

# Reflections On Governance And Presidential Elections In Nigeria (2015) And Ghana (2016)

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**Abstract:** Elections in both developing and western democracies portend an eye opener to the electorates. Empirically most of what was bargained by the electorate after elections were least expected in governance. The wave of surprises and similarities between what metamorphosed and transpired in Nigeria and Ghana was a grave shock to many political 'seers'. Following the same suit was the unpredictable hurricane blizzard and thunderbolt of uncertainty that beclouded America in their just concluded election which made many sure pundits to be astounded. The switcheroo scenario of the deaths of Presidents of both countries (Nigeria (Umaru Musa Yar'Adua) /Ghana Prof. Atta Mills) and the constitutional takeover of power by their Vice Presidents coupled with the manner in which they were bootlicked through the barrel of ballot box in their prime calls for a wakeup. Elite theory which offers a society centered account of the capitalist nation- state was adopted as the magical tincture of our theoretical framework. It denies the plural nature of the society and the contradictory pressures generated by it as the basis for a neutral state. Instead, it argued that there exists a tendency throughout human history for the elites as opposed to the mass to monopolize public power, resources and authority. Our method of data collection was secondary sources of data. The findings of the study presage that elections in African countries henceforth are capricious and impetuous. Africans have started utilizing the power of their votes to attract changes in their domain. That power has slipped from the hands of the aristocratic elites to gerontocratic elites is irrefutable. The youths in both nations must rise to the occasion by winning the minds of the electorate in order to carve out a niche for themselves in the society. Admittedly the current new wave political tsunami blowing across the length and breadth of many nations globally may swallow sit-tight African leaders that are dialectically opposed to the wishes and aspirations of the people.

**Keywords** - Election, Democracy, Elite theory, Pluralist society, Governance.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Election is the means of entrenching good governance and sustenance of democracy. Elections have become a major factor in the stabilization and democratization of emerging democracies and post-conflict countries. Animasaun (2010:115) views election as the heartbeat of representative democracy. A credible election not only confers legitimacy on political leadership, it is also crucial to the sustenance of democratic order. Under any democratic system, citizens who are legally qualified to exercise franchise are provided with opportunity to choose political alternatives and to make decisions that express their preferences. In a multi-party dispensation, this choice is made out of the several parties and candidates competing in the electoral market. In all democracies, election performs several functions: it is an instrument through which the voting public compels accountability from elected officials; it facilitates political recruitment; it enables citizens to make enlightened choices; and it confers moral authority on political leaders.

Schlozman and Verba (1987:3) views election as a "legitimizing institution, functioning to give elected leaders the wherewithal to govern." Nnoli (2003:230) stated that electoral system is a complex of rules and regulations that govern the selection of officeholders in a democratic context. According to Elekwa (2008:30), the election process (electoral process) relates to the entire cycle ranging from the provision of voter education to the dissolution of the National Assembly. Election is generally accepted in all climes of the world as the hallmark of democracy. However, since the advent of democratization in Africa in the 1990's, a great deal of emphasis has been placed on holding regular elections (Molomo, 2006). Ojo (2006: 109) argued that the idea of democratic self-government is incompatible with electoral farces. Thus, free and fair election is a *condicio sine qua non* for a political system to be termed democratic, but not every election fulfills these criteria. However, the conduct of elections in evolving democracy in Africa and world globally is deficient in these cardinal ingredients because of sheer incapacity inherent in such new democracies which barricade adherence to electoral law. (Aluaigba, 2008). According to Jandoh (2017:35) regular, free and fair elections are an integral part of democracy and of any democratization process, and this must be ensured as far as is possible. It is important that domestic election observation should take place during the electoral period (pre-election, particularly election-day, and post-election) to confer an aura of neutrality, fairness, transparency, and ultimately, legitimacy on the process.

For Bratton (1999:36) elections do not make a democracy, and one can have elections without democracy, but one cannot have democracy without elections, because elections afford participation, choice, competition, and accountability to the electorate. Free and fair elections that have widespread acceptance and confer legitimacy on a nation's leaders constitute the prima facie condition for democratic practice, and increases the chances of further deepening it. What this research adds to the literature is the saliency of election, participation, observation practices in the acceptance of election outcomes, and thereby their potential contribution to the consolidation of democracy in Africa. Elections constitute one of the most important pillars of democracy. Those

are the texts of Electoral Law that rule and clearly define both the organization of these elections, and how to undertake the deduction of the votes in order to assign them to the corresponding seats. There is an active electoral law and a passive electoral law. Citizens who can use active electoral law have the right to vote whereas those who can use passive electoral law have the right to be elected.

The quality of elections which is one of the mechanisms for gauging the extent of democratic consolidation has shown evidence of progressive decline which is attributable to electoral violence (Alemika & Omotosho, 2008). Kean (2004:155) observed that violence is the greatest enemy of democracy, being the bane of Africa's march to democracy. To Nwolise (2007:155) there can be no democratic election, democratization, consolidation of democracy, growth in democratic culture or internalization of best democratic practice in any country if electoral violence is prevalent. Albert (2007:132) asserts that electoral violence resulting from representational campaign, balloting, and result conflicts have been a terminal problem of Nigeria politics since the 1950's. Also works by scholars like Akintola (2006); Post & Vickers (1973) and Osaghae (2002) reaffirms Albert's position. Akzin (1960:706) opined that elections have technical and social significance. Remi Anifowoshe (1982) defines political violence as: The use or threat of physical act carried out by an individual or individuals within a political system against another individual or individuals, and/or property, with the intent to cause injury or death to persons and/or damage or destruction to property; and whose objective, choice of targets or victims, surrounding circumstances, implementation, and effects have political significance, that is, tend to modify the behavior of others in the existing arrangement of power that has some consequences for the political system. Electoral violence therefore is a form of anomic participation in the political process (Elaigwu, 2006). To Ochoche (1997) abuse at any of the stages of election could be structural or physical. Galtung (1991) submits that violence can be psychological and structural as well as physical. Psychological violence involves generating and living in fear, terrorizing people or publishing abusive material directed against people. Structural violence according to Galtung is usually indirect, but more destructive than physical and psychological violence. Structural violence involves among other factors, political repression, economic exploitation and deprivation of rights such as freedom of choice.

## Democracy

Many prevailing scholars of repute have embraced varying conceptualizations of democracy. This basically is contingent to the ecological externalities they found themselves and operate. For Rouke (2008:182), democracy is a system of governance that connotes two types of rights to the citizens. The first type is a range of political rights such as voting freely and frequently for competitive candidates who have different policy views and who if elected will have an important impact on policy making. As a corollary of the above the vibrancy of democracy implies the prevalence civil liberties, such as freedom of expression and association and equality before the law. Hence the quintessential elements of democracy are credible elections, rule of law, freedom of fundamental rights, separation of powers, democratic pluralism, opposition, an independent electoral system and equality among citizens. Referring to the Agenda for Democratization presented on 20 December 1996 by the UN Secretary-General to the 51st session of the United Nations General Assembly, Adopts the following Universal Declaration on Democracy and urges Governments and Parliaments throughout the world to be guided by its content:

Democracy is both an ideal to be pursued and a mode of government to be applied according to modalities which reflect the diversity of experiences and cultural particularities without derogating from internationally recognized principles, norms and standards. It is thus a constantly perfected and always perfectible state or condition whose progress will depend upon a variety of political, social, economic and cultural factors. As an ideal, democracy aims essentially to preserve and promote the dignity and fundamental rights of the individual, to achieve social justice, foster the economic and social development of the community, strengthen the cohesion of society and enhance national tranquility, as well as to create a climate that is favorable for international peace. As a form of government, democracy is the best way of achieving these objectives; it is also the only political system that has the capacity for self-correction.

Historically there is an endemic social, political and moral dimension of democracy. This is based on the fact that it is previously regulated by the state from the ideology of welfarism and social utility. The sludge has led to the emergence of classical liberalism and liberal democracy. For the liberals they were of the opinion that individual nations are capable of finding mutual interests and cooperating to achieve them. For Mclean & Mcmillan (2003:309) is the belief to preserve the rights and allow citizens and individuals to make choices. Liberals retain faith in the possibilities of socio-political conditions which is related to the progress made. They believed that it now ripe for the state to be freed from antiquated and cumbersome ideas and laws that are detrimental. The declaration assumes our model and noodle to appreciate its impact to the society. Jega (2007: 14) argued that as democracy evolved as a dominant system of political organization in modern nation-states, attempts to conceptualize and theorize it have become amorphous and imprecise with the result that democracy have become heavily contested albeit over flogged concept. To its different contradictory conceptual definitions, it means different ideology to many scholars from its formulations: Peoples Democracy; Guided Democracy; People's Democratic Dictatorship that has to do with authoritarian dispositions of socialist regimes.

Nnoli (2003:132) swiftly alluded that the character and political dynamic of the state have an impact on the scope of the citizenship, its definition and objective, and its implication to the socio-economic and political organization of the society. However the state is not only the variable equation that defines the citizenship. The characteristics of the individual are equally important.

Presumably there are three main models of democracy that have dominated intellectual discourse on which modern-states predicate their political systems which are the Liberal Democracy which is hinged on the principles of the rule of law; universal suffrage (voting rights); election and representation. Socialist Democracy is a concept that is based on the Marxist/Leninist principles which is prevalent in socialist countries like China, Soviet Union, Vietnamese, and Cuba which Tanzania in Africa adopted its model. Direct democracy was modeled by Libya which essentially is based on the notion that there are more acceptable and fashionable ways of imbibing democracy which will be promoted through positive neutrality. Igwe (2007:110) averred that “democracy in theory is one of the finest examples of a working human contrivance whose basic objective is to promote human life and society but its greatest threat in the 21<sup>st</sup> century remains the universal monopolization by moneyed men and consequent deprivation from the masses its original owner with all the attendant evil consequences”.

For Massui (1998: 44) a sustained state of democracy thus requires a democratic climate and culture constantly nurtured and reinforced by education and other vehicles of culture and information. Hence, a democratic society must be committed to education in the broadest sense of the term, and more particularly civic education and the shaping of a responsible citizenry. Democratic processes are fostered by a favorable economic environment; therefore, in its overall effort for development, society must be committed to satisfying the basic economic needs of the most disadvantaged, thus ensuring their full integration in the democratic process. It is evidently clear without contradiction that there is a strong relationship between democracy and economic development. It is obvious that the wealthier a country is, the more likely her democracy is and the poorer a country is the more likely authoritarian their governance is. Some schools of thought believed that economic development is the precursor for democracy contending that people need to have a certain sense of economic well-being before they can spare energy to participate in a democratic system. From all indications attempts to promote democratic ideals in developing countries tends to floor the arguments of this school of thought as leaders from those countries now see it as a colossal failure hence such countries now have to fashion out their own prototype democracy that will suit them. (Hobsbawn, 2001).

Democracy is more than the sum of its institutions. A democratic political culture is also crucial for the legitimacy, smooth functioning and ultimately the sustainability of democracy. A culture of passivity and apathy, an obedient and docile citizenry, are not consistent with democracy. The electoral process periodically divides the population into winners and losers. A successful democratic political culture implies that the losing parties and their supporters accept the judgment of the voters, and allow for the peaceful transfer of power. Participation is also a necessary component, as apathy and abstention are inimical to democracy. Even measures that focus predominantly on the processes of representative, liberal democracy include (although inadequately or insufficiently) some aspects of participation. In a democracy, government is only one element in a social fabric of many and varied institutions, political organizations and associations. Citizens cannot be required to take part in the political process, and they are free to express their dissatisfaction by not participating. However, a healthy democracy requires the active, freely chosen participation of citizens in public life. (Almond & Powell, 1966).

Scholars like Weber, Plato and Aristotle averred that the contentious issues undermining the sustenance of democracy is bureaucracy. Bureaucracy tends to derive its roots from democracy in the sense that powers to operate it emanates from the people. Bureaucracy carries out an indispensable function in any nation-state, and is of particular importance in democratic States. A homogenous State requires an effective centralized administration and the welfare state, which is the product of universal suffrage, leads to an extension of public services. Both of these necessities have given rise to an enormous bureaucratic machine, a powerful monster in modern societies. By its very nature, bureaucratic action works in the opposite direction to democracy. In a bureaucracy, decisions are taken at the top and carried out at the bottom, whereas in a democracy, it is the citizens who decide and the leaders who execute their decisions. The bureaucratic machine requires hierarchies, authoritarian command lines and discipline among its officials, whereas democracy promotes equality, autonomy and the absence of subjection among citizens. (Ball, 1977)

The task of bureaucracy is to maintain the system from above, while that of democracy is to question it from below. This contrapositions and contraptions tends to undermine the operationalization of democracy hence in coalesce setup democracy tends to be at variance. This has probably enhanced the evolution of weak states in less developed countries that utilizes to the full glare the dual usage and politicization of the two entities to the detriment of the masses. The stance of Schumpeter (1998:88) remains unequivocally germane that nations with a weak democratic tradition and culture are, by default, vulnerable to setbacks. Many nonconsolidated democracies are fragile and, in the post-2008 crisis years, socio-economic stress led to backsliding on democracy in many countries. The underlying shallowness of democratic cultures—as revealed by disturbingly low scores for many countries in our index for *political participation* and *political culture*—has come to the fore in recent years.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The beginning of the twentieth century was marked by the birth of elite theory. References to elites which are circuitous are today ubiquitous in political discourse. Political pundits and commentators speak regularly about elites when dissecting events in African politics and the world globally. Social scientists and historians regularly assign elites pivotal roles when analyzing political regimes, revolutions, social movements, democratic transitions and consolidations. Elites are at the core of the emphasis on “political” causation that is now so prevalent in macro political analysis, even though many scholars continue to use synonyms such as leaders, rulers, power groups, power networks, and state actors. The discussion of elites is once again in vogue. As yet, however,

elite theory has not been renewed. Scholars have not followed up on the attempts of Mosca, Pareto, Michels, and, in his own way, Weber to make elites the centerpiece in theories of political and social change. Consequently, the many who today focus on elites in their analyses do so in something like a theory void because there is no well-accepted body of definitions, interrelated concepts, and propositions guiding their focus. "The elitist paradigm," George Moyser and Margaret Wagstaffe have observed, suffers from argument and confusion over key terms, a relative dearth of testable hypotheses, a failure clearly to separate normative from empirical theory and, not least, the lack of a firm data base in which the latter could be solidly grounded (Moyser and Wagstaffe, 1987). The kinds of overall elite configurations that exist among contemporary societies, the means by which transformations from one configuration to another occur, the limits that mass publics place on elite actions, and the examination of what is, therefore, possible in the political world of the twenty-first century demand better theory and analysis. These are complex and difficult issues.

The term "elites" is used to refer to those who occupy the most powerful positions in structures of domination" (Scott, 2008). As such, elites are "those small groups of people ... in formal or informal positions of power who take or influence key economic, political, social and administrative decisions" (Leftwich and Hogg, 2007). According to Hossain and Moore (2002), they number very few in small countries, while larger and more urban countries have more but in all elites make up a small portion of the population. But as Hossain and Moore (2002) opined, they usually control a very large piece of the national income and the influence that goes with it. According to Scott (2008:18), two types; coercive and inducing elites may be identified from the forms of power they exercise, based on the resources they control. Coercive elites control access to the means of violence or force while inducing elites have access to economic assets and induce others to conform "by influencing their rational, self-interested calculations of personal or group advantage" (Scott 2008:33). In Nigeria and Africa, elites have been associated with the formal political institutions of the state. As Chandra, (2006) observed, most often, those who have the capital to launch a political career tend to be 'elites', as politicians also do business personally or through proxies (Daloz, 2003). An important feature of the Nigerian post colonialism elite is that both politics and economics are entirely tied with the state. Thus, the development of the elites has been within or in close propinquity to the state; political power brings with it other forms of power. Hence, change is difficult as elite interests are deeply engrained, straddling economic, political and social dimensions. Besides, due to the systems of patronage and the non- autonomy of the elites from society, they are further embedded. The result is that the state lacks effective institutions, as formal rules are openly defied and ignored. According to Hyden (2006:45) though formal institutions exist, they do not influence the conduct of individual actors. This, according to Chabal and Daloz (1998: 45) is a derivative of the fact that like other Africa states, the Nigerian state was not unbound from the society and hence not fully established. The public and private spheres are intertwined in their appointments functions and advancement based often, not on merit.

As such, power remained personalized and based on informal relations. Given the pervasiveness of personalized rule, pressure for democratic reform only gave rise to what Mette Kjaer, (2004:36) labeled "partial reform syndrome", where leaders commit rhetorically to reform, that are carried out to prevent hurting politically important members of the political elite. In the opinion of Chabal and Daloz (1998:15), this arises from the fact that the elites derive legitimacy from fostering a network of clientele on which their power rest. The network is built upon the capture and control of state resources. This is even more so in the presidential systems, wherein access to state resources is warehoused in the presidency; the core source of resources and patronage (Chabal and Daloz 1998; van de Walle 2001, 2003; Hyden, 2006). In a democracy, elections are preceded with peaceful campaigns and open discourse of persuasion, as candidates compete for votes by presenting reasoned arguments about their suitability for an election to office (Kitschelt *et al.*, 2010). Works on political parties; typologies (Duverger, 1951; Kirchheimer, 1966; Michels, 1968), social origins (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Aldrich, 1995) and spatial competition between parties (Downs, 1957), assumes programmatic linkages. Voters therefore, choose contenders with policy position closest to their own preferences. However, this is not the case in Nigeria, as elections appear to be mere struggles over access to state controlled resources. Given these high stakes, politicians have most often, resorted to a variety of "unfair" means to attain public office. Thus, though candidates routinely go through motions of presenting "electoral promises", often, the promises are unreliable (Keefer, 2004 & 2007), mostly alike across parties (Mohammed and Nordlund, 2007) and evolve often, into personality attacks (Van de Walle, 2003, 2007, 2007).

The elite theory has been criticized on the grounds that: The notion of elite revolves around power and yet this concept is not well defined by the classical elite theorists and this makes it possible to include in the ruling elites wielders of different sorts of powers and also those who wield no power (Tittenbrun, 2013). Similarly, Korom (2015) contends that the elite theorists failed to develop a clear-cut elite concept and that most of their arguments were general and lacking concrete substance. Dahl (1958) criticized the elite theory on the ground that no single elite exercised overall influence on every aspect of decision making. In his work *Who Governs? Examine three political issues in New Haven, Connecticut* namely: party nominations for local elective offices/ positions, public education and urban development, include in the ruling elites wielders of different sorts of powers and also those who wield no power (Tittenbrun, 2013). Similarly, Korom (2015) contends that the elite theorists failed to develop a clear-cut elite concept and that most of their arguments were general and lacking concrete substance. Dahl (1958) criticized the elite theory on the ground that no single elite exercised overall influence on every aspect of decision making. In his work *Who Governs? Examine three political issues in New Haven, Connecticut* namely: party nominations for local elective offices/ positions, public education and urban development. He found that no single elite operating behind the scene, but rather many lines of cleavages and politicians who were responsible to the desires of the citizenry. It is too simplistic because it fails to differentiate between different political systems. It assumes that all political systems are the same. The genuine differences between democracy and authoritarianism are dismissed.

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They are all regarded as oligarchy. The argument that political elites are superior to the masses is simply an assertion. There is no objective criterion being provided by which we can measure the superior quality of the elites.

In spite of the limitations of the theory, it contributes to better comprehension of socio-political life of the society. Moreover, it is a useful guide in understanding how changes occur in political power. It is useful in the analysis of politics in Africa, especially the role of the elites of the region in which it directs our attention to the source of policy flow and whose interest such public policy serves. Besides, the elites of the region enjoy autonomy (relative political power and control of state institution). Put differently the ruling elite in the region make execute as well as interpret the laws that govern their region. They decide who gets what, how and when? As Arowolo and Aluko (2012) rightly note, the level of stability and progress or development achieved in any society is a function of elite's initiatives.

### III. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA AND GHANA AT A GLANCE

Presidential elections in Nigeria and Ghana has come and gone but the scars and aftermath of the elections are still in public discourse today. Every election conducted in Africa both at local and national levels are characterized by varying degrees of flaws and irregularities. Animasaun (2010:3) observed concerning Nigeria that consolidating democracy through the conduct of credible elections has remained an albatross. The history of Nigeria's democratic experiments demonstrates that elections and electoral politics have generated so much animosity which has, in some cases, threatened the corporate existence of the country (such as happened after the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election) and in other cases instigated military incursion into political governance, most notably in 1966 and 1983. March 28<sup>th</sup> and April 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 election marked another watershed and turning point in Nigeria's democratic history as registered voters took to the polls to elect the next set of leaders into the Presidential and National Assembly positions. The elections, conducted in the thirty six states of the country and the Federal Capital Territory, witnessed the emergence of the opposition party- the All Progressives Congress (APC) and its candidates. The outcome was also the first time an opposition party would unseat the ruling party- People Democratic Party (PDP) since Nigeria's transition into civil rule in 1999.

For Sakariyau et al (2016) the administration of 2015 general elections which has been adjudged peaceful and applauded to have met international best practices by both local and international observers did not happen by accident. Rather it is a product of decision of actions and inactions of individuals, groups, and institutions. The credibility attributed to the election can be understood from moderating factors which are internal and external dimensions. Obviously Nigeria before the elections were faced with serious challenges of security, corruption, impunity and other socio-economic depression. Although some of these problems are not new to the country, the ectopic stance it took on the socio-economic firmament of the nation under the headship of Goodluck Jonathan was worrisome.

Ghana in the same vein was not insulated from the same predicament Nigeria had. On 7 December 2016, Ghanaians went to the polls in a high stakes election that tested the country's democratic credentials. A new Chair of the Electoral Commission (EC) faced a baptism of fire, accused of favoring the ruling party but presiding over an election that many observers predicted could deliver an opposition victory. Despite two peaceful transfers of power in 2000 and 2008, mounting political tensions and concern that the outcome of the election would be disputed led a majority of citizens to fear that the polls would be accompanied by violence. Just two days later, public apprehension turned to pride as all parties accepted the results. This was despite the fact that the ruling party suffered defeat in both the presidential and legislative polls. In the former, Nana Akufo Addo of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) defeated the incumbent, President John Mahama of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), winning an absolute majority (54%) in the first round. Significantly, this represented the first time a sitting Ghanaian president had been defeated at the ballot box, since all previous opposition victories came in contests in which the ruling party was forced to run a first time candidate after the incumbent had exhausted constitutional term limits and stood down. Drawing on fieldwork before, during and after the elections, we argue that the polls also have much to tell us about the state of democracy elsewhere in Africa. To date, the advantages of incumbency and the "menu of manipulation" have tended to dominate analyses of African elections. While this general pattern persists, Mahama's loss in Ghana – and the previous defeat of sitting presidents in Nigeria and, for a week at least, Gambia – suggests that it is also becoming increasingly difficult for incumbents to retain power. Although Ghana is in some ways outlier in Africa in terms of the number of changes of government that it has experienced, the institutional and societal factors that undermined the NDC's authority provide important insights into the challenges that many African presidents face. In particular, we argue that recent transfers of power have been driven by a combination of deteriorating economic conditions, opposition learning, increasingly robust electoral processes, and – magnifying the impact of these three – increasingly assertive voters.

In line with Ghana's constitution, Mahama became President of Ghana on 24 July 2012 on the death of his predecessor, John Atta Mills. In July 2012, he became the Ghana's first president to have served at all levels of political office (Ghanaian and Pan-African MP, Deputy Minister, Minister, Vice-President and President). He said in parliament upon being sworn in:

This is the saddest day in our nation's history. Tears have engulfed our nation and we are deeply saddened and distraught and I'm personally devastated, I've lost a father, I've lost a friend, I've lost a mentor and a senior comrade. Ghana is united in grief at this time for our departed President.

As a result of his elevation to the presidency, Mahama made political history by becoming the first Ghanaian head of state to have been born after Ghana's declaration of independence on 6 March 1957. The National Democratic Congress (NDC) held a Special National Delegates Congress on 30 August 2012 and endorsed President John Dramani Mahama as its 2012 presidential candidate. President Mahama, the sole candidate of the party, polled 2, 767 votes, representing 99.5% of total votes cast, to pick the slot for the party. Mahama has stated that his administration is deeply committed to continuing the Better Ghana Agenda started under President Mills. Mahama won the December 2012 general election with 50.70% of the total valid votes cast and a 3% winning margin beating his nearest rival, Nana Akufo-Addo of the main opposition New Patriotic Party, who polled a close 47.74%. This was just barely enough to win the presidency without the need for a runoff. In addition, Mahama won the majority of valid votes cast in eight out of Ghana's ten administrative regions. Thirteen African Heads of State, one Prime Minister, two Vice-Presidents and 18 government delegations across the world attended his inaugural ceremony at the Black Star Square in Accra on 7 January 2013, when Mahama was sworn-in to begin his own four-year term. (Antsu, 2013).

After his investiture, the opposition New Patriotic Party led by its 2012 Presidential candidate Nana Akufo-Addo, running mate Dr Mahamudu Bawumia and the party chairman Jacob Otanka Obetsebi-Lamptey, challenged the election results, alleging irregularities, malpractices, omissions and violations. The petition was heard by nine justices of the Supreme Court of Ghana. After eight months of hearing, the Court on 29 August 2013 dismissed the petition by a majority opinion. On 9 December 2016, Mahama was defeated by the main opposition leader Nana Akufo-Addo, to whom he conceded defeat earlier that day. Mahama polled 44.4% of the valid votes cast compared to Akufo-Addo's 53.5%.

The defeats for Mahama, Jonathan, and Jammeh suggest that a significant proportion of the electorate decide how to vote on the basis of their perceptions of the economic performance and competence of the party in power. As Bratton et al have argued, based on Afrobarometer survey data from 18 countries, "would-be voters in Africa consider policy performance, especially the government's perceived handling of unemployment, inflation, and income distribution". Further survey research has found that the kind of voters most likely to vote on the basis of performance and the public good are those who live in urban areas, are more educated, and come from families that have experienced inter-ethnic marriage. If this is correct, the proportion of the electorate voting on the basis of the government's record will grow in the future as levels of urbanization and education on the continent increase. For Cavanaugh (2015:67) transition planning and sustenance is crucial in a country for sustenance and continuity. A successful handover required clear, enforceable procedures that would facilitate continuity in the administration of core government functions while minimizing postelection political tensions. Ghana's recent history had underscored the need for cooperation between successive governments.

Nana Addo Dankwa AkufoAddo, the 72yearold flagbearer of the opposition party, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) was declared the winner of Ghana's 2016 presidential elections by the Electoral Commission (EC) more than 48 hours after the elections took place. He defeated the incumbent, John Dramani Mahama of the National Democratic Party (NDC) by taking 53.85 per cent of the vote while Mahama had a 44.40 per cent share of the valid votes. These figures exclude the results of four constituencies, Afram Plains North, Upper West Akyem, TunaSawlaKalba and Tamale Central, which were still being collated. The results of these four constituencies, totaling about 120,000 votes were considered insignificant in changing the overall outcome of the elections. The total turnout was 68.62 per cent even though the EC expected 80 per cent. The total number of rejected ballots was 1.4 per cent, which while lower than the 2.23 per cent recorded in 2012, is still of concern and emphasizes the point of deepening voter education.

For Ayee (2016) Corruption has engaged the attention of the international community, politicians and citizens because of its deleterious and corrosive consequences on politics, governance, security and socio-economic development. Corruption can undermine the state's ability to deliver inclusive economic growth in a number of different areas. When government functions are impaired, it can adversely affect a number of important determinants of economic performance, including macro financial stability, investment, human capital accumulation, and total factor productivity. Moreover, when systemic corruption affects virtually all state functions, distrust of government can become so pervasive that it can lead to violence, civil strife, and conflict, with devastating social and economic implications (IMF 2016; UNECA 2011).

**2016 Presidential election result (based on ballot order and from 271 out of 275 constituencies)**

Rankings	Presidential Candidates	Party	Total Valid Votes	% Score
1.	Ivor Kobina Greenstreet	CPP	23,395	0.24
2.	Nana Konadu Agyene-Rawlings	NDP	16,878	0.16
3.	John Dramani Mahama	NDC	4,713,277	44.40
4.	Papa Kwesi Nduom	PPP	105,682	1.00
5.	Nana Akuffor Addo	NPP	5,716,026	53.85
6.	Edward Mahama	PNC	22,214	0.21
7.	Jacob Osei Yeboah	IND	15,889	0.15
	Total Valid	Votes	10,615,361	98.46
	Total Rejected	Votes	166,248	1.54
	Total Votes	Cast	10,781,609	

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Elections in Africa has been marred by inherent irregularities that has signpost the continent where democracy is in intensive care unit. This endemic phenomenon has made citizens absolutely not titivated during the harbinger of electioneering. Our electoral institutions are now anemic that its solution is far from being actualized. Aside that our political and democratic culture is far from meeting international best practices and the electorate rarely feeling the impact of governance. The only panacea to this administrative quagmire is strong institutions where rule of law and independence of electoral institutions will be guaranteed. A situation where opposition parties win elections is a welcome development if it is sustained. As Johnson Asiedu Nketiah, the General Secretary of National Democratic Congress (NDC) which took office in 2009 noted “For many African dictators, the reason they don’t leave when elections approaching their exit is near is that they want to mess with the constitution and perpetuate themselves in power. They’re not sure what will happen to them. They saw those coming after them as riding tigers and when they take a bow from office will eventually devour them.” Nigeria would have been a major casualty of this observation if the legislature was not alive to her responsibility. The time for Africa to get it right is now.

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