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AN ASSESSMENT OF ETHNICITY IN POLITICS IN THE DEMOCRATIC DISPENSATION OF GHANA: THE CASE OF AHAFO-ANO NORTH CONSTITUENCY

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AN ASSESSMENT OF ETHNICITY IN POLITICS IN THE DEMOCRATIC DISPENSATION

OF GHANA: THE CASE OF AHAFO-ANO NORTH CONSTITUENCY

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this term paper is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Name: Eric Gyamfi Boateng

ndidate's Signature…………………………..   Date…………………

reby declare that the preparation and presentation of the term paper were supervised in rdance with the guidelines on supervision of term paper laid down by the University for relopment Studies.

Supervisor's Name: Prof. Daniel A. Bagah

Supervisor's Signature…………………………..   Date…………………..

DEDICATION

I dedicate this paper to my late mother, Madam Augustina Akua Afriyie, my wife Ophelia Gyamfi, and my three lovely children: Gerald Asamoah Boateng, Augustina Nhyira Afriyie and Gabriella Gyamfi Boateng.

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between ethnicity and politics in the Ahafo-Ano North constituency of the Ashanti Region. More specifically, the study sought to ascertain the origin of ethnicity in Ahafo-Ano North Constituency's politics and to examine the role of ethnocentrism in Ahafo-Ano North Constituency's politics as well as determine the ways of minimizing ethnicity in Ahafo-Ano North Constituency's politics. The study used a qualitative approachh. A sample size of 80 respondents was employed using the non-probability sampling technique. Both primary and secondary sources of data were collected for this study. Primary data were gathered through fieldwork. Supportive materials and research works from books, sources from the library, and articles available online were also used. The findings revealed that the post-independence idea that led to the establishment of ethnic based political parties is the birth of tribal politics. It showed that tribal politics is not a recent development. Historically, NPP and NDC are noted for counting on tribal politics to gain the attention of the masses. It was found that the activities of the ruling NPP and the opposition NDC are woven around the people of the Upper Regions, Volta, Ashanti and other Akan dominated communities the country. It was also revealed that the central government can handle ethnicity in politics by preventing formation of political parties on ethnic background. It was recommended that the most reliable way to handle tribal politics is for authorities to restrict people from forming or carrying out their political activities on ethnic basis.

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BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Democracy has a complex meaning and it is usually used to imply a favorable attitude or characteristics towards a regime since it describes particular features of it. It has been variously defined by different people, but the father of democracy, Abraham Lincoln, defines it as; "government of the people, by the people and for the people". This definition of democracy implies that; all the people in a country and not a specific sect, class, ethnicity or group of people without any political mandate of the people should carry-out the governance the state. At the heart of democracy is party politics (Asante, 2012).

e 1992 Constitution, Article 55 section 4, (p:44) states that "every political party shall have ational character, and membership shall not be based on ethnic, religious, regional or other tional divisions". The questions to ask here are whether or not these laws are upheld and ether people who offer themselves as founding fathers for the political parties within the ious constituencies are truly members or supporters of the political parties and whether y are not of a specific ethnic group, religion, region or other sectional division as the stitution forbids (Asante, 2012).

Ghana's current experiment in constitutional rule has taken significant steps forward. Although from a wobbly start, the country has moved from the first Republic through to the fourth Republic. And in the fourth Republic, the country has witnessed three successive general elections; this has made Ghana a paragon of good governance and peaceful co-existence within and among its neighbours (Frempong, 2004).

It is observed that these strides in the democratic process of Ghana have witnessed the upsurge of ethnicity, so high that, any important policy, or issue made by a ruling government or any public figure is politicized and interpreted or given ethnic connotations or meanings. Asante (2012) warned that politicians desist from playing the ethnic card to canvass for votes. Politicians were urged to play cards of unity, talk on the merit of their manifestoes and proposals to make Ghana great and strong.

Problem Statement

anaians have been very discerning in their choice of political leaders, both presidential and liamentary. They have voted on decisions made as a result of party messages or nifestoes. Their decisions are informed by economic and social issues such as employment, corruption in official circles, and performance of elected leaders. It is coming increasingly clear however, that ethnicity is among the host of factors which voters asider when making their choice through the ballot. Ethnicity although has had a place in ana's political history since independence, its insurgence in contemporary politics has come more glaring (Frempong, 2004).

Ethnicity is seen in the election of presidential or flagbearers, choice of a vice presidential candidates, in parliamentary and district level elections in a multi-ethnic electoral constituencies, in the appointment of ministers of state, in employment issues such as in the Security Services and in the Civil Service. In the early 1960s, it had been so serious that the leader of government then, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, passed the Avoidance of Discrimination Act, an act which banned all the political associations on ethnic, regional or religious lines. This Act merged all the opposition political groupings into one, called the United Party (UP).

This Act however became irrelevant during the military regimes. As military rulers took over the reins of governance of the country, the Act was thrown overboard. Today the country is ruled by political parties which are formed and supported on ethnic and regional lines (Frempong, 2004).

The violent ethnocentric experiences in the country show how serious the ethnic problem in Ghana has reached (Ephson, 2008). Ephson (2008) in his book, 'The countdown to Election 08', admitted that, there is an element of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics. He states that the of ethnicity in Ghana's elections stands at 4.7% to 5%. For instance, the murder of Ya Na kubu Andani, the overlord of Dagbon has been politicized by cultural entrepreneurs who k to make a political gain by using ethnic mobilization. It is against this background that term paper seeks to examine the relationship between ethnicity and politics in the Ahafo-o North Constituency in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

Research Objectives

1.3.1 Main Research Objectives

The main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between ethnicity and politics in the Ahafo-Ano North constituency of the Ashanti Region.

1.3.2 Sub Research Objectives

a. To ascertain the origin of ethno-politics in the Ahafo-Ano North Constituency

b. To examine the role of ethnocentrism in Ahafo-Ano North Constituency

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c. To establish the divergent views associated with ethnic voting in Ahafo-Ano North Constituency

d. To determine the ways of minimizing ethno-politics in Ahafo-Ano North Constituency's politics.

1.4 Research Questions

.1 Main Research Question

ıat kind of relationship exists between ethnicity and politics in the Ahafo – Ano North istituency of the Ashanti Region?

.2 Sub Research Questions

When did ethno-politics introduce to the Ahafo – Ano North Constituency?

What role does ethnocentrism play in the Ahafo – Ano North Constituency?

What divergent views are associated with ethnic voting in Ahafo – Ano North Constituency?

d. What mechanisms can be employed to minimize ethno-politics in the Ahafo – Ano North constituency?

1.5 Relevance of Paper

Several countries have been plunged into civil wars due to ethnic related issues in politics. Afghanistan, Liberia, Rwanda, D.R. Congo, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Ivory Coast, have had

their own experiences. The paper will highlight and appraise the relationship that exists between ethnicity and politics and to guide the actions and inactions of the voters that can help control political violence for a peaceful co-existence. The paper will also contribute knowledge in the area of ethnicity and politics and provide basis for further studies.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Literature review is a critical analysis of existing research work on a particular subject. Here, existing literature relevant to this paper are reviewed. Basically, it is a secondary data reviewing segment or chapter. Various documents on this topic are compared and contrasted so that, theories, and concepts of ethnicity in voting patterns are understood.

Theoretical Framework

ated theories to the paper are reviewed here. The theories are reviewed to put the paper in appropriate perspective.

.1 Primordial Theory

s is another theory from the primordial conceptualists who stress the uniqueness and the erriding importance of ethnic identity. From their point of view, ethnicity is a biological fixed characteristic of individuals and communities (Geertz, 1963). The primordialists hold the view that members of the same ethnic group have a common bond that determines their personal identity and "turns the group into a natural community of a type that is older than the modern state" (Van de Goor, 1994:18 in Ake, 2003: 93). Their idea of ethnic identification is as a result of inherent long-standing and usually unchanging sets of alliances which often defy rational explanation (Smith, 2000: 36). One is bound to one's kinsmen by virtue of some unaccountable way that is related to the very tie itself (Geertz, 1963:109-110).

Many studies of ethnicity concentrate on justifying the claim that any political organization based on ethnic identity is a primitive model. In most cases such approaches suggest that if

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Africa wants to make progress it must first of all eradicate ethnicity. The African political leadership endorses "assimilation, rather than pluralistic inclusion and acceptance of difference as the only approach to national unity." (Heather, 2007: 39). Such affirmation supports the argument that urbanization, high levels of education and high social status do not necessarily decrease ethnocentrism as asserted in the structural theory.

2.2.2 Instrumentalists

e Instrumentalist (Bart, 1969; Glazer and Moynihan, 1975) argument is that, in Africa ere poverty and deprivation are becoming endemic, mostly as a result of distributive stice, ethnicity remains an effective means of mobilization and survival. Ethnic groups t form for economic reasons, easily disband after achieving their objectives. This responds with Anderson's (1991:5-7) argument that ethnicity is "a construct" rather than a stant. The instrumentalists see ethnicity essentially as a means for people, especially ders, to pursue their own purpose such as 'forming, mobilizing and manipulating groups of ple for political ends' (Van de Goor, 1994 in Ake, 2003:94).

2.2.3 Human Needs

Burton (1979; 1997) also has his human needs theory on ethnicity. This approach to ethnicity explains that ethnic groups mobilize to fight because they are denied not only their biological needs, but also psychological needs that relate to growth and development. These include peoples' need for identity, security, recognition, participation, and autonomy. This theory provides a plausible explanation of ethnic conflicts in Africa, where such needs are not easily met by certain democratic regimes that fail to fulfill these needs. This concept moves beyond

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theories that blame African conflicts on a primordial past. Instead, it points to ineffective

institutions that are unable to satisfy the basic human needs of their citizens. Wherever such

non-negotiable needs are not met, conflict is inevitable. Obviously, the problem of ethnicity

in Africa largely depends on the level of state effectiveness, accountability, and transparency

in handling the demands of diversity.

Ethnic identities act as a pivot around which group members are mobilized and compete

ectively for state-controlled power and economic resources. Under the leadership and

uence of the predatory ethnic entrepreneurs, members of the ethnic group are urged to

m an organized political action-group in order to maximize their corporate economic,

ial, and political interests. The reality is that ethnicity exhibits all the characteristics at the

ne time. Amoo (1997) states that, although ethnicity may appear instrumental, it is

cturally primordial, possessing an intrinsic absolute value, involving and demanding a

el of loyalty which transcends other social groups (Amoo, 1997: 16).

mpong (2004) believes that, ethnicity thrives on half-truths and perceptions as much as on

historical facts and is sustained by stereotypes and prejudices which help to explain why

ethnicity remains a crucial weapon for political mobilization. The common idea has been

that, political elites manipulate ethnicity for their own purposes, yet sometimes the elite act

under the pressure from the masses. As emphasized by Conteh-Morgan (1997), indeed,

ethnicity has been politicized because it can combine both instrumental and affective

dimensions.

2.3 The Origin Of Ethnicity in Ghana's Politics

Manifestations of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics have been rife because the country is made up of various ethnic groups and in which the "shared feeling of belonging to the nation is recent" (Chazan, 2001). The formation of regional, religious and ethnic based parties and organizations such as the National Liberation Movement (NLM), Northern People's Party (NPP), Togoland Liberation Movement, Moslem Association Party (MAP) and *Ga Shifimoo* *ee* before and immediately after independence to promote regional, religious and ethnic rest mainly as a result of competition for resources shows the evolution of ethnicity in anaian politics. Ghana's First and Second Republics were also plagued with ethnic sions, and the politicization of ethnicity continued to cause separations between ethnic ups (Chazan, 2001; 468).

1957, the opposition parties united to form the United Party (UP), led by Kofi Abrefa sia Akan. Both the Volta and Ashanti Regions have been referred to in many Ghanaian vspaper articles as the 'World Banks' of votes for the National Democratic Congress and the New Patriotic Party respectively in Ghana's Fourth Republic. In 1977, there were three main factors that caused the ethnic forces that had been in opposition to finally mobilize against the government. They protested the dwindling availability of resources and wanted compensation, they protested the falling benefits from policies enacted by the government, and protested against their separation from the core of state activity (Chazan, 2001). The protests against the government came in many forms. There were petitions sent, increased public discourse and criticism, and professionals withheld their services in protest. The mounting discontent in Ghana forged a sense of unity in Ghana that eventually led to the birth

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of the "Union Government" concept, or what became known as "Unigov" in Ghana in October 1977. The main goal of the "Union Government" was to "a democratically sanctioned non- party incorporation of major horizontal (class- linked) and vertical (ethnically based) groups, including the military and the police."

Closely linked to ethnicity in recruitment into public service is the dismissal of public servants. There has been allegations of instances where people have lost their jobs, or asked proceed on leave in Ghana based on where they came from (region); issues allegedly more ted with ethnicity than inefficiency (The Chronicle, 20 October, 2004: 6). Busia, as in pollo 568" had been accused of dismissal of public servants and having an epresentative cabinet during his time as president, he removed 568 public servants under Transitional Provisions of the 1969 constitution, due to what was said to be the over resentation of Ewes as senior public servants; all served to deepen tensions (Asante and imah-Boadi, 2004). This in some ways caused the Akan- Ewe split that was already wing. John Nyuot Yoh noted that, Nkrumah worked hard to ensure that ethnicity and ional politics were kept completely separate from each other causing him to pass a law not allow the ethnicities of employees of government institutions to be known during their employment. Regional balance has also been noted as being important in maintaining peace in Ghana.

2.3.1 Ethnocentrism in Ghana's Politics

Before independence and immediately after independence, in Ghana, politicians were drawing ethnic lines, and using ethnicity as a common factor and a means of gaining support

from the masses. Most of the ethnically aligned parties, formed a strong opposition to and, entered into alliances, to contest against the ruling party; the CPP. From 1954, there was an emergence of many political parties that were formed along ethnic and regional lines to contest in the elections. Examples of these parties were the Northern People's Party (NPP), which was formed to protect the interests of the northern people by its chiefs and elites. Another of these parties was the National Liberation Movement (NLM), the Moslem Association Party (MAP), the Ga Shifimo Kpee, the Togoland Congress formed in 1951 to unify both the British and the French mandated territories of the Togoland (Asante and imah-Boadi, 2004).

he 1969 general elections the Progress Party (PP), led by Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia an Akan, n a landslide victory. However, there was a general perception then that tribal politics was olay with the PP tagged an Akan-dominated party, while the second – placed National iance of Liberals (NAL) led by Komla Agbeli Gbedema an Ewe, was perceived as an e-dominated party.

Horowitz (1985: 293) also defines ethnic parties as those that derive their support from an identifiable ethnic group and serve the interests of that group. "To be an ethnic party, a party does not have to command an exclusive hold on the allegiance of group members. It is how that party's support is distributed, not how the ethnic group's support is distributed, that is decisive". The two parties that stand out during elections have been the NPP and the NDC both of which have ethnic attachments, to the Akan and Ewe ethnic groups respectively. Regardless of the way in which these two parties market themselves as it draws close to the periods of elections, they continue to maintain their strong voter bases (Joshua and Goski,

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2007). Ethnicity plays an important role in the way in which the two parties are packaged and are represented in Ghana. Both the partisan and ethnic dimensions of the party have to appeal to the people they are marketing themselves to, must be in line with their beliefs, and their place in society socially and economically (Joshua and Goski, 2007).

Joshua and Goski state that the way people of a particular ethnicity define a party and appreciate a party goes a long way in deciding whether they would vote for a particular party (Joshua and Goski, 2007). They also indicate in their article that, "the entrenchment of ...nicity in Ghana's politics is due to the fear of perpetual ethnic domination in the politics of ...ana. It is the fear of ethnic subjugation by another ethnic group as a result there has been ... true national political party in Ghana since the demise of Nkrumah's party, the ...nvention People's Party (CPP) in 1966" (Joshua and Goski, 2007).

Views on Ethnic Voting in Ghana

...itical analysts who do not believe in the salience of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics in this ...sent generation, can easily argue that, with different perceptions attached to both parties, ... NPP and the NDC, people might be voting for these two different parties, and making decisions regarding the parties because of other notions attached to the party and not because of the ethnic attachments of the two parties. The discourse remained on the ethnic attachments of the party and never the notion that one of the parties has its majority voting population being urban and the other was a more rural party. It can easily be said that ethnicity is the more stable factor for deciphering the two parties. Both poor and rich, and urban and rural Voltarians for example will support the NDC and the same with the Ashanti and the NPP, and therefore the fact that they are poor or rich will not be that salient, but being Ewe or Ashanti will play a more beneficial role. Due to the fact that politicians cannot make

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broad based public promises to the electorate, they focus on making promises to a small portion of the population which usually turns out to be their ethnic groups. They then focus their energies and resources on fulfilling the promises made to this smaller group of citizens, who are then guaranteed to vote them back into power when the next election come along, because of their perceived 'credibility' (Austin, 1970).

It is worth noting that, African leaders shy away from playing ethnic politics when they lize that they are from the minority ethnic group. Dr Kwame Nkrumah (an ethnic Nzema) l his CPP are typical examples in this instance since he did not use Akan and non-Akan : to the fact that Nzema is a small tribe within Akans. Austin (1970) notes that a fear of er-ethnic conflict causes people to align with people of their same ethnic groups to intain some stability, in case their preferred parties are not successful, they can always p the benefits received by their ethnic groups. The research suggests that, voters usually l be less likely to align themselves with parties that in some ways incite violence against ir ethnic group. This seems the almost natural instinct of people belonging to an in-group.

In Ghanaian politics, it can be suggested that the Ewe are so weary of the NPP because of the perceived threat to the ethnic group of Akan- specifically Ashanti dominance. Austin's research states further that politics becomes polarized when different ethnic groups support different parties or voters claim to support people who come from the same ethnic group as themselves. Although, Austin has made a good point here, yet, this tactic keeps non ethnics or non-supporters out of their share of the national cake. Politics has been noted to affect ethnic clustering in African countries, because politicians use fear as a tactic to get people to

cluster along ethnic lines, and support the party that proposes to protect them or provide them with their needs.

2.4.1 Ethnicity and Politics in the Ahafo-Ano North Constituency

Since the inception of the fourth republic in 1992 there have been consistent changes in Ghana's electoral proceedings especially at the constituency level. Frempong (2006) relate that this change in voting pattern in the 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004 elections brings to the fore a number of issues related to the question of citizenship and identity in Ghana. One of the 1es, he attributed to significant settler populations in the Ashanti region, particularly in the afo-Ano North constituency.

the Ahafo-Ano North constituency, Frempong (2006) recounted that increase in settler pulations in the constituency has persistently influenced the voting pattern of individuals as ple voted along ethnic ties. No doubt, to state that social identity has in the past impacted elections and the high interplay of ethnicity and indigenous-settler rivalry have had greater act on elections in the Ahafo-Ano North constituency.

In the 1992 general elections, George Kwasi Adjei Annim of the then Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere (EGLE) party was said to have won the constituency seat as a result of his strong Akan background and his ability to convince the populace that he himself was a native of the land (Wikepedia, December 2013). Consequently, this in connection to what Nugent (1998) said that ethnicity and chieftaincy disputes have had higher tendencies of impacting on elections. In the 1996 elections, the mantle of leading the Ahafo-Ano North constituency had fallen on Baffour Annor of the then ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC). It is

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recounted that the constituency had in some time past inhabited settlers from the North who were strongholds of the NDC and that they holistically voted their party to lead the constituency (Wikepedia, December 2013). From the literature, it is revealing that ethnic politics has been a fundamental drive towards the winning of Ahafo-Ano North constituency seat. In three successive elections, the constituency had had to be led by three different candidates from different parties all together and from a seemingly ethnic point of view. The 2000 general elections was no different from that of 1992 and 1996, as the honorable Kwame Owusu Frimpong of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) had the chance to lead the affairs of the nstituency. The honorable Frimpong is said to have won the seat as a result of his strong ive background as An Akan and for that matter and Ashanti (Wikipedia, December 2013 *afo-Ano North (Ghana Parliament Constituency); retrieved from: m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahafo-Ano North (Ghana-Parliament-Constituency), October 2017)*

his report, Frempong (2006) related that the most important factor influencing voter avior in the Ahafo-Ano North constituency was native-settlers rivalries which are rooted he history of the people. He reported that to be able to win elections in the Ahafo-Ano rth constituency, parties have had to adopt strategies that take cognizance of local exigencies, most importantly, the settler populations; party executives in the constituency, their choice of parliamentary candidates and campaign messages are all influenced largely by the settler/ethnic question and parties have lost or won elections depending on how they handled the ethnic/settler question. On the face of it, this is not doubtful as the Ahafo-Ano North constituency has in the past changed its seat consistently.

2.4.2 Dealing with Ethnicity in Ghana's Politics

In response to reducing ethnicity, a number of measures mainly in the area of legislation have been taken. Firstly, Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) government passed the Avoidance of Discrimination Act in December 1957 which forbade the existence of parties on regional, tribal and religious basis. This measure was, however, interpreted as depriving the opposition parties of the basis of their support in the regions (Austin, 1970).

econdly, the post-Nkrumah period constitutions, namely, the 1969, 1979 and 1992 nstitutions, all have provisions dealing with ethnicity. For instance, under the "Directive nciples of State Policy" of the 1992 Constitution, the State is to "actively promote the egration of the peoples of Ghana and prohibit discrimination and prejudice on the grounds place of origin, circumstances of birth, ethnic origin, gender or religion, creed or other iefs".

ditionally, to achieve the political objectives of the Principles, the State is enjoined to take propriate measures to foster a spirit of loyalty to Ghana that overrides sectional, ethnic and other loyalties" (Republic of Ghana, 1992). Similarly, the Political Parties Act (Act 574) of 2000 prohibits the formation of ethnic or religious parties. It states that;

a). No political party shall be formed on ethnic, gender, religious, regional, professional or other sectional divisions; or

b). which uses words, slogans or symbols which could arouse ethnic, gender, religious, regional, professional or other sectional divisions.

It further defines the characteristics of a party formed on ethnic or other sectional divisions as:

1) A political party is formed on ethnic, gender, religious, regional, professional or other sectional divisions if its membership or leadership is restricted to members of any particular community, region, ethnic group, gender, religious faith or profession, or if its structure and mode of operation are not national in character" (Republic of Ghana, 2000).

2) As a matter of fact, in a multi-ethnic society such as that of Ghana where there are over ninety (90) ethnic groups, ensuring the ethnic and regional balance in government and into the public and civil services is the best in trying to maintain a peaceful co-existence yet it becomes almost impossible to ensure this.

e reason being that, the sizes of and differences in the regions and the ethnic groups, apart m Ashanti Region which has a uniform traditional area and paramouncies known to be nte, almost all the other Regions have more than one tribe/ethnicity and paramouncy for t matter. Probably it would be more appropriate to talk of ethnic equity in recruitment into public offices.

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METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

ery research demands a comprehensive methodology. According to Sarantakos (2005),

thodology is a research strategy that translates ontological and epistemological principles

guidelines that show how research is to be conducted. In other words, methods are

truments employed in the collection and analysis of data. It is very critical in ensuring the

ability and validity of findings. The methodology takes into account: the research design,

data collection instruments, review of secondary data, sampling details, data

lysis and presentation techniques and ethical considerations.

3.2 Study Area

The Study Area for this research work was the Ahafo – Ano North Constituency in the

Ashanti Region. The Ahafo – Ano North has a land area of 593 kilometer square, and its

geography is usually rainforest with most of its working population being farmers. The Ahafo

– Ano North Constituency has one major hospital and four other smaller health service

stations. Tepa is the District capital. The Ahafo-Ano is well known in terms of politics.

However, a major development is the introduction of ethno-politics in the constituency which

has attracted the attention of both social analysts and political commentators. Hence the

choice of such political district with the view to unravel the extent to which ethnicity has fed into the constituency politics.

3.3 Study Design

Research design may be viewed as a plan for collecting and analyzing evidence that makes it possible for the investigator to address his research questions. The design of an investigation touches almost all aspects of the research, from data collection decisions to selection of techniques for data analysis (Sarantakos, 2005). This study employed the qualitative research design by focusing on descriptive and diagnostic aspects. Kothari (2004) recounted that descriptive research studies are those studies which are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or of a group, whereas diagnostic research studies determine the frequency with which something occur or its association with something else. According to Creswell (2009), a qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem; the process of research which involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting. The qualitative descriptive and diagnostic design enabled the researcher to establish the otherwise relationship between ethnicity and politics and how these variables affect voting in the selected community.

3.4 Study Population

The targeted population for this research work comprised the electorates within the Ahafo – Ano North Constituency. The justification for targeting this category of respondents stemmed from the fact that they are those who are actively involved in the voting process within the

constituency. Such category of respondents was able to provide relevant and accurate information necessary for this research work.

3.5 Sampling and Sample Technique

The non-probability sampling technique was used for this research. The researcher used both the purposive and quota sampling techniques to select the respondents for this research. Purposive sampling techniques involve selecting of certain units based on a specific purpose rather than randomly (Babbie and Mouton, 2004). This method involves the selection of sample based on one's own knowledge about the population and the elements of it and also based on the nature of the researcher's study goals. The purposive sampling technique was used to help in the identification of the institutional leaders who were informative about the electoral processes and its impacts. In this regard, eight key informants from the following institutions were purposely selected: Ahafo-Ano North District Assembly (1), the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) (1), the district office of the Electoral Commission (EC) (2), Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) (1), Tepa Senior High School (1), media houses (1), Faith Based Organizations (churches and mosques) (2). These institutions were considered because, some have been directly responsible and playing crucial roles in electoral processes, conflict resolution as well as campaigning against ethnic voting whist others were indirectly responsible but influencing and managing behavioral change in electoral processes.

Besides, quota sampling technique was used in the selection of 71 others drawn from the civil society. The bases for the selection were that the respondent should (1) be a male or female

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and registered voter in the Ahafo-Ano North Constituency and (2) belonging to any of the political parties registered in the country. Through these sampling techniques, 23 females and 57 males were selected. The skew nature of the sample in favour of males is due to the fact that in Ghana, the political system and the debate associated with it is dominated by males (Odotei, 2006). The findings were however not affected due to the fact that the study did not focus on gender.

Sources of Data and Data Collection Methods

e study used both primary and secondary sources of information.

.1 Secondary Data

e secondary information used in the study included literature reviewed from textbooks, orts, journals, newspapers and files that were relevant and related to the study.

.2 Primary Data

Interviews were used to obtain the primary data. Primary data could be defined as information that is collected from the field for processing (Micah et. al.; 2000). According to Koul (2001:175) "interview is a process of communication or interaction in which the subject or interviewee gives the needed information verbally in a face-to-face situation" to gather the desired information for the achievement of research goal and objectives. Interview was employed in this study to obtain the information through the encouragement of individual respondents to expand their answers to specific questions through explanations particularly in

voting and ethnic conflict and its impact for peace and development. The primary data were

collected with the aid of interview guides and audio recording device.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Data collected for this research were analyzed qualitatively. Information gathered with the

aid of the audio recording device was first transcribed and carefully written with the view to

serve the original content given by the respondents.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

s chapter concentrates on the analysis, interpretation and discussions of the data gathered

m the field. The discussions and the analysis were based on the four objectives of the

dy.

Origin of Ethnicity in Politics

finding out as to what might have been the origin of ethnicity in politics per the analysis,

jority of the respondents 54 (76.1%) opined that ethnic based political parties in the Ghana

seen as the origin of tribal party politics in Ahafo-Ano North District. This is what one

pondent expressed in an interview:

'The formation of political parties was on ethnic lines from the birth of political

parties in Ghana. I am not surprise that politics is now ethnicised'.

All the nine key informants supported what the respondents told the researcher. This is

what one key informant stated:

'If you plant yam, you will harvest yam and if you plant cocoyam you cannot

harvest plantain. At the eve of independence and even thereabout people tried to

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> *form political parties around ethnic groups. The manifestation is that in Ghana in*
>
> *terms of politics, people are blinded by ethnicity'*

This finding from the study supports of the work of Chaza (2001). According to Chaza, the manifestations of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics have been rife because the country is made up of various ethnic groups in which the "shared feeling of belonging to the nation is recent". Chaza (2001) further argues that ethnic based parties such as the National Liberation Movement (NLM), Northern People's Party (NPP), Togoland Liberation Movement, Moslem Association Party (MAP) and *Ga Shifimoo Kpee* which were formed before and immediately after independence was to promote regional, religious and ethnic interest due to competition resources.

From the responses of the respondents, it can be said that the origin of ethnicity in politics is planned activity by the people which a reflection in of the attributes they give to their tribal groups. It was gathered from 62 respondents (87%) that they prefer voting for candidates whom they share common ethnic ties so that in the cases where there are distribution of resources their members can benefit from. This is the remark given by one of the respondents:

> *'It is very important that I vote for someone who is known to me than a stranger. Yes, I should vote for someone with whom we belong to the same tribe so that even if I could not benefit directly, a member of my tribe could be helped one day'.*

In finding out the repercussion of ethnicity and politics on the recruitment of people into public services, all the respondents (71) were of the view that ethno-politics has adverse effects on recruitment of people into the public service(s). Respondents supplied the view that there has been allegations of instances where people have lost their jobs, or asked to proceed on leave in Ghana based on where they came from (region); issues allegedly more related with ethnicity than inefficiency. One key informant lamented about the development of ethno politics:

> *We are losing qualified personnel in our various institutions because of this deadly ethno-politics. Should a person be recruited into public office on the basis of his/her ethnic background? My brothers this is killing Ghana and we have to stop the practice'*

The Role of Ethnocentrism in Ahafo-Ano North Constituency's Politics

From the analysis, it was revealed that ethnicity plays a major role in politics in the Ahafo – Ano North constituency. Several of the respondents (54) opined that during elections, politicians mostly rely on electorates that they have ethnic ties with and to convince them to vote them into office. This is what a respondent said in the course of an interview:

> *'The parliamentary aspirant told me that my grandfather and his grandfather came from the same house and we are all brothers so I should convince my family to vote for him as we all stand to benefit if he wins. This was good news to me so I voted for him. Unfortunately he lost the election'*

A key informant in support of the assertion of the respondents remarked:

Ethnicity has serious role in Ghana's politics. Politicians have come to realize that their continuous dependence on some selected ethnic groups will always help gain political supremacy on their respective opponents. Over here in Ahafo-Ano North, the two main political parties NPP and NDC have employed all the necessary communication tools purposely to win the hearts and minds of the electorates. Sincerely speaking, this place historically has been the strong hold of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP), even though the opposition NDC is still putting their operational strings together to overturn such political dominance it has not been easy at all'.

e finding from this study was in line with the work of Asante and Gyimah-Boadi (2004), o said that most of the ethnically aligned parties formed a strong opposition to and, entered o alliances, to contest against the ruling party; the CPP; from 1954, there was an ergence of many political parties that were formed along ethnic and regional lines to test in the elections Consequently, there was a general perception then that tribal politics s at play with the PP tagged an Akan-dominated party, while the second – placed National iance of Liberals (NAL) led by Komla Agbeli Gbedema an Ewe, was perceived as an Ewe-dominated party.

Information from the respondents indicated that since the emergence of multi-party democracy in Ghana, it is only 2012 that NDC managed to win parliamentary seat at the Ahafo-Ano North Constituency. That victory was characterized by countless controversies. It took prominent opinion leaders in the constituency to resolve the impasse. One should not be

surprised over the dominance of the ruling NPP in this area since the area is Akan dominated.

As stated by one respondent:

> *'NPP does not need vigorous political campaign to win political power in this constituency. Meanwhile, what happened in 2012 really taught them serious political lesson. Interestingly, the Ewes and the Northerners in Ahafo-Ano North often times prefer to exercise their franchise for the opposition NDC as against the ruling NPP'.*

menting on the crucial role of ethnicity in Ghana's politics, one traditional leader had this

ay:

> *'Selection of candidates for parliamentary election by parties in their primaries; in multi-ethnic constituencies, the ethnic groups in majority have always determined who represents them in the constituency, co-ethnics are mostly voted for whilst non-ethnics are either turned down or voted against. To appease the electorate and to further poll more future votes, DCEs and Regional ministers have always been strategically appointed and this has been decided among other things on ethnic majority within the District or Region. Time has come for political think tanks to join forces with other social related bodies to see how best such unfortunate phenomenon will cease for the benefit of posterity. It is improper for politicians to develop their strengths out of ethnic groups'.*

4.4 Views associated with Ethnic Voting in Ahafo-Ano North Constituency

The field was really opened enough to allow the respondents express their views on ethnic voting. Their responses were on three different angles: some of them looked at tribal voting as voting for candidates with common ethnic beliefs, voting with ethnic sentiment and exercising franchise on tribal lines. Meanwhile, majority of the respondents considered ethnic voting as voting for candidates with common ethnic beliefs. Adding to the field findings, Austin (1970) posited that elections in most third world countries are characterized by ethnic voting. As a result such polls favor candidates from majority ethnic groups thereby placing the minority ethnic group at disadvantage. It is worth noting that, African leaders shy away m playing ethnic politics when they realize that they are from the minority ethnic group. In anaian politics, it can be suggested that the Ewe are so weary of the NPP because of the ceived threat to the ethnic group of Akan- specifically Asante dominance.

stin (1970) buttressing the earlier argument revealed that political analysts who do not ieve in the salience of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics in this present generation, easily ued that, with different perceptions attached to both parties, the NPP and the NDC, people ght be voting for these two different parties, and making decisions regarding the parties ause of other notions attached to the party and not because of the ethnic attachments of the two parties. The discourse remained on the ethnic attachments of the party and never the notion that one of the parties has its majority voting population being urban and the other was a more rural party.

Due to the fact that politicians cannot make broad based public promises to the electorate, they focus on making promises to a small portion of the population which usually turns out to be their ethnic groups. They then focus their energies and resources on fulfilling the promises

made to this smaller group of citizens, who are then guaranteed to vote them back into power when the next election come along, because of their perceived 'credibility'.

Throwing more light on ethnicity and voting, one of the interviewees explained that:

'Like other electorates across the nooks and cranny of Ghana, voters in Ahafo-Ano North also vote for a purpose. We do not just vote because we take delight in voting, instead we exercise our franchise with the notion that most of our socio-economic challenges would be handled as required. Even though it is the fundamental responsibility of every government to seek the welfare of the citizenry, this is often times not the case depending on the ethnic divide that the group seeking development comes from. I am not trying to politicize the subject under review but great percentage of the electorates will agree with me that communities under Ahafo-Ano North did not experience enormous socio-economic development during the turner of ex-president John Dramani Mahama. However, the story is different taking into consideration Regions like the Upper East, West, Northern and Volta. This is because these areas voted massively for the then ruling NDC and they are ethnically in full support of the NDC. There is no empirical support to the above assertion but I strongly believe it is truly the case'.

Analytically, it was evident out of the field data that most of the respondents believed that different ethnic group will make the political environment polarize. This attests to the fact that the respondents have come to realize the adverse effects associated with ethnicity. Supporting the field survey, Austin (1970) research states further that politics becomes

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polarized when different ethnic groups support different parties or voters claim to support people who come from the same ethnic group as themselves. Adding to Austin's (1970) study, field results proved that the respondents are fully aware of anti-ethnicity measure been enforced by authorities. The responses given by 58 respondents (82%) is a clear indication that the respondents used in this study are conversant with what the 1992 constitution stipulates about ethnicity and party politics.

an interview, an interviewee posited that:

'The issue of ethnicity and politics are very disturbing. Mandatorily, ruling and opposition parties need to come on board and see how the problem will be handled once and for all. Unfortunately for us, political parties, the two major parties in the country, NPP and NDC, considering the enormous benefit derive from such over the years feel reluctant to take a critical look at the situation at hand. People do not kill one another merely because of the ethnic differences but they kill when these differences promote unhealthy competition. The situation does not even become explosive until such a climate of social relationship is extended to the economic and political spheres. Because of the ethnic competition for the scarce economic resources and political power, each ethnic group tends to fight to have a president from their group. For them, the president will loot the state for his ethnic group'.

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In other words, the president is not for the state, but his ethnic group. This is the root cause of the struggle to control the state. Ethnic strategies are often connected with the resources of modern economy, such as in gaining employment, education, securing loans, and seizing appointments for lucrative offices. Political leaders gain political support based on their ability to convince their co-ethnics that they will go after their requests and concerns at the expense of other ethnic groups. This promise cannot be made to a limited section of the co-ethnics, but a substantial amount must be made to believe that the promise made by the politician will reach all of them. Therefore, it becomes easier for the co-ethnics to support the politician in their ethnic group in hope of receiving the benefits promised. Politicians instead making broad based public promises to the electorates, focus on making promises to a all portion of the population which usually turns out to be their ethnic groups.

dently, out of the field data, majority of the respondents collectively agreed that the tral government can handle ethnicity in politics by preventing formation of political ties on ethnic background. This is a clear indication that people still have their own judice and biases against ethnicity in politics and is ready to support the central ernment to find a lasting solution to it. The 1992 constitution backing the field study ed categorically that, to achieve the political objectives of the principles, the State is enjoined to take "appropriate measures to foster a spirit of loyalty to Ghana that overrides sectional, ethnic and other loyalties".

Similarly, the Political Parties Act (Act 574) of 2000 prohibits the formation of ethnic or religious parties.

4.6 Conclusion

Conclusively, the findings have revealed that the post-independence idea that led to the establishment of ethnic based political parties is the birth of tribal politics. It showed that tribal politics is not a recent development. Out of this study it has become obvious that tribal politics has really gained grounds in political activities within Ahafo-Ano North and beyond. The main role of it is to win the political mandate of people from the same ethnic background. Historically, NPP and NDC are noted for counting on tribal politics to gain the attention of the masses. It is found that the activities of the ruling NPP and the opposition NDC are woven around the people of the Upper Regions, Volta, Ashanti and other Akan dominated communities in the country.

Ethnic voting per this study refers to voting for nominees with common ethnic beliefs. This attests to the fact that the ability to penetrate well into majority ethnic group, based on the findings of this study, makes it easy to win their political trust.

Recommendations

The findings concluded that the most reliable way to handle tribal politics is for authorities to restrict people from forming or carrying out their political activities on ethnic basis. Out of the findings the following recommendations were made:

The National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) and other civil rights organizations operating at Ahafo-Ano North District should educate the general public, particularly those within hard to reach communities to exercise their political rights on issues rather than ethnic affiliation.

Traditional rulers and other opinion leaders within Ahafo-Ano North and its immediate environs should join the crusade against tribal politics stressing much on the dangers associated with it. Traditional leaders on their part should stick to Article 276 Clause one (1) of the 1992 constitution which debars them from taking active part in party politics. Among other things, Article 276 Clause One of the 1992 constitution states that chiefs shall not take part in active politics and any chief seeking election shall be abdicated his stool or skin.

...iticians in their quest to satisfy their political ambitions (whims and caprices) should avoid ...king unguarded statements that have the tendency to draw some traditional leaders into ...itics.

...ditional leaders are heads of countless number of ethnic groups in the country and their ...ions and inactions are often measured by sizeable number of their subjects who consider ...m as semi-gods and as such any decision taking by them are worth relying on. It has been ...n record that most people try to take ethnic stance during elections in Ghana due to the open stance taken by their chiefs. They should therefore avoid leading their constituents on ethnic lines in political discourse.

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