

GHANA'S DEMOCRACY UNDER THE FOURTH REPUBLIC: A CASE FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LIBERALIZATION IN AFRICA.

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Abstract

Ghana's Fourth Republic has been marked by a stable and thriving democracy since its inception in 1992. The Fourth Republic began after a series of military governments and coups in the country's history. Ghana's democracy has proven its mettle under the Fourth Republic by upholding democratic principles such as the Rule of Law, free and fair elections, freedom of expression and association, a multi-party system, political tolerance, separation of powers, and effective participation. Despite its commendable success over the past 30 years, there are still some critical challenges that need to be addressed, including low participation, corruption, favoritism, nepotism, extreme political polarization, winner-takes-all mentality, and politicization of illegal mining (Galamsey). This paper aims to establish the undeniable relationship between democracy and economic liberalization and suggests remediation strategies to ensure the long-term sustainability of Ghana's democracy by thoroughly reviewing relevant literature.

Keywords: *Africa, Economic Liberalization, Ghana Democracy, Politics in Ghana, Fourth Republic, Ghana, Galamsey*

1 INTRODUCTION

It is without a doubt that the concept or discussion of democracy in Africa cannot be fruitful without citing Ghana as an example. In the West African region, Ghana has achieved the status of a consolidated democracy, as described by Samuel P. Huntington (Huntington, 1991). Owusu-Mensah and Rice share similar thoughts, and they describe Ghana as enjoying a good image in democracy. With the abundance of electoral violence and coup de tats in the West African sub-region and among Ghana's neighboring states, Ghana's democracy is exemplary (Owusu-Mensah & Rice, 2018).

Ghana's democracy has offered more than just a foundation of free and fair elections. Their daily lives change when people are appropriately represented in their leadership. Considering the many successes, the country's practice of democracy has, we cannot overlook the economic and political impact it has had and continues to have on the country. Hitherto, Ghana's style of democracy or practice of democracy has shown some cracks that could go a long way to affect the years of stability the country has enjoyed under the practice of democracy. Through poor leadership and many other problems discussed in the paper, leaders have rendered democracy nonexclusive, where citizens are yet to see how involved they are in governance.

There have been constant arguments in the world over whether there can be meaningful democracy. Democracy has always been central to the political stability of Ghana and even ensuring development. In essence, a country that fails to improve its democracy so much so that it is participative and involves the entire governed, then that country is bound to suffer immensely for it. This explains how important democracy is. Democracy contributes to building a more secure, free, and stable world where every country like Ghana can pursue its national interests. Human and worker rights are more likely to be upheld in democratically run countries. They are also more likely to thwart aggression, open markets, encourage economic growth, protect citizens, fight international terrorism

and crime, protect public health, and prevent humanitarian crises and refugee flows. Therefore, its importance cannot be disputed and demands our complete attention.

Due to some factors, democracy is threatened worldwide and in Ghana. Therefore, it must be talked about well enough to prevent doom in the foreseeable future. As earlier stated, if we allow problems such as low participation, Intolerance, corruption, political interference, and the like to find their way into the smooth operations of the country's democracy, this will have dire and possibly irreversible consequences on the country. Therefore, there is the absolute need to, right from the start, not just identify these problems but also find ways to ensure that democracy continues to enhance political and economic liberalization, which in other words, helps to develop the country. In this paper, we examine how Ghana's democracy enhances and ensures political and economic liberalization and tackles some of the problems that hamper the growth of democracy.

2 METHODS

The resources used in this research paper are a collection of peer-reviewed journals, Newspapers, and books. This paper thematically reviewed relevant and related literature focusing on Ghana's democracy under the Fourth Republic. The researcher then dealt exhaustively with the milestone achievements of Ghanaian democracy, challenges, and recommendations for sustainable democracy.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Ghana has enjoyed an uninterrupted democratic phase from 1992 till date. Ghana has recorded transitional governments since 1992 under the Fourth Republic. With a history of having had four republics, the country has seen relative progress in democracy than all the countries in the West African Sub-Region (Sefa-Nyarko, 2022). Before that, the nation endured a series of military-driven overthrows that ultimately undermined attempts to forge a united nation after independence. Ghana battled, as most nations have, after the tosses of colonial rule and the speedy, shaking shift from little independence to full (Owusu, 2008).

The 1992 Constitution, which went into force on January 7, 1993, is the Republic of Ghana's fourth effort at Republican democratic rule since gaining independence in 1957. It states that Ghana is a unitary republic with power over its citizens. It was established to stop future uprisings, repressive governments, and one-party systems. Its objective is to promote disagreement and the idea of power-sharing (Constitute Project, 2022).

The concept of democracy is broad and varies from one nation to the other, as well as having different forms. With this idea, it suggests that each nation can be a distinctly democratic nation. The paper highlighted the major aspects of Ghana's democracy.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Free and Fair Elections

Przeworski (2011) defines elections as fundamental principles that give citizens a free and fair way to elect or remove their representatives. As a result, voting has played a big role in Ghana's democracy since the country switched to a multi-party system in 1992 (Abdulai & Crawford, 2010). Ghana's image as a model of democracy has grown thanks to the successful conduct of elections (Abdul-Gafaru, 2009; Alemika, 2007; Awal, 2012; Boafo-Arthur, 2007; Burke, 2012).

Since the establishment of the Fourth Republic in 1992, Ghana has organized six successive elections with almost no violence. Ghana has received numerous accolades for its exceptional achievement in the vote-based history of the West African sub-region and for serving as an outstanding example of a majority rule government there.

Government authority, as expressed through genuine, free, and fair elections held regularly based on universal, equal, and secret suffrage, can influence public opinion in any state.

In addition, one of the ways citizens of a country can demonstrate their wishes is by electing a representative to serve on their behalf in the government.

It is worth noting that a nation cannot be democratic until the citizenry has the chance to pick their delegates or representatives through regular elections that are free and fair. National elections in Ghana have been held every four years since 1992. An elected president's maximum tenure can have been two as such, eight years in total.

During this fourth Republic, Ghana has been experiencing regular free and fair elections, and this has, by far, been considered by many as one of the key components of the country's democratic governance. USAID (2012) states that without a legitimate government that was democratically elected and is accountable to its people, critical development measures cannot succeed. Elections offer a crucial chance to deepen democratization and promote political liberalization. This indicates that Ghana's remarkable political stability now emanates from one important element of democracy: the conduction of free and fair general elections.

Moreover, it would be difficult for fruitful elections to be held without an able electoral commission. The Ghanaian Electoral Commission, since 1992, has done whatever it takes to guarantee that the elections are serene as well as free and fair. They connect with the public and global NGOs to oversee the voting process, set up a team to guarantee well-being and security at polling stations, research constituent registrations, and start public sensitizations and awareness campaigns. The presence of the electoral commission and their diligent work ensured that everything was under control even though the 2008 elections threatened to alter the multi-party democracy Ghana has enjoyed since the start of the fourth republic. This has been crucial in ensuring that elections are fair and tranquil (Omotola, n.d; Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2022).

4.2 Freedom of Expression and Association

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana ensures that everyone in Ghana, regardless of race, political opinions, religion, ideology, or orientation, will be qualified for every one of the key common liberties and opportunities, likely to regard for the privileges and opportunities of others and the public interest. Everyone has the right to free speech, expression, access to the press and media, as well as the freedoms of conscience and belief. They also have the right to association, which includes the ability to start or join organizations like unions and other associations (Armah-Attah & Robertson, 2014).

To some extent, Ghanaians have enjoyed and continue to enjoy some freedom of speech, association, and belief. They are somewhat free to choose from a personal will, whom to vote for or join any political party or organization of choice, and say what they think freely (UNESCO, 2012).

Over the years, it has been demonstrated on the media front in Ghana that any administration that endeavors to choke the media will probably run into serious hardships over the years. There has been a significant extension in the enjoyment of civil and media freedoms (particularly following the annulment of criminal defamation regulation in 2001). Ghana currently has over 100 independent FM radio broadcasts and numerous Television stations in addition to satellite television. Moreover, the state has lifted its control or authority over the public transmission media (UNDEF, 2013).

About 55% of Ghanaians, or a slightly larger portion, fully agree that the media should be given the freedom to present all viewpoints and ideas without interference from the government. Undoubtedly, a larger percentage (82%) recognizes the media's usefulness in exposing the errors, wrongdoings, or corruption of the government (Boafo-Arthur, 2008). This has been demonstrated by the recent Airbus scandal and other media exposés. Even though most of them encountered threats from officials who sought to conceal their corrupt actions, these wrongdoings were exposed through the freedom of the press or media (Boakye, Siaw, & Sarpong, 2022).

4.3 Multi-Party System and Political Tolerance.

Osei (2012) agrees that the political party system adopted or practiced by a state is an essential feature in the democratization process. The ban on political parties that was finally lifted on May 18, 1992, six months before the presidential and parliamentary elections, saw a stupendous number of political parties emerge. Moreover, the new constitution has now embraced and dug into the option

or right to shape and join political parties. This right is the premise of a multi-party democratic government (Ayee, 1996). The option to shape ideological groups and partake in the political cycle is moored in Articles 55 (1) and (2) of the 1992 constitution.

1. It is possible to create or join political organizations.

2. Every person in Ghana who is old enough to vote has the option of joining any political party.

The entrenchment of product Political parties in the constitution has guaranteed a significant shield to the assurance of a multi-party democratic system in Ghana.

That said, following the renewed introduction of multi-party-political regulation in Ghana in the mid-90s and the proclamation of the 1992 constitution, Ghana has proclaimed a multi-party state. Furthermore, to date, we have the existence of many political parties that take part in elections. Examples are NPP, NDC, CPP, GUM, and the like (Ayee, 1996).

In addition, starting from the first multi-party-political elections in Ghana in 1992, the development and improvement of the political party framework has taken the form of a two-party system or dimension. To be sure, the most recent twenty years have seen a rotation of force between the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC). Twenty-three political parties (23) are enlisted in Ghana and will partake in the approaching decisions. Nearly all parties in Ghana are genuinely advanced with sound institutional structures and public outreach (Ayee, 1996). The presence and practice of a multi-party system give room for a diverse style of governance, which in turn serves as grounds for embracing views from other political parties when citizens give them the right to, and this indicates that there is a democracy where the state has numerous political parties.

Furthermore, because democratic societies are politically tolerant, a multi-party system implies that there must be some degree of political tolerance. This means that even though the majority rules in a democracy, minorities' rights should be upheld. The right to express one's opinions should be given to those who are not in authority. Minorities are sometimes referred to as "the opposition" since they might have thoughts that are not quite the same as those larger parts. Individuals must likewise figure out how to be open-minded toward one another. This can be said to be observed in Ghana's democracy.

Even though the majority seem to have the most to say in decision-making, there is always room in parliament where decisions are voted on, including voices from the minority or opposition members. From this, we can agree that the absence of a formidable opposition in parliament under a multi-party system affects the quality of debates. In this case, there is a tolerance level from the majority to allow the minority to share their views on issues for deliberations or passing outlaws.

4.4 Separation of Powers

The 1992 constitution, which allows for the division of power between a president, a parliament, a cabinet, a council of state, and an independent judiciary, is the unbreakable rule that everyone must abide by. As part of its checks and balances, it strives to prevent giving one arm of government an undue amount of power. The president, the 25-member state council, and other advisory groups, most notably the National Security Council, all share executive power or authority. The president serves as the nation's head of state, chief executive, and top military commander. The Vice President is also mentioned (The Republic of Ghana Judiciary, 2022).

Legislative power is granted to the national parliament, which consists of the president and a unicameral legislature with 275 members. A decision cannot become a law or a regulation without the president's prior consent. All measures, except for those connected to a vote of urgency or criticality, are subject to the president's certified veto. Legislators are chosen using the renowned "universal adult suffrage" system and are in office for terms of four years (Constitute Project, 2022). Additionally, no other branches of government remain in the legal executive's architecture, structure, or power. The Supreme Court has broad powers of legal audit; It decides whether any legislative or governmental action is constitutional upon the request of any resentful party (Constitute Project, 2022).

The English legal system has a significant influence on how the courts operate. The Supreme Court of Ghana, the Court of Appeal (Appellate Court), the High Court of Justice, the Regional Tribunal, and numerous other lesser courts make up the progressive system, also known as the Superior Court of Judicature. All civil and criminal matters are under the purview of the courts. The fourth republic in Ghana distributes power rather than concentrating it in the hands of a small number of people. Power operates under rules like the rule of law, the separation of powers, and checks and balances. This ensures that the state's authority is not concentrated in the hands of a single person. This illustrates how democracy operates or has operated in Ghana. This is because if power is not distributed across the many governmental entities, democracy is not truly complete. Democracy is destroyed when authority is concentrated in the hands of one group or person.

4.5 Effective Participation

This is one of the most important elements or components of democracy. Before a policy is embraced or dismissed, individuals in the state have the chance to share their perspectives about the policy. Even though it has had few crack-ups in this regard, Ghana can still be identified as making tangible strides in involving or engaging citizens in governance. Ineffective participation, every citizen is entitled to participate in decision-making through referendums, by-elections, and general elections. In this sense, the democratic process is so open that the populace can change a policy according to their interest. Effective participation has been one of Ghana's essential aspects of democracy.

5 CHALLENGES FACED BY GHANA'S DEMOCRACY

5.1 Low Participation

Ghana has fostered various projects to advance citizen participation in governmental issues. The constitution completely safeguards citizens' rights, and their participation is openly accessible all through the political framework. However, the problem of participation remains.

Besides voting during elections, Ghanaian residents seldom participate in democracy, as per recent surveying. The 2019 Afro barometer Round 8 study, which estimated the quality of democracy and governance in African nations, showed that during the earlier or previous year, 85% of respondents in Ghana never reached an individual from parliament about a significant issue or to share their perspectives, while 71% never reached an Assembly member. As per the review, 84% of respondents did not participate in demonstrations during the earlier year, and 64% showed they could never go to a demonstration. Furthermore, this is somewhat of a great loss to the country as greater political participation also includes public protests, which have the potency of yielding results (Afrobarometer, 2022). According to Arthur (2012), further types of participation include people taking part in local politics at the grassroots level by attending community events and talking with their elected officials.

Most of the writing on Ghana's fourth republic's democracy has mostly concentrated on voting and political party activities, which is not the case with its democracy. (Ayee, 1996; Boafo-Arthur, 2008). A typical example is about Local and Regional government. District assemblies, regional coordinating councils, and devolved authorities have been established because of decentralization. However, the government has placed a ban on political parties from participating in local governance. Many consider the government's ban on political parties participating in district elections to be undemocratic to depoliticize local processes. District-level citizen consultation is nonexistent or ineffective, and the decentralization process remains incoherent and incomplete (Ayee, 1992).

In a democracy, citizens can communicate concerns and preferences to government officials through political participation and exert pressure on them to act. Nonetheless, in the case where citizens are disengaged and do not actively take part in politics or governance, where the system only gives room to some members of the country to participate, where citizens are theoretically able to participate and not practically, then the democracy that is said to be practiced in the country is somewhat questionable. The democracy of the county would be under threat in the foreseeable future.

5.2 Corruption

Most studies show that democracy and corruption have a negative relationship, with more democracy resulting in less corruption. From numerous indications, we can attest to the fact that democratic institutions typically reduce the likelihood of corruption. In mature democracies, the governments are open with deeply ingrained democratic norms, which increase the likelihood of exposing and punishing corrupt officials. Officials are restricted from engaging in corrupt behavior by institutionalized democratic principles of checks and balances and the rule of law (Gurría, n.d).

From this, we can say that since we still have corruption flawing the democracy in Ghana, democracy is mere theory and is not mature on the ground. Weak or immature democracies experience an increase in corruption since they lack the institutional requisites to produce higher administrative quality and capacity, typically associated with consolidated democracies dealing with corruption. This has been the case in Ghana's democracy over the last decades. Numerous corrupt behaviors have been discussed and brought to light under Ghana's fourth republic despite the practice of checks and balances, separation of powers, the rule of law, and other key institutions.

Over the last couple of years, Ghana has been in the headlines for corrupt behavior. The Airbus scandal, the Ameri deal, The Stephen Opuni Cocoa Board Scandal, the Tema Port Scandal, the Ghana Football Association Brazil 2018 World Cup scandal, and many others (Nketsia, 2018). All these are always in the news and always go global. It gets to the international front and creates a bad name for the country. No one likes to invest in a country noted to be corrupt, and this can go a long way in affecting economic liberalization and development.

These cases, by far, have and are undermining the democracy in Ghana, destroying public trust in institutions, skewing policy to only fit in the interest of the few, and if measures are not in place to curb or curtail this challenge, can go the mile to spark a new upsurge in authoritarianism. Hence, the utmost need to address corruption as one of the key drivers of democratic decline and a challenge causing devastating effects on development.

5.3 Favoritism and Nepotism

The "Whom you know" concept is not new to Ghanaians. Favoritism and nepotism have been one of the problems that are gradually crippling the country's enviable taste of democracy. Talk of favoritism, forgetting that every citizen is entitled to have a fair share of the national cake, government officials oftentimes inclined to favor some people or groups, especially party members. They treat certain people differently, in this case, much better than others (Nyukorong, 2014).

In this same way, nepotism has had most officials use their power in an unfair manner, where they give the best jobs and certain positions to members of their families. This means that they are denied even when qualified people are fit for the job or position. With how rampant this has become; I find it worrying about the growth of democracy and see it affecting democracy. Because of this problem, people with great experiences, who have the right expertise, and knowledge, and who are readily available to serve the country with their in-depth views are neglected or relegated because they do not waive or hold a party flag for people whom one way or the other have relationships with officials. This means that those relegated are denied access or means to participate in democracy. Their views are not heard, and they cannot help in the best way possible except by exercising their right to vote. Meanwhile, we understand democracy to involve everyone.

In other words, we seem to be democratic by words and a few instances, but when it comes to practically living it out, we are faced with these problems. Preventing people from being involved in governance because officials have the closest people to favor and family members to occupy positions only means our democracy is being left at the mercy of these officials. Moreover, sooner than later, when this problem is not looked at, democracy would be greatly affected, jeopardizing the name the country has gained for itself in terms of democracy in Africa and the world.

5.4 Extreme Political Polarization

Dawood (2013) argues that conventional democratic theory, partisanship's pathologies of blind allegiance, constrained interests, political polarization, and extremism present significant obstacles to the operation of democracy. Political parties are frequently seen as being dividing, dishonest, and self-serving.

Politics is not always terrible, but when it takes on partisan characteristics, it turns into revolting inclinations that are unhealthy for the development of nations and democracy. Party-political or partisan government officials run the risk of confounding many Ghanaians with their party politics on almost every national issue.

How voters' support for democratic institutions may erode over time as they grow more partisan and start to prioritize partisan results like those of their political leaders rather than the efficacy of democratic processes, particularly if their party is out of power (Stoecker, 2021).

Many Ghanaian politicians have a sour demeanor that starkly reveals their true motivations for running for office. Kyei (2020) argues that one may easily conclude that Politicians are complete self-seekers who don't have Ghana's best interests at heart based on their distasteful behavior and inaction. They prioritize partisanship and personal interests over nationalism.

Due to extreme partisan politics, current governments frequently leave significant unfinished projects started by earlier administrations because they believe their political rivals will claim credit once the projects are completed. However, stability or continuity in government is essential for progress (Ackah, 2020).

More gravely, partisan politics lead some politicians to make defamatory claims. They enable enmity and propaganda to persuade them to create intentionally false stories to disparage and damage the credibility of their political rivals. Although democracy has brought some measure of peace to the nation, it is important to highlight that party or partisan politics have the potential to impede progress.

5.5 The Practice of Winner Takes All

This is another setback or problem facing Ghana's democracy under the Fourth Republic. The victorious contender and his political party assume control of the government and essentially nominate new people to several state bodies. Concerning political positions, party backers and financiers frequently receive largesse in the form of highly paid jobs, deals, and executive positions in enterprises (Gyampo, 2016).

This severely impacts the national mentality, frequently divides Ghana's political landscape, and fuels animosity and sporadic conflicts. When this happens, there is division and reluctance in opposition to share their views to help run the country, as even when they do share their views, the incumbent would disregard them. How does a country move forward when the voices of others are barred from governance?

5.6 Politicization of Illegal Mining (Galamsey) Fight

For many years, illegal mining has been a major problem in Ghana due to its devastating environmental and socioeconomic consequences. What makes it more problematic is the fact the fight against this menace has become a political tool leading to significant effects on the democracy of the country. Government officials in power exploit the issue of galamsey for their self-interest and political gains. The autonomy of regulatory agencies has been compromised by the constant polarization of the fight against it. Regulatory agencies are unable to successfully enforce regulations because they are always hampered by the influence of politicians in the licensing of mining activities. The leader of the main opposition party, Mr. John Dramani Mahama of the National Democratic Party (NDC), is making political promises to grant amnesty to those who have been charged and imprisoned under the New Patriotic Party (NPP) regime. This approach of political expediency is hindering the incumbent government's efforts to address the issue of illegal mining. As a result of NDC's promises to institutionalize this menace, President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo lost the 2020 general elections

in all mining communities. This has not only made it possible for the continuation of illegal mining but has also rendered checks and balances less effective, which consequently affects the democracy and the rule of law of the country. Illegal mining has had devastating effects on streams and rivers in Ghana, leading to water scarcity in many communities, and the consequences of this illegal activity on the environment are immeasurable (Damoah, 2023). This impacts both climate change mitigation and adaptation measures necessary for sustainable development (Damoah et al., 2023).

Additionally, there have been some instances where it was revealed that some political leaders were indirectly involved in illegal mining activities. Some have been known to offer cover and protection to illegal miners due to the allure of quick gains from the activities. This is backed by a report made by Former Minister of Environmental, Science, Technology and Innovation, Prof Kwabena Frimpong Boateng. He was the chairman of a committee set up to investigate illegal mining as a step to fight it. In a 36-page document addressed to the president, the Chief of Staff, and the police, the former minister mentioned some individuals he claims frustrated efforts made by himself together with the committee to address the menace. An excerpt of the document posted online by myjoyonline.com captures the former minister stating, "I can state without any equivocation that many party officials from the national to the unit committee level had their friends, PAs, agents, relatives, financiers, or relatives engaged in illegal mining. Most of them engaged Chinese working for them... there are appointees in the Jubilee House that are doing or supporting illegal mining or interfering with the fight against the menace" (Arhinful, 2022). As a result of this, public confidence in the political system has been damaged since it seems that elected officials put their interests ahead of the welfare of the country. If the democratic institutions are not strengthened, it would cripple the democracy in the country. This problem must not be politicized, and the interest of the people must be promoted and not those of specific politicians.

6 Suggested Remediation for Sustainable Democracy

It is without a doubt that citizen participation is an essential tool for pursuing a democratic process. Therefore, citizens must be empowered and motivated to gather skills, and attitudes, organize themselves, and participate in governance.

Effective laws and regulations must be implemented that enable or ensure participation and accountability. This also goes hand in hand with the government's willingness and commitment to legitimate integrative participation of the population, including the readiness to consider their demands and views.

The government should give local groups, organizations, and community activists some power and responsibility in the decision-making process so they may offer insight into money designations and cultural concerns and aid in forming collaborations.

Ghana's institutions and constitution need to be updated to ensure effective checks and balances. The hiring and firing of government employees must be constrained, the state Attorney General must be kept independent from the Ministry of Justice, and anti-corruption organizations must be protected from executive interference.

Monitoring procedures are necessary to identify and deal with law enforcement corruption. For instance, undercover investigations may be used to identify and convict state officials and other personnel involved in corruption in any form or otherwise tamper with the legal system.

On the issue of favoritism and nepotism, to curtail this problem, it is recommended that systems for hiring or recruitment and promoting based on merit: The tenets of competence, effectiveness, merit, fairness, and suitability ought to serve as the foundation for the procedures that govern the hiring, advancement, and retirement of public officials and other non-elected officials. This would prevent powerful officials from hiring people who are merely family members. Job descriptions and profiles should be created that indicate the skills and experience needed for the position. There should also be unambiguous selection procedures to aid in transparency.

Furthermore, we can streamline communication routes and provide discussion areas to address the problem of partisan politics. The ideal form of effective communication is dialogue. People can

learn alongside one another through this exchange. When there are avenues to help bring different political parties together to have fun, not debate, it enhances some sense of oneness, forges a connection between parties, and engages varying perspectives despite differences.

Criticize your group or political party; We are social creatures who are highly sensitive to popularity and the desire to belong. We depend on those with power to tell us what it takes to fit in. Speaking out against partisan politics, abusive words, and acts shows that partisan attitudes can be changed by making such behavior undesirable to that group, according to politicians, commentators, and ideological leaders.

In a manner analogous to that which applies in the United States, the executive must be completely distinct from the legislature. Ministers must no longer be appointed by parliament. This would enable them to fulfill their function as a balancing authority to the executive's powers and further their careers as legislators.

6.1 POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LIBERALIZATION

Human and national development emanating from political and economic liberalization has improved due to the rise in democracy. It is hard to deny that they have had a significant impact on not only Ghana but the modern world. Having had a picture of what democracy looks like under Ghana's fourth republic, this next chapter will try to explain how democracy ensures or fosters political and economic liberalization.

6.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION.

Political liberalization happens when governmental authorities loosen their restrictions on citizens' political activity. Political liberalization entails the formal acknowledgment of fundamental individual rights and is also referred to as a democratic opening.

Governments reinstate previously renounced freedoms of association, speech, and mobility for both individuals and social groupings in such openings. The release of political prisoners, the abolition of official censorship, and the legalization of formerly outlawed political parties are all examples of political liberalization (Bratton & Walle, 1997).

Political liberalization is like economic liberalization in that it reduces government intervention in the political market, breaks up political authority monopolies, and makes room for various viewpoints and organizations.

From the beginning of the paper, having touched on some key components of democracy in Ghana under the Fourth Republic, it is safe to say it is close to impossible, if not completely impossible, to achieve Political liberalization without the practice of democracy. In that, democracy ensures that there is an enabling environment for people to make decisions that would benefit them and not those forced on them. They have the legitimacy to exercise their franchise, they have the freedom to participate in politics or governance, they have the liberal will to choose what political party to belong to, and they have their rights as citizens being protected by the constitution of the land. All these are made possible due to democracy. In a politically liberal state or a country that is politically liberal, you find these components of democracy in the polity. In essence, democracy gives room for political liberalism.

The reasons presented to explain Ghana's relative stability could also be largely used to explain the country's democracy's continued existence, in which we can find traces of political liberalism. Since the beginning of the fourth republic, the country has been very critical in exercising democratic governance. The political freedom that citizens enjoy and the liberal nature that democracy presents them with have made it possible for continued political stability. Freedom only exists when there is a growing and intentional commitment to democratic principles. This has been the case for Ghana and her attainment of political liberalism. We can also claim that the exercise of democracy directly leads to political liberalization or is eminent in political liberalization.

6.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC LIBERALIZATION.

The United Nations, on the other hand, views economic liberalization as encompassing processes, including governmental policies, that promote free trade, deregulation, elimination of subsidies, price controls, and rationing systems, and, frequently, the downsizing or privatization of public services (United Nations, 2010).

Increased democracy promotes or fosters economic freedom, which is evident in Ghana's fourth republic. Democracy has allowed citizens to venture into economic ventures without government interference. The state has given citizens the right and liberty to partake in economic activities. These freedoms are not exercised in autocratic states, as citizens' rights and freedoms are limited or restricted. However, economic freedoms can only be made possible when there is democracy. This goes on to say that there is a link between democracy and trade openness, and democracy enhances trade liberalization. This is because civil liberties and political rights granted unto citizens under democracy positively affect increased economic freedom (Amlanu, 2022).

During Ghana's fourth republic, between 2011 and 2016, for example, 37 more American companies had their beaches or operations in the country, made possible by the fact that the government had liberalized controls to invite investors and encourage domestic entrepreneurship. This is also because the country has been practicing democracy which supports or gives rise to the liberalization of many forms. Ghana now enjoys good relations with United States investors and other multinational companies like COCA-COLA, VALCO, S.C Johnson, Star-Kist, Total Petroleum Limited, Eco Bank, and Unilever (Ghana Investment Promotion Centre, 2017).

Moreover, instability can hurt economic growth because political instability and capital flight are closely related. Savings rates fall when a polity is unstable because people are more likely to spend because their savings might amount to nothing. Savings are also no longer necessary when political unrest causes people to be uprooted and lose their source of income (Gyimah-Brempong & Traynor, 2007).

With rising political unrest, investors' preference for fixed capital equities also declined, evident in the period when Ghana went through military takeovers or coups. Even when investors make investments, they favor speculative and liquid markets and investment opportunities. Investment in politically unstable countries so frequently goes toward low-productivity, which are capital-light businesses and not capital intensive, that would serve as the cornerstone of development (Gyimah-Brempong & Traynor, 2007).

Additionally, a country like Ghana, which has enjoyed a politically stable democracy, attracts investors to set up or establish their businesses without fear because it has been known internationally to be politically stable over the years. Having had a consolidated democracy, any investor loves to be in an environment where he or she is certain of life without political instability and unrest. Democracy ensures political stability, and this positively affects the level of economic freedom people enjoy.

7 CONCLUSION

Ghana is a beacon of democracy in West Africa and the continent at large. Since the Fourth Republic in 1992, Ghana has come a long way toward the establishment of democratic values. As captured in the paper, free and fair elections, freedom of association, freedom of speech, a multiparty system, the separation of powers, and meaningful political participation are characteristics of Ghana's thriving democracy. The goal of this paper has been to examine how democracy affects political and economic liberalization.

However, the paper has also touched on the fact that despite the thriving state of the country's democracy, it has some challenges that need to be addressed. Some of the challenges mentioned include low political participation, corruption, favoritism, nepotism, the practice of winner-takes-all, politicization of illegal mining (Galamsey) fight, and extreme political politicization.

To safeguard and sustain democracy, there is a need to address these challenges. The paper stated a few including encouraging citizen participation, which is to foster the engagement of the citizens by educating them on their rights and the democratic processes. Ensuring checks and balances was also

one of the proposed remediations to the challenges. This has to do with ensuring the independence of certain offices and heads like the Attorney General who can ensure accountability. Combating corruption is to enhance the culture of transparency and accountability. Furthermore, hiring should be based on merit, and this ensures that there is transparency in the selection of individuals for any job. These would ensure the practice of separation of powers, decentralization, and local governance and strengthen the legal framework.

Furthermore, using Ghana's Fourth Democracy as a lens, the paper journeyed through the relationships between democracy, political liberalization, and economic liberalization. Democracy provides the bedrock for sustainable political and economic liberalization. In terms of political liberalization, democracy provides security for citizens' rights and freedoms. These include the right to vote in free and fair elections, freedom of movement, expression, and association. This has ensured the liberty to participate in political activities. With the ban that was lifted off political parties, it enhanced political openness and competition. These contribute the political stability which is essential for political liberalization.

Moreover, in a democratic country, there is the freedom for citizens to participate in economic activities. Not just citizens, but this also attracts foreign investors which benefits the country in the long run. In other words, democracy, which ensures political stability, offers a favorable environment and conditions for savings and investment which leads to economic development. When there is political instability because of nondemocratic governance, investors are unwilling to risk losing their capital. Free trade is a common feature in a democratic system due to the nonintervention of the state. The freedom that individuals must engage in economic activities ensures economic liberalization.

Ghana's Fourth Republic demonstrates the interconnectedness of democracy, political liberalization, and economic liberalization. Political stability and economic growth have all been aided by the political and economic openness, which is embedded in democracy. This emphasizes how crucial democracy is in creating a transparent society. The interdependence of these ideas is essential in building a strong country.

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