

**EFFECTS OF ECOWAS ELECTORAL SUPPORT SYSTEM ON SUSTAINABLE
DEMOCRACY ON MEMBER COUNTRIES**

**OKORODUDU EYESAN EMMANUEL
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this thesis has been approved by the Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Peace and Development Studies of University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria

.....
Dr. I. A. Jawondo
Supervisor

.....
Date

.....
Prof. Oyeronke Olademo
Director, CPSS
Internal Examiner

.....
Date

Dr. Raji Shittu
Postgraduate Co-ordinator

Date

.....
External Examiner

.....
Date

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Almighty God for sparing my life to conclude this project.

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ABSTRACT

The mandate of the ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Support System (EEASS) to promote sustainable democracy in member countries is being undermined by intense internal political complications. Certainly, West African countries are maturing into stable political transitions but there is still the problem of distortion of democratic principles to subvert the collective will of the people. The aim of this study was to assess the effects of the EEASS on sustainable democracy in member countries. The objectives of the study were to: (i) examine the main thrusts of the EEASS to member countries; (ii) investigate the extent to which members have domesticated the Good Governance requirements for EEASS; (iii) evaluate the extent to which members have benefitted from the EEASS; (iv) assess the effects of EEASS on sustainable democracy in member states; and (v) identify the challenges of EEASS in member countries.

The study adopted mixed method research design, consisting of quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data while Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focused Group Discussion (FGD) were employed to generate qualitative data. The total ECOWAS total population was around 500 million people while the sample size for the study consisted of 500 randomly selected respondents from relevant electoral stakeholders. The data analysis for the study was based on the 485 copies of retrieved questionnaire and responses from the KII and FGD. The data collected were interpreted with the use of percentages and descriptive analysis. The reliability of the results (0.88 reliability value) was obtained through the use of inter-instrument data consistency model. The data gathered were analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS).

The findings of the study were that:

- (i) The EEASS to ECOWAS member countries included election observation (96%), improved performance capacity building for electoral umpire (87%) and financial assistance 48%;
- (ii) most member States (89%) have domesticated the values of ECOWAS good governance requirements for accessing its electoral assistance by adopting zero tolerance to non-democratic governance (93%), increasing freedom of political association (82%), improving free and fair elections (40%) and reducing electoral violence (34%);
- (iii) many member States (67%) have benefitted substantially from the EEASS with training support for their electoral commission (83%), financial assistance (67%), post election crisis management workshop (64%) and capacity building on credible election observation methods (52%);
- (iv) the EEASS has positive effects on sustainable democracy in member countries having led to overwhelming reduction in coup d'état (92%), increased stable democratic transition in member countries (81%) and reduced electoral violence (36%); and
- (v) the challenges of EEASS at enthroning sustainable democracy in member countries included poor funding of electoral administration (89%), weak

electoral policing (87%), partial electoral umpire (84%) and bad governance (82%).

The study concluded that the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system has served as a useful political tool for enthroneing sustainable democracy without adequately enhancing accountable governance. The study recommended that the EEASS be sustained and refocused for better performance in West African States.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTON

1.1. Background to the Study

Since the end of the cold war, the concepts of good political governance and corporate economic governance have remained major hallmarks of sustainable democracy in most countries of the world. During the bipolar world order, which revolves around the capitalist and socialist ideological rivalry between the United States of America (USA) and the defunct Union of Soviet Socialist Countries (USSR) respectively, democracy and accountability in governance as clamoured by Western countries were not profoundly stressed because many communist countries were largely autocratic. However, the end of the cold war has virtually enthroned a unipolar world order, which is largely characterized by democratic tenets that revolves around responsive governance that provides at least the basic needs of the people, popular sovereignty and majority choice, which is largely characterised on a system of government that is genuinely premised on the consent of the electorates. The post cold war era is also characterized by a universal legal framework that guarantees the rule of law and due process, popular participation in the decision making process, freedom of association and expression, uniform application of rules and a democratic culture in which the people exercise the governing power (Raji, 2011: 238).

Understanding how the concepts of democracy and good governance have remained on the forefront of the contemporary political process requires a brief historical interpretation of the current world order. The contemporary unipolar political order is associated with the historical demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, which curtailed its overwhelming ability to sustain its leadership to a socialist sub-system leading subsequently to the demise of most socialist regimes and the triumph of capitalism over socialism. The important dimension of this change in the world order which is relevant to this study is the emergence of liberal democracy and zero tolerance to non-democratic and unaccountable governance. Such a neo-liberal political philosophy has arguably dominated the current global political economy.

Apart from its cardinal focus on political governance, the concept of liberal democracy and good governance also has its economic dimension as most international financial institutions and agencies now proclaim the principle of corporate economic governance as a major performance sign-post of good governance and liberal democracy. Such corporate economic governance paradigm is characterized by industrial democracy whose hallmarks include privatization and

commercialization of public enterprises and liberal democracy as a pre-condition for development assistance across the globe. As liberal democratic ideals and norms became accepted models for political governance among developing nations, aid conditionality from Western nations has equally emerged as a tool to compel recipient countries to adopt democracy as the system of governance.

Multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union (EU) virtually have the same aid assistance conditionality as the Western nations. These institutions insist on democratic tenets and good political governance as key factors for recipient countries to receive donor assistance. In fact, the European Union (EU) adopted a broader extension of aid conditionality to include respect for human rights and rule of law in dealing with its aid recipient countries (European Union, 2008). The good governance conditionality as adopted by Western countries and its effects on Africa is particularly evident in the Cotonou Agreement of 2000, which was signed between the EU and African countries, where the former placed strong emphasis on democracy, good governance and respect for human rights as a precondition for aid assistance to African countries.

In a bid to foster regional integration and progress, West African countries have also designed its protocol on democracy and good governance that is largely anchored on transparent electoral contest and responsive governance (Onoja, 2014; Yabi, 2016). There is also the ECOWAS Protocol on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, which was adopted in December 1999, which centers on the internal management strategies of conflicts among West African nations and complemented by the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good governance as adopted in December 2002. The above protocol established a clear link between conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms and the will to develop strong political principles, including the community's objection to any accession to political power through unconstitutional means and the right of intervention in the internal affairs of member country in case of serious and massive violation of human rights (ECOWAS, 2018). The ECOWAS protocol on democracy and good governance, which borders on zero tolerance on non-democratic governance and transparent elections, among others, has similar general principles with the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU) as adopted in July 2001. The growing recognition of the link between good governance, development and sustainable peace has stimulated demand for monitoring the quality of governance across West African countries over time.

In spite of the adoption and domestication of the ECOWAS protocol on democracy and good political governance by its members, electoral violence, bad governance, poor leadership and political violence in many of its member states have prevented the realization of the key provisions of the 1973 Treaty of the institution to promote peace and security in the sub-region. Nigeria had its share of political turbulent which led to the military take-over of government in 1966, with the Military in Ghana taking over in 1967 just to mention a few. Though at the formal take off of ECOWAS in 1975, about nine out of the fifteen countries were operating democratic system of government (Asante, 1986), the nature of such governance hardly qualifies for genuine democracy as some of these systems were laced with democratic dictatorship while change of government were very frequent having been characterised by violence and undemocratic means as coups and coup d'état became a relay race with batons exchanged sometimes between army sergeants and captains (Onah and Ibietan, 2009). Burkina Faso, Benin Republic, Liberia and Sierra Leone were few examples of the above scenario. There was also the brutal killing and removal from office of the Burkinabe leader, Thomas Sankara and Sergeant Samuel Doe of Liberia (Onah and Ibietan, 2009: 8).

Thus, the West African sub-region was engrossed by political instability typified by coup d'états and authoritarian political system in the early eighties and nineties. For instance, the post-independence political trajectories of many countries in the sub-region like Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea, Benin, Sierra Leone and Burkina Faso were characterized by non-democratic regimes ranging from military junta to one party authoritarian regime with attendant economic mismanagement and socio-economic dislocation. These factors, among others, led to series of violent conflicts that engulfed Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire and Togo in the 1990's. In Liberia, the first violent civil war started in December 1989, with the invasion of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). Taylor's rebellion, which sought to overthrow the autocratic and repressive rule of then President Samuel Doe did not only succeed with his ascension to power in the 1997 elections, but also resulted in the outbreak of another seven-year civil war in Liberia (Vinck, Pham and Kreutzer, 2011).

In Sierra Leone, the clashes between the Johnny Paul Koroma led RUF and the democratically elected government of Ahmed Tejan Kabbah led to violent conflict in the country, which officially ended in February 2002. The conflict, arising from corruption, bad governance, social injustice and breakdown of democratic institutions in Cote'd Ivoire resulted in the killing of

over 5,000 people and the destruction of social infrastructure (Kargbo, 2002). In July 6, 1967, the Biafran war, under the leadership of Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu broke out in Nigeria over accusation and counter accusation of regional domination, which was a fallout of the coup and counter coup of 1966, leading to the massacre of over 100,000 innocent Nigerians (Anthony, 2014).

Apart from frequent political repression and suffocation brutality against political opposition, citizens of ECOWAS member states have also witnessed injustices, dictatorship, politics of deprivation and exclusion and large scale embezzlement of state resources by the political elite as exemplify by the case of Mobutu Zeko of Zaire, Saani Abacha of Nigeria, Daniel Arab Moi of Kenya and Kibaki regime in relation to the Anglo-leasing scandals in Kenya, just to mention a few (Ong'ayo 2018). Internal power struggles have taken a violent dimension in many ECOWAS member states, thereby threatening the very existence of many countries. Thus, the contemporary political space in West Africa is laced with diverse issues of political clientelism, insurrections, terrorism and political violence and unaccountable governance. The above negative variables have direct implications not just for state survival, but also for general socio-economic development of West African nations.

Consequently, ECOWAS, whose initial primary motive was to promote economic integration in West African states, has largely evolved into being an institution to addressing issues of internal political violence and turmoil by deploying peacekeepers to the trouble spots through the establishment of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) as a key indicator of the preparedness of the West African countries to solve its internal problem with minimum external intervention. However, the various peace keeping strategies and security agenda did not seem to get a hold on the major problems facing the member states because the crisis of regime change or political succession are yet to be adequately addressed by the ECOWAS. For example, issues of legitimacy crisis, poor governance, bad leadership, political leadership failure, political corruption, electoral crisis and political violence have been largely left unattended or ignored (Okeke, Oji and Okechukwu, 2014). The political conditions in most of the countries in the sub-region, and indeed Africa as a whole, are not democracy friendly and are unsuitable for democratization and flourishing of democracy or demilitarization (Aning et al., 2010; Sperling, 2018).

The ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Support System (EEASS) was established in 2000 to improve democratic governance and stabilize the sub-region politically. The main content of this System is amplified in article 32 of the ECOWAS protocol on good governance and democracy, which agreed that member states intensify the principle of good governance, which is characterized by press freedom, social Justice and accountable governance, among others, to curtail violent conflict and guarantee political stability and peace in conformity with global governance standard (ECOWAS, 2017). Some of the core principle of EEASS include objection to any accession to power through unconstitutional means, political isolation and economic sanction in case of serious violation of human rights and accountable governance.

Since the adoption of the ECOWAS electoral support system, the role of the Community has largely been commended for reversing major coups in member states like Guinea-Bissau during the 2003 and 2012 coups; Niger in 2010 when Salou Djibo overthrew Mamadoun Tanja; Cote d'Ivoire coup in 2011 under Laurent Gbagbo; and in Guinea-Bissau and Mali in 2012 when the military overthrew the civilian government (Chidume, 2013). In spite of these relative achievements, there have also been other forms of crises in ECOWAS member states, ranging from electoral disenfranchisements, electoral malpractices, and intraparty/interparty conflicts, among others, in the region, which calls for a systematic studies to determine the effects of the ECOWAS electoral support system on sustainable democracy among member states, hence this study. More so, given the series of post-election crises that have occurred in many West African countries, it becomes salient to critically examine whether the assistance and support given to EMBs by ECOWAS has led to the emergence of credible and transparent electoral administration that could foster sustainable democratic consolidation in West Africa. This thesis examines the effects of the EEASS on sustainable democracy in member countries.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The aim of the ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Support System (EEASS) to promote sustainable democracy in West Africa has largely been undermined by electoral violence and other intense political complications in member countries. Though West Africa countries are politically maturing into a democratic culture of political ascension through the electoral process, which has

contributed to stable democratic transition in some member countries and the peace process that led to the end of the civil wars in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire, among others, there is still the problem of distortion of democratic principles to subvert the collective will of the people as electoral processes were marred by electoral manipulation in many ECOWAS countries, including Nigeria, Togo, Benin Republic and Mali, especially by the government in power. Member states still face poor democratic culture of politically induced assassination, weak electoral process and dwindling dividends of democracy in spite of stable democratic transition, which gave the impression that the ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Support System (EEASS) has not done enough to enhance accountable and responsive political leadership across the sub-region.

While the stabilizing role of ECOWAS in dealing with issues of democratic succession in West Africa cannot be underestimated, the nexus between structural issues of political insurrections and electoral violence have continually undermined such success. Also, there are concerns on the quality, benefits and effectiveness of ECOWAS electoral assistance as a means of promoting democratic dividends and consolidating democratic sustainability in the face of internal electoral turmoil in member countries. This thesis studies the effects of the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system on sustainable democracy in West Africa. Though there are various studies on democratic sustainability in West Africa (Adegboyega, 2007, Adigun, 2010, Ali, 2013, Gambo, 2016), a particular focus on the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system in academic literature is largely missing, a gap this thesis intends to fill.

1.3. Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to assess the effects of the ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Support System (EEASS) on sustainable democracy in member countries. The objectives of the study are to:

- (i) unveil the main thrusts of the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system to members
- (ii) investigate the extent to which members have domesticated the Good Governance requirements for ECOWAS electoral assistance in their electoral process.
- (iii) evaluate the extent to which members have benefitted from the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system;
- (iv) assess the effects of the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system on sustainable democracy in member states.
- (v) examine the challenges of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system at enthroneing sustainable democracy in West Africa countries.

1.4. Research Questions

In the light of the problem stated above, this study sets out to answer the following questions:

- i. What are the main thrusts of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system to members?
- ii. To what extent have members domesticated ECOWAS Good Governance requirements for electoral assistance in their electoral process?
- iii. To what extent have members benefitted from the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system?
- iv. What are the effects of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system on sustainable democracy in member countries?
- v. What are the challenges confronting ECOWAS electoral assistance support system at enthroning sustainable democracy in member states?

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study immensely contributes to the stock of knowledge in regional and national politics as well as unveils the performance status of ECOWAS in the area of good governance and sustainable democracy in West African states. Our focus on the substantial gamut of ECOWAS electoral assistance to its member states and the evaluation of its election monitoring and observation missions would enable the study to evaluate the effects of its electoral assistance on democratic consolidation in member states. The study will also contribute to the field of politics, peace and democratic transformation by proposing to the policy makers how ECOWAS can use elections as a tool for promoting peace and development in West Africa. The relevance of this study derives from the apparent preponderant mismanagement of electioneering processes in West Africa. In many instances, such mismanagement has become major conflict trigger threatening not only democratic governance, but also the peace and security of the entire ECOWAS region. The study will ascertain how the ECOWAS election assistance and support system has assisted West African states to mitigate political instability that is common to the sub- region. Through the implementation of the recommendations from this study, West Africa states can rise again from governance challenges and become impregnable to all forms of political plights presently ravaging the sub-region. The study could enhance the political security of West African countries and help in identifying indicators of outcomes related to electoral assistance.

1.6. Scope of the Study

Nigeria, Ghana and the Republic of Benin have been selected as the geographical scope of this study. The choice of these countries was informed by the electoral evolutions that have taken place in these countries in recent time which has lasted almost two decades without being truncated. Also, while Nigeria and Ghana represent other Anglophone countries, Benin represents Francophone countries of ECOWAS community, which has dominant members in the organization.

The subject scope of the study is the general appraisal of the performance of ECOWAS in deepening democracy and promoting good governance in West Africa through its electoral assistance support system. The study will specifically identify the contents and character of such assistance, assess the effects of ECOWAS electoral assistance on deepening democratic governance and consolidation in West Africa, study the achievements and challenges inherent in ECOWAS electoral assistance to its members, unveil the extent to which members has domesticated and adopted ECOWAS agenda on electoral assistance in their electoral processes for sustainable democracy to thrive in the sub-region.

The timeline for the study covers the period between 2004 and 2014 because majority of the member states had their subsequent elections between these periods. It was also the time most of the member states began the process of implementing the protocol on democracy and good governance after signing the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance in 2001.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

The major constraint to this study rests mainly in the difficulty to access classified reports and information in the custody of the relevant political stakeholders involved in electioneering processes. The Electoral Management Body (EMB) officials were reluctant to release vital but sensitive information on the report of the elections they conducted due to civil service regulations on the non-disclosure of Official State secret. However, the researcher contacted relevant respondents through personal networking to manage the challenges of obtaining the needed information. Key Informants Interview (KII) was very useful in this regard.

The constraints highlighted above were also experienced with officials of security agencies, state media outfits and the political parties. On the part of the political parties, their inability to have proper record keeping and having the rightful designated persons to speak on the parties' strategies around electioneering processes was a major challenge to this study. Similarly getting relevant personalities who participated in the pro-democracy campaigns for free and fair elections, to

militate against electoral conflict in the particular member states to speak on their roles, during the period proved to be difficult. Moreover, the possibilities of tracking or identifying such persons proved difficult as well. The inexhaustible nature of the variable data that abounds and the inaccuracies of the information and perceptions of the respondents also pose a major limitation to this study. Financial implications for travelling and lodging in the three countries during the field work were also a challenge considering the poor state of the ECOWAS region's international highways.

The above obstacles notwithstanding, the study's approach of using KII and Focus Group Discussions particularly with Civil Society Organisation's actors (CSO) and ECOWAS staff in the three countries contributed in enriching the variance of useful information generated during the study.

1.8. Operational Definition of Terms

The following key concepts in the thesis are defined for better understanding of the subject matter under study.

1.8.1. Democracy: is a system of government in which ultimate power (or sovereignty) rests with the people. Democracy as adopted in this study means a political system that promotes the political will of the people and a governance system within the tenets of constitutionality.

1.8.2. Supplementary Protocol: It is the protocol on democracy and good governance which is supplementary to the protocol relating to the mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution peacekeeping and security, signed in December 2001 in Dakar by ECOWAS member States.

1.8.3. ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Support System: As conceived in this study, refers to all forms of supports by ECOWAS geared towards ensuring successful political transition among member states. This supports often come in form of monitoring of elections, financial assistance, intelligence and technical supports to promote credible electoral process in order to bring about peaceful elections in West Africa.

1.8.4. Good Governance: This refers to a system of government based on good leadership, respect for the rule of law and due processes, and the accountability of the political leadership to the electorates and transparency in the operations of government.

1.8.5. Election: This is a democratic process, in which the electorates periodically select their leaders according to the electoral law.

1.8.6. Electoral Assistance: Electoral assistance in this study is the financial technical and logistic support provided to support peaceful political transition. It could be in form of material support given to the electoral bodies, such as providing voting material and equipment.

1.8.7. Sustainable Democracy: This refers to the process by which democratic system of governance matures to a point that it is unlikely to revert to authoritarianism.

1.9.1. Background to the Creation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Before the creation of ECOWAS, the collective territory known as West Africa was made up of an aggregation of states that had emerged from different colonial experiences and administrations which largely defined the boundaries of the 15 states domiciled in the area. Even though Member States of the community now make use of three official languages (English, French and Portuguese), there are well over a thousand existing local languages, including cross-border native tongues such as Ewe, Fulfulde, Hausa, Mandingo, Wolof, Yoruba, Ga, among its over 300 million people tucked in a vast land of about 5.1million square kilometers (ATLAS Map, 2016). Prior to colonialism, the West African sub-region played host to many empires and kingdoms that spanned centuries, some of which included Ghana, Mali Songhai, Wolof, Oyo, Benin and Kanem Bornu empires.

The sub-region's cultural, linguistic and ecological diversity presents both opportunities and challenges for the integration process as the combined efforts of the West African leaders at forging ahead with the socio-political and economic integration of ECOWAS member states has always been recognized by the international community as a step forward in the desire to engender prosperity of the area. The first effort at integration of the West African sub-region dates back to 1945 with the creation of CFA franc that brought the francophone countries of the region into a single currency union. Then in 1964, the then Liberian President, William Tubman proposed an economic union for the West African region leading to an agreement which was signed in 1965 by the four states of Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In spite of its formation, the union did not take off due largely to ideological rivalries among West African countries.

The ECOWAS was established by the signing of the Treaty of Lagos on 28 May 1975. The impetus for establishing the Community came from the then Nigerian and Togolese Heads of State, Yakubu Gowon and Gnassingbe Eyadema respectively, which was eventually rectified by other members. The ECOWAS consists of fifteen West African countries, which include: Benin, Burkina

Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo. ECOWAS aimed at promoting cooperation in development, economic activities and socio-cultural matters of the African continent (ECOWAS Treaty, 1975).

Article 2 (1) of the Treaty provides thus:

It shall be the aim of the Community to promote cooperation and development in all the fields of economic activity... for the purpose of ... fostering closer relations among its members and contributing to the progress and development

From the above aim and objectives, ECOWAS vision was to create a borderless region where its citizens has access to its abundant resources and is able to exploit same through the creation of opportunities under a sustainable environment. The institution was also designed to create an integrated region where the population enjoys free movement, have access to efficient education and health systems and engage in economic and commercial activities while living in dignity in an atmosphere of peace and security; a region governed in accordance with the principles of democracy, rule of law and good governance (ECOWAS Report, 2012).

The Community was also established to promote cooperation in development, economic activities and socio-cultural matters. ECOWAS was particularly envisaged as a quasi political community within the West African sub-region where the constituent Member States pursue certain common goals and objectives for mutual relevance, joint rewards, common responsiveness and a generalized loyalty to interests that promotes the common good of all the Community's citizens (Chamba, 2014). However, political instability in most of the member states prevented the realization of the key provisions of the 1975 Treaty. In particular, the West African sub-region became noted for its profound history of political instability through military coup d'états and authoritarian political system, especially in the late seventies and early eighties and the nineties (Bolarinwa, J. 2008:331).

The post-independence political trajectories of many countries in the sub-region like Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea, Benin, Sierra Leone and Burkina Faso were replete with military junta and one party political structure. These among other factors led to series of conflicts that engulfed Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Cote D'Ivoire and Togo in the 1990's. However, since the end of the Cold War, democracy and good governance have gradually taken root and are becoming

the norm of political systems and governance in the Community. Consequently, electoral democracy has become the driving force influencing the numerous political transitions from military/authoritarian regimes to multiparty system. This democratic political culture of a structured modality for ascension to political office through election was fundamental for the peace processes which led to the end of the civil war in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote D'Ivoire (Claremont D: 2010:44)

In realization that the citizenry are well disposed to electoral democracy as the criteria for choosing their leaders, ECOWAS Heads of State signed and adopted the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance in December 2001. It was designed as a means to consolidate the democratic gains set in motion in the region from the 1990's. Since then, ECOWAS has continually worked at encouraging democratic growth across all member states. In keeping with this fact, chapter 1 of ECOWAS protocol on democracy and good governance provided for 'the Constitutional Convergence Principle on democracy and good governance as a principle to be shared by all member states. These principles include clear cut separation of power between the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary, accession to political power through free, fair and transparent elections only and zero tolerance for power obtained or maintained by unconstitutional means. Other principle on democracy among ECOWAS members includes popular participation in decision-making process, strict adherence to democratic principles and decentralization of power at all levels of governance and formation of political parties freely within the limits of the law without prejudice to ethnic, religious, regional or racial considerations.

Thus, non-compliance with key provisions of the Constitutional Convergence Principle, such as (c) above, has been invoked by the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State, which is the highest decision making body of the institution as grounds for sanctioning member states. To further ensure that elections are the only legitimate means by which anyone can ascend to power in the ECOWAS region, the provision of section II and III of the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance institutionalized electoral assistance and observation as a means of deepening and enhancing democratic culture in the community. Specifically, ECOWAS has remained very focused at providing electoral assistance to member states through funding and capacity building as a key element for building stable democracy (ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy, 2001:Section 2-3:10-11).

The principle of constitutional convergence as enshrined in the ECOWAS protocol on

democracy and good governance has facilitated periodic electoral assistance to member states and to some extent engendered a stable environment for peaceful interactions among the citizens of the affected states. Thus, the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system in its operations has been designed to work as a viable strategy for expanding the frontiers of democratic process and the maintenance of sustainable peace and security in the sub-region. Consequently, the right of every citizen to participate in the electoral process without any limitations is guaranteed with properly managed electoral umpire within the confines of the United Nation Charter on Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, which recognized the freedom of individuals to participate in the political process of their countries through genuine elections (ECOWAS, 2016). The conduct of this periodic election is seen as indispensable means of creating a level playing ground for all eligible citizens to express their political views and preferences.

Consequently, Articles 12 and 13 of the ECOWAS Protocol on electoral support system provides thus:

Art. 12 ‘At the request of any Member State, ECOWAS may provide assistance in the conduct of any election’, and Art. 13 ‘As election in a Member State approach, the Executive Secretary (now the President after the change from Secretariat to Commission) shall dispatch a fact finding Mission to the Member State conducting election

The above Articles offer an appropriate platform for ECOWAS electoral assistance to Member States. However, there are concerns over the quality, texture, benefits and effectiveness of ECOWAS electoral assistance and observation missions as a vehicle to consolidate democratic culture and practices in West Africa due to vicious circle of electoral violence in ECOWAS member countries. The need therefore arises for the interrogation of the entire gamut of ECOWAS electoral assistance to its Member States and the evaluation of its election monitoring and observation missions. This is against the backdrop that election in West Africa, rather than foster development and sustainable peace, has largely incorporated undemocratic values and culture, especially election rigging among the citizens, thus, promoting sharp divisions along ethnic, geographical and religious lines across the sub region. Furthermore, ECOWAS practice of short term Election Day monitoring and observation, raises the question of how exhaustive is the standard and principle of observation of ECOWAS within the context of current international best practices

that encourages Election Management Bodies (EMBs) to plan and implement their electioneering process to run in an Electoral Cycle (DFID, 2010:2). ECOWAS support and assistance has been reactionary to each electoral event as it occurs and not holistic to provide a long term solution to electioneering challenges (DFID Document, 2010:2).

In sum, given the series of post-election crises that have bedeviled several West African countries ECOWAS has given support to, it becomes salient to critically examine whether the assistance and support given to EMBs by ECOWAS has led to a strong and transparent electoral administration that could sustain democratic tenets in West Africa. The discussion of the processes, contents and textures of democracy and good governance have been an integral part of the contemporary global world order, which is largely characterized by undiluted democratic culture for sustainable development. The growing recognition of the link between good governance and sustainable development, as empirical evidence suggests has stimulated demand for monitoring the quality of governance across West African countries and within individual countries over time (Kaufmann, 2002).

1.9. 2. ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Support System and Sustainable Democracy in Member Countries

Since the emergence of a unipolar world order, democracy and good governance have taken root in Africa having become the norm of political governance in ECOWAS member countries. Consequently, transitional democracy has become the driving force influencing the political transitions from military/authoritarian regimes to multiparty system amongst member states. This democratic political culture of ascension to political office by election was fundamental to the sustenance of democratic tenets having contributed to the peace processes which led to the end of the civil wars in some member countries, including Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire. However, in spite of the improvement in the electoral process in the Community, political development in countries such as Niger, Togo, Burkina Faso, Gambia and Senegal has been marred by constitutional manipulation and distortion of democratic principles to subvert the collective will of the people. In Togo for instance, there was a deliberate attempt to evolve a political dynasty following the death of the then President Gnassingbe Eyadema, when power was handed over to his son, Faure Eyadema. In Guinea, while ECOWAS was in total support of providing assistance for the transitory electoral process in the country, the ruling military junta under Captain Moussa Dadis Camara cringed unto power. It took the application of pressures from ECOWAS and other relevant

stakeholders, including the United Nations and the European Union to force the military junta out of office (International Contact Group, 2009).

The electoral process in West African States have also been clouded by faulty electoral process designs, fierce competition for political offices, which leads to unrest and violence. In Côte d'Ivoire, elections have tended to weaken the institution, with claims of rigged and stolen elections (Mwangi, 2011). In this instance and other cases, elections have actually further polarized ethnic groups and led to violent conflicts (Essoungou, 2011). In Côte d'Ivoire's November 2010 elections, discrepancy over the results led to some of the worst killings and human rights violations in the nine-year war that crippled the country.

In Gambia, the ECOWAS community pulled out their personnel to monitor the 2014 polls because of the unwholesome political environment and clear machinations of the incumbent Head of State, Yahya Jammeh, to allegedly manipulate the outcome of the elections (Obayuwana, 2011). The reports of the fact-finding mission and the Early Warning System clearly confirms incidences of intimidation, an unacceptable level of control of the electronic media by the party in power, the lack of neutrality of state electoral institutions, and an opposition cowed by repression (Obayuwana, 2011:3). Thus, the efforts of ECOWAS to enthrone democratic rule in member countries are always confronted with democratic recession or reversal of democratic gains, which led to the establishment of the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system in 2000 (Yaya, 2014).

By the provisions of its extant legal instruments relating to democracy, peace and security, ECOWAS has tilted its member states through its electoral support system towards building strong institutions, responsible and accountable government and ensuring freedom of information for the press, enshrining rule of law, and guaranteeing equal rights for all citizens, which are the major hallmark of credible democratic foundation. The first article of the ECOWAS electoral support system revolves around the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, which provides for the implementation of democratic tenets as a set of principles that shall be shared by all member states. These principles include all forms of assistance in the conduct of any election at the request of member state (Article 12) and dispatching a fact finding mission to member states conducting elections by the Executive Secretary, who is now referred to as President (Article 13).

The protocol also recommended the collection of all pertinent information relating to the contesting candidates or political parties; holding meeting with political contestants, political party leaders, electoral umpires and other competent bodies on how to conduct credible elections and

assessing the status of the preparations for the elections, among others. As written in the protocol:

The Mission of the ECOWAS electoral support system shall be to hold consultations with the relevant authorities of the host government for an exchange of views and in order to determine the mode of deployment of election observers in the host Member State The Mission shall also submit a report to the Executive Secretary. The Report shall comprise: The Mission's own observations; Statements by witnesses; Its assessment of the conduct of the elections from the point of view of the national laws governing the elections and the universal principles in electoral matters; Its recommendations for the improvement of the conduct of future elections and monitoring Missions (Article 15 and 16).

The above principle of constitutional convergence on good governance in West Africa has facilitated regular electoral assistance to member states of the Community, in order to engender a stable political environment for elections in most of the member states. The ECOWAS electoral support system in its operations has been designed to work as a viable strategy for expanding the frontiers of democratic process and the maintenance of sustainable peace and security in the sub-region. Democratic rule has thus become sacrosanct in order to attain constitutionality as well as good governance among ECOWAS countries. One of the major issues beclouding the success of ECOWAS electoral support system is hinged on how to ensure sustainability of these deepened democratic tenets among its member states. In spite of the ECOWAS efforts at promoting sustainable democracy in member countries, the daunting challenges of insecurity, political instability and conflicts of all sorts continue to pose a big threat to the sustenance of peace and good governance among members. Having established the rationale behind the adoption of democratic processes in entrenching good governance in ECOWAS member states, the challenge now is how to justify the strategies, instrumentalities and the supports of ECOWAS electoral assistance in the face of crippling electoral crises, violence and other forms of socio-political upheavals within the space of political transitions in West Africa.

West African States have long been practicing multi party systems in Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo, among others, with each State having quite a number of political parties. For example, Burkina Faso has 103 parties, Côte d'Ivoire 130, Ghana 10, Guinea 46, Liberia 22, Mali

94, Nigeria 98, Senegal 77, and Togo 68. These political parties are engaged in competition for political power, but in some countries, despite the existence of many independent political parties, the electoral space is virtually monopolized by dominant parties controlling both the executive and the legislature in many instances. For instance, in Nigeria, major national issues in the twilight of the regime of President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2006–2007 were the corrupt practices involving the leadership of the ruling party, the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) during the 2003 general elections and the diversion of public funds from a federal agency into a phony account to finance the party. A special public account, named the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF), which was to be used to facilitate technological development in Nigeria, was alleged to have been cornered by the leadership of the PDP and used as ‘slush’ funds by the party to finance the 2003 presidential elections.

There was also allegation of the diversion of \$2 billion dollars meant to fight insurgency into party campaign fund in the 2015 general elections in Nigeria (Adekunle, 2017). The low level of trust of the political system to deliver credible democratic dividends in Nigeria can also be linked to the perceived incapacity of political parties to keep their campaign promises and reduce the growing level of poverty in their countries. Politicians are largely perceived to be a self-seeking group who, no sooner than they acquire political power, often neglect or care little about the interests and demands of the electorate that voted them into power. This led to the existence of extra-party groups like the ethnic militias in Nigeria and an unregistered but clandestine group called the Revolutionary Communist Party of Upper Volta in Burkina Faso. The commandment of tremendous support by these extra political party groups in West Africa underscores the tenuous nature of the legitimacy and public trust which political parties enjoy in those countries. People’s high expectations of the parties are usually dashed when parties win political power and abandon the electorates, only for them to go back to the same electorates during election periods (Akubo and Yakubu, 2014).

Also, unstable party systems have affected some ECOWAS member states. Though there are many political parties but only few are electorally relevant due to feeble legal constraints on ‘cross-carpeting’ or floor-crossing by parties. The dominant parties often entice the strong or promising members of the smaller parties, thereby further weakening the latter (Abuutu 2013). Also, political leaders are used to manipulating the electoral process to retain power and the end

result has been the existence of a culture of fraudulent electoral politics that have tarnished the image of the sub-continent of West Africa (Jephias 2013).

In virtually all the West African countries, including Nigeria, Togo, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, political leaders have demonstrated corrupt tendencies as many corrupt leaders recruit kinsmen to fill vacant post even where there are more qualified candidates; collect salaries and allowance of ghost workers; bribe law enforcement agents and other administrators of justice to pervert justice and connive with contractors to inflate cost of contract while also spending huge sums of money abroad at the expense of the masses (Gyong, 2010). Human Rights Watch (2017) observes that in Nigeria, which is the leading democracy in the sub-region, political elites, almost without exception, have an insatiable capacity to steal from the commonwealth and leave the people more impoverished. Unrestrained by any real accountability to the electorate, many of those elected officials who came to power through fraudulent elections engage in large-scale looting of public resources (Ilufeye, 2010).

In most West African countries also, political manipulations often ensure that results are declared even when there is no evidence that voting actually took place. Many politicians typically plays electoral politics with little or no respect for the established rules on credible electoral process while many political leaders do not display any sense of moral restraint against inappropriate behavior in a democratic political order. It is not surprising therefore that election results in many ECOWAS countries, whether at the intra-party level or at the level of general elections are always disputed by those who are declared losers. In fact, many presidential elections have been the subject of judicial intervention (Abutudu, 2013). Apart from elections conducted by the colonial government in Nigeria, others, particularly the 1964, 1983, 2003 and 2007 elections were plagued by violence and crises. Prior to the 2007 elections, the spate of politically induced assassinations was simply unprecedented, including that of a serving Minister of Justice, Bola Ige.

Other electoral challenges in ECOWAS countries include male dominated party politics, labeling and money politics. Party indiscipline, weak inter and intra-party relations and lack of party political education are other challenges confronting democratic consolidation in West African countries (Abutudu, 2013:11). The judiciary is the arm of government that interprets and applies the electoral law; it is saddled with the responsibility of resolving disputes as an impartial umpire. However, there is an influx of a dependent judicial system in many ECOWAS member countries, which makes a mess of electoral adjudication in many instances. The judicial system in Gambia, as

reported by the International Bar Association in August 2006, suffers from neglect, political manipulation, and under-investment, resulting from a general de-prioritization of its importance. Whilst still under political pressure, most official reports on the rule of law in the Gambia were supportive of the independence of the judiciary. In practice however, many of government’s actions undermined judicial independence and the rule of law (IBA, 2016). Weak judicial system in Gambia has created a climate of undermining human rights and the rule of law in the country as the legal profession is largely regulated in the country while the government perceives the legal profession as a political oppositional force (IBA, 2016).

Some ECOWAS member states have improved significantly in civil participation with active civil society and independent media. For instance, Mali has 30 private newspapers, 147 independent local radio stations, seven state radio stations and one national television station (Adejumobi, 2017). In Ghana, there are 35 registered newspapers (33 privately owned), about 52 radio stations and nine television stations (eight of them independent). Similarly, Mali has over 1,000 civil society organizations operating in different areas of socio-political sphere of the country (Adejumobi, 2017:6). In spite of this relative freedom of information in member countries, Many ECOWAS member states have grim records of political freedom as reported in the Freedom of Information World report (2015):

Table 1: Freedom World Results, 2015

Country	Political rights	Civil liberty rating	Aggregate score	Status	Press freedom
Benin	2	2	82	Free	Partly free
Burkina Faso	4	3	59	Partly free	Partly free
Cape Verde	1	1	90	Free	Free
Côte d’Ivoire	4	4	51	partly free	Partly free
The Gambia	7	6	18	Not free	Not free
Ghana	1	2	83	Free	Free
Guinea	5	5	40	partly free	Not free
Guinea-Bissau	5	5	39	Partly free	Partly free
Liberia	3	4	61	Partly free	Partly free
Mali	5	4	45	Partly Free	Partly free
Niger	3	4	52	Partly free	Partly free
Nigeria	4	5	48	Partly free	Partly free
Senegal	2	2	78	Free	Partly free

Sierra Leone	3	3	65	Partly free	Partly free
Togo	4	4	48	Partly free	Not free

Source: Freedom House, Freedom in the World Report, 2015 (Washington, DC: Freedom House). 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free rating.

Table 1 above revealed that only 4 member states are rated as having political freedom and are allowed to express their political rights, while the rest have a political climate of openness and civil liberty, this and many more are reasons why democratic elections can be hindered in such countries because the inability of the people to express their political rights undermines the tenets of democracy, in which the electorate votes counts optimally.

1.9.3. The Study Areas

This study basically took place in three selected countries; Nigeria, Ghana and Republic of Benin. The choice of these countries was informed by their status as leading countries that have sustained democratization process in West Africa for at least close to two decades as well as the necessity to consider the dual lingua franca espoused by ECOWAS community. The geographical configuration and socio-economic indicators of each country are highlighted below.

1.9.3.1. Nigeria

Nigeria has the largest population in Africa generally and in West Africa in particular with the current figure hovering around 190 million (National Bureau of Statistics, 2018). Liberal democracy has been adopted in the past and present republic as the ideal form of governance. Although Nigeria has had a long history of military interregnum since its independence in 1960, the country has remained democratically stable since 1999. The country has played a very vital role in West Africa within the peace and security architecture of the ECOWAS, especially in the formation and sustenance of the ECOMOG (Francis, 2009).

Figure 1: Map of Nigeria



Source: Google Images

A Historical Overview of Election Administration in Nigeria

Election is a major foundation of the vital pillars of representative democracy in Nigeria (Raji, 2016). First, election is a fundamental means of choosing credible candidates to form the government. Thus, election largely distinguished democracy from dictatorship by an open political atmosphere which allows the participating political parties to sell their manifestoes to attract popular votes (Williams, 1999). Election also symbolizes popular sovereignty and the expression of the opinion of the people as a social contract pact between the state and the people who are the ultimate decider of who holds political authority while also serving as a formal expression of people's preference for a particular government or candidates which are then aggregated and transformed into a collective decision about who will govern or who will not. Even though election alone does not translate into democratic dividends automatically, multi-party elections are necessary pillars of representative government and political stability in all democratic countries. In few instances, ceasefire within countries emerging from armed conflict make provision for all inclusive electoral process in a bid to obtain legitimacy for the transition government and to accommodate former rebels in the political process. With such a central role in democratic process, election constitutes the most important elements in the conception and practice of liberal democracy.

Nigeria's political history could largely pass for a good study in political crises. As noted by Omitola (2011) as cited in Raji (2016), the history of party politics in Nigeria has largely been characterized by conflicts and sustained violence. Nigeria's first election took place in Lagos and Calabar in September 1923 in line with the introduction of the elective principle into the Nigerian

constitution by the Clifford constitution of 1922. The first political party in the country known as Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP) led by Herbert Macaulay, won the three seats for the Lagos and Calabar Legislative seat. It is important to note that the conduct of the first election was free from political manipulations and complexities devoid of violence. First, the electoral constituency was marginal (Only three seats were contested) while the electorates were few as restricted franchise, which allowed only male voters was introduced. Just one political party; the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) was involved and thus was devoid of intense political rivalry. The electoral policing was strong while the conduct of the election by the colonial administration was very fair and less troublesome. However, the decolonization process enthroned series of other elections to transfer power to Nigerians in 1954. The electoral outcome favoured the Northern People's Congress (NPC), who won overwhelmingly in the Northern Region by capturing 84 out of the 92 seats allocated to the Region. In the Western Region, the National Council for Nigeria and Cameroun (NCNC) won 23 seats while the Action Group (AG) won 18 seats and the Commoners Liberal Party (CLP) won 1 seat. The NCNC won 30 seats and the United National Independent Party (UNIP) won 12 seats respectively in the Eastern Region.

The NPC, NCNC and the AG also came out as the dominant parties which contested the 1959 federal elections in the North, East and the Western Nigeria respectively. The voting pattern from the election showed that each party won overwhelmingly in their respective regions saved the NCNC which made an in- road into the Western Region where the party won more seats than the AG. Both the 1954 and 1959 elections were conducted by the colonial administration and were reasonably free and fair but the pattern of election showed that the pre-independence political parties were largely formed to promote parochial sectional interest while issue of political ideologies were largely disarticulated in the Nigerian politics. The love for parochial and sectional rather than national interest laid the foundation for troubled election after the exit of the colonial masters who had earlier remained a fair umpire in the conduct of free and fair elections in Nigeria.

The 1964 election was conducted under two major political alliances, United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) and the Nigeria National Alliance (NNA) owing to the fact that each party was largely restricted to their regional domain and needed the cooperation and collaboration of other parties to form a broad based national government. The United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) was an alliances between the NCNC, AG and some minority parties including the United Middle Belt Congress (UMBC), the Borno Youth Movement (BYM) and the Northern Elements

Progressive Union (NEPU). The UPGA was led by M.I. Okpara, the then premier of the Eastern Region. The Nigeria National Alliance (NNA) coalition was made up of an alliance between the NPC, led by Sardauna of Sokoto and the then Premier of the North, Sir Ahmadu Bello and the NNDP which was formed by the splinter group from the AG led by Samuel Ladoke Akintola, the then Premier of the Western Region. The 1964 elections were characterized by political bickering, thuggery, arrests and imprisonment of political opponents, such as the arrest and imprisonment of Chief Obafemi Awolowo and his political supporters for treason by the federal government. There were also incidences of denial of permit to hold political campaign in many areas outside the political and geographical strength of the competing political parties. At the close of nomination, 66 NNA and 15 UPGA candidates were returned unopposed in 81 federal constituencies out of 312 (Abdullahi, 2008).

The large number of candidates returned alarmed the UPGA leaders and equally served as an indicator of their impending electoral defeat. They therefore called for the cancellation and the postponement of the elections. The political confusion and election violence generated from the 1964 general elections and the 1965 regional elections in the South-West truncated the first republic with the eventual military takeover of the civilian government in January 15th, 1966. The Military handed over to a civilian government in 1979, thus ushering in the second republic. Five political parties contested the 1979 elections. These parties were the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), Nigeria Peoples Party (NPP), Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP) and the People's Redemption Party (PRP). It is pertinent to note however that the political coloration of the second republic was not a clear departure from the ethnic politics of the first republic leading to the resuscitation of the old ethnic political rivalry and new political geographical rejuvenation. Thus the old AG reincarnated as Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) and was led by the former Premier of the Western region, Obafemi Awolowo. The Nigeria Peoples Party (NPP), an off-shoot of NCNC was led by Nnamdi Azikwe. The National Party of Nigeria (An off-shoot of NPC) was led by Adisa Akinloye. The Great Nigeria's Peoples Party (GNPP) was led by Wasiri Ibrahim while the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) which was the reincarnation of the old NEPU was led by Aminu Kano and had its support base mainly in the old Kano and Kaduna states. As usual the UPN maintained strongholds in Yoruba land and Mid-Western state (Now Edo).

The NPP commanded more influence in the Eastern region of old Anambra and Imo states and the North central state of plateau, The GNPP had its strongholds in the old Borno and Gongola

States. While the NPN controlled the greater parts of Northern region and also spread its political tentacles further into the Eastern parts as it captured the substantial seats in both the House of Senate and the House of Representatives in the Eastern minority areas of old Cross River and River States. The NPN also captured a few national parliament seats in Anambra, Imo and Oyo states. Furthermore, both the UPN and NPP made significant inroads into what was the hitherto regarded as the monolithic North each capturing sections of minority areas of the North – four senatorial seats in Plateau state for the NPP and two each from Kwara state (Yoruba speaking section) and Gongola state. The two parties also secured 23 national assembly seats from Cross Rivers, Anambra and Imo state (Chris, 2009).

The voting pattern during the 1979 election produced a strong block voting thus enthroning a quadric-polar election equation with the emergence of the strong impact and political successes of the minority parties (Apart from the three dominant regional parties) on the political scene. This out of base election successes of the major political parties was a significant political development and some positive departure from the election results pattern that prevailed in immediate pre and post independent political competitions which conferred electoral victories of political parties mainly to their geographical base. Such relative election successes for all the parties that contested the 1979 elections reasonably reduced political tension and thus quieting the temper of political atmosphere. There was however an election legal crisis between the UPN and the NPN bordering on what constituted the two-third majority of the Nigerian state (Whether twelve two-third or thirteen states) which was eventually resolved in favour of the NPN. This relative success of the election process which produced some measures of free and fair elections in 1979 was seriously reversed in the 1983 general elections. The foundation of election violence and democratic reversal in the third republic started when many of the elected officials attempted to succeed themselves in the 1983 general elections in spite of their poor performances in office. An attempt by many political office holders to perpetuate themselves in office through self-succession strategy caused internal and inter party crises within and amongst the six registered political parties respectively (Nigerian Advanced Party (NAP) was registered in 1983).

Invariably, virtually all the parties were eventually engulfed in one form of internal crisis or the other as dissident members began to emerge owing to stage managed internal elections or non conduct of primary elections. For example, the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) under Obafemi Awolowo stage managed the internal primary in favour of the five UPN serving governors who

were returned unopposed to re-contest for their offices through affirmation rather than through primary election which made some members like Busari, Adelakun MichaelAfolabi, Akin Omoboriowo, Olaiya, Fagbamigbe, amongst others, to defect to the National Party of Nigeria. During the inter-party elections, there was an election bandwagon effect which deployed the incumbent power of the NPN led federal government to perpetrate wide spread election irregularities including rigging, ballot box snatching, intimidation of political opponents in many states. The declaration of Akin Omoboriowo (before it was reversed) and Omololu olunloyo as the winners of the gubernatorial elections in Ondo and Oyo states respectively led to widespread election violence in the South-West which led to the killings of many citizens including Olaiya Fagbamigbe an accomplished author and former astute supporter of the UPN before the 1983 general elections. The widespread of election violence in the second republic was also one of the reasons attributed to the second military take-over of government in December 31, 1983.

The fourth republic which was aborted by no other person than its architect, President Ibrahim Babangida also has its fair share of electoral violence. Worried by the danger posed by threat to Nigeria's unity and collective existence as a result of previous political bickering, the Babangida's administration moved to break the country's political ethnic cleavages by registering only two political parties, the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP). The two parties contested elections into local government, state, national assemblies and governorship elections between 1991 and 1992. The two political parties had national outlook and this was a plus for the political process under the Babangida's transition programme. Conversely however, there was also a big minus as the two militarily decreed parties were not peoples-oriented because they were created in the image of the military command structure. These short comings notwithstanding, the elected officials were sworn in and were functioning when presidential elections were conducted on June 12, 1993. The administration managed to conduct a free and fair presidential election which was won by M.K.O Abiola (Omuoha,2000).After eight years of political experimentation and incessant policy summersaults, the military could not manage the achievement recorded by the successful conduct of the presidential election as the election was annulled by President Babangida without cogent reasons. The annulment sparked off intense electoral violence especially in the South-West region which felt cheated with the cancellation of the presidential election result. According to the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) account, about 1,000 lives were lost. The Babangida regime could not perpetuate itself in power after the

election following a monumental civil unrest and external pressure from many advanced democracies in the world and such pressure made Babangida to vacate office for an Interim National Government (ING).

However, the contraption called the ING headed by Ernest. Shonekan was toppled by General Sani Abacha, then the Chief of Defense Staff and Minister of Defense on November 17, 1993. All the political structures established during Babangida's transition programme were scrapped and the elected officials sacked. But rather than resolve the election logjam in favour of the acclaimed winner of the June 12th presidential election, M.K.O Abiola, another tortuous political transition programme was put in place by Abacha who also tried to perpetuate himself in power. That inordinate ambition triggered off another round of political violence and intense opposition to the draconian regime of General Sanni Abacha. The government return such affront to its regime with draconian policies that included the bombing of individuals who were in the opposition which led to the death of many people, including Kudirat Abiola, the Wife of the acclaimed winner of the June 12th presidential election, M.K.O Abiola while vocal voices, like Wole Soyinka, Chief Anthony Enahoro, Bola Tinubu, amongst others, were forced into exile. General Abacha's draconian regime was curtailed by his sudden death on June 8, 1998. General Abdul Salami Abubakar took over as Head of State and Commander –in –Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces. Unfortunately, before the regime could settle down, M.K.O Abiola died in government detention and his death sparked off another round of political violence, especially in the South-Western part of Nigeria leading to a conservative death toll of 988 people (Election watch, 2011) .It was difficult for the government to diffuse the political tension because many supporters of Abiola accused the regime of masterminding his death with the connivance of the international community. In spite of this challenge, Abdulsalami Abubakar's government was able to organize a short but successful political transition programme that lasted for less than a year. Elections were conducted between 1998 and 1999 at the end of which elected government under the leadership of Olusegun Obasanjo were sworn into office on May 29, 1999.

The elections which brought the people's Democratic Party (PDP) into office at the federal level was relatively conducted under a free and fair election atmosphere but this did not go without an allegation of isolated cases of election rigging. However, mega election rigging which has been the primary norm of many political competitions in the past was generally absent during the 1999 elections. In comparism to the 1999 elections, the 2003 general elections conducted by the

incumbent administration of former President Olusegun Obasanjo, where the then president was seeking re-election for another four year term was full of electoral malpractices which many observers describes as one of the most fraudulent elections conducted in Nigeria (TNG Report,2010). In the run up and during the 2003 general elections, violence took an unimaginable high proportion. During this period, politically motivated assassination became very rampant. Some of the major politically related assassination that took place during the run off to 2003 general elections included the killings of Felix Ikebuwu, Eze-Odimegwu, Okonkwo in Anambra , Chief Bola Ige (Osun), Ahmed Patigi (Kwara) , Barrister Abigail and Barnabass, Igwe (Anambra) amongst others. The situation in 2007 elections was no different because in the run-up to the election the tempo of political assassination also increased. In 2006 alone, three gubernatorial aspirants were assassinated including Olu Daramola, gubernatorial aspirant from Ekiti State, Funsho Williams from Lagos state .Infact, international election observers reported that 2007 election was the worst in the Nigerian history (TNG Report, 2010). For instance, the EU observers observed that the 2007 state and federal elections have fallen far short of basic international and regional standards for democratic elections. The elections were marred by poor organization, lack of essential election materials, missing names and the disqualification of many eligible candidates from electoral contest (which were later reversed by the court).Widespread procedural irregularities were also observed. Significant evidence of electoral fraud, particularly during the result collation process was observed.

Many voters were disenfranchised at different stages of the election process. There were also numerous incidences of violence at polling boots. As a result of these election challenges, the outcome of the 2007 election did not lived up to the international corporate election governance standard while the hopes and aspirations of many Nigerian electorates to have a credible election were also dashed (TNG Report, 2010). The 2011 elections did not witness reasonable departure from the previous election disputes as the elections produced one of the worst violence in the history of the country's democratic transitions. Even though the conduct of the actual elections were adjudged by most local and international election observers as largely free and fair, the pre- election period was bedeviled by unprecedented election violence where at least 90 people were killed and 209 injured weeks before the elections (Election watch, 2011).

The 2011 election also marked the beginning of the introduction of terrorist activities into a civilian inspired transition programme to settle primordial political scores as bomb blast rocked the

INEC office at Suleja and the PDP campaign rally at Minna, both in Niger state, killing 23 people eventually (Election watch,2011) . There was also post election violence mainly in the Northern parts of Nigeria in 2011, especially in Bauchi and Adamawa states where many people were killed including nine National Youth Corps (NYSC) members who served as election officers during the elections. Other states where post election violence took place in 2011 apart from these two states are Sokoto, Zamfara, Niger, Jigawa, Katsina, Kano and Akwaibom states.

The riot from the 2011 elections in spite of its credibility from both internal and external elections observer reports as been sufficiently free and fair in conduct and outcome was a reflection of frustration and anger primarily directed at people considered to be collaborator with the ruling PDP government and its Presidential candidate, Goodluck Jonathan to undermine local Northern interest which wanted Muhammadu Buhari, the Presidential candidate of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC).What was eventually found out from the conduct of elections in Nigeria since the commencement of representative governance in the country in 1923 was that many of such elections were characterized by violence because of the tendency of the aspiring politicians and incumbent political parties to stage manage the election process in their favour. However, it was observed that all the elections conducted under the colonial administration and virtually all those conducted under the military government (saved the Abacha regime) were observed to be transparent than that conducted under the civilian administration.

According to Omitola (2011), electoral violence occurs in four major stages in Nigeria. These are at the identity (registration), campaign, balloting, and result (outcome) stages. Electoral violence at the identity stage occurs during the registration process. Some of the electoral anomalies associated with this electoral stage include issuance of fake voters registration card, moving registration exercise from the officially designated point to unapproved centre by electoral officers due to financial inducement by interested politicians, underage registration, insufficient provision of registration materials, insufficient time for registration, registration apathy by the electorates until the closing of registration, non-display of voters registration list for possible objections, multiple registration, non -registration of eligible voters due to logistic problems. Pre-election violence also occurs during the registration process when refugees or other conflict-induced immigrants are unable to establish or re-establish their identities with their immediate communities on their returns and are thus prevented from registration. These sets of people often cause violence at the registration centre for the denial of their right to participate in the electoral process. Pre-election

violence takes place in Nigeria during the campaign stage. Campaign violence occurs as rival parties seek to disrupt opponent's campaign, intimidate voters and candidates while the parties in power also use threats (such as demanding for voter's registration cards before salary is paid) to force people to register.

The tone of political campaign in Nigeria is often riddled with provocative abusive language, character assassination, threat of physical combat between political rivals, amongst others. Balloting violence is perpetuated on the Election Day when political rivalries are re-enacted at the polling booth. Some of the issues that precipitates violence on the day of the election include vote buying, vote rigging, issuance of fake ballot boxes and ballot papers, stuffing of ballot boxes with multiple printed ballot papers. Ballot boxes snatching, multiple and underage voting, intimidation of political opponents from voting, disqualification of legitimate voters from voting, shortage of election materials, especially ballot papers, starting the voting process late and closing early, falsification of election results at the collation center or at the point of announcement by INEC officials, missing names in the voters register, influencing others on whom to vote for at the polling booth, attempting to count authentic vote as "rejected" vote, amongst others. The outcome stage of electoral violence in Nigeria has always been very disputive over falsified or supposedly falsified election results. Some of the element of election falsification includes returning votes that are more than the number of the registered voters, variation in the total number of certified votes scored amongst election stakeholders; party agents, the police, state security services and the INEC. Electoral violence also does occur at the outcome stage due to the inability of the judiciary to resolve election disputes in a fair, timely and transparent manner. Thomson (2011) identified two broad dimensions of electoral violence in Nigeria. These are physical and psychological violence dimensions. The physical dimensions of electoral violence include physical assault, arsons and destruction of lives and properties during electoral contest. The psychological aspect of election violence include the emotional trauma of physical assault, constant feelings of political insecurity, emotional pains for the lost of loved ones in electoral violence and high sense of hate and unforgiving sprit for those who were responsible for the loss. Such psychological torture makes post-election violence reconciliation efforts very difficult to achieve. A major precipitant of electoral violence in Nigeria has being the desire of one community, group or individuals to gain the control of the national resources and the attempt to gain or retain the power of the distributing authorities at the detriment of other tribal rivals and an attempt by such distributing authorities to

even move further to capture the political and economic terrains of such rivals, an attempt that is often resisted by the rivals through violence.

Another fall-out of the unfavourable nature of the Nigeria federation that has contributed to electoral violence in Nigeria is the issue of identity crisis as a result of the proliferation of sub-federal administrative boundaries of identities which often serve as a platform to struggle for federal resources allocations, especially in a contest that discriminates against settlers and non-indigenes. Such discrimination leads to more crises as groups engage in fair or foul electoral contest in order to win elections at all cost in an atmosphere of the “end justifies the means” while political contest is seen in most instances in Nigeria as war by other means. The successive attempts by the military governments to foster political restructuring and territorial reconfiguration and fragmentation of many Nigerian homogenous groups into different local governments and states have bred more distrust amongst such groups rather than stemming the tide of violence during political competition. This is because rather than assuaging the fears of the so called minorities, military government has actually created more minorities that are brought together or separated more disillusioned, disenchanted and marginalized in the new coerced community.

It is not surprising that such people resort to fiercer election contestation to gain control of such artificially created political community forcefully joined together under an atmosphere of distrust. Election violence in Nigeria is caused by the attempt of many politicians to use their incumbency power to stage-manage elections in their favour having seen the signs of been rejected by the people due to poor performance and weak accountability record in office. Many of such politicians, especially at the local and state levels often instruct their supporters and loyalists that have been deliberately planted at the electoral commission and local constituencies to deliver their areas for the party in power at all cost. Such unethical mandate frequently results in the manipulation of elections which are regularly rebuffed by the opposing parties through violence. Electoral violence is caused in Nigeria by the introduction and sustenance of the structural adjustment policies in the socio-political and economic development frameworks of successful governments in Nigeria since 1986. The Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which was introduced under the Ibrahim Babangida administration and sustained by successful administrations essentially borders on privatization and commercialization of public enterprises, removal of public products subsidy and mass sack of Nigerian workers. Such draconian policies have largely impoverished vast majority of Nigerians, especially those from the poorest households. It is

therefore difficult for aspiring politicians in Nigeria to win election freely and squarely on the basis of SAP because it is impossible for the politicians to intend to make the electorates poorer through the structural adjustment policies and still expect such electorates to vote for them. It is not totally surprising then that many Nigerian politicians with unpopular development policies often intends to rig their ways into office, a move which is consistently resisted by the electorates, a times through violence.

The proliferation of small arms and ammunitions, especially in the hands of political thugs is a pointer to the link between arms and electoral violence. Some of the thugs use the weapons to scare away eligible voters during elections or cause intense mayhem with the weapons. The high rate of poverty in Nigeria is another contributory factor to electoral violence in Nigeria. The extremely poor Nigerians which constitute almost 70% of the population (UNDP Report, 2011) are easily mobilized as combatants for political rigging, election violence and hired assassins. Such jobless and highly impoverished electorates tie their economic survival to those of their political financiers. A perceive electoral failure by their mentors is thus seen as an open signal to impending personal economic doom which must be prevented by all means including the use of election manipulation and political violence to sustain their political godfather in power. Lack of party discipline in political competition in Nigerian has also contributed largely to electoral violence. For instance, the conduct of primary elections in many parties are devoid of reasonable adherence to rules and regulations of the party and constitutional guidelines on internal election processes as anointed candidates of political power fixers are often impose through manipulated consensus arrangements. Many of those candidates that were scheme out of contest often go to any extent, including the sponsoring of violence to undermine such unpopular internal political process. Many security personnel who are supposed to apprehend election riggers and perpetrators of other electoral vices often collaborate to rig elections for a favoured candidate which in most instances favour the incumbent governments at the federal and state levels. The wrong perception of politics as a business venture is another disheartening factor in the perpetuation of election violence in Nigeria. The age long utilitarian perception of politics as a means of creating the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people has suffered a setback especially after Nigeria's independence. Many of the current Nigerian politicians see politics more as a means of appropriating state resources for personal gains at the expense of community service to the people. Some aspiring

politicians go to the extent of selling their personal belongings, including cars and houses to finance their elections.

Consequence upon their desperations not to lose their election investments, aspiring politician often adopt foul means to suppress their opponents while the defrauded losers launches counter offensive through violence to claim their stolen mandate. Post election violence also does occur due to the inability of the judiciary to resolve electoral disputes in a fair, timely and transparent manner. The language of political campaign is often characterized by abusive pronouncements, character assassination and slandering thus prompting the opponents to which such language was directed to retaliate sometimes with physical assault. From the evidences that abound from the examination of electoral violence in Nigeria, one cannot agree less with the UNDP report³³ that electoral violence in the country cannot be linked to a single cause and thus requires multidisciplinary and multidimensional approaches to resolving them.

Electoral violence in Nigeria has many impacts on national security. First, it inhibits private and public peace and security. The rampant use of dangerous weapons during election leads to loss of lives and properties. The loss of lives and properties affects development as many productive forces (people) and institutions are destroyed. Electoral violence also disrupt socio-economic activities as businesses and movement of people are sometimes curtailed through the imposition of curfew as exemplified in plateau state in 2002 due to electoral violence at Angwan Rukuba between the PDP and the ANPP supporters, during the conduct of primary elections for the Jos North local government .Electoral violence weakens domestic economy and it reduces government ability to invest on productive venture because much of the needed resources for such venture are diverted to security votes to maintain peace thus exposing many citizen to excruciating poverty which in turn generates new form of economically induced violence. Electoral violence leads to political instability. Where it is not properly managed, such violence could lead to a state of anarchy, confusion and military takeover of government as witnessed on the 15th January 1966 when the military seized political power owing partly to the electoral violence in the South-Western Nigeria. Such take- over is riddle with more threat to security as the military often violate the fundamental human rights of individuals through summary trial, detention without bail and execution without a formal prosecution, thus further threatening the security of lives and properties in Nigeria. The result of the flagrant use of arms and ammunition by political thugs leads to the intimidation, injury and sometimes killing of political opponents.

Some of the political thugs eventually transited to armed robbers who terrorize the society within national and between international boundaries, leaving such society prone to persistent security threat. Furthermore, electoral violence scares away local and foreign investors apparently due to lack of security for their investment thus increasing job insecurity in the country. Due to electoral violence, many innocent Nigerians have been displaced from their places of residence into a refugee camp where a new form of health, economic and social security threats (exposure to hunger, diseases, and prostitution, amongst others) are prevalent. There have been incidences of many political thugs transiting into child soldier and terrorist groups and they are frequently used to terrorize the environment. The engagement of African youths in act of thuggery and other delinquent tendencies such as bodyguards to many political “god fathers”, which thrive on the periodic dole out of financial and material gains by the “godfather” destroys the youth which instead of making virile Nigerian youths agents of national growth and development had built into such youth the culture of violent that is characterized by riotous form of livelihood in many facets of public life. It is even difficult to make good future leaders out of such Nigerian youths who have imbibed the culture of wild life, political imperfection, bribery and political manipulation thus endangering future political stability in Nigeria.

Electoral violence has the risk of transiting into dangerous and destructive communal conflicts thereby further polarizing the society into a state of disintegration. Even though such violence is sometimes triggered by political differences it is often hijacked by ethnic militias and misguided elements who use such disputed elections to launch their hidden agenda of planned annihilation and extermination of their perceived political enemies. For instance, the Hausa-Fulani claims that the 2008 Jos North local government election dispute which claimed over 1600 lives (Election watch, 2011) was used by the indigenes as a platform to eliminate the Hausa/Fulani community in Plateau State while the indigenes also accused the Hausa/Fulani of persistent exploitation and domination of the plateau indigenes in their own land. These accusation and counter accusation which largely emanated from disputed elections led to mistrust and constant suspicion amongst the two ethnic groups. And such suspicion is largely responsible for the fragile peace that is currently being witnessed in plateau state. Electoral violence has also introduced fake dimension to security networking and peace keeping operation in Nigeria as many of the recruited fighting machineries in the Jos 2008 election crisis were caught wearing fake police and military uniforms. People were therefore confused on whom to run to for protection. Election induced

violence have been known to have reduced the highly essential positive defensive group spirit (Esprit de corps) and the essential unity in strategic operational organization within the rank and files of the security agencies that were deployed to fight election crimes. For instance, there were serious allegations of divided loyalty to the military authorities in Jos election crisis as many peace keepers deployed to keep peace in Jos were accused of tactically supporting their kins and kin in the crisis thus promoting tribal loyalty far above their official loyalty to the military authorities. The sophistication and the quantum of arms and ammunitions that are used by political thugs also points to a reasonable measure of proliferation of light and advanced weaponry in Nigeria and this worrisome development raises national security concern in the country. Such rampant and reckless use of arms makes it difficult for the security forces to isolate and control political violence, especially where such violence is carried out under ethnic identity. The proliferation of illegal arms and ammunitions to fight ethnic course is one of the major reasons why election crisis in Jos is very difficult to control than many other places.

The research findings clearly showed that electoral violence in Nigeria is caused by many factors. Elections conducted under the colonial administration and military governments in Nigeria were more transparent than those conducted under the civilian administrations. It was also discovered that by their very competitive nature, election, especially in ethnically fragile and factionalized states often generate negative extensive political activism and participation to control the leverages of political power. Such hard-line political contest often creates stress on the nascent political institutions in Nigeria leading to disputed elections in many cases. The research findings also reveal that poorly conducted elections are a primary source of political instability in Nigeria. More so, where elections are even successfully conducted, such election success need not be considered as an end in itself. It needs to be seen as a means to achieve good governance to reduce political and election tension and thus improve dividends of democracy rather than democratic deficits in Nigeria. Such elements of good governance are characterized by probity, transparency, honesty and accountability, amongst others. Such accountable governance style also reduces electoral violence because a performing government is likely to be re-elected under a far less rancorous electoral atmosphere.

As there is growing efforts in the mediation of the election related violence in Nigeria, there are major areas of electoral processes which need to be reformed. First, there is the need for the reform of the adjudication processes of electoral administration as the success or failure of an

electoral process is predicated largely on the nature of the legal instruments that defines the overall directions and dimensions of such process. This legal instrument usually determines whether an electoral process would be inclusive, exclusive or equitable to all contestants and whether prospects exist for a level playing field for all contestants. Also, the legal process by which these instruments are adopted, whether by public referendum, military fiat, peace agreement, laws passed by a represented body or enacted after broad citizens input, do go a long way to weaken or strengthen the electoral framework as fair and non-partisans input increases electoral credibility. Conversely, electoral legal framework that is partisan and geared towards inhibiting the effective participation in election of specific individuals or segments of society could heat up the polity and remove reasonable credibility from such electoral process.

A legal framework that places partial obligation on candidates from the opposition parties to the incumbent government (such as taking police permission before campaigning) or inhibit their ability to campaign freely in all parts of the country can generate frustration that can easily escalate into electoral violence. A good electoral law with credible implementation could reduce electoral violence in Nigeria. There is need to have financial and appointive independence of the electoral commission to make the body more independent for the conduct of free and fair elections. The President who in virtually all instances stands for re-election against other candidates is charged with the responsibility of appointing the INEC chairman and other functionaries of the commission while the President equally decides and approves the financial needs of the body. Such overwhelming appointive powers often make the incumbent President and the party to have overwhelming influence on the INEC officials to stage manages the electoral process in their favour to the detriment of the opposing parties. There is need for decorum in the campaign language of aspiring politicians to reduce political tension. There is also the need for a mobile political mass literacy school to enlighten the citizens regularly about their fundamental human rights and privileges from and obligation to the government, to liberate them from political ignorance, intimidation and culture of political apathy and violence. Many of the political thugs are often ignorant of the fact that they are been used only to be dumped after the elections. Such sensitization programme could reduce act of thuggery and other delinquent behaviour from politics. The political mass literacy programme could be subsumed into the national orientation programme of the country. The enrolment of the above suggestions into the electoral process in particular and political process in general could greatly reduce electoral violence in Nigeria.

Since the establishment of its Electoral Assistant Support Division in the early 2000, ECOWAS has been providing support to Nigeria mainly in the areas of capacity building for the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) while also embarking on election monitoring and observations in the country. There were ECOWAS election observation mission, which has been monitoring Nigeria’s elections since 1999. A Peer Review Support Mission, made up of six head of EMBs from Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Niger and Liberia was also deployed to provide technical advice and support to the Nigerian Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to enable it conduct credible elections. Nigeria has never requested for financial support from ECOWAS, rather, she has been providing complimentary funding support to other member states through the ECOWAS Network of Election Commission (ECONEC) Platform. The ECONEC support system as extended to Nigeria has improved the skills and capacity of the electoral stakeholders, including the police on electoral policing, peace advocacy and fostering of post-election adjudication and reconciliatory capacity building in Nigeria.

1.9.3.2. Ghana

Ghana lies in West Africa, surrounded by Cote D’Ivoire on the West, Togo on the East, Burkina Faso in the North and the Atlantic Ocean on her Southern hemisphere. Ghana’s electoral history is replete with series of interruption of democratic rules starting from the coup of 1966, which was staged by Colonel Emmanuel Kotoka, which ousted Kwame Nkrumah. However, the country is nuanced with democratic strides relevant for the thrust of this study having sustained democratic governance for more than two decades. At present, the population of Ghana is around 29 million (World Bank, 2018).

Figure 2: Map of Republic of Ghana



Source: Google Images

Democracy and elections are two important drivers that have had great impact on the national security of the Ghanaian State. The country has undergone several political system aimed at promoting national cohesion and strengthening of security stability of Ghana. Right from its struggle for independent and the attainment of independent, the political governance space have witnessed ups and downs with civilian politicians and the military officers occupying the seat of Governance of Ghana. In deepening its democracy Ghana adopted electioneering process as a mean towards transforming it to a functional liberal democratic state. Even more critical elections because of the competitiveness of the process in Ghana the broader political terrain have accommodated vibrant media and critical civil society, have all contributed in one way or the order to enhance national security and peaceful elections in Ghana (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009; Whitfield, 2009). In spite of these facts, important concerns have always arisen on the challenges of democratic consolidation in the country; these concerns are mostly situated on the issue of Ghana's susceptibility to electoral violence. The complexity of electoral violence in Ghana has led to the fundamental question of what the driving variables that are stimulating electoral violence in Ghana is. The examination of the relationship between political governance institutional frameworks and the political parties inter-exchanges amongst themselves vis-à-vis the multiplicity of psycho-cultural and historical ethnicity rivalry have raised alarming concerns as main triggers of electoral violence which have led to threat to national security and peaceful cohesion of the Ghanaian state. The verbal use of negative and degrading words by the political class in Ghana also stands out as a main driver of electoral violence.

Brief History of Election Administration in Ghana

The political governance space in Ghana has had its ups and downs. Kwame Nkrumah, the first elected democratic president of Ghana, with his political party; Conventions Peoples Party (CPP) laid the governance foundation upon which elections and democratic governance started to evolve in Ghana. The progressive tendencies of the Ghanaian political systems evolved after the last military rule ended in 1992. Thus, the transition from military rule to multiparty democracy in 1992, and the subsequent promulgation and ratification of the 1992 constitution, guaranteed the citizenry certain social, political, and economic rights and as a result created new levels of political awareness amongst the citizenry (Abdul- Gafaru, 2009). On the social front, religion, ethnicity, gender parity, and social and economic equality, amongst other counted elements, dominate the socio-political landscape in Ghana, and found a space for most of the agitations and crises which rocked and stimulated elections in Ghana. In this regards, political factors such as political affiliation, and ethnic considerations, political and media pressure groups, all began to be the tool for both social and political accountability that stimulated the signs of modern electoral violence in modern Ghana. These elements and how they have shaped the Ghanaian political space have been the subtle drivers which have continued to run through Ghanaian electoral experiences and have led to many series of political violence which metamorphosed into deadly electoral violence.

Ghana like other Member States in the (ECOWAS) region, has its own huge share of experiences of political violence which have been domiciled as electoral violence. All elections conducted in the country from 1992 to 2016 have experienced all phases of electoral violence. The occurrences of electoral violence have increasingly been taking place in different form and structure. Violence act when reviewed as they occurred during the elections in Ghana, have led to loss of lives and wide spread wanton destructions of both government and personal properties of politicians. The Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) Ghana, has evidenced that the occurrence of electoral violence, in Ghana are usually instigated by open confrontation which originates from statement attributed to threats, which eventually leads to molestations, abductions and worst case scenario death (CDD,2010:12). Though the Ghanaian Police are an important factor in the country's electioneering processes, they and the joint security elections taskforce which are set to manage security around the elections in Ghana often find it difficult to maintain and sustain peace (Dapatem, 2010). Besides the above facts, incidence of political arguments on discussions on

radio programs as well as other media outlets, have often led to political party faithful's engaging in direct attacks on one another's groups.

In Ghana, these attacks are mostly linked to the two major political parties in the country, namely the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP). Instances abound rights from the period of the modern day origin of Ghanaian democratic dispensation in 1992, where local radio stations have been closed down by rival political parties. In the early period, military personnel were used to intimidate and assault political opponents. Furthermore, electoral violence has also created the negative effect of structural violence on the citizens.

This has often impacted the citizen's emotion, by way of fear and apprehension which makes people to show apathy toward participation in the electioneering processes. In this regard, the decision that citizens make their choice of leadership they want in a sane and conducive condition of elections becomes relevant in the linkage of electoral violence on national stability and security. It is therefore important that the citizens of the country freely exercise their franchise to renew or vote out the mandate of an incumbent government through the electioneering polls. The incessant use of force of ruling power authority over state institutions have several pointed to how this has threatened to affect Ghana's democratic growth and the larger question of national security and peaceful coexistence among ethnic groups which are fractionalized between the NDC and NPP.

This makes the phenomenon of electoral violence and the multiple accusations of fraud and malpractices that accompany elections in Ghana very worrisome and require a constitutional review that will establish sustainable democracy in Ghana (Aning, 2001).

Leadership and Regime Rhetoric in Ghana

The United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) slogan of "independence in the shortest possible time" was the major rhetoric in the fight for the independence of Ghana. The point to note here is that this rhetoric as used in the Ghanaian political space was used to create a situation of "us and them", that is the British colonial masters and the ordinary Ghanaian citizen. By extension the rhetoric is mainly used to state the point that "those who oppose our views and actions become the enemy of us and are deemed to perpetrate injustice against us."

This use of political rhetoric by leadership of regimes in Ghana was also appealing to the different military leadership that ruled Ghana. For example, the leadership of the Armed Forces

Revolutionary Council (AFRC) while overthrowing the regime of the rule of Peoples National Party (PNP) under the leadership of the then President Hilla Limann, used the political rhetoric of “house-cleaning exercise”. These use of political slogans by the unconstitutional military regime and the constitutionally elected political government in Ghana, are what has metamorphosed and led to the establishment of antagonistic and violent traits which are being experienced in modern politics in Ghana. More so political parties today in Ghana, use slogans during electioneering period to depict “us against them” and by extension they even set up campaign and electioneering agenda which when assimilated by the citizens, are used to perpetrate violence around electioneering processes in Ghana.

What has been distilled from the electoral history of Ghana is that the trajectory of elections in the country began with the struggle for independence in the early 1950s when the political discourse in the country, was primarily centred on democracy and emancipation for the Ghanaian state from the colonial rule of the British. The major foot soldiers for promoting the campaign for democracy and eventually elections to be held for a Ghanaian self-rule, were the leaders of two separate liberations movement which later translated to become the front runner in the first democratic elections held in Ghana. The first of this movement is the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), which was leader by Kwame Nkrumah. Under Nkrumah’s leadership, the UGCC, made up of lawyers, chiefs and business deployed a conservative political demeanour, which appealed and generated support from the poor and ordinary peasants who saw in Nkrumah one who was able to give a voice their yearning for independence from the British. It is pertinent to note that as Nkrumah grew into this role of leadership of the movement for independent; his personality began to tilt greatly to induce most ordinary Ghanaian in the context of how LeVine (1975) described who seek uncritical support for their agenda and themselves. To Nkrumah the people belong to him, placing on himself a personality of invincible leader without whom Ghana cannot attain independence (Nkrumah, 1973). Nkrumah with the credible personality he portrayed, was to later break away from the UGCC to form the Convention Peoples Party (CPP). This description of Nkrumah’s antecedence gives a perspective to which his actions and conduct then, has brought to bear and impacted greatly on the characteristic of elections and electioneering processes in modern day Ghana.

It is important to state that the 1951 elections as mentioned and 1954 as well as 1956 which were the early elections held in Ghana, were conducted during the British colonial rule. Other

period in which elections were held included 1960, 1969 and 1979. It is key to express that all of these elections, were done within a multiparty democracy context. Suffice to also mention that these highlighted datelines notwithstanding, there were disruptions to the civilian democratic rule, which occurred as indicated in these following years, 1966, 1972, 1979, and 1981 when the Ghana experienced military coup. Flight-Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings, one of Ghana's military leaders who staged the coup of 1981, banned all political parties until 1992, when he restored multiparty democracy again and also enacted the 1992 Constitution (Oquaye, 1995). The 1992 Constitution as it pertains to elections, democracy and democratizations, set the tone for addressing all the shortcoming issues that impacted on the peace and national security stability of the country of the civilian regimes from Nkrumah's era to the various military leaders up to the point when the Rawling's regime transited from a military to a civilian democratic regime. It important to highlight that the 1992 constitution gave birth to all of the modern attributes to the modalities which govern the conduct and management of elections in Ghana (Aning, 2001).

Furthermore with elections opening up from one electioneering period to the other, the political democratic major active player was divided along to main party as existed in the early formative stages of electoral democracy in Ghana. Notably, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) became the two leading political parties that have been dictating and winning elections in the country. While these two political parties remain at the forefront for contesting elections, another trend that has been associated with elections in Ghana, is the element of bring other electoral institutional stakeholders to join in the electioneering process as election observers. The relevance of these observers which are both international and local are to ensure confidence building measures and to act as moral guarantors to deter the competing political parties from engaging in electoral fraud, (Oquaye, 1995). Aside from these observers, the media in Ghana from the post the elections conducted from 1992 have increasingly played a prominent role in promoting elections as a veritable mechanism for upholding and sustaining democracy and democratization process in Ghana (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009). On a final note, as electoral violence still keeps occurring in elections in Ghana, it must be highlighted that aside from chapter 7 of the 1992 Constitution that governs elections, and acts do exist which the Electoral Commission of Ghana has powers to enact.

These laws and acts have been designed to address all the possible electoral violence conflict drivers. Examples of such laws include, the Political Parties Law, Act 574 (2000),

Presidential Elections Law (PNDCL); 285, 1992 as amended, the Ghanaian Public Elections Regulations (1996) and Political Parties Code of Conduct (2004/2008). These acts and law are adopted and utilize side by side with international elections legal normative text and frameworks.

The ECOWAS electoral assistance support office provided a funding support of \$500,000.00 (Five hundred thousand dollars) for Ghana. The fund was very useful for planning for supplementary elections while also covering other budgetary deficit for the Ghanaian electioneering process. The Commission equally assisted the Ghanaian electoral process with capacity building programs on Voter Education. The ECOWAS electoral assistance support brings to light ECOWAS's contribution to sustainable democracy in Ghana. The capacity building training program, which was highly appreciated by the Ghanaian Electoral Commission, was a complimentary support for credible electoral process in the country. Despite these positive effects, there are challenges which were raised by voter concerning the level of ECOWAS visibility and monitoring of elections in the District Council areas and regions of Ghana, where a lot of challenges on elections security are raised due to the destructive activities of Vigilante groups linked to the two major parties; the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) in the country.

1.9.3.3. Republic of Benin

The Republic of Benin became independent from the French colonial rule in 1960. Until November 30, 1975, the country was known as Dahomey. Benin has a very unique history of political instability in its early days of independence, resulting from military coups and counter-coups (Charles, 2017). Benin republic has a population of 11 million people (World Population Figure, 2018).

Figure 3: Map of Republic of Benin



Source: Google Images

Brief History of Election Administration in Benin Republic

In her first years of independence, Benin experienced troubles, with several military interventions. Nugent (2004) describes the Benin military regimes as caretakers, that is, a military regime that accepts the premise that the military does not belong in politics. Yet the military claims an obligation to remove bad civilian politicians, as part of their obligation to defend the interest of the nation. On the 26th of October in 1972, Major Mathieu Kérékou seized power through a military coup. The armed forces established the claim to rule in their own right in the supposed absence of an alternative for Benin (Nugent, 2004). This military regime brought stability and ended political hegemony of colonial educated elites by transferring power to a new civilian and military generation (Riedl, 2014).

Although Kérékou first articulated a nationalist position and declared he did not want to follow any ideology, Marxism-Leninism was announced as the official ideology of the regime in November 1974. After declaring the socialist regime assets of foreign companies were quickly nationalised, the government dedicated itself to egalitarian allocation of state resources, and new political structures were created, which were supposed to provide more political participation. The regime institutionalised itself through a political party, the Parti Révolutionnaire du Benin (PRPB), founded in November 1975, but in reality the regime was still under control of military officers

(Nugent, 2004). In its attempt to consolidate rule, the authoritarian regime neutralized the strength of traditional chiefdoms. The regime tried to change existing political, economic and social structures and substitute them with control of the party. By initiating an anti-vooodoo campaign to target traditional and religious authorities the PRPB wanted to overcome the feuds that led to instability in the previous decade. The party succeeded in neutralizing the political organizing capabilities of the traditional kingdoms, a critical basis of social and religious identity, which had been involved in the political contests in the prior decades (Riedl, 2014: 113-114).

In the mid-1980s, the incumbent regime was in serious trouble. The country was in heavy debt, the economy was shrinking and there was not enough money to pay public employees on a regular basis. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) instructed the regime to dismantle the system of state controls. These measures influenced public sector employees, students and members of the armed forces, which expressed their dissatisfaction through strikes and demonstrations (Nugent, 2004). Another important factor that had important consequences was the implosion of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The demise of Communism removed much of the ideological legitimation of Marxist regimes, like Benin (Nugent, 2004:373).

The near bankruptcy of the state led to mass demonstrations and strikes that were centred on economic and political reform, because it was generally believed that the government was the source of the crisis, since they controlled the entire economy (Riedl, 2015: 93-94). Incumbent president Mathieu Kérékou realised that repression of the protests was not working, so he made a tactical decision. He promised to legalise political parties and to convene a national conference. The national conference consisted of a variety of social groups that would deliberate on changes to the constitution. The 500 members of the conference consisted of government representatives, opposition politicians' trade unionists, women's leaders and churchmen. The first thing the conference did was declare sovereignty, which stripped the PRPB of its mandate to govern. Effective power was transferred to an interim government, with Nicéphore Soglo as interim Prime Minister. The interim government was given the responsibility to organize elections (Nugent, 2004: 387). The reforms focused on political pluralism, universal human rights, national sovereignty, economic development, political participation and expression, and the promotion of personal and political liberties. The reforms presented by the opposition forces were much more far-reaching than the initial incumbent agenda (Riedl, 2014: 165, 167).

By referendum, a new constitutional draft was approved at the end of 1990, which is still in force, gave birth to democratic institutions, and including the executive (led by the President of the Republic), the National Assembly, the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, and the High Authority for Audiovisual and Communication. Over time other institutions have emerged that are not yet constitutional, such as the Autonomous National Electoral Commission (CENA).

With the 1990 constitution, national elections followed over February and March of 1991. In the national elections, Nicéphore Soglo defeated Kérékou and the PRPB, and the incumbent regime was voted out of office without further troubles. According to (Riedl 2014: 133), the weak/fragmented state of the incumbent party and the weak/fragmented state of the opposition challengers led to this open transition process. Benin had become the model of a successful transition through democratic elections and in 1996 Benin became the first country to alternate its government. In this election, Kérékou was voted back to the presidential office (Nugent, 2004). The constitution has more or less effectively regulated the electoral cycle, which has run fairly smoothly since the constitution was passed. Thus, Benin has experienced five presidential elections, six parliamentary elections, and two communal and municipal elections (as well as one local election).

Benin has a legacy of peaceful electoral processes, even though the country is characterized by politicized ethnic identity. Unlike in Nigeria in the 2011 elections, national polarisation intersected with local grievances between Muslim and Christian ethnic groups, which led to regional violence (Angerbrandt, 2018: 163). Similarly, in Kenya, rival ethnic groups were intimidated to discourage them from voting, or they were driven from their homes, so they could not vote on Election Day (Boone, 2011, p. 1328).

In spite being hailed as a “beacon of democracy,” Benin’s recent legislative elections have shaken the country’s hard-earned image. On April 28, Benin elected a new National Assembly. However, there were a series of eleventh-hour hurdles raised by President Talon’s government, only loyalist parties were permitted to field candidates, resulting in the election of a near one party legislature. The opposition boycotted the polls, leading to a meager 27 percent turnout.

Benin is a presidential republic and the president serves a five-year term and is eligible for a second term. The president is elected by a two-round majority formula. The president is both head of state and head of government. The legislative body is unicameral and consists of 83 seats. Members of the National Assembly are elected directly in multi-member districts by proportional

representation, and serve a four-year term (The World Factbook, 2016). In the period before the first democratic election, there was a rapid expansion of the amount of political parties (Creevey, Ngomo and Vengroff, 2005: 473). However, Benin represents low levels of party system institutionalization. The political parties are fluid and because of that, they have less influence on voters and the political system (Riedl, 2014: 55). Benin is rated as 'Free' by the Freedom House index. The country scores an aggregate of 79 out of 100, where 100 is most free. On both freedom rating, political rights and civil liberties Benin scores 2 out of 7, where 1 is most free (Freedom House, 2019).

One of the key causes of electoral violence, as highlighted in the previous section, is a culture of violence. This factor is especially evident in post-conflict countries. When a country did not experienced severe conflict in the past, and therefore does not know a culture of violence, stability during electoral periods is more likely. As mentioned above, the data from Straus and Taylor (2012) show that in Benin there have been no elections that experienced high levels of electoral violence. This implies that violent behaviour during electoral periods is not in the country's culture. In the UCDP one-sided violence dataset (Eck & Hultman, 2007; Petterson et al., 2019) and the UCDP non-state conflict dataset (Sunderberg, Eck & Kreutz, 2012; Petterson et al., 2019) there are no documentations of conflict in Benin. This means that in the period from 1989 to 2018 there were no events of one-sided or non-state conflict. The absence of any form of serious conflict in Benin's history could be a possible explanation for the absence of electoral violence, since a history of violence along ethnic lines is one of the leading social factors for conflict in the ECOWAS (Sisk, 2012: 45).

Violence is also not common in Benin in the context of public protests. This was evident on two critical occasions- the end of Kérékou's second term and, respectively, the end of Yayi Boni's second term. Both Presidents considered changing the constitution to allow them a third term, but have been stopped by popular uproar and broad, mass-based campaigns in defense of the constitution.

On the 28th of April 2019, legislative elections were held in Benin. These elections were not without controversy. All the 83 seats of the National Assembly were up for re-election. However, a new electoral code, with the aim to change the political landscape, and reduce the number of parties in Benin caused controversy. Based on the new electoral code, the electoral commission blocked all

party lists, except for two. This decision excluded all the opposition parties from participating in the election. Not surprisingly, this led to a political crisis and demonstrations in the capital of Benin. Despite the protests, the elections were held and the two parties of the presidential majority now share all the seats of the National Assembly. The participation rate for this election was extremely low. Since 1990 turnout has not been under 50%, but for this parliamentary elections the turnout was only 27%. After the elections opposition supporters clashed with security forces, which resulted in several deaths (Election Watch, 2019). Here we see a scenario of violence that has been addressed by Straus & Taylor (2012) in their research. It is the scenario of violent repressing of protests, which were triggered by election results.

The factors that have promoted peaceful electoral processes in Benin include the followings:

Institutional Background of Electoral Process in Benin

In Benin, an electoral system of proportional representation is used, which reduces the risk of (political) actors engaging in violent electoral strategies. The 83 members of the National Assembly are elected by proportional representation in 24 multi-member constituencies, based on the country's departments. By employing a proportional electoral system, Benin has an inclusive political system. Through the proportional representation, the different groups in the country feel represented and representation makes it more likely that their interests are protected. Although Benin does not make use of power-sharing agreements that guarantee seats to particular groups, the electoral systems provide a power-sharing legislature through proportional representation. This also results in the need of politicians to form coalition governments. Because of the two-round majority formula in presidential elections, presidents cannot be elected by a tiny fraction of the vote. Therefore, presidential candidates often need to build support across the political spectrum, often in the form of coalitions, in order to win office. From this, we can deduce that Benin, indeed, has inclusive institutional mechanisms that are important in reducing the chance of escalation along ethnic lines.

In addition, ethno-regional cleavage in Benin has serious consequences on electoral results. Although these ethno-regional cleavages have decisive effects on voting patterns, party strategies, and party system structure, the influence is contingent. This is because of sub-ethnic divisions within the ethnic groups, and the spatial dispersion over the administrative districts. These factors

and the interaction with the electoral system prevent any single ethnic group from winning a majority in elections. This pushes political parties to the formation of cleavage crossing electoral coalitions to win competitive elections (Creevey et al., 2005: 474).

Also, it is relatively easy for parties to compete in elections, which reduces the feeling of exclusion in Benin republic. Until recently when the new electoral code was introduced political parties competed freely in pluralist elections freely. However, the new Code introduced some artificial obstacle to prevent major political parties from competing favourably in the electoral processes. The lack of strong traditional leadership in Benin, as a result of undermining policies in the colonial and Kérékou periods, could explain why competing in elections is easier for opposition parties in Benin.

Electoral violence is especially likely to occur in the case of close race elections. Using them) to see how close elections in Benin have been. Overall, election result in Benin does not portray close races. The first parliamentary elections in 1991 were relatively close, with many parties winning a sizeable part of the vote. The 1995 parliamentary elections were also relatively close, but not dramatic. In this election, the largest party won 21 of the 83 seats, and the runner-up won 19 seats. The closest presidential election was in 1996, between Soglo and Kérékou. In the second round, Kérékou won the presidency by winning with 52.49% of the vote. The 1999 Parliamentary election saw the Benin Rebirth Party retaining its status as the largest party in the Natinal Assembly, increasing its number of seats from 21 to 27, while the Democratic Renewal Party, the second largest party, won only 11. The 2011 Presidential elections were held on March 6th, despite its postponement twice. The incumbent President Yayi Boni was outrightly with 53.18%, enough to win second term without a run-off. In the March 6 2016 Presidential elections, President Patrice Talon defeated his major opponent, Prime Minister Lionel Zinsou, with 65.37% in a run-off. Thus, close race elections are not common in Benin and the emergence of electoral violence as a result of a close election is therefore unlikely in Benin.

Strong institutions and an independent electoral commission can be important in overcoming insecure electoral processes. According to Birch and Muchlinski (2013) the risk of electoral violence in Benin Republic can be lowered by increasing political inclusion, and by altering perceptions of likely exclusion and intentions of actors (like the electoral commission) in the electoral process. Lapses in the electoral process can result in violence if people believe that

they are disadvantaged by these lapses. When there are no lapses in the electoral process the chance of violence is reduced (Birch and Muchlinski, 2018: 89). Benin has an Autonomous National Electoral Commission (CENA), which includes representative from both the ruling party and the opposition. The country scores 3 out of 4 in the Freedom House (2019) on the question whether the electoral laws and framework are fair, and implemented impartially by the relevant election management body. The CENA, however, is not undisputed. After the presidential elections in 2011 there was doubt in the performance of the CENA, and the commission was accused of irregularities by the opposition (Freedom House, 2014). This indicates that lapses in the electoral process sometimes take place in Benin.

According to Straus and Taylor (2012), there have been no elections that experienced high levels of electoral violence in Benin. This depicts that violent behaviour during electoral periods is not in the country's DNA. It is important to note that from 1946 to 2018, there has been no armed conflict in Benin. In the UCDP one-sided violence dataset (Eck and Hultman, 2007; Petterson et al., 2019) and the UCDP non-state conflict dataset (Sunderberg, Eck and Kreutz, 2012; Petterson et al., 2019) there are no documentations of conflict in Benin. This means that in the period from 1989 to 2018 there were no events of one-sided or non-state conflict. The absence of any form of serious conflict in Benin's history could be a possible explanation for the absence of electoral violence, since a history of violence along ethnic lines is one of the leading social factors for conflict.

The strong institutional framework around the electoral process and the culture of non-violence cannot be taken for granted in an increasingly dynamic political system like Benin. There are emerging factors that if not adequately addressed, portend bad omen for the future of democracy in Benin. These factors include:

Inadequate Consultation among Political Actors in Benin

According to the ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, particularly, Article 2 (1), which stipulates that 'No substantial modification shall be made to the electoral laws in the last six (6) months before the elections, except with the consent of a majority of Political actors'. This provision of the Protocol was instructive to guide political stakeholders in Benin in put in place the new electoral code.

President Talon led-government proposed a reform into the electoral code in September 2018, which was adopted by the National Assembly. While the span of time comply with the

ECOWAS Protocol, the government did not consult extensively to get the necessary buy-in of other key political stakeholders in the country before embarking on the implementation. The new electoral law created some obstacles for opposition parties to effectively compete in the elections in the country. First, the fee for presidential candidates increased by 1,500% from \$27,000 to \$445,000, while an increment from 8.3 million francs to 249 million francs as deposit required for a parliamentary candidates. This hike in fees for political parties to take part in elections is not only absurd, it was further compounded by the creation of an electoral threshold of 10% of the national vote to enter parliament. While the new electoral code was, among other, aimed at reducing the number of political parties, which numbered around 200, the implementation of the reform was not accorded extensive consultation among the political actors involved in the July 2019 parliamentary elections. Hence, tension grew between the ruling party and the major political parties on the new electoral law in the build up to the parliamentary elections.

The recent trend of subtle politics of exclusion portends a bad omen for the future of democracy in Benin. The introduction of bureaucratic requirements of “certificate of conformity,” for political parties and exorbitant registration fees for candidates ended in the National Electoral Commission only approving two political parties; both aligned with President Talon for the April 28 elections. Although it was announced on 16 January 2019 that the opposition would form a single bloc to participate in the elections, only two blocs were registered to contest the elections; the Republican Bloc and the Progressive Union, both of which were linked to President Patrice Talon. The election commission rejected the applications of five opposition groups, the PRD, Cowry Forces for the Development of Benin, Union for the Development of Benin, Moele-Bénin and the Social-Liberal Union. Against this backdrop, the turnout of only 23% was a significant drop from 65% from the previous election and the lowest in since Benin adopted democracy (African Centre for Strategic Studies, 2019).

Mediation mechanisms at both national and international levels proved inadequate to manage the conflict between the ruling party and opposition political parties as result of the new electoral code. All efforts by the President Patrice Talon to bring the opposition parties to term with the implementation of the new electoral code towards the April 28 Parliamentary election proved abortive. The 28 April Parliamentary elections took place in a context marked by a breakdown of consensus among the political stakeholders, thus undermining the open, inclusive and competitive nature that has traditionally characterized electoral processes in Benin.

At the regional level, ECOWAS' Chairman of Authority, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari, dispatched two envoys to Benin who pressed President Talon to pursue a peaceful dialogue in order to allow the opposition to participate in the democratic process. According to its protocols, ECOWAS is obligated to intervene in instances of democratic backsliding as it did diplomatically and then militarily in Gambia in 2017. Some members of ECOWAS have suggested sending a fact-finding mission to Benin, which could then lead to the issuance of an ECOWAS resolution. The mediation initiatives undertaken to bridge the gap between the positions of the political stakeholders and to allow for a peaceful and inclusive vote did not yield the expected results.

Political interference is a serious attack to the spirit of separation of power and checks and balances. In Benin, a warning sign has been apparent since 2018 when President Patrice Talon appointed Joseph Djogbénou, his former personal lawyer, as Minister of Justice, Legislation, and Human Rights. The Minister began pushing for the creation of a special court to prosecute terrorism and economic crimes. The *Cour de Répression des Infractions Économiques et du Terrorisme* (CRIET) was installed in August 2018 and re-prosecuted Ajavon, one of the political gladiators of the country, in absentia, sentencing him to 20 years in prison with no possibility for appeal. This is a clear affront to undermining the rule of law, the government's move gave credence to the tactical means of limiting political opponents' ability to organise for elections. Meanwhile, in June 2018, Talon promoted Djogbénou to the head of Benin's Constitutional Court. Like the majority of Talon's appointees, Djogbénou is from Benin's southern Gbe-language speaking region, a trend that since his election in 2016 has deviated from Benin's tradition of regional balance in appointees. In addition, despite the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights in Arusha condemned the resulting conviction in March 2019 along with the very existence of CRIET and ordered Benin to revoke the decision within six months, to date, Benin has declined to do so.

Another worrying development in Benin is the unprecedented violation of human rights that marked the last parliamentary elections. Security forces violently confronted protesters and fired on demonstrators protesting against the 28th April legislative elections. More importantly, protests against the new electoral law were banned, with protesters defying the ban arrested. In particular, Former presidents Nicéphore Soglo and Thomas Boni Yayi were both tear-gazed in a protest event in Cotonou. The government shut down the internet, harassed journalists; all measures that violate Benin's constitution. On Election Day, Net_Blocks reported the blocking of social media platforms and the subsequent disconnection of nearly all internet connectivity in the country.

Prior to the elections, several opposition activists and political journalists were also arrested. Benin's press freedoms had already been under threat with the government utilizing new laws to detain and charge journalists accused of spreading what it deemed to be "false information." This new law is not human rights compliant as it inherently constitutes violation of press freedom. Given this context, both the eruption of protests, human rights violation and the government's undemocratic response appear far less encouraging for the future of democracy in Benin.

With respect to Benin Republic, the ECOWAS electoral assistance commission has provided supports in the areas of facilitating training programs on Civic Education and training workshop for Electoral Official in the country. There was also financial support in the tune of \$500,000 (Five hundred thousand dollars) to fund the electoral process. However, the support to Benin produced both positive and negative effects on the country's election process. On the positive side, civic education created opportunities for her citizens to be more aware and participate in the political process. The ECOWAS civic education program also taught media practitioners in the country how to report election matters objectively.

Similarly, the ECOWAS support on capacity building for the national EMB Electoral Officers created peer learning opportunities for the trained staff. The workshop, which was structured in a Train – the – Trainers format was of great value in that it gave room for cascading the training downwards for the benefits of the officers in the local EMBs commune and prefecture area offices of Benin Republic. Similarly, the effects of the ECOWAS financial support brought in an additional amount to support other budgetary areas of needs in Benin Republic. The above positive effects notwithstanding, there are demands that ECOWAS should do more to ensure that its support to Benin Republic electoral process should go beyond the capital city of Cotonou, to the local populations in the interiors of the country, where the politicians are the only ones who come in to provide information based on their partisan interest.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

A handful of literature and popular discourses exist on the subject matter of ECOWAS electoral support system and democratic consolidation in West African countries. This chapter is particularly devoted to an examination of relevant literature that has direct bearing on the discursive issues of elections and electoral support system in West African countries. The conceptual

clarifications and theoretical foundation for the study were also laid in this chapter. A theoretical orientation was also adopted in this chapter to put the study in the right intellectual perspective.

2.1. Conceptual Discourse

2.1.1. Election

In all regions and cities of the world, there is a general consensus that elections are hallmark of democracy and important instrument through which leaders are elected to public offices (Molomo, 2006, cited in Ojo 2007:4). Elections according to Muhammad and Omotola (2013:145) are concepts relating to the “empowerment of citizens to decide on their true representatives and promote or encourage a participatory government”. The point to underscore is that elections are political variables that provide citizens the opportunity to participate in democratic processes. In a similar way, an excerpt from the minutes of a conference organized by the United Nations Office for West Africa on elections and stability in West Africa highlighted the role of election thus;

A typology of elections presented at the conference identified three distinct roles that elections can play in relation to democracy: first, elections serve as foundations for democracy or mechanisms to transition to democracy; second, elections can help to consolidate a democratization process; and elections can become part of a democratic routine. (International Peace Institute, IPI, 2011)

Muhammad and Omotola (2013) also argued extensively in their conceptual clarification that disregarding credible election in a democratic system and perpetrating electoral fraud could facilitate the emergence of political insecurity and legitimacy crisis. The issues of legitimacy and effectiveness in the democratic process and particularly on election in the West African Sub-region have been questioned. To this fact, elections in the ECOWAS member states have further revealed the fragility of such states. Albert (2011) exemplifies this issue with African elections like that of Kenya and Zimbabwe in 2008 and particularly that of Cote d’Ivoire in 2010, where Alassane Ouattara had led with 54.1 percent of the election result. However, Laurent Gbagbo got constitutional council to cancel most of the results in the North, claiming electoral fraud. Ouattara and Gbagbo later declared themselves presidents.

Elections form part of constitutional democracy which broadens popular participation of citizens in governance. This was the focus of Muhammad and Omotola (2013) who attempted to draw the linkages between failure of electoral process, crisis of legitimacy and political instability.

Their focus was on Nigeria, a leading member state of ECOWAS. They contend that “elections in Nigeria have worsened from being a means of popular participation and peaceful change of government to one of illegitimate governance, insecurity and political vagueness (Mohammad and Omotola 2013:145). Indeed, the authors are pre-occupied to a great extent with the legitimacy question which they claimed resides in the people given the fact that political power is exercised through the ballot box. Electoral malpractices however, create legitimacy vacuum and when the crisis emanating that are improperly managed, it becomes a fertile ground for the cultivation of chaos and anarchy which ultimately leads to political instability. These issues have created excruciating poverty and undermined development in the West African Sub-region. As important as Mohammad and Omotola’s (2013) study is to understand the concept of elections and the democratic process, they restricted themselves to the question of legitimacy and insecurity. Consigning to insignificance how elections socialize political activity and institutionalises access to political power. Thus, there insight is limited.

Ojo (2007a: 5) sees elections as the process of choosing people for particular jobs by voting. He differentiates direct and indirect elections and indicates that indirect elections are the most popular concept contemporarily being used in many democratic countries to elect members of the representative chambers. Ojo explores the conceptual postulations of elections, identifying its nexus with democratic rules thus helping us to understand the rudiments of elections. Citing Anifowoshe (2003), Ojo (2007a) contends that elections do not possess one single character or function. He itemises the following functions of elections:

- i. Recruiting politicians and public decision-makers.
- ii. Making and running governments.
- iii. Providing political representation for all inclusive governance.
- iv. Influencing policy decisions.
- v. Educating voters.
- vi. Building legitimacy.
- vii. Strengthening popular participation in governance.
- viii. Providing succession in leadership.

The study, drawing from Anifowoshe’s work distinguishes two broad functions served by elections which include the competitive model where the elite compete for office and the none-competitive ratificatory model, which is based on the ratification of elite preference by mass

electorate. The point being made is that the competitive model emphasises party competition and a possible change of government through elections, while the ratificatory model is characterised by exclusion of critical opposition, unfair electoral regimes and single-party systems, that is, the absence of party competition. This has been the situation in the West African Sub-region where the electoral system violates the basic conditions for competitive elections and undermined public good. Ojo's (2007a) work highlights free and fair elections as the prerequisite for good governance and public good. Ojo (2007b) explores the conceptual theme of political succession in West Africa which lends credibility to this study and its examination of the ECOWAS protocol on democracy and good governance by defining political succession as the transfer of political power from one group to another. Such succession and the degree of orderliness with which it is carried out are identified as a marker of democratic maturity on the part of the state within which it is carried out. This process has become the barometer for assessing the consolidation and quality of democratic governance in a polity. Absence of this character in the democratic process of the ECOWAS member states and beyond has therefore attracted academic attention. To this fact, Ojo (2007b) adumbrates that the processes of regime change through election has been pencilled as the factor that could mitigate or facilitate political succession and build a formidable democratic culture. This study will build on Ojo's conceptual framework.

Osaghae (2005) discussed the nexus between the concept of election and political violence. More particular to the sub-region are the issues of political violence which involve state repression and terrorism. Violence however has a wide scope and include tangible and intangible forms and processes. The concept poses great challenges on its operational meaning. Williams (2005), offers examples of electoral violence to include knife-attacks, savage beatings, shootings, bombings and physical torture. That means in its classical form, electoral violence involves the use of physical force like killing, torture, beatings and shootings. Although there has been a redefinition and re-classification of the concept of electoral violence, several people still hold the above view. Violence can be direct or indirect. Johan Galtung (1969 cited in Webster and Perkins 2001) has described direct violence as the avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs or life which makes it impossible or difficult for people to meet their needs or achieve their full potential. Threat to use force is also recognized as violence.

According to Williams (2005), there are limitations in the conceptualization of violence from the above description because they do not admit other criteria for the analysis of what violence

are. Legitimist and structuralist concepts therefore emerged to address the above conceptual limitation. The legitimists contend that violence is the illegitimate use of force. This school of thought understands violence from the point of force and legitimacy. One of its proponents Sydney Hook argues that “violence is the illegal employment of methods of physical coercion for personal or group ends” (cited in Williams, 2005). The problem of this definition is that it assumes that all violence must be physical. It therefore did not take into consideration the fact that violence has other dimensions. The structuralists assume that violence is concerned with an analysis of violence arising from abnormalities in the present structures of public institutions (Williams 2005). Its major proponent Johan Galtung has contended that violence refers to any form of social injustice whether inflicted by individuals or by institutions or by the workings of society at large, and whether or not it involves the deliberate infliction of personal injury by episodes of physical or psychological force. “In sum, violence is any physical, emotional, verbal, institutional, structural or spiritual behaviour, attitude, policy or condition that diminishes, dominates or destroys ourselves and others” (Turning the Tide, n.d.). An attempt is made here to examine the structural violence and show different but invincible forms of structural violence, and indicate how they affect society. This conceptualisation will guide this study.

2.1.2. Electoral Violence

Africa has made significant gains on the path to democracy and, in theory; recent elections in West Africa have made power accessible to all. By May 2011, all fifteen presidents in the countries belonging to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the president of Mauritania, had gained office through elections. However, an assessment of recent elections in the sub region and their implications for crisis prevention and stability still reveals mixed results overall. In some countries, the ballot box has not only become the preferred tool for selecting leaders, elections are also recognized as the only acceptable way to access power. In the likes of Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Niger, and Nigeria, elections have produced encouraging outcomes. Some electoral processes have helped societies acclimatize to democracy as a reality and eased political tensions. And progress has been recorded at all three election stages across West Africa. At the pre-election stage, the introduction of biometric voting cards helped secure the vote in Côte d’Ivoire and Guinea, for example, and will help to do so in upcoming elections in the Gambia, Ghana, and Sierra Leone. During the election stage, progress was made in ensuring a peaceful polling process and in the observation of elections, particularly in Guinea, Niger, and

Nigeria. In the postelection phase, an acceptable level of legality in several countries further contributed to strengthening the electoral process as a whole. Regrettably, the impact of electoral violence is also visible in West Africa. Democracy and stability have suffered from a culture of rigging, and elections remain challenged by a generation of leaders who refuse to see themselves out of office. Material and institutional limitations continue to affect electoral processes in the region. These include the difficulties candidates face in formalizing their candidacy, problems with voter registration, and the challenges facing election-management bodies. For free, fair, and peaceful elections in the sub region to shift from the exception to the rule, their democratic value needs to be restored and reinforced (International Peace Institute 2011).

Albert (2007) has argued that electoral violence, resulting from representational, campaign, balloting, and result conflicts have been a terminal problem of especially Nigerian politics since the 1950s. Albert's study moved away from the traditional conceptualisation of electoral violence which has been defective largely because of the ways the concept is narrowly conceived. Drawing from Galtung understanding of violence which distinguished physical, psychological and structural violence, Albert categorises electoral violence to reflect Galtung's analysis. Albert characterizes these three categories of electoral violence as the bane of political problems in Africa. Physical electoral violence in Albert's (2007) view is a situation where there is a physical assault, whether mild or hard. Thus, Albert argues that physical electoral violence include the kind of bodily attacks politician or their agents inflict upon one another at party conventions, during political campaigns, during elections and when election results are released. Physical electoral violence does not end there but Albert adds that the attacks security agents inflict on members of the public or members of the public inflict on law enforcement agents are overwhelmingly forms of physical violence.

Psychological electoral violence manifests in terms of citizens living in a state of perpetual fear of what could happen to them as a result of their participation in electoral activities. Albert (2007) points out that psychological violence explain the phenomenon of 'political apathy' in a society. Thus, the people are afraid of contesting for public offices and in some cases, they are afraid of coming out to vote. This author made it clear that this type of violence frustrates the exercise of conventional political participation rights. The point to underscore from Albert's analysis is that electoral conflict has the tendency to inhibit the progress of democracy in West African Sub-region given the prevailing fragmentation in the region.

Albert's (2007) study on electoral violence is of great relevance to this research. He points out *Ipso facto* that free and fair elections are major factors in arresting state collapse in fragile states. His reference to the situation in Cote d'Ivoire drew attention to the internal and external national security implications of electoral fraud or improper electoral processes in the West African Sub-region. Thus, Albert contends that this breakdown in governance in the sub-region have redefined donors approach to lending as they quickly put their lending under review. Citing Aljazeera Television report of December 6, 2010, Albert (2011) reported the cable network as reporting the Western countries' position that "in line with our policies, we will continue to closely monitor developments and reassess the usefulness and effectiveness of our programmes given the breakdown in governance. At that point the World Bank tied the cancellation of \$3bn of external debt, net of an estimated total of \$12.5bn, to the conduct of smooth elections in Cote d'Ivoire. This was a way to check Gbagbo and compel him to step down. This study is insightful as it also furnished us with the electoral development in Cote d'Ivoire and observed the place of elections in deepening fragility or propelling a strong state. This study therefore will build on it by examining the lessons learnt from electoral weaknesses in the ECOWAS community. Conceptually, the relationships between elections and democratic rules cannot be severed. Aristotle had averred that "...from these fundamental principles, and in particular, principles of ruling and being ruled are derived, the features of democracy to include participatory elections involving all citizens eligible for all political offices..." (Cited in Ojo, 2007a). The author explores the importance of elections to both the sustenance and consolidation of democracy in both advanced and developing democracies.

According to Albert (2007), electoral violence with particular reference to Nigeria could be blamed on excruciating poverty, unemployment, hunger, retrenchment resulting from privatization of public property, manipulation of ethnic loyalties. Other factors facilitating the emergence of electoral violence include religious fundamentalism, elite fragmentation, commoditisation of politics and zero sum attitude displayed by politicians, absence of independent judiciary and election administration bodies. Orji (2011) in his study of Nigeria affirms that the process of choosing leaders in Africa is often characterised by violence. He adds that such violence is a threat to peace and security. X-raying Nigeria's political landscape, Orji (2011) identifies the underlying factors responsible for electoral violence. He argues that a major factor is the fact that most political leaders and aspirants lack an adequate knowledge of the principles and practices of democratic governance. Orji's (2011) study interrogates electoral violence from historical perspective and

argues that it has seen a prominent factor against democratic values. While Orji's historical expostulation of the phenomenon is relevant, it is however limited given the fact that the study could not properly link the causes of the phenomenon and the content.

Karim and Albert (2011) elaborate Isaac Albert's (2007) position of the drivers of electoral violence. These include high stake financial return to politicians, proliferation of political parties, poverty and unemployment. These factors they argue have led to a widespread electoral violence in Nigeria, leading to many deaths and loss of property in different parts of the country. Their study helps us to see in a wider sense, the causes of electoral violence. All forms of violence that characterize the Nigerian democracy through election also lead to rejection of election results as seen in many petitions and tribunal cases that furthermore extend the abnormalities of election process.

2.2.1 Implications of Electoral Violence for Democracy

Drawing from various studies (Albert, 2007; Karim and Albert, 2011; Orji, 2011), it is clear that one major result of electoral violence or conflict for democracy is voter apathy. This is because as already noted psychological violence leaves the people in perpetual fear, making them unwilling to contest for fear of losing their lives or unwilling to vote. This trend will ultimately lead to legitimacy crisis which leaves the government mostly as an authoritarian regime. Other consequences of electoral violence in democracy include destruction of lives and property that is meant to be protected as provided by social contract, loss of confidence in the democratic process, contestants forced into hiding, insecurity, political tension, human right abuses. All these combine to form a threat against the democratic process. Examining electoral apathy within the range of voting culture, credibility of an election is often determined by popular participation and fairness in election processes. Voting is a crucial exercise that gives individual who are qualified within the ambit of the law the opportunity to perform their suffrage. In other words, the people or the electorate reserves the legitimate right within the context of democratic settings to select their choice of leader through the power of voting. It is however very important to note that for voting to be effective, there must be certain things in place, (Albert, 2007; Karim and Albert, 2011; Orji, 2011). These include, but not limited to, electoral education, public trust or distrust in the electoral system, agency of the contesting political party, political instability and other internal and external diplomatic influence, down to infinitum. The role of the mass media, political and educational

institution as well as special agencies of the state is very crucial in this respect (Obasanjo, 1989; Coyle, 2003; Saliu and Muhammad, n.d).

Elections and electoral outcomes driven by political accountability have considerable capacity to shape key political, legal, institutional and economic changes and ultimately bring about peace and prosperity in the society (Obasanjo 1989; Fombad and Inegbedion 2010). However, there continues to be an on-going debate among political scientists as to the imbroglio imbued in the systemic administration of elections within the concerned institutions. There has been little or no serious inquiry into the electoral process by other social scientists despite the significant economic and social effects of elections and electoral outcomes. Yet, in recent decades economists have increasingly brought their analytical tools to bear in exploring the role of institutions, including democratic elections, in economic and social matters that impact human welfare with great policy insights (Kilishi 2011). Since the outcomes of the political process significantly impact resource allocation, the speed of economic and social progress, and the well-being of the population, endogenising power and government in analysing economic and social behaviour has become an imperative (Bates, 2008). Put differently, a critical enquiry into the nitty-gritty of the processes involved in the conduct of election is not in any way negligible.

In the spirit of constitutionalism and development, Obasanjo, (1989) says:

With a total of about a hundred years of colonial rule followed by political independence, and the creation of modern large nation-states, it will be ridiculous to the extreme to expect that the colonial chiefdoms will be re-created. My going into the past is to anchor the present and the future in the politics of consensus which was the practice of the past rather than the rancorous antagonism opposition, confrontation and hostility of Western-type of democracy involving government and opposition – an alien culture (p.33).

What Obasanjo (1989) is trying to drive home in the above excerpt is the fact that communalism, which was preponderant in the primordial or traditional African politics in its wholesomeness encouraged empathy and collective participation of people in the governance of their affairs. Resentment of the electorates in electoral process is usually manifested through political apathy. Political share distrust in the entire governing process is essentially problematic in the sense

that it creates room for continual contradictions, contestation and possibility of bad governance and accompanying electoral malpractices. The crux of the matter is that the participation of the electorate is inexplicably crucial in enhancing democratic and good governance in Africa (Coyle 2003; Orji 2011; Bamfo, 2013). Accordingly, since culture connotes totality of behaviour in terms of knowledge, belief, art, morale, law and custom of individuals, it does mean that the culture the electorate generally put up with regard to electioneering is sine qua non in understanding both the course and causes of successes and failures in electoral process. In assessing the efficacy of ECOWAS in the sub-region, it would not be out of place to probe the culture that depicts the disposition of people to voting and the entire electoral processes.

2.2.2 Leadership and Tenure Elongation in Africa

African history of leadership is replete with leaders, be it democratically elected or those who hijacked the machinery of state by force, who possess sit-tight syndrome (Babalola, 2014; Meredith 2011; Fombad and Inegbedion, 2010; Saliu and Muhammad, n.d.). There are those who have been in power for as old as the age of their country's independence – President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and the freedom-fighter Eduardo dos Santos of Angola who ruled for 36 years are two examples, among others. President Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire, who served for 33 year, was third longest serving head-of-state just after Fidel Castrol of Cuba and Kim II Sung of North Korea. More instances of sit tight mentality of African political leaders are highlighted by Premium Herald (2016). Rwandan President, Paul Kagame, is one of the highest on the long list of African leaders to have been bitten by the tenure elongation bug. For someone who became vice-president in 1994 after leading the rebel force that ended the genocidal war that claimed about 800,000 lives in his country, and assumed the presidency in 2000, Kagame now has the opportunity to lead his people for upwards of 40 years. As the referendum on the constitution amendment allows him to stand for a reelection for another seven-year term in 2017, which he won. As noted by the author, Rwanda is a reflection of the tottering nature of democracy in Africa. Thus, in the absence of strong institutions, only a few have managed to play by the rules. With perhaps the exception of the late South African iconic leader and champion of freedom, Nelson Mandela, and the few examples of Jerry Rawlings and his compatriots in Ghana, very few Africans have gone into government, served their terms and left without rancor. In fact, in many cases, they have even tended to behave as if they were elected president for life. Robert Mugabe was a leader who, as a freedom fighter, helped his country, Zimbabwe, to secure independence in 1980. He was at the

helm of affairs for about 37 years before he was removed by the military. Before he was ignominiously kicked out and killed in a revolution now referred to as the Arab Spring, Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi, had spent over 40 years in the saddle while his Egyptian counterpart, Hosni Mubarak, was lucky to have been forced out alive after over 30 years as his country's leader. Until his death in 2005, Gnassingbe Eyadema ruled the West African state of Togo like his personal estate for 38 years, having forcibly seized power in 1967. He was however outlasted by Omar Bongo, who came to power the same year and put in 41 years before his death in 2009. In both countries, the presidency has been turned into monarchy, with children succeeding their fathers. While in Togo, Faure Gnassingbe took over from his father, it was Ali Bongo that succeeded Omar Bongo in Gabon.

The scenario is also similar in Congo DR, where Joseph Kabila succeeded his father, Laurent Kabila. The older Kabila had earlier ousted Mobutu Sese Seko, who had held sway for 31 years. Thus, across the continent, names such as Paul Biya of Cameroun, Jose Eduardo dos Santos of Angola, Teodore Obiang Nguema Mbasongo of Equatorial Guinea, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and Omar al-Bashir of Sudan readily come across as sit-tight leaders. They are leaders who have spent between 25 and over 30 years in office, even when it is obvious that they no longer have much to offer and their people are longing for fresh ideas in leadership. In most cases, the protracted hold on power has always resulted in crises and political instability. This is principally why the continent is ravaged by civil wars, which breed economic instability and poverty. Long stay in power, especially in Africa, also fosters massive corruption, while the tendency of leaders to become intolerant to opposition grows with time.

As noted by Lanre (2017), there are few exceptional cases of African leaders who have not been enmeshed in elongation crises. These exceptional leaders, though had the opportunity to stay longer in power, chose to honourably leave the stage of power and as such are accorded special respect in the history of the continent. The apartheid hero of South Africa, Dr. Nelson Mandela, and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania are two prominent figures that readily come to mind among those who defied all temptation to stay glued to leadership positions in Africa.

In their own contribution, Fombad and Inegbedion (2010) explain that term elongation or the desire to do so could come in form of individual willing to stay longer in power or a particular party having a strong hold of the mechanism of the state for a long period of time as the case in Nigeria when the People's Democratic Party (PDP) wishfully declared that the party would be in

power for at least 50 years before any other party could take over the leadership of the country. But this wish was soon to be short-circuited with the emergence of Muhammadu Buhari as the president, from the All People's Congress (APC), in the 2015 presidential election. What term limits does is all-encompassing – it helps to ensure constitutionalism in a way just as it also reduces barriers to entry into politics and as well as developing the culture of political participation as against apathy (Fombad and Inegbedion 2010). The pertinent question to ask, however, is; what stimulates the jinx of term elongation? The answer to this question may seem far-flung but a critical genuflexion into the reflexive realities of African politics will reveal a wide range of issues of greed, dysfunctional judicial system, and corruption of high magnitude, absence of true separation of power and many of such inconsistencies which give selfish leaders fertile ground to achieve their avaricious ambitions (Babalola, 2014).

The immediate consequence of sit-tight syndrome in African political terrain is that it engenders a plethora of tensions and political incongruities/instability within the continent (Olaiya, Apeloko and Ayeni 2013). The contradiction and contestation are often expressed in conflict of interests of concerned forces. It must be noted that, in most cases, the will to stay longer in power by African leaders is energized through connivances, abridgment of due processes and technical manipulation of state apparatuses (see Olaiya et al., *ibid*). Unfortunately, term elongation and its attendant consequences implicate on the success of ECOWAS. Since, term elongation in most cases impinges on democratic rule and due processes entrenched in the Protocol, it therefore behoves on ECOWAS as an umpire to interpose, to ensure peaceful and democratic rule in West African sub-region. Thus, issues that bother on tenure system of government are pertinent in examining the success of ECOWAS in Africa. To wit, the underpinnings of progressive democratic government systematically presuppose subversion of individual's selfish interests to that of the larger society. Conversely, the motive of most of the African leaders who have at one time or the other moved for term elongation or perpetuity of their regime have done so only for selfish reasons, hence undermining the interests of the collectivism of people in the society.

2.2.3 Election, Democracy and Democratisation Process in ECOWAS Member States

Extant Studies have made salient points on the linkages between elections, democracy and democratisation process. Elections have been identified as the very want of democracy. Schumpeter (1942) argues that democracy is an 'institutional arrangement', a means of filling public office through a competitive struggle for the people's vote. Thus, it is by election that citizens are involved

in political decision making process, which is what ultimately confers political legitimacy on any government. In this sense, a government is only legitimate when it is democratic. Such form of government – that is the institutional arrangement called democracy come to be through the means of election and the transition of such deepening culture is said to be democratisation. Thus, democratisation is the transition to a more democratic political regime. It could be a transition from an authoritarian political system to a semi-democracy or transition from a semi-authoritarian political system to a democratic political system. The outcome of such transition could be consolidated mostly through elections. This was the wave in the West African Sub-region in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Since the third wave of democratization reached the shores of West Africa in the late 1980s, all countries have opted for the adoption of constitutions worthy of liberal democracies and for the establishment of multiparty systems of democracy. One immediate consequence of this option was the use of elections as a preferred means of acceding to power. More recently, all countries of the sub-region in the process of democratization have also opted to reduce the influence of the Executive Power on the management of elections with the confirmation of the electoral umpire by the legislature. But these choices do not go without creating their own problems as the national parliament often manipulate such electoral amendment, including the re-ordering of elections in their favour. In fact, after twenty years of experience in democratization in the region, it is easy to conclude that the use of competitive elections in general, but especially the option of reducing the degree of involvement of Government in the electoral process are issues that deserve serious brainstorming if Africa is to improve the quality of elections. As posited by Ademola (2014), another equally important challenge of democratic consolidation in Africa is that of ensuring the effectiveness of the Electoral Commission. This assumes that issues relating to the independence or autonomy of the Electoral Commission should be tackled. It also requires the consideration of issues concerning the organization and operation as well as the credibility of the Commission and the security of the electoral process and their implications for each category of actors involved in the management of elections, including public security forces, (Mathias Hounkpe and Ismaila Madior Fall, 2011). Mbachu (1994) made a significant contribution to the content overview of democracy in Africa. His study interrogates the constant incursion of the military into politics in Africa but was quick to add that there are countries in Africa, despite their excruciating economic

conditions, heterogeneous population, culture and religions, the military doggedly refused to be drawn into coup d'état, one of which is Benin Republic.

As argued by Nwolise (2007), democracy has remained the most popular form of government since the UNESCO survey of 1951 despite the observation that democracy is not a way of governing but a way of determining who shall govern and to what ends and his insistence that the people do not, and cannot govern; they control the government. As argued earlier, the people are central to practice of democracy and that confirms why the most held view of democracy is that espoused by Abraham Lincoln as “government of the people, by the people and for the people”. Unfortunately, democracy in the West African sub-region is only a government of the people without the consent of majority of the people. The term is etymologically derived from *demokratia*: - from ‘*demos*’, the Greek word for people and ‘*kratos*’, the Greek word for rule or power. It is necessary to point out here that the people invariably constitute the numerical majority in any community. Given the above, Mbachu (1994) contends that in a democracy, government should not only be responsible or acceptable to the people, but indeed political power itself should emanate from the popular will, from the people; and the state and its government should adhere to the popular will. This will is evidenced in periodic competitive elections. It is this in the words of Mbachu that constitutes the essence of the idea of democracy.

Larry Diamond (1997) examines the global search for democratic consolidation. He traces the want of authoritarian regimes from Europe to South America, from Asia to Africa where authoritarian regimes or one-party dictatorship had held sway. Democratic transitions ensued with military withdrawal from politics, though Diamond is quick to add that despite such want, authoritarian regime was equally expanding and deepening in some part of the world. He asserts that “by the end of 1994, 38 of the (then) 47 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa had held competitive multi-party elections for at least the national legislature, and the number of electoral democracies in Africa had increased to 18 from just 3 in 1988. Diamond however points out that regular, free and fair elections do not ensure the presence of other important dimensions of democracy. This argument does not negate the place of elections in a democracy rather it reinforces the fact that elections play complementary roles in liberal democracy; which encompasses extensive protections for individual and group freedoms, inclusive pluralism of civil society as well as party politics, civilian control over the military, institutions to hold office holders accountable and a strong rule of law secured through an independent, impartial judiciary. Diamond demonstrates that

democratisation only deepens the culture of democracy when it becomes a regular trend through competitive elections. That way democratic culture is entrenched.

Staffern Lindberg (2006) takes a contrary position to the gloom and doom studies on elections and democracy in Africa. Lindberg in his empirical study contends that the quality of democracy in Africa is not only quite stable, but that it is also improving in a number of areas. His study examines the centrality of election in the process of democratisation in Africa. Lindberg (2006) draws attention to the democratic qualities of political participation, competition and legitimacy. He corroborates Diamond's (1997) position that elections alone are insufficient to make democracy but other political institutions precede participatory, competitive and legitimate elections to be instrumentally relevant for self-government. Giving an in-depth analysis of existing literature, Lindberg posits that there is a discordant view of scholars on African democratisation, which he claims pay less attention to careful conceptualisation of dependent variables. He claims that political change still suffers from inadequate theoretical specification, methodological rigor, and above all insufficient collection of data.

Indeed, Lindberg's (2006) study is a sharp departure from other Africanist studies of the democratisation trajectory in Africa. The short coming of Lindberg's (2006) study however is that of the 232 elections studied in forty four (44) countries between 1989 and 2003, we could not tell which countries in Africa have made the greatest strides in democratisation and which have regressed in this regard. This is because as argued by Nasongo (2008), Lindberg's study sacrifices historical detail and the country-specific peculiarities and nuances of the iterated and nested game of liability. Of course Lindberg (2006) did not take the West African Sub-region into cognizance because it may be different to say how many countries in this sub-region are making any significant stride in the democratisation process despite the repetitive elections which Lindberg pictured as an important causal factor in the development of democracies.

Tedesco and Barton (2004) present a critical analysis of the contemporary democratic state in Latin America. In a shift away from the more typical analysis of Latin American political change during the 1990s, these authors present a more state-centric perspective that seeks to explain why transitions to democracy and trends towards better governance have failed to provide more political and social stability in West Africa. Through a deeper analysis of underlying social relations and political values and how these manifest themselves through institutions, the state is understood not purely as an institutional form, but rather as a set of interdependent relations that are shaped by

particular collective and individual interests. The central argument of Tedesco and Barton (2004) is that the shift away from authoritarian to democracy provides the dominant backdrop to Latin American social change since 1970s. The foray into Latin American literature of political change is to enable this study examine the dynamics of democracy in that region, to assess the workability of ECOWAS protocol on democracy and good governance.

A supplementary protocol of the body prescribes “constitutional convergence principles,” which cover the separation of powers; free, fair, and transparent elections; the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms; freedom to form political parties; special treatment for former heads of state; and “zero tolerance” for unconstitutional changes of government. The above review helps us to measure the priority ECOWAS in the promotion of democracy and see clearly, the linkages between elections, democracy and democratisation to see how one influences the other. However, the International Peace Institute (IPI) in a special publication prepared from a conference held to address the challenge of building democratic societies in West Africa through peaceful and credible elections emphasizes the principle of zero tolerance for power obtained or maintained by unconstitutional means following the September 2003 military coup that overthrew then President Kumba Yala and led to the immediate organization of elections in Guinea. The principle also found meaning in 2005 in Togo, when ECOWAS condemned the “constitutional coup” that followed President Gnassingbe Eyadema’s death and supported the political transition by pushing for the organization of elections. The zero tolerance principle further led to the condemnation of the December 2008 military coup in Guinea, and the one in Niger in February 2010, which followed President Mamadou Tandja’s attempt to illegally stay in power after modifying the constitution.

The supplementary protocol also provides the framework for ECOWAS’ electoral assistance. This encompasses financial and technical support, observation and monitoring of elections, institution building, and support to national efforts to reestablish democracy and constitutional order whenever necessary. It further details the role of military observers in ensuring security during electoral processes as well as ECOWAS’ involvement in the resolution of pre- and postelection-related conflicts. In 2007, ECOWAS officials intervened in Sierra Leone to facilitate the acceptance of the presidential election results, which saw a transfer of power with the election of President Ernest Bai Koroma over former Vice President Solomon Berewa. A year later in Ghana, ECOWAS conducted shuttle diplomacy to ensure the results of the presidential election were accepted despite a narrow margin. In 2008, the supplementary protocol was reinforced by the

adoption of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF), which aims to enhance sub regional human-security efforts by preventing violent conflict and engaging in peace building initiatives in post conflict situations. Nonetheless, the supplementary protocol also presents challenges. These include a weak sanctions regime that focuses on suspending member states' participation in the community's decision-making bodies. ECOWAS has initiated a review of the sanctions regime and participants at the Praia conference called for the revised regime to be based on democratic principles and leaders' accountability to their citizens. They argued that this should be facilitated by ongoing initiatives to popularize the twelve constitutional convergence principles contained in the protocol and parallel efforts to strengthen citizens' ownership of the protocol. Other obstacles identified as limiting the effectiveness of the supplementary protocol relate to the absence of term limits in the convergence principles and the absence of a clause prohibiting amendments to electoral laws in the six months leading up to an election. Furthermore, the protocol is weak in combating monarchical tendencies and does not provide solutions to harmonize conflicting election-management bodies, an issue raised by the postelection crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. With regard to election observation by ECOWAS, the participants at the conference raised concerns about observation missions that validate flawed elections, for example in Togo in 2005 and in Nigeria in 2007. The supplementary protocol is considered an ambitious text that touches on national constitutional norms. It has been adopted by member states, and national jurisdictions can apply its provisions at a local level.

It is clear from our examination of existing literature that much effort has been focused on the nexus between elections, democracy and sustenance of peace in Africa without a perculiar study on the ECOWAS Electoral Assistance Support System, which makes blur the prospects and the challenges inherent in the system. It therefore becomes relevant to catty out an academic investigation on the effects of the System on sustainable democracy in West Africa and how the interaction between election, democracy and democratisation could facilitate or mitigate peaceful political change, undermining or engendering good governance in electoral conflicts, their causes and implications for democracy.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

The functionalist theory of integration is adopted as a basis of analysis for this study. The ground work of functionalist theory was laid by the British scholar of Romanian origin, David Mitrany (1944), in his influential monograph 'A Working Peace System'. David Mitrany was

inspired by the failure of League of Nation to maintain world peace after the First World War and systematically set forth an analytical framework to explain this failure while proffering a solution to the problem of war in the world.

According to Mitrany (1944), the root of international conflict was as a result of the division of the world into competing political units (Biswaro, 2012). The state model of international relations based on the territorial approach is doomed to failure as there can never be a perfect fit between nations and state boundaries (Kiven, 2012). Mitrany believes that modern economic, technological and socio-political developments have made political integration of the world imperative. To him, this economically and technologically integrated world had given rise to many complex problems including governance that many individual competing states could not deal with effectively particularly in the sub-Saharan Africa. He argues that this problem could be solved when countries integrate and evolve international agreements in specific functions or technical areas such health, governance, telecommunication. Mitrany assumes that common needs could be identified across states and that this present an opportunity for cooperation. Because common challenges had outgrown the boundaries of the nation-state, the state was no longer the most efficient and effective provider of these needs (Kewir Kiven, 2012).

If functional problems in the areas of economy or governance were to be solved, nation-states should, in their self-interest, establish international organization to carry-out the required activities. It is against this background that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established. The forerunners of ECOWAS were inspired from the daunting challenges of trade barriers hindering their citizens who hitherto engaged in commercial and cultural exchanges among themselves. To address this concern, the Heads of state of West African region established ECOWAS in 1975 for the purpose of promoting cooperation and integration, leading to the establishment of economic union in west Africa in order to raise the living standards of its peoples and to maintain and enhance economic stability, foster relations among states and contribute to the progress and development of the African continents. To attain these goals, member states set-out legal and operational frameworks highlighting measures to be undertaken.

The measures include harmonizing and coordinating national economic policies and promoting integration programs, projects and activities particularly in food, agriculture, natural resources as well as the removal between member states of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital to the right of residence and establishment. According to

Mitrany, as this new organization proves its effectiveness in dealing with various technical problems, member states would delegate more and more tasks to the organization (Biswaro, 2012). In the recent years, ECOWAS became aware of the importance of peace and stability to the attainment of its traditional objectives. In other words, the twin objectives of integration and development of the ECOWAS portend to be elusive and unless and until democracy and good governance are fostered and entrenched in the region, such objectives will remain a fantasy. This is of course not unconnected to the prevalence and multiple violent intra-state conflicts that bedeviled its member states in the 1990s resulting from poor economic management, corruption, personal rule, military interregnum, ethnic marginalization, violation of fundamental human rights. ECOWAS developed normative instruments for enthroning democracy and good governance, peace and security in the region, and the Declaration of Political Principles of 1991 is significant point of call.

Other instruments like the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Peacekeeping (1999) and Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance (2001) have been put in place as part of legally binding framework for promoting democracy and good governance in the region. Besides these instruments, ECOWAS has been able to rigorously walk its talk in ensuring that political power are not obtained and maintained by unconstitutional means in any of its Member States. For instance, ECOWAS vehemently rejected the constitutional coup d'état by former President of Cote d'Ivoire, Laurent Gbagbo and threatened to apply force in resolving and restoring normalcy in the country. Consequently, the task of promoting democracy and good governance was born out of the importance of guaranteeing peace and stability to enable the regional body achieves an integrated and developed region. The argument of Mitrany (1944) is true as the promotion of democracy and good governance by the Regional Organizations is on the rise in areas of limited statehood, where states not only have limited capacities to set and enforce standards but often do not show much respect for human rights, democracy, the rule of law and good governance (Börzel, Tanja, van Hüllen and Lohaus, 2013).

It is important to note that functionalism theory of regional integration especially in its modified version, neo-functionalism, developed by Ernst Haas, stresses the unintended consequences of previous integration efforts, which he referred to as 'spill over'. The functional spill over can lead to participation and support for integration by non-state actors that can play an important role in the promotion of democracy and good governance (Kewir kiven, 2012). This happens through what is referred to as elite socialization. Neo-functionalists predicted that

supranational interest groups will be increasingly formed in response to the formation of supranational institutions to influence policy decision (ibid). The reason for the involvement of non-state actors in regional organization matter is for the promotion of regional standards on democracy, human right, and rule of law in the member state. The active mobilization of the civil society under the West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF) has been commendable in the region. Also, the Open Society Initiatives in West Africa (OSIWA) has constantly engaged in the promotion of democratic norms and good governance across the region. This position is also valid for the Governance Transfer Model espoused by Tanja Borzel, Vera van Hullen and Mathis Lohaus (2013) in their paper titled Governance Transfer by Regional Organization: following a Global Script?

Like many International Relation theories and in particular Realism, this analytical tool identifies the state as the major actor and reference point since state provides the overall (constitutional) framework for governance in sovereign state. David Mitrany however opposed the realist view that integration could only succeed where it served the strategic interests of states. Such an analysis essentially puts states and consequently politics at the centre of every decision.

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the exposition of the research methodology used for the study. It specifically discusses the research design, instruments, population and sampled population, among others.

3.1 Research Design

The research adopts the quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques with the use of questionnaire to seek quantitative data and Key Informant Interview, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to generate qualitative data.

3.3. Study Population

The population for this study comprised of about 260 million people who are residents of Nigeria, Ghana and Benin while the sample population are drawn from: (i) Staff of ECOWAS Electoral Management bodies (EMBs); (ii) Donor Agencies; (iii) Security Agencies; (v) Relevant government agencies in Nigeria, Ghana and Republic of Benin; and (vi) randomly sampled electorate across Nigeria, Ghana and Republic of Benin.

3.4. Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The quantitative data respondents for this study were selected using the non-probabilistic sampling method while a total of four hundred and fifty (450) respondents were selected for the administration of structured questionnaires; one hundred and fifty (150) respondents were selected from each of the three countries (Nigeria, Ghana and Benin Republic). For the qualitative data collection, one hundred and two (102) participants were selected: forty-five (45) respondents for the In-Depth Interviews, fifteen (15) respondents for the Key Informant Interviews and forty-two (42) respondents for the Focus Group Discussions.

3.5. Methods of Data Collection

The data for this study were collected through two main sources: primary and secondary. The primary sources include Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) and questionnaires. The interviews were conducted among Staff Members of ECOWAS Electoral Management Office, national electoral management commissions, members of Inter-Party Advisory Committee (IPAC), selected and identified members of political parties, identified donors who support and assist electoral process, Media Practitioners, identified

security personnel involved in electoral policing, randomly selected electorates, unemployed graduate electorates, university lecturers and National Youth Service Corps, who are use for the conduct of elections in Nigeria, traders and artisans. The secondary data sources include published books, journals, newspaper and magazine articles, advertorials and unpublished works and internet resources.

3.5.1. Primary Data

The main primary instruments for data collection of the research were the use of in-depth interview guide, focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The use of these techniques was justified by the fact that deep understanding of the challenges, opportunities and lessons from the democracy and electoral assistance of ECOWAS in West Africa are better investigated by such intensive methods of enquiry. The qualitative methods gave room for respondents to express themselves fully on the subject matter without restriction.

3.5.1.1. Qualitative Data Collection Methods

The qualitative data used for this research include:

- (i) Focus Group Discussions (FGD): was used as an instrument of qualitative data collection to engage relevant electoral stakeholders (Election Management Bodies (EMBs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) comprising 6 to 8 members. A total of six (6) FGDs were conducted; two (2) in each of the selected countries.
- (ii) Key Informant Interview (KII): These were conducted with staff and members of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs), Political Parties, Donor Agencies, Security Agencies and relevant government agencies and informed members of the public in Nigeria, Ghana and Republic of Benin. A total of fifteen (15) KIIs were conducted; five (5) in each listed country.
- (iii) In- Depth Interview (IDI): A total of forty five (45) IDIs (15 IDIs in each listed country) were carried out among willing electorates. This was intended to enrich variance of useful information that was garnered from other complementary sources.

3.5.1.2. Quantitative Data Collection Method

Questionnaire was used in the study as a quantitative data collection instrument to supplement the data generated through the use of qualitative methods. A total of four hundred and fifty (450) structured questionnaires were circulated to respondents from Nigeria, Ghana and Republic of Benin. The use of questionnaire is justified by the need to collect data from a relatively

large number of samples for statistical quantification, and to ensure uniformity of responses on thematic issues amongst the respondents. The questionnaires include open and close-ended questions to effectively cover the breadth and depth of the research objectives. Also the questionnaire is divided into four sections according to the objectives of the study, namely Sections A to D.

Section A covers the respondent's socio-demographic characteristics; Section B focuses on the significance of ECOWAS electoral assistance system; Section C is on the factors affecting the efficacy of ECOWAS support system, while Section D focuses on the consolidation of ECOWAS electoral assistance.

3.5.2. Secondary Data

Relevant books, journals, news reports, statistical and official bulletins and other materials were consulted extensively. Particularly, available publications, newsletters, bulletins or published articles that have bearing to the objectives of the study were sourced, utilized and well referenced in the course of the study.

3.6. Validity of Instruments

The validity of the instrument used in this research was tested by giving them to Test Measurement experts to examine, re-examine and ascertain their suitability for the variables and the objects they were to measure. Their observations and corrections were taken into consideration and the amendments were made where necessary on interview guides and questionnaire before they were finally administered.

3.7. Method of Data Analysis

Data generated from the field were analysed using qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis. The data were cleaned, coded and thoroughly cross-checked to eliminate errors and enhance the quality of the data. The qualitative data collected were transcribed in their unalloyed form. The quantitative data collected through questionnaires were analysed with the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software (Version 20). Through the use of percentages and both pie and bar charts, the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were statistically described and the data presentation also extended to the specific objectives of the study as covered by the research instrument.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The chapter was divided into two main sections. Section 4.1 presents the demographic data of the respondents while section 4.2 presents findings on the thematic questions based on the research objectives. From the four hundred and fifty (450) questionnaires distributed across the three (3) countries, four hundred and thirty (430) questionnaires were retrieved.

4.1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

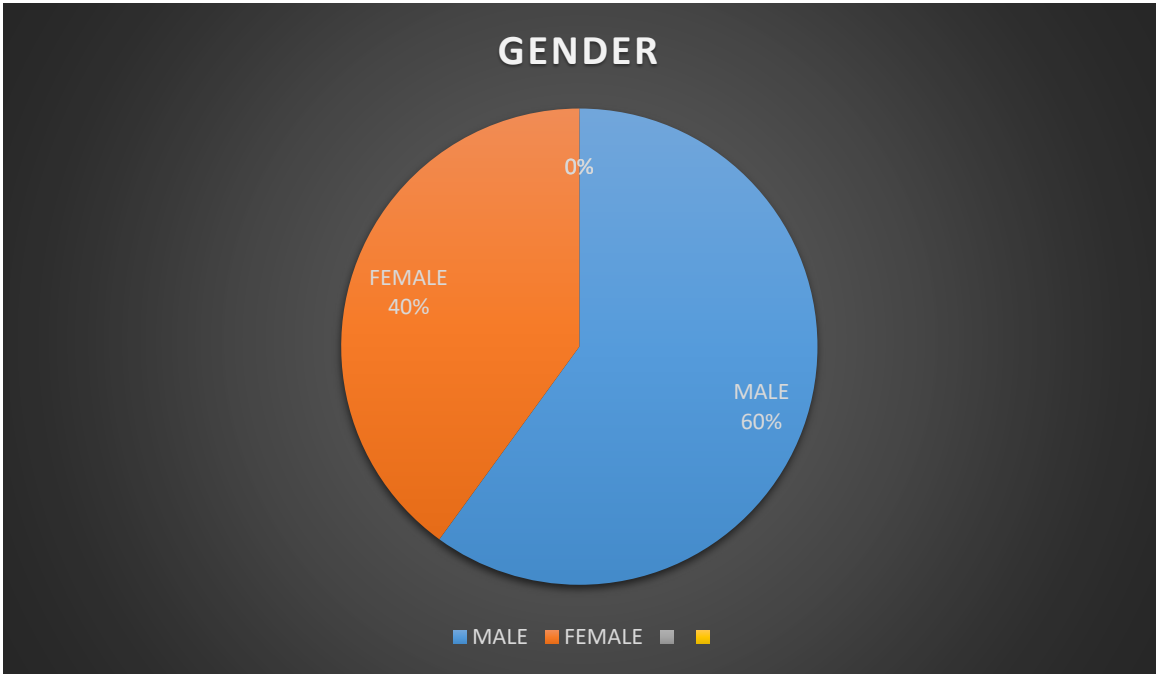
In this section, analysis of variables such as age, sex, country of residence, duration spent within the country of residence, the level of education and occupation were presented. The importance of these variables to the study hinges on how they influence the opinions of the respondents about the role of ECOWAS electoral support system in the sustenance of democracy in member countries.

Table 4.1.1. Sex Distribution of Respondents

Gender	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	258	60
Female	172	40
Total	430	100

Source: Researcher’s Field Work, 2018

Fig. 4.1.1. A pie chart showing the gender distribution of the respondents.



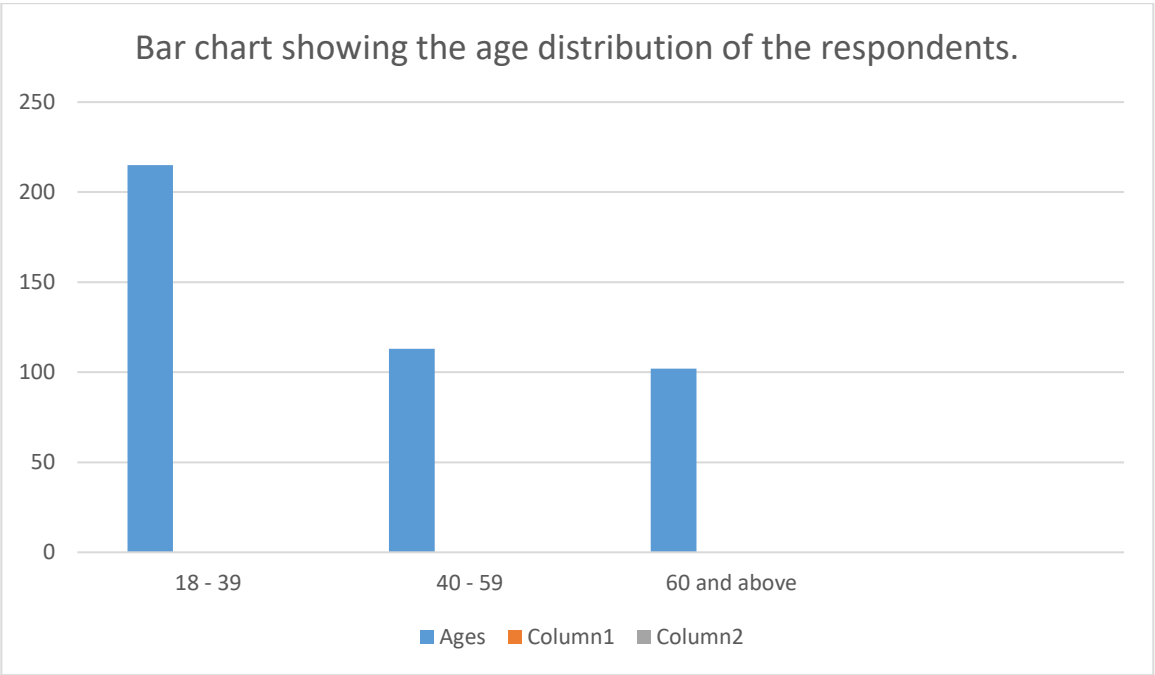
The above table and pie chart show that 60% of the 430 respondents are males while 40% are females. This means that both males and females’ opinions, which are the bulk of electorates in a democratic setting were sampled in the study.

Table 4.1.2. Age Distribution of Respondents

Category (Years)	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
18 – 39	215	50
40 – 59	113	27.3
60 and above	102	23.7
Total	430	100

Source: Researcher’s Field Work, 2018

Fig. 4.1.2: A simple bar chart showing the age distribution of the respondents.



The data in the above table represented in a simple bar chart shows that 215 respondents which represent 50% of the total number of respondents fall between 18 and 39 years of age. 113 respondents fall between 40 and 59 years of age while 102 respondents are 60 and above. This table clearly shows that all the respondents in this study are matured voters having acquired the voting age of 18 years in Nigeria. They are therefore qualified to be included as credible respondents in this study.

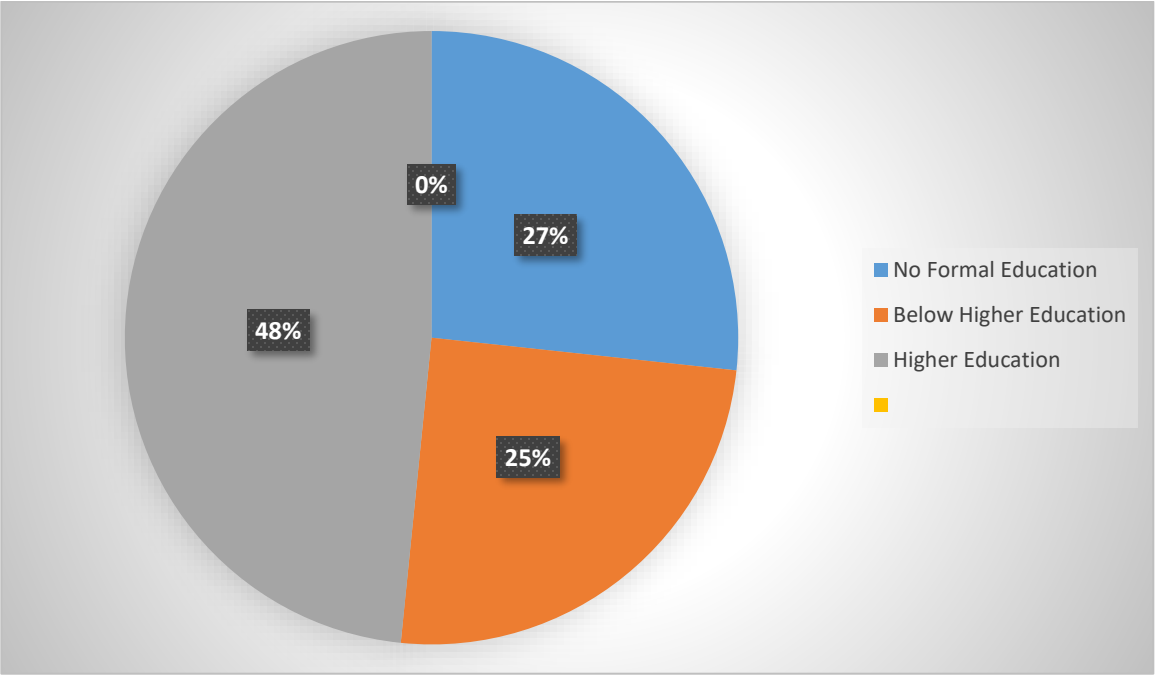
Table 4.1.3. Educational Qualifications of the Respondents

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentages (%)
No Formal Education	115	26.7
BelowHigher Education	107	24.9
Higher Education	208	48.4

Total	430	100
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Source: Researcher’s Field Work, 2020

Fig. 4.1.3. A pie chart showing the academic qualifications of the respondents.



From the above table and figure, it is clear that 115 respondents or 26.7% of the respondents had no formal education, 107 or 24.9% are below higher education while 208 respondents or 48.4% possess higher education. It is clear from the above interpretation that majority of the respondents are highly educated and well informed electorates who could answer the research questions with much precisions.

Table 4.1.4: Period of Respondents’ Residence in each country.

Category (Years)	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
Less than 10 years	180	41.86
Above ten years	250	58.14
Total	430	100

Source: Researcher’s Field Work, 2020

Figure 4.1.4. A pie chart showing the respondents’ years of residence.

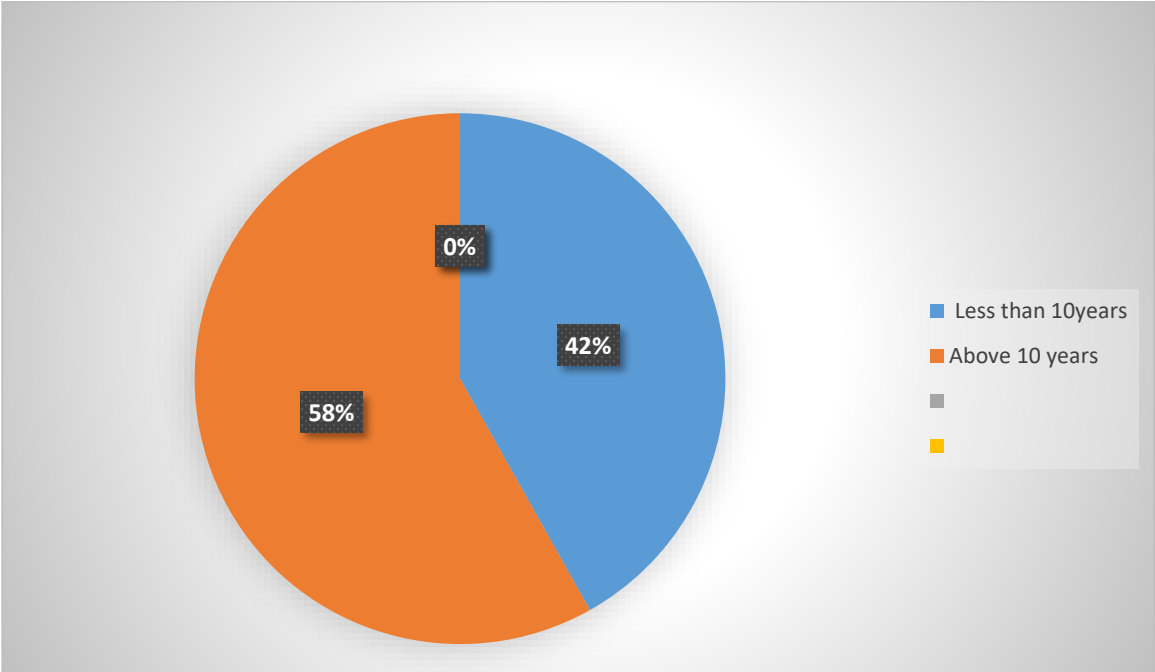


Table 4.1.4 above reveals that 180 respondents or 41.86% have resided in one of the countries for less than 10 years while 250 respondents or 58.14% have lived for a period of over 10 years. The table shows that majority of the respondents have resided sufficiently in their country of abode have the require residency background to give accurate data on the electoral process of their country of abode.

Section 4.2. Presentation of data on thematic questions based on the research objectives

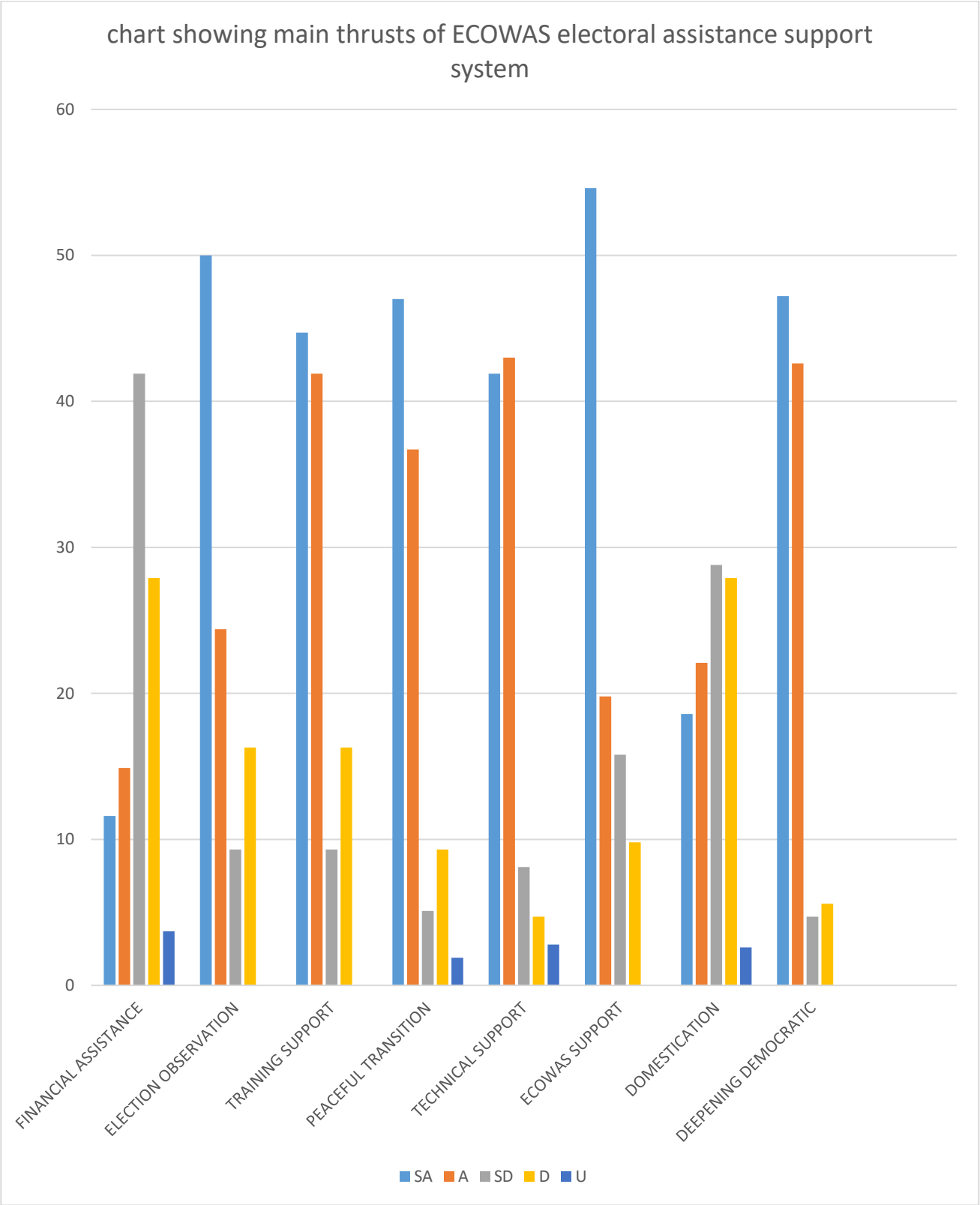
4.2.1. The main thrusts of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system to members

Table 4.2.1: Frequency Distribution of respondent’s opinions on what they considered as the main thrusts of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system to members

Item	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Undecided
Financial assistance	50 (11.6%)	64 (14.9%)	180 (41.9%)	120 (27.9%)	16 (3.7%)
Election Observation/Monitoring	215 (50%)	105 (24.4%)	40 (9.3%)	70 (16.3%)	-
Training Support to the electoral commission	192 (44.7%)	180 (41.9%)	28 (6.4%)	30 (7%)	-
Peaceful Electoral Transition	202 (47%)	158 (36.7%)	22 (5.1%)	40 (9.3%)	8 (1.9%)
Technical support on the use of ICT	180 (41.9%)	185 (43%)	35 (8.1%)	20 (4.7%)	12 (2.8%)
Training skills on post election Peace building.	235 (54.6%)	85 (19.8%)	68 (15.8%)	42 (9.8%)	-
Training strategies on domestication of ECOWAS Electoral Norms	80 (18.6%)	95 (22.1%)	124 (28.8%)	120 (27.9%)	11 (2.6%)
Deepening democratic culture	203	183	20	24	

	(47.2%)	(42.6%)	(4.7%)	(5.6%)	--
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Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2020



The above table 4.2.1 and figure 4.2.1 show the respondents opinions on the main thrusts of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system available to the member states. Put together, 114 respondents, representing 26.5% of the total respondents identified financial assistance to members as the main thrusts of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system to member countries while three hundred (300) respondents disagreed strongly. This stands at 69.8%. 16 (3.7%) respondents could not decide. 320 (74.4%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed that election observation is

the major thrust of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system to member countries. Just few respondents representing 25.6% disagreed.

A major thrust of the ECOWAS electoral support system to members is training support to the electoral commission as 350 (86.6%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed with this and 58 (13.4%) disagreed. Another thrust of the ECOWAS electoral support system is peaceful electoral transition. 28% of the respondents were undecided over the rating of peaceful electoral support as the main thrust of ECOWAS while majority of the respondents 72%) were strongly in agreement with the proposition that peaceful transition is the main thrust of ECOWAS support system. ECOWAS support on peace building is another laudable thrust by the respondents. 320 respondents representing 74.4% of the total respondents strongly agreed that without peace, there cannot be development. The above interpretation clearly confirmed that the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system to its members covers all the variables in the table but the most popular support assistance known to the respondents and which they are familiar with is election observation.

The key informant interview below corroborated Charles (2016) opinion that election observation is the primary thrusts of the ECOWAS electoral assistance to members as he notes:

The key important aspect of ECOWAS electoral support system is regular election observation which is designed to enthrone fairness, openness and transparency in the conduct of elections across West African countries (IDI/Nigeria/Male/Public Servant/ September, 2020)

In an interview with a youth in the Republic of Benin, it was gathered as follows:

During election, we also see ECOWAS election monitoring personnel around the polling units and election collation points. In fact, the fear of the presence of ECOWAS personnel instils sanity into the electoral process in this country. Ordinarily, politicians are apt to manipulate things during election and as a whole lot of issues of insulting and abusive words that politicians use against each other during election are reduced because of the presence of ECOWAS people. In short, ECOWAS helps to promote good electoral behaviour and norms (IDI/Ghana/Male/Youth/August, 2020)

A discussant in a FGD stated that:

ECOWAS has been doing quite well during election. The impact of ECOWAS is felt a little before election while the period after election which is also very crucial in electoral process witnesses relatively weak appearance of the body. We would like to always have the point of view of ECOWAS after election (FGD/Benin/Female/July, 2020)

As noted by an interview respondent:

Another assistance that gives credibility to ECOWAS is election observation. Although the quality of observers sent for observation is sometimes questionable, yet ECOWAS has done fairly well in the area of election observations, even at the global level. The neutrality of ECOWAS in conflict management is itself commendable. Over the years, ECOWAS has remained an unbiased, fair and non-partisan umpire in conflict mediation, management and reconciliation processes. In fact, you cannot say that ECOWAS is working for one party or the other. We don't use to have cases of post-electoral violence in the country although there have been minor cases of violence in which ECOWAS role in curbing the violence has been remarkable. To me, ECOWAS seems to have a well-accepted finality in solving electoral crises...ECOWAS houses different people, who serve in one capacity or the other, in the operation of the organ among the 16 member states that form it (ECOWAS) in West Africa. Therefore we hold ECOWAS in high esteem in Benin (IDI/Benin/Male/Civil Servant/July, 2019)

It was further revealed in an interview with a Nigerian that:

I am very sure that the activities of ECOWAS are well pronounced in terms of peace advocacy, election monitoring, and to some extent post-election adjudicatory and reconciliatory movement in election situations in Nigeria. But in reality, ECOWAS is not performing up to expectation in that the organisation's activities are not felt at all-time save during election periods when their bells ring the loudest. I expect ECOWAS to have a system that is comprehensive enough to have a system that ensures

good governance by way of continual assistance all facets of electoral process (FGD/Nigeria/Female/Teacher/September, 2019)

4.2.2. Objective 2: the extent to which members have domesticated ECOWAS Good Governance requirements for electoral assistance support system in their electoral process.

Table 4.2.2.Shows respondents’ opinion on the extent to which members have domesticated the ECOWAS Good Governance requirements for electoral assistance support system in their electoral process.

Item	Strongly satisfactory	Satisfactory	Strongly not satisfactory	Not satisfactory	Undecided
Acceptance of ECOWAS electoral monitors in their electoral process	201 (46.7%)	192 (44.7%)	18 (4.2%)	18 (4.2%)	1 (0.2%)
Zero tolerance to non-democratic governance	188 (43.5%)	202 (47%)	8 (1.9%)	32 (8.6%)	-
Freedom of political association	235 (54.6%)	145 (33.7%)	30 (7%)	20 (4.7%)	-
Conduct of free and fair elections	80 (18.6%)	95 (22.1%)	130 (30.2%)	124 (28.8%)	1 (0.2%)
Non-intimidation of	40	85	201	102	2

political opponents	(9.3%)	(19.8%)	(46.7%)	(23.8%)	(0.4%)
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Source: field survey, 2018

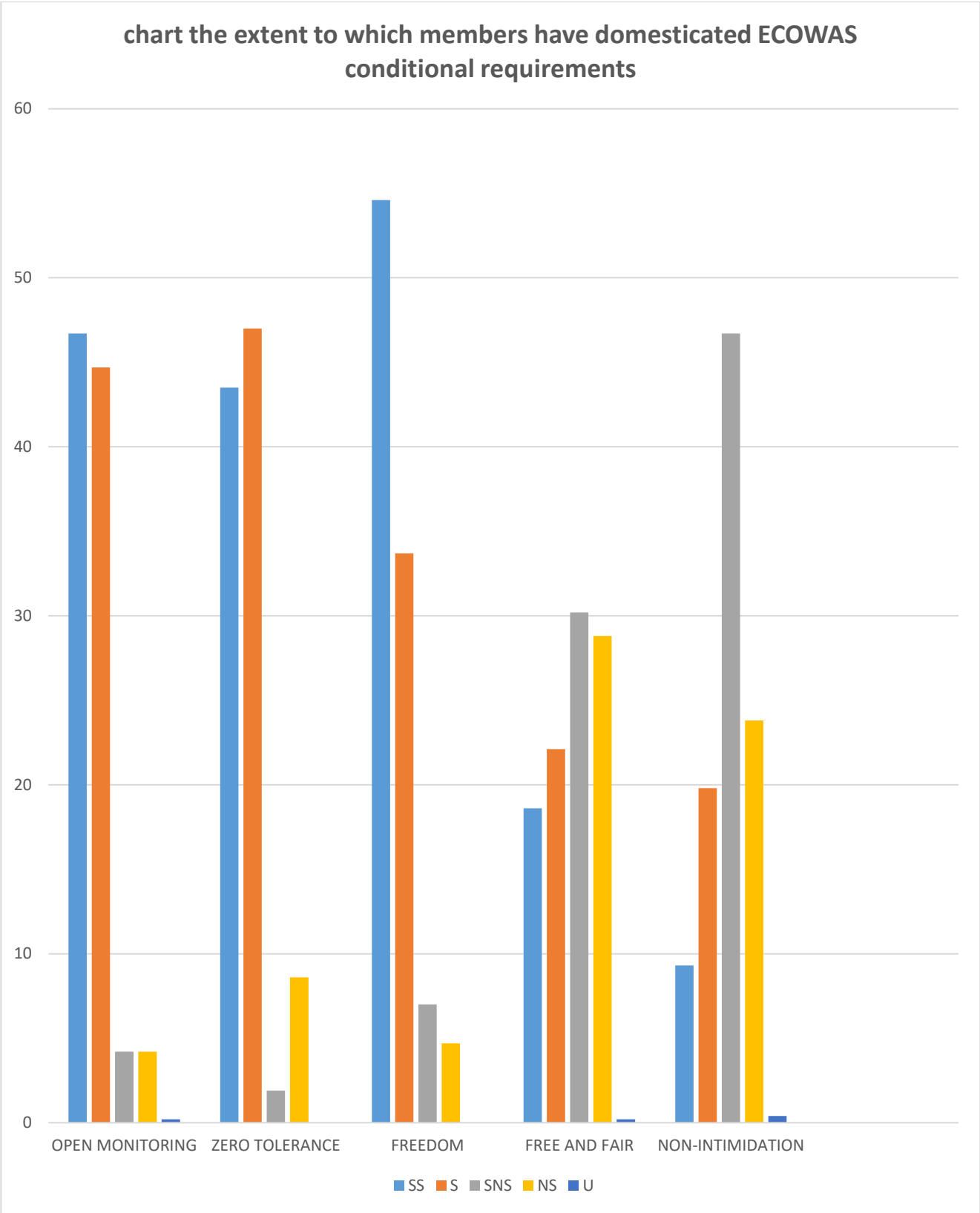


Table 4.2.2 and figure 4.2.2 showed the extent to which members have domesticated ECOWAS conditional requirements for electoral assistance in their electoral process. From the table, five conditional requirements were identified but member states have not really been able to domesticate very well in the area of conducting free and fair elections and non-intimidation of political opponents. From the 430 respondents that returned their questionnaires, 254 respondents (59%) were strongly not satisfied while 175 respondents (46.1%) were satisfied. Member countries

have been able to domesticate very well the open monitoring of the electoral process by local and foreign observers.393 respondents (91.4%) were strongly satisfied with it while only one respondent (0.2%) was undecided. From all indications, member states have been able to domesticate very well in the area of freedom of political association and zero tolerance to non-democratic governance. Majority of the respondents representing 88.3% were strongly satisfied that member states have been able to domesticate very well in the area of freedom of political association while 11.7% were not satisfied.

In respect of the domestication of freedom of political association, one respondent confirmed that:

The political space in Nigeria is very open haven accommodated more than 90 political parties however, there is the problem of coordination, funding and monitoring of those parties. In the area of zero tolerance to non-democratic governance ECOWAS has done a lot in this regards having reversed coups in a number of countries with a democratically elected government, including Sierra Leone, Sao Tome and Principle and Guinea Bissau.

4.2.3: Objective 3: The extent to which members have benefitted from the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system

Table 4.2.3: Frequency Distribution of Respondents opinion on the quality of ECOWAS Electoral Assistance to members

Item	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Financial assistance	19 (4.4%)	35 (8.1%)	137 (31.9%)	239 (55.6%)	-
Election Observation	325 (75.6%)	70 (16.3%)	20 (4.7%)	15 (3.5%)	-
Training Support for electoral commission	205 (47.7%)	185 (43%)	32 (7.4%)	8 (1.9%)	-
Peaceful Electoral Transition	35 (8.1%)	72 (16.7%)	185 (43%)	136 (31.6%)	2 (0.5%)
Technical support on the use of ICT	20 (4.7%)	88 (20.5%)	135 (31.4%)	187 (43.5%)	-
ECOWAS support on post election Peace building	210 (48.9%)	154 (35.8%)	50 (11.6%)	12 (2.8%)	4 (0.9%)
Domestication of	48	64	100	218	

ECOWAS Electoral					-
Norms	(11.2%)	(14.9%)	(23.3%)	(50.7%)	
Deepening democratic culture of tolerance of opposition	27 (6.3%)	182 (42.3%)	166 (38.6%)	50 (11.6%)	5 (1.2%)

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2020

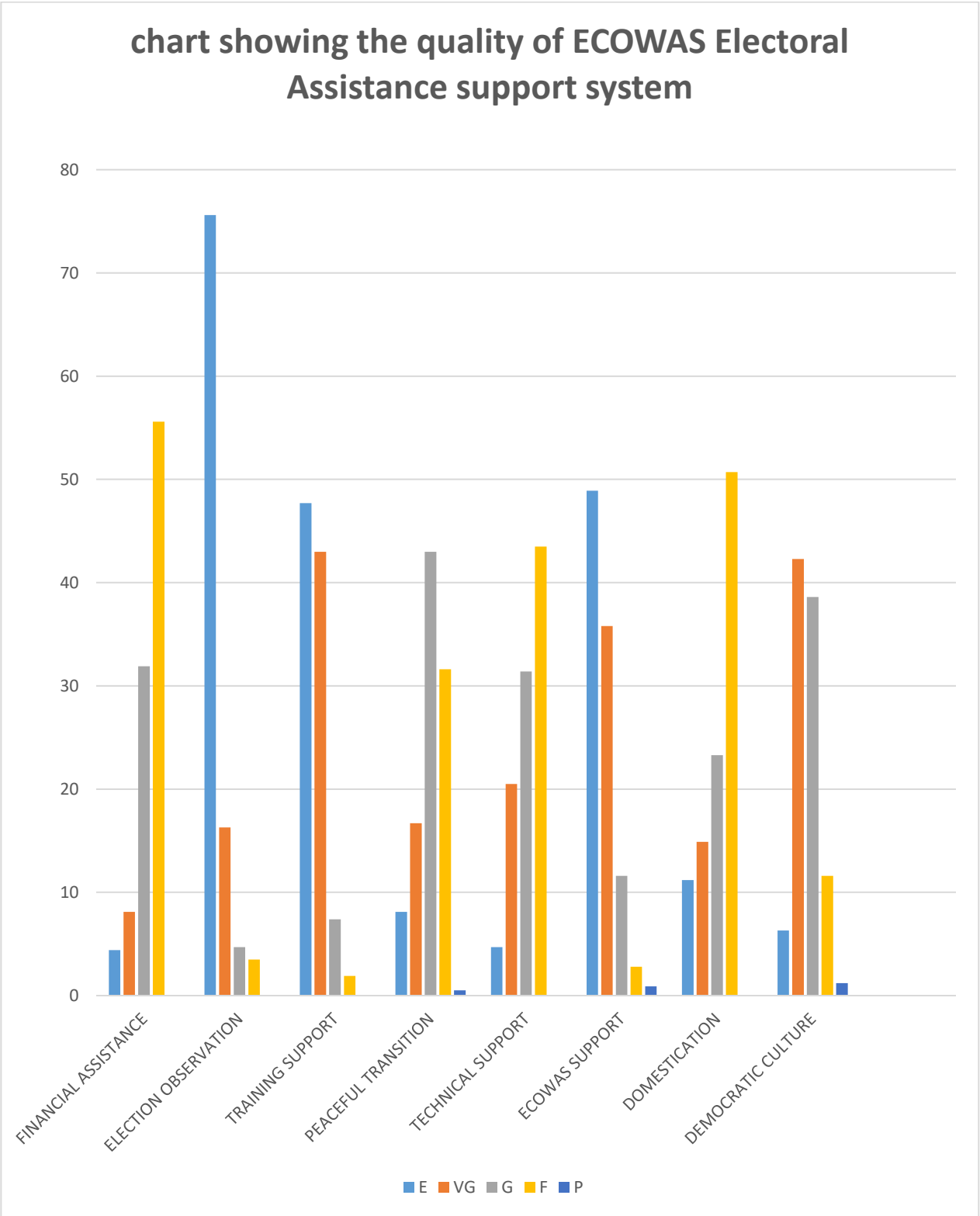


Table 4.2.3 and figure 4.2.3 above describe the quality of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system to member states. From the table above, respondents felt that ECOWAS has not really performed excellently in the aspect of financial assistance. 239 respondents (55.6%) rated the

quality of the financial assistance to the members as fair while just 19 respondents rated ECOWAS excellently in the area of financial assistance. This is not the same in the area of election observation. 395 respondents (86.9%) rated ECOWAS excellently while 35 respondents still feel that ECOWAS could do more. The presence of both local and foreign election observers are felt strongly during most national elections in member countries. The quality of the ECOWAS training support to the commission of the members is weak according to the majority of respondents. Thus, 390 (90.7%) of the respondents felt ECOWAS has not done a great job in the area of training of Electoral Commission staff in member states.

As noted by an interview respondent:

Nothing much has been done by ECOWAS to improve the quality of staff of the Electoral Management Bodies in member countries that I am aware of than its superficial support for the agencies. Training is a very important aspect of enhancing the electoral process that ECOWAS has not really worked on. It is important that the youngsters who are just coming into the system are well trained for effective delivery of duty and to ensure smooth running of the electoral process. Similarly, ECONEC is yet to do much in Ghana-e.g. they can facilitate inter country exchange training, in which Gambian can sent staff to Ghana to learn for a year and vice-versa. ECONEC can also do or send a peer learning/review team to Ghana. All the above have not been done by ECONEC.

Ghanaian EMB staff (KII/Ghana/Activist/ September, 2020).

Two of the people interviewed shared their views that ECOWAS has not performed above average in the area of training support for members in the following excerpts:

The history is that since 2011 in Nigeria, we have what we call the EBR (Electoral Biometric Registration) which captured all the eligible voters into a biometric data. But since then, nothing has been done to either upgrade or review this electronic list while the register is not available online, thus, has been very difficult to use....we have some experts from France to do some assessment of this document and it has been found that the register is a clog in the wheel of electoral successes, for instance, the rate of participation, which is dependent on the registers has not been

updated, has not been encouraging. In all the elections that have been held, it has been difficult to get the ratio of participation simply because the LEPI is not been effectively used (IDI/Nigeria/Male/Civil Servant/July, 2020).

The above experience is similar to that of another respondent who said:

I really appreciate the fact that Nigerian electoral system is undergoing series of transformation in recent time as recommended by ECOWAS electoral monitors. One of the pointers to this claim is the proposed introduction of e-voting system that the National Assembly has passed into law. As good as this electoral innovation is, the unfortunate thing is that due to some factors like illiteracy, especially computer illiteracy, poor infrastructural facilities like energy and so on, the system might not been able to achieve much in terms of popular participation in election and having a free and fair electoral transition. This is an area that needs the attention of ECOWAS. ECOWAS can help in terms of finance and provision of expert advice on how to improve on the system of managing the data of the electorate and carrying out elections (IDI/Nigeria/Female/Teacher/June, 2020).

Going by the responses on the table, 74.6% of the total respondents agreed that ECOWAS has performed relatively well in inculcating post election conflict management skills in member countries while 24.8% disagreed. Many respondents opined that there are instances of electoral violence in many member states, which has negatively affected peaceful transition, which the ECOWAS intervened decisively.

As noted by an interview respondent:

We are in a volatile political environment. Prevention of violence is very important in every sense. ECOWAS has been effective in advocacies and galvanising several mechanisms to forestall electoral violence. This, the body does by means of sending experts to monitor and its political leadership to mediate in crisis situations as witnessed in Gambia and Guinea Bissau. The support system of ECOWAS is commendable before

and during elections but the body needs to work on post-electoral issues (KII/Benin/Male Security Expert/July, 2020).

However, another respondent opined that even though ECOWAS has done great in the area of advocacy for reduction in post electoral violence, it could do more in its support to curtail post election violence in member country. He added further thus:

Though ECOWAS is relatively active during elections, it has not been there after elections as its assistance is least felt by member countries after election... ECOWAS needs to work on the aspect of sending envoys not only before and during elections but also after elections to various stakeholders so as to prevent electoral crisis or violence. I have witnessed a lot of instances where ECOWAS organised commendable support before election and during election ECOWAS has not been doing badly especially in terms of monitoring but after the election, it seems that ECOWAS only chooses a prominent person (say a VIP, as in the case of Ghana) to mediate in violent situation... To put it straight, it seems after a candidate has been declared a winner, ECOWAS goes back to sleep. ECOWAS has not been there to review the process and figure out lessons learnt so as to improve on subsequent elections and reduce violence. That, for me, is a weak point of ECOWAS (KII/Ghana/Male/Civil Servant/July, 2019).

A similar stance is taken by another respondent interviewed with regards to the efficiency of ECOWAS in matters relating to post electoral violence training and monitoring as shown in the next excerpt;

The first required post election training in West African countries is the kind of support that helps people (stakeholders) to talk in order to avoid conflict. This support includes all forms of dialogues organised by ECOWAS. In the course of the dialogue, processes are reviewed to check for possible violation of electoral ideals and know where amendment ought to be made. (IDI/Benin/Male/Civil Servant/July, 2019).

It was further revealed in an interview with a Nigerian that:

I am very sure that the activities of ECOWAS are well pronounced in terms of peace advocacy, monitoring, and to some extent post-election

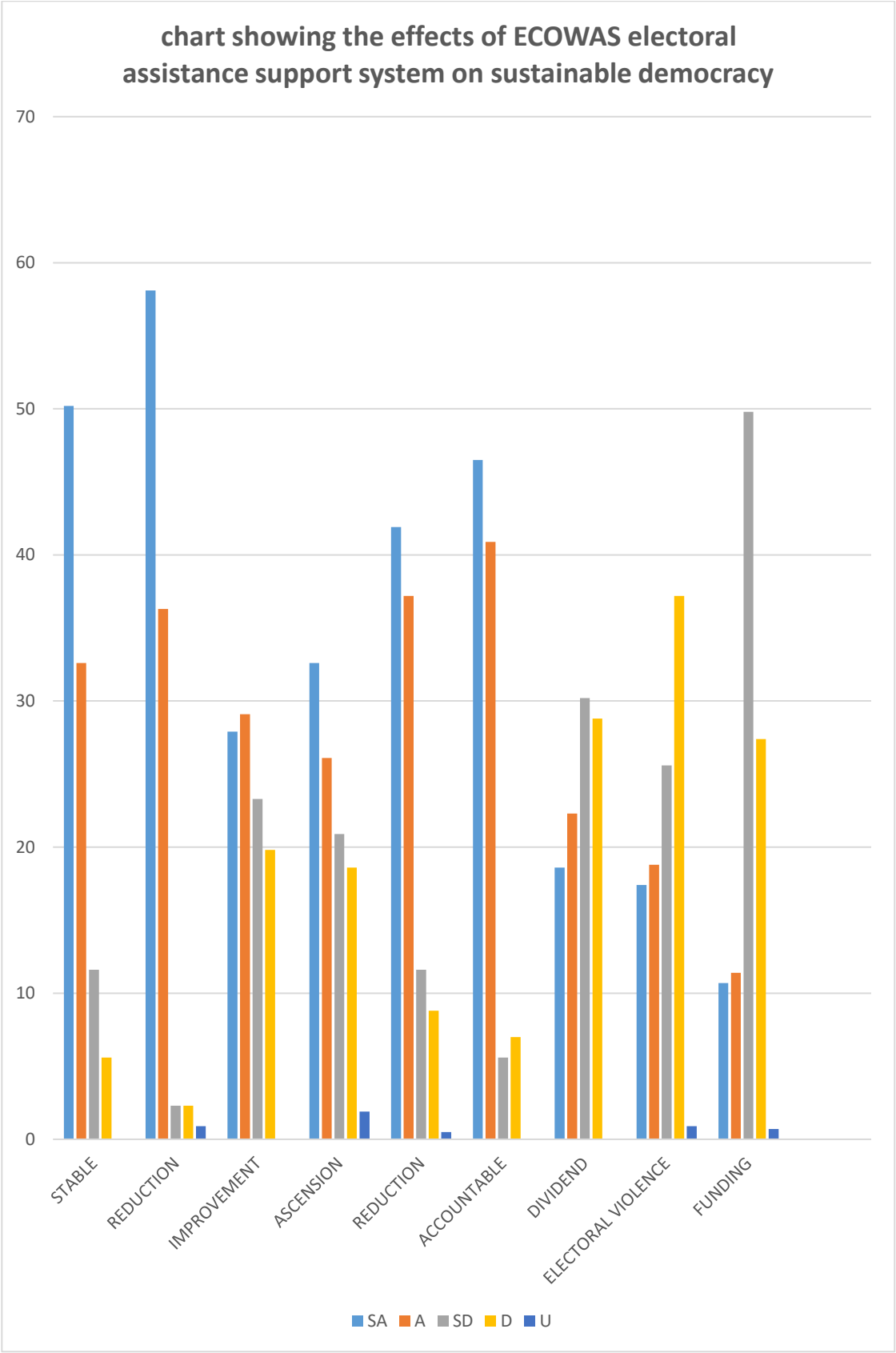
adjudicatory and reconciliatory movement in election situations in Nigeria. But in reality, ECOWAS is not performing up to expectation in that the organisation’s activities are not felt at all-time save during election periods when their bells ring the loudest. I expect ECOWAS to have a system that is comprehensive enough to have a system that ensures good governance by way of continual assistance all facets of electoral process (FGD/Nigeria/Female/Teacher/September, 2020)

4.2.4: Objective 4: The effects of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system on sustainable democracy in member countries

Table 4.2.4: Shows Respondents’ opinion on the effects of the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system on sustainable democracy in member countries

Item	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Undecided
Stable and unbreakable democratic transition	216 (60.2%)	140 (32.6%)	50 (11.6%)	24 (5.6%)	-
Reduction of coup detat in member country	250 (58.1%)	156 (36.3%)	10 (2.3%)	10 (2.3%)	4 (0.9%)
Improvement in electoral administration	120 (27.9%)	125 (29.1%)	100 (23.3%)	85 (19.8%)	
Ascension to political power through credible and transparent electoral process	140 (32.6%)	112 (26.1%)	90 (20.9%)	80 (18.6%)	8 (1.9%)
Reduction in electoral malpractice	180 (41.9%)	160 (37.2%)	50 (11.6%)	38 (8.8%)	2 (0.5%)
Improvement in accountable governance	200 (46.5%)	176 (40.9%)	24 (5.6%)	30 (7%)	-
Improvement in dividends of democracy	80 (18.6%)	96 (22.3%)	130 (30.2%)	124 (28.8%)	
Reduction of electoral violence	75 (17.4%)	81 (18.8%)	110 (25.6%)	160 (37.2%)	4 (0.9%)
Improved funding and mutual domestication of harmonized sub-regional electoral norms	46 (10.7%)	49 (11.4%)	214 (49.8%)	118 (27.4%)	3 (0.7%)

Source: field survey, 2020



The above table and figure displayed the effects of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system on sustainable democracy in member countries. In the area of stable and unbreakable democratic transition, 356 (82.8%) respondents agreed strongly that ECOWAS has a positive effect while 74 (17.2%) respondents disagreed. Generally in member states, there has been an unbreakable and stable democratic transition in the last few years. Nigeria for example, has a unique and stable period of transition. Nigeria conduct and has transitional programs every four years. Though not totally eradicated, there has been rapid reduction of coup detat in member states. Democracy seems to have come and stay in West African countries. 406 (94.4%) of the respondents agreed strongly

with the fact that coup detat in West African states have reduced while 20 (4.6%) disagreed and 4 (0.9%) were undecided.

As noted by a Nigerian respondent:

Generally in member states, there has been an unbreakable and stable democratic transition in the last few years. Nigeria and Ghana for example, has a unique and stable period of transition. The two countries conduct elections every four years. Though not totally eradicated, there has been rapid reduction of coup detat in ECOWAS member states and democracy seems to have come to stay in West African countries

FGD/ Nigeria civil servant/Male/ Abuja/ 20/10/ 2020

There is a little difference in the level of agreement and disagreement over the level of improvement in electoral administration of ECOWAS member countries. 245 of the respondents agreed strongly while 185 respondents disagreed with the assertion. Much difference is seen under the ascension to political power through credible and transparent electoral process. 252 (58.7%) of the respondents agreed while 170 (39.5%) of the respondents disagreed. 8 (1.9%) were undecided.

The positive effect of ECOWAS funding and mutual domestication of harmonized sub-regional electoral norms has not really been felt in most member countries. 332 (77.2%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that there's improved funding and mutual domestication of harmonized sub-regional electoral norms in member countries while 95 respondents (22.1%) agreed strongly with the assertion that there is mutual domestication of harmonized electoral norms and processes in member countries. 3 respondents were undecided. Electoral violence still prevails in many member states as attested to by 270 (62.8%) of the respondents who agreed strongly that electoral violence is still much in member states. This is different from the opinion of 156 (36.2%) respondents who agreed that electoral violence has reduced. 4 (0.9%) of the respondents were undecided. What the above results shows is that the effects of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system on sustainable democracy, especially as it relates to democratic sustainability has been positive as confirmed by 376 (87.4%) of the respondents while 54 (12.6%) opined that there is accountable governance in ECOWAS member countries.

4.2.5: Objective: 5.The challenges of ECOWAS electoral support assistance to member states

Table 4.2.5: Shows the frequency distribution of respondents opinion on the challenges of ECOWAS Electoral Support System to member country

Item	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Strongly disagreed	Disagreed	Undecided
Adoption of unfavourable colonial and western political system	86 (20%)	110 (25.6%)	130 (30.2%)	102 (23.7%)	2 (0.5%)
Poor funding of electoral process	208 (48.4%)	119 (27.7%)	51 (11.9%)	45 (10.5%)	7 (1.6%)
Globalisation	78 (18.1%)	98 (22.8%)	140 (32.6%)	110 (25.6%)	4 (0.9%)
Poor political culture	180 (41.9%)	69 (16.1%)	85 (19.8%)	91 (21.2%)	5 (1.2%)
Weak electoral policing	150 (34.9%)	160 (37.2%)	48 (11.2%)	69 (16.1%)	3 (0.7%)
Partial electoral umpire	204 (47.4%)	184 (42.8%)	20 (4.7%)	13 (3%)	9 (2.1%)
Lack of the input of ICTs facilities for elections	280 (65.1%)	120 (27.9%)	20 (4.7%)	9 (2.1%)	1 (0.2%)
Promotion of sectional political agenda	120 (27.9%)	166 (38.6%)	70 (16.3%)	61 (14.2%)	13 (3%)
Poor quality of democratic dividends	184 (42.8%)	196 (45.6%)	24 (5.6%)	25 (5.8%)	1 (0.2%)

Source: field survey, 2020

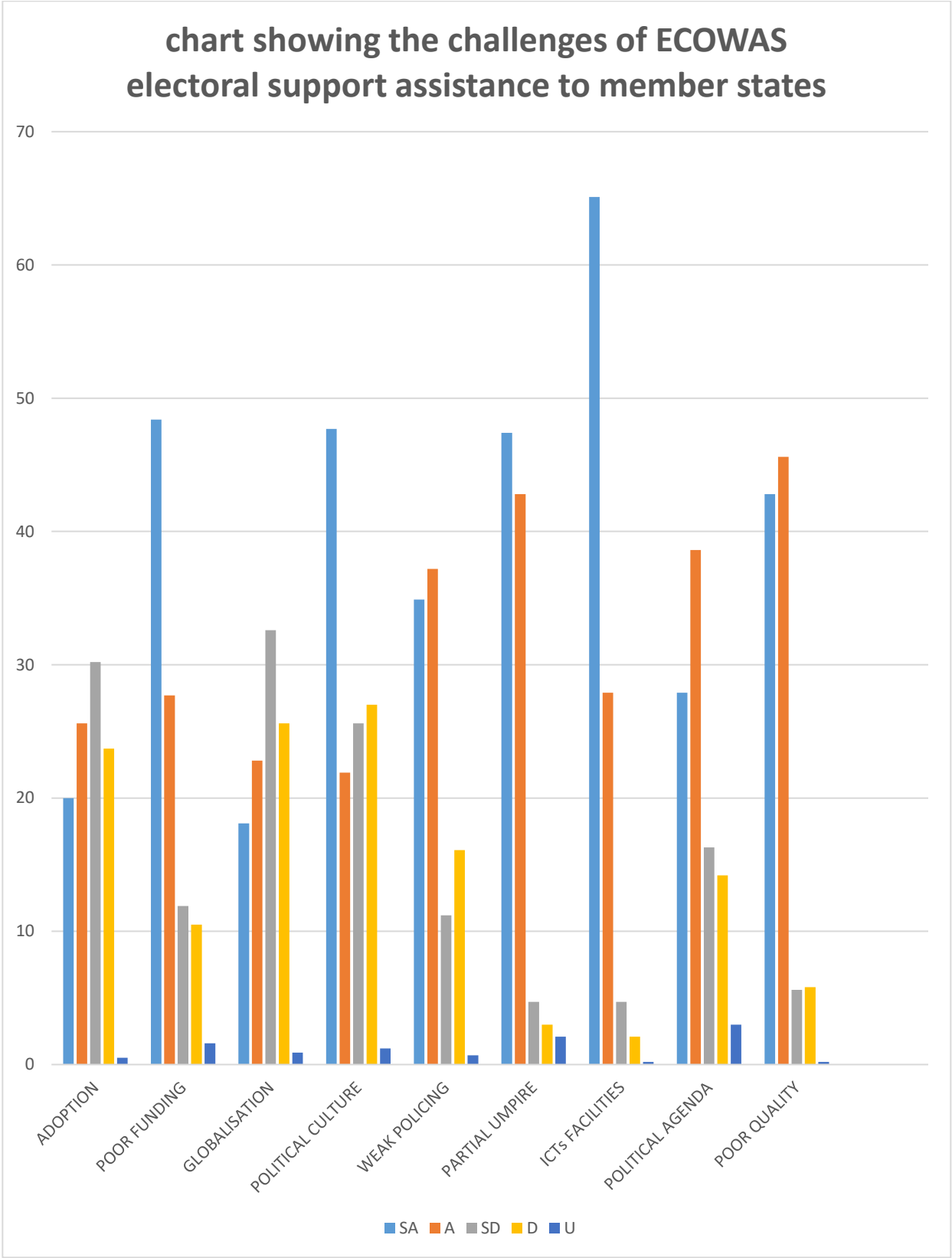


Table 4.2.5 and fig. 4.2.5 above revealed the challenges of ECOWAS electoral support system to member states. Some of the challenges highlighted included the adoption of unfavourable colonial and western political system, poor funding of electoral process, globalisation, poor political culture, weak electoral policing, partial electoral umpire, lack of the input of ICTs facilities for elections, promotion of sectional political agenda, and poor quality of democratic dividends. ECOWAS members mainly consists of Anglophone and Francophone countries as the Anglophone region is dominated by nations who had Britain’s antecedent such as Nigeria and Ghana while Francophone nations are regarded as French speaking nations due to their colonial affiliation with

France. Most of the respondents in the study, as reflected in the table, subscribed to the view that their colonial experience determined the type of political system adopted in each member country with a negative impact on indigenous political system. This is evident as 53.9% of the respondents stated that the adoption of colonial and western political and economic structures as major challenges of ECOWAS electoral support assistance to members. This is partly due to overdependence of member nations on a western political economy structures they less understand and less control. With the political and economic influence of their ex-colonial masters, the socio-political activities in West African countries are largely entangled in the Western concept of democracy and good governance.

However, 45.6 percent of the respondents opined that unfavourable colonial and western political system is not a challenge to sustainable democracy in ECOWAS member countries. Furthermore, poor funding of electoral process is a big challenge to the electoral support mission of ECOWAS. Table 4.2.5 revealed that a high percentage (76.1 percent) of the respondents responded that poor funding affect the internal electoral process of member countries. With poor funding from ECOWAS, membership electoral process has largely been incapacitated by insufficient funding to establish a credible election in its member countries as the funding of the internal electoral process are mainly borne alone by the concerned countries.

Globalisation has a moderate and positive impact on ECOWAS electoral support mechanism as 58.2 percent of the respondents subscribed to this. More so, 40.1 percent stated that globalisation is not a challenge to ECOWAS electoral support mechanism. Globalisation has created a network of communication among nations as each nation is conscious of the kind of leadership qualities to be exhibited to the world; the world has become global village and Africans are exposed to virtually all the electoral policies and procedures existing in the world. This has created a form of true consciousness on the citizens of West African nations about electoral processes. Globalization has also enable ECOWAS to monitor the political development in member countries. However, many ECOWAS member countries have weak ICTs penetrations

401 (93%) of the respondents strongly agreed that lack of ICTs supports by the ECOWAS for election is a challenge to credible electoral process in ECOWAS member countries while 6.8% respondents disagreed while one respondent was undecided. 89% of the respondents identified electoral fraud as a serious challenge of the ECOWAS electoral support system to its members while 7 percent disagreed with 2% indecision.

As opined by a respondent:

There is no gainsaying about the fact that opportunists take advantage of elections to foment troubles in virtually all the ECOWAS state. I think to curb this trend it is important that ECOWAS work towards promoting fraud-free electioneering process. When there is minimal electoral fraud, we can as well expect less violence or crisis. This is true because the opportunists see election as a way of enhancing their personal aggrandisement and fortunes (IDI/Benin Republic/Female/EMB staff)

The following opinion expressed by a Nigeria respondent on troubled election in West African countries is also instructive:

One of the challenges of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system might be facing could be inability of the body to understand the electoral terrain (e.g. the operating laws and the culture of the people of Nigeria) that in turn influences electoral successes is a missing link. In some cases the prevailing electoral rigging before elections is largely culpable for post electoral crises despite the fact that ECOWAS is known for mediation and resolution in membership electoral process (FGD/Nigeria/Female/Student/July, 2020)

Further interpretation of the result unfolded that financial constraint is one of the major challenges facing ECOWAS electoral assistance to member states. This is established in the following excerpt:

Due to funding constraint, ECOWAS support does not cover political party and CSOs. This consequently makes ECOWAS absent from the vital support terrain. There is need for ECOWAS support to be extended to political parties and CSOs not only during election but also in the periods beyond election. So far, Ghana has not received much support from ECOWAS in terms of training and support to political parties and CSOs; although it has helped through its mediation efforts in campaign periods to sustain peace and stability to allow election take place (IDI/Ghana/Male/EMB staff/August, 2019).

4.3. Discussion of Findings

This study found that election observation missions and monitoring are the major areas of ECOWAS support system to enhance and entrench sustainable democracy in its member states. These efforts have conferred credibility on the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system. Although the quality of observers sent for observation is sometimes questionable, yet ECOWAS has done fairly well in the area of election observations, which has raised the credibility of many elections in member countries. Even though, electoral monitoring is prime in the electoral assistance programme of the ECOWAS, the activities of the organization is also noticeable in the area of peace advocacy and post-election adjudicatory and reconciliatory roles as witnessed in Gambia. However, ECOWAS has not performed optimally in its electoral support system owing to the fact that the organisation's activities are not felt at all-time except during election periods. The ECOWAS need to have a system that is comprehensive enough by way of continual assistance in all the facets of its electoral process even after elections in member countries.

The study equally found that most members of the ECOWAS have embraced democratic tenets in their electoral process leading to sustained democratic transition in many member countries, including Nigeria, Ghana, Benin Republic, Liberia and Sierra Leone, among others. The electoral support system has also contributed to the improvement of the electoral process with the donation of Information and Communications Technologies to support such electoral process. The post election conflict management dialogues being organised by ECOWAS has also helped to check possible violation of electoral ideals while also pointing out where amendment ought to be made. Such gesture has toned down the temper and tempo of political activities in many ECOWAS countries.

As much as the research findings shows the domestication of ECOWAS's good governance initiatives in member countries, it is pertinent to state that more is expected by member states in the areas of ECOWAS policy aimed at training and capacity building for electoral personnel as much has not been done by ECOWAS to improve the quality of staff of the Electoral Management Bodies in member countries. Training is a very important aspect of enhancing the electoral process that ECOWAS has not really worked on. It is important that new members of the electoral commission are well trained for effective delivery of duty and to ensure smooth running of the electoral process. Similarly, ECONEC is yet to do much in most member states by facilitating inter country exchange

training, in which one country can send staff to another to learn for some time and vice-versa. ECONEC can also do or send a peer learning/review team to member countries.

The research findings also confirmed the openness of political space in many of ECOWAS member countries as more political parties are registered to contest election without any member country adopting single party system. However, there is the problem of coordination, funding and monitoring of those parties. In the area of zero tolerance to non-democratic governance, ECOWAS has done a lot in this regards having reversed coups in a number of countries with a democratically elected government, including Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau.

The study confirmed that ECOWAS electoral support system has impacted and promoted sustainable democracy in its member states as amplified by the fact that most respondent in the study indicated that coup d'état are now very minimal as part of the political governance landscape of the ECOWAS region. In its place, elections, as promoted and supported by ECOWAS electoral assistance support system have become duly embraced by ECOWAS member states. There has been unbreakable and stable democratic transition in Nigeria and Ghana. The two countries have a unique and stable period of transition as they conduct elections every four years. Though not totally eradicated, there has been rapid reduction of coup d'état in ECOWAS member states and democracy seems to have come to stay in West African countries.

In line with the above findings, improved electoral administration, funding of electoral process and the mutual domestications of ECOWAS harmonized regional electoral norms have contributed to assisting in the deepening of sustainable democracy in member states. On the negative side, the study came out clearly with findings that electoral violence still exist in member states.

The study found, among amongst other factors, over dependent and adoption of ECOWAS countries' ex-colonial masters political structures, which they less understood, and which are far less relevant to the traditional African political process as one of their greatest challenges of sustainable democracy. Such foreign political inputs contradict the traditional electoral terrain in West Africa, including the operating laws and the political culture of the people. The non-availability of sufficient funding to support most political actors in the electioneering process was found to be another key factor against the strengthening of sustainable democracy in the sub-region. Due to funding constraint, ECOWAS support does not cover funding of political party and CSOs. This consequently makes ECOWAS absent from these vital support terrains. There is need for

ECOWAS support to be extended to political parties and CSOs not only during election but also in the periods beyond elections.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary of Findings

The aim of this study was to assess the effects of the EEASS on sustainable democracy in member countries while its objectives were to examine the main thrusts of the EEASS to member countries, investigate the extent to which members have domesticated the Good Governance requirements for EEASS, evaluate the extent to which members have benefitted from the EEASS, assess the effects of EEASS on sustainable democracy in member states, and identify the challenges of EEASS in member countries.

This study found that the main thrusts of the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system include electoral monitoring and observation, financial assistance, training and enlightenment, among others. However, from the analysis of respondents' responses, ECOWAS has only performed very well on observation and monitoring, but only fair on other support systems such as financial assistance. On the crucial dimensions of ECOWAS electoral functions, it was found out that majority of West African nations prefer to seek for funds outside the organization as a result of inaccessibility of funds within the commission and lack of confidence in ECOWAS. Despite this, majority of West African countries still seek the support of ECOWAS on other issues such as observation, security and technical support. Nonetheless, the study discovered that ECOWAS has been able to fight against tenure elongation by greedy and power drunk politicians in West Africa.

It has also helped in creating good platforms for learning and sharing of experience among its member states.

The study found out that ECOWAS member States have amended their electoral laws in line with the demand of the ECOWAS electoral assistance requirements to improve transparency in their electoral process. The appointment of members of electoral bodies also followed the guidelines of ECOWAS through the recommendation of ECONEC. The electoral bodies in countries like Nigeria and Benin are reasonably independent of the government and as such could make non-partisan decisions. The study found out that there is a need for the proper use of technology to foster transparent and credible transition of power in West African countries. On the effects of ECOWAS electoral assistance support system on sustainable democracy and good governance in West Africa, the study found that ECOWAS member states are beginning to develop good tendency towards democracy and good governance. In this regard, majority of the respondents across the three study areas preferred democracy to other forms of governments. Thus, the research shows that democracy and its accompanied tenets are becoming increasingly acceptable in West Africa.

The study revealed that the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system is a credible mechanism for promoting sustainable democracy in West Africa as majority of the respondents saw it as an interface that is worth sustaining. However, the findings also exposed the negative tendencies of the electoral support system with reference to the expensive nature of the electoral process and the tendency to subjugate member States' sovereignty through ECOWAS monitoring of members' internal election processes. On the level of involvement of the ECOWAS in democratic processes of member States, the study revealed that ECOWAS offers electoral assistance support system before, throughout and after election process but with far less support after the elections.

The positive effects of ECOWAS assistance was majorly felt on stable and unbreakable democratic transition, reduction of coup d'état in member country and improvement in accountable governance. ECOWAS assistance has been fair in the area of improvement in electoral administration, and reduction in electoral malpractices.

The study revealed that factors such as poor funding of electoral processes, partial electoral umpire, and lack of the input of ICTs facilities for elections are major challenges of the ECOWAS electoral support with negative impacts on the efficacy of ECOWAS electoral support while factors

such as adoption of unfavorable colonial and western political system, globalization, and weak electoral policing moderately influence the organization's functions.

5.2. Conclusion

In line with the study objectives, the study concluded that ECOWAS electoral assistance support system is a useful tool for enhancing good governance among its members but needs constant review to meet the changing social and political needs of the people of the region. Furthermore, it has been established that ECOWAS support system can only make sense and become resilient on sustainable democracy when there is credible internal mechanisms to adequately domesticate such electoral support system among members. ECOWAS assistance is only relatively effective in the period around elections in most cases. This, to a large extent is a big pitfall of the institution because the success of any election is predicated on all the phases of the electoral process starting from the pre-election period to the post electoral period. Thus, the study has shown that electoral assistance rendered by ECOWAS needs not be time-bound.

While challenges continue to becloud the efficacy of the ECOWAS electoral assistance support system, it was established in the study that through the cooperation of member countries, the assistance can be consolidated and made sustainable. Hence, there is increasing need to have a comprehensive review of the assistance to cover other stakeholders in the electoral process ,especially the security sector apart from the electoral umpire, which happens to be the prime of ECOWAS assistance.

5.3. Recommendations

In order to effectively bring about further consolidation and deepening of democracy in West Africa through the activities of ECOWAS electoral assistance support systems, the following recommendations are suggested.

First, ECOWAS assistance support system should be reviewed to take care of all phases of political transition – pre-election, during, and post-election phases to ensure that the loopholes in electoral processes are proactively blocked before, during, and after elections in member States to enhance less trouble-free electoral transitions. ECOWAS should also understand the unique characteristics of the electoral process in each member states and bring up peculiar policies that are best suited for the electoral process in each member country.

ECOWAS assistance should be tailored to addressing the problem of funding associated with the training and re-training of the electoral personnel with the inclusion of other key

stakeholders in the electoral process, including the security forces and the media personnel to promote best practices in the electoral system. The training and sensitization programs of the ECOWAS electoral support system should be extended beyond the election periods in order to make it part of the socialization process and norms of the people in each member States.

To achieve optimal result, it is important that ECOWAS court be repositioned to sanction election riggers and promote justice in West Africa. This is essential for the promotion of constitutionalism and fair play in all aspect of governance. This will further add to the credibility of ECOWAS electoral support system for the promotion of good governance in the West African sub-region.

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Appendix i: Questionnaire in English

Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies,
University of Ilorin,
P.MP.1515,
Kwara state,
Nigeria.

Dear Respondent,

QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a Postgraduate student of the Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. I am currently carrying out a study on “**Impact of the Economic Community of West African States Electoral Support System on Sustainable Democracy on Member States**”. This questionnaire is aimed at obtaining data on this study. Your cooperation in giving appropriate answers to the questions asked in the questionnaire would go a long way in making the study a huge success.

Please note that your name is not required and your anonymity is guaranteed. I want to assure you that this questionnaire is purely for academic research. In the light of the above, please respond to the following questions herein below;

Section A: Respondent’s Bio-data

Kindly choose appropriately from available categories.

1. Age_____ (a) 18 – 39 []; (b) 40 – 59 []; (c) 60 and above []
2. Sex_____ (a) Male, (b) Female
3. Country of residence _____
4. Duration of residence_____ (a) Less than ten years (b) Above ten years.
5. Level of education _____ (a) No formal education, (b) below higher education (c) higher education
6. Profession/occupation _____ (a) formal sector, (b) informal sector, (c) unemployed
7. Political interest_____ (a) Partisan politics (b) Non-partisan politics (c) Indifferent
8. Religion: _____ (a) Christian (b) Islam (c) African Traditional Religion (ATR)
(d) Other (specify) _____

Section B: ECOWAS electoral assistance system and its significance

Kindly score ECOWAS’ assistance on the following parameters:

(Code: 5 – excellent; 4 – very good; 3 –good; 2 – fair; 1 – poor)

9. Monitoring _____
10. Structure _____
11. Financial assistance to member states _____
12. Personnel assistance _____
13. Pre-electoral support _____
14. Training and enlightenment support _____
15. Electoral Support _____
16. Peaceful transitions _____
17. Post-electoral support _____
18. Conflict management _____
19. Validation of elections _____
20. National integration _____
21. Regional integration _____
22. Deepening of democratic culture _____
23. Diplomacy _____
24. Party politics _____
25. Control of media and information _____

26. Election Observation Mission _____
27. ECONEC (ECOWAS Network of Electoral Commissions) _____
28. What would you consider most imperative in ECOWAS electoral assistance?(a) Funding
(b) Monitoring (c) Security (d) Technical support (e) Other (specify) _____
29. Has ECOWAS been able to achieve the harmonization of electoral norms in member states? (a) yes (b) no (c) undecided (d) no idea
30. Do West African countries resort to ECOWAS assistance? (a) Yes, (b) No, (c) No idea
31. If the answer to the last question (30) is yes, how often? (a) very often, (b) occasionally, (c) No idea
32. If the answer is no, why? (a) Lack of confidence in ECOWAS, (b) Lack of access to ECOWAS, (c) There are better sources of external supports other than that of ECOWAS, (d) No idea

Section C: Factors affecting the efficacy of ECOWAS support system

Kindly rank the perceived impacts of the following factors on the efficacy of ECOWAS support system.

(**Code: 4** – Positive impact; **3** –Normal/moderate impact; **2** – Negative impact; **1** –No impact)

33. Past colonial experience of ECOWAS states _____
34. Poor funding of ECOWAS _____
35. Globalisation _____
36. Cultural issues _____
37. Terrorism _____
38. Religious diversity _____
39. Shortage of ECOWAS personnel _____
40. Others (specify) _____
41. Co-operation on the part of member states _____

Section D: Consolidation of ECOWAS electoral assistance

42. Do you think ECOWAS electoral assistance is worth sustaining? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Undecided

43. If your answer to the last question is yes, why? (a) It has helped to sustain good governance (b) It promotes regional integration (c) It helps in conflict mitigation (c) all of the above (d) other (specify).....
44. If your answer is no, why? (a) It has no impact (b) it amounts to subjugation of sovereignty of individual country (c) it is expensive (d) all of the above (e) other (specify).....
45. What would you suggest to ECOWAS to improve electoral assistance? (a) Expert personnel (b) technical support (c) improved financial assistance (d) all of the above (e) other (specify).....
46. What would you like to suggest as the best form of government for ECOWAS community? (a) Socialism (b) Democracy (c) Autocracy (d) Other (specify).....
47. What type of party system would you recommend to ECOWAS for member states? (a) Single party system (b) two party system (c) multiparty system (d) Other (specify).....
48. Would you suggest that ECOWAS electoral support system be entirely overhauled? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Undecided (d) other (specify).....
49. To what extent should ECOWAS be involved in electoral processes? ECOWAS should participate (a) in every phase of election (b) only during election (c) only on invitation (d) other (specify)
50. In few words, kindly give additional useful information about ECOWAS electoral assistance and good governance in West Africa.....
.....
.....

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Eyesan OKORODUDU

Appendix ii: Questionnaire in French

Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies,

University of Ilorin,
P.MP.1515
Kwara state,
Nigeria.

Madame, Monsieur,

Je suis un étudiant en troisième cycle du Centre pour la paix et les études stratégiques, Université d'Ilorin, l'Etat de Kwara, Nigeria. Je suis en train de faire une recherche sur la "**L'assistance démocratique et électorale de la CEDEAO en Afrique de l'Ouest: défis, opportunités et leçons apprises**". Ce questionnaire vise à obtenir des informations ayant trait à cet thème. Votre collaboration à donner des réponses appropriées aux questions posées dans le questionnaire sera utile pour la réussite de ce travail. Veuillez noter que votre anonymat sera gardé. Par ailleurs, je tiens à vous rassurer que ce questionnaire est purement destiné pour la recherche universitaire. Au vu de ce qui précède, s'il vous plaît répondez aux questions suivantes présentées ci-dessous

SECTION A: Profile du répondant

Veuillez choisir parmi les catégories disponibles.

1. Age _____ (a) de 18 à 39 ans []; (b) 40 - 59 ans []; (c) 60 ans ou plus [].
2. Sexe _____ (a) Masculin (b) Féminine
3. Pays de résidence _____
4. Durée de résidence _____ (a) Moins de dix ans (b) plus de dix ans
5. Niveau d'éducation _____ (a) Aucune éducation formelle, (b) en dessous de l'enseignement supérieur (c) l'enseignement supérieur.
6. Profession _____ (a) secteur formel, (b) secteur informel, (c) chômeurs
7. intérêt politique _____ (a) La politique partisane (b) la politique non-partisanes (c) Indifférent.
8. Religion: _____ (a) Christianité (b) l'Islam (c) Religion traditionnelle africaine (ATR) (d) Autre (précisez) _____

SECTION B: Assistance électorale de la CEDEAO et l'importance.

Veuillez évaluer l'assistance de la CEDEAO dans les domaines suivants:

(Code: 5 - excellent; 4 - très bien; 3 -bien; 2 –assez bien; 1 - mauvais)

9. Surveillance _____
10. Structure _____

11. L'aide financière aux Etats membres _____
12. Assistance Personnel
13. Soutien pré-électorale _____
14. Soutien Formation _____
15. Soutien électorale _____
16. Transitions pacifiques _____
17. Soutien post-électorale
18. La gestion des conflits _____
19. Validation des élections _____
20. L'intégration nationale _____
21. L'intégration régionale _____
22. Approfondissement de la culture démocratique _____
23. Diplomatie _____
24. La politique des partis _____
25. Le contrôle des médias et l'information _____
26. Mission D'observation Électorale _____
27. ECONEC (Réseau des Commissions Électorales de La CEDEAO) _____
28. Qu'est-ce que vous considérez très impératif dans l'assistance électorale de la CEDEAO? (A) le Financement (b) le Surveillance (c) la Sécurité (d) le soutien technique (e) Autre (précisez) _____
29. Est-ce que la CEDEAO a été en mesure harmoniser les normes électorales dans les Etats membres? (a) oui (b) non (c) indécis (d) aucune idée
30. Est-ce que les pays de l'Afrique de l'ouest recourent à l'aide de la CEDEAO? (a) Oui, (b) Non, (c) Aucune idée
31. Si la réponse à la dernière question (30) est oui, à quelle fréquence? (a) très souvent, (b) de temps en temps, (c) Aucune idée
32. Si la réponse est non, pourquoi? (a) Le manque de confiance a la CEDEAO, (b) Le manque d'accès aux services de la CEDEAO, (c) Il existe d'autres sources de soutien meilleur que celui de la CEDEAO, (d) Aucune idée

SECTION C: Les facteurs déterminants de l'efficacité du soutien de la CEDEAO.

Veuillez mentionner les impacts perçus sur l'efficacité du soutien de la CEDEAO.

(Code: 4 - Impact positif; 3 -Normal / impact modéré; 2 - Impact négatif; 1 -Pas impact)

33. l'expérience du colonial passé des pays de la CEDEAO

34. le manque de financement de la CEDEAO _____

35. La mondialisation _____

36. Les questions culturelles _____

37. Le terrorisme _____

38. La diversité religieuse _____

39. le manque de personnel de la CEDEAO _____

40. Autres (précisez) _____

41. La coopération de la part des Etats membres _____

SECTION D: La Consolidation de l'assistance électorale de la CEDEAO

42. Pensez-vous que l'assistance électorale de la CEDEAO vaut la peine d'être soutenu? (a) Oui (b) Non (c) Indécis

43. Si votre réponse à la dernière question est oui, pourquoi? (a) Elle a contribué à soutenir la bonne gouvernance (b) Elle favorise l'intégration régionale (c) Elle contribue à atténuer les conflits (c) tout ce qui précède (d) autre (précisez)

44. Si votre réponse est non, pourquoi? (a) elle n'a pas d'impact (b), il revient à la subjugation de la souveraineté des pays membres (c) elle coute chère (d) tout ce qui précède (e) autre (précisez)

45. Que suggéreriez-vous à la CEDEAO afin d'améliorer l'assistance électorale? (a) des experts dans le domaine (b) un appui technique (c) l'amélioration de l'aide financière (d) tout ce qui précède (e) autre (précisez)

46. Selon vous quel serait le meilleur régime politique dans la zone CEDEAO? (a) Le socialisme (b) la démocratie (c) la dictature (d) Autre (précisez)

47. Quel type de système de parti recommanderiez-vous à la CEDEAO pour les Etats membres? (a) système de parti unique (b) deux systèmes de partie (c) le multipartisme (d) Autre (précisez).....

48. Suggérez-vous quelle système de soutien électoral de la CEDEAO soit entièrement remanié? (a) Oui (b) Non (c) Indécis (d) autre (précisez).....

49. Dans quelle mesure la CEDEAO devrait être impliquée dans le processus électoral? La CEDEAO devrait participer (a) dans toutes les phases de l'élection (b) que pendant l'élection (c) uniquement sur invitation (d) autre (précisez)

50. En quelques mots, bien vouloir donner des informations utiles à propos de l'assistance électorale de la CEDEAO et de la bonne gouvernance en Afrique de l'Ouest

Merci.

Cordialement

EyesanOkorodudu

Appendix iii: Interview guide

Research Question 1: What is the significance of ECOWAS (electoral) support programme in relation to the deepening of democratic processes in your country? How should ECOWAS' democratic assistance in your country be evaluated?

1. How has the ECOWAS long term observation Mission helped in facilitating the creation of an enabling environment for the conduct of free, fair, credible and peaceful elections in your country specifically in relations to the following parameters?
 - Access to National and Private Media by all Political Parties
 - Access to state infrastructure and facilities (e.g. stadium) for campaign purposes by all political parties
 - Compilation and production of a credible and acceptable register of voters by all relevant stakeholders.
 - Implementation of Electoral laws and principles based on international best practices.
2. How do the ECOWAS Fact Finding Missions and Long Term Observation Missions facilitate collaboration amongst all electoral stakeholders and long term observation missions assisted in facilitating collaboration in your country?
3. In what ways do the ECOWAS Fact Finding Missions mitigate electoral violence and enhance democratic processes and deepening of democracy in your country?
4. How do you perceive the role of ECOWAS Observation Missions in ensuring the conduct of peaceful, credible and fair election in your country in the following areas?
 - Pre-electoral, Electoral and Post-electoral phases and processes.
 - Free and fair elections
 - Peaceful transition
 - Peaceful settlement of Post-electoral disputes
5. What advice would you give to ECOWAS' electoral observation missions to enhance their efforts in ensuring that the conduct of elections in Member States conforms with international best practices,
6. How beneficial is the ECOWAS technical, financial and Capacity building programme to the electoral process in your country in terms of;
 - Training of Electoral Officials

- Women's Participation, Participation of People with Disabilities, Youth etc.
 - Voter education
 - Enactment of credible electoral codes/laws
 - Compilation of voters' registers
 - Training of electoral officials, monitors and observers
7. Does the technical and financial assistance provided by the ECOWAS contribute to the conduct of successful elections and prevention of electoral disputes in your country?
 8. Does the implementation of ECOWAS' Democratic Principles strengthen the capacity of political parties to effectively compete in elections and minimize the impact of incumbency factor in elections in your country?

Research Questions 2: What are the gains of ECOWAS' electoral assistance/support system and programme between 2005 and 2015 in your country?

1. How many ECOWAS Election Observation Missions have been dispatched to your country in the period 2005 – 2015?
2. Access the role of the Electoral Observer Mission in the conduct of peaceful and credible elections in your country?
3. In what ways has the ECONEC facilitated experience sharing and peer learning enhanced the electoral management bodies in Member State?
4. In what ways does the validation of elections by ECOWAS Election Observation Mission lent credibility to the electoral process in your country?
5. To what extent have ECOWAS efforts in developing and harmonizing the ground principle of electoral norms amongst Member States succeeded in consolidating democracy in the ECOWAS region?
6. Access the impact of ECOWAS capacity building training and workshop on promoting engagement with the electoral process, by political parties, CSOs, CBOs, and other relevant stakeholders, women, youth, persons with disabilities?
7. How has the ECOWAS Observer Mission been able to settle pre and post electoral disagreements?

8. Has ECOWAS been able to achieve the harmonization of electoral norms or processes in member states and how has that triggered or inhibited the democratization efforts in the region
9. To what extent have ECOWAS Missions' recommendations improve electoral process in your country?
10. Has the networking of the Electoral Management Bodies in member states been able to enhance best practices in the conduct of election in your country?
11. Has the training programmes organized by EOCWAS been able to enhance the capacity of political parties to promote internal democracy, self-organization, sustainability and elaboration of manifestos?
12. Has the capacity building workshop organized by the ECOWAS for women and youth organizations enhanced their participation at all levels of politics?

Research Question 3: In what ways can ECOWAS assist in consolidating and sustaining democracy in West Africa?

1. Assess the impact of ECOWAS training workshops in electoral outcome in relating to women, youth, and persons with disabilities engagement or involvement in decision making process?
2. To what extent has ECOWAS been able to develop minimum regional normative standards to govern the conduct of elections in West Africa?
3. Examine the role of ECOWAS in strengthening the capacity of the legislature in law making and performance of oversight function?
4. To what extent has ECOWAS enforcement actions in the implementation of its various normative frameworks on democracy and good governance determine or propel Member States to adopt and enforce them?
5. Assess the role of ECOWAS in capacity building for officials of Election Management Bodies in the performance of their professional duties?
6. Has ECOWAS been able to develop a minimum regional norms and standards governing the conduct of elections and electoral administration?
7. Do workshop programmes organized by the ECOWAS for the media been able to ensure their vibrancy and non-partisanship in the electoral processes in member states?

Research Question 4: What is the response of Member States to ECOWAS’ attempt at deepening democratic culture in West Africa?

1. To what extent has your country domesticated and implemented the various democratic norms and principles enshrined in its normative frameworks?
2. Do the representatives of your country participate in the various training, workshops and sensitization programmes organized by the ECOWAS on democratic issues?
3. Does your national human rights institution participate actively in the activities of the Network of National Human Rights Institutions in West Africa (NNHRI-WA)?
4. Does the Electoral Management Body of your country participate actively in the activities of the ECONEC?
5. Does your country implement the recommendations of the ECOWAS Electoral Observation Mission or other committees constituted by the ECOWAS Commission?

Research Question 5: In what ways can ECOWAS assist in promoting and sustaining the credible and peaceful conduct of elections in West Africa in relation to the following electoral process?

- Technical support for Electoral Management Bodies, Political Parties and Civil Society Organizations
- Financial support to Electoral Management Bodies, Political Parties and Civil Society Organizations
- Capacity building for Electoral Management Bodies, Political Parties and Civil Society Organizations
- Building Popular confidence in Democratic and Good Governance principles
- Sensitization Programmes on popular participation in decision making processes for women and the youth.

Research Question 6: In what ways can ECOWAS contribute to access to, and use of the media to strengthen electoral processes in West Africa?

1. Assess how ECOWAS impress upon the ownership structure of the media in your country to promote positive ideals and influences on electoral processes in your country.
2. Assess how ECOWAS can use the regulatory laws of the media in your country to impact on the holding of free, fair, peaceful and credible elections?

3. Evaluate the level of the opportunities available to all registered political parties to gain access to both state and private media for their political campaigns during the electoral process in your country. Can ECOWAS play a role here?
4. Assess the sanctions regimes for the media in your country that denounces the use of inciting broadcast and hate speeches during the electoral process in your country. How can ECOWAS contribute to the deepening of the effects of its sanctions?
5. Give an appraisal of the role of the social media in the electoral process in your country? In what ways can ECOWAS contribute to the promotion of responsible broadcasting in the social media space?

Appendix iv- ECOWAS Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance

Communauté Economique des Etats de l’Afrique de l’Ouest

**ECOWAS Protocol A/SP1/12/01 on Democracy and
Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol relating to
the Mechanism For Conflict Prevention, Management,
Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security**

Executive Secretariat
Dakar, December
2001

PREAMBLE

WE, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS);

MINDFUL OF the ECOWAS Treaty signed in Cotonou on 24 July 1993, notably its Article 58;

MINDFUL OF the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security signed in Lome on 10 December 1999;

CONSIDERING all the issues enumerated or reaffirmed in the preamble to the Protocol of 10 December 1999 referred to above;

MINDFUL OF the principles set out in the OAU Solemn Declaration on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa adopted in Abuja on 8 and 9 May 2000 and the Decision AHG. DEC 142 (XXV) on the framework for OAU's reaction to unconstitutional change of government, adopted in Algiers in July 1999;

CONSIDERING the Harare Declaration adopted by the Commonwealth on 20 October 1991 and the Bamako Declaration adopted by the member countries of the Francophonie on 3 November 2000;

CONSIDERING also the Cotonou Declaration adopted on 6 December 2000 at the end of the 4th international conference on new or restored democracies;

RECALLING that women's rights have been recognised and guaranteed in all international human rights instruments, notably the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women;

MINDFUL of the ratification of the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights and other international human rights instruments by the majority of the Member States and their solemn commitment to eliminate all forms of discrimination and harmful practices against women;

CONCERNED about the increasing wave of international terrorism;

CONCERNED also about the increasing incidence of conflicts caused by religious intolerance, political marginalisation and non-transparent elections;

HAVING OBSERVED that to become really effective, the Protocol of 10 December 1999 needs to be complemented through the incorporation of provisions concerning issues such as prevention of internal crises, democracy and good governance, the rule of law, and human rights;

HAVING DECIDED to enhance the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security;

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

DEFINITIONS:

The terms and expressions used in the present Supplementary Protocol have the same meanings as those used in the Protocol of 10th December 1999.

The list of definitions is completed as follows:

“Treaty” means the Revised Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) signed in Cotonou on 24 July 1993;

“Protocol” means the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, signed in Lome on 10th December 1999;

“Supplementary Protocol” means the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security;

“Community” means the Economic Community of West African States referred to under Article 2 of the Treaty;

“Member State” or **“Member States”** means a Member State or Member States of the Community as defined in paragraph 2 of Article 2 of the Treaty;

“Community citizen or citizens” means any national (s) of Member States who satisfy the conditions stipulated in the Protocol defining Community citizenship;

“Court of Justice” means the Court of Justice of the Community established under Article 15 of the Treaty;

“Authority” means the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States established by Article 7 of the Treaty;

“Mediation and Security Council” means the Mediation and Security Council as defined by Article 8 of the Protocol;

“Defence and Security Commission” means the Defence and Security Commission as defined in Article 18 of the Protocol;

“Executive Secretary” means the ECOWAS Executive Secretary appointed in accordance with Article 18 of the Treaty;

“Executive Secretariat” means the Executive Secretariat established under Article 17 of the Treaty;

“Deputy Executive Secretary” means the Deputy Executive Secretary in charge of Political Affairs, Defence and Security as referred to in Article 16 of the Protocol;

“ECOMOG” means the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group, which constitutes the Community’s intervention force as defined in Article 21 of the Protocol relating to the Mechanism etc;

“Armed Forces” includes the army, Airforce, Navy, and Gendarmerie;

“Security Forces” the Police, Gendarmerie, National Guards and other Forces assigned with security.

CHAPTER 1

PRINCIPLES

The provisions of this chapter complement and clarify the principles set out in Article 2 of the Protocol of 10 December 1999.

SECTION I: CONSTITUTIONAL CONVERGENCE PRINCIPLES

Article 1:

The following shall be declared as constitutional principles shared by all Member States:

- a) - Separation of powers - the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary.
- Empowerment and strengthening of parliaments and guarantee of parliamentary immunity.
- Independence of the Judiciary: Judges shall be independent in the discharge of their duties.
- The freedom of the members of the Bar shall be guaranteed; without prejudice to their penal or disciplinary responsibility in the event of contempt of court or breaches of the common law.

- b) Every accession to power must be made through free, fair and transparent elections.
- c) Zero tolerance for power obtained or maintained by unconstitutional means.
- d) Popular participation in decision-making, strict adherence to democratic principles and decentralisation of power at all levels of governance.
- e) The armed forces must be apolitical and must be under the command of a legally constituted political authority; no serving member of the armed forces may seek to run for elective political.
- f) Secularism and neutrality of the State in all matters relating to religion; freedom for each individual to practise, within the limits of existing laws, the religion of his/her choice everywhere on the national territory. The secularism shall extend to all parts of the State, but shall not deprive the State of the right to regulate, with due respect to human rights, the different religions practised on the national territory or to intervene when law and order break down as a result of any religious activity.
- g) The State and all its institutions belong to all the citizens; therefore none of their decisions and actions shall involve any form of discrimination, be it on an ethnic, racial, religion or regional basis.
- h) The rights set out in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and other international instruments shall be guaranteed in each of the ECOWAS Member States; each individual or organisation shall be free to have recourse to the common or civil law courts, a court of special jurisdiction, or any other national institution established within the framework of an international instrument on Human Rights, to ensure the protection of his/her rights.

In the absence of a court of special jurisdiction, the present Supplementary Protocol shall be regarded as giving the necessary powers to common or civil law judicial bodies.

- i) Political parties shall be formed and shall have the right to carry out their activities freely, within the limits of the law.

Their formation and activities shall not be based on ethnic, religious, regional or racial considerations. They shall participate freely and without hindrance or discrimination in any electoral process. The freedom of the opposition shall be guaranteed.

Each Member State may adopt a system for financing political parties, in accordance with criteria set under the law.

- j) The freedom of association and the right to meet and organise peaceful demonstrations shall also be guaranteed.
- k) The freedom of the press shall be guaranteed.
- l) All former Heads of State shall enjoy a special status including freedom of movement. They shall enjoy special benefits compatible to their status as former Heads of State.

SECTION II: ELECTIONS

Article2

1. No substantial modification shall be made to the electoral laws in the last six (6) months before the elections, except with the consent of a majority of Political actors.
2. All the elections shall be organised on the dates or at periods fixed by the Constitution or the electoral laws.
3. Member States shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that women have equal rights with men to vote and be voted for in elections, to participate in the formulation of government policies and the implementation thereof and to hold public offices and perform public functions at all levels of governance.

Article 3

The bodies responsible for organising the elections shall be independent or neutral and shall have the confidence of all the political actors. Where necessary, appropriate national consultations shall be organised to determine the nature and the structure of the bodies.

Article 4

1. Each ECOWAS Member State shall ensure the establishment of a reliable registry of births and deaths. A central registry shall be established in each Member State.
2. Member States shall cooperate in this area with a view to exchanging experiences and where necessary providing technical assistance to each other in the production of reliable voters' lists.

Article 5

The voters' lists shall be prepared in a transparent and reliable manner, with the collaboration of the political parties and voters who may have access to them whenever the need arises.

Article 6

The preparation and conduct of elections and the announcement of results shall be done in a transparent manner.

Article 7

Adequate arrangements shall be made to hear and dispose of all petitions relating to the conduct of elections and announcement of results.

Article 8

Member States shall use the services of civil society organisations involved in electoral matters to educate and enlighten the public on the need for peaceful elections devoid of all acts of violence.

Article 9

The party and/or candidate who loses the elections shall concede defeat to the political party and/or candidate finally declared the winner, following the guidelines and within the deadline stipulated by the law.

Article 10

All holders of power at all levels shall refrain from acts of intimidation or harassment against defeated candidates or their supporters.

SECTION III: ELECTION MONITORING AND ECOWAS ASSISTANCE

Article 11

The provisions of Article 42 of the Protocol of 10th December 1999 are hereby complemented by the provisions under this section.

Article 12

1. At the request of any Member State, ECOWAS may provide assistance in the conduct of any election.
2. Such assistance may take any form.
3. Also, ECOWAS may dispatch a monitoring team to the country concerned for the purpose of monitoring the elections.
4. The decision in this respect shall be taken by the Executive Secretary.

Article 13

1. As elections in a Member State approach, the Executive Secretary shall dispatch a fact-finding Mission to the Member State conducting an election.
2. This mission may be followed by an exploratory Mission aimed at:
 - ❑ collecting all texts governing the elections concerned;
 - ❑ gathering all information on the conditions under which the elections shall be conducted;
 - ❑ collecting all pertinent information relating to the contesting candidates or political parties;
 - ❑ meeting all candidates, political party leaders, government authorities and other competent bodies;
 - ❑ assessing the status of preparations for the elections;
 - ❑ gathering any other useful information that may provide a clear picture of the situation.

Article 14:

1. The Executive Secretary shall appoint the leader and the members of the Observer/Supervisory Mission, who shall be independent persons and nationals of Member States other than the Member State conducting the elections.
2. The Members of the Mission shall include women.
3. Staff of the Executive Secretariat shall be designated to assist the Mission.

Article 15:

1. The Observer/Supervisory Mission, with the documents collected by the exploratory Mission and the report prepared by the Mission, shall arrive in the Member State concerned at least forty-eight hours prior to the conduct of the elections.
2. The Observer/Supervisory Mission may be preceded by ECOWAS Staff, who shall prepare the meetings to be held between the Mission and the national authorities.
3. The Mission shall be expected to hold consultations with the relevant authorities of the host government for an exchange of views and in order to determine the mode of deployment in the host Member State.
4. It may establish co-operation links with NGO or any other observer teams while maintaining its autonomy.
5. The members of the Mission shall show restraint and refrain from making any individual statement. Any statement shall be made collectively and on behalf of the Mission by the team leader or a spokesperson appointed for this purpose.

Article 16:

1. The Mission shall remain in the country throughout the election period and until the election results are announced.
2. The Mission shall also submit a report to the Executive Secretary.
3. The Report shall comprise:
 - ❑ the Mission's own observations;
 - ❑ statements by witnesses;
 - ❑ its assessment of the conduct of the elections from the point of view of the

national laws governing the elections and the universal principles in electoral matters;

- ❑ its recommendations for the improvement of the conduct of future elections and monitoring Missions.

Article 17:

1. The Observer/Supervisory Mission's report shall be signed by all Members of the Mission and submitted to the Executive Secretary by the Mission's leader within fifteen (15) days with effect from the date of accomplishment of the Mission.
2. Before leaving the host country, the Mission shall convene a consultative meeting for the preparation of the report.
3. Any member of the Mission, who is unable to attend the meeting, shall submit a report in writing to the Mission's leader before leaving the country.
4. ECOWAS Staff shall assist the Mission in the preparation of the report

Article 18:

The report shall be forwarded by the Executive Secretary, together with his own observations, if necessary, to the Mediation and Security Council for recommendations to be made to the country concerned and/or to all Member States, and for measures to be taken, where necessary.

**SECTION IV: THE ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES, THE POLICE AND THE
SECURITY FORCES IN A DEMOCRACY**

Article 19:

1. The armed forces and police shall be non-partisan and shall remain loyal to the nation. The role of the armed forces shall be to defend the independence and the territorial integrity of the State and its democratic institutions.
2. The police and other security agencies shall be responsible for the maintenance of law and order and the protection of persons and their properties.
3. The armed forces, the police and other security agencies shall participate in ECOMOG missions as provided for in Article 28 of the Protocol.
4. They may also, on the decision of the constitutionally constituted authorities, participate in peacekeeping missions under the auspices of the African Union or the United Nations.
5. Members of the armed forces may be drafted to participate in national development

projects.

Article 20:

1. The armed forces, the police and other security agencies shall be under the authority of legally constituted civilian authorities.
2. The civilian authorities shall respect the apolitical nature of the armed forces and police. All political or trade union activities and propaganda shall be forbidden in the barracks and within the armed forces.

Article 21:

The armed and security forces personnel as citizens, shall be entitled to all the rights set out in the constitution, except as may be stated otherwise in their special regulations.

Article 22:

1. The use of arms to disperse non-violent meetings or demonstrations shall be forbidden. Whenever a demonstration becomes violent, only the use of minimal and/or proportionate force shall be authorised.
2. All cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment shall be forbidden.
3. The security forces, while carrying out investigations, shall not disturb or arrest family members or relations of the person presumed guilty or suspected of having committed an offence.

Article 23:

1. The armed forces, the police and other security agencies shall during their training receive instructions on the Constitution of their country, ECOWAS principles and regulations, human rights, humanitarian law and democratic principles. In this regard, seminars and meetings bringing together members of the armed forces, Police and other Security Agencies and other sectors of society shall be organised from time to time.
2. Joint training sessions shall also be arranged for members of the armed forces from different ECOWAS countries, the police, other security forces, university dons and members of the civil society.

Article 24:

1. The Member States undertake to strengthen their national agencies responsible for preventing and combating terrorism.
2. In accordance with Articles 3 (d) and 16 (1) of the Protocol, the Department of

Political Affairs, Defence and Security of the Executive Secretariat shall initiate joint activities for the national agencies of Member States in charge of preventing and combating terrorism.

SECTION V: POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND PROMOTION OF SOCIAL DIALOGUE

Article 25:

Member States agree that poverty alleviation and promotion of social dialogue are important factors for peace.

Article 26:

Member States undertake to provide the basic human needs of their populations.

Article 27:

Member States undertake to fight poverty effectively in their respective countries and within the Community, especially by:

- ❑ creating an environment conducive to private investment and the development of a dynamic and competitive private sector;
- ❑ providing the instruments necessary for the enhancement of job creation and for the development of the social sector as a matter of priority;
- ❑ ensuring equitable distribution of resources and income in order to consolidate national unity and solidarity;
- ❑ enhancing the integration of economic, financial and banking activities through harmonisation of commercial and financial laws and establishment of Community multi-national corporations.

Article 28:

1. Employers associations and trade unions shall be organised and/or strengthened in each Member State and at the regional level of ECOWAS.
2. Member States shall promote social dialogue. In this regard, employers associations and workers unions shall meet regularly among themselves and with political and administrative authorities with a view to preventing social conflict.
3. There shall be associations of farmers, artisans and artists in each Member State and at the sub-regional level of ECOWAS.

SECTION VI: EDUCATION, CULTURE AND RELIGION

Article 29:

Education, culture and religion are essential factors for peace, stability and development in each Member State.

Article 30:

1. There shall be regular exchanges of students and academics between Member States.
2. Community institutions shall be established to provide training for students from the sub-region.
3. - In accordance with Article 36 of the Protocol, the Executive Secretariat shall, from now on, provide budgetary allocations for immediate funding of the programmes as contained in this Article.
 - Each Member State shall in the shortest possible time also make a contribution for the take-off and implementation of the programmes contained in this Article;
 - A percentage of the Community levy shall be allocated for the establishment of a fund for the implementation of the activities outlined in this Article;
4. A policy to promote women's education at all levels and in all fields of training shall be adopted and implemented in each Member State and at the level of ECOWAS.
5. Member States shall guarantee women equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular, shall ensure the same conditions for career and vocational guidance, access to the same curricula, access to opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants. They shall also ensure the elimination of stereotyped concepts of roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education.

Article 31:

1. The culture of every group of people in each Member State shall be respected and developed.

2. The Executive Secretary shall take the necessary measures to organise, within the sub-region, periodic inter-state cultural events: festivals of arts and culture, symposia, various cultural events on literature, music, arts, and sports.
3. Member States undertake to take measures to eliminate or prevent religious conflicts and to promote religious tolerance and harmony. To this end, permanent structures for consultations among the different religions on the one hand and between the different religions and the State on the other hand, shall be established at national levels.
4. The Executive Secretary shall take the necessary measures to promote, through periodic meetings, consultations among the religious organisations of Member States.

SECTION VII: RULE OF LAW, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Article 32:

Member States agree that good governance and press freedom are essential for preserving social Justice, preventing conflict, guaranteeing political stability and peace and for strengthening democracy.

Article 33:

1. Member States recognise that the rule of law involves not only the promulgation of good laws that are in conformity with the provisions on human rights, but also a good judicial system, a good system of administration, and good management of the State apparatus.
2. They are also convinced that a system that guarantees the smooth running of the State and its administrative and judicial services, contributes to the consolidation of the rule of law.

Article 34:

1. Member States and the Executive Secretariat shall endeavour to adopt at national and regional levels, practical modalities for the enforcement of the rule of law, human rights, justice and good governance.
2. Member States shall ensure accountability, professionalism, transparency and expertise in the public and private sectors.

Article 35:

1. Member States shall establish independent national institutions to promote and protect

human rights.

2. The Executive Secretariat shall take measures to strengthen their capacities. The institutions shall be organised into a regional network.

Within the framework of this network, each national institution shall systematically submit to the Executive Secretariat, any report on human rights violations observed on its territory.

Such reports and reactions of governments shall be widely disseminated through the most appropriate means.

Article 36:

Member States shall institutionalise a national mediation system.

Article 37:

1. Each Member State shall work towards ensuring pluralism of the information sector and the development of the media.
2. Each Member State may give financial assistance to privately-owned media. The distribution and allocation of such assistance shall be done by an independent national body or by a body freely instituted by the journalists themselves.

Article 38:

1. Member States undertake to fight corruption and manage their national resources in a transparent manner, ensuring that they are equitably distributed.
2. In this regard, Member States and the Executive Secretariat undertake to establish appropriate mechanisms to address issues of corruption within the Member States and at the Community level.

Article 39:

Protocol A/P.1/7/91 adopted in Abuja on 6 July 1991 relating to the Community Court of Justice, shall be reviewed so as to give the Court the power to hear, inter-alia, cases relating to violations of human rights, after all attempts to resolve the matter at the national level have failed.

SECTION VIII: WOMEN, CHILDREN AND THE YOUTH

Article 40:

Member States agree that the development and promotion of the welfare of women are essential factors for development, progress and peace in the society. Consequently, they undertake to eliminate all forms of discrimination and harmful and degrading practices against women.

Article 41:

1. Member States shall guarantee children's rights and give them access to basic education.
2. Special laws shall be enacted in each Member State and at the level of the Community against child trafficking and child prostitution.
3. The Community shall adopt laws and regulations on Child Labour in line with the provisions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Article 42:

1. Member States shall agree on rules to be adopted on the training and development of the youth.
2. Uniform laws shall be adopted within the Community to prevent and handle cases of juvenile delinquency.

Article 43:

The Executive Secretariat shall put in place all necessary structures within its establishment to ensure the effective implementation of common policies and programmes relating to the education and the promotion of the welfare of women and youth.

CHAPTER II

MODALITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND SANCTIONS

Article 44:

1. This Article complements the provisions of Chapter V of the Protocol of 10th December 1999.

2. In order to give full force to the provision of Article 28 of this Supplementary Protocol and in accordance with Article 57 of the Treaty, a legal convention incorporating, if need be, Convention A/P.1/7/92 relating to mutual assistance in criminal matters, and the Convention A/P1/8/94 on Extradition shall be elaborated and adopted not later than twelve months after the entry into force of this Supplementary Protocol.

Article 45:

1. In the event that democracy is abruptly brought to an end by any means or where there is massive violation of Human Rights in a Member State, ECOWAS may impose sanctions on the State concerned.
2. The sanctions which shall be decided by the Authority may take the following forms, in increasing order of severity:
 - ❑ Refusal to support the candidates presented by the Member State concerned for elective posts in international organisations;
 - ❑ Refusal to organise ECOWAS meetings in the Member State concerned;
 - ❑ Suspension of the Member State concerned from all ECOWAS decision-making bodies. During the period of the suspension the Member State concerned shall be obliged to pay its dues for the period.
3. During the period of suspension, ECOWAS shall continue to monitor, encourage and support the efforts being made by the suspended Member State to return to normalcy and constitutional order;
4. On the recommendation of the Mediation and Security Council, a decision may be taken at the appropriate time to proceed as stipulated in Article 45 of the Protocol of 10th December 1999.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 46:

This Supplementary Protocol shall form an integral part of the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, signed in Lome on 10 December 1999.

Article 47: Amendments

1. Any Member State may submit proposals for the amendment or revision of this Supplementary Protocol.
2. Any such proposals shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary who shall notify other Member States not later than thirty days after the receipt of such proposals. Amendments or revisions shall not be considered by the Authority unless Member States shall have been given at least one month's notice thereof.
3. Amendments or revisions shall be adopted by the Authority.

Article 48: Withdrawal

1. Any Member State wishing to withdraw from this Supplementary Protocol shall give a one-year written notice to the Executive Secretary who shall inform Member States thereof. At the end of this period of one year, if such notice is not withdrawn, such a State shall cease to be a party to this Supplementary Protocol.
2. During the period of one year referred to in the preceding paragraph, such a

Member State shall nevertheless continue to observe the provisions of this Supplementary Protocol and discharge its obligations thereunder.

Article 49: Entry into Force

This Supplementary Protocol shall enter into force upon ratification by a least nine (9) signatory States in accordance with the constitutional procedures of each Member State.

Article 50: Depository Authority

This Supplementary Protocol and all instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Executive Secretariat which shall transmit certified true copies to all Member States and notify them of the dates of deposit of instruments of ratification by the Member States and shall register it with the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)/African Union (AU), as well as the United Nations (UN) and any other organisation as may be decided by the Council.

**IN FAITH WHEREOF WE, THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF
THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST
AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS) HAVE SIGNED THIS SUPPLEMENTARY
PROTOCOL**

**IN SINGLE ORIGINAL IN THE ENGLISH, FRENCH AND PORTUGUESE
LANGUAGES, ALL TEXTS BEING EQUALLY AUTHENTIC**

DONE AT DAKARON THIS 21st DAY OF DECEMBER 2001

.....
H. E. Mathieu KEREKOU

President of the Republic of BENIN

.....
H. E Blaise COMPAORE

President of FASO

Chairman of the Council of Ministers

.....
H. E. Jose Maria Pereira NEVES

Prime Minister and Head of Government
of the Republic of CAPE VERDE
theepublic of CÔTE D'IVOIRE

.....
H. E. Abou Drahamane SANGARE

Minister of Foreign Affairs,
For and on behalf of the President of

.....
H. E. Yahya A. J. J. JAMMEH

President of the Republic of The GAMBIA

.....
H. E. John Agyekum KUFUOR

President of the Republic of GHANA

.....
H. E. Lamine SIDIME

Prime Minister of the Republic of GUINEA

.....
H. E. Koumba Yala Kobde NHANCA

President of the Republic of
GUINEA BISSAU

.....
H. E. Monie R. CAPTAN

Minister of Foreign Affairs
MALI For and on behalf of the President
Of the Republic of LIBERIA

.....
H. E. Alpha Oumar KONARE

President of the Republic of

.....
H. E. MINDAOUDOU Aïchatou (Mme)

Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the For and on behalf of the President of
Republic of the Republic of NIGER

.....
H. E. Olusegun OBASANJO

President and Commander-in-Chief
Armed Forces of the Federal
NIGERIA

.....
**H. E. Abdoulaye WADE
KABBAH**

President of the Republic of SENEGAL
LEONE

.....
H. E. Alhaji Dr Ahmad Tejan

President of the Republic of SIERRA

.....
H. E. Gnassingbé EYADEMA

President of the TOGOLESE
Republic