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2019

Abstract

The Impact of Good Governance and Stability on Sustainable Development in Ghana

by

William Towah

MA, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, 2005

BBA, University of Liberia, 1992

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

February 2019

Abstract

Previous studies have lauded Ghana's commitment to sustainable development, but corruption and violence may affect sustainable development policies and initiatives related to poverty reduction, agricultural practices, environmental protection, and human development. The purpose of this holistic, qualitative case study was to identify and describe good governance practices in Ghana and threats to sustainable development. A Marxist conceptual lens guided the thematic analysis of data collected from artifact documents, field notes, and interviews of 20 key informants from various professions and diverse perspectives who were directly involved in the governance of Ghana or implementation of policies. Three primary themes emerged: (a) the importance of active governance proactively anticipating and responding to citizen's needs through democratic processes, independent judiciary, social inclusion, and influence in Africa; (b) an effective governance formulating and implementing specific policies to advance citizens' standard of living in partnership with the private sector focused on human capital, education, health services, farms-to-market infrastructures, and revamping economic priorities; and (c) fair governance and rule of law accountable to the people. Ghana's good governance practices for sustainable development that were identified integrated some Western practices while maintaining and sustaining its own cultural norms and priorities. This may be a durable recipe for other African nations to use to effect positive social change for citizens, private institutions, and therefore, good governance, which is germane for sustainable development.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, Decontee, and my children,

William, Jr., Jassie, Yao, Deijaijah, Laion, Odell and Nyentoh. Also, to my

grandchildren, William, III, and Bouty. To my wife and children, I say thank you

so much for your encouragement and support, and above all else your

understanding throughout this process. You were by my side and, in some

instances, you were prepared to forgo some essential needs to enable me to stay

focused on my studies. I trust that this will inspire my children; noting that there

is nothing too difficult to achieve once you are focused. To my beloved mother,

Mary Laion, though you left this world many years before this day, I want you to

know that I love you so much. Thank you for teaching me humility and

compassion as exemplified by your life. To my father, John, thank you for making

an excellent path for my journey. I am ever grateful to you for sharing with me

the love of family and the attributes of sound judgment and leadership. To John,

my brother, and uncle Anthony, thank you for your passion and persuasion that

inspired me to pursue higher education. To my extraordinary friend, Monuway, I

am exceptionally grateful for your tireless support and encouragement.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The emerging concept of *sustainable development* is prioritized in the programs

of most businesses, governments, nongovernmental organizations, and educational

institutions around the world regarding good governance (Bamidele, 2013). Sustainable

development encompasses development-focused activities that strive to enhance and

promote the economic and socio-political welfare of the populace within an ecologically-

sustainable framework at all social organization levels (Grindle, 2004). It is an evolving

context, and its conception varies depending on the local settings. According to

Onyekachi (2013), sustainable development satisfies the requirements of the present

generation without affecting the future generations' ability to meet their needs.

Sustainable development is based on the people, and as such, the government, which

mirrors the people, should embody sustainability (Grindle, 2004). For the government to

be successful in the implementation of the sustainable development policies, it must

demonstrate good governance per the people's standards (Grindle, 2004). Once the

government is not thought of as credible, then it becomes damaging to the measures of

sustainable development (Grindle, 2004). This is based on the premise that such a

government lacks accountability to the citizens and some of the policies become

suspended leading to the standards of the economies being watered down.

In Africa, good governance has been quite elusive and attaining sustainable

development has remained a mirage (Onyekachi, 2013). This is because the

governments' policies have not been focused on the people as defined by the concept of

sustainable development. Since the 1980s, governance has been a debatable topic and scholars, international organizations, and governments have assumed different interpretations of the good governance. World Governance Indicators defined good governance as the practice and foundations by which power is exercised within a given country; the procedure by which governments are selected, held accountable, monitored, and changed; the capacity by which governments manage resources efficiently and formulate, implement, and enforce sound policies and regulation; and the respect for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions (Onigbinde, 2007). On the other hand, Leftwich's (1994) definition of good governance was "a clear and predictable legal framework, accountability, transparency and information on the management of national affairs" (p. 372). The United Nations Development Program defined good governance in the human development framework as democratic governance where human rights are respected and accountability and participation in the decision-making process is upheld. Good governance also entails responsiveness and focuses on poverty eradication, inclusiveness, equity, impartiality, fairness, outpacing any discriminatory practices, taking into consideration the present and the future generations (United Nations Development Program, 2002).

The difference that good governance makes to development can never be understated. To put it into perspective, whenever government performance is poor, the resources are wasted; services remain undelivered; and citizens, particularly the poor, are denied of legal, economic, and social protection (Grindle, 2004). To this end, good governance is an imperative to sustainable development and reduction of poverty.

However, in developing countries, it is impractical to depend on good governance as a guide to development. Attaining good governance entails improving all aspects of the public sector, including the institutions that developed the guidelines for political and economic interaction and the organization that governs administrative systems and delivers services and goods to the populace as well as the human resources and the interface of citizens and officials in the bureaucratic and political domains (Grindle, 2004).

The third wave of democracy was introduced in Africa in the early 1990s, just after the international financial organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, came up with minimum reforms (Mindzie, Wachira, & Dunderdale, 2014). When the wave dwindled, a good governance agenda of the rule of law, transparency, human rights, and accountability continued being in existence (Mindzie et al., 2014). It should be noted that the issues above form part of democracy and how they are handled is what matters. Fundamentally, all African governments profess to the good governance agenda, but in actual practice, it is diluted (Mindzie et al., 2014). However, a good number of them have made significant strides towards democratic governance, and there are now more elections than the military coups that were experienced in the 1960s and 1970s (Mindzie et al., 2014). The nations have adopted new constitutions, done some work on their governance institutions and legal reforms, and effective governance have remained a priority (Mindzie et al., 2014). Most of the war-torn African countries have stabilized over the past few years, including Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Liberia (Mindzie et al., 2014).

Regrettably, the gains made have not been without challenges because there have been such effects as inequalities; marginalization of youth, women, and the underprivileged; as well as the insecurity issues being felt in all angles of these countries (Sebudubudu, 2010). For example, most economies in the African continent have not fully embraced women's inclusion in governance; as in the case of the United Nations (2013) Women Report on Malian women pressing for peaceful, fair elections and decrying their powerlessness in the face of their male counterparts. They pushed for national reforms to be able to get involved in the electoral process (Sebudubudu, 2010). There have also been issues of radicalized militias as well as rebel groups pursuing ungoverned territories and competing with the state. Some of these groups have abused religion by making claims on the legitimization of new kinds of ruthless authoritarianism as portrayed in the Central African Republic, Somalia, northern Mali, Libya, and northern Nigeria (Hope, 2005). The strife has created significant risks for governance and leadership. Nonetheless, insecurity issues resulting from poor governance have included postelection violence, as was the case in Kenya and Ghana (Fjelde & Höglund, 2016). Concerning the widespread transnational insecurity experienced in West Africa, I analyzed the violent conflicts, the state of insecurity in Ghana, governance, and how they impacted sustainable development. Therefore, in this chapter, I will introduce and drive the subject matter of the study, while at the same time present the empirical arguments that backed the findings of the survey.

Background of the Problem

In the recent years, the African system has experienced dramatic transformation. There have been questions about when and how the populace can stand against injustice, oppression, and abuse without resorting to violence. As such, it is imperative to rethink the comprehension of African conflict and peace (Bamidele, 2013). Issues of poor governance and corruption in Africa have also remained central in conversations about African countries. Currently, African governments, institutions, donors, professionals, and aid workers acknowledge the negative effect of corruption and poor governance to sustainable development and particularly the states that are emerging from conflict (Bamidele, 2013). According to Bamidele (2013), poor governance can keep African nations in cycles of violence due to lapses in governance institutions that allow the flow of funding to criminal networks and the armed forces that terrorize their people and hindering development. Experiences from various African countries indicate that poor governance and corruption play a significant role in driving fragile nations into failure and instability; an example of such is South Sudan, Africa's newest independent nation, and what is left of it is political unrest and ethnic clashes (Bamidele, 2013).

Good governance embodies the ability of a nation to encourage public participation and publicly reveal abuse of office and corrupt leaders even when it hurts their political futures (Onyekachi, 2013). Elections represent a vital approach to public participation in governance and extends legitimacy to a government chosen by the populace (Amankwaah, 2013). Free and fair elections also reinforce the credence of holding the leaders accountable, and in the event of misuse of office, the citizens vote

them out during the following election cycle (Amankwaah, 2013). However, in the

African setting, this remains the perfect scenario but is still quite impractical because

most leaders are entangled in corrupt dealings and poor governance yet they insist on

maintaining leadership (Bryden, N' Diaye, & Olonisakan, 2008). For example, Kenya is

one such country where the presidential elections of 2007 were marked by violence after

it occurred that the then president clung to power against the will of the majority, a

situation that resulted to ethnic clashes that remain historical today (Bryden, et al., 2008).

Corruption is also another factor that undermines the whole aspect of good governance

and democracy. For instance, in some West African states including Ghana, cases of

misappropriation of public funds and corruption have remained the top reasons for

military interventions (Ayee, 2002).

According to Atuobi (2007), the internal conflicts experienced in West Africa, as

well as the spillover effects over the past few decades, have derailed the economic and

social development in these nations. Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, three of the

Mano River Union States, have been ensnared in civil wars that have spilled over to their

neighbors (Atuobi, 2010). Gambia, Senegal, and Guinea-Bissau have also been engaged

in a low-intensity conflict, while Nigeria and Cameroon's conflict has been intensified by

the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula grossly undermining relations between the two neighbors;

however, thanks to the international community, peace was brokered between the two

nations in 2006 (Atuobi, 2010; United Nations, 2006). Issues of corruption and poor

governance have persisted as the primary reasons for the conflicts, with citizens referring

to them when airing their grievances against the violent political change and political

leaders (Addo, 2008). Further, Addo (2008) posited that the in-house skirmishes in West Africa are sponsored by the illegal extraction of highly-valued natural resources, such as gold, timber, and diamonds, or selling arms illegally. Criminals and rebel groups traffic illicit weapons across Africa and use them in armed robberies or during the internal skirmishes as fanned by politics or civic differences as seen in the cases of Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone (Addo, 2008). Furthermore, corruption and poor governance also pose a threat to the peacebuilding efforts after the conflict in West Africa since those who are sidelined in the process of resource allocation always play the victim card, leading to class differences and class clashes (UN, 2006).

Previous studies have sought to investigate the insecurity in Ghana due to the country's rise from a destabilized state into one with a smidgeon of democratic governance in West Africa (Mansfield & Snyder, 2007). Some studies have identified two major types of violent conflicts, electoral-related violence and intraethnic violence, occasioned mostly by partisan and individuals' sentiments (Johnston, 2004). The fact that in Ghana the pockets of violence during the election may be somewhat less severe compared to the experiences in neighboring countries does not warrant discounting incidents that supervene during elections (Issifu, 2015). Disregarding the power of this violence is equivalent to lowering the symptoms of possible explosions of ferocity later. Researchers have posited that Ghana's December 2008 elections were exceptionally overwrought and stained by more brutality across the nation than normal (Mohammed, 2015).

While elections have resulted in violent crises in some of the countries of the sub-Saharan Africa region, the 2012 elections in Ghana and its subsequent court case gives added credence to why I focused on Ghana in this study. After the election, the main opposition party in Ghana, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), rejected the results of the election complaining of electoral fraud, but unlike what happened in some other West African countries, NPP placed confidence in the judicial system and resorted to challenging the results in court. According to Diedeng (2012), a country's judicial system mirrors the level of democracy exercised in the respective country. Therefore, the fact that steps were taken by the opposition party in Ghana, who had absolute confidence in the judiciary and took their grievances to court rather than resorting to violence, bode well for the development of democracy in Ghana. It is widely held that a nation can never be self-governing without guaranteeing impartiality (Mansfield & Snyder, 2007).

Studies have shown that several West African states are drifting towards economic decay as a result of civil wars (Zack-Williams, 1999). Poor governance catapults the situation with the politicians being oblivious of the nation's essentialities (Balestri & Maggioni, 2014; Bah, 2012). Other studies have ventured into investigating the transnational security issues and how policies address insecurity (Thomas & Tow, 2002). Researchers have concluded that nonassociation of guidelines with international legislation and protocols are the focus of multinational security glitches (Addo, 2008; Williams & Haacke, 2008). Good governance plays a significant role in sustainable development, but with the insecurity challenges, the whole pathway can be upset. Instability brings the economic activities of the day to a standstill, investors get scared

away, and the economy of a country stagnates or comes to a halt (Williams & Haacke, 2008). Good governance leads to a peaceful national life. When there is peace, businesses thrive and the economy of a country thrives (Mindzie et al., 2014). With effective governance, citizens expect mechanisms, processes, and policies that deliver public services and goods including safety and security, human development, the rule of law, and political participation etc. (Mindzie et al., 2014). Omeiza (2008) explored the effect of good governance on sustainable development in West Africa and concluded that there was the need for collaborative efforts from state institutions and agencies. Regarding the protocols ratified in the West African region to nurture the culture of good governance, particularly in the conflict-prone region, Cowell (2011) proposed the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) protocols. Nonetheless, there is limited literature on the security status of Ghana as well as good governance and its impact on sustainable development. Between the 1960s and 1980s, Ghana experienced political instability and spent around 30 years after independence under military regimes (Zack-Williams, 1999). As the political instability grew, the economy deteriorated (Zack-Williams, 1999). However, in the 1980s and 1990s, the process of militarism collapsed and finally Ghana was able to transition into a relatively robust democracy (Zack-Williams, 1999). Moreover, Ghana's security sector has evolved through the years to relative stability (Zack-Williams, 1999). The biggest question that has persisted centers around the quality of Ghana's security and its sustainability. Atuobi (2007) posited that West African nations have continued to experience the adverse effects of poor governance and corruption and the numerous campaigns on peace and security,

development, and anticorruption facilitated by ECOWAS have remained cosmetic and have seldom addressed the root causes. Furthermore, research on the relationship between poor governance, state instability, and sustainable development in West Africa and particularly Ghana has remained inadequate. Concerning the widespread transnational insecurity experienced in West Africa, in this study I analyzed the violent conflicts, the state of insecurity in Ghana, governance, and how they impact sustainable development.

Statement of the Problem

Issues of transnational insecurity, particularly in West Africa, have dominated global dialogues for many years with several scholars lamenting the lack of political will on the part of state actors (Atuobi, 2010; Cheyanne & Kirby, 2009; Fishman & Edward, 2008; Hope, 2005). Others have decried the lack of robust institutions of governance at both national and regional levels to check governance practices (Addo, 2008; Bamidele, 2013). While global debates on the subject intensify, the lack of leadership and absolute disregard for the tenets of democratic governance have been identified as the underlining factors that present the current state of affairs (Gilbert & Allen, 2014). Cowell (2011) posited that while there is an ongoing global discourse on finding lasting solutions to the crisis in West Africa, many state actors and governments remain uncommitted to the public policies necessary to spur upgrading the quality of lives of citizens as well as economic growth. Other authors have lamented the absence of transparent and accountable systems and institutions of governance built on the respect for the human

rights and people's dignity as well as the rule of law, thereby fueling instability (Omeiza, 2008).

Furthermore, the lack of a good functional governance has created a situation wherein many states of the subregion are vulnerable to maladministration, unbridled corruption, inequalities, and regime protection by politicians and their cronies to the detriment of societal good (Atuobi, 2010). As injustices are afflicted to the population with impunity, socioeconomic deprivation and poverty lead to despondency and mistrust of government, thereby instigating revolutionary tendencies among the citizenry (Cowell, 2011; Omeiza, 2008). According to Bah (2012), while some of the West Africa's countries continue to suffer the effects of poor governance, frantic efforts have been made by researchers to explore the root causes of economic decay and the state of underdevelopment of a subregion largely endowed with natural resources (Addo, 2008; Balestri & Maggioni, 2014; Hope, 2005). In previous research on violence in Ghana, Amankwaah (2013) posited that apart from the ethnic crises between the Abudus and Andanis in the northern part of Ghana, election-related crises are the only noticeable form of violence. According to the findings, it is hard to ascertain many details on these incidents of violence because media reports about these events are scanty and there have been few studies about them. Nevertheless, literature and media outlets have reported that since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in 1992, the violence in Ghana has been less frequent and occurred in specific parts of the country. However, Bah (2012) maintained that most of the violence in Ghana, as well as civil wars in other countries in West Africa, are as a result of fundamental economic, social, and political problems that destabilize the

state. Previous studies have had limitations and failed to adequately demonstrate the appropriate structures to help inform policy reforms intended to address the lingering good governance matters of the subregion.

Ghana has been regarded as the upholder of democracy and peace, not only in West Africa, but on the African continent in general (Amankwaah, 2013). The country has held seven consecutive democratic elections successfully since the inception of the Fourth Republic with the elections of 2000, 2008 and 2016 overseeing a democratic change of government from one political party to another through peaceful coexistence overall (Abdulai, 2009). Nonetheless, Ghana has come from a spate of violent coup d'états, resulting in military regimes similar to several of its counterparts in the democratic Africa and is still susceptible to certain insecurity concerns, such as growing youth unemployment, ethnic clashes, poverty, and postelection violence centered on party lines as those affiliated with different party ideologies are manipulated by the political class who use divide-and-rule tactics to make them to hate one another (Abdulai, 2009).These vises, among others, are situations more often experienced by its more unsettled neighbors in the region (Utas, 2012).

Since the initiation the democratic rule in Ghana after intermittent military regimes, the Fourth Republic was ushered in in 1992, and the country has since known peace and stability, other than spots of electoral violence (Amankwaah, 2013). Elections and their subsequent violence have accounted for the crises in many of the West African subregion nations, and Ghana has also experienced its own wave since democratic rule. Supporters of the two primary political parties, the National Democratic Congress and the

NPP, violently took over strategic state institutions and assets anytime there was a change of government (Amankwaah, 2013). For instance, John Mahama was perceived to be a vicious leader who often instigated the Ghanaian youths to throw stones at the house of Nana-Akufo Addo, his main political opponent (Abdulai, 2009; Amankwaah, 2013).

The electoral process in Africa has been characterized by pockets of violence that have happened at different stages: before elections, during elections, and after elections. One example is Kenya where the country always experiences a period of tension before and during elections, followed by a series of violence triggered by claims of rigged elections, especially presidential, and this pits different tribes against each other (Bryden et, al., 2008). The causes of electoral violence are multifaceted and range from bad governance and informal patronage systems to socio-economic uncertainties of losing political power and exclusionary politics (Amankwaah, 2013). Additionally, factors, such as unsuccessful or faulty elections, weak or manipulated election governing bodies or election fraud, can lead to electoral violence (Fjelde & Höglund, 2016).

In sub-Saharan Africa, a third of the states are currently democratic, while the rest are electoral authoritarian, quasi-democratic, failed states and autocratic (Addo, 2008; Mindzie et al., 2014). While Ghana has experienced its share of political and ethnic conflicts and electoral violence over the past years, it demonstrates a slightly higher democracy compared to the other nations in the war-torn West African subregion (Abdulai, 2009).

Following the 2012 Ghanaian elections, the action taken by the opposition party, demonstrating utter confidence in the judicial system by reverting to the court to address

grievances rather than resulting to violence bears testimony to the level of Ghana's

democracy (Amankwaah, 2013). According to Diedeng (2012), a country's judicial

system mirrors the level of democracy exercised. However, it is unclear if the slightly

better governance and political stability in Ghana has any correlation with sustainable

development since there is little documentation of the same. The results of this study

provide a better understanding of the concept of sustainable development and good

governance and how stability supports it.

Purpose of the Study

I conducted this study to broaden the understanding of sustainable development

by investigating the impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development.

The purpose of the study was to describe the indicators of good governance and

sustainable development and also demonstrate how good governance and violence impact

sustainable development using Ghana's case scenario. In the study, I evaluated the claim

that asserts that motivation of citizens to indulge in acts of violent rebellion, which

consequently leads to civil conflicts and a state of insecurity, is triggered by

marginalization, socioeconomic deprivation, and disregard for the rule of law, abject

poverty, and underdevelopment.

In this study, I employed a qualitative approach with a holistic case study design

to investigate the governance systems and practices in Ghana. Ghana is a country with a

history of violent coups d'état; however, it has risen above this history and undergone

major transformations to become an example of good democratic governance in the West

African subregion (Omeiza, 2008). A review of the violent past of postindependent

Ghana, the ethnic crisis in the northern part of the country, and its pockets of electoral

violence indicated that Ghana is just like other countries of the subregion and is prone to

violent crisis. Therefore, a study of the people's experiences and perceptions of violence

in Ghana was not only important to understand how and why skirmishes occurred in the

country but also demonstrate how the governance practices have ensured that the people

of Ghana focus on preserving peace and fostering sustainable development. In this study,

I examined the participants' experiences regarding the governance processes to help

derive a hypothesis.

The limitations of the previous studies in the same domain included their inability

to capture the reasons behind the infamous violence among the Zongo community in

Ghana. As suggested by Schildkrout (2006), many of the perceived settler groups, such as

Morsi's, Hausa, etc., had settled in Ghana since the late 1800s, but are still considered by

many Ghanaians and the state as foreigners. These groups have settled in the

communities referred to as Zongos that are economically deprived, have high levels of

illiteracy, and the lucky ones have low-paying jobs while most of them remain

unemployed (Schildkrout, 2006). According to Amankwaah (2013), these experiences

contribute to the willingness of the young men from the Zongo areas in Ghana to result to

internal community violence almost daily as a way of venting out their frustrations. They

also engage in external community violence during ethnic disagreements and the

elections for gains (Amankwaah, 2013). My research findings will be made accessible to

political actors and policymakers to help inform institutional reforms aimed at

establishing the practice of the democratic tenets of good governance, particularly since the findings may be replicated in other countries in the troubled West African sub-region.

Research Questions

Qualitative research questions are structured in such a way as to allow investigators to extensively study people's behaviors, viewpoints, and beliefs concerning particular problems or situations (Yin, 2005;). I selected this research approach to unravel the research participants' perceptions of how stability and good governance impact sustainable development in Ghana. I hoped to help improve the sustainable development agenda in the sub-Saharan by shedding more light on the association between the key drivers. Uwe (2009) posited that it is essential to present a clear idea of the research questions while staying open to new and somehow more meaningful ones that may arise. To this end, I examined the following core question in this study: What is the impact of good governances and stability on sustainable development in Ghana? This question was further broken down into four subquestions:

RQ1: Is there a relationship among the political stability and good governance and sustainable development as experienced in Ghana?

RQ2: Compared to other countries in the West African sub-region, what factors have contributed to the political stability and good governance in Ghana?

RQ3: What roles have good governance and political stability played towards sustainable development in Ghana?

RQ4: What plans have the Ghanaian government implemented for sustainable development (i.e., social, economic, and environmental)?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study was based on the development theories of Karl Marx. Marxist thought and philosophical arguments have formed the basis and inspired most research frameworks in the fields of science, literature, philosophy, among others. This theory applies to modern day political and democratic establishments in the sense that there are groups within society who are still hell-bent on subverting justice and democratic spaces in their jurisdiction as dictated by their capitalist approaches and way of life. Ghana is a democratic establishment, but that does not make it free of elements who would wish to have and retain power disregarding the popular will of the people. Tranquility and development often precede a peaceful, transparent, and accountable political process (Laclau, 1977). The reverse of the same is always marked by unrest and a series of violence and destruction of property, thereby disrupting the normal life of the citizens and the business community (Laclau, 1977). Interestingly, this unrest and violence can be beneficial to a few capitalist individuals who could benefit from arms deals and such instabilities; therefore, the Marxist approach made it possible to understand the data gathered in this study.

The influences of Marxist thought have seen different tropes and included the theory of alienation, the application of the concept of mystification, the theories of class conflict, and that of exploitation among others. The focus of this study was on the impact of good governance and stability on the sustainable development of Ghana, within which I employed a philosophical inquiry. This approach in itself assumed two parameters of the study. Firstly, I was concerned with the manner in which the Marxist approaches

helped shape the human understanding of the sociopolitical world. The confines of this study were within the domain of philosophical investigation coupled with empirical research (see Torfing, 1999).

Marxism is a social and economic system that is derived from the works of Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx (Torfing, 1999). It is a framework that derives its analyses from the conflicts that exist between the subjugated and the powerful individuals in the society with the self-emancipation of the working class as the primary goal (Murray, 1998). This theory holds that the capitalist approach of production makes it possible for the bourgeoisie to exploit the proletariat unfairly, and this prompts class struggles by the proletariat forming the basis for historical and social change (Murray, 1998). Based on this foundation, Marx argued that a social revolution must take place to establish a form of the dictatorship of the workers, known as the proletariat, with the ultimate goal being to own the means of production, exchange, and distribution (Murray, 1998).

The theoretical framework for this study was founded on the foundation of basic ideas of alienation and exploitation, labor theory value, base and superstructure, class consciousness, historical and dialectical materialism, and idealism. I made use of political ideology as the basic idea of the Marxist theory of development to guide the research. Ideology holds that the ruling class imposes the dominant ideology on members of the society to make its agenda and interests appear as those of all the members of that society (Laclau, 1977). This ideology is thus used by the political elite to confuse the alienated groups and create some impression or false hope, known as commodity fetishism, where

the social correlations get transformed into objective relationships between money and commodities (Laclau, 1977). Every society is characterized by contradictions between the exploited and the exploiters; the problem comes when defining each of these cases becomes the subject. While adopting this approach, it is significant to point out the fact that some countries without properly instituted paths of democracy and institutions have always attempted to groom the spirit of resurgence (see Torfing, 1999).

Nature of the Study

In this study, I made use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods in deriving data. The independent and dependent variables in the study are also identified in this section. The topic of this study was the impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development in Ghana. This means that the sustainable development of the Republic of Ghana depends on good governance and political stability and pits the development of Ghana as the dependent factor in this study, while the independent variables were political stability and the good governance.

Operational Definitions

Accountability: The means by which governing authorities/institutions continue to be responsive to the electorates or citizens aimed at facilitating their participation at all levels of public life is encouraged, whereas public servants are held answerable for their actions or inactions in the service of their communities (World Bank, 2011).

Capacity: The ability of a leader to carry out their core functions efficiently and effectively (World Bank, 2011).

Economic development: The means by which access to resources, such as employment, land, and other opportunities, remain available to all who desire improved standards of living, and not just the elites, who distribute these resources for their political gains. Nevertheless, when those resources are distributed along astrictive identity lines, the perception is that the opportunities are derived based on a person's belongings to a giving social community (Basu, Calamitsis, & Ghura, 2000).

Good governance: A government's respect for the rule of law and individual human rights. The concept includes encouragement for participation in productive political processes, access to information, and the empowerment of citizens (UN, 2010b). According to UNDP (1997), good governance is the entirety of exercise of authority in the administration of a nation's matters, encompassing the complex procedures, apparatuses, and institutions through which groups and populaces express their interests, implement their legal rights, and arbitrate their dissimilarities.

Millennium Development Goals: Objectives that were established by the international community under the auspices of the UN, who were charged with ensuring that leaders of developing nations built viable governance institutions to assure good governance, enhance justice system, guarantee citizens' rights and security, jobs creation, and remove all unnecessary roadblocks to sustainable development (World Bank, 2011).

Political stability: When the ruling government is favored by the population and does not experience strong indicators of social unrest. While there are problems within every nation, and times of war or hardship are common, a stable political system is one

that can withstand these occurrences without major societal upheaval and ongoing endurance of these circumstances (World Bank, 2011).

Sub-Saharan Africa: The region of the African continent, south of the Sahara Desert, which consists of 49 countries (Venture Africa, 2013).

Sustainable development: The development of an economic and social system to ensure that there is an improvement in the educational standards, an increase in incomes, an improvement in the health of the citizens, and an advancement of the general quality of life. The Brundtland Commission (1987) defined sustainable development as growth or advancement of society that satisfy the needs of the present without necessarily negating the necessities of the future generations.

Transparency: The ability of the leadership in place to function with the absolute openness of all their dealings and encourage third-party reviews of developmental activities within their institutions (Langer, 2008).

Assumptions of the Study

Assumptions help the researcher demonstrate the essentiality of a study (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). As such, I conducted this study with a few assumptions. First, whereas the absence of good governance and political instability leads to failed initiatives on sustainable development, my assumption was that the Ghanaian government continues to be a step ahead in the West African region on sustainable development issues. Another assumption was that the qualitative, holistic case study method would provide me with an in-depth understanding of how Ghana's relatively good governance and stability impacts on sustainable development. I also assumed that I would not get less than 20 cooperative

research participants willing to answer all questions with integrity and reliability to understand the Ghanaian perspective on good governance, stability, and sustainable development. My last assumption was that I would find ample documents to contribute sufficient data to explain how Ghana's relatively good governance and stability impacts sustainable development.

Scope and Delimitations

Accordingly, researchers are categorized by their scope or perimeters (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). As such, I sought to outline the issues, such as the goal, statement of the problem, and the research questions of a study. The purpose of this study was to understand the impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development in Ghana. I took a particular interest in Ghana's rule of law; the structures of governance; Ghana's political stability; and Ghana's initiatives on sustainable development, policies, and practices. I studied how Ghana, being one of the critical leading democratic nations in the subregion, has approached the concept of sustainability differently.

Determining the impact of good governance, stability, and sustainable development using Ghana's case study helped me understand the association between the three, which will be beneficial to other West African nations and, by extension, the rest of Africa still struggling with issues of failed states or civil unrests and skirmishes. The study appeared exploratory; therefore, a qualitative, holistic case study was appropriate. I declined to use phenomenological research because I did not intend this study to include an understanding of life experiences (Patton, 2002). Instead, I expected to understand

perceptions about processes of actions implemented to bring about socioeconomic and sociopolitical changes in Ghana.

Limitations

In most studies, researchers encounter the issue of limitations (Patton, 2002). One limitation of this research was the issue of accessibility. I used a snowballing technique to recruit research participants, and this presented an inherent difficulty in accessing a larger sample because with such extensive data, issues of diversity set in and this proved to be a challenge to the entire study regarding accountability issues. In qualitative inquiry, the sample size does not count much, the reason being that it is a single sample derived from multiple sources of data (see Patton, 2002). In any case, the size did help to enhance the validity and reliability of the study findings (see Merriam, 2009).

The other limitation I identified was my handling of research biases. To mitigate this, I used peer review and worked hard to form a panel of experts whose comments helped add validity and reliability to my study findings. As a qualitative study, this research did not provide the quantitative descriptions previous studies had provided. The conclusions derived from this research were limited to interpretation rather than quantitative analysis.

Significance of the Study

In Africa, poor governance still poses a significant threat to sustainable development due to inability of government policies to focus on the people (Onyekachi, 2013). Since the 1980s, governance has been a debatable topic and scholars, international organizations, and governments have assumed different interpretations of good

governance. Good governance in itself is defined by how transparent the processes of selecting governments are administered and how policies are framed and implemented to satisfy the needs of citizens (Onigbinde, 2007). The existence of national integrity systems that monitor and hold public officials accountable in the implementation of economic and social policies as well as the management of state resources promote good governance (Onigbinde, 2007).

On the other hand, Leftwich's (1994) definition of good governance pointed to an indication of the presence of systems of transparent and accountable governance founded on strong legal frameworks (Sebudubudu, 2010). According to Sebudubudu (2010), the United Nations Development Program also defined good governance in the human development framework as democratic governance where human rights are respected, and accountability is upheld. The United Nations Development Program's definition also takes into account the participation of citizens in the decision-making process, responsiveness and focuses on poverty eradication, inclusiveness, equity, impartiality, fairness, phasing out any discriminatory practices, and "taking into consideration the needs of future generations" (pp. 250–251).

The results of this study will help improve the current frame of literature that explains the impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development. Previous studies have explored the irony around the fact that most of the West African countries have vast natural resources, yet underdevelopment and economic decay persists (Onyekachi, 2013). However, these studies have failed to present realistic and practical frameworks to address the challenge of governance. Drawing on the perceived relatively

of good governance activities in Ghana that account for stability, peace, and the

sustainable development of the republic, I captured the existing gap in the literature in

this study and the findings would inform public policy.

Using a case study approach, I explored the feelings, views, and experiences of

people who were active participants in the governance processes of Ghana and how the

practices impacted their lives and the larger society. I also looked at how good

governance and stability effect sustainable development in this study. Although elections

in Ghana are relatively calm compared to some of the neighboring West African

countries, some of the shortcomings in the Ghanaian electoral system need to be

tightened to ensure that the election process is transparent, free, and fair.

The results of this study provide insights for policymakers and stakeholders to

help direct the process of policy reforms. They also establish or reinforce national

integrity to address the issues highlighted by the study. Furthermore, the findings of this

study will be available as useful resource material to inform future studies.

Summary

Sustainable development is reinforced with good governance and stability;

however, the postcolonial interpretation of sustainable development remains

questionable. Successful governance in any organized political system is determined by

the quantity and quality of change facilitated by such governance, and as such, the quality

of leadership determines the degree of development. Research has previously

documented the civil wars and electoral violence experienced in West Africa and

regarded them as caused by underdevelopment in that subregion (Atuobi, 2010). Studies

have also casually mentioned the black market sale of natural resources, including diamond and gold, in the West African countries and how it has been used to fund the civil wars and led to the political instability experienced in the area. Researchers have also mentioned the lack of political will in this region to curb the transnational insecurities and how the continued instability has affected the subregion socially, economically, and politically (Amankwaah, 2013).

In this study, I sought to uncover the impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development. I focused on Ghana as a case study, a country that has risen above military regimes that it underwent for over 30 years to become one of the most viable democracies in the West African subregion. This chapter is followed by a review of the pertinent literature in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In this section, I will present a review of the existing literature on the impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development in Ghana. I will break the chapter down into subsections, taking into account a series of developments presented in the past and current literature. In this study, I independently assessed good governance, stability, and sustainability in so far as the impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development in Ghana is concerned.

In the chapter, I will present related studies and literature after an in-depth and thorough search was conducted. I will offer a synthesis of theorems and the conceptual framework to the full understanding of the studies carried out. Finally, I will provide definitions of critical terminologies for the betterment of the knowledge of the study.

The possibilities for good governance are dependent on economic resources and institutional resources presented for guaranteeing governance; however, in some cases, there are insufficiently centralized governance structures, while in others they are inadequate (Grindle, 2004). For instance, in Africa, the proper governance is lacking, and the civil wars and political instability experienced in some of the countries has derailed the whole process of sustainable development (Bamidele, 2013). In West Africa, the subregion is rich in natural resources but still faces underdevelopment primarily because of the major political violence in countries like Togo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Nigeria (Bah, 2012). Even worse civil wars and political instability have bedeviled Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone (Atuobi, 2010). Ghana has impressively tried to avoid

anarchy despite being part of a war-tone region, but it still has had its fair share of election-related violence (Addo, 2008).

Ghana has developed a security culture as reflected in its foreign policy which defines how the nation handles the national security challenges. Addo (2008) looked at how the Ghanaian national security cultures have integrated with the regional security protocols and if they in any sense complement each other. The author posited that despite Ghana developing proper security culture, it remains on paper and has not been actualized. As such transnational criminal activities have become more challenging and are even intensifying, the poor governance, corrupt institutional practices and leadership, inadequate resources, and lack of interagency coordination remain the fundamental causes of the disconnection (Bamidele, 2013).

Corruption, corrupt and inefficient law enforcement agencies, and bureaucratic inefficiency undermine the capacity of institutions to facilitate good governance for economic development (Bamidele, 2013). Without an appropriate institutional environment, corruption and rent-seeking events will always prevail even in an economy that has attempted to apply outward-oriented economic policies (Onyekachi, 2013). Through the process of constitutional convergence, the ECOWAS has tried to create a series of norms that will ensconce democracy and good governance in the member states (Cowell, 2011). Despite the efforts, the West African countries still grapple with unrest, which makes the public to question the efficacy of the protocol (Cowell, 2011). Formulation of policies is not enough to ensure adequate employment, and it requires the support of good governance that can only be achieved by putting in place appropriate

institutions. Additionally, sustainable development remains at the center of most nation's agendas, and some underlying factors, such as stability and good governance, define the degree of development in any county, as it is impractical to choose one over the other (Onyekachi, 2013). To this end, sustainable development needs the effective provision of institutions and sound policies favorable to good governance.

Literature Sources

I conducted this literature review using various sources of information. Keyword searching, as well as the snowballing process, was used to determine the most relevant studies and literature. I searched the Google Scholar, ERIC, A+ Education databases for relevant articles alongside ProQuest and PsycINFO, particularly from journals that were peer reviewed.

Some of the search words I used include *sustainable development, unsustainable development, good governance, governance, political instability, West Africa's civil wars, Ghana's political instability, corruption, conflict,* and *electoral violence.* From articles found through these search strategies, I conducted a review of references used by previous authors to locate additional resources that my general search did not discover. The literature review ranged from an overview of the sustainable development and good governance to stability in West Africa and narrowed down to the literature on Ghana's governance and stability and how it supports the concept of sustainable development. Much of the information I sought was available; however, those topics that had little current research conducted on them were marked for future studies.

Theoretical Foundation: The Marxist Approach

In this section, I will articulate the theoretical foundation of this study. Specifically, the core assumptions of the theoretical framework, the Marxist approach, will be mapped out and discussed. The overarching purpose of the theoretical foundation was to serve as the analytical compass for guiding my interrogation of the relationship among good governance, sustainable development, and political stability in Ghana.

The fundamental premise of the Marxist theory is that groups or individuals in society tend to struggle in a bid to maximize their shares of the limited resources at their disposal (Laclau, 1977). Since the resources are limited, the struggles without any reasonable doubts lead to competition and conflict, which in turn, impact both intra- and interclass relations (Thomas & Tow, 2002). Importantly, these class struggles affect the various institutions, governance, sustainable development, and political stability (Addo, 2008). One of the resulting effects is the struggle for power within the ruling class as well as between the ruling class and sections of the ruled classes (Hirshleifer, 2001).

Drawing from the foundational pillars of the Marxist theory, I identified the following specific assumptions. The main assumption is that human interactions lead to conflict (Laclau, 1977). This can be caused by different individuals sharing a common interest in terms of resources, sexual partner, and other fundamental human wants (Laclau, 1977). Another assumption concerns competition. Competition has been overlooked within the neoclassical economics (Laclau, 1977). While this assumption is wide, it is vital to take note of the fact that the cause of competition is human nature, while it's functioning is a consequence of spontaneous interactions (Laclau, 1977).

Marxist competition is coercive in nature and is in the context of trade and economic relations (Laclau, 1977). The concept of modern neoclassical theory also supports Marxist's arguments through acknowledging that in a perfectly competitive market, the agents lack the powers that could call the shots (Laclau, 1977).

Even though radicals declare their indebtedness to Marxism in terms of science, the concepts of competition and power are a bit different from that of Marx. The Marxist concept of competition has no deviation from power; the two go hand in hand (Murray, 1998). According to Marx, competition is not looked at from the perspective of markets but from the approach of mechanisms that define the coordination and operations that define the mechanism of social coordination (Laclau, 1977). Marx's notion is that power is an interpersonal relation (Murray, 1998).

Also, structural inequalities in rewards and power are mostly built on all social structures (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). Resources are distributed based on who knows who and by how close one is to the power cronies (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). Since everyone desires to have access to resources, they often employ all available attempts to ensure that they land themselves the fair share of the resources (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). The resources are scarce, and every individual would always scramble to have these resources.

The degree of inequality is another major element in the theory. Inequality arises in varied proportions with the people having varying amounts of wealth. They amassed the wealth in the form of gifts and rewards for their loyalty to the ruling class (Annan, 2004).

Arguably, the most critical tenet revolves around the issue of a revolution. Major changes occur due to the conflict between the competing interests as opposed to through adaptation (Ahiave, 2013). This is always an abrupt and revolutionary process as opposed to an evolutionary one; that is, the changes that occur as a result of this are spontaneous (Ahiave, 2013).

Overtime, civilization and the democratization of states have become part of the human aspect. Modern societies have adopted the social hierarchies that have effectively brought about the creation of distinct classes by wealth, prestige, and power (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). Based on this theory, it is the structure of social classification that pits the haves against the have-nots, who are perceived to be the lower classes (Dahrendorf, 1959).

In sum, the Marxist theory asserts that in a modern society the criminal law and the criminal justice system operate on behalf of the powerful and wealthy bourgeoisie, having the resulting policies being aimed at controlling and ruling the lower classes (Laclau, 1977). This theory maintains that the process then goes further to perpetuate a system whereby, the upper class retains the power and the other classes are kept economically disadvantaged, powerless, and disenfranchised (Dahrendorf, 1959). There is no doubt that Marx had a premonition of such conflicts and held that every society is based on the foundation of antagonism of the oppressed and oppressing classes, with industrialization and modernization pointedly increasing the conflict between the two parties (Dahrendorf, 1959).

Modern society offers several instances of the key ideas and mechanisms that touch on Marxist theory, exhibiting the process through which the ruling class systematically commits to the spirit of disenfranchising and exploiting the lower classes in its bid to retain power and maintain its influence. The best thing about this theory is that it applies to all types of governments and societies, including the dictatorial and modern-day democracies (Dahrendorf, 1959). In this case study, I used the theory in explaining the impact of good governance and sustainability on political stability in Ghana.

Governance

Good governance and stability have far-reaching effects on the concept of sustainable development. Good governance nurtures stability, and the converse of it is true. In this section, I will provide insights into the individual's experiences with governance and instability and their impact on sustainable development.

Background

Governance, like sustainable development, is a concept that was broadly embraced and explored in the late 1980s (Grindle, 2004). It was an attractive area because it encompassed a comprehensive set of factors that were vital, yet remained insufficiently unrecognized in conventional thinking (Kemp, Parto, & Gibson, 2005). The concept also encouraged a more integrated comprehension of the interrelated factors. Scholars' work on governance has portrayed the political system as a complex set of informal and formal arrangements that are unbalanced and imprecise (Kemp et al., 2005). This contrasts with the conventional understanding of governments as clearly

identifiable, formal, and static entities (Kemp et al., 2005). The term, government, conjures up an image of formal structures reigning over people, while the idea of governance highlights the increasingly vital role of informal and formal provisions in a political economy (Kemp et al., 2005).

According to Plumptre and Graham (1999), governance is a practice that is characterized by processes through which societies are ruled. In the realm of political science, governance has been associated with attempts under changing patterns of societal or state interactions. Some theories have linked governance to new kinds of socio-political interaction (Meadowcroft, 2007) while Rhodes (1996) defined it as "self-organizing inter-organizational networks that constitute an alternative to, not a hybrid of, markets and hierarchies" (p. 659). In this light, Onyekachi (2013) discussed governance as a form of social coordination based on dialogic rationality with modification of goals through ongoing negotiation and reflection. Other scholars have defined governance differently and simply considered it as a generic term for the various approaches to the achievement of coordinated approaches. Kooiman's (2003) description of socio-political governance as an arrangement in which public, as well as, private actors interact aimed at solving societal problems. Dynamics, diversity, and complexity drive the development of more wide-ranging governance activities encompassing a hybrid of three major kinds, mainly self-governance, hierarchical governance, and co-governance (Kooiman, 2003). Pierre and Peters relate the notion of governance to both interactive and institutional processes. According to Onyekachi (2013), governance means "making and managing public policy, organizing people, controlling subordinates to exercise skill and

commitment to achieve excellence in a given set of assignments" (p. 3). In other words, governance is about ascertaining that the citizens follow a recognized course while apparatuses of governance offer approach to upholding culpability.

The Concept of Good Governance

Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) research project defines good governance as institutions and process by which power is exercised and the procedure by which governments are selected, held accountable, checked and replaced. Further, it is the capacity of governments to manage resources effectively and efficiently, as well as, formulate, implement and enforce sound plans and regulations, and the reverence for the institutions that govern them (Onigbinde, 2007). The UNDP (1997) described good governance as the entirety of exercise of authority in the administration of a nation's matters, encompassing the complex procedures, apparatuses, and institutions through which groups and populaces express their interests, implement their legal rights and arbitrate their dissimilarities. It comprises the economic, political, social, judicial and administrative authority, and thus includes; the private sector, the government and the civil society.

It also entails a particular set of initiatives and a broad strategy to reinforce the civil society institution purposing to make the government more accountable, more democratic and more transparent (Abe, 2010). Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) defined good governance as a significant level of an organizational structure upon which policy formulation and the policy implementation is carried out, especially in the conduct of economic policies and the overall contribution to growth, stability as well as in public

welfare. Consequently, good governance is not only about accountability, transparency, and participation but also encompasses the rule of law and openness. A more insightful and comprehensive explanation of good governance was provided by the World Bank (1992) which defined it as the means through which power is exercised in the management of the economy of a given country together with its social resources that are geared towards development. According to Potter (2000), good governance can be regarded as sound development management, accountability, the legal framework for development improvements, the legality of the government, information and technology, the capability of administrations to articulate suitable policies, make timely decisions, implement them efficiently and deliver services. Thus, good governance is the level at which a government is observed and acknowledged as valid, devoted to refining the wellbeing of people and being able to respond to the requirements of the populace. The government should also be capable of the upkeep of law and order, and public service delivery, ability to produce an empowering setting for fecund undertakings and impartial in its conduct.

Governance and Democracy in Africa

Today, it is impractical to separate the performance and measurements of democracy from good governance. The two concepts are connected, and for democracy to be successful in practice, it should be understood in the same light as good governance and focus on improving the society and the citizen's welfare. This understanding is well put into perspective by analyzing the African scenario where every nation claims to be practicing democracy, yet there are increasing incidences of decadence and poverty in the

socio-economic and political health of the citizens. Amongst the scholars, the concept of democracy has remained indeterminate and remained fundamentally insuperable. For instance, Olowu (1995) conjectured that democracy as a "concept of governance has become all things to all men" (p. 16). This concept justifies politicians from various African countries to label every political system as democratic to suit their perspectives. The concept of democracy has therefore been grossly abused and misinterpreted by various African nations. Literature in the 1980s connoted that democracy was directly linked to the development concept and left out the aspect of good governance. However, Linz and Lipset recognized the disconnection particularly in the absence of substantial development (Southall, 2003). The empirical study conducted by Akindele (2002) showed the interrelation between democracy and governance and concluded that "it was analytically discovered that practically, political animals, all over the world attach serious importance to democracy as a mechanism of political governance" (p. 174).

Two scenarios characterize the practice of democracy in Africa. First, there are instances where politicians are insensitive to the necessities of the populace, irresponsive and insolent to the rule of law (Gilbert & Allen, 2014). These politicians device and employ violence to ascend to power and subsequently use the power to acquire wealth and perpetuate the assortment of illegalities blatantly. In all this, the populace and their wellbeing are neglected with impunity. These nations are characterized by instances of witch-hunting, political killings, fraudulent electoral processes and insecurity (Gilbert & Allen, 2014). Apparently, in these African countries, there is a façade of democracy as a cover for the disempowerment of citizens in the decision-making process and the

disenfranchisement of voters. The rates of underemployment and unemployment are widespread; exploitation is rife, the majority of the citizens are languishing in poverty and are unable to access the common wealth. On the other side, few people who hold the public offices or their cronies appropriate the state's wealth (Gilbert & Allen, 2014), while politicians struggle for public office and political power to perpetuate the status quo. Moreover, the public institutions are privatized and only controlled by few individuals with so much impunity. The political parties also lack liberalization and make it difficult for the ordinary citizens who would control the state in a manner that would benefit the entire populace.

Moreover, these self-acclaimed African democratic states lack proper social infrastructure as well as basic amenities including good public transport system, hospitals, schools, water and electricity (Gilbert & Allen, 2014).The public policies and decision are made from top to bottom and reinforce the interests of those in power who are totally oblivious to the needs of the citizens. Furthermore, the implementation of public decisions, policies, and laws are selective and mostly driven by the intentions and interests of those in power. Such nations are referred to as transitional democracies, but in reality, they should be labeled undemocratic and jumbled democracies (Gilbert & Allen, 2014). In the absence of policies that positively impact on the welfare of its citizens, such nations inevitably experience political instability, with little respect for human rights. Some of the countries under this category include Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Gambia, Nigeria, Benin Republic, Zimbabwe, Togo, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Sierra Leone (Gilbert & Allen, 2014).

Secondly, there are those nations that have deep respect for human rights and democratic principles and provide opportunities for collective and individual welfare. They value the civic participation of the populace and are also responsive to their demands (Gilbert & Allen, 2014). Moreover, these nations have a transparent process for succession which is dictated by democratic codes. After the electioneering activities, the citizens are involved in policy and decision making. They are also appointed into influential positions in government and politics and can articulate their gripes through nonaggressive legal ways to deliver oversight over the government undertakings (Gilbert & Allen, 2014). With minor exceptions, the political process outcomes in these nations are characterized by accountability, responsive and transparent democracy and the living conditions of the citizens are prioritized. Such countries are characterized as operating working democracies. In this category are Ghana, Botswana, South Africa, Mauritius, Tanzania, and Senegal (Gilbert & Allen, 2014).

Good Governance and Sustainable Development in Ghana

In Ghana, governance is chief to any development strategy. The civil societies, as well as the private sector, are promoters of good governance in Ghana as stakeholders. In the aftermath of the country's dalliance with military rule, the public has been increasingly supportive of democracy. Ghana has also been moving forward towards better governance resulting in a more peaceful and stable political environment. In 2000, the New Patriotic Party (NPP), a somewhat market-friendly party won the elections and presided over a period of strong economic growth and regained its postindependence per capita GDP while maintaining relative political stability (Guseh & Oritsejafor, 2005).

However, the transformations were not holistic as some sectors did not experience any progress while challenges persist (Hasty, 2005).

Evaluating Ghana's governance performance in the context of its locality puts into perspective the progress that it has made through the years. Compared to some other countries of the region that are either under the throes of conflict or come out of it (Werlin, 2005), Ghana has for some time now experienced positive economic growth and stability. The only challenges facing the country in the area of governance relate to gaps between capacity and expected outcome. Structural, leadership and resource constraints challenge Ghana's governance capability in rights promotion, infrastructure and security provision, income generation, and economic management. The limited capacity negatively affects the government's ability to deliver positive change to some of the nation's most challenged groups including the poor, children and women.

While Ghana has become a success story in peace and political stability, there are worrying signs of strain in the areas of economic and government efficiency, the rule of law and the democratic participation. This is surprising as the country is the recipient of more than US $1.4 million annually premised on the parameters of effective democratic governance and economic competence (Werlin, 2005). Nonetheless, Ghana performance trumps those of its neighbors although there is room for improvement based on its medium risk structural core. Its key strength is located in specific indicators including press freedom, contract regulation and viability of political parties. On the other hand, it experiences deficiencies in the areas of dependence on foreign aid, areas of the GDP per capita and the integrity of the legal system.

Ghana's performance in the Government and Market Efficiency cluster is also worrying because of its correlation with economic development (Werlin, 2005). Conversely, its proclivity for political violence show is at low-risk mainly compared to its regional neighbors. It is important to note that growth and peace are beneficial to the population and good governance is a vital prerequisite for such positive outcomes.

Ghana's inflation rate has reduced to 13.3% in 2017 from 14.9% in 2005 and 41.9% in 2001 (Aryeetey, & Fenny, 2017). Although a significant improvement, the country has to focus more on stabilizing its currency. Some of the key challenges experienced in the services sector include low levels health expenditure, poor access to improved water as well as relatively low levels of primary school enrollment which contribute to the overall high risk. However, significant changes have been experienced especially with the improved enrollment of primary school from 10% in 2000 to 91.11% in 2015. To address the shortcoming in the education sector, the government has legislated free primary education to make the service available to the poorer citizens. In as much as some sectors face nonfinancial challenges, such improvements are remarkable. Ghana's GDP grew at an average of 4.5% between 1995 and 2004, in 2006 it grew by 5.7% while in 2012 it rose by 9.3% (Aryeetey, & Fenny, 2017). The estimated GDP in 2017 is USD 46.6 billion while the rate of unemployment is at 6.3%. However, Ghana experiences low levels of inequality which is a strong point for improving governance outcomes.

Ghana's economy is founded on the lucrative gold and cocoa products with cocoa representing 5% of the GDP while gold accounts for 90% of the country's mineral

exports, constituting about 40% of the total exports (Youde, 2005). Its economy is also

dependent on the foreign assistance, representing over 10% of the GDP, 54% of the gross

capital formation and 19% of the imported goods and services. The international

community has steadily supported Ghana since the 1983 launch of its first Economic

Recovery Program. Analysis of Ghana's economic trends and structures indicate that

compared to other countries in West Africa, the market and government efficiency in

Ghana are stronger and have been able to produce positive outcomes regarding the

consolidation of economic processes and economic growth (Youde, 2005). However, the

challenges that Ghana is facing include the gaps between the current standard of state

capacity and the outcomes that both the international community and its local cronies

nation.

An analysis of Ghana's institutional performance indicates glitches with various

branches of Ghana's government being able to conduct their prohibited tasks (Tettey,

Puplampu, & Berman, 2003). The civil service, the judiciary, and the parliament have

notoriety as institutions challenged by capacity problems. Moreover, the foreign donor

capacity in Ghana usually outstrips its creating concerns over national policy sovereignty.

Complacent leadership has been identified as the chief obstacle to effecting serious

change (Tettey et al., 2003). The Ghanaian government efficiency can be evaluated on

two levels notably its efficacy in producing positive policy outcomes and the perception

of this effect in the eyes of the International community. Ghana has always been cited as

an example of good governance and economic development and enjoys a high level of

investments and foreign aid from international financial institutions and individual's

donor governments (Youde, 2005). It is important to note that, Ghana's heavy reliance on international aid portends an ominous future especially with the country's relatively slow progress in combatting corruption. As the government efficiency reforms continue, donors may reevaluate Ghana's performance and reduce the inflow of development assistance (Youde, 2005). If this happens and since Ghana's financial health dependence on development aid, then the implications would be dire.

Corruption in Ghana is rife, and it is almost being considered normal by the populace. Conversations about corruption and its effects are rampant, and this endemic cancer has affected every aspect of governance over the years (Tettey et al., 2003). Literature posits that fighting corruption is a prerequisite for good governance and the rule of law which are the foundation stones for sustainable development (Bamidele, 2013). Scholars' document that the poverty experienced in Ghana is as a result of corruption, attributed to the loss of moral values and poverty. Partisan economic and political arrangements also contribute to the ignorance and poverty in the country (Bamidele, 2013). This arrangement has entrusted a disproportionate portion of the nation's wealth in the hands of a few individuals. The link between corruption, politics and sustainable development is principally around the fact that the vital structures expected to facilitate development are attacked (Kabumba, 2005). For instance, resources meant for human and social development including roads, schools, and hospitals are corruptly diverted into individuals' accounts. Sustainable development balances out the social, ecological and economic impacts of people's action now and in future, but corruption destabilizes the balance entirely (Kabumba, 2005).

Fuseini and Kemp (2015) posited that land is the most endowed natural resource and a prerequisite for sustainable development. There is more competition for human land which necessitates the practice of proper land use. Rapid urbanization has also been on the rise, and according to UN-Habitat (2009), about 70% of the world's population would be living the urban area by 2050. Responding to these new developments, Fuseini and Kemp look at spatial planning in Ghana and how it works in support of sustainable development. They acknowledge that urban land planning is a vital aspect in achieving sustainable development particularly because more people are living in urban areas and their issues like spatial sprawl, food insecurity and environmental degradation being experienced (Fuseini & Kemp, 2015). Particularly in Ghana, urban centers are experiencing problems such as poor infrastructure and service delivery, poor environmental conditions, uncontrolled growth. These factors deter sustainable urban development, and as such, the government has renewed efforts to transform planning through proposed land use and spatial planning bill and the national urban policy framework (Fuseini & Kemp, 2015). The former suggests planning based on a repeal of an old 1945 planning ordinance and spatial development framework. Fuseini and Kemp recommended the two as the most appropriate approaches for managing the country's urbanization and all the related matter in the spirit of sustainable development.

The Ghana Country Director of the World Bank alluded that Ghana requires a growth strategy that is premised on productivity path; such as, robust public investment system, reform of the governance framework, and accelerated educational system (World Bank, 2011). Since the inspired reforms engendered by the World Bank in the late 1980s,

the country change course from its post-independence socialist/communist inspired governance system of the late 1950s (World Bank, 1992). This was after it became seeming that such system had failed and created more negatives than positives. Presently, what exists in Ghana is a mixed politico-economic system wherein indigenous has a say in the allocation of the natural resources. The combination of public-private initiatives with the full participation of the locals in exploiting natural resources does not alienate most Ghanaians but has rather enhance resilience and sustainable initiatives.

The sustainability of social and economic development in Ghana depends to a large extent on its resource base, more so when economic growth has been based on the use of renewable and non-renewable natural resources like forests, water, and soil. The pressure on these natural systems is enormous. Unfortunately, past attempts to handle the environmental problems have been largely on an ad hoc basis. There is a need for a rethinking of its natural development efforts along more sustainable lines.

Through the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP), the government of Ghana has stated its commitment to environmental protection and sustainable development. While not all promises have been realized, Ghana's efforts have gone beyond lip service as it has taken steps towards strengthening institutions, developing human resources, research capacity and methodology, thus improving popular participation and balancing access to and distribution of resources.

Already NEAP is helping to facilitate national strategies and networking in the field of sustainable development. These considerable efforts must be intensified since environmental protection is a recurring challenge requiring constant vigilance and

periodic revision. Perhaps what is needed most is sustained and consistently orchestrated campaign by the country's mass media to engender a public commitment to halt the alarming rate of environmental degradation and to develop new strategies for ensuring sustainable living.

Incentives and deterrents should also be provided to complement the legal texts already in force in the environmental field to provide further weight to the policy of environmental protection. Land and forest laws in particular need to become more rational, both from a scientific and social perspective. These measures are necessary to encourage people's involvement and ecological regeneration.

Empirically, there is a correlation between political instability and economic growth. All other factors remaining constant, a steady political leadership invariably leads to sustained economic growth. Stability comes with its perks; assurance of a definite market increased investment and evolution of a country's intellectual capital which are all weighty indicators of progress in any economy (Annan, 2004). On the other hand, instability in the hands of civil strife and disobedience condone mediocrity, underutilization of the youth capacity, discourage investment, employment, and creation of income. It is a red flag being blatantly waived at investors and taxpayers prohibiting them from undertaking any investments and work, stultifying the economy. It would be a fallacy for someone to neglect the plain truth about the relevance of stability to the sustenance of the economy. Political stability is viewed in the context of growth, referring to a specific kind of stability: strong institutions, the rule of law rather than a

responsive and efficient bureaucracy, low corruption, influential individuals and a business climate amenable to investment and sustainable development.

Political Instability

Background

Politically advanced countries demonstrate legitimate authority over their territorial boundaries and interact with other nations from the position of strength (Williams & Haacke, 2008). Ideally, their power comes from people's mandate, and it is exercised in tandem with their wishes. The situation is such because, in most advanced nations, the appropriate institution of governance including the judiciary, the legislature, central bank, auditor, press etcetera are sophisticated and autonomous. Thus, they are efficient in maintaining government within the confines of the law as they exercised their political authority. Contrarily, at independence, most West African nations were either poorly developed or lacked proper structures (Annan, 2014). Due to lack of the essential legal and institutional checks and balances, in the 1960s and 70s, most of the West African governments became tyrannical to nurture the general rule of the so-called founding fathers of the most prominent political parties at independence (Apogan-Yella, 2005). Just like the colonial predecessors, these African leaders were intolerant of dissent and opposition. As such, the opposition politicians were either eliminated through extrajudicial killing or incarcerated. Some nations went to extremes and even transformed into one-party states and outlawing political dissent. Citizens of these countries lived in fear and studies have shown that within ten years of independence, a significant number of countries had suffered an attempted coup, most of them from West Africa. For

instance, Benin has five attempted coup plots, Ghana - one, Sierra Leone - two, Nigeria - four, Burkina Faso – one, and Togo - two (Apogan-Yella, 2005).

In the case of Ghana, its first president Kwame Nkrumah is blamed for his own downfall right after his country's independence in 1958 when he enacted the Preventive Detention Act that authorized him to detain his opponents for up to 5 years without trial based on the amorphous national security considerations. (Apogan-Yella, 2005). By 1961, between 400 and 2,000 opponents were clamped into detention under this Act. While the judiciary and legislature enjoyed moderate development, ultimate authority rested with the President who possessed unquestioned executive powers. Without an active political, institutional, or legal structures to control the excesses of the president, the military in collaboration with other external performers often engaged in the historic overthrow of governments. Such was the case when the military usurped the authority of the people of Ghana with the ouster of President Nkrumah's government in 1966 in a coup d'état, barely 9 years after independence which set back the clock of democratic governance in Ghana for about twenty years (Apogan-Yella, 2005).

States with the most established political system are considered advanced and most stable. Governments of these states are primarily accountable and represent the electorate and are democratic (Annan, 2014). On the other hand, politically underdeveloped nations usually do have independent governments for their citizens; however, this independence results from strong military support and external finances for the ruling class of the underdeveloped states (Annan, 2014). Even when in conflict with most of their citizens, the significant dependence of these countries on unearned income

and these elites' capacity to control valuable commodity exports to purchase overwhelming armed forces which invariably are used to exercise and perpetuate authority and power, as well as, suppress individual freedoms and rights of their populaces. Once citizens feel alienated from the affairs of government, they are less likely to be patriotic and in West Africa, the preindependence struggles for self-determination resulted in the alienation (Annan, 2014). The logic still holds true irrespective of the reasons for such alienation. In all four of West Africa's major conflicts in the last decade - in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and Cote d'Ivoire-personalized autocracy was a significant trigger. Classic examples are Samuel Doe and Charles Taylor in Liberia, Siaka Stevens and Joseph Momoh in Sierra Leone, Joao Vierra and Kumba Yala in Guinea-Bissau and the heirs to Cote d'Ivoire's founding President, Felix Houphet-Boigny – Henri Conan Bedie, Robert Guei, and Laurent Gbagbo. These individuals displayed antidemocratic tendencies and indulged in ethnic nepotism and cronyism that alienated and threatened other groups in the process (Apogan-Yella, 2005). In most West African countries, fragile political structures have estranged populaces from the political process. This alienation-induced political insecurity of groups or individuals has resulted in the instability and conflict experienced in some of the countries.

The Economic Dimension of Insecurity

Economic underdevelopment is another significant cause of insecurity in West Africa. The fact that most West African countries record the lowest GDP per capital annually, yet they are rich in natural resources is surreal (Apogan-Yella, 2005). Per capita GDP is the total output of services and goods for final use produced by an economy, by

both bob-residents and residents divided by the entire population of the country. Compared to other advanced nations in the world, mainly those found in Western Europe and the United States, the level of human development in the West African countries is significantly lower. While wealth and stability characterize the advanced nations, West African nations experience internal conflicts and poverty (Apogan-Yella, 2005). As such, there seems to be a correlation between GDP and stability. Whenever the income is low, and some sections of the population monopolize the control of natural resources at the expense of others, the discontent may result in conflict when no avenues for fair distribution of natural resources and income exist (Annan, 2014). According to UNDP, Cape Verde has the highest GDP per capita in West Africa, and it is not surprising that it is the only country in the sub-region that has escaped coup d'état or civil wars since 1975 (Apogan-Yella, 2005). Unemployment, poverty, low per capita GDP, hunger, and disease which characterize this sub-region are some of the ramifications of underdevelopment.

Social Dimension of Insecurity

Nigeria is not only the most prolific oil producer in Sub-Saharan Africa but also the 10th most abundant global oil producer. Oil accounts for more than 90% of Nigeria's total exports and represents the crucial sector of the nations' economy (Apogan-Yella, 2005). However, driven by a perception of exclusion, the youth of Niger Delta, the heartland of the country's vast reserves of natural gas, has launched a campaign of terror to draw attention to the alleged neglect of the area, the source of a preponderance of its oil income. In 1999, for instance, they attacked oil installations persistently resulting in several clashes with the security forces. The campaign was youth-driven because they

feel that their grievances have been ignored despite the huge incomes and profits from oil

drilled from the region by the Nigerian government and oil companies in the area

(Annan, 2014). The youth demanded the upgrade of social amenities including schools,

roads, political representation and the provision of clean drinking water as the only way

to end the attacks (Apogan-Yella, 2005). The above point in the case demonstrates that

when the social contract between the state and its citizenry cascades, then conflict

becomes inexorable. People only accept the state's authority as long as it provides

suitable economic conditions and delivers services such as income and employment

(Apogan-Yella, 2005). Once this social contract is broken, social disorder and violence

ensure and could quickly escalate into civil wars. Corruption, tribalism and religious

intolerance are other social factors that could lead to instability.

During colonization, the colonial masters exploited ethnic dissimilarities to their

advantage. After independence, the African governments were not any different and were

autocratic and exploitative (Annan, 2014). In an ethnically diverse and authoritarian

environment, the idea of national development and patriotism does not register to them

since people are more focused on the necessities of life. Therefore, loyalty is based on

interest, and it is first to the clan or family, ethnic group or tribe and finally to the state. In

underdeveloped countries, where income is low, the citizen's resort to unpatriotic means

to survive (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004). They look for their tribesmen or women in position

for openings or privileges to succeed in life. In all aspects of experience in the West

African sub-region, this mentality has permeated with the difference being in the degree

of manifestation in the different states. At such, tribalism-facilitated conflicts have

ensued because some of the communities feel sidelined in resource allocation, development projects, employment, government positions distribution of the national cake and social amenities (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004). Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia are some of the West African states that have experienced civil wars on ethnic grounds. Ghana, Mali, Guinea, Niger, Senegal, and Burkina Faso have also experienced ethnic rivalries but to a lesser extent (Annan, 2014). These nations can avoid future conflicts by adopting political and social structures that recognize the needs of all citizens, including the minorities.

Religious bigotry and intolerance have also contributed to instability in West Africa where the nations have had internal unrests perpetuated by the groups from different religions (Annan, 2014). For instance in Ivory Coast and Nigeria, violent confrontation has been reported between Christians and Moslems, while in Ghana between Christians and traditionalists, Christians and Muslims, and Muslims and Muslims (Apogan-Yella, 2005). In West Africa, religion is quite significant. For instance, Nigeria has experienced various religious clashes resulting in thousands of deaths, internal displacement and the generation of refugees. The country is not only torn between Islam and Christianity, but it also has strong ethnic bonds.

Lousy leadership choices have also certainly played a part in some of the most significant issues confronting the economic, social and political stability in West Africa (Assensoh & Alex-Assensoh, 2001). For instance, problems of mismanagement of resources, commitment to strategic plans, corruption, as well as, the lack of political will to effect policies have resulted in most of the countries of the subregion in administrative

limbo (Svanikier, 2007). The widespread nature of corruption, the general criminalization of the political system, essential social services are in dramatic decline, and security apparatus across the region is weak (see Ayee, 2002; Annan, 2014). More worrying is the inability of those with the genuine political will to effect change which will trigger the restoration of national integrity systems remaining in a constant argument on how to gain citizens' trust (Chamberlin, 2011). While these issues are of concern to the region, others such as future threats to security exist across the sub-region. (Chamberlin, 2011). The existence of porous borders meant that trafficking of small arms and illicit drugs by criminal gangs continue to flourish posing threats of insurgency and new conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa. (Annan, 2014).

However, in spite of these critical challenges to the stability of West Africa, there are definite indications of a resolute Africa which will see a more stable and the sustainable development of its countries (Osinowo, 2011). This narrative further explains why the leadership of UN has developed a strong policy to bring stability to the subregion (UN, 2005). Former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan indicated accountable governance, stability as well as the development of a joint peacekeeping operation for the subregion as the benchmark for the new policy to improve security in West Africa (UN, 2005).

Insecurity in West Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa is a continent of nascent nation states, most of which gained their independence from European colonizers between 1960 and 1980. Autocratic regimes and civil strife were widespread in the first part of the postcolonial period. Many

countries subsequently introduced multiparty political systems in the early 1990s and stability has improved since. This progress should be conducive to economic and political development since political instability is detrimental to economic growth and self-reinforcing (Alesina, Ozler, Roubini, & Swagel, 1996).

Sub-Saharan Africans have managed to bring down the number of armed conflicts Combined with a lower number of coups - from 20 per decade in the period 1960-2000 to six in the 2000s and four so far in this decade - this has contributed to higher stability and stronger states. According to the State Fragility Index, most African countries have improved their resilience since 1995, bar a few exceptions such as Uganda. That should translate into a better capacity to manage conflict, develop and execute public policy, deliver public services and sustain progressive development (Marshall & Cole, 2014).

Qualitative institutions are an essential precondition for sustainable long-term GDP growth (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). That partially explains the weak development of Sub-Saharan Africa. Its institutional quality is, in fact, weak from a global perspective. For a significant part, this is due to high levels of corruption, which leads to the weak rule of law, a challenging business environment, and uncertain government effectiveness. Zimbabwe, Angola, and Nigeria, for example, score very poorly on corruption, while armed conflict increases instability in countries such as Burundi, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. There are also outperformers; South Africa is the most well-known example, but also Mauritius (due to its stable democracy and friendly business environment) and Botswana (due to a stable democracy and relatively low corruption levels).

Unfortunately, however, the improvement in Sub-Saharan institutional quality has lagged behind the world average. The overall score has deteriorated rather than improved, from -0.63 in 2002 to -0.67 in 2013, which mainly reflects a lower score on political stability. This situation does not mean political security has not improved. As we have illustrated above, the number of conflicts has gone down, and general political stability has improved. But political stability has fallen relative to that in the rest of the world. In that sense, Sub-Saharan Africa has seen its political stability improving compared to previous years, but still cannot be considered politically stable compared to the rest of the world.

A country's stability, particularly regarding physical security, is essential for economic development (Apogan-Yella, 2005). However, when a county's insecurity springs within its borders, the relationship between development and security is reversed. After the Soviet Union collapsed and the death of communism, the push for democratic countries has taken center stage (Apogan-Yella, 2005). As the superpower rivalry ended, African states that relied on the politics of Cold War to exploit the citizens were no longer protected and lacked the wherewithal to keep staying in power even with the public push for democratic reforms. These governments had in the past labeled genuine push for reforms as capitalist or communist inspired within the cold war context politics and even sometimes with the backing of the Eastern and Western bloc to strengthen their global supremacy and power (Apogan-Yella, 2005). For instance, France put up an unyielding military group in his former colonies during the cold war period. However,

that has changed, and France is now diversifying in commercial relations beyond its former colonies in Africa.

While the cold war ended and resulted in the decline in conflicts amongst states, there is, however, an increase in the number of civil disputes (Apogan-Yella, 2005). Africa was among the nations that experienced the civil wars as the ordinary citizens demanded better environmental, social, political and economic environments that would upgrade the lives of the populace. Whenever their demands were not met in the conventional political process, violence ensued as they demanded attention which results in instability and particularly in the West African region.

The West Africa region entails 15 sovereign nations that make up the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (Cowell, 2011). They include Burkina Faso, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Liberia, Togo, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Niger, and Senegal. Except for Liberia, these countries were for hundreds of years under the colonies of European power including Portugal, Britain, and France (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004). The West African countries are classified according to their official languages and their colonial pasts into Francophone (Togo, Burkina Faso, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Benin, Niger, and Senegal), Anglophone (Ghana, Liberia, Gambia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria) and Lusophone (Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde) (Apogan-Yella, 2005). Most of the West African countries are sparsely populated or small in size except Nigeria which makes it hard for them to be viable political or economic entities (Cowell, 2011). With only 15 out of 53 African states, West Africa has disproportionately been affected by the conflicts experienced in Africa.

Through the years, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Senegal, and Guinea-Bissau have been entangled in a cross-border web of civil conflicts or civil wars with rebels, arms, and refugees, spill over the borders (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004). Niger, Mali, and Nigeria have been beleaguered by internal insurgencies that have crippled their potential to offer security to their populaces. In Burkina Faso, Guinea, Togo and Gambia, the democratization efforts have experienced setbacks. Literature provides that the West African states are among some of the poorest countries in the world and the subregion is also the most coup-prone area (Annan, 2014). West Africa has experienced more successful overthrow of government recorded in Africa than any other part of the continent. As a matter of fact, with the exception of Cape Verde, all West African states have suffered coups d'état at least once. This situation begs the question, why the subregion is so unstable? Studies have tried to determine the relationship between the state of insecurity in the West African subregion and the economic, political, environmental, and social state of affairs.

West Africa is known to be one of the world's principal sources of resources including gold, oil, bauxite, coal, gas, uranium, cocoa etc. However, the region is so polarized and characterized by weak state structures, poor governance, war, corruption, stagnant economy and disease (Apogan-Yella, 2005). After the collapse of the Cold War, the independent states room was created for internal debate that included previously excluded groups. While trying to transition from the old approach to governance and adopting new governance, West African countries suffered some of the worst effects (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004). As internal and external pressures from disgruntled citizens

and donor countries loomed, various nations embarked on reforms which manifested

most visibly in multi-party elections or regime change in Ghana, Benin, and Mali

(Apogan-Yella, 2005). Other countries were less fortunate including Liberia which had

an increasingly active and vocal opposition whose activism precipitated in the escalation

of long-simmering internal conflicts leading to bitter civil wars. Sierra Leone's efforts to

reforms came a little too late as exiled opposition offshoots, propped up externally,

hurled invasions that plunged the state into a brutal war. Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau

would later experience an outbreak of armed conflict with the former still grappling with

the aftershock.

Other West African countries have also continued to experience different levels of

internal conflicts and violence manifested in political agitations in the Casamance region

of Senegal, Nigerian Niger Delta, and Northern Ghana (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004).

Nonetheless, different levels and forms of transition have happened in all these areas

since the Cold War ended. No state has been left unscathed, including Mauritius and

Togo, where the intractable leaders bitterly fought for change, resulting in the alteration

of their political trajectory. Two seismic events, the demise of President Gnassingbe

Eyadema, who ruled Togo for about 40 years and the ouster of President Ould Taya of

Mauritania in a bloodless military coup after 21 years in power marked the defining

moments in the political evolution of these countries (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004). In

Mauritania, a military junta ruled for less than 2 years and transferred power to a

democratically elected president while Eyadema's son succeeded his father who had left

Togo's security sector untouched (Apogan-Yella, 2005). Guinea has been affected by the

developments in the neighboring Sierra Leone and Liberia and by the regional clamor for

democratic governance. Since the early 1990s, the region has had to bear a huge refugee

burden from Sierra Leone, Liberia, to some extent from Casamance region of Senegal

and Guinea-Bissau (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004). Lansana Conte, Guinea's ailing president

thrived in crushing recurring popular revolutions and revolts, all symptoms of deficits in

the security governance sector but was obliged to make major concessions to retain

power.

Like many other regions of Africa, West Africa is characterized by the diversity

of its cultural, ethnic and social relationships that go beyond the national boundaries with

civil conflicts likely to be reinforced and fueled in such complex associations (Balestri &

Maggioni, 2014). For instance, the Mano River Union (MRU) region witnessed several

civil conflicts leading to thousands of people getting displaced and dying as well as

contributing to the widespread human and economic underdevelopment (Balestri &

Maggioni, 2014). The MRU comprises of an economic and custom union between

Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire meant to promote economic

development and enhance wealth and stability in the area (Balestri & Maggioni, 2014).

However, with the repeated humanitarian crises and conflicts, the union has been

hamstrung from discharging its mandate. From the early 1990s, instability in one country

have ripple effects on its neighbors resulting in a region wide collateral consequences.

Porous borders make it difficult to stanch intracommunity trafficking in small arms and

light weapons that fuel these conflicts that create a permissive environment for the illegal

exploitation of the region's rich natural resource endowments (Balestri & Maggioni, 2014).

The West Africa's nations' journey to reforms from stifling, rigid authoritarian systems to a more transparent, perceptive governance framework has not been any smooth or peaceful (Bah, 2012). The whole bloc has also not experienced the same journey and has had different challenges to battle. Transition in each state has been occurring within a unique context and at different pace. The perfect scenario would have been a peaceful transition, requiring a strengthening of the state security institutions weakened by decades of poor governance alongside major transformations of attitudes and practices within such institutions and more broadly in the society (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004). In countries where divisions have led into civil wars, the security environment is often characterized by a range of factors which create further complexities in the aftermath of conflict. In addition to large-scale displacement of people and refugee movements, extreme insecurity is caused by the weakness of the formal, state-controlled armed forces and the devolution of power into the hands of paramilitary groups, warlords, ethnic militia, private security organizations etc. (Bah, 2012). This is sometimes compounded by the massive trafficking, abduction, and recruitment of children and young people for use in armed conflict.

The transition to stable environments where sustainable development can occur in the post conflict settings needs a series of interrelated activities that transcend social, economic and security consideration (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004). It is vital to strengthen and transform state institutions in ways that will allow for the creation of an honest, well-

functioning state and a dynamic private sector. Regarding the security sector, the

restoration of law and order is an immediate priority which usually includes the

restoration of the monopoly of the means of violence to the state and formally recognized

security establishments guided by a democratic leadership (Annan, 2014). The process of

achieving this would entail a range of activities, including disarmament, demobilization

and reintegration (DDR) of various formal and informal security forces and groups;

transformation in security governance arrangements and attention to rule-of-law issues

such as transitional justice (Apogan-Yella, 2005). Another factor that must be addressed

in such a security framework is the widespread proliferation of small arms and light

weapons. But these issues can only be solved if the state, civil society, and international

actors working in harmony.

Electoral Violence in West Africa

Some of the countries that have experienced significant violent elections in Africa

in the recent years include Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Cote d'Ivoire (Nordic African

Institute, 2012). This state of affairs is characterized by widespread coercive intimidation

of both voters and candidates including harassment, assassinations, and imprisonments;

low-intensity violence, violent riots, and clashes between supporters or security elements

of the competing political parties and attacks on local party headquarters and party

symbols is common. Other West African countries that have experienced violence during

elections include Gambia, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Senegal, and Liberia.

Coups were even staged in Mali and Guinea-Bissau before their elections in 2012

elections (Nordic African Institute, 2012). Election violence is regarded as a sub-category

of political violence, primarily distinguishable by its timing and motive. It is a coercive and deliberate strategy used by political actors – incumbents as well as opposition parties- to advance their interests or achieve specific political goals about an electoral contest (Nordic African Institute, 2012). It may take place in all parts of the electoral cycle: in the run-up to elections, on the day of elections, and in the immediate post-election period. Election-related violence is not limited to physical violence but includes other coercive means, such as the threat of violence, intimidation, and harassment.

The causes of electoral violence are multifaceted but can be divided into two broad categories. First, structural factors related to the underlying power structures prevalent in new and emerging democracies, such as simple patronage systems, poor governance, exclusionary politics, and the socio-economic uncertainties of losing political power in states where almost all power is concentrated at the center (Nordic African Institute, 2012). Second, factors related to the electoral process and the electoral contest itself, such as failed or flawed elections, election fraud and weak or manipulated institutions and institutional rules governing the electoral process. The states in Africa are all, to varying degrees, relatively new democracies. Democratic institutions and procedures, including elections, have been introduced or reinforced, while the underlying structures of power in society and the norms governing the political system have often not yet been transformed (Nordic African Institute, 2012). The continent has a long history of one-party and dominant political party states where politics and economics are often conflated. As a result, politics is often exclusive, intolerant of opposition and sometimes militarized, not least in postwar states. Furthermore, many of the socio-

economic and political benefits of democracy have yet to be fully realized among large

parts of the population.

Instability in Ghana

Ghana had enjoyed relatively strong economic growth and political stability since

2000 when the market-friendly (NPP) won elections (Addo, 2008). Though democratic

transitions since Ghana's return to democratic government have been relatively peaceful,

there have been several incidents of violence. Notable examples include the 1994

Nanumba-Konkomba land skirmishes as well as the 1992 and 1996 election-related

violence (Amankwaah, 2013). Although much of these challenges occurred decades ago

and consigned to the country's history, the potential remains for the reoccurrence of

election-related violence. The ethnic identities in Ghana are complex, and the exact

number of ethnic groups in Ghana has remained debatable with estimates indicating there

are about 100. The major ethnic groups in Ghana include the Ewe, Akan, Ga-Adangbe,

Mole-Dagbane, and Guan. Each of the major ethnic groups is further divided into smaller

units depending on the history, language, and cultural heritage. As such, there is a mixed

level of ethnic fragmentation. Usually, the identities are localized, but the ties to larger

groups also persist (see Ahiave, 2013).

Christians comprise 60% of the population while Muslims make up 20% and the

remaining 20% includes indigenous belief systems (Ahiave, 2013). Social and

geographical intermixing between the groups are very common. Religious affiliations cut

across class and ethnic lines, although Christianity is dominant in the South and Islam in

the north. Religion, as well as Ghana's fractured ethnic composition, partly explains the

nation's internal calm. Ethnic and religious identities form an intricate web that averts extreme polarization. Ghanaians place great importance on religion, and religious attitudes are principally rooted in moderation and acceptance, and these principles also dominate inter-religious relations. Inter-religious tolerance is usually on the high but external infusion of extremism alters the status quo (see Ahiave, 2013).

The Rawlings Era in Ghana

In the 1960s, sub-Saharan Africa was plagued by coups while the atmosphere was rife with suspicions following the rising incidences of armed insurgencies (Agyeman-Duah, 1990). These coup d'états failed to serve the supreme interest of the population, except to undermine the potential of the region to achieve socioeconomic and political stability as well as development (Agyeman-Duah, 1990). Whereas the insurgencies of the 1960s were to raise enough fear on the frequent incidence of military coups, the sporadic nature of its occurrence in the 1980s brought more uncertainties to the sub-region (Agyeman-Duah, 1990). Regular as it was in the region, Liberia tasted its first military coup led by Samuel Doe of the People's Redemption Council (PRC) on April 12, 1980 (Agyeman-Duah, 1990). Lt. Jerry John Rawlings then took over through another coup in Ghana in 1981 (Agyeman-Duah, 1990).

Rawlings removed President Hilla Limann of the Third Republic in a coup that demonstrated the relevance of the country's military in its domestic politics (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1995). Rawlings had taken over the reins of government through another military coup on June 4, 1979, when he was rightly hailed as a messiah by most Ghanaians. It should be admitted that his uprising was very popular given the pervasive

corruption and the inefficient management of the economy. In the aftermath of that coup, top military officers were executed while three former Heads of state namely Gen. Akuffo, Afrifa, and Acheampong were also killed in June 1979. Other senior officers were sentenced to lengthy jail terms while junior army personnel canvassed the wholesale elimination of all senior officers who were arrested and detained throughout the country in the spirit of the Ethiopian model.

However, Rawlings subsequently ordered the release of all those senior officers who were not corrupt while those deemed corrupt appeared before special tribunals and jailed on being found guilty instead of being shot by firing squad in 1979. The June 4 uprising took Ghana into a 3-month house cleaning exercise, unprecedented discipline, truth, honesty, fellow feeling. In fact, June 4 invented a social vaccine that restored the country's moral standards.

In taking the country through this process, Rawlings' unique charisma and transformational leadership approach endeared him however to Ghanaians (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1995). Many believed in his vision for the new Ghana even more than the Millennial Development Goals project envisioned by the UNDP for developing countries. Rawlings' vision stood on a concept that requires equipping Ghanaians with the basic skills, tools, and access to technology. The training concentrated on providing the skills and tools that would make citizens self-dependent (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1995). Rawlings' defined goals in effect broke the conservative state-reliance that hitherto drove Ghanaians into economic deprivation. Nonetheless, critics of Rawlings' second coup remained unconvinced and asserted that the second coup was groundless,

and the elected government of Hilla Liman needed time to efficiently function (Annan, 2014).

The economic policies and programs of Rawlings' leadership brought relief to Ghanaians as the country saw economic recovery and the strengthening of institutional capacities (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1995). At the time the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) led by Jerry Rawlings took the leadership in 1981, Ghana was in a state of economic decline with inflation of over 200% while GDP declined by 3% annually (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1995). The previous regime which was overthrown was accused of massive corruption and mismanagement of the country (McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1995). Ghanaians trusted Rawlings and felt his patriotic and nationalistic tendencies and character unlike did Limann (Agyeman-Duah, 1990). While consolidating his power, Rawlings targeted senior officials of the previous regime for prosecution with the excessively harsh treatment meted out to most of them. Rawlings' vision, character, and demonstrable nationalism presented Ghanaians with collective patriotism and new hope to usher the country into the 21st Century (Dartey-Baah, Amponsah-Tawiah, & Aratuo, 2012). His autocratic leadership style and charisma ensured that Rawlings had full control of the revolution and this worked flawlessly to his advantage (Dartey-Baah et al., 2012). As confidence and trust in Rawlings soured amongst Ghanaians and those of sister countries of West Africa, Rawlings turned attention to rebuilding Ghana through building a strong and resilient economy (Dartey-Baah et al., 2012). Rawlings' development agenda approach further affirms Dartey-Baah

et al. (2012) argument that poverty strived amongst Ghanaians even with the stabilized economy.

Election-Related Violence in Ghana

Ghana is considered one of the more stable countries in West Africa since its transition to multiparty democracy in 1992. The Ghanaian nation has made significant strides towards consolidating its democratic achievements (Jockers, Kohnert, & Nugent, 2010). There have been five free and fair elections in the past 20 years and two peaceful transfers of power, which is enough in itself to attract substantial investor interest.

Ghana ranks 26th globally and second in Africa in the 2016 World Press Freedom Index which measures the pluralism, independence of the media, quality of legislative framework and safety of journalist in each of the 180 countries in the ranking. The broadcast media in Ghana is the strongest, with radio being the most far-reaching medium of communication. These developments put Ghana in an enviable political position and formidable social capital.

Ghana governance has received significant progress through the strengthening of its democratic credentials. There are 24 registered political parties in Ghana according to the Electoral Commission; however, the landscape is dominated however by two sides (Gurien, 2013). With such democratic credentials, the country deserves the distinction of being the longest traditional democracy in Africa. The 1992 constitution mandates a multi-party system of governance with the President as the Head of State (Jockers et al., 2010). The tenure of the President is limited to a maximum of two terms of 4 years each

which contributes to its stability and attraction as a preferred investment destination in Sub Saharan Africa.

The Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance which assesses the performance of various countries by measuring the extent to which they meet the expectations of citizens politically, socially and economically. This organization ranked Ghana seventh in the 2016 index. On Safety and Rule of Law, Ghana placed sixth but was ranked 14th, 23rd, 11th and fifth in the subcategories of Rule of Law, accountability, personal safety, and national security respectively.

The administrative region of Ghana is divided into 10 regions which are subdivided into Metropolitan and District assemblies. Of the assemblies, 70% is elected by universal suffrage with the remaining 30% based on experience or ability to excel in a particular field (Gurien, 2013). The independence of the judiciary has helped strengthened the country's good governance and reputation and where weaknesses in the system have been identified, the authorities have acted swiftly to remedy these weaknesses.

Compared to other nations in West Africa, the pockets of violence occurring in Ghana are less severe. However, it is unwise to ignore the incidents since it would be analogous to ignoring the indicators that for possible explosions of ferocity in future (Amankwaah, 2013). The 2008 elections were characterized by tension, and violent acts were more than expected. However, the level of peace experienced during the 2012 general election in the country was unprecedented over the previous 8 years.

Ghana is considered a democratic country and it has to live up to the standards. To this end, the way the electoral fraud associated with the 2008 election was handled, undermined the ideals of democracy. According to Jockers et al. (2010), the electoral commission may not have wanted to open a can of worms or did perhaps lack the money to carry out a proper investigation. Furthermore, the international community expected Ghana to maintain the image of a democratic nation and set an example for the less democratic African countries. Furthermore, in the subsequent elections, the NPP rejected the 2012 general elections results citing electoral fraud. NPP chose to pursue the case in court although some sectors in the media argued that for the sake of peace, the party would simply accept the results and drop the case (Amankwaah, 2013). On the other hand, it was argued that a country's judicial system played a role in demonstrating how democratic a nation is and NPP had the right to contest the elections in court.

Studies have shown that voting in Ghana is driven by clientelism and ethnicity. According to Lindberg and Morrison (2005), about 10% of voters in 1996 voted on ethnic grounds the number rising to 14 percent in 2000. The voting patterns in the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the NPP strongholds were posited to be due to legacies resulting in a political socialization (Amankwaah, 2013). For instance, since the first elections in 1992, the Volta and Ashanti regions have consistently voted for NDC and NPP respectively. Moreover, the northern areas (Upper West, Upper East, and Northern regions) have consistently voted for NDC although, in 2000, NPP gained some mileage. Citizens from the southern cities of Accra and Kumasi, where elections are less related to chieftaincy, argue that election-related violence occurred most often in

ethnically different areas. Studies have also shown that violence occurred mostly in

political parties' strongholds where the minority lived (Amankwaah, 2013). The swing

voters are mainly found in Greater Accra, Central, Western and Brong Ahafo. For

instance, in 2000 they all voted for presidential power to change from NDC to NPP and

in 2004 for NPP to maintain control. However, in 2008, the NDC won in the Greater

Accra and Central Regions in the first round.

Compared to other nations in West Africa, Ghana experiences relatively peaceful

elections. However, it is impossible to ascertain much detail on election-based violence in

Ghana as a whole since media reports are often scant while there has been limited

research on this subject Amankwaah, 2013).Nonetheless, most media reports and

research conclude that since 1992, there have been pockets of violence in certain parts of

the country, though the number of reports of violence varies from year to year (Adebajo

& Rashid, 2004). For example, many characterized the presidential elections of 2012 as

peaceful compared to those of 2008 and 2004. Why was this? Firstly, the competition

between the two candidates in 2012 was not as close as it was in the 2008 election when

there was a run-off (Amankwaah, 2013). It seems that the combination of close

competition and an extended election process were factors that heightened tension in the

2008 elections. The political competition between the two candidates was the gravest

during the period between the first round and run-off of the 2008 election. This was also

the time when the NPP and the NDC used young men to snatch ballot boxes and

intimidate voters in opposition strongholds around the country. Election-related violence

had been exacerbated by alliances between the two major parties, the NPP and NDC with

factions to chieftaincy disputes. This situation was the case in northern towns such as

Yendi and Bawku because the possibility of gaining chieftaincy rights is directly related

to whether or not a faction's preferred party wins elections.

Sustainable Development

Background

The concept of sustainable development was derived from two key sources

including the progressively troublesome indication of environmental dilapidation and

other biophysical destruction. Both of them majorly resulted from the efforts put in place

after the Second World War to drive economic growth (Meadowcroft, 2007). Alongside

other associated agencies, the United Nations was concerned with the unintended

outcomes and appointed the World Commission on Environment and Development

(WCED) to address them jointly. Beforehand, the concept of sustainable development

had appeared in the Swiss-based World Conservation Union Report in 1980 that

welcomed bolstered and democratically new formations of development that advance the

present generations' material needs without depriving the future generation the necessary

resources to meet their requirements (Onyekachi, 2013). According to the WCED's

conclusion, the social and ecological disasters had common causes and focused on

establishing a shared response. In 1987, WCED prepared a report dubbed, Our Common

Future which was focused on experimenting with the concept of sustainable development

and since then a significant number of institutions around the world have adopted it.

Since its inception, sustainable development had remained debatable with disputes

ranging from its definitional to how infective the bodies that claimed devotion to it had

become. However, scholars and researchers are stepping to offer more clarity on the concept and give it more direction.

Brundtland Commission (1987) defined sustainable development as growth or advancement that caters to the needs of the present without necessarily compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs. It also maintained that sustainable development contained two primary notions including the concepts of needs, particularly the crucial requirements of the poor, to which overruling precedence should be granted and the idea of limitations imposed by the social organization and the state of technology on the ecological ability to meet the current and future requirements. Brundtland Commission (1987) linked sustainable development to a series of normative ideas such as, environmental protection including the chief life support purposes of the universal ecosphere; human welfare promotion principally developing the needs of the poor urgently, concerns on future generations' wellbeing and involving the public in the making of decisions regarding the environment and development.

Meadowcroft (2007) regarded it as finding a perfect balance between the three pillars including the society, the economy, and the environment. There have been numerous 'consensus documents' adopted by the transnational conferences and agencies, but the idea of sustainable development remains contested and complex with various perspectives on the appropriate reforms necessary to give it force. The debate on whether sustainable development represents a hard economic and philosophical concept and how it makes it difficult to translate into particular policy prescriptions has persisted (Meadowcroft, 2007). However, (Onyekachi, 2013) posited that these debates are missing

the point because the concept was not developed as an extension of sustainable development but rather was meant to represent the point of reference of development and environmental policy-making.

The UN realm breaks down the area of sustainable development into four fundamental parts including economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, political stability and social stability (Onyekachi, 2013). Sustainable development is about developing an economic and social system to ensure that there is an improvement in the education standards; an increase in incomes; an improvement in the health of the nation and advancing the general quality of life. The scope of sustainable development goes beyond the environmental issues and also encompasses social and economic development (UN, 2005). According to Pearce (1993), sustainable development encompasses the development of a society where the development costs are not transferred to the future generation, or at least these outlays are compensated. Sustainable development is quite diverse and integrates multidisciplinary capacities and also interprets cultural diversity as a primary element of a new strategy for sustainable development (Kemp, Loorbach, & Rotmans, 2007). According to the United National Division for Sustainable Development, Education, Agriculture, Disaster Reduction and Management, information for decision-making and participation, poverty, science, international law etc. fall under the sustainable development scope (Onyekachi, 2013). The idea of sustainable development remains exciting and has intrigued the imagination of policy makers, development specialists, scholars and government leaders as they focus

on promoting socio-economic development and protection of the environment (Hope, 2005).

Unsustainable Path to Development

It has been established that the current development and growth patterns are not sustainable and are also deeply inefficient. Consequently, they stifle sustainable development as well as its objectives of the environmental, social and economic sustainability. Time has demonstrated that the social and economic goals are both highly compatible and largely complementary. It is important to note that growth helps in driving poverty away, either through eradicating it or reducing its level. Be that as it may, the extent to which the social goals eliminate the poverty, all this depends on the extent of the inequality.

The on-going resource-intensive development patterns are most economically and ecologically unsustainable. Some of the other problems experienced include inadequacy in the protection of workers and consumers, exclusion and poverty. In as much as modern economic advances have brought a lot of value improvements including vital environmental quality gains, there are very few gains that are automatic, and the general results have included deepening ecological decline and persistent development failures (Kemp et al., 2005).

Sustainable Paths to Development

Sustainability is not only about protection of existing amenities but also continued creation or advancement to a more just and better world. At such, there is the need for innovation in the socio-technical systems and institutions of governance. Novelty help to

ease the adverse effects of some trade-offs posed by existing technology (Kemp et al., 2005). However, innovation also comes with risks that any system should anticipate and put in measures to deal with them.

The key dimension involves bettering the services, preserving the biophysical systems, integrity and liberating people from hunger, deprivation, and nuisance. There are also aspects of equity across and within generations, as well as, access and opportunity to participate in decision-making. According to Gibson (2001), sustainability is about long-term and immediate incorporation and entails pursuing the essentialities for sustainability at once and seek benefits that are mutually supportive.

The concept of sustainable development has so many interconnected purposes and factors and therefore, it is an effective integration of economic, ecological and social considerations effectively at all scales from international to local, over the long run (Schnurr & Holtz, 1998). It is also characterized by sacrifices and compromises. Despite the imperfections of the current initiative on sustainable development, it is important to acknowledge the social, ecological and social imperatives that are intertwined and find the appropriate ways to contribute to all of them. In literature, the inter-twinned nature of the three pillars has been clearly depicted, but unfortunately, it does not directly translate to practice (Dixon & Hamilton, 1996; Mebratu, 1998).

The context of sustainability determines the most appropriate, needed, and practical approaches. As such, the thorough explanation of sustainability requirements, and the determination of suitable processes of rejecting or accepting trade-offs and options must respect the time and place of application and include those that the results

affect (Kemp et al., 2005). Ideally, sustainability is about adopting locally available options that are sustainable globally. It is also about the local behavior and awareness that shares the greater agenda. As noted by Rosenau (2003), there is a possibility of conflict ensuing between globalism and localism especially because of the different logics and mindsets for action. With the resulting debates and controversies around globalization, it makes it difficult to reconcile them.

Diversity is regarded as a fuel of evolution and a source of learning (Kemp et al., 2005). The importance of having different approaches to designing and strengthening different practices and foundations of governance can never be overstated. As much as diversity is administratively inconvenient, it offers positive benefits for sustainable development. Thus, diversity should be safeguarded in all dimensions including economic, technological and socio-cultural. According to Rammel and van den Bergh (2003), diversity is a resource base for reorganization and adaptation as well as a source of learning.

In sustainability, it is important to take precautions because there would be so many surprises. Sustainable development is pursued in a world of intersecting, dynamic, multi-dimensional and complex systems (Kemp et al., 2005). As such, it is hard to fully describe not to mention predict the future. Furthermore, there is limited evidence on the emerging glitches that would unpredictably ripple through the complex socio-ecological systems. To this end, sustainability calls for adaptability and prudence, choosing safer technologies, seeking broadly comprehensible options over those that are dependent on

the specialized expertise, ensuring practicality and availability of alternatives for backup, and developing mechanisms for effective response and monitoring (Gibson, 2001).

Active public participation and transparency are vital aspects of governance for sustainability (Kemp et al., 2005). Sustainability encourages active citizenship, openness, and participation. It is not only a means of building commitment and understanding but also an end in itself.

Decision-making that is centered on sustainability aims at seeking positive, mutually supporting improvements in all domains. But in some cases, the practical options are not beneficial to all aspects. Since trade-offs are to be expected, and there will be losers and winners, it is imperative that trade-offs are being properly handled (Kemp et al., 2005). The rule of thumb is, the ultimate decision made should not sacrifice a long-term goal for a transitory benefit. It is also important to ascertain that the result of any set of compromise offers positive contributions to the core of sustainability essentialities (Gibson, 2001). Losers should be compensated but not always. For instance, those who pollute the environment should pay for damages and not to be rewarded to cause harm. The anticipation for trade-offs and compromises is found on the fact that while the perfect scenario would be to strike a win-win situation, it does not always happen and therefore, it is more viable to anticipate such situation and adequately deal with them.

Sustainability is a continuous process that cannot be considered as focusing on a specified target. Pursuing sustainability is a long-term, continuous process that does not have a landing place. According to Sartorius (2006), sustainable development will always face challenges and unceasing calls for change. Committing to sustainable development

encompasses substantially transitioning to more and wider understanding of set objectives as well as adopting coherently interrelated institutional processes and structures for administration, planning, traditions, choice, and market at every scale (Kemp et al., 2005). Today, sustainable development is multidimensional, cross-sectoral and a new development paradigm.

Sustainable Development in West Africa

While the West has seen exponential sustainable growth, West Africa with its fair share of instability is yet to experience the surge towards the concept of sustainable development. By virtue of most of the countries of West Africa been underdeveloped, many are of the view that sustainable development must be a priority of governments of the sub-region. According to Heaps, Humphreys, Kemp-Benedict, Raskin, and Sokona (1999), social, economic and environmental sustainability are basic components of a well-thought-out sustainable development agenda. Global discussions on the issue have also identified governance and institutions as core to the achievement of sustainable development goals with the international community continually putting preeminent on these key pillars.

The critical need to realize the Millennium Development Goals has compelled international conventions to expand existing components of the pillars to include more achievable ones. These include social sustainability, economic sustainability, governance and institutions, and environmental sustainability. There exist, however, interlinkages amongst the pillars and how the implementation processes of their commitments are carried (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013).

The need for Sustainable development has seen more than 95% of African states ratifying the Rio Convention by the year 2002 (Annan, 2004). Most national governments of the continent have also signed other international environmental treaties at the national level leading to significant progress made in developing their respective national policies. These policies and laws have helped address sustainable development related challenges and issues.

Progress has also been made by the Regional body leading to the establishment of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) to drive the implementation of the sustainable development goals. Progress at the Regional level in the implementation of sustainable development strategies was also reflected in the establishment of the NEPAD. African leaders through the African Union and NEPAD program have pledged their commitment to address the multifaceted development of the continent in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (Annan, 2004).

The treaties recognize for sustainable development to be achieved, poverty eradication and improved living conditions for the majority of citizens where the gap between the haves and the have-nots are bridged are essential. Central to NEPAD's agreements is the responsibility and obligation of African leaders to firm-up national and regional priorities. These would allow citizens to take ownership of the development challenges of their countries.

Heaps et al., (1999) argued that the challenge of sustainable development in the countries of West Africa stem from the difficulties in harmonizing social, economic, and environmental goals of member countries. The priority is aimed at ensuring the current

challenges and aspirations are addressed with an eye on ensuring a more robust and resilient economy, social and environmental systems. Largely, the UNDESA (2013) frameworks for addressing issues of sustainable development in the subregion includes the development of applicable legal frameworks; addressing issues of illiteracy, poverty, and lack of awareness in the development and implementation of sustainable development programs; strengthening institutional frameworks for coordination among ministries and across sectors; develop appropriate human and institutional capacity to translate agreement into actionable programs; improve coordination among governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGO), and the private sector; managing the growing gap between population growth and national output; Improve leadership's vision and commitment to implementing sustainable development strategies, policies, and programs; consolidating the multiplicity of regional formations in West Africa and encouraging youth and women's empowerment in sustainable development.

Meantime, with the support of ECOWAS, the different economies of Francophone and Anglophone blocs have made significant progress particularly in the Health sector with the establishment of agencies which are visible on sub-regional issues. Heaps et al., (1999) noted that the Francophone and Anglophone countries formed the Coordination and Cooperation Organization for the Control of the Major Endemic Diseases (OCCGE) and the West Africa Health Community (WAHC) respectively and functioned separately. But for an efficient realization of the sustainable development goals, it behooves the deepening of regional cooperation and integration of the countries of the region (Heaps et al., 1999). This approach of conceptualizing development

provides enormous opportunity for region-wide synergy, resource exploitation,

infrastructure integration and market expansion of West Africa.

Rural-urban migration has also contributed to some degree of insecurity

particularly the migration of people from the Sahel belt in the north to the countries of the

south. With varying ethnicity, religion, language, cultural and social orientation,

integration continues to be a challenging issue. This sometimes led to conflicts. Presently,

foreigners make up more than one-third of the population of Ivory Coast (Heaps et al.,

1999). Similarly, there are religious undercurrents of the Boko Haram Insurgency in the

North-East of Nigeria. Tribal conflicts have also led to clashes in Mauritania, Senegal

and the Northern part of Ghana. In addition, activities of the Tuareg rebels in Mali, civil

wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia and conflicts between communities elsewhere in the

subregion were aggravated by migration.

Migration aided by porous borders has contributed significantly to the rise in

trafficking of illicit drugs in West Africa. The growing production and intake of drugs

particularly amongst the youthful population continue to ruin the youthful generation of

the subregion. This in itself is fast developing into a serious threat to security in the

region. The situation has also given exponential rise in impunity and corruption which

mostly favors drug barons who sometimes fund politicians and state security apparatus.

The adverse effect of this on average citizens who do not consume these drugs cannot b

overlook. In effect, the proliferation of illicit drug trade undermines development efforts,

citizen's well-being and the greater good of the population.

Besides, in parts of West Africa, there is reported state protection for drug barons so strong that, they operate the trafficking with impunity. In some countries, this evolves into organized crime syndicates which pose a serious threat to economic growth, peace and stability, good governance and above all the public health of the people of the subregion. Previous works of literatures meanwhile questions the present drug policy control practices being adapted to control the situation arguing the negative effect on the economy, public health, human rights, rule of law, gender and social development (Banon, 2016).

Banon (2016) also argue that the overemphasis and focus on law enforcement and criminal justice by international conventions byway of current practice instead of the protection of human rights and public health which is its core objective is undermining sustainable development efforts. It also emerged that countries of the sub-region just as in other countries of the world tend to focus on eliminating the supply source of drugs with little appreciation of the demand end. Moreover, drug trafficking promotes money laundering which subsequently has a considerable effect on the formal economy, and in turn discouraging investment in affected countries.

There are also two different climatic and ecological zones in West Africa Region with one characterized by the dry climate of the Sahel with insufficient rain. According to Amanor and Moyo (2008), this results in deforestation; soil erosion; food shortages leading to famine and desertification. Consequently, the excessive demographic pressure is mounted on immediately available land particularly in the North. Global debates have now narrowed to a completely radical change in social beliefs and values to help the

control increasing population growth. Measures to restore the ecology and environment, as well as birth control policies, are now been charted to address the challenges.

Annan (2004) argued that the building of sustainable development program is critically grounded on good governance practices. This must focus on the procedures of decision-making, awareness creation and its efficient implementation by all who participate in the political process (Amanor & Moyo, 2008). Amanor and Moyo (2008) also highlighted the need for establishing effective and credible independent electoral systems which will ensure a free and fair election. This will guarantee peace and security and, thus sustainable development. However, transparent and accountable governance, public sector management effectiveness and responsiveness of political actors to citizens are still crucial in the governance process (Amanor & Moyo, 2008). Previous literature also argued the need for the institutionalization of the rule of law, zero tolerance for corruption, equity, and public access to information, inclusiveness and transparency as a necessary ingredient to trigger economic growth, social well-being of citizens and sustainable development. Accordingly, Amanor and Moyo (2008) posited that economic growth generates the needed wealth from which the commitments and targets of sustainable development can be achieved. It is necessary therefore to reduce gaps of inequality particularly in income, a bridge the gaps in poverty levels and to guarantee the equitable distribution of the nation's wealth.

For the subregion to make a drive towards a transition from conventional to sustainable development, sustainable development initiatives must be accompanied by the presence of appropriate conditions such as socio-economic infrastructure to promote

effective social service delivery which will allow sustainable development to be

achievable. Amanor and Moyo (2008) argued that the 1980s saw a decade of weak

agricultural growth, the decline in exportation, drop in manufacturing, weakened social

services, debt accumulation by national governments and degraded environment. This

resulted in an average economic growth of 3.4% across West Africa. This brought years

of state economic decay and growth of poverty on the people.

Of another critical concern to West Africa in pursuit of sustainable development

is the global climate change. While international negotiations such as the Paris

Agreement are underway to address the global menace, the practice in land use and

excessive deforestation presents an enormous source of emission of greenhouse gas

although relatively small compared to global emissions. The north, Sahel region which

originally is prone to desertification and drought is expected to see worsening state of

drought and desertification of its vegetation. The adverse effect of this vulnerability of

the Sahel region to climate change could, however, be mitigated if the Clean

Development Mechanism (CDM) and Global Environmental Funds (GEF) are followed

to the latter.

Previous actions taken by individual member countries of West Africa to sustain

the sustainable development goals only tend to confirm earlier propositions that

sustainable development cut beyond geopolitical boundaries. This, therefore, demands a

collect regional approach and effort to achieve sustainable development (Heaps et al.,

1999). A regional approach is essential to achieving sustainable development in West

Africa. This requires the opening of borders, free trade, free movement of people and

harnessing the economic, social and environmental settings through knighted regional integration framework.

Sustainable Development in Ghana

The 1987 report of the WCED defines sustainable development as an advancement that meets the needs of the existent without conceding those of future generations (Brundtland Commission, 1987). In global efforts at eliminating social marginalization and pursuing economic growth, Sustainable development must also underscore the need for progress and development of humanity in a holistic and multi-dimensional perspective. In Ghana, sustainable development forms the basis to crafting any development strategy; particularly, sustainable development is core in building good governance institutions aimed at addressing the circle of acute poverty and ensuring citizens enjoy peace, stability, and economic prosperity. The country realized that in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) there is the need for the spirit of pragmatism and partnership amongst government, civil society, the private sector, and citizens in order to make right choices which will improve the quality of life, in a sustainable way, now and for future generations. The civil society, as well as the private sector, has therefore become promoters of sustainable development in Ghana as stakeholders (Brundtland Commission, 1987; Werlin, 2005).

Unlike in some countries of the sub-region, Ghana has made substantial progress on the Millennium Development Goals, including enrolling more children in primary school, particularly girls. In addition there is increased representation of women in national parliaments, and reducing child and maternal deaths and the proportion of people

infected with HIV (Myjoyonline, 2014). Building on this progress, Ghana has taken pragmatic steps to integrate the SDGs into their national visions, plans and ambitions to achieve tangible outcomes for its people.

Ghana's holistic approach to sustainable development is an affirmation of global admission and indicators that development is much more than economic growth and that the pursuit of economic growth and expansion alone cannot sustain both the present and future generations (Brundtland Commission, 1987). Ghana's four-dimensional concept approach to sustainable development, either economic development; good governance (rule of law); environmental sustainability and social inclusion helped Ghana developed country-specific strategies which considered the collective issues identified by the global community in achieving the SDGs. These country-led strategies have indoctrinated global commitments into a rather plethora of the following national and institutional development plans, policy frameworks, strategic, investment and action plans:

- Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP).

- Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA

- National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS).

- Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) I and II [Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy].

- National Environmental Sanitation Strategy and Action Plan (NESSAP)

- National Policy Framework on Climate Change.

- Food and Agricultural Sector Development Plan (FASDEP) I and II.

- Ghana Education Strategic Plan (2003 - 2015; 2010 - 2020).

- Medium Term Agricultural Investment Plan (METASIP).

- Forestry Investment Plan.

This obligation to plan and pursue global development agenda through country-led strategies is supported by a global partnership and collaboration which led to the flow of much-needed resources from developed to developing countries which Ghana is a beneficiary. However, the multitude and overlapping nature of some of these country-led strategies make for a rather challenging and poor monitoring and evaluation of performance and achievement. It is worthy to note that the Ghanaian public has been increasingly supportive of democracy in the aftermath of the country's dalliance with military rule. The country has also been moving forward towards better governance resulting in a relatively peaceful and stable political environment (Guseh & Oritsejafor, 2005).

Despite Ghana's positive economic growth and stability, there still exists gaps between capacity and expected outcome. Structural, leadership and resource constraints challenge Ghana's sustainable development capability in rights promotion, infrastructure and security provision, income generation and economic management. The limited capacity negatively affects the government's ability to deliver positive change to some of the nation's most challenged groups including the poor, children and women. There are gains, however, as the country over the past decade has witnessed some improved economic growth (GDP), which many attributes largely to the extractive industry but with little impact on the average citizen. According to Alliance for Development 2014) the Service Sector (50.6% - 2014 Budget), which is the largest contributor to Ghana

GDP, is heavily patronized by multinationals and foreign investors, hence once again a chunk of the benefits accruing from the increasing growth in the sector somehow eludes Ghanaians for the most part.

Meanwhile, most of the service subsectors of Ghana depend largely on the importation of several commodities, thus the growth in the sector also brings a worsening of the country's trade deficit and balance of payment (Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2014). Whiles, generally there has been a reduction of poverty amongst Ghanaians, reportedly, the Northern part of the country is still poorer compared to the Southern part and there is a seeming growing gap between the rich and the poor (Aryeetey & Baah-Boateng, 2015). With the country having achieved a semi middle income status, it is becoming more imperative for the government of Ghana to improve domestic revenue mobilization which will finance policies and programs needed to complete the ongoing commitments to the sustainable development agenda.

The sustainability of social and economic development in Ghana depends to a large extent on its resource base, more so when economic growth has been based on the use of renewable and nonrenewable natural resources like forests, water, and soil. The pressure on these natural systems is enormous. Unfortunately, past attempts to handle the environmental problems have been largely on an ad hoc basis (Canterbury & Kendie, 2010). There is a need for a rethinking of a robust national development along sustainable lines.

Through the NEAP, the government of Ghana has stated its commitment to environmental protection and sustainable development. While not all promises have been

realized, Ghana's efforts have gone beyond lip service as it has taken steps towards strengthening institutions, developing human resources, research capacity and methodology, thus improving popular participation and balancing access to and distribution of resources.

Already NEAP is helping to facilitate national strategies and networking in the field of sustainable development. These considerable efforts must be intensified since environmental protection is a recurring challenge requiring constant vigilance and periodic revision. Perhaps what is needed most is sustained and consistently orchestrated campaign by the country's mass media to engender a public commitment to halt the alarming rate of environmental degradation and to develop new strategies for ensuring sustainable living. Incentives and deterrents should also be provided to complement the legal texts already in force in the environmental field to give greater weight to the policy of environmental protection. Land and forest laws in particular need to become more rational, both from a scientific and social perspective, to encourage people's involvement and ecological regeneration.

Empirically, there is a correlation between political instability and economic growth. All other factors remaining constant, a steady political leadership invariably leads to sustained economic growth. Stability comes with its perks; assurance of a definite market increased investment and evolution of a country's intellectual capital which are all weighty indicators of progress in any economy (Annan, 2004). On the other hand, instability due to civil conflict and disobedience promote mediocrity, discourage investment, impede youth capacity development, employment, and creation of wealth

(Adebajo & Rashid, 2004). It is a red flag being blatantly waived by investors and taxpayers prohibiting them from undertaking any investments and work, stultifying the economy. It would be a fallacy for someone to neglect the plain truth about the relevance of stability to the sustenance of the economy. Observably, Ghana hopes to use its oil proceeds to spur sustainable growth and development, but such vision and ambitions would yield more dividend when investment and support is increased to the agriculture growth sectors in order to stimulate growth that impacts a majority of the average citizen.

Summary

Sustainable development has remained an elusive topic in sub-Saharan Africa, and this is because of lack of proper initiatives and structures put in place by respective nations to drive the agenda. One major priority for countries of West Africa remains the Sustainable Development agenda. The groundwork to achieve sustainable development are manifested on three basic mechanisms, namely: social, economic, and environmental sustainability. While the international community still holds that strong institutions and governance are prerequisites for sustainable development, more needs to be done collectively to meet the developmental goals.

Unfortunately for West Africa, sustainable development is not only the fundamental challenge facing the subregion. The challenge for the total transformation of national economies and their societies demand a concerted effort amongst state actors; such as to exert the political will require in addressing these issues to ensure the long-term well-being of citizens of the region. In this connection, countries of the subregion need to create wealth, reduce abject poverty and provide socio-economic infrastructure,

inclusive of basic social services and nutritional safety net. The primary barrier is that the rural poor depend on substance farming, while a great of the continent's revenue generation is depended on natural resources, which prices they do not have a say regulation.

In Chapter 2, I analyzed available literature to provide context to the issue of sustainable development, good governance, democracy and stability in Africa, and in West Africa with particular emphasis on Ghana. I provided information on some of the initiatives put in place to drive sustainable development, the concept of good governance, issues of insecurity and stability. The information was meant to put into perspective the association of the three factors defined by the research questions. Chapter 3 is focused on research methods; the chapter sought to identify the research tradition, including identification of key research participants, gathering and analysis of data, and ethical requirements.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

In the two previous chapters, I detailed the impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development with a keen focus on West Africa and particularly Ghana. Ghana is regarded as a democratic and advanced nation considering the West African standards; however, it still experiences a fair share of electoral-related violence as well as chieftaincy conflicts, which have derailed most of the economic efforts put in place towards sustainable development (Alliance for Development, 2014). There has been no clear demonstration regarding the experiences of those working in the civil society and government institution and whether they have had any changes economically with the relatively good governance and stability experienced in Ghana.

It is fundamental to develop a methodology in any research paper because it helps to unveil the theme. Each work of any science has its research methods. Every scholar of the social sciences, regarding the defined problem, tries to find their way to answer the question and combine different research methods. For this study, I developed a methodology that revealed and exposed the chosen topic in the best possible way.

In this study, I used a qualitative method. Regarding the problem formulation, this method was the best option to get an overview of this issue and test the hypothesis. According to Huberman and Miles (1994), the qualitative method is defined as practical information about the world, which is in nonnumerical form. As the original investigation of this thesis is on the possible impact of government on the aid's efficiency, the qualitative method was considered as suitable for data collection and analysis of this kind

of nonnumerical study. Moreover, I used the qualitative approach as an appropriate method for the following reasons: "... qualitative studies can look directly at the local processes underlying a temporal series of events and states, showing how these led to specific outcomes and prove or rule out rival hypotheses" (Huberman & Miles, 1994, p. 434). In regards to this, the method allowed for an investigation of the data that was suitable to test the formulated hypothesis, which was, good governance and stability positively impacts sustainable development.

In this chapter, I will outline the qualitative method and design used to assist in understanding the experiences of the participants in this study. I will also provide profiles of the participants and how they were recruited for the study. Additionally, there will be a review of how their ethical protection was ensured as well as the procedures for collection of data, data analysis, and the verification of findings.

Research Design and Rationale

Research Tradition

Creswell (2013) argued that qualitative studies are employed when variables appear not easily recognizable. Qualitative data is dominant in evaluations that are based on the constructivist paradigm or evaluate the process itself (Creswell, 2013). Evaluation is usually done in a limited context, and its objective is, for example, the development of organizational functions or an intervention project, which cannot be generalized to other contexts (Creswell, 2013). This kind of evaluation usually adapts multiple research methods, like observation, semistructured or open interviews, and the analysis of different types of documents (Patton, 2002).

Research designs result from how researchers select a given method to respond to a set of inquiries that best address the issue being investigated (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003). Every study design presents a roadmap that articulates the study (Patton, 2002). For the purpose of this research, I selected a holistic case study design; this design was intended to better explore and understand how Ghana's relatively good governance and stability has impacted sustainable development and was premised on the core question: What is the impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development in Ghana? I broke this question down into the following four subquestions:

RQ1: Is there a relationship between the political stability and good governance and sustainable development as experienced in Ghana?

RQ2: Compared to other countries in the West African subregion, what factors have contributed to the political stability and good governance in Ghana?

RQ3: What roles have good governance and political stability played towards sustainable development in Ghana?

RQ4: What plans have the Ghanaian government implemented towards the concept of sustainable development (i.e., social, economic, and environmental)?

The rationale for the case study approach, as with most qualitative studies, includes the necessity to use numerous sources of information necessary to heighten triangulation and to assure the validity and reliability of the study results (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003). Additionally, Patton (2002) posited that "the qualitative methods are often used in evaluations because they tell the program's story by capturing and communicating participants' stories" (p.10). Corbin and Strauss (2007) opined that the

key advantages of a qualitative research design are that it employs an inaugural data analysis scheme and triangulation of data to arrive at developing themes and emerging assumptions.

Applying a qualitative approach to understand instability and governance in West Africa and how Ghana's continued relatively good governance, stability, and sustainable development experiences were vital to mapping the research problem and themes of this study. The holistic case study was the most suitable method for this study regardless of the benefit of using other methods because it provided the ability to triangulate the large volume of data derived from research participants' experiences.

I initially considered other methods of qualitative inquiry but viewed them as less effective in providing the insights necessary to understand the questions. For instance, a biological study is a survey of an individual and the transitions or stages in his or her life (Creswell, 2013). This type of study may provide an overly narrow scope and would have only captured what poor governance and instability meant for a single person. On the other hand, the grounded theory refers to a set of systematic inductive methods for conducting qualitative research aimed at theory development (Creswell, 2013). If the existing theories do not describe the experiences of the participants, they would not be appropriate. Ethnographical studies are used to provide a "description or interpretation of a cultural group or system" (Creswell, 2013, p. 10). Although an ethnographical method was used to describe the experiences of some communities with good governance, this approach was not appropriate for this study population. The ethnography conducted by Wong (2014) examined the impact of the development of local tourism on the indigenous

communities of three villages in rural Sabah. This approach was possible because the participant population was much greater and was confined to a population of particular communities. However, in this study, the population was somewhat large and did not reside within an isolated community; therefore, a cultural group or system was not being investigated. The final method under consideration was a phenomenological study design, which is a study that attempts to understand individual's perceptions, perspectives, and understanding of a particular phenomenon (see Wong, 2014). A phenomenological inquiry is used to discern what the lived experience is for participants when placed in an environment, and this design would not have been sufficient to provide the relevant information to satisfy the research questions of this study.

I selected a qualitative methodology to explore the research area and obtain a detailed understanding of the problem. Merriam (2009) opined that the qualitative approach is essential to address critical matters that are germane to acquiring knowledge. In other words, qualitative method is particularly suitable for the purpose my study.

The Rationale of the Study

This study aimed to examine the critical principles of democracy, good governance, and the stability of Ghana and its role in the country's growth and development. I employed a conceptual model to deduce the challenges that are faced by the government of Ghana and the country as a whole. The use of the conceptual model would afford the opportunity to proffer appropriate recommendations pertinent to the improvement of the nation's current democratic state of affairs to serve as a center of excellence to be emulated by other countries of the region.

The Role of the Researcher

In this holistic case study inquiry, I remained the main vehicle of data collection, analysis, and presentation; this was consistent with scholarly advice on the subject (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2009). When conducting a study, it is crucial for the researcher to consider potential ethical compromises. The rule of thumb is for the researcher to be mindful, remain ethical, and stay bias-free throughout the duration of the study (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009). In this research inquiry, I remained ethical, free of bias, and stayed focused on the issues that were central to the research, such that emphasis was placed on how well the findings demonstrated comprehension of the research questions. Consequently, full attention was paid to the handling and encoding of data and reporting the study findings accurately and objectively. Harmful and unethical practices of some previous research studies that cast doubt on the research community served as a flashpoint to guide my conduct in this study; for example, such unethical practices determined in the Nuremberg and the Tuskegee syphilis studies generated the need for awareness of ethical consideration for all participants. Hence, I remained guided by moral principles and ensured that the risks to all those involved in the study did not go beyond the ordinary course of life.

More often than not, issues of unethical behaviors or research bias usually start at the data collection stage of the study (Maxwell, 2010). During data collection, possibilities exist for researchers to exhibit bias; as such, some within the scholarly community advise researchers to be mindful and make every effort to guide against possible unethical behaviors or biases and avoid them before they ruin the outcome of the

research study (Yin, 2009). Maintaining neutrality is essential for a researcher to avoid

any potential biases. Heedful of this, I collected all data using recording devices to ensure

accuracy and applied NVivo 10 software to analyze the data. I was aware that biases can

occur at any level of the research endeavor; therefore, I strove to obtain all data, even if

the data included personally unfavorable comments by some research participants. I was

guided by the assertion that scholarly writing is bias-free as Patton (2002) and others in

the research arena have underscored. Additionally, drawing on the advice of Rudestam

and Newton (2007), I did not accept any unethical utterances of any kind, such as

offensive, oppressive, and discriminatory language, during the course of the research.

The use of electronic devices to capture information for the inquiry remained

essential. Accordingly, interview bias is eliminated or lessened when the researcher is not

blinded to the outcome (Creswell, 2013). In addition, Maxwell (2008) cautioned

researchers to be mindful of paying attention to their desired expectations for the

research, and from the start, to get rid of any theories, beliefs, and perceptions that could

cast doubt on the outcome of the study. I was mindful to avoid biases, such as

stereotypes, negative assumptions, and the use of ethnicity to describe a person or a group

of individuals, and excluded language that depicted gender and age biases. Finally, I

adopted a strategy of consulting peer reviews and a panel of experts, which fostered the

goal of objectivity.

Methodology

The Participant Selection Logic

The study population exclusively comprised of Africans because the study intended to ensure that all purposeful members, selected through the data collection technique adopted, would demonstrate the cultural, empathetic, and balanced understanding of the dynamics of stability and governance in the subregion. Moreover, this population dynamics helped to attain precise and comprehensive viewpoints on activities and practices on the African continent relevant to the stability and relatively good governance thought of being experienced in Ghana. Moreover, my aimed was to understand the core perspectives on how Ghana managed to achieve its stability and good governance and how it has helped in sustainable development.

I recruited policy makers, civil servants, academicians, civil society organizations, political leaders, institutional or organizational leaders, professionals, students, and citizens who are capable of articulating indicators of good governance and sustainable development, political instability and the association between these factors. The interviews were conducted face to face while some were through e-mails, one-on-one telephone interviews or audio recorded depending on the availability of the respondents. These were the principal sources of the primary data since they were the key informants and respondents of the study. Secondary data from articles, journals, books, newspapers, news files, radio reports, Internet publications, and thesis were also analyzed and provided secondary data for the study. The participants were directly involved in governance in Ghana or the implementation of the policies and well informed on the key

indicators of sustainable development, key indicators of governance and how good

governance and stability impact on sustainable development in Ghana.

Data Collection

For qualitative data, information was collected from 20 respondents, who agreed

to participate in the study in their naturalistic setting where observations were conducted,

the questionnaire was issued and those signed up for face-to-face interview, upon

consent, were recorded. They were recruited through snowballing sampling. Snowballing

sampling,

> A form of nonprobability sampling in which the researcher begins by identifying
>
> an individual perceived to be an appropriate respondent. This respondent is then
>
> asked to identify another potential respondent. The process is repeated until the
>
> researcher has collected sufficient data (Oliver & Jupp, 2006, p. 50).

Oliver and Jupp (2006) further posited that snowball sampling starts by identifying

components and increased by enlisting new elements until saturation; often such samples

apply in the absence sampling frame providing the entire components of the desire

participants.

In this study, there was no specific sampling frame listing of the interviewees

which showcased the snowball procedure as relevant. Atkinson and Flint (2001),

explained that snowball sampling appeared to be cost-effective and useful in several other

research endeavors of some associated issues. Such as representativeness and sampling

principles, finding respondents and initiating chain referral, and (c) seconding

participants as research assistants. They concluded that the richness of snowball

sampling is its ability to unravel aspects of social experience not so visible to researcher's

and lay person's opinion about society. A dearth of literature exists explaining the context

of the success of Ghana's political stability, good governance and economic growth in the

midst of civil wars and skirmishes experienced in the subregion. This study put into

perspective how Ghana has managed to stay successful. Moreover, the data obtained

through snowballing represented one of the various sources of data required in a

qualitative study. To this end, validity and reliability remained compensated for by other

sources including field notes from the researcher's observation and documents.

After receiving approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board

(IRB), snowballing referral from one potential participant was used to get the other as

more participants got recruited. Multiple means were employed including telephone and

e-mail, to engage with the participants. Most of the participants were residents of Africa

with some pursuing professional careers that allowed them to travel between the United

States, Europe, and Africa and therefore, have broader and appropriate knowledge and

understanding of what the study sought to investigate. Once the selection of the

participants was completed, I followed up with e-mails to some and made telephone calls

to others to agree on possible meeting or schedule conversation for determining a

meeting to provide the appropriate letter of consent to participate in the study. When the

consent letter was signed, we agreed on how the interview was to be conducted and then

scheduled an appointment for the time and place where the interview was eventually

held.

Participants selected for the research were actively involved in providing detailed information on good governance and stability in Ghana and how the country succeeded towards sustainable development. The complexity of defining the right number of participants has remained a sampling problem in qualitative research. Rudestam and Newton (2007) posited that "most students tend to understand the number of participants necessary to draw meaningful conclusions from the data" (p. 92). Often than not, the advice is to not so professional researchers, like me, has been to pay keen attention to the selection of appropriate sample population. For instance, Creswell (2013) maintained that the logic behind the qualitative research is to purposefully select participants, sites or documents or visual material that best drive the researcher to understand the problem and the research question.

Mindful of the views presented on sample sizing, I projected sample size of around 10 to 40. The reason being that I aimed to rally as many research participants as appropriate while applying the snowballing technique until at such a time when the data reached a point redundancy or at the level of saturation (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). The application of snowballing placed me in direct contact with additional would be interviewees knowledgeable of the study that related adequately to the research problem and purpose and responded fully to the questions.

Scholars have debated the issue of the exact sample size for the qualitative method. For instance, numbers like 20 to 30, 10 and 15, and even in some cases suggestion is that one participant would do for a qualitative case study depending on the outcome the research (Creswell, 2013; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Yin, 2009). Howbeit,

the undisputable reasoning is that the more research participants for a given research, the better it is for the interview portion of the data. It is essentially relevant to preserve easy modification of data through purposeful sampling (Hoepfl, 1997). I was mindful of maintaining a sharp lens on potential errors with sampling, like misrepresentationsdue to lack of adequate data obtained from the field or simplydistortion as a result of unfolding events that overwhelmed the conduct of the research (Hoepfl, 1997; Patton, 1990). Additionally, I was guided by the scholarly advice for researchers to be attentive to the timeframe for data collection when deciding the pool of research participants (see Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009; Merriam, 2009). Authors Yin (2009) and Merriam (2009) agree that interviews remained essentially one of the many sources relevant for qualitative research method. In essence, a sample in qualitative research reflects a no statistical representation of a population, as one would find with quantitative research (Merriam, 2009). For this study, I interviewed 20 knowledgeable participants, who responded to my research questions; thereby, adequately contribute to the existing body of knowledge.

In qualitative research, researchers must pay attention to how they link data collection and data analysis into achieving new perspectives on the seamless linkage of research questions with the problem, purpose, and theoretical as well as conceptual frameworks of the study (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, Rudestam and Newton (2007) articulated that qualitative research inquiry focuses on how the study remained conducted. The iterative process, wherein individual researchers take note of all that they

observe during interviews, collect, and study documents, which additionally enrich the data and the information gathered (Stake, 1995).

From the get-going, the approach for this study was to seek clearance from the Walden University's IRB regarding all intentions and purposes of the research. After getting the endorsement from the Walden University's IRB, Approval Number: 12-06-17-0425657, I met with some regional public policies leaders to discuss the nature of my study and the benefits it provides for Sub-Saharan Africa. I traveled to Ghana to conduct face-to-face interviews. In addition to the face-to-face interviews, I also used electronic means, including e-mails and audio-recording, person-to-person telephone interviews. I was mindful of the ethical considerations which came about as a result of the use of modern technology in the carrying out the research, which by all means were essential tools employed in the conduct of the study (Shuy, 2002). I ensured that, throughout the study, the research participants so selected remained identified only by codes; accordingly, Shuy (2002) discussed alphanumeric codes as ideal coding. When selecting my research participants, I used purposive sampling with a snowballing technique. Atkinson and Flint (2001) explained that snowball sampling had been found to be economical, efficient and effective in various studies irrespective of some shortcomings.

Drawing on purposive sampling with the application of the snowballing technique, I made calls individually to each identified participants, at separate intervals to ensure confidentiality (Patton, 2002). In addition to the calls, I sent e-mails to potential participants in Ghana as well as Ghanaians residing in Nigeria. I implemented the 'snowballing' technique to find new leads from one potential accessedparticipant to

another (Patton, 2002). As participantswere identified, I provided them with the consent

forms assuring them that the interviews would remain voluntary and that they will have

the option to stop at any time if they felt uncomfortable with any or any part of the

interview questions. This practice remained consistent with the assurances, anonymity,

and respect, which are essential to protect the participants (Creswell, 2013; Merriam,

2009; Yin, 2009). I explained all the risk issues to each participant. Moreover, I informed

all the participants that although they would not benefit personally and directly from the

study, Ghana and the rest of Africa could take advantage of theresearch. Assuming that

the findings, leading to growth and development, could encourage national policymakers

in Africa to formulate and implement effective policy related to good governance,

conflict management, peace-building, education, economic development, health, and

sustainable development.

I began the interview by asking each participant one core question and four

subquestions. The questions included open-ended and semistructured, focusing on the

problem and purpose of the study, which I used to understand how stability and good

governance impacted sustainable development in Ghana while most West-African

countries have been bedeviled by civil wars and political conflicts. Each interview began

with the adequate informed consent explanation that (a) I would use alphanumeric coding

to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, and (b) I would not use personal information of

the participants in the data.

Following the preliminaries, I sought the consent of each participant. At the end

of the individual interviews, I asked participants if they remain available for a second

interview for clarification if there was a need. When the data collection, embedded with member checking and peer review strategies, reached a saturation point, I determined to complete the process. Adds to the interviews; I continued to explore documents useful to the study. Materials such as additional sources needed to strengthen the process of triangulation were considered. Qualitative research requires the use of multiple sources and concurrent continuity of triangulation to enhance validity and reliability (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009).

I took into consideration all standard protocols that govern qualitative data collection. For instance, interview questions open-ended, recorded with a laptop for accuracy, and I took notes to create an audit trail. Additionally, I created journal entries of events as the proceedings unfolded. Implementing these protocols added fidelity and high standards of the structure during the interviews. Journal entries account for impressions, expressions, feelings, reactions, or specific events that transpire data collection (Patton, 2002). Creating journal entries remains consistent with what research theorists (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2010; Patton, 2002; Rudestam & Newton, 2007) see as a vital resource for supplementary information. All data collected for the study remained securely locked for safe keeping, accessible only to me, the researcher (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Consistent with Walden University's policy on data safety, the data will remain for 5 years after I will dispose of it through complete deletion or shredding and burning.

Data Analysis

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) defined qualitative data analysis as "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for the patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (p. 145). Patton (2002) observed that qualitative data analyses have an inherent characteristic to transform data into research findings. Data analyses can remain challenging but making the right decisions and following research protocols often provides one with an appropriate framework for interpreting data and publishing the findings of the study (Creswell, 2013; Huberman & Miles, 1994; Patton, 2002). Throughout the process, it would be prudent to initiate strategies for recording and arranging data. In this case, creating a master code list initially helped to capture categories, themes, and patterns as emerged from the responses to the research questions. Additionally, interpreting data remained a continuous process during the study until I reached data saturation point.

Consistent with the use of the Internet and multiple databases available, researchers tend to feel overwhelmed by vast amounts of data. Therefore, organizing data using CAQDAS often prove useful. Both Stake (1995) and Yin (2003) concurred that data collection and analysis happen concurrently. To ensure fair analysis of all data, I used aggregation and direct interpretation, pattern matching, logic models and cross-case analysis (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). By this I depicted a figure showing how data was gathered, stored and distributed before processing; the NVivo 10 software was used for mapping out categories, themes, patterns and other pertinent aspects to enhance the

interpreting of findings of the study. I used Excel software in the verification of the hypotheses through the use of the chi-square test and the Pearson correlation between the variables as well as the answers that were presented through the use of charts and graphs (Yin, 2009).

The quality of the data scrutiny regime applied offered credence to the nature of the data so collected and, therefore, articulates the worth of the tireless field trips I conducted. It is a scholarly argument that inquirers/investigators endeavor to present their findings through compelling logical reasoning by which they were developed and are made available to an analytical person (Thorne, 2000); it is a critical line for researchers to articulate relationship between data and findings such that the outcome remains reliable and acceptable. Maintaining credibility and being accountable throughout the research is essential; therefore, I employed the use of computer-aided software, such as NVivo 10 to conduct my study. I followed through with some scholars who have advanced the need for researchers to employ the use of tape recorders, video recorders, computers, and phone recordings to collect data because these tools assist researchers to document essential component of their interviewees' responses. Though, computers may evaluate both qualitative and quantitative research findings; however, NVivo remains a popular software used for data analysis (Creswell, 2013).

Several scholars posit that data analysis starts when the researcher begins to explore the collected data, categorized and dissect it for emergent themes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2009). The use of different types of coding, such as open coding, selective coding and axial coding was employed. The first category

included a focus on primary themes identified; the second type included a focus on codes

that remained more concrete; whereas the third type centered a focus on original

crystalize codes. Though there were some literature findings of Ghana's governance,

stability, and sustainable development drive, data obtained from the research questions of

this study helped discover relevant themes which contributed significantly to the findings

of the survey and the literature on how the political stability and good governance impact

sustainable development in Ghana.

Issues of Trustworthiness

In a qualitative research study, research design, data gathering, and data analysis

are central to given research (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2012; Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994).

The perception that validity and reliability are central to quantitative research as opposed

to the qualitative inquiry merely is inaccurate. Qualitative research holds validity and

reliability using verification. Patton (2002) argued that verification strategies ensure there

are reliability and validity of data sample through qualitative inquiry. The process

strengthened the relationship between sampling, data collection, and analysis through the

means of sampling sufficiency and methodological coherence.

Furthermore, Creswell (2013) and Schwandt, Lincoln, and Guba (2007) argued

that understanding the general doctrines of verification approaches is germane to

examining some of the problems associated with qualitative research. In the same vein,

this research remained confirmable, credible, dependable, and transferable; these

standards increased the validity and reliability of the qualitative research results

(Schwandt et al., 2007). Patton (2002) presented that verification remains crucial because

it helps the research to identify research biases, encourages peer review, categorizing and coding data to provide for audit trails; these contribute to the integrity of the research findings. Guba (1981) posited that trustworthiness means adding standards of measurements to the study. Further, in this study, I implemented verification strategies to confirm that the survey meets trustworthiness standards to buttress the educational requirement of this study. I adopted a high level of research strategies for constant monitoring and focused on maintaining data integrity, openness, and continuous member checking. All these actions added rigor and value to the outcome of the study.

The rule of thumb in a qualitative study is that much attention is paid to data collection, how field notes are recorded, and other literature sources reviewed and documented, and that findings must be evidence-based and believable. Accordingly, Creswell (2013) posits that "credibility refers to the believability of the results and is enhanced by evidence such as confirming evaluation of conclusions by research participants, the convergence of multiple sources of evidence, control of unwanted influences, and theoretical fit" (p. 22).

Huberman and Miles (1994) added that further assuring data credibility of a research requires, among others, the following core objectives: (a) strategy of data reduction, such that the data remain simple and understandable to enhance coding and themes formation; (b) simplistic data display approach, including matrices, charts and graphsof participant accounts; (c) forming conclusions; and (d) counter-checking to test validity. The research assured compliance with trustworthiness standards of confirmable,

credible, dependable, and transferable, thereby ruling out alternative facts that may distort the research outcome. These standards are further discussed below:

Transferability

Transferability means to cause to pass from one person to another, as though, qualities, or power to transmit; it is an integral element of comprehensive research to ensure that the study is well done, very reliable and useful for the study of populations and testing of data (Creswell, 2013; Guba, 1981). Further, it is a condition in which learning in one situation influences learning in another; this may be positive, as when learning one behavior facilitates the learning of something else, or negative, as when one habit interferes with the acquisition of a later one. Accordingly, "At the theoretical level, transferability can be achieved by evidence of conceptual transference, that is; the same ideas apply more widely and are shown to be applicable in other fields" (Huberman & Miles, 1994, p. 22). The method used in this work will help future researchers to appreciate how Ghana attain good governance, stability, and sustainable development.

Dependability

Researchers employ triangulation by using numerous data collection approaches that enhance steady, trustworthy, steadfast, faithful and responsible data collection, and tabulation, calculation, analysis and interpretation of data (Creswell, 2013; Guba, 1981). The method that I employed couple with my research objective and goal will determine the openness or closeness of the research; also, my ability to handle multiple data will show how in-depth my findings, analysis or results will turn out. Interpolation and extrapolation methods could keep the research reliable and consistent to produce a more

realistic outcome (Merriam, 2009). This study is intended for understanding dependability, data collection, data management and analysis and procedures that were adopted to reach an accurate and comprehensive result.

Confirmability

This establishes the truth, accuracy, validity, or genuineness; it enhances the study through the availability of audit trails. I will consider honesty, first, before conducting the direct protocols of the study. To determine or test the confirmability of the data or the research as a whole, I defined the enumeration area, the sample size and the questions. Once these were adequately put in place, I involved a panel of experts or peer reviewers to assure research quality (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). To test conformity of data, I did counter-checking with participants and procedures used in the research. Patton (2002) suggests confirmability of data through the involvement of experts in the field. Finally, for clarity, I developed an easy to understand questionnaire to obtain the answers consistent with the objectives and goals of the research. I advised participants to address the face value of the questions asked and not their personal opinions. Also, as articulated by Creswell (2013), I recorded the interviews and preserved the field notes and maintained a reflective journal to keep audit trails of the research.

<div align="center">

Ethical Procedure

</div>

The following procedures served as a sequential guide in recruiting and informing participants, collecting and analyzing data, and validating findings:

1. Public office holders, civil servants, professionals, civil society organizations leaders and others familiar with the governance of Ghana were contacted, via telephone or e-mail, and provide them with information on the study.

2. An informative letter inviting individuals to participate in a study on the impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development in Ghana was sent out.

3. Informative meetings with target participants were scheduled where information about the study wasprovided along with a copy of the letter describing the study.

4. Contact was made to participants to establish the time and/or location for the interview.

5. A follow-up telephone call wasmade when there was no contact within one week of the informative meeting.

6. At the first interview, each participant was given a copy of the letter describing the proposed study and was asked to sign the Consent Form. The interviewincluded asking questions listed in Appendix B, the Interview Protocol.

7. Participants then went through a 30 to 60 minutes in-depth interview.

8. Participantswere informed they could be asked for a second interview for clarification if the need exists.

9. Audiotapes were later transcribed verbatim and analyzed using a qualitative software.

10. Triangulation was done in other countries such as the Benin, Senegal, and others to assist in validating themes extracted from transcripts.

11. The research took cognizance of the ethical protection of participants previously identified in this proposal while conducting triangulations in other countries.

Ethical Protection of Participants

I fully complied with international best practices and procedures governing the conduct of research. I was aware that persons involved in this kind of research be assured of their protection. That is to say the respect for the human person, the respect for human dignity, the respect for human or personal experiences, the right to participate or not to participate, the right to freedom of expression and the right to the security of the person, and ultimately the benefits of the research (Huberman & Miles, 1994). In short, the right to liberty, justice, and freedom such as prescribed by the Walden University IRB.

I maintained and observed all protocols, procedures conventions and other international and national human rights instruments as guaranteed by Walden University IRB in the selection of participants for this case study. Participants were selected on a voluntary basis bearing in mind that each participant deserves the right to withdraw at his or her own will and pleasure. Further, I was mindful of their personal safety and kept their identity confidential so as to give them more confident of their personal safety and wellbeing. For purpose of securing their identities, I introduced alphanumeric identification to my participants, such as R1, R2, R3, and etc. I made available to the survey participants the consent letter to assure their voluntary participation in the process.

The Credibility of the Study

Honesty and validity represent the quality of being believed or trusted and the scholarly soundness or foundation on which the research is based (Creswell, 2013; Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009). To clarify findings of the study, I ensured the interview questions were well communicated to and understood by the interviewees and followed through that their responses correspond exactly to the questions asked and in line with the desired objectives and goals of the research. I also thoroughly assessed the data and reviewed the entire data collection process, including the methodology, and reexamined the tabulation, analysis, and interpretation of same; all data were treated as a confidential as possible and with the integrity they deserve.

In order to clarify the research findings, I conducted member checking; this process required providing interviewees with a copy of their respective responses to further validate their answers. In addition, the involvement of peer reviewers and subject experts remained relevant (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). Even much more essential was the value of complying with the requirements laid down by Walden University with respect to this research which was observed fully.

Summary

In Chapter 3 my focus has been to present a systematic analysis of the holistic case study approach of the qualitative method used for this investigation. An attempt was made to reveal the procedural measures aimed at when to engage, how to go about and what requirements there are in pursuing the research. The chapter therefore included sampling, sample sizing and rationale for the selection of the research population. Also,

included in this chapter are data collection, data management, and data analysis

approaches; ethical issues and role of the researcher are featured prominently.

Chapter 4 further articulates the results derived from the inquiries. In addition, it

presents validations of the analysis presented in the prior chapters. And finally, it lays the

basis leading to the final and concluding chapter to the study.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

In Chapter 4, I will discuss the data collection, analysis, and results of this study.
My aim with this study was to understand Ghana's relatively good standards and political
stability as per the region's standards and how they have impacted sustainable
development. A qualitative method with a holistic case study approach was employed to
conduct this study. Findings from the inquiry may enhance policies for good governance
and postwar reconstruction for other countries in the war-torn, underdeveloped West
African subregion.

Against this background, I posted one fundamental question to guide this study:
What is the impact of good governance and political stability on sustainable development
in Ghana? I expanded this question by using the following subquestions:

RQ1: Is there a relationship among the political stability and good governance and
sustainable development as experienced in Ghana?

RQ2: Compared to other countries in the West African subregion, what factors
have contributed to the political stability and good governance in Ghana?

RQ3: What roles have good governance and political stability played towards
sustainable development in Ghana?

RQ4: What plans have the Ghanaian government implemented for sustainable
development (i.e., social, economic, and environmental)?

Setting

For the purpose of this study, 20 participants, who consented, partook in the research. I recruited the participants through snowball sampling. Most of the participants were residents of Ghana and a few resided in Nigeria. I used face-to-face interviews as well as electronic means, such as e-mails and telephones, to interview participants depending on their availability. Interviews for the study occurred between December 10, 2017, and January 30, 2018, following approval of my application by the Walden University IRB.

Demographics

The 20 participants I interviewed for the study included three academicians (i.e., university professors), four nonprofit organizations executives, three university students, three journalists, two religious clerics, two state actors, one mining engineer, one petroleum engineer, and one environmentalist. Seventeen of the participants identified themselves as Ghanaians, of which 14 resided in Ghana and three lived in Nigeria. The remaining three identified themselves as non-Ghanaian Africans residing in Ghana.

Data Collection

After receiving IRB approval for the study, I used the data collection stage to carry out the following vital measures: (a) engagement of study participants; (b) application of interview questions and study materials; (c) data collection, analysis, and coding, and (d) interpretation and reportage of data. I also met with two key regional public policy leaders and discussed the relevance of my study. Also, briefed them of the benefits it provides for not only Ghana but the entire ECOWAS subregion.

Drawing on purposive sampling with the application of the snowballing technique, I reached out to each identified research participant; this was accomplished on an one-on-one basis and at different intervals by phone calls, e-mails, or face-to-face to assure confidentiality (see Patton, 2002). The targeted participants included Ghanaians residing in Ghana, Ghanaians residing in Nigeria, and non-Ghanaians Africans with residence in Ghana. I subsequently traveled from Nigeria, where I resided at the time of the study, to Ghana, where the bulk of the research participants lived and had face-to-face interactions with them. I secured the data collected from the participants on my computer to assure the accuracy of the analysis.

Data Analysis

This section will include the data collected from the transcripts of the interviewees who participated in the study. I gave the participants a pseudonym (e.g., R1 to R20) to ensure that they were protected from identification and any reprisal. I used thematic analysis with the aid of NVivo qualitative software as the method of analysis. The data analysis process generated three thematic labels critical to the central question regarding how good governance and stability impacts sustainable development: (a) active governance, (b) effective governance, and (c) fair governance.

Thematic Label 1: Active Governance

The first thematic label emphasized the importance of an active governance. An active governance usually anticipates and responds to citizens' needs as well as evolving development challenges. Mainly, this is accomplished with deliberate, targeted, and proactive planning and delivery, which is essential in getting the business of development

done. The themes of politics and democracy fell under this thematic label. The theme of active governance requires institutions that are capable of delivering reliable and quality services whenever needed. Additionally, it also requires a government that can collect revenues honestly; allocate and invest public funds wisely; and manage the public goods, including land and natural resources, for the benefit of all. In Ghana, active governance includes national development initiatives, which have created major impacts and pushed for sustainable development.

The themes of politics and democracy fall under this thematic label. Active governance is sustained when there are institutions in place that assure the delivery of consistent and valued services as may be required. It also entails a public management regime that is honest, such that revenue collection and utilization as well as natural resources that are efficiently and effectively applied for the greater public good. This theme included Ghana's national development initiatives, which have impacted and advanced the sustainable development agenda. As R1 observed,

> Ghana has made some progress in poverty reduction through the implementation of Ghana's Poverty Reduction Strategy Policy over the last decade regarding reducing the number of poor people. As such, the poverty levels in Ghana have continued to decline, even though still higher compared to the international standards; it is a step in the right direction.

Based on the above account of R1, I inferred that the government played a significant role in sustainable development by recognizing that earnings growth is a prerequisite for a reduction of the poverty level in a given society. In other words,

poverty exacerbates sustainable development challenges, such as pitiable and inadequate

housing facilities, poor nutrition, lack of and/or weak health, other critical services, and

reduced education levels. R5's observation was also grounded in the issue of active

governance by putting in place checks and balances to ground the people:

> The constitution provisions grounded the stability experienced in Ghana. The
>
> Constitution in 1992 provided the establishment of the National Development
>
> Plan Commission with 14 members and was given the power to advise the
>
> president on the national development agenda. Among the commission's
>
> functions included advising the president on providing development planning,
>
> policy, and strategy by providing a national development policy framework and
>
> ensuring that strategies such as consequential policies and programs are carried
>
> out effectively to enhance the living standards and well beings of all Ghanaians
>
> on grounds of sustainability.

When the government has such provisions enshrined in the constitution, the

citizens feel catered for and trust the nation more. As such, there are reduced instances of

unrest or skirmishes and the energy is directed towards sustainable development

initiatives. R10 acknowledged that

> It is worth noting that the separation of the three branches of government
>
> including the legislature, the judiciary, and the executive had resulted in most
>
> individuals trusting the government, and the leader's goodwill is an indication that
>
> impunity is intolerable.

R6 recognized the contribution of active governance in fighting corruption while at the same time instituting measures that assure political stability:

> Ghana's good governance and improved aspects of accountability have immensely contributed to the stability experienced in the country. When Rawlings came to power, he was very focused on stopping the spread of corruption, which was evidently a canker. He called upon everyone to join in on this movement as Ghana underwent the transition.

With an effective leader who understands the importance of the citizens and the role they play towards sustainable development, Ghana's governance appeared to be trusted by people.

Democracy. Ghana is referenced as a center of excellence with regards to the practice of democracy in Africa, and as such, public participation is highly valued. The citizens are involved in making decisions regarding the policies, regulations and other factors that matter to them. R18 observed that "Ghana established robust communities and legitimate institutions in the fragile democratic republic." He agreed that democracy is the first step toward good governance, stability, and ultimately positively impacts sustainable development. R1 reiterated just how important democracy is by stating:

> The political scene in Ghana is one of its most notable features. When describing Ghana, one can never miss the fact that compared to its neighbors, it has experienced free and fair elections; more than 20 years of stability, relatively lower levels of corruptions, and the social/political instability is on the low.

One of the main setbacks of sustainable development in Africa is ethnic and political conflicts as well as militarism in the political body. Gains achieved over time can easily be eroded by military coups, resulting in looting and experimentation as well as corruption and ethnic upheavals. R20 observed that

> Ghana has been living in a democratic experience for the past 2 decades and the open free media, access to both the public services and legal systems as well as deregulation in doing business has significantly contributed to the stability in Ghana. However, there have been few instances of high tensions particularly during the electioneering period and has posed a threat to stability; it is yet to escalate to the red flag levels.

The building of trust between the public policy practitioners and the governed is particularly necessary to harness the principles of the social contract designed to ultimately act in the best interest of all citizens and by extension the accomplishment of sustainable development. As such, there is a need for Ghana to fight for a much stronger democracy as noted by R9:

> In the long run, I believe that real democracy should have reliable political alternatives, as well as, the ability of individuals being able to choose governments on the grounds of policy platforms and their competence in delivering them, is centered on both democracy and development.

A stronger democracy is characterized by transparency, public participation, and accountability. Accountability holds the public officials responsible for the government's behavior and makes it vital for them to be responsible to the needs of the citizenry. The

populace should also be involved in all matters of national development to ensure that each stakeholder plays their part. R12 acknowledged that

> The commitment ensures that policies and programs adopted for Ghana reflect the interests of the public, not just the ruling elites' parochial interest. Ghana's electoral system should be more credible and transparent to enhance the quest for sustainable development as also as the principles for sustainable development.

To this end, it is important for the government to apply both the bottom-top and the top-bottom approach to governance.

Politics. Politics remain a big part of ensuring the success of the national development strategy. The participants noted that in Ghana, the power of the president was eminent, and the presidency defines national policy. R7 noted that:

> The political patronage system in Ghana places so much power in the hands of the president, which poses a threat to the country's structural weaknesses. For instance, the president is the head of all administration all the way down to the villages. The president appoints more than 4,000 officials including 30% of local government institutions and executive officers of the 110 district assemblies. With this patronage system, the expansive power is used in the awarding of contracts and ensuring that all levels of the civil society exercise loyalty.

The participants also acknowledged that by restoring the independence of the judiciary, the opposition and other parties feeling aggrieved were able to win several cases against the government. This made people develop a certain degree of trust in the judicial system. It comes from a place under President Rawling's centralized dictatorship

during Ghana's earlier leadership. Nonetheless, after several years of dictatorship, Ghana has moved to an open society, democracy, development and offering more opportunities for human development. Ghanaians are currently at a place where they now enjoy self-determination and security under the rule of law.

      Culture, religious, and social-centered strategies. Incorporating social science knowledge in the decision-making process helps measure and calibrates progress towards sustainable development. One of the three attributes of sustainable development is social inclusion. There is a successful inclusion of culture and social underpinnings in Ghana's government structures. It is important to note that a nation's identity helps in pushing the people towards national development as demonstrated in Ghana. As observed by R5, Ghanaians naturally love their country, language and preserving their culture and this contributes to their cooperation in sustainable development initiatives:

      Ghanaians are a social, fun-loving group with the exception of the northern part which is embroiled in ethnic and Islamic conflict. Unlike the other African countries, Ghana enjoys a single lingua the Twi dialect. Most people from Ghana speak a variety of Twi which over the last century has somewhat unified the nation under a common language in a way that Ghanaians hardly view each other on tribal grounds unlike in Nigeria where tribalism is so real.

Moreover, the strong national identity has made Ghana rise above the tribal lines and emerged as one strong nation. As R17 put it:

      Ghana has a strong sense of national identity that supplants other attachments such as tribe and ethnicity, in a way bigger than any other nation in Africa. As such, the

level of association is impressive, for instance, in the education system; there are so many people from different backgrounds.

Even with different religions in Ghana ranging from Muslim to Christianity, there is no significant derailment of the agenda for sustainable development. R17 further recounted:

Ghanaians are quite religious, but that has in no way facilitated issues of tension resulting from religious differences. Around 70 percent of Ghanaians are Christians including Catholics, Pentecostals, Protestants and other denominations, while the Muslims are about 16 percent and the traditional religions represent less than 9 percent.

Ghanaian civil society is also well developed and put the government in check by applying the acceptable amount of pressure on the government. They push for the peaceful demonstration to let out discontent and frustrations. The strong civil society gives Ghana its national identity and uniqueness as it stands out from the rest of the countries in West Africa.

As Ghana focuses on modernization, it has not veered off its traditions and has managed to remain grounded as a nation. As such, the modern systems have perfectly blended well with the traditional ones. The governance systems in Ghana have kept evolving and the fact that remains its heritage. New people settling in Ghana are easily assimilated into the system, and they do not feel left out whatsoever because of the nation's just systems. The level of animosity between the people is significantly on the low since there is no discrimination.

Their religious traditions guide Ghanaians' actions and it defines them as a people. As R14 put it:

> There are two primary factors that set Ghana apart from its neighbors such as Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, and Liberia. Living up to the words of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first President, 'Seek ye first the political kingdom and all will be added unto you.' These sentiments demonstrate that the collective interest of the nation and the people surpasses that of individual's interest. These precedents were first set during the birth of the republic and are held true until now. As observed in other West African countries, they have destroyed themselves by engaging in wars and have wasted the opportunities to develop a unified nation.

R2 also acknowledged that Ghanaians take pride in their nationalism. He reiterated his points by stating:

> Agreed that corruption is an African epidemic. However, Ghanaians have placed more effort to ensure that the problem is curtailed. It is worth mentioning that the efforts that Ghana has put in place have been recognized globally which is a good thing since the citizens now feel more motivated to remain on the right path.

The passion and genuine love that Ghanaians feel for their country has in so many ways facilitated their engagements in the initiatives aimed at sustainable development.

Identify as Africans. The identity of Ghanaians as Africans remains one of Ghana's strong points and has guided them throughout the transformational process. Knowledge of their African root and acknowledging the Ghanaian culture helped the nation in establishing national strategies since Ghana could show internal strength

moving towards their best form possible. In R11's words, Ghana is the "Black Star of

Africa." He further noted:

> Long before African Governments were thinking of encouraging private
> investment, Ghana was so welcoming to all the African Americans to come to
> Africa and settle. During President Obama's visit to Accra, he stated: 'We must
> start from the simple premise that Africa's future is up to Africans.' This message
> was so clear to Ghanaians and they acted on it.

Thematic Label 2: Effective Governance

Governance is said to be effective when a government has the capacity to

formulate and implement policies essential to advance the living standards of the citizens;

thereby assuring sustained socio-political and economic development initiatives. A

response to the complex and intertwined challenges countries are encountering at present

with regards to sustainable development require policy making with a focus on economic

progress, social advancement, reduction in poverty, justice, and sustainability are not

competing for goals to be traded off against each other, rather interconnected purposes

which when successfully undertaking together would generate sustainable development

response. Effective leadership endeavors, as Ghana is concerned, have continued to

derive positive responses with regards to the governance structure as well as the general

societal framework. The role of traditional rulers is significant in grassroots and local

municipalities, regarding socio-politico and economic development and dispensing of

justice in the current political arena. It has remained a part of the people's cultural

heritage. The traditional heritage institution plays a vital role in supporting and

nourishing unity and cohesion between and among social actors of Ghanaian society. The Ghanaian government has since reaffirmed the authority of the traditional rulers' structure, which was long practiced at the advanced level prior to becoming muted. Compared to modern structures some Ghanaians seemed most attracted to the customary ones. It is important to note that Ghanaians view the modern structures not as a competition but as a complementary to the traditional one. As R4 put it:

> Since colonial times, the traditional Ghanaian rulers have always been a part of a wider local government structure. To this end, these leaders are the custodians of the natural resources including land and at such people are prevented from fighting over it.

Ghanaian leaders are at the forefront in fighting for the social development of their constituents. With the strong leadership, representation and arbitrations, the government leaders have ensured that they are accountable to the people at best. In addition, citizens consider their leaders the custodians of norms, customary legacy, principles, and beliefs. As R13 posited:

> The local leaders got their mandate from the central government to oversee local development, security and the ability to dispense justice. With this mandate, the local leaders are also expected to give their constituents the chance to address their problems in close inner circles. Mostly, where the family or a smaller community fails to resolve such matters, then the local leaders intervene and deliberate on the issue in a more formal setting. The point is, the local leaders are in full control of their localities.

Local leaders are also the negotiators, facilitators, and mediators and they promote peaceful relationships among the regions. R18 was quick to point out, "the leaders will have to make sure that they can establish open dialogued between belligerent blocs in which peaceful communication is initiated. They have to communicate effectively with the involved parties. They serve as liaisons between the parties." In some cases, the negotiations fail and, that is, the leaders step in as facilitators to ensure that they establish a consensus.

The respondents are in agreement that leaders at the community level often provide fair and balanced justice; such that they (community members) have faith in them. In their bid to solve problems involving their members with other communities, local leaders usually engaged with leaders of other localities and together they evoked their customs and norms to problem solving. R17 mentioned:

Leadership entails getting things done. No two nations are similar, but from my experience as a professor of the African studies, I have learned the challenges of governance are in a way surprisingly similar in Accra as they are around the world. It is important to have a clear vision of where to take the nation, and it's rooted in the people's aspirations and their families. That includes being able to make tough choices and be disciplined and focus on what is politically incorrect. But really, it is hard to put in place the necessary machine which will make it happen. To be more precise, governance is a race between capability and expectations.

Ghana's journey towards effective leadership has been phenomenon going way back to colonial times. For instance, in the colonial era, the British agents were not

involved with the Ghanaians' house of chief; the chiefs were left to administer the affairs of their people. In comparison to practices among other West African people, traditional rulers in Ghana put ethnicity at the forefront as a real threat, if not managed, to development; therefore, to mitigate threat, they established local leadership or chiefs to directly handle the affairs of their people at the local levels, in order to minimize conflicts and maintain law and order. With the local solidarity, there was a more peaceful coexistence, and the local chiefs were always available to mediate settling of any disputes.

Regarding sustainable development, the central rely on local governing authorities to take a lead role in articulating such issues as climate change and preservation of vital resources as land use, water bodies, and sanitation, among others. Even though the local governments in Ghana do not have significant initiatives relating to sustainable development, with some of the agencies lacking environmental management experts, planning officers, engineers, etc.; the fact that they are ensuring stability in the direction is a step in the right direction. Meanwhile, the central government should put more focus on establishing policies of decentralizing the recruitment of professional and technical staff to push the sustainable development agenda to the desired level.

In addition, various metrics indicate that Ghana is performing well in terms of governance. For instance, The Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance, a measuring mechanism that focused on sub-Saharan Africa's 48 states, as it measures the extent of these countries meeting the aspirations of their citizens in the political, social and economic domains. Ghana was ranked seventh, using the 2016 index. Pertaining to the

safety and rule of law indicator, the ranking was high, as Ghana was placed sixth. In addition, Ghana was ranked fifth on national security, 14th on the rule of law, 11th on personal safety, and 23rd on accountability. In addition, according to the 2013 Ibrahim index of African governance, Ghana was also ranked the seventh best-governed country in Sub-Saharan Africa. It had an overall score of 66.8 and was also among the most improved. To this end, Ghana is among the top governance performers on the African Continent.

Participation and social inclusion. Sustainable development is premised on maintaining inclusivity with the involvement of different sectors of the population in setting the agenda; inclusivity assures availability and accessibility of basic social services for the public good. Inclusion that targets the people is about the government involving more participants with a shared interest in decision-making and formulation of new policies. The themes of human capital and private capital also fall under this thematic label.

As noted by R8, "inclusion should comprise of everybody, their social status notwithstanding. These include marginalized groups and people at the grassroots level. To ensure there is unity and individuals work towards a common course as regards sustainable development through social engagement." Ghana is just like the other African countries where most people trust the government with their aspirations and faith, with hopes that they will indeed make a difference. Most of the interactions in Ghana happen at the grassroots level. As R5 put it:

Social engagement in Ghana has remained possible because Ghana is at a place where it created partnerships and alliances with various organizations and a higher level of trust was built. Ghana has gone ahead to establish focus groups where individuals have a platform to deliberate on underlying issues. Moreover, Ghana has continuously engaged the communities in community-wide forums and town hall meetings in which everyone's voice is heard and their contributions put into consideration.

Moreover, R11 reiterated the same by stating "a national approach is that everyone in Ghana is considered a stakeholder. Local leaders are allowed to exercise jurisdictional control in their areas and that has drawn greater participation and locals feel being treated fairly and justly." Inclusivity of private programs as well as broad citizens' involvement in deciding on utilizing natural resources does not alienate local communities; they are rather more involved and have a buy-in thereby assuring sustainability of such programs.

Inclusivity was also contributed by the system that allowed people to choose their leaders. R19 observed:

I am meant to believe that not just the absence of corruption and presence of capacity is needed for effective governance. In the long run, I believe that real democracy needs credible political alternatives and that the ability of the people choosing governments on the basis of policy platforms and competence in delivering them is vital for both democracy and development.

The fact that Ghana allows the public to participate in free and fair elections makes the public to give more credence to their government.

Private sector involvement. For sustainable development in any country to be successful, it is totally unwise to sideline the private sector. The private sectors have opened new markets which are attractive to investors and other key players considered to have played an important part in the restructuring of Ghana. The private sector has also opened it's with little control from the government because of promotion of good governance and privatization initiative instituted by the Ghanaian government. Ghana has also restructured the agricultural sector by introducing sustainable farming mechanisms model into a business-like process and not the typical shifting cultivation practiced by other neighboring nations; this has contributed significantly to the growth ago-market. R10 recognized the governments' policies that encourage banks to give loans to the private sector. However, the process has not been totally easy for small enterprises because the banks have always asked for collaterals, such conditions which small enterprises have always not find it easy to fulfill. Accordingly, significant progress could be recorded if governments work more with the banks on addressing the issue of collaterals. R15 explained that:

> The Ghanaian government has collaborated with the private sector to promote the required sustainable development by establishing rules of law that apply equally to everyone including the private sector. The government has also guaranteed freedom of speech of the press and for everyone without any unnecessary ramifications. The government has ensured the rights of the private sector are well protected.

Moreover, the government had since abolished draconian tax levies and penalties and has put into place programs whereby the private sector has the leverage to invest and create more jobs.

Other participants also applauded the government that in collaboration with the private sector, the Ghanaian government has promoted open business. When problems are brought to the fore view of government, they are discussed and actions instituted; these include and not limited to the following: encouraging farming, building new roads, protecting the people's rights, cleaning the environment and increase partnership with local authorities on issues regarding development. R3 and R16 further added, "…it is important to note that the private sector has so much power and functions to ensure that a stronger Ghana is created." R9 observed:

It is imperative that the private sector is engaged and encouraged in working with the government to reshape outdated policies that undercut vibrant economic growth. Among the policies to be reshaped is the agricultural policy because Ghana is an agrarian economy that is desirous of major agricultural investments, including modernizing equipment to spur high productivity.

So far the Ghanaian authority is taking steps in the right direction by bringing to center stage the private sector in the national development drive; banks are encouraged to provide loans to small enterprises which is crucial to spur jobs creation for the growing number of youths. There is the need for Ghana to triple its efforts in ensuring that they not only get to maintain all that they have achieved thus far but also to sustainably work towards the future.

Human capital. The development of human capital is a priority in ensuring stability, good governance, and sustainable development. R7 reiterated this point by stating:

> Ghana has not been at its best on this one. For instance, the government has more than 80 ministers. The civil servant's wage bill is more than 70% of the government's income. The changes in demography are also posting so much pressure as the population of those who are working increases.

The national human capital development plan was initiated in 1993 during J. J. Rawlings rule and has since implemented various programs with the assistance of international development partners. The human capital development initiative was part of Rawlings's broad social and economic development endeavor referred to as Ghana's Vision 2020. Its long-term goal was to turn Ghana into a middle-class society within a quarter of a century. Priority areas were economic growth, human capital and rural developments, and infrastructure, as well as, providing a conducive environment for sustainable development.

Several human capital development plans have been in existence. As R7 observed, "Regarding education, the government has established more secondary and elementary schools to ensure that every student is given the opportunity to study." At the level of providing health services, the Ghanaian administration constructed clinics and put into place training programs across communities throughout the country to enhance healthcare delivery. Moreover, in the agriculture sector, the administration has improved

on the subsistence farming framework whereby rural inhabitants now have access to market their produce.

Educational sector. Ghana appears to score success in all aspects of a 'middle-class' development drive. Budgetary allocation to fundamental poor services including water supply, primary education, and public health has continued to grow through the years. To meet the future challenges regarding sustainable development, the government has acknowledged the importance of bringing most of the sectors on board. Effective governance has ensured erection of educational institutes, designed as more accountable, accessible and affordable. This program was developed by the government to deter the disturbingly increasing rate of students dropping out from high schools, particularly in poor and rural communities. Ghanaian schools have recorded a huge amount of cash flow from nationals of other countries who have chosen to study at private institutions in the country. Foreign students generate significant revenue for Ghana, which is approximated at US$1 billion yearly for upkeep and tuition (Fatunde, 2014). In other words, government's education policy has not only served well the nation of Ghana but persons from far and near as witnessed by the increased number of individuals educated in Ghana. For instance, according to Dery (2014), in Ghana, there are approximately 7,776 foreign students coming from 30 African countries and enrolled in private universities, and about 1,766 from 33 African countries enrolling in public universities. The country has made significant strides in this sector including offering free education, capital investment in the sector and feeding the students; however, educational quality remains much to desire as it still lacks behind as per the international standards. The educational

policy ensures that Ghana has enough human capital to assist the country to achieve the middle-class citizenry status as well as economic growth.

Agricultural sector. The Ghanaian leadership has constructed farms-to-market roads that have promoted increased accessibility as the farmers can transport their produce to towns or factory destination, as well as, allowing for the transportation of farming inputs more efficiently. The government also established vocational institutions where workers are trained. The government also supports farmers in the cocoa subsector as witnessed by yield recorded, which has increased significantly over the years; for example, it increased twice between 2000 and 2010. In 2000, the total yield was 450,000 tons, but increased to 900,000 tons by 2010, due to and including government interventions, such as export tax, licensing arrangements and input subsidies (Asante-Poku & Angelucci, 2013). However, the fertility of the soils is somewhat poor. Additionally, the level of deforestation has significantly been on the rise which is alarming, and the government should step in to ensure that the natural resources are well protected as well as increasing the agricultural yields.

Environment. Importantly, the environment is the foundation for sustainable development of any society. Accordingly, Ghana has stepped in to promote sound environmental management and protection by establishing several environmental policies among which is renowned National Environmental Policy. This policy aims at putting issues of the environment to the fore front; such that Ghana has developed a strategy known as the National Environmental Action Plan; this plan is intended to enable the government take the necessary robust key steps aimed at efficiently managing and

sustaining human development drive, as well as, the environment to avoid exploitation of the natural resources to the degree of irreparable destruction.

Not much progress has been recorded as yet regarding the environmental policy implementation in Ghana. The deprived outlook of the environment signifies that the current policies and programs are not achieving the desired objectives; therefore, there is the need for a review and the institution of steps necessary to preserve the health of the sector and articulate the guidepost for sustainable development. With the increasing rates of deforestation, soil erosion, desertification, land degradation, intensification of the bad agricultural practices and pollution of water bodies, adequate measures for better agricultural practices are paramount. The socio-economic difficulties also exacerbate the environmental challenges due to poor agricultural practices, such as inadequate research input and lack of funds to promote better agricultural practices, as well as lack of funds to pay for labor. The environmental degradation issues are a result of weak institutional policies, environmental, and forest policy failures and population pressure and the Ghanaian government should step in to act on the same.

Health sector. The Ghanaian government is utilizing the internet to enhance the accessibility of the health services, particularly for children and women. The services have also been adopted in the rural parts of Ghana and not just in the cities. There is the Universal Health Insurance System (UHIS) project that Ghanaians are embarking on which has received finances from the general taxes and other beneficiary contributions. The UHIS aims at preventing manageable diseases including tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS. However, even with the government's efforts, Ghanaians have continued to

suffer from disease prevention management and inadequate health care. In response to Millennium Development Goals 4, 5, and 6 which focus on improving the health status of individuals, Ghanaians have drawn on the assistance of non-profit organizations to promote preventive care to the benefit of infant and children alike which so far, has proven to be a step in the right direction. Despite all the progress articulated, Ghana still records high incidences of malaria, unmet family planning needs and a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS. For instance, according to a WHO (2012) report, malaria is the leading cause of unhealthy life and accounts for at about 20% of child deaths, as well as approximately 45% of out-patient attendances. Additionally, Badu, Brenya, Timmann, Garms, and Kruppa (2013) articulate that HIV/AIDS prevalence in Ghana is 2.9%.

Issues of safe drinking water, environmental and household sanitation have remained of large public health concern in Ghana. Ensuring that there is enough potable, clean and safe drinking water for the population is critical for the sustainable development of any country. The water resources in Ghana are favorable, but the fact that not every Ghanaian can access safe drinking water is disturbing as 70% of the diseases experienced in Ghana result from the water challenges. Meeting the Millennium Development Goals requires that supply of water has to increase from what it now is. Ghana needs a forward movement of its sustainable drive; such that accessibility of safe drinking water and sustainable water resources must be the horn. In the same vein, sanitation is a core component as well; however, it would seem the Ghanaian administration is striking a balance between direct health care and the prevention, especially as safe drinking water and sanitation concern. There is no doubt that poor

sanitation, pollution couple with exposure to disease vectors are a disservice to the country's health sector. Rapid urbanization with inadequate funding to communities, weak enforcement of the environmental regulations and low technical capacity in the management of the solid waste have been the major contributory factors to the pitiable nature of environmental health and sanitation in the country; as such, the government should recognize the loopholes in the system and take actions necessary to avert the situation.

Sustainable development initiatives. Sustainable development is defined as growth or advancement that caters to the wellbeing of present-day and mindful to accommodate or plan for the needs of the impending generation. In Ghana, sustainable development was implemented by focusing on three major sectors; economic, social and environmental. Of the three, nonetheless, economic growth is central to the Ghanaian administration. As R11 indicated:

> With the advent of the sustainable development plan in Ghana, most individuals recognized the significant role it would play towards national progress. The plan was also focused on expediting growth and enhances national drive and reducing the level of poverty and depolarizes national discussion from mere party lines. More than not, the plan was meant to provide a performance evaluation of the government as it administers the affairs of the state.

Economy. A country's economy plays a leading role in determining how much development has been achieved. The Ghanaian government established measures to revamp its economy, one of such areas were an adjustment in huge military spending,

which in fact was not in the interest of protecting the citizenry but rather that which many believes is used for military regime change. The restructuring witnessed a boom in the creation of private sector jobs. Although inadequate, many see it a step in the right direction as businesses created between 2005 and 2014 have successfully generated over 78.9% of all new jobs (Krakah, Agyaho, & Adzovor, 2015). Gold, cocoa, and oil are the major contributory factors to Ghanaian exports, GDP and revenue generation. The mining industry of Ghana accounts for 5% of the nation's GDP while minerals make up 37% of the exports, of which gold contributes over 90% of mineral exports (Movemining, 2016). 18% of Ghana's exports are cocoa beans, while 9.1% is crude oil. 70% of Ghana's cocoa is exported globally, especially to Europe, and contributes to 25% of the nation's GDP, and $2 billion in foreign exchange annually, hence a huge revenue source for Ghana (Ghana Economic Indicators, 2015). On the other hand, all crude oil is exported and contributes 5% of Ghana's revenues, and 1.5% of the country's GDP (Segbefia, 2016). However, these sectors did not contribute much to employment creation, sources alluded (Aryeetey & Baah-Boateng, 2015). Coco which is one of Ghana most leading cash crop has since experienced draw-back as most able body young workers moved to urban areas in search of better employment and shunned farming.

The national financial system was restructured by establishing three separate commercial banks, as well as the private banks. And there have been also major changes in the Ghanaian legal system, including the recent increase of competition tie to the influx of foreign banks, and an increase in interest rates (Citifmonline, 2015). Additionally, the service sector remained further liberalized to allow foreign and private

investment in the sectors that were previously restricted including insurance, distribution, and banking. With all these developments, the Ghanaian government has remained at the forefront in promoting growth in all sectors (Rabinowitz, 2013).This includes offering grants and loans, which are given to manufacturers and large-scale coffee growers, as well as better interest rates, educating Ghanaians on growing coffee, making deals and agreements on exports to the destination countries, as well as providing better policies that have promoted direct foreign investments (Citifmonline, 2015; Rabinowitz, 2013).

Through the years that Ghana was under the military rule, Ghanaians experienced an economic system that was primarily monopolized, but after gaining its stability, the market was opened and welcomed more investors. It is important to note that even as the Ghanaian government opened its doors to foreign investments, the local business and small enterprises were prioritized. According to Boafo-Arthur (2008), the economic growth experienced in Ghana for the past two decades may be attributed to political stability, good governance and essentially increasing demand globally for cash crops and minerals, among others. It is also vital to highlight that even with the significant increase in the prices of the minerals such as gold, the ordinary citizens in Ghana have not benefitted from it in any tangible way (Moseley, 2014; Van Gyampo, 2014). In Ghana, mineral exploitation is intensive and takes so much capital and provides limited employment opportunities while it the foreign companies in the sector that reap the benefits.

Civil and social society. The other aspect of sustainable development is the social dimension of growth. As an open society, Ghana can easily deal with its issues openly,

for instance, discussing issues of the instability of public radio. The press freedom has allowed for Ghanaians to publicly have the conversation on the issues that are important to them. Ghanaians also respect the elderly and society leaders as well as the religion which has facilitated the peaceful coexistence among them. As R7 put it:

> Civil societies in Ghana enjoy a partnership with international support groups to facilitate conflict mediation. There is also an open communication between the contending parties as an effort to ensure that Ghana has the stability that it needs to focus on sustainable development.

> Civil society is part of the Ghanaian society in a significant way. For instance, the church I go to has established a strong community which fosters togetherness, harmony, and development. Additionally, the political families and affiliations focus on developing a profound sense of peace and remind the citizens of their responsibilities towards realizing sustainable development.

The respondents overwhelmingly observed that development should remain inclusive and encourage participation of the public so to eventually fully address the plight of the majority of the people constituting the nation.

    Policies. For sustainable development to be realized in any country, all the policy processes and policies should be participatory; this necessary because the pressure threatening any attempts at ensuring sustainability are always around. Various factors such as the desire by certain individuals and people in privileged positions to exploit the system for their own benefits order then always exist. Towards this end, Ghana has made some policy recommendations aimed at consolidating the sustainable development

efforts. Regarding poverty reduction, there have been various initiatives put in place including social programs such as school feeding, health insurance system, maternity care for all, Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty, among others. The nonprofit/nongovernmental organizations operating in Ghana have also significantly played a role in efforts put in place towards curbing poverty. Collaboration with non-governmental organizations and other third organizations provides significant support to the government. However, there is proper coordination between the various sectors.

The other issue has been in the management of the energy resources since it has been quite a challenge for the African nations to achieve. In 2010, Ghana joined the oil-producing countries league, and since then there have been continuous conversations on managing the oil reserves in a transparent and equitable manner. Ghana should establish a detail energy policy with deep consideration to supporting the agricultural sector by encouraging the e manufacturing of inorganic compost, as well as, encourage usage and adoption Liquefied Petroleum Gas domestically and industrially. More stringent policies should also be developed regarding curbing the environmental abuses including deforestation, poor disposal of solid waste and sewage and poor agricultural practices.

Thematic Label 3: Fair Governance

Fairness of the governance system bears great significance to sustainable development; reason being that it forms the building blocks, as articulated in chapter two, for a stable and secure society and ignites inclusive growth within the finite boundaries of our one world for an unforeseeable future. Governance institutions are said to be fair if they are accountable to the people, reliable and nurture trust between the government and

the governed. The public should also be meaningfully engaged, and the citizens allowed to participate in shaping the decision that impacts on them. The themes of law and trustworthiness of the institutions fall under this thematic label.

Fairness in dispute settlement. Ghana has continued to experience peace because of an effective model employed in settling disputes. Most disputes in Ghana are settled between contending parties through dialogue at the local levels. Unlike most nations in the West African subregion, Ghana has a proudly functional civil society network which cuts across all spectrum of social and political interactions which has help deepened a sense of nationhood and belonging. There is a quasi-traditional system that is involved in settling disputes. The court system is also functional save for the intertribal escalations which remain handled through dialogue. It is reported that a great deal of the civil discontents experienced is exacerbated by government's poor response to crucial economic issues that confound the citizens, for instance, gross inflation of the currency. There are two major labor groups in Ghana including the Trade Union Congress and the Ghanaians for Responsible Governance.

Customary conflict management in Ghana is said to replicate a structured judicial or political arbitration approach. For instance, customary or traditional rulers preside over critical grassroots or local communities' conflict resolution mechanisms in the administration of justice and socio-economic development in the Ghanaian system. It proudly represents the cultural lineage of the Ghanaian people. The coexistence of the traditional rule in the Ghanaian body-politics represents a vital part of making and sustaining peace, social cohesion and, by extension, maintenance of societal orders.

Traditional institutions are said to play two primary functions: the reactive function

addresses disputes that have already occurred and the proactive role oversees orderly

maintenance of peace and enhances harmony and co-existence.

Legal systems. The Ghanaian government adheres to rule of law by instituting

policy frameworks that enhance good governance that is premised on the rule. Apart from

few incidences, for the most the functioning of the society is primarily based on the rule

of law; the principle is that there is no one above the law including the president. The

government also ensures that citizens are protected by the law while those who engage in

illegal practices or commit crimes face the wrath of the law. Compared to other West

African states, the legal system in Ghana is vibrant; such that individuals with the desire

to commit crime have no choice but face the law and the entire legal system as a whole.

However, the process has been not without shortcomings. For instance, some legal issues

are disappearing, but the government has remained steadfast in ensuring that the

environment is accommodative of everybody and there is peaceful co-existence. There

are continuous deteriorating economic conditions in some African countries, which is

mostly attributed to violent ethnic, political and chieftaincy conflicts which destabilize

numerous peaceful countries (Mohammed, 2015). The West African subregion has

experienced its fair share of these disputes. For example, countries such as Sierra Leone,

Nigeria, Guinea, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, and Liberia have experienced conflicts for the past

thirty years, which have weakened the governance systems in these countries

(Mohammed, 2015). However, in Ghana, there has seen a substantial reduction in

disputes and armed conflicts. For example, many experienced the presidential elections

of 2012 as peaceful, compared to the previous elections of 2008 and 2004 (Amankwaah, 2013). As such, in comparison to other West African nations, Ghana enjoys peaceful existence, because leaders put ethnicity at the forefront as a real threat to development and established local leaders or chiefs in charge of making decisions for their people. This approach minimizes the conflicts and maintains law and order (Owusu, 2017). With the local solidarity, there was a more peaceful coexistence, and the local chiefs were always available to mediate the settling of any disputes (Owusu, 2017).

In Accra, the legal system remains visible. The legal system is an independent body, and the government does not interfere with its functionality. Various political parties waive the attitude where the winners take it all and are welcome to a more inclusive government and engaging the people. The legal system in Ghana has aided the conflict resolution and also been instrumental in dealing with issues of abuse of office and misappropriation of funds meant for sustainable development initiatives. Ghana has structures in place to anticipate any potential triggers of conflict and political unrest which has assisted the government in maintaining political stability. R12 acknowledged the legal system in Ghana as he observes:

> Ghana's judicial system has made some significant strides in the right direction. The fact that in 2012, the opposition party NPP chooses to entrust the system to investigate the alleged election fraud indicates that the system has matured and has earned the people's trust.

However, issues surrounding environmental regulation as far as Ghana is concerned pose one of a critical challenge, especially as relating to adequately protecting

the environment through sustainable engagements. Legislation on the books appertaining to environment protection is inadequate, and most provisions fall short of current realities. For instance, land use policy is disjointed, and some of the laws on environmental management are grossly outdated as can be traced far back to the preindependence period. In some instances, Ghana uses British laws that are unparalleled and therefore abrogate customary system of people ownership of the natural resources within their communities. However, some land, forests, and water areas are notably government owned. In nations such as Ghana which lack adequate structures in place, the implementation of sustainable development programs needs massive infrastructure and technological investments that present the environment on center stage.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Throughout this study, I am solely responsible for all aspects of the numerous data collection approaches. These approaches enhance steady, trustworthy, steadfast, faithful and accountable data collection, and tabulation, calculation, analysis and interpretation of the data, as well as reporting the findings in an objective manner (Creswell, 2013; Guba, 1981). The method employed by me coupled with the objective and goal of the study underpinned the outcome of the study. The tool for data analysis that I used was the NVivo 10.

Member checking was accomplished by working with each participant to review the script of the replies/answers to assure correctness (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). In addition, I solicited the assistance of a panel of experts from the university and some professional colleagues who provided peer reviews during the course of the study. The

researcher adopted transferability technique to enrich his work much more to horn his work so that future researchers would understand how Ghana attain good governance, stability and sustainable development within a subregion prone to violence, instability, and poor governance practices. The research also utilized triangulation procedures to design the study protocols to upsurge the likelihood of dependability that the data collected was rich and the methods or the procedures for managing and analyzing data were rigor.

Breakdown of the Results

The global world community is gradually accepting the fact that the trend of destruction in the name development is unsustainable; such that the call is becoming ever-louder to institute measures to preserve the natural resources including protecting the environment for present generation and generations to come. Like many other nations of the world, Ghana responded to the call and had instituted some measures among others by enacting the National Environmental Action Plan, which presents a roadmap for strategic engagement by all parties to initiate better approaches germane to protecting the environment while at the same time undertaking vital development activities.

Ghana like most of its subregional African nations is gifted with a tremendous amount of natural resources, including gold and oil; these resources, particularly gold, has recorded significant revenue inflow to the country and has in a way contributed to the engine of growth. Ghana's economy is mainly based on the lucrative gold and cocoa, with the cocoa representing 5% of the GDP while gold supplies 90% of Ghana's mineral exports, which makes up 40% of the total volume of exports (Youde, 2005). Primarily,

the sector that encompasses oil and gas accounts for 26.5% of the Gross Domestic

Product and has substantially expanded by 19.3% (Van Vuuren & Dontoh, 2017).

However, until the last two decades, no tangible measures were initiated to mitigate the

side effects associated with the extraction and the environmental mishaps associated with

it. Thanks to the UN for the Human Environment Conference that was particularly held

in Stockholm in the year 1972, which shared the light and became an eye-opener for the

Ghanaian authorities. This event then formed the basis for the ongoing work aimed at

protecting the environment. The government has developed several policies and

strategies for safeguarding the environment, as well as, redirecting development efforts in

attaining a sustainable path. The relatively good governance and political stability

experienced in Ghana has expedited the process as some ministries and organizations

have initiated measures to ensure that the environment is protected and also facilitated

sustainable development engagements. Furthermore, the comments to the three questions

that follow shared light on my understanding of the impact of good governance and

stability on sustainable development in Ghana.

Q1: What are the Notable Indicators of Good Governance?

The notable indicators of good governance were embodied in all the three

thematic labels. R5 observed that good governance is all characterized by effectiveness,

control of corruption, voice, and accountability. He noted that "Good governance is

characterized by the ability to develop accountability and fighting to end corruption."

Transparency is also vital, and it includes providing information in an easily

understandable form or medium. The information should also be freely available and

accessible to those affected by the governance, practices and the policies. Effectiveness and efficiency is the fact that the processes implemented by the organization to produce favorable results vital for meeting stakeholder needs while also making the best use of the resources including human, technological, financial, natural and environmental. It is important to note that inasmuch as Ghana is demonstrating good governance in some ways, it can also do more in tightening the loose ends, which, according to Fjelde and Höglund (2016), include postelection violence as well as poor financial planning and annual budgeting. For instance, Dagbon conflicts have led to numerous deaths and adversely affected the production, marketing and investment in agriculture (Issifu, 2015). The severe violence and insecurity in the metropolis resulted in most financial institutions being unwilling to grant loans to farmers to invest in agricultural production. Additionally, it is important to note that, Ghana's heavy reliance on international aid would be problematic in future especially with the country's relatively slow progress in combating corruption. As the government efficiency reforms continue, donors may reevaluate Ghana's performance and reduce the inflow of development assistance (Youde, 2005). If this does not happen and financial health dependence on development aid continues, then the economic implications would be dire.

Even so, for a while, the absence of violence and political stability, regulatory quality and the rule of law are also the other notable indicators of good governance that have been covered in all the three thematic labels. The rule of law guides the activities in any nations, and the citizens are supposed to play by the rules. It is also essential that the law protects the citizens. Most people adhere to the legal systems, and it also applied to

conflict resolution. Good governance requires fair legal regimes enforced by regulatory bodies impartially, to protect stakeholders. Regulatory quality falls under the government capacity in the formulation, and implementation of various policies and procedures developed ought to be market-friendly. Good governance also provides a stakeholder opportunity in maintaining, enhancing, or improving their well-being. It requires that the organizations are planned for serving the best interest of the stakeholders with reasonable timeframes. The issue of political stability as an indicator of good governance can never be understated. As R7 observed, "Ghana is considered the most democratic nation in the sub-region, and it enjoys the peace while most of its neighbors are embroiled in skirmishes and civil wars." Ghana has heavily invested in its stability and conflict mitigation. As such, the civil unrests in Ghana are very uncommon. The northern region of Ghana where the poverty level is high experience civil unrests but not in the major cities like Accra or Kumasi. The unrests can be attributed to politics. For instance, the voting patterns in NDC and NPP strongholds were posited to be biased due to political socialization (Amankwaah, 2013). Since the first elections in 1992, the Volta and Ashanti regions have consistently voted for NDC and NPP respectively. Moreover, the northern areas have consistently voted for NDC. Although, in 2000, NPP gained some mileage. Besides politics, the unrests are fueled by different ethnicities in the regions. For instance, the citizens from the southern cities of Accra and Kumasi, where elections are less related to chieftaincy, argue that election-related violence occurred most often in ethnically heterogeneous areas, as well as ethnic and Islamic-based conflicts. Studies have also shown that violence occurred mostly in political parties' strongholds where the minority

lived (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004; Amankwaah, 2013). Additionally, another factor that has

led to election-related violence in Ghana is when either the NPP or the NDC has tied to

factions that dispute chieftaincy rights; a state of affair that has been the case in northern

towns such as Yendi and Bawku because the possibility of gaining chieftaincy rights is

directly related to whether or not a faction's preferred party wins elections (Issifu, 2015).

Q2: What are the Notable Indicators of Sustainable Development?

Ghana is endowed with natural resources, but the quest for economic

emancipation following independence precluded the dialogue for environmental

protection which is one of the pillars for sustainable development. Action by the global

world community provided a wakeup call to the Ghanaian government, such that action is

being taken for environmentally friendly sustainable development initiatives. Sustainable

development exists when costs associated with the advancement of current society is not

passed on to the next generation, or at least these costs are compensated. The notable

indicators for sustainable development include but not limited to the following: poverty

reduction, management of growth, protection of the environmental or pollution controls,

safe drinking water, environmental and household sanitation, viable energy provision,

and global economic partnership, etc. Sustainable development has been covered under

the three thematic labels, but mostly under effective governance. For instance, R11

lamented that "with the advent of the sustainable development plan in Ghana, most

individuals recognized the significant role it would play towards national progress. The

plan was also focused on expediting growth and reducing the level of poverty among the

population."

Addressing the wellbeing of the present generation and not negating the needs of generations to come requires the government to be proactive and present a well-articulated and balanced vision that addresses all issues associated with sustainable development covering all aspects of the national endeavors. In other words, sustainable development is considered within the framework of decisively acting in the best interest of the current generation while at same-time considering the future. Sustainable development focuses on the current, as well as, the future. It entails harnessing the potential of the third sector in poverty reduction policy implementation, a renew and holistic management of the new energy resources, strengthening state regulatory agencies, strengthening the role of local government agencies and the broadening of the frontiers of democracy as well as promoting research and development.

Q3: How do Good Governance and Violence Impact Sustainable Development in Ghana?

In Ghana, strategic engagement with the private sector to harness the potential of the nation is addressed in thematic label 2 subsection on participation and inclusivity. Private enterprising initiatives are germane to economic growth and, therefore, help promote good governance through regimes such as the rule of law, provision of basic social services to the population, freedom, justice, etc. Accordingly, R5 disclosed that:

> Engaging and encouraging the private sector is vital; such that public policies formulation and reform efforts by the government are creating a balance. Ghana lives on agriculture but records low productivity and has limited modernized equipment to meet the challenges.

Ghanaians need to remain steadfast not to allow the gains made in governance and sustainable development to evaporate. Ghana's success story at this level is based on proactive sustainable measures instituted particularly in the management of its key resources, cocoa, gold, and oil; somehow these contribute to GDP growth. Ghana's economy is mainly based on these core resources, with cocoa representing 5% of the GDP, while gold supplies 90% of Ghana's mineral exports, which in turn make up about 40% of the total exports (Youde, 2005). Essentially, the sector that encompasses oil and gas accounts for 26.5% of the GDP and has substantially expanded by 19.3% (Van Vuuren & Dontoh, 2017). However, with this said, much is still desirable as the oil segment is still in the early stages of development and has not shown much employment creation nationally. At the same time, cocoa, which has been core to Ghana's exports, is experiencing decline because the youthful workforce is abandoning the sector to seek employment in the cities. These trends, therefore, require sober reflection and necessary steps being initiated if Ghana is to continue on the trajectory of sustainable growth.

The World Bank Country Director for Ghana had argued that Ghana requires a growth strategy that is premised on productivity path; such as, robust public investment system, reform of the governance framework, and accelerated educational system (World Bank, 2011). Since the inspired reforms engendered by the World Bank in the late 1980s, the country changed course from its postindependence socialist/communist inspired governance system of the late 1950s. This was after it became seeming that such system had failed and created more negatives than positives. For example, in the 1960s, the Minister of Trade tried to combat corruption by revoking import and export licenses for a

chance of allowing his officials to scrutinize instances of corruption closely, which led to an economic shockwave and the lack of raw materials, thereby affecting industrial production owing to the massive holdups (Pearsall, 2005). The World Bank recommended that the two are the most suitable approaches that Ghana can employ to manage urbanization and all the related matter in the spirit of sustainable development. Additionally, the World Bank was also involved in developing Ghana's structural adjustment programs, mainly via encouragement. This initiative created a deeper understanding of how to implement sound policies for sustainable development. Ghanaians, through the assistance of the World Bank, began understanding the importance of integrating both African and Western cultural experiences with sustainable development, which is crucial as it creates the foundation for good governance, national stability, and development for social change.

Within the Ghanaian context, sustainability of social and economic development is depended at most on available renewable and nonrenewable natural resource, including land, forest, water, gold, oil, etc.; these account for Ghana's economic growth. Demand for these resources is insurmountable, and regrettably, previous approaches have for the most part been on an ad hoc basis. Therefore, it is ever-compelling to reengage development priorities on a more sustainable front robustly.

Through the NEAP, the government of Ghana has highlighted its commitment to protect the environment and achieve sustainable development. Even though some of the promises have been achieved, the country's efforts have gone beyond lip service, as it has taken steps towards strengthening institutions, developing various human resources,

increased research capacity, which has improved participation by various stakeholders and promoted equity in the distribution of resources.

At present NEAP is involved in aiding initiatives at the national front to bring to the forefront issues that are germane to sustainable development endeavors. By all accounts, efforts need to be deepened, considering that challenges associated with protecting the environment is recurring and needs awareness and revision periodically. However, the media needs to consistently support public commitment to halting environmental degradation and developing various new strategies that will allow for sustainability in living. Incentives, as well as deterrents, should be availed in complementing the different legal frameworks to provide a greater weight on environmental protection policies. Forest and land protection laws should be made rational, scientifically and socially and to draw participation by citizens for environmental conservation. Observably, Ghana hopes to use its oil proceeds to spur sustainable growth and development, but such vision and ambitions would yield more dividend when investment and support are increased to the agricultural growth sectors for stimulating growth that impacts the majority.

Nevertheless, from the findings, one would reason that political instability undeniably adversely impacts economic growth. On the flipside, a steady good governance system often produces sustained economic progress. Steadiness comes with its pluses: open market and increase in investment, and human resource development, among others; all of these are weighty indicators of sustained economic growth. Conversely, instability with its inherent tendencies of socio-political instability usually

midwife poverty, negates the potential of the youth, lacks employment creation and stifles and debases the economy. This status core prohibits direct foreign investment and, therefore negates jobs creation and employment opportunities for the citizenry. It would rather be a disservice for a natural person to deny the fact that stability is germane to sustainable economic development.

Political stability, specific kind of stability, is viewed in the context of growth, including, the rule of law, strong institutions, responsive and efficient bureaucracy, free of corruption and conducive business environment necessary to horn investment opportunities and sustain development.

Summary

Three themes emerged from the data analysis, including (a) active governance; (b) effective governance, and (c) fair governance: Thematic Label 1 included an emphasis on active governance which is centered on planning and taking measures to address challenges aimed at meeting the needs of the population. Politics and democracy were articulated under this thematic label. A governance system is said to be active when good governance institutions with the necessary capacities are in place to consistently deliver valued services for the greater good of the citizens. It involves public management system that harnesses just and equitable taxation/revenue generation, and every public penny is spent efficiently and effectively to serve the people better. Thus, development initiatives in Ghana tended to create major impacts on the lives of people across all spectrum. Thematic Label 2 emphasizes effective governance with a focus on policies formulation that harnesses sustainability. Sustainability deals with how Ghana is

responding to multifaceted challenges to policies formation with a focus on sustainable socio-economic and political progress, reduction in poverty, and justice for all, among others. In other words, these are by no means competing for objectives to be traded-off against each other; rather they are related goals to pursue together effectively. Towards this end, effective leadership is referenced as core to Ghana's progress at achieving sustainable development goals. Finally, Thematic Label 3 talked about fair governance considered one of the key pillars of sustainable development; it harnesses equity and assures all-inclusive economic growth and societal stability. Just, accountable and corruption-free governance institutions can bring about the needed confidence so critical for correlation between the government and the people. It articulated the need for meaningful government and people interaction that harnessed shared responsibilities.

Most research highlighted significant findings that mirror the proposition that no humans can simply achieve sustainability, stability, and progress, unless and until good governance practices guaranteed by democratic values are cultivated. Sustainability allows for efficient use of resources, and thus, it allows futuristic planning such that resources are utilized while considering future generation and economic performance. This benchmark can only be achieved when the country is politically stable, owing to good governance practices. Towards these ends, Ghana has initiated critical measures that are people-centered; such that stability, which is a prerequisite for sustainable development, is realized.

The interviewees also acknowledged that Ghana has a strategic national engagement that nurtured public participation in development initiatives. The Ghanaian

authority has been keen on bringing on board both urban and rural inhabitants into the fold by creating the socio-political space needed for a shared sustainable development drive. Several reforms have been established regarding sustainable development, including initiatives for environmental protection and management, poverty reduction, socio-economic development, and sustainable agricultural practices.

Moving forward, Chapter 5 that follows harnesses the discussions. It derives implication for social change, and proffers recommendations to conclude the research. In other words, as the concluding chapter, it summarizes the highlights of the study and makes recommendations that have implications for both aiding further research and policy practice.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

This qualitative, holistic case study was aimed at understanding how political stability and good governance have impacted sustainable development in Ghana, particularly because it is in the war-torn West African region. Lessons from such a study include understanding how to create an environment that is favorable for capacity building and sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa. It was logical to presume that, from a political perspective, instability adversely affects the economy. Political leadership, making other factors constant, will lead to sustainable economic growth; however, it comes with peaks of increased investment and betterment of intellectual capital, which are positive indicators of progress in the economy. Instability, on the other hand, is a source of civil strife, youth capacity underutilization, and discouragement of investment, income creation, and employment, which are red flags for investors and taxpayers, and contribute to stunted economic growth (Alesina, Ozler, Roubini, & Swagel, 1996). The findings generated from this study will contribute to the literature on political stability and good governance in sustainable development, particularly in the case of sub-Saharan countries.

This chapter will include a focus on the implications and insights of the study findings. The results of the study contribute to the understanding that Ghana stands out among its neighbors regarding sustainable development because of the stability it gets to enjoy along with relatively good governance. In this chapter, I put the key drivers of sustainable development into perspective so other countries will be able to borrow some

of the excellent initiatives that Ghana has applied in ensuring that the country moves to the next level.

Interpretation of the Findings

Since the inception of the concept of sustainable development, the topic has remained debatable. Some scholars have questioned the achievability of sustainable development and even suggested that development cannot be economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable simultaneously (Amanor, & Moyo, 2008). In furtherance of their argument, Amanor and Moyo (2008) posited that it is impractical to avoid compromising future needs, especially if people cannot oversee what will be required then, as needs change the society. However, the arguments and other challenges hindering sustainable development have not stopped the international community from pushing for it because they are convinced that it is achievable. The motivation behind this push is that the world cannot continue acting, producing, and consuming unsustainably. As indicated by the former UN Secretary-General, H.E. Kofi Annan, society needs to act immediately primarily on water, energy, human health, and biodiversity needs for the world to achieve sustainable development.

Ghana went through a period of being a failed state, but with resilience and determination, the people of Ghana rose above the military ashes and made a complete turnaround towards political stability, good governance, and sustainable development. In fostering a progressive development agenda, the government of Ghana implemented the Vision 2020 to spur economic growth (Alliance for Development, 2014). This blueprint ensured that Ghana's development was and is constructive and sustainable (Alliance for

Development, 2014). Moreover, Ghana saw the need to grow the country's human

capital, the professional workforce, to speed up growth (Aryeetey & Baah-Boateng,

2015). To this end, the Ghanaian government has embarked on collective initiatives to

bring stakeholders on board and develop dynamic investment programs inclusive of both

private and public sector businesses (Dixon & Hamilton, 1996). Good governance in

Ghana has pushed the country in the right direction and initiated great infrastructural and

rigorous economic policies that have ensured sustainable development in the nation

(Grindle, 2004). The participants in this study also pointed out the fact that amidst the

political unrest and other types of conflicts that have bedeviled the West Africa region,

Ghana has come out strongly in all indicators of sustainable development and good

governance. For instance, in 2016, Ghana was ranked seventh on the Mo Ibrahim Index

of African Governance (Aryeetey & Baah-Boateng, 2015). Pertaining to the safety and

rule of law, Ghana ranked highly at sixth. In addition, Ghana was ranked fifth in the area

of national security, 14th in the rule of law, 11th in personal safety, and 23rd in the

accountability subcategory (Bamidele, 2013). These rankings imply that Ghana is doing

well in terms of good governance.

In this study, I conducted a thematic analysis of the data with the aid of NVivo

qualitative software. From the data, I generated three primary thematic labels with

various subthemes under them that were critical to the central question regarding the

impact of good governance and stability on sustainable development in Ghana. The

primary themes were (a) active governance, (b) effective governance, and (c) fair

governance.

Theme 1: Active Governance

An active governance anticipates and responds to the needs of its citizens and evolving development challenges with deliberate, targeted, and proactive planning and delivery, which is essential to getting the business of development done. The subthemes of politics and democracy fell under this thematic label. Active governance requires institutions that are capable of delivering reliable and quality services whenever needed. It also requires public administration that can collect revenues honestly; allocate and invest public funds wisely; and manage the public goods, including land and natural resources, for the benefit of all. The national development initiatives in Ghana have created major impacts and pushed for sustainable development.

As a viable democracy, Ghana provided an enabling environment for its citizens to take part in decision making, ensuring that they actively participate in the policy decision making that impacts their lives. In this study, I also established that inclusivity allowed the public to access services as and when needed. The Ghanaian government encouraged the participation of the private sector in governance, which laid the foundation for good governance. With the government being actively involved in the needs of the citizens, it was easier for the citizens to build trust in them. As such, the sustainable development initiatives have received support from various sectors, although not all of the initiatives were implemented adequately due to the improper practices of some sectors of the government. The political sector, for example, especially in the northern region of Ghana where the mines are located, has been marred with civil unrest, but this is not the case in the major cities like Accra or Kumasi (Balestri & Maggioni,

2014). The civil unrest in the northern region can be attributed to political and ethnic differences. For instance, the voting patterns in NDC and NPP strongholds were shown to be due to political socialization (Amankwaah, 2013).

Theme 2: Effective Governance

Effective governance is a prerequisite for establishing the integrated policymaking capacity that is needed to drive sustainable development. A sustainable development response to the complex and interlinked challenges that countries face today demands policy making that views economic growth, social development, poverty reduction, equity, and sustainability, not as competing goals to be traded off against each other, but as interconnected objectives which are most effectively pursued together. Effective leaders in Ghana continue to play an important role in government and the overall national development initiative.

Ghana's implementation of an economic recovery program helped tightened its fiscal control, ensuring accountability and value for money (UNDESA, 2013). Effective governance has helped the country focused on three main pillars: economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Media pluralism, which comes with a free press, has made Ghana an open society, and most of the social issues are deliberated via the mainstream media (Dery, 2014).

Theme 3: Fair Governance

Fair governance matters to sustainable development because it holds the key to building stable and secure societies and driving inclusive growth within the finite boundaries of our planet over the long term. Fair, accountable, and reliable governing

institutions build trust between the government and people; institutions need to be free of corruption. The public should also be meaningfully engaged in governance, and the citizens should be allowed to participate in shaping the decisions that impact them.

Ghana has a broad framework of the third generation, also referred to as *watchdog* institutions, in the form of the anticorruption body, the independent electoral commission, and an elaborate and independent media (Jockers et al., 2010). The constitution also empowers the auditor general, account general, and the parliamentary committees to inspect and report on the state and use of public accounts in all government departments and parastatals (Svanikier, 2007). Apart from ensuring the observance of all laws relating to the use of public funds, the auditor general has the duty to ensure that all necessary precautions are put in place and any improprieties reported to parliament (Svanikier, 2007).

The reasonable level of democracy in Ghana has resulted in a relatively lower level of corruption compared to the other countries in the subregion, with the country being ranked as the seventh least corrupt nation in Africa (Meres, 2017). While there is much room for improvement, Ghana recognizes the importance of combating corruption for the nation to continue attracting direct foreign investment to create jobs, which in turn reduces poverty and improves people's quality of life. To this end, the anticorruption body was established to fight corruption, which is considered one of the hindrances to development since it diverts resources from a good course, such as sustainable development, to serve the short-term, selfish interest of the corrupt person. In this way,

combating corruption is vital to reducing poverty be providing safety nets and other forms of assistance to the poor without being diverted to the wealthy (Abdulai, 2009).

According to the 2016 Mo Ibrahim index of African governance that measures the quality of governance in sub-Saharan Africa's 48 states on the basis of the rule of law, safety and security, transparency and corruption, sustainable economic opportunity, participation, human rights, and human development, Ghana was ranked the seventh best-governed country (Schildkrout, 2006). The country has an overall score of 66.8% and is among the most improved (Schildkrout, 2006). To this end, Ghana is among the top performers on the African continent. The Ibrahim Index of African Governance is regarded as the world's most comprehensive ranking of African governance (Kabumba, 2005). The Ghanaian case indicates that there is good governance. No society can achieve sustainability, stability, and progress unless and until the good governance practices guaranteed by democratic values are cultivated (Alliance for Development, 2014). Sustainability allows for efficient use of resources, leading to futuristic planning such that resources are used while considering future generations and economic performance. This condition that can only be achieved when a country is politically stable, owing to good governance practices. As such, before attaining sustainability is possible, good governance must be adopted first.

The existence of a free media and civil society are additional indicators of an open and democratic society (Werlin, 2005). Although this is an area where many citizens may feel that state control has been rather strong in limiting the operations of trade unions and private media and adopting a cynical attitude to civil society groups, the law nevertheless

allows these players to exist (Werlin, 2005). Both the media and civil society have grown in strength and have successfully been able to advocate for better performance by the state in matters of human rights, anticorruption, women's and children's rights, and pushing for an agenda of sustainable development, among others (Berry & Wilcox, 2015). For example, in March 2002, there were reports in the Ghanaian media that the two factions, the Abudu and the Andani gates, were preparing for war (Tonah, 2012). As such, the media, was effective in this case because it averted potential conflict when the government was able to take the necessary steps in time. The media also plays a vital role in demanding transparency and accountability in government, which promotes good governance. In turn, good governance contributes to equitable development. In addition the civil society role is crucial. It can do this by helping to build strong collaborations in national political leadership and fostering togetherness, harmony, and development, while also seeking more coordination with the government's mediation and prevention efforts by involving international organizations such as UNDP (International Peace Institute, 2017).

Assessing Ghana using the main indicators of education (i.e., basic literacy rate), health (i.e., reduced mortality) and economic performance (i.e., increased per capita income), the good governance policy environment has enabled the nation to make impressive achievements. In the last decade, Ghana witnessed positive economic growth with cocoa representing 5% of Ghana's GDP and gold supplying 90% of Ghana's mineral exports, which in turn make up about 40% of the total exports (Youde, 2005). The industry sector that encompasses oil and gas accounts for 26.5% of the GDP and has

substantially expanded by 19.3% (Van Vuuren & Dontoh, 2017). This has been largely due to the extractive industry which has little impact on the average Ghanaian as most crude oil exports aid the government in terms of revenues but do not benefit directly the average Ghanaian (Moseley, 2014; Van Gyampo, 2014). The service sector is the largest contributor to the GDP. For instance, this sector contributed 50.6% to the 2014 budget and is a major investment target of both local and multinational companies (Moseley, 2014; Van Gyampo, 2014).

Many service subsectors rely on the importation of commodities, so while the sector experiences growth, it also leads to a worsening balance of payment and trade deficit for the country. For example, the trade deficit for Ghana increased from $1.3 billion dollars in November to $1.5 billion dollars in December, according to Focus Economics (2018). However, the overall reduction of poverty was experienced, according to the Ghana Economic Indicator (2015), poverty levels dropped from 52.6% to 21.4% between 1991 and 2012. However, the poverty level in Northern Ghana has not reduced compared to that of the South, and the gap is widening between the poor and the rich. For instance, a report by UNDP (2014) highlighted that even though the number of poor reduced by 2.5 million between 1992 and 2006 in the South, the figure increased by 900,000 in the northern part of Ghana. The report also highlighted that the poverty rate stands at 70.4% and 87.9% in the Upper East and West respectively (UNDP, 2014).

Good governance contributes to sustainable development. However, the country along with neighboring nations has experienced extreme polarization politically, owing to multiparty politics, which adversely affects any efforts for development and sustainable

planning. For instance, it is difficult to develop areas that are prone to violence, such as in the northern part of Ghana, since it does not provide a suitable environment to conduct business, as insecurity can lead to the destruction of property. Multiparty politics adversely affects any efforts for development and sustainable planning, as a party only supports development in areas it won and sidelines the other areas it did not garner support from. Election cycles also affect how governments are run. Instead of advocating for long-term priorities, the issue of election cycles hampers development with many expressing sentiments on the problem. For example, studies have also shown that violence occurred mostly in political parties' strongholds where the minority lived (Adebajo & Rashid, 2004; Amankwaah, 2013). Additionally, another factor that has led to election-related violence in Ghana is when either the NPP or the NDC is tied to factions that dispute chieftaincy rights. The situation in the northern towns such as Yendi and Bawku are typical cases of factions gaining chieftaincy rights when their preferred party wins elections (Issifu, 2015).

Currently, Ghana is experiencing relatively good governance and political stability; but its sustainable development is treacherously negatively skewed (Annan, 2014). For instance, R6 recognized the contribution of active governance in fighting corruption, while at the same time instituting measures that assure political stability. R6 stated that Ghana's good governance and improved aspects of accountability have immensely contributed to the stability experienced in the country. When Rawlings came to power, he was very focused on stopping the spread of corruption, which was evidently a canker. He called upon everyone to join in on this movement as Ghana underwent the

transition. For this reason, stakeholders, including citizens, civil society, and institutions must play their roles. Essentially, post 2015 global development consultations were largely centered on the whole concept and issue of sustainable development. Specifically, they seek to build on the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals, an opportunity source for not only Ghana but all other developing countries in strategizing and positioning themselves in effectively addressing lapses and weaknesses in the development agenda, and championing futuristic sustainability.

Limitations of the Study

I was conscious of potential research biases which could affect findings. This limitation was addressed through peer review and member checking of respondents. The limited sample size although not a major factor also posed some limitations due to the limited range of data I gathered and investigated. The other limitation was that some of the respondents were not available for a face-to-face interview and I had to contact them by means of e-mails and audio-recorded telephonic interview.

Recommendations

To realize sustainable development, then all efforts and policy processes must be cyclical, iterative and continuous. An economically sustainable system must be able to produce goods and services on a continuing basis, to maintain manageable levels of government and external debt, and to avoid extreme sectoral imbalances that damage agricultural or industrial production (see Brundtland Commission, 1987). More concrete and innovative strategies are required to enhance sustainable development. A continent at peace needs more than the absence of war; it requires accountable governance that

includes effective service delivery, respecting human rights, the law, as well as transparent management of the natural resources.

The current qualitative and holistic case study includes exploring how good governance and stability impacts on sustainable development in Ghana. This study may be particularly important for both researchers and policymakers since it provides a coherent picture of the phenomenon as well as addressing some of the weaknesses that should be tackled. I hope the study finding may help the governments particularly in the war-torn West African region work on reinforcing their governance policies as well as focus on postwar reconstruction as core ingredients for sustainable development. Ghana's efforts at sustainable development even with the need for improvement provide new possibilities for future studies.

There is the need for research on addressing corruption, mismanagement of resources, inclusive decision making and how Ghanaians can overcome the other hindrances of sustainable development such as collapsed institutions. More studies should be done on poverty reduction policy implementation, a renew and holistic management of the new energy resources, strengthening state regulatory agencies, strengthening the role of local government agencies and the broadening of the frontiers of democracy as well as promoting research and development.

In future studies on the same, investigators may consider a few methodological settings; for instance, investigators need to expand the sample size, because better quality data improves reliability, validity, and transferability (Patton, 2002; Stake, 1995). The snowballing sampling techniques were possibly limiting and not an exact representation

of the population. To this end, future researchers on the same would better implement

other sampling techniques such as simple random sampling or stratified random

sampling.

The use of a different method of data analysis may also be useful as it might help

further research to come up with additional results. A different method of conducting the

study could also reveal additional data not captured in the current study. For example, the

future studies can use a phenomenological approach to understand lived experiences of

Ghanaians. Future studies may also focus on the life experiences of the participants in

Ghana to gain more insight about good governance indicators, for example, poverty, as

well as highlighting the poverty levels, the effectiveness of leadership, and any positive

changes experienced overtime. In addition, a comparative analysis of sustainable

development in Ghana and other sub-Saharan nations may help to shed more light on

how good governance and stability support sustainable development. A larger population

may also assist in providing more reliable and credible data to make more generalizable

findings. Furthermore, a quantitative study should be considered in the future since it

quantifies the association and gives more power to the findings.

Implications for Positive Social Change

I intended to inquire about how political stability and good governance have

impacted sustainable development in Ghana. From the findings, I drew from the relevant

documents as well as the interviews on the indicators of good governance and sustainable

development; I validated the need for other sub-Saharan countries to focus on stability

and good governance as they are some of the key driving forces of sustainable

development. Understanding Ghanaians' perceptions provide insights that cannot be overlooked. Ayittey (1994) posited that in the backyard of Africa lie homegrown institutions and systems; such that Africa's redemption is dependent on returning to these roots and nurturing them through indigenous ingenuity. Selecting Ghanaians for the current study appeared as a vital population towards comprehending the power of social change. The Ghanaian government decided to pursue national development through economic reforms, participatory democracy, and equitable redistribution of the national wealth by developing capacities and strengthening programs of social services. They felt that they should provide lessons for social change that would be beneficial to other sub-Saharan states that are still grappling with issues of civil unrest and skirmishes.

When the Ghanaian government embarked on developing its structural adjustment programs, encouraged by the World Bank, even Ghanaians did not embrace Rawlings' vision to move Ghana forward. However, decisions taken in those years have begun to settle. The World Bank was primarily involved in the development of Ghana's structural adjustment programs, mainly via encouragement, which created a deeper understanding of how to implement sound policies for sustainable development (see World Bank, 2011). Ghanaians, through the support of the World Bank, began understanding the importance of integrating both African and Western cultural experiences with sustainable development, which is important as it creates the foundation for good governance, national stability, and development for social change. This development paved the way for the good governance that is being experienced, as well as, the significant peaceful coexistence in the southern part of Ghana. In most modern times, Ghanaians have framed

a conflict resolution model, such as involvement of quasi-traditional conflict resolution, with which other sub-Saharan countries may experiment. Ghana experiences peace due to an effective model employed in settling the disputes. Many of the disputes in Ghana are resolved via dialogue between the parties involved. As opposed to some African nations, Ghana has a vibrant and proud civil society comprising of the educated elite who respect and care for their country. Additionally, the quasi-traditional system involved in settling disputes along with the court system prevents intertribal escalations which remain handled through dialogue. For labor conflicts, there are two major labor groups in Ghana: the Trade Union Congress and the Ghanaians for Responsible Governance.

For the field of public policy and administration, then I hope to create a deeper understanding of how to implement sound policies for sustainable development. Ghanaians provided that by understanding the significance of both African and Western cultural experiences and integrating these for sustainable development, that might formulate a durable recipe for good governance, national stability, and development for social change.

Personal Reflections

The first thing that inspired the research is the fact that sustainable development has remained an elusive idea particularly in the West African region that has for a long time grappled with civil wars and political instabilities. Most international organizations are currently pushing for sustainable development, an agenda that is driven by good governance and political instability. It is illogical to push for sustainable development in undemocratic nations, embroiled in civil wars and political conflicts. I had sincere desire

to see people in the other West African nations live in peace, dignity, respectfully and focus on the development agendas by making good use of the available natural, social, and economic resources. Seeking for answers, absorbing the narratives from respondents had been the goal of the researcher throughout this study. I tried as much as possible to be a good scholarly listener. A particular challenge during the study was the researcher must demonstrate the capacity of restraining biases, as some of the respondents diverted from the topic.

For example, Ghanaians who supported one particular political party or another in their country provided either positive or negative views of political leaders. However, by following Yin (2009) and other scholar's recommendations, I remained a neutral listener. Often the key emphasis included that I did not favor one leader or another, but remained interested in exploring how Ghana relatively good governance and stability has impacted on sustainable development.

Good leadership is one of the missing links in most sub-Saharan nations. Good leadership requires accountability, capacity building, gender equality, human rights, transparency, social inclusion, and better living standards for the nationals of the country. As Afegbua and Adejuwon (2012) added that Africa could adopt homegrown values germane to the governance of African societies which fundamentally must be entrenched by inclusiveness, open-mindedness, and respect for constitutional precept. These suggestions remain some of the most important values needed to ensure the concept of sustainable development is put into perspective and the goals are realized in sub-Saharan Africa.

Conclusion

Most of the recent studies of sub-Saharan Africa have depicted weak productivity, weak political governance, weak political institutions and poor redistribution of natural resources; all of which have negatively affected sustainable development in most of the African countries. However, Ghana has fared better compared to the countries in the region, including Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Guinea, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, and Liberia (Amankwaah, 2013; Mohammed, 2015; Owusu, 2017), through its improved political and economic strategies. In fact, Ghana enjoys a peaceful coexistence in comparison to neighboring nations, owing to the fact that leaders bar ethnicity from spurring conflicts and maintain law and order (Owusu, 2017). In consequence, with the local solidarity, there was a more peaceful coexistence, and the local chiefs were always available to mediate settling of any disputes (Owusu, 2017). Therefore, understanding how good governance and political stability have impacted sustainable development in Ghana provides important insights that can be utilized by other sub-Saharan nations while pushing their development agendas.

Political reforms from within Africa are imperative and are far more sustainable than reforms or solutions from elsewhere. It is therefore critical for Africans to take responsibility for initiating and sustaining the kinds of reforms that will build more stable and democratic political systems (see Ayittey, 1994). Consistent with this argument, the current study included findings, which may help positively shape sustainable development initiatives in African countries. The study included insightful lessons to help build strong collaboration between national political leadership and productive civil

societies. No matter what path a nation may take, this study included the need for developing sustainable and peaceful structures of governance. In the early decades of the 21st century, sub-Saharan African countries have continued to face steep challenges, despite enormous possibilities for socioeconomic growth and sustainable development.

The Ghanaian government also implemented fundamental laws to govern each sector of the society and, as Boafo-Arthur (2008) argued, Ghanaians adhered to the rule of law, which remained essential for social conformity. Afegbua and Adejuwon (2012) further posited that the concept of governance is rather simple; it is a set of values, policies, and the foundation by which the society manages social, economic, and political processes at varying intervals and horn interaction among the government, civil society, and the private sector. Currently, Ghana is experiencing relatively good governance and political stability, but its sustainable development is treacherously negatively skewed. There are loose ends, such as insecurity brought by the postelection violence, as well as, poor financial planning and annual budgeting (Fjelde & Höglund, 2016). For instance, Dagbon conflicts have led to numerous deaths and adversely affected the production, marketing and investment in agriculture (Issifu, 2015). The severe violence and insecurity in the metropolis resulted in most financial institutions being unwilling to grant loans to farmers to invest in agricultural production. Additionally, Ghana heavily relies on international aid and there is a slow progress in combating corruption. Therefore, donors may reevaluate Ghana's performance and reduce the inflow of development assistance (Youde, 2005). However, if this does not happen and financial health dependence on development aid continues, then the economic implications would be dire.

As such, all stakeholders must play their roles, such as civil society. The post-2015 global development consultations were largely centered on the whole concept and issue of sustainable development. It seeks to build on the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals, an opportunity source for not only Ghana but all other developing countries in strategizing and positioning themselves in efficiently addressing lapses and weaknesses in the development agenda, and championing futuristic planning that is sustainable.

The development and sustainability of Ghana are dependent on large resource base and utilization of natural resources, for example, water, forests, and soil, which pressures natural systems enormously. Unluckily, past attempts that were designed for addressing environmental problems were not effective. This is due to the increasing rates of deforestation, soil erosion, desertification, land degradation, intensification of bad agricultural practices and pollution of water bodies. The socio-economic difficulties also exacerbate the environmental challenges due to poor agricultural practices, such as inadequate research input and lack of funds to promote better agricultural practices, as well as lack of funds to pay for labor. The environmental degradation issues are as a result of weak institutional policies, environmental, and forest policy failures and population pressure and the Ghanaian government should step in to act on the same. As such, there is a need for a rethinking of the natural development efforts along more sustainable lines. Nonetheless, Ghana has substantially set pace for other African countries, particularly in the West African subregion, to revamp their weak socioeconomic and political structures and to move into the future. Stability and good

governance drive sustainable development. Thus, it is up to the other West African

nations to rise above the civil wars and different types of conflicts and implement policies

to push for sustainable development.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocols

Date: _____, Location: _____

Name of Interviewer: _____

Name of Interviewee: _____

RQ1: Is there a relationship among the political stability and good governance and sustainable development as experienced in Ghana?

RQ2: Compared to other countries in the West African sub-region, what factors have contributed to the political stability and good governance in Ghana?

RQ3: What roles have good governance and political stability played towards sustainable development in Ghana?

RQ4: What plans have the Ghanaian government implemented towards the concept of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental)?

Interview Questions (Interview Number: (#One …etc.)**:**

1. Is there a relationship between political stability and good governance in Ghana?

2. Is there a relationship between political stability and sustainable development in Ghana?

3. What are the differences in governance and political stability between Ghana and other West African countries?

4. What is the cause of this difference?

5. Is Ghana experiencing sustainable development?

6. What is the cause of this development?

7. What social policies has the government of Ghana implemented for sustainable development?

8. What economic policies has the government of Ghana implemented for sustainable development?

9. What environmental policies has the government of Ghana implemented for sustainable development?