**Ethnicity and Democracy in Ghana: Focusing on the two major parties in Ghanaian politics (The New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress), How has ethnicity affected voter and party leadership decisions (with particular reference to the presidential and vice- presidential candidates chosen) during the 1996- 2008 elections?**

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**ABSTRACT**

Research that has been conducted in Ghana to explain voting patterns in Ghanaian national elections during the Fourth Republic have suggested that Ghanaians behave like mature voters, and vote more on an analysis of party platforms and issues, than ethnicity and clientelism. However, it is important to know that like most other African countries, Ghanaian voters rely to a large extent on ethnic and clientelistic signs to help them decide whom to vote for. Through interviews conducted in four Ghanaian regions in December 2010 and through an analysis of newspaper articles around four consecutive elections in Ghana between 1996 and 2008; I attempt to prove that ethnicity continues to play a salient role in Ghanaian elections until this day. This paper attempts to use fresh data to contribute to the discussion of ethnicity and politics in Ghana, and show how other variables, such as urbanization and economic issues that contribute to voting patterns are underlined by ethnicity in Ghanaian elections. Ethnicity and Democracy in Ghana: Focusing on the two major parties in Ghanaian politics (The New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress), How has ethnicity affected voter and party leadership decisions (with particular reference to the presidential and vice- presidential candidates chosen) during the 1996- 2008 elections?

*“The complexity of ethnicity in African grass roots politics is due to the fact that African ethnic groups bond not only by kinship, but also by principles.” (Alabi 42).*

**Introduction**

In this paper, I will be attempting to answer the question, “ Ethnicity and Democracy in Ghana: Focusing on the two major parties in Ghanaian politics (The New patriotic party and the National Democratic Congress), How has ethnicity affected voter and party decisions (with particular reference to the presidential and vice- presidential candidates chosen) during the 1996- 2008 elections?”

I chose this time period between 1996 and 2008 leaving out 1992 because Ghana had become a new democracy after military rule in 1992 and democracy in the country was just taking off to where it is now. The 1992 elections were highly contested elections. After 1996, elections in Ghana were more free and fair, and therefore people could make more informed decisions and opposition parties were stronger.

Through researching scholars in this matter such as Naomi Chazan, Professor Gyimah- Boadi and others, I came to find that there seemed to be a split view as to whether Ghanaians voted based on ethnicity or not, or paid attention more to the platforms of the different parties before making the voter decisions. Ghana has been said to have a more mature voting population, and although I agree to this assumption, I argue that ethnicity continues until this day to play an important role in Ghanaian voting decisions and party decisions when choosing the candidates. Ghana is no different from many other democratic African countries in this respect, because I believe in Ghana, where you come from plays an important role in your thoughts and actions that are bound to affect the political and social decisions one makes.

Through my research I use new data through interviews I conducted in four of the ten regions. I conducted one hundred and eighteen interviews in the Central, Ashanti, Volta and Greater Accra Regions to suggest that Ghanaians continue to use ethnicity as an important factor in making decisions as to which party to vote for. Knowing the New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress both have strong ethnic roots in the Akan regions particularly in the Ashanti region and Volta region respectively, I believe these contribute to voting decisions and behaviors seen in Ghana. I split my analysis of ethnic voting in Ghana into ethnicity and candidate, showing how the ethnicities of different candidates have affected people’s voting choices, and ethnicity and party, which focuses on the ethnic roots of the two major parties and how that has affected the way people vote for them.

The first section of this paper looks at a brief bibliography Ghana as means for people to understand the country that will be discussed throughout the paper. The second section of the paper gives an overview of Ghanaian political history, showing how ethnicity has always been a part of Ghanaian politics, and that is why it continues to prevail today and has become such a major part of the Ghanaian electoral fabric. After this, I analyze the literature that is already out there about voting patterns in Ghana, and other scholars conclusions and perceptions of Ghanaian voting and what leads voters to the poles. I thought it important to also look at the role of the media, especially the newspapers in promoting ethnicity and politics in Ghana, and therefore I dedicate a section of this paper to analyzing the media in Ghana and newspaper articles that contribute to the conversation about ethnicity and voting in Ghana. In the following section I look at my own interview results and discuss conclusions drawn about individuals views on ethnicity and politics in Ghana, and their feelings after the 2008 elections which I considered the most ethnically charged elections.

**Brief Biography of Ghana**

Ghana, also known as the “Gateway to Africa,” is a country located on the Western Coast of Africa. Ghana shares its boundaries with Côte d’ Ivoire to the west, Togo to the east, Burkina Faso to the north and the Gulf of Guinea to the south. Ghana’s population is estimated at twenty-two million people representing over one hundred different ethnic groups, with different cultures and languages. However, through colonization, the lingua franca of the country is English (Ghanaweb 2010). Ghana is divided into ten administrative regions. These regions are similar to internal colonial boundaries that were drawn by colonialists before independence in their attempt to maintain the coherence of traditional states and tribes (Oelbaum 2004).

The major ethnic groups represented in Ghana are the Akan, Mole- Dagbani, Ewe, Ga- Adangbe, Guan and the Gurma (Ghanaweb 2010). The Akan ethnic group that makes up 49.1 percent of the population, is it self divided into many different sects. The Mole- Dagbani group, which is found manly in the northern part of the country, constitutes 16.5 percent of the population and is also sub- divided into smaller sects. The Ewes, constitute 13 percent of the population and are mostly found on the eastern part of the country (Asante and Gyimah- Boadi 2004). Following the Ewes as the fourth largest group in the country are the Ga- Adangbe constituting 8.3 percent of the population followed by the Guan that make up 3.7 percent and the Gurma that make up 3.5 percent. Numerous other small ethnic groups account for 11.4 percent of the Ghanaian population (Chazan 2001). Ghana has a complex ethnic structure that is constantly changing as seen from census data in which the ethnic group sizes and constructs are always changing. The many different ethnic groups are not secluded to certain portions of the country, but are found in sizable numbers in other regions. Apart from the spread of the different ethnic groups in multiple regions, we also come to find that through intermarriages many Ghanaians find themselves belonging more than one of the major ethnic groups (Asante and Gyimah- Boadi 2004).

According to Naomi Chazan, socio- economic disparities in Ghana between the different ethnic groups contribute an essential class aspect to ethnic determination. Ethnicity in Ghana tends to intermingle with cultural, geographical, income and developmental variables that transform political commentary into ethnic expression (2001). It is important to understand that even between the different sects within ethnic groups, there has been some history that has caused some disparity- especially within the Akans, which will be seen again in the 2008 elections. Although it is assumed that most Akans always vote as a block, we come to find that other sects such as the Fantis, Akyems and Brongs do not always align themselves with the Asantes because of imperialist tendencies exhibited by Asantes in the pre- colonial period. During this period, the ambitions of the Asante King to expand his empire and have direct access to the British at the coast caused conflict amongst Akans found in the south of Ghana. In 1958, the CPP passed the Emergency Powers Act that separated the Brong Ahafo region for the Ashanti region, making it an independent region allowed to control its political and administrative affairs, which the Asantes disapproved. This was another cause of conflict between the Brong Akans and the Ashanti Akans (Asante and Gyimah- Boadi 243).

These inter ethnic conflicts are not just limited to the Akans, but in the Northern part of Ghana, many inter- ethnic and intra- ethnic conflicts have also been experienced from pre- colonial times. These conflicts are noted to arise from smaller ethnic groups vying for power for themselves, and to be alleviated from their positions as second-rate citizens that have no political or traditional sway. Conflicts between the different groups have also arisen over land and resources, which is similar to that within the Akan group. In present day, as noted by Asante and Gyimah- Boadi, some Brong- Akans will show more favor towards an Ewe or Ga as compared to an Asante or Akyem. Asantes themselves will have a stronger affinity towards a Ga or Dagomba, than towards a Fante or Akyem, however, this is not reserved to Akans alone (244).

In Ghana, the term northerner is used to refer to all people that hail from the north of the country. It has become a term of identification, and sometimes is interchanged with the ethnicity of a person from the north; although it is not an ethnic group. In the northern pert of Ghana, there is estimated to be over fifteen ethnic groups, which have different traditions, languages and customs; but are noted to share some similar social and cultural traits (Asante and Gyimah- Boadi 244). Since colonial times because the British focused more on the developing the urban and southern areas in Ghana, there has always been a dissimilitude between the north and south, and rural and Urban Ghana. In northern Ghana and in rural areas, there is little access to electricity, running water, medical and health services, schools and other essential social services that southern Ghanaians and urban dwellers do not have. After independence, northern leaders demanded some measures be put in place to safeguard themselves in fear that due to the underdevelopment in their regions they will not be able to achieve as much. However, after independence, these inequalities are still somewhat present, however it has not led to conflict due to the strategic maintenance of a north- south balance seen in the political and civil service spheres in Ghana.\*\*\*\*\*

**Ghana’s Political History**

Ghanaian politics it seems has always been ethnically underlined. According to Matthijs Bogaards, democratization of African states and multi- party politics brought about the politicization of ethnicity, which is seen through Ghana’s history and continues to affect politics today (2008). Naomi Chazan also noted that ethnicity in Ghanaian politics became pronounced through different regimes and the different intensities in which they politicized ethnicity through their policies and varying successes (2001).

In Ghana, pre- independence voting patterns have replicated themselves between the Danquah- Busia group, seen mainly as Ashantis and the Nkrumahists through the military and civilian governments in Ghana (Morrison and Lindenberg 2008). J.B. Danquah and Kwame Nkrumah ran these two parties respectively (Asante and Gyimah- Boadi 2004). Both theses parties were ideologically different, one catering to the elite and thought of as being ethnically exclusive (catering to the Ashantis and the Akyems) – UGCC- and the other more ethnically inclusive and left- winged, it was considered a party for the people- CPP. In present time, the NPP and the NDC have been noted to follow these traditions. The NPP has been closely linked to the Danquah/ Busia tradition that stems from pre- independence, and the NDC support base and ideologies have been said to resemble that of the CPP (Witfield 2009).

Pre-independence, we come to find that Ghanaian politicians were already drawing ethnic lines, and using ethnicity as a common factor and a means of gaining support from the masses. Most of these ethnically aligned parties, formed as a strong opposition to the CPP, entering into alliances, to against the ruling party. The CPP won the general elections in 1952, 1954, and 1956. From 1954, there was an emergence of many political parties that formed along ethnic and regional lines to contest in the elections (Ghanaweb 2008). 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 Togoland Congress formed in 1951 to unify both the British and the French mandated territories of the Togoland (Asante and Gyimah Boadi 2004).

An Asante nationalist movement emerged in 1954, three months after the elections under the National Liberation Movement (NLM). The leadership of this organization was in the hands of the Asante people, and was formed to safeguard Asante people and their institutions. The NLM was vying for national power, and to this it sought alliances with the Northern People’s Party and the Anglo Youth Association in the Volta Region (Allman 1990). It has been noted that the rise of the NLM brought about some problems in Ghana. With the NLM came an era of instability and violence in the Ashanti region and its environs, and there was the problem of whether there will be elections held before independence, and what kind of constitution will be adopted by independent Ghana. The NLM pushed for elections on the basis that they had emerged after the 1954 elections, and therefore new elections needed to be held for people to determine the popularity of either party (Asante and Gyimah- Boadi 2004).

In 1956, the CPP won the elections. However, it did not do as well in the Ashanti, Volta and Northern regions that encouraged the NLM to continue to advocate for a federal system of government. There continued to be unrest in the Togoland as southern Togoland boycotted the independence celebration, in Accra, there were tensions between the CPP and the Ga that led to the formation of the Ga Shifimokpee (The Ga Standfast Asssociation) in 1957. The Ga Shifimokpee joined the opposition against the CPP. The opposition sent a delegation to London to oppose the CPP, however both parties decided that Ghana will remain a unitary state with more power granted to the regions in the form of regional assemblies (Asare 2002) .

In December 1957, the Avoidance of Discrimination Act was passed, which prohibited the formation of parties along ethnic, regional or religious lines. Through the passage of this act, the question of federalism was suppressed along with the National Liberation Movement and the Togoland Congress Party. In 1959, the quasi- federalist regional assemblies that were formed under the 1957 Independence Constitution were also dissolved. The CPP ordered the dissolution of the NLM and ordered an investigation into their activities. Nkrumah also appointed Chief Regional commissioners from the CPP in place of the British (Asante and Gyimah- Boadi 2004). In January 1958, Nkrumah also passed the Emergency Powers Act that allowed him the power to separate Brong Ahafo giving it its own House of Chiefs. This led to the continuous tensions between the Ashantis and the Brongs that is still present today. Nkrumah also at this time recognized all the chiefs in the Ashanti region that were pro- CPP, making them Paramount Chiefs (Asare 2002).

Ghana’s First and Second Republics were also plagued with ethnic tensions, and the politicization of ethnicity continued to cause separations between ethnic groups. In 1957, the opposition united to form the United Party (UP), led by Kofi Abrefa Busia (Akan). In 1966, there was a coup led by Major Afrifa (Ashanti) and Colonel Kotoka (Ewe), however this union was temporary. In 1967, there was an attempted coup that was orchestrated by Akan junior officers during which Kotoka died. That same year Afrifa managed to take over the military government and the National liberation Council without Kotoka which marked the genesis of the separation between the Akans, especially the Ashanti and the Ewe (Hettne 1980). The separation became more pronounced in 1969 when the NLC handed over to Afrifa. Ewes felt extremely unrepresented in Busia’s cabinet, the leader of the National Alliance for Liberals, K.A. Gbedemah, an Ewe was disqualified, and the removal of 568 public servants under the Transitional Provisions of the 1969 constitution, due to what was said to be the overrepresentation of Ewes as senior public servants; all served to deepen tensions(Asante and Gyimah- Boadi 2004).

From the time of the Popular Front Party (PFP) that was led by an Ashanti, Victor Owusu who the Ewes voted massively against due to his alleged comments about the Ewes being inward looking people, the Ewes have voted against presumed Akan- based parties (Oelbaum 2004). Both the Volta and Ashanti regions have been referred to in many Ghanaian newspaper articles as the ‘World Banks’ of votes for the National Democratic Congress and The New Patriotic Party respectively in Ghana’s Forth Republic.

Ghana after 1969 went through many phases in which the ruling coalitions or parties tried to remove themselves from the ethnic politics that surrounded the country. However, we come to find that on more than one occasion, ethnicity reemerged on the political scene. This is important to understanding ethnicity and politics during my focus period, the Fourth Republic as a means of understanding the important role of the elite and the ruling party in determining the intensity of ethnic politics in Ghana.

In 1972, the NRC came to power under I.K. Acheampong and drastically tried to curtail the role of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics. The banned the activities of the ex- CPP and ex- Progress Party, and constrained political dissent and activity. The NRC in a n attempt to control the problems caused by tribalism in Ghanaian politics banned the word ‘tribe’ from all official documents and advocated against expressions of ethnicity to foster national unity (Chazan 1982). In the scheme of things, the NRC tried to go a step further in promoting ethnic unity by recommending that ethnic surnames, and tribal facial markings be banned as well. I.K. Acheampong was noted to have created the most ethnically balanced government in Ghana, however, even then Acheampong relations with Ewes in Ghana and the problematic relations he had with Togo due to his rejection of their aspirations, pushed Ewes away and caused extreme dissatisfaction. In the same manner most regimes in Ghana came to an end, the fall of Acheampong and the NRC came in 1975 after successive coup attempts.

After the fall of the NRC, the Supreme Military Council came to power through the coup. In coming to power, the SMC’s motive was to destabilize the political center that Acheampong had created; and instead created a secluded ruling coalition to govern the country. This new form of government threatened clientelistic ties people depended on, and separated people from their direct or indirect access to the decision-making apparatus, which they depended on (Chazan 465). This served to consolidate the different ethnicities, and evoked class and ethnic responses. The Ewe, Akan (Asnate, Fante, Brong, Akyem), the Ga and some groups in the north expressed their discontent, but the hotbed of the opposition to the SMC was said to stretch from the coast to Kumasi. The discontent under the SMC regime also caused another aspect of society to be come politicized. Local community groups begun to become politicized and joined in the political activism. 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 protest their separation from the core of state activity (Chazan 468). Although the impression given off sometime in the literature on Ghanaian ethnic cohesion makes it seem as though certain ethnic groups are unable to ever be in agreement, in some cases as encountered in Ghanaian history, the Ewe and Asante, we come to find that ethnic groups, and people in Ghana in particular, hold more highly their access to power and the importance of patron ties, over ethnic divisions, as seen here. Economic development in this time, and even in present Ghana and government abilities to fulfill their tasks and promises to the electorate are instrumental to a regime success, and the main reason why the Supreme Military Council faced so much opposition. The ethnic urban elite played a huge role as the leading voices in the protest for policy changes during the SMC regime. 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. During this period, we come to find that although there was ethnic solidarity, ethnic divisions and conflict arose as the different ethnic groups lobbied for their individual needs that were usually narrow and came at the expense of other ethnic groups.

The mounting discontent in Ghana forged a sense of unity in Ghana that eventually led to the birth of the “Union Government” concept, or what became known as “Unigov” in Ghana in October 1976. 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.” The SMC initiated the idea of “Unigov” in an attempt to return the reigns of power back into civilian rule, and in January of 1977, created a committee and appointed Justice Koranteng- Addow as the head of the committee. The proposal to form a Union Government backfired and the ethnic elite finally found a common issue to unite on, and mobilized communal disputes that lasted well in to the Spring of 1978 (Chazan 469). Discontent for the “Unigov” spread across class and the Ewe, Ga and Akan regions became the center of anti- “Unigov” organization. Pockets of people tried to protest the “Unigov,” but were not allowed a fair hearing and finally in the summer of 1977, the country was impaired. In March 1978, a referendum was held, and the lines were drawn between the pro- “Unigov” forces which was made up of a large amount of ex- CPP members, and anti- “Unigov” forces that was led by ex- Progress Party members, and gained large support form the Akan and Coastal Regions. During this period, there was a lot of inter- ethnic conflict witnesses, and as Chazan noted, it was hard to distinguish between the inter- ethnic conflict that was directed at the government and that that was simply inter- ethnic violence. This period seems to reflect the consequences of discontent against a dissenting government in Ghana and when the different ethnic elites push for policies for the sole benefit of their individual ethnic groups (Chazan 472).

On June 4, 1979a violent coup was staged to over throw the SMC government, and was led by non- commissioned and junior officers led by Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings. This led to the formation of what became known as the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). This period of Ghanaian history was extremely brutal, and the AFRC was an oppressive military regime that orchestrated the killings of both Acheampong and Akuffo, and tried and imprisoned many other people in opposition.

The AFRC were open to restoring a civilian government, and accepted a draft constitution submitted to them with some amendments that they included. They allowed presidential and vice- presidential elections that were already in place to be held between June and July to continue, made public the new constitution, and after the elections, stepped down and allowed the new president and parliament of the Third Republic to take power on September 24, 1979. Te new president was Dr. Hilla Limann, a northern diplomat, who was tied to the Nkrumah tradition and was a candidate of the PNP. During his time in power, he struggled with stabilizing Ghana’s democracy, however, he upheld the newly established democracy and unlike the previous regime, respected people’s human rights. Limann’s rule was short- lived, and with the dissatisfaction caused by the failing economy, there was little resistance to a coup that took place on December 31, 1981, led again by Flt. LT. J.J. Rawlings and a group of enlisted and former soldiers to remove Limann and his cabinet from power.

Flt. LT. J.J. Rawlings then formed the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), which was made up of seven members, with Rawlings as its chairman. In coming into power, the PNDC suspended the 1979 constitution; formally removed the president and his cabinet, adjourned Parliament, and barred all existing political parties, forming what was known as a unitary government. The PNDC encouraged people to exercise their political power through defense committees that were established in people’s communities and places of work.

However, in December 1982, the PNDC decided that they were going to decentralize the government from Accra and move it into different districts, regions and local communities. They decided that there would be district and regional secretaries appointed to exercise executive powers and to also chair regional and district councils. In 1984, the PNDC wanted another change and established the National Commission on Democracy to research the steps necessary to create a participatory democracy in Ghana. By July 1987, a “Blue Book” was created, which outlined the steps for district- level elections that took place between late 1988 and early 1989 for the creation district assemblies (Bureau of African Affairs).

According to an article written by Nugent he said, “ strong threads of continuity in Ghanaian political life … a return to multiparty politics has been accompanied by the regrouping of politicians around one of the two poles, represented by Nkrumah and Busia/ Danquah traditions respectively.” He continued by saying that even the military rulers in Ghana have tended to align themselves with ether camp (290).

Through international and domestic pressure to return to democracy, a Consultive Assembly was formed that was made up representatives from the different geographic districts and civic or business organizations. The Consultive Assembly’s task was to draw up a draft constitution taking into consideration PNDC proposals in order for the establishment of the Fourth Republic. When the constitution was done, the PNDC accepted the constitution and held a referendum on April 28, 1992 and the constitution gained a 92% approval. In May 18.1992 the ban on party politics lifted to prepare for multiparty elections. The constitution came into force on January 7, 1993. After this, the PNDC tried to detach itself from what it was before and along with its supporters created the NDC, which has been noted as being linked with Nkrumah’s ideals. The opposition NPP was also formed along the Busia/Danquah lines, and is still considered up to present day as being an Akan party.

It is important to understand these the history of Ghana because as Nugent and other scholars with a strong grasp of Ghanaian politics sated, Ghana even in the Fourth Republic continues to maintain its alignments from the Busia/ Danquah and Nkrumah days. Although the NDC is considered an Ewe party because of its founder, Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings, it is still closely tied to the Nkrumah tradition and this has caused many groups to be drawn to it as well. Through the coups, the ethnic politics that was played in some regimes, and the influence of the elite in creating impressions about ethnicity and rounding up support for their causes, a strong background has been created to explore ethnicity in Ghanaian politics; and how the elite manipulate it for their personal gains.

**Partisan Politics and Ethnic Identification in a Growing Democracy**

\*\*\* According to the “third wave” of global democratization, ethnic nationalism under the right conditions can prove to be beneficial in the rise and consolidation of democracy. This position emphasis the benefits of ethnic nationalism, if directed rightly to end foreign rule, and not to cause inter- ethnic rivalry amongst the different groups within a country. Robert A. Dahl argues that although ethnicity nationalization can prove to beneficial to the formation of a democracy, it can also prove to be a problem to it in countries where one ethnic group can potentially aspire to dominate the country or state. By rallying up ethnic nationalism, politicians in Africa in particular use it as a means of controlling ambitious ethnic groups, by forging divisionary lines amongst the different sects of larger ethnic groups, in an attempt for them to unite and aspire to take over the state (Beissinger 85). The ‘third wave’ of democracy that wept through Asia, the Soviet Bloc, and Africa, has been credited with opening up the dialogue about the effects of ethnic nationalism and its relationship to the formation of democracy (Beissinger 86).

Ethnic diversity has however been noted as having the ability to indirectly affect the growth of a nation of democracy by affecting other factors that are important in a budding democracy. It can affect the performance of a government and economic growth which h we have come to see in African politics, however their democracies still remain. In taking Ghana for example, clientelism and ethnicity have caused the government to allocate resources more to one groups of people than sharing the national pie equally, and contributing to the national growth of the country as a whole. Through promises made by the government to their respective partisans who are usually co- ethnics, their focus lies on providing this group with an equal share of resources as a means of maintaining their loyalty in hopes of getting re- elected into power (Beissinger 87).

According to Kristin Michelitch there are a number of ways partisanship can be defined. Partisanship can be understood as the socialized effect towards a party, or according to the running tally view, is defined as the affinity developing from a rational updating about party performance. However, in African countries it is argued that there are is not enough information reaching the masses, or the high rates of illiteracy still present in the continent does not allow for partisanship to be described in that way. In the case of Africa, the best way to define partisanship will be that partisanship is the affinity towards social groups associated with particular political parties. Based on the country and people personal characteristics, any of these three forms of partisanship can determine the one’s partisan identity.

In developing countries, partisanship has been noted as being an sculpting one’s behavior, similar to the effects of other social group identities, which in turn can lead to the formation of inrgoup- outgroup distinctions, and therefore some discrimination.

In Africa, group identity is extremely important because of the purpose it serves individuals. These groups people identify with, be it their tribal, kinship or religious/ ethnic groups condition an individual to act a certain way, or make important decisions based on their belonging to a larger group. In a place where resources are scarce and survival is not always certain, people tend to identify themselves with a larger group that can offer them stability and access to the scarce resources, sometimes usually at the expense of another group. This tends to cause in- group/ out- group identifications, which are a natural psychological means of cognitive grouping- and in Ghana these identities are usually based on ethnic or partisan identity (Mitchelitch 5).

In Ghana ethnic identity and ethnic divisions are so pronounced, especially in politics and forming partisan identities because of the British adaptation of a ‘divide and rule’ mechanism during colonial times. Colonialist were noted to focus on tribalism or political ethnicity because they were not concerned with building a cohesive nation, neglecting moral ethnicity which is essential to the building of a nation with citizenship that is tied to the nation. This British colonial tactics lead to ethnic groups with different nationalist agendas, and which at this present time, especially around election causes problems for the creation of a national consciousness; or even if these different nationalistic views are similar, posses some challenge to unification (Yoh). Although not as extreme in Ghana, we come to find that a lot of Ghanaians do not believe that the Akan, or particularly the Ashanti nationalist agenda is similar to theirs. The Ewes, the Northern tribes, and even other factions in the Akan ethnic group are all pushing their different nationalistic agendas, which are then played up during elections. Ethnicity has been noted as one of the most enticing means of political mobilization due to the emotion content behind it, and therefore political elite manipulates ethnic loyalty regularly as the easiest and most reliable means of gaining and maintaining political support (Yoh). This behavior is not just noticed in developing countries, but in developing ones as well.

Scholars in this field also argue that ethnicity identification can also vary through different time periods in a developing country. In the short run, they believe that if elites stimulate group identity in the country they can alter the citizen- level ethnic identity salience. In the medium run, when ethnic has been made salient in the eyes of citizens, the eveidence of ethnic voting and the ethnic appeals made by (ethnic) political parties serve mainly to reinforce ethnic alignment to the parties. However, in the long- run, ethnic identity becomes more fluid, but is visceral to political competition (Michelitch 6).

Clientelistic ties between politicians or the elite and citizen partisans in these growing democracies, especially in Africa have been linked to causing ethnic disparities. As citizen partisans anticipate an election, are expectant of resources they will potentially have access to due to the clientelistic nature of African politics. This anticipation for resources causes discrimination amongst citizens along partisan cleavages. However, Michelitch also argues that citizen partisans are also unsure of the “elite power contestation” and therefore will align with a more stable group to which they also receive resources- their ethnic groups- making them more hostile to other groups and causing them to exhibit discriminatory behavior. People exhibit more favorable attitudes towards coethnics, than against people in a different ethnic group. In African countries, it has also been found party identity operates similar to group identity (abstract). This strong identification people’s respective political parties I can argue is due to the clientelistic nature of politics and the individual benefits people expect or gain from their political parties when they are in power. Even for elites in developing countries, elections and partisan identity is an important representation of power to them, because by a citizen choosing their faction, they are making a statement that they are willing to “fight” on their side against other factions. Ethnic and partisan tensions heighten around elections due to the perceived contest for access to the state apparatus and scarce resources, not just between elites, but between ordinary citizens as well who have been mobilized for this particular cause to help their faction succeed. Keefer argues in his paper that 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 (1). Therefore, it becomes easier for the co- ethnic to support the politician in their ethnic group in hope of receiving the benefits promised.

Partisan identification in most African countries is based off the alignment of people to a credible politician who can provide. So here, we come to find that access to resources is paramount to people’s partisan alignments, however thee are easier done along ethnic lines as well. In forming partisan identities in places like Ghana, a factor that becomes important to people’s decisions as well is the performance of the incumbent government. Voters expect politicians and governments in power to pass a certain threshold, which usually requires some form of benefit to them or the groups with which they identify, and an inability to be successful will cause voters to realign themselves, and rid themselves of the ineffective governing body. According to research recorded by Keefer, respondents were noted to state a particular partisan preference if they had a positive experience with the incumbent government, than those that did not (2). As expressed throughout the paper, Keefer notes that a fear of inter- ethnic conflict causes people to align with people of their same ethnic groups to maintain some stability, in case their preferred parties are not successful, they can always reap the benefits received by their ethnic groups. In the research suggests that voters usually will be less likely to align themselves with parties that in some ways incite violence against their ethnic group. This seems the almost natural instinct of people belonging to an ingroup. 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.

The research conducted by Keefer 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. Through the literature and during my interviews, the Ghanaian voters I interviewed and read about expressed both sentiments. However, there have been argument raised that will be further discussed that state that the NPP and NDC are not completely and Akan and an Ewe party respectively.

Keefer makes an important argument about the importance of clientelism, the use of sate resources and public policy to support their co- ethnics or co- partisans. By doing this, politicians are in some ways using resources to benefit the public, and the discourse between themselves and the voting citizens cause there to be some fulfillment of public need. However, if this did not exist, then the government institutions that have been put in place to facilitate inter- ethnic bargaining will serve only the interests of the ethnic elite and may sometimes be counter – productive for the rest of the population (5).

Due to the fact that politicians cannot make broad based public promises to the electorate, the 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’ (Keefer 6).

Through my research I came to find that most African countries have similar characteristics of an ethnocratic regimes as laid out by As’ad Ghanem in his piece “Democratizing “Ethnic Sates”.” Ghanem notes that ethnicity and not citezenship, is what dictates resource and power allocation. Although in this frame he goes no to discuss the loss of rights and freedoms of the minority, we come to find that in Africa, and Ghana in particular this is not the case. Ethnicity plays an important role in assigning resources and power, however it is negotiable, as the majority and minority groups can vote the government in power out alike (463).

Ethnicity 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 (Keefer 10). This has been witnessed in Ghana, as politicians have incited ethnic clustering by promoting the notion of an eminent Ashanti dominance if the NPP is voted back into power. The Brongs, who in the past have faced persecution from the ancient Ashanti Kingdom out of fear them were forced to align themselves against the Asante, and vote for the NDC as a means of ‘protecting’ themselves, and voting against Ashanti imperialism.

Vote buying in African countries goes a long way in forming partisan identifications (Keefer 11). Political parties in Ghana spend a substantial amount on money on buying goods and providing services to the regions in which they campaign in. this vote buying, is usually restricted to the younger voter, or the illiterate voters in the rural areas, that are easily bought by this form of political marketing. Although it can be argued that one time vote buying does not form a permanent sense of partisan identification, we come to find that this investment is not a one-time deal in African politics. Rural voters who have never received any outside help before will immediately form a partisan bond with the party that provided them with the good or service, because they believe that if they continue to vote for the party they will continue to receive the benefits from the party coming into power. According to Keefer voters also make partisan decision not based solely on whether they receive pre- electoral gifts, but how often the particular party gives gifts. Having received a gift from a particular party also dictates whether a person will express partisan preference. When voters do not feel as though they can depend on the policies of the competing parties, they know they have nothing to do if the y align themselves with the party that offers them gifts, because even if the other party promises them policy changes that are favorable to them their distrust of political parties and elites keeping the promises cause them to be indifferent (12).

Incumbent performance also sways voters to align themselves with a particular party, and makes them more willing to express their partisan preference. However, according to research conducted, incumbent performance become particularly important when people have no belief in the policy promises made by political parties vying for power. This causes them to have witnessed the acts of a political patry making them more credible, if they performed well, and causing voters to align with them instead of aligning with a party they have no prior knowledge of and are unwilling to trust because of their low credibility. In Ghana, we have come to find that after a change in government people seem to re- elect the same government into power for a second term, making it seem like the normal cycle since 1996. The research suggests that parties are voted back into power when voters believe that they are dong a good job. However, in the case of Ghana, I question what causes voters to re- elect the incumbent government back for a second term in office (Keefer 13).

In Africa and a lot of developing countries, the gain of resources, either individually or as a group is guaranteed through connections to state officials, political office holders and elites, either through a shared partisanship or ethnicity. As seen in places like Ghana, political support and success is based on the promotion of clientelism, and when a party wins, to reward its followers, we come to find that handouts are given in the form of goods and services or contracts to professionals. As we will come to see in the further analysis in Ghana, which also pertains to other clientelistic growing democracies, the loss of one’s party for the most part signifies the loss of benefits to its partisans during their period in opposition. This knowledge leads to the hightened tensions close to elections, and leads to increased discrimination amongst individuals and groups along partisan and ethnic lines (Michelitch 1).

Through research in developing countries, it has been noted that, “casting a vote is less a tool to reveal one’s policy preferences to elite representatives, but to stake one’s self in the partisan faction which will maximize expected access to higher prosperity.” In Ghana in particular, you come to find that a lot of voters know very little about the policy stands of the respective parties that they vote for. Looking at the percentage of swing voters in Ghana, I believe it can be safely assumed that by weighing the potential to succeed between the parties competing before throwing their weight behind the party, they are looking to take full advantage not of the party’s political stand on issues, but of the benefits they stand to gain when the party wins (Michelitch 2). Looking at constituencies like Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana, it can be assumed that in 20008, Atta- Mills and the NDC stood a better chance of winning, and as a coethnic, their chances to receive resources as individuals and as a collective will be great if they made a stake and voted for that partisan faction . In 2000, when they made this analysis, they decided against voting for the NDC because the chances for success were leaning heavily towards the NPP, and therefore they cast their vote differently in that election as a means of receiving benefits, and being represented in parliament (Dr. Ziblim).

There have been two noted reasons as to people’s partisan identities cause them to discriminate along partisan lines, especially in African countries and more so around the time of elections. Psychological research has shown that heightening group competition tends to lead to individual- to- individual discrimination between those groups, even when behaviors unrelated to competition are exhibited. Another theory that can be used to describe partisan identification and discrimination is the political economic definition which states that “norms of discrimination against competing groups at the individual- level is an optimal strategy for group survival, and these groups which can engage in it survive evolutionarily.” Most Ghanaians do not act hostile against each other, and through my interviews in Ghana, many locals mentioned that they did not feel any remorse towards people of other ethnic groups prior to or during the election period, because most people, especially in the urban areas are multiethnic and belong to other groups/ cleavages, and therefore don’t identify with one group. However, scholars argue that although people have multiple group identities, people will still discriminate or be hostile to people along lines/ cleavages that are pertinent at that time, and as elections come around these identities will be partisan and ethnic identities (Michelitch 3). As elections come close, the media and elite politicians play an important role in heightening tensions based around ethnic and partisan identity, because they use these identities as a means of increasing party sentiments and gathering the masses to support either party- in the case of Ghana, it is usually the NPP or the NDC.

The term “ethnic entrepreneur” introduced to us by Michelitch, refers to people that are able to skillful maneuver identity by placing every dispute in an ethnic context to increase inter- ethnic conflicts enough to cause conflict. Although this is mostly seen in other African countries, Ghana has its own form of “ethnic entrepreneurs” in the form of the media or elite politicians. Many top government officials in Ghana and politicians use the ethnic card a lot around elections to bolster people’s spirits and solidify their commitment to a certain camp. The media in Ghana has also played a huge role in pushing ethnicity as a means of stirring up strong emotions within the Ghanaian population as elections draw close, and the competition between the two major parties- the NPP and the NDC- with their supposed strong ethnic bases is at its peak (Michelitch 3).

When broad based ethnic appeals are used by politicians to try and rally support for themselves, research conducted has come to find that larger ethnic groups will most likely have a set partisan identification that that of smaller ethnic groups (Keefer 15). In Ghana we come to find that this theory holds true as the largest ethnic group in Ghana, even though noted as not voting as a block, have divided themselves mainly into the two largest parties, and note a partisan identity.

The finding of the survey conducted by Keefer came to the conclusion that people are more likely to form partisan identities with co- ethnic groups than nothing at all. African voters in clientelistic societies are aware of the fact that if political leaders of a particular party express disaffection towards their ethnic groups, then they do not expect to receive anything in terms of resource allocation that is experienced in many African countries. Clientelistic promises made by political leaders cause ethnic clustering the division of society along ethnic lines. People tend to align themselves with a group that will provide them a stable means of access to resources that are beneficial to them (47).

Krutz also notes in his writings that although Ghanaians election patterns are somewhat explained by the inter- ethnic alliances made to win elections and gain the benefits from the state, these findings do not explain why these same coalitions and ethnic clusters also work together to remove parties from positions of power after some time. IN 2000, the NDC government suffered this fate as a large number of people changed their votes from the NDC to the NPP (12). Being in Ghana at that time and witnessing this change in hands from the NDC to the NPP, I believe it is important to note that, although people’s partisan identities did not shift, they simply wanted a change in government since the incumbent government had been in power so long. This need from change caused the people to swing their vote from the NDC to the NDC. What this truly meant was that the swing regions, regardless of the benefits awarded to the m by the incumbent government valued change over maintaining the same government and therefore acted on this desire for change. In discussing the need for change in Ghanaian politics, I will make a note that I believe party turnover is dependant mainly on people being tired of being under one government for too long. If we look at the trend, the NDC electively stayed in power fro 1992 until the lost to the NPP in 2000, after 8years. After this, the NPP was elected into power, and was given eight years too by the electorate after they campaigned for ‘positive CHANGE’ in Ghana, allowing them to win the ballot. In 2008, the NDC and Atta- Mills campaigned with a slogan that is translated to mean, “We are changing it up,” which as you see is along the same lines of a campaign for change after eight years, ad the electorate voted massively for a change in government in hopes of experiencing some form of change in the government.

Although it seems as though voters do not focus on party platforms as a means of forming their partisan identities in Ghana, it is important to recognize that NPP and the NDC are noted as representing different schools of thought, even though some political critiques do not share the same view. The NPP is meant to stand for constitutionalism and liberal individualism, whilst the NDC is more has a more populist approach in its policy stand (Oelbaum 265). If the voting population had more trust in the platforms and policy recommendations and promises given to them during rallies and political gatherings, these policy stands would prove helpful in allowing voters to form ethnic identities.

\*The interaction between the state and the society is an important factor in determining the effects of nation building and politics. Perceptions by voters of class and communal differences between the ethnic groups also contribute to the importance of ethnicity in politics, as ethnic groups are becoming more politically mobilized and expressing their concerns through their franchise (Nuyuot- Yoh).

\* ‘Skirt and Blouse’ voting in Ghana is one of the countries biggest phenomenon, where individuals go the polls and vote fore a presidential candidate from one party and votes for a parliamentary candidate from another party. Krutz argues in his paper that although clientelistic ties and ethnicity might play a role in causing people to vote this way, more personal factors such as sex, religiosity and the individual evaluation of the incumbent party that might play into people voting this way too. However, in the 2008 election where a lot of this kind of voting was experienced in some of the swing regions, for example in the Central Region where some people voted for Atta- Mills and then voted for the NPP parliamentary candidate. This voting pattern for happens like this especially during the 2008 elections and in the particular region was pegged on ethnicity as a means of swaying voter decision. Although this might be a jump, psychological analysis shows that when a person is good looking, people tend to be drawn towards them, and without knowing them have an immediate liking for them. Although this might not be completely factually true, a lot of people I listened to in the run up to the 2008 elections noted that Alan Kyerematen, the candidate running against Nana Akuffo- Addo should have won the flag bearership of the party, because then his good looks will draw many women voters, especially illiterate voters to vote for him. People along these lines continue to attribute J.J. Rawlings immense support to not just his eloquence, but his good looks which seemed to make it easier for people to like him and be drawn to him.

**Ethnicity and Politics in Ghana**

Since gaining independence most African governments have worked towards taming ethnic sentiment and nationalism and forming a national unity to create a sense of peaceful co- existence in their states, as colonization had exasperated ethnic divisions. As John Nyuot Yoh noted, Nkrumah worked hard to ensure that ethnicity and national politics were kept completely separate from each other causing him to pass a law to not allow the ethnicities of employers of government institutions to be known during their employment.

Ethnic identity in Ghana has been noted as being an important part of the people’s daily lives and has been found to trump civic identity. According to Mr. Jonah, the Ghanaian voter holds their ethnicity highly in respect to their voting decisions. Although ethnic differences in Ghana have never led to violence, we come to find that in Ghana, inter- ethnic tensions and collectivist ethics have been seen since the 17th Century (Asante and Gyimah- Boadi). Ethnic groups not just in Ghana, but also in Africa in the present day have a high sense of ethnic nationalism, are gaining the political will and are “striving to give territorial expression to the inalienable sovereignty of the groups to which they belong” (Nyuot Yoh). Usually this ethnic political expression, especially in Ghana at this time is expressed through the vote, as a means of advancing their ethnic nationalist ideas. \*It is important to note that no part of Ghana is remotely ethnically homogenous, and in discussing voting patterns and ethnicity and poltics in Ghana, this makes a big difference in understanding the voting trends (Alabi 47). However, there is another school of thought in relation to ethnicity and politics in Ghana. Some political analysts and critics have argued that ethnicity may not be as salient as it has been reported to be, or is loosing its importance as a major player in swaying Ghanaian voters in the present day (Alabi 43). Ethnicity in many ways, I believe dominates the political discourse in Ghana today, as two of the major parties that compete in Ghanaian elections since the beginning of the Fourth Republic are known to have strong ethnic bases.

There have been many provisions that have been outlined in the Ghanaian Constitution in relation to ethnicity and politics in Ghana. According to Gyimah- Boadi and Asante, the CPP’s decision to pass the Avoidance of Discrimination Act prohibiting parties from forming along religious, ethnic or regional lines have carried through and have been seen in Ghana’s 1969, 1979 and 1992 Constitutions. Article 55 of Ghana’s Fourth Republic Constitution repudiates parties based on ethnic, religious, regional or other sectional divisions’ to encourage parties to conform to the Gesellschaft mode (Fridy 284). The Constitution also provides limitations as to how involved traditional rulers can be in politics. Article 276 of the 1992 Constitution and Article 25 0f the PNDC Law 81, also known as the Political Parties Law, both have provisions that limit the influence and participation of traditional leaders. Understanding the important role ethnicity has played in the past in politics and continues to play, also caused an ethnic provision to be placed in the Political Party Act 2000. Article 15(3C) requires political parties to establish or maintain a national or regional office in every region in the country (Gyimah- Boadi and Asante 255). Regional balance has also been noted as being important in maintaining peace in Ghana. The 1992 Constitution also makes provisions for this under the ‘Directive Principles of Sate Policy,’ as a means of controlling political competition and curbing inequalities. Article 34(5) instructs the state to maintain a ‘reasonable regional and gender balance in recruitment and appointment to public office’ in the state’s attempt to curb regional, ethnic and other loyalties (Asante and Gymiah- Boadi 256).

Busia had been accused of having an unrepresentative cabinet during his time as president, and this in some ways caused the Akan- Ewe split that was already brewing. In the Fourth Republic, although it is not required through the constitution or by law, ethno-regionalism has been highly considered in public sector recruitment. What has been known as a form of ‘ethnic mixing’ has been adopted to ethnically balance the cabinet and to choose representatives for key public sector institutions (Gyimah- Boadi and Asante 258). In the literature written on Ghanaian politics, it has been noted that ethnicity does not play a large part in politics, however through the actions of the government and by provisions made in the Constitution, we come to understand the importance of ethnic balancing in maintaining peace.

The NDC was the first to appoint career civil servants as heads of the civil service in 1994. Althopugh the NDC has been noted as being a predominantly Ewe party, out of the seventeen civil service heads appointed, a majority were Akan- eleven members; and three of the heads were Ewe. Under the NPP government, seventeen chief directors were also appointed, nine being Akan and two were Ewe. As noted by Asante and Gyimah- Boadi, Akans have continued to represent the majority in the government, as they also represent the majority ethnic group in Ghana. In analyzing the 2000 parliamentary make- up, out of the 200 MPs, one hundred and thirteen MPs identified as being Akan, with more Northerners than Ewes. In respect to Presidents in the Ghana’s Fourth Republic, we come to find that Akans have continued to dominate the government, with the exception of J.J. Rawlings, the first president of the Fourth Republic of Ghana, who was said to have ushered in Ewe predominance (251).

\*According to Joshua and Goski Alabi, political parties with strong ethnic basis in Ghana have been the parties that have maintained strong voter basis through the different Republics Ghana has passed through. This notion cannot be disputed as we realize that although Ghana is a multi- party state, 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 elections close to the time of elections, they continue to maintain their strong voter bases (39). I believe that understanding political marketing in Ghana plays a key role to understanding ethnic and partisan politics in Ghana. Political marketing can be described as modes of marketing designed to appeal to target audiences to vote for a particular party, person or prepositions. Political marketing is the package of not just the physical “product” in this case being the party manifesto, personalities that represent the party, ideologies and past performance to mention a few, but another important aspect of political marketing is the promotion of the party through media outlets, communication and the entire campaign process within a given environment. Both the NPP and the NDC deal a lot in the political marketing process, and ethnicity plays an important role in the way in which the two parties are package 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 (41).

In my discussions with scholars on this topic and through my research I came to find that political parties spend a significant amount of time and money on trying to figure out people’s identities and their cultures, as a means of presenting themselves suitably to obtain votes in the different parts of the country. 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 (42). They also indicate in their article, “the entrenchment of ethnicity in Ghana’s politics is due to the fear of perpetual ethnic domination in the politics of Ghana. It is the fear of ethnic subjugation by another ethnic group as a result there has been no true national political party in Ghana since the demise of the Nkrumahist party, the Convention’s people’s party (CPP) in 1966” (44). In present Ghana, I argue that the presence of a national political party similar to that of the CPP in 1966, will ever be possible again. Ghanaians have become so deeply involved in the political discourse that has grown with the NPP/ NDC split that hold so strong in politics today. The political elite along with the foot soldiers and ordinary citizens has all contributed the deepening ethnic cleavages that are forming in Ghana today, which transcends politics sometimes into everyday dealings.

The Ghanaian voting population is divided into two distinct groups, the core and swing voters. Core voting populations and swing voters are usually found in countries that have an electoral system that is built around the presence of two major parties (Idema 1). Core voters are defined as voters that have ties to a particular political party and will always vote for that one party. However, swing voters are defined as voters that have no political affiliations to a particular party. In Ghana, swing voters are thought of as being more ‘mature’ voters due to their ability to analyze the present party’s performance and opposition’s stance in making their decisions. Swing voter decisions can be affected by government policies and structural adjustment programs in urban areas, amongst the many things they look at (Morrison and Lindberg). Their level of education, class, gender or age like most core voters cannot typically define swing voters. Ghana is said to have a high volatility rate, meaning that individual voters in the population vote for the same party over a series of elections, as Dr. Ziblim also mentioned (Morrison and Lindberg). According to Lindberg and Morrison, official election results indicated that 13% of the Ghanaian voter population was considered swing voters; meaning that 85- 90% of the voter population considered themselves core voters. Through the survey the conducted, they found a similar trend in regards to core and swing voters. 18% of the population considered themselves swing voters, and 82% classified themselves as core voters- loyal party supporters (Lindberg and Morrison). The Greater Accra Region is considered one of Ghana’s biggest swing regions. The theory surrounding this suggests that as people migrate from the villages to the cities, their voting and thinking changes. Firstly, they are removed from their close- knit communities in which most decisions are made by the chief or village head, and therefore they have more opportunity to make their own decisions in regards to voting. Another reason suggested is that, in an urban setting, economic survival and political challenge causes people to focus less on ethnicity of candidates or ethnic attachments of parties, but causes them to access the political parties and the issues in during the election period in making their decisions. This in turn detaches people from ethnic and clientelistic voting and attachment to a party, and causes them to vote for the party that makes life easier for them, regardless of which party. This shift is termed ‘social reconstruction,’ (Dr. Ziblim). In political marketing, it has been noted as being much harder to win over the floating voters than it is to maintain a core voter. In dealing with floating voters, political parties have to consider not just the lifestyles and attitudes of the voters, but in places like Ghana, the voter’s ethnic loyalties, the party’s reputation and the benefits they have and can continue to offer to the people in the short or long run (Alabi 46).

Ghana’s core voter population is mainly split between the two major parties, which are the New Patriotic Party (NPP), and the National Democratic Congress (NDC). The core regions have been noted as being the Ashanti Region, the Volta Region, the Upper East and Upper West Regions. The NPP has always been considered as stemming from the UGCC and deeply rooted in the Busia- Danquah tradition; which was associated with elite Ashanti professionals. The NPP is also considered as being a party that favors southern city dwellers with its epicenter being in the Ashanti region. The NDC on the other hand is considered as being an Ewe party because of its founder- J.J. Rawlings, and therefore it is said to also have its epicenter in the Volta region (Fridy). The NDC is said to have adopted many of the principles of the CPP, and its leaders are usually compared to Dr. Kwame Nkrumah by its followers (Oelbaum 262). In December 1996, an independent newspaper sympathetic to the NDC, The Ghana Palavar, printed out an article addressed to Ghana’s ‘Nkrumahists’ comparing the NDC leader- J.J. Rawlings as having similar traits to Nkrumah (Oelbaum 262). NDC is considered a party for the masses, is popular amongst rural dwellers and among people in the working classes, because of its populist nature (Lindberg and Morrison 14). The NPP and the NDC have been noted as being center- right and center- left respectively in their political ideologies.\* However according to Oelbaum, the independent media have tried on many occasions to comment on the different policy stands of the two political parties and have found them to be extremely similar (249). Joshua and Goski note that about forty percent of the votes cast in the Fourth Republic in every election have come from the ethnic votes received by the two parties, further emphasizing the importance of ethnic identification attached to the parties as a means of maintaining their leads in the different elections (47).

In deciding the flag bearer of the respective parties, political parties make a decision in Ghana as to how strategically they can play the ethnic card, and which card is most suitable for them to play to win the election. According to Joshua and Goski, the NPP since 1996, has stuck with an Akan as the flag bearer, and opted for a regional and ethnic balance by choosing a northerner; which brought them success in 2000 and 2004. In the case of the NDC, it has been important for them to balance themselves with an Akan, noting that they are the largest ethnic group in Ghana; and with their reputation as an Ewe party, in light of the perceived tensions, made this their best choice. In 1996 the NDC ‘s flag bearer was an Ewe and this caused the party to choose an Akan as a running mate. In 2000 and 2004 when the flag bearer of the party was an Akan, they opted for a similar ethnic balance to that of the NPP, choosing a Northerner as the running mate for the president (46). The NDC could afford to choose an northerner instead of an Ewe because of the party’s string base amongst the Ewe’s, since the founder of the party remained an Ewe; tying the party to three ethnic groups.

Party images and party origin have also been noted as important factors to the success of a political party. Focusing on the two main political parties in Ghana- the NPP and NDC- there are very specific images and perceptions attached to the parties. The NPP had been noted as having a large urban support base, it has been said to be pro- capitalist and elitist, along with being identified as an Akan based party. The NDC on the other hand has been noted as having a more rural support base. It has been noted as being a party that is very pro- poor, and for the lower class, and is noted as being a violent Ewe party (Alabi 46). Political analysts that do not believe in the salience of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics in this present time, could easily argue that with all of thes different perceptions attached to both parties, people might be voting for these two different parties and making decision regarding the parties because of the other notions attached to the party and not because of the ethnic attachments of the two parties. However, we come to find that in discussions in the media and by interviewing and talking to people, their first instincts are never to discuss the other labels attached to the party, but the main focus remains on the ethnic attachment of the party. In all the newspaper articles I found and analyzed based on 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. In further analyzing these notions and attachments to the different labels attached to the two parties, you can easily say 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 important role.

\*\* To understand ethnic politics in Ghana, it is important to understand Ghanaian history and the history of Greater Ashanti. In present Ghana, the government has to try a contain a nationalistic, and once powerful nation that was almost as big as present day Ghana; with one of the countries most lucrative exports- gold, into a region that has to answer and be loyal to the central government (Oelbaum 247). Since the time of Nkrumah, ethnic engineering has been used to try and contain parties linked to Akans, and particularly the Ashanti. During the 1956 elections, Nkrumah capitalized on the Brong and Ahafo displeasure of with the Asante as a tool to contain the Asante National Liberation Movement. To reward them for their support, in 1959, he awarded them with their own region (Oelbaum 251). Ethnic engineering has continued to be seen in Ghanaian politics, and has been shown as a steady tactic. The ruling government in Ghana uses tribalism or ethnicity as a means of undermining their opposition by accusing them of having a tribal agenda. According to Oelbaum, the NDC used this tactic a lot in dealing wit the NPP because of the strong ethnic ties in their history to the Busia- Danquah tradition, and the Danquah’s attempt to name present Ghana ‘Akanland.’ (250) The NDC on many occassions have also tried to ignite the Asante- Brong mistrust in continuing to emphasis their past divisions (pg. 251) The NPP in its campaign focuses on dispelling the notion that it is a ‘tribal party.’ If you follow the Aka voting patterns through thte elections, you come to realize that all Akans do not tend to vote as a block for the NPP, despite the notion of it being a Akan party. The Ashanti, the Akyem, the Kwahu, Akuapem and Ahanta tend to vote for the NPP; however, the Brong, Fanti, Assin, Wassa, Sefwi and the Akan people of the Volta region tend to through their weight behind the NDC in elections (Nugent 307).

\*\*It has been noted that regions with more than 40% of Akans have been noted to vote for the NPP, however, if a region has between 2- 10% of Akans represented, the region leans more towards the NDC, proving the importance of the Akan base to NPP success. All five swing regions have been noted to have a high ethnic diversity, and this has been said to explain why they are swing regions, because they have no political allegiance to either of the two parties. Taking into consideration that the Akans constitute the largest ethnic group in Ghana, they have a wide spread in Ghana and are represented in 5 of the 10 administrative regions in Ghana, making their influence felt. Most of these swing regions are known as being mainly Akan based, except in the Greater Accra region, where they are balanced out by other ethnic groups. In the Central region, another Akan based swing region, it is noted that there is a high amount of emigration, however the presence of the university, with a high multi- ethnic voting population causes its swing tendency.

The NDC has also been noted as having a more ethnically diverse ethnic population compared to that of the NPP. The Ewes, who constitute the base of the NDC voting population, constitute a small portion of the Ghanaian population at 12.7%, and therefore the NDC pulls the remaining 27.3% of its 40% core voters from other ethnic groups. Therefore, some political scholars have argued then that the NDC technically cannot be noted as being an Ewe party, however I believe it continues to be one, because of the percentage of Ewes that support the NDC- 93%- compared to any other ethnic group. However, statistcs also show that not all ethnic Ewe are opposed to the NPP, with 6% of the Ewe population supporting the NPP. Some of these same political analysts argue that the NPP is also less so an Akan party if voting trends are paid attention to, but instead should be considered an Asante party. In looking again at election result trends, it has been found that Akans are more split in regards to their support for the two major parties. 53.4% of Akans support the NPP while a high 46.6% support the NDC during elections. The NDC support comes ainly from Akans, with 45.9% of their support coming from Akans, however, the more ethnically homogenous support base of the NPP is represented in the 80% of the NPP voter base that is drawn from Akans. Twi speaking Akans, more so than non- Twi speaking Akans vote on a more communal basis. Non- Ashanti Akans support the NDC more than they do the NPP, with over 50% of them supporting the NDC. Smaller ethnic groups such as the Ga and Frafra, tend to lean more towards the NDC (Alabi 48).

\*\* In Ghana, there is a clear distinction that is to be made between ethnicity and party and ethnicity and candidate. Ethnicity and party refers to ethnic groups that identify with a particular party based on some ethnic ties to the party’s founder or history. Ethnicity and candidate, refers to ethnic identification by an ethnic group to a particular candidate chosen by the respective parties. However in Ghana, we come to find that most people in making voting decisions don’t vote for the presidential or vice- presidential candidates, but instead vote for a party. This is mainly experienced with voters aligning with New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress. In an interview with Dr. Ziblim, he theorized that if you put a Dagomba as the presidential candidate of the NPP, Akans would vote for the candidate because of their ethnic ‘ties’ to the party, and not the candidate. Looking at the 2008 election, the NDC presidential candidate was an Akan, at the head of an Ewe linked party. However, we some to find that regardless of his Akan affiliation, and the Ewe- Akan tensions in politics, the NDC maintained their high voting patterns in the Volta Region, which is thought of as being predominantly Ewe (interview with Dr. Ziblim). According to voting statistics, 94.8% of the people that voted for the NDC in 1996 voted for them again the 2000 elections, although there was a shift of presidential candidate from an Ewe, J.J. Rawlings to an Akan, J. Atta- Mills (Dr. Ziblim).

Ethnicity as a factor could not be denied in the 1996 elections as well, judging from the voting patterns witnessed in some constituencies. According to F.K.G. Anebo, in constituencies such as Ablekuma South in the Greater Accra Region and Asokwa East in the Ashanti Region to mention a few, although Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings won the election in those areas, his parliamentary candidates lost the seats in these same places. Anebo argues that there might be some other factors that might have led to the loss of these seats by the parliamentary candidates; however, the ethnic factor cannot be denied (48).

According to Nugent, looking at the voting trends in Ghana during the 1996 elections gave rise to two theories. There seemed to be some centre- periphery voting that took place during these elections as regions found within the center voted for the NPP and periphery regions mainly gave their vote to the NDC. He associated this voting trend to the boarders of the Ashanti Kingdom and the periphery states. With the NPP associated with the Akan, and mainly Ashanti tradition, the regions that made up the periphery of the historical kingdom did not want to associate themselves with the party, but rather aligned themselves with the NDC (306). It has been noted that the former periphery states of the Ashanti Kingdom are still sensitive to an imminent Ashanti take over and therefore are very weary of the Ashanti, and thus thus the NPP, which has caused them to align themselves the way they do. However, this notion can be said to be dying as the Brongs have voted for the NPP in some elections- including the 2000 and 2004 elections. The Krobo, Adamgme and the Guan people are opposed to the NPP and align themselves with the NDC because they believe that voting for the NDC means voting against Akan hegemony which they are strongly opposed to. The ethnic link attached to the NPP has caused some problems for it on a national level as well as amongst the Akans themselves. On the national level, it tends to pit Akans against non Akans, especially taking from the historic view point. Amongst the Akans, non- Ashantis are reminded of the Ashanti hegemony and become uncomfortable with the notions of Ashantis, the usual flag bearers of the NPP party, being in power. Although in 2008 this changed, Ashantis have been the chosen flag bearers of the party, and although there seems some chance for other Akans, Voltarians and Northerners have been noted to believe that they have stand no chance of leading the party and therefore are in some ways opposed to it (Nugent 308). Noting the general trend since 1996, we notice that in the Volta Region the NDC vote has always stayed well above the 80% mark, however although the NPP has been said to also maintain the majority in the Ashanti Region the have hovered just above the 60% mark in the Ashanti Region, well below the success of the NDC in the Volta Region (Alabi 47). Although the Ashanti Region is noted as being more homogonously Akan, the percentage of votes gained by the NPP in some ways proves the different political aspirations and outlooks amongst the Akans. Joshua and Goski Alabi state two reasons in their article to explain the seemingly low NPP votes in the Ashanti Region. The region is noted as having one of the highest migrant populations. The Ashanti region has also bee noted as being more urban than it is rural and therefore, from our research we find that in urban settings, ethnicity becomes somewhat less salient because people focus more on the party that will help make their living situation easier through economically beneficial solutions, and do not just based on ethnicity. Another factor that seems to be ignored is the fact that Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings, the wife of the founder of the NDC, is the daughter of a royal of the Ashanti Region, which could play intot he fact the NDC pulls a higher amount of votes in the Ashanti Region, than the NPP does in the Volta Region with no ties to the region (48). An analysis of the Volta votes in the case of the NDC also suggest that although the Volta remains connected to the party due to ethnic and party ties, their real alligience lies with Rawlings and this was seen as the votes gained by the NDC in the Volta region fell from 90% when J.J. Rawlings was the flag bearer to 86.81% in 2000, 83.8% in 2004 (Alabi 47) and 86.0% in 2008 (Electoral Commission Ghana), when Atta- Mills was the presidential candidate.

In the four elections that have happened from 1996 until 2008, we find that ethnicity has played a major role in all the elections, however in 2008 Ghana experienced the most ethnically charged election in the Fourth Republic. In the 2008 election, another issue that became more highlighted was the north- south divide.

Until 2008, the flagbearer chosen to lead the NPP has always been an Ashanti, in 1992 it was Professor Adu Buahen, and in 1996, 2000 and 2004 it was J.J. Kufuor. However in 2008, there was stiff competition between an Ashanti, Alan Kyerematen and an Akim, Akuffo- Adoo, and the Akyem, Akuffo- Addo, won the position as the flag bearer for the party. Although the NPP has tried to shake off the notion that they are an Akan party in their election campaigns, the nation that they are deeply rooted in an Akan tradition is manifest in the people that always come up to contest to be a flag bearer. Although in 2008, the flag bearer was an Akan, we come to find that it, because the flag bearer was an Akan and not an Akim, there were some problems experienced within the party that caused their loose in the 2008 elections.

Although the NDC has been noted as being an Ewe party, we realize that unlike the NPP, their flag bearer position has not always been occupied by an Ewe, or only contested by an Ewe. In 1996, the party chose J.E. Atta- Mills, the past Vice- President as their flag bearer. Atta- Mills, being an Akan was said to have been chosen to help the party increase their votes in the predominantly Akan areas in Ghana, which the party in past elections did poorly with because of their reputation. However, in 1996, the NDC plan did not succeed because the NPP still won the Akan – Fanti vote. In these elections, we see that for the Fantis, ethnicity and party was stronger than ethnicity and candidate. The Fantis still tied their loyalties to their ethnic ties to the NPP, and although a Fanti was the flag bearer of the NDC, it did not serve as a good enough reason for them to change their loyalties- however, in 2008, we come to find that this changed. In 1996, although there was a switch from an Ewe to an Akan, a majority of the Volta Region votes went to the NDC for the same reasons that the Akan vote stayed in the NPP camp. Even in 2008, the Volta region has for the most part continued to vote because of ethnic ties to the NDC and not to the candidate. During that year, 90% of the Volta vote went to the NDC regardless of the fact that Atta- Mills continued to be the flagbearer.

In 2008, a lot of ethnic voting was seen in Ghana, especially in the swing regions. In the Central Region where the NDC presidential candidate came from, there were some trends that suggested ethnic voting seen. In Ajumako/ Enyan/ Esiam, Awutu Senya and Cape Coast, all constituencies in the Central Region, the NPP had these constituencies consecutively since the 1996, however in 2008, they managed to loose in these constituencies. In Agona East (first round and run- off) and Assin North ( NDC in first round, NPP in run- off), still two constituencies in the Central Region, the NPP parliamentary candidate won their seat however; the presidential ticket went to the NDC. In Ghana this is referred to as ‘Skirt- and- Blouse’ voting, which was witnessed in those two consituencies. In my interview with Dr. Ziblim, his theory in these two constituencies was that, the Fantes that were going to vote on the day saw two Fantes on their ballot sheets, Atta- Mills, the NDC presidential candidate and the Fante NPP parliamentary candidate; and then saw an Akyem- the NPP presidential candidate, and voted ethnicity and party for the parliamentary candidate and ethnicity and candidate for the presidential candidate, staying loyal to his ethnic group.

During the first round of the Presidential election is 2008, in Assin North, we found that voters were voting ethnically. The NPP parliamentary candidate in the constituency, Kennedy Adjepong, won the seat and for the presidential elections, the NDC candidate beat the NPP candidate by over two thousand votes. This means that over 5000 more voters voted for the NPP parliamentary candidate over the NPP candidate, showing clear signs of ethnic voting. Taking again form the explanation given by Dr. Ziblim, the voters saw two Fantes and decided to vote for the Fante regardless of the party. However, in the run- off of the presidential elections, we found those same voters going back and voting ethnicity and party and reconnecting with their Akan link, as the NPP won in the same constituency during the run- off.

Ethnic voting was also seen in the Eastern Region, where the presidential candidate of the New Patriotic Party also came from. In the region, there wer some constituencies that were clearly voting based on ethnicity and candidate. In Suhum, Ayensuano, and Fanteakwa we found that the parliamentary candidates of the NPP barely won in these areas, with the NDC candidate close to the heels, however, Akuffo- Addo- the NPP presidential candidate- gained a lot more votes than the NDC presidential candidate. Although there could be many reasons as to why this happened, it is also easy to assume that Akuffo- Addo’s increase in votes came from NDC supporters who in that region voted ethnicity and candidate when voting in the presidential elections; seeing that Akkufo- Addo is Akyem and from the Eastern Region, and voted for the NDC for the parliamentary elections.

In the ‘world bank’ region of the NPP- the Ashanti Region- ethnic voting trends were also seen in the 2008 elections. It is argued that the NPP won the 2008 elections mainly because of the internal divisions within the party that translated into votes and support for the party; especially between the Akans. The flagbearer of the NPP, although Akan has always been an Ashanti, however in 2008, Akuffo- Addo was an Akyem and people have commented that this could have contributed to the NPP loss. Betweeen the 2004 elections and the first round of the 2008 elections, Akuffo- Addo was noted to have 24,000 less votes than was received by Kuffour. This trend is explained in very thnic terms, as people assume that because of the fact that Akuffo- Addo was Akyem, although Akyems came out in their numbers and voted for him, Asantes did not come out and vote in their numbers as usually, because some on from their tribe was not being offered. As we will come to see, as the elections came around, elites for the other camp and the media played up a lot on the Akyem- Ashanti division. Around this time also, there was a lot of funfair around the release of a book called, ‘The Royal Akyem Kingdom, Ghana,’ written by Kwasi Amfo Kwakye, which potentially exasperated the division and tension between the Akyem and Ashanti. A lot of Fantes were disheartened by the Akyem- Ashanti pull for power within the party, and this caused them to realize during the 2008 elections that they had no stake in the party, however, a Fante stood the chance to become president under the NDC. So, in 2008, it can be said looking at the voting trends that the Fantes block voted for the NDC, because of ethnicity and candidate, so they could also have access to some power whilst the Akyems and Asante went back and forth within the NPP. It is easy to question why Fantes did not black vote for Atta- Mills in 2000, as he was the presidential candidate in that year too. However, in 2000, Fantes were still caught up in their loyalty to the NPP, and voting ethnicity and party, because they still saw NPP as an Akan party. However, in 2008, the growing rife between Akans within the NPP caused them to vote for a man from their soil who happened to be the NDC.

In 2008, the Central Region realized that Ata- Mills chances were high and decided to support him as a bloc and will not loose out. To the Fantes, although the NPP lost, they still had benefited because someone fro their region had won. In 2004, Fantes realized that by throwing their weight behind Atta- Mills, they would loose out, because Atta- Mills was not popular, and they would rather vote for their party, and have their presence felt in parliament. As a swing state, the Central Region could be said to vote for a candidate based on issues, and on the candidate’s chances, and in this case, the chance for a son of their soil to be president was high. The bloc voting Fantes for Atta- Mills wasn’t restricted to only illiterates, but educated people, and people referred to as being ‘enlightened’ also weighed their chances and voted for Atta- Mills (Dr. Ziblim).

**Analysis of Newspapers and Media Articles**

In developed and developing democracies the media is referred as the forth pillar of democracy and is supposed to be a means of unbiased information reaching the populace to make informed decisions (merinews). In Ghana’s newer democracy the media’s most important role should be that of communicating democratic ideals to the citizens. The media has been noted as a tool to curb the hegemony of the majority of a minority in a developing democracy. Joshua and Goski Alabi note in their piece that Ghanaian political parties depend heavily on the media as a means selling themselves to the general public for approval (46). The Democratic Theory suggests that the sustenance of democracy depends on information and communication, and therefore it is important that citizens continue to receive unbiased and adequate information to weigh their decisions especially as elections draw near.

During my interviews for this project, I came to find that a lot of voters sometimes did not even know that elections were drawing near and only depended on the local popular radio stations and radio personalities to keep the informed. Radio stations like ‘Peace FM’ and Adom FM’ became the voice of the people and the made their decisions based strongly on what they heard through this medium. Through political debates and newspaper analysis, mostly lined with a bias, people believed what they heard and made their decisions based off that information. Even intellectuals who could make informed decisions latched on to information presented by newspapers that were clearly aligned to one camp or the other in forming their decisions, further confirming the importance of the media in Ghana.

It has been argued that the Ghanaian media has lost its sense of direction, and has lost its means of reporting the complete truth and public opinion. The media has been labeled has being divided, and this has caused the information received in the public sphere to be the information of the few instead of a neutralized balanced representation. Being that Ghanaians usually illiterate depend on the information on the radio stations to make their decisions, the role of the media in Ghana, and in most African countries is extremely important in swaying and forming public opinion. Research in Ghana has revealed that the opinions of people on the radio and newspaper publishers in Ghana are particularly important, because most Ghanaians believe that they are receiving information that is dependable, from people who are knowledgeable, however, people have argued otherwise.

It is important to understand the biases of the Ghanaian media in explaining their role in shaping public opinion and contributing to the partisan and ethnic divisions in Ghana, especially around the times of elections. On a daily basis, and especially around the time of elections, the newspapers are filled with ethnically tainted articles and the radio stations blasting out of people’s homes and cars all seem to be listening to partisan debates lined with ethnic passions especially around the two major parties the NPP and the NDC. Radio personalities, especially at this time are found o have immense influences on the general public. Although it is important that the media does its job of holding the government accountable for their actions as a check and balance, and to bring to light the shortfalls of democracy; we find them playing into the political debates, and become the forefront on Ghanaian democratic elections, but not as a neutral observer.

Article 163 of the Constitution being used in the Fourth Republic states that the state owned media has to afford equal opportunities and coverage to all political parties to represent their programs. However in Ghana we find that, the line between political party propaganda and state or government propaganda when a party is in power has become increasingly more blur. From results received from the European Union Election Observation Mission of selected media from November 11, 2008 to December 27, 2008 the blurring line is further confirmed. Ghana Television, the national broadcasting station was reported to have dedicated 33% of their airtime to the NPP, 19% to the NDC, 15% to the CPP and 10% to the PNC. The immediate former President, J.A. Kuffour was also noted to have been given a good chunk of airtime, making it questionable as to whether her was performing a state duty, or representing his party during the broadcasts. This trend was not visible just in 2008, during the 2000 elections, the NDC was noted to have received a lot of positive coverage as they were in power; which switched over for the 2004 and 2008 elections, as there was a transfer of power.

Media houses and journalists in Ghana have been noticed to align with certain political parties or politicians causing the media to cease to be an independent source of information. Due to some journalists’ access and power they have taken advantage and tried to direct or influence people’s votes during elections. They have played into the politicization of ethnicity and contributed to the heightening tensions especially around elections. The media has lost all its self- regulatory means to reduce tensions amongst political parties- especially the NPP and NDC in Ghana- because they have become a huge part of the problem (Dziah). Ghanaians, even governments past and present have expressed concern about the media and their “overstepping their boundaries” (Opoku 6).

Chapter 12 Article 162 clause 4 of the 1992 Constitution, the Constitution of the Fourth Republic states that “editors and publishers of newspapers and other institutions of mass media should not be subject to control or interference by government, nor shall be penalized or harassed for the editorial opinions and views on the content of the publications,” therefore Ghanaian journalists have been found to push the envelope when in comes to reporting in the newspapers and other mediums. Knowing the sharp ethnic and political divisions in Ghana, the media has on many occasions contributed to exasperating the polarization of society in election periods (Opoku 5).

A brief understanding of the position of the media I believe was important as I go into an analysis of some newspaper articles I found on ethnicity and politics in Ghana. Understanding that the media has tended to be in some ways biased, and have an influence on the voting population. It is important to note that is has not only been the journalists that have contributed to the conversation about ethnicity in Ghanaian politics in the newspapers, but the citizens of Ghana have also contributed a lot to the discourse found in the newspapers. Sometimes these discussion have been negative, however a lot if times they call awareness to the bigotry and ethnic politics being played by the media and the political big wigs in Ghana. Through my research and looking through newspaper articles I found that a lot of the articles on ethnicity and politics in Ghana written by citizens also fuel the ethnic politics present in Ghana. With the feature articles written by ordinary citizens, I came to find that the ethnic sentiments ran very high, with some people calling their respective ethnic groups to be up in arms and others ensuring that their ethnic or partisan identifications are set above the rest.

The article that prompted me to look at ethnicity and politics as portrayed in the media was an article that I found in the Daily Graphic on July 2, 2009. In the section of feature articles, there was an article entitled, “Elections and ethnic politics in Ghana” written by Colin Essamuah with the pictures of Kwame Nkrumah, J.A. Kufour and J.E. Atta- Mills. In the article, the author noted the importance of ethnicity in politics in Ghana, I was further drawn to the article, because ethnicity in Ghana is sometimes denied as being on of the most important factors that affect Ghanaian politics. In his article he focused mainly on the history of Ghanaian politics that molded the partisan and ethnic cleavages found in Ghana today. Essumah argued that the analysis of ethnic politics that is solely restricted to the Fourth Republic is of a very narrow scope, as the birth of ethnic politics did not begin with J.J. Rawlings. However, unlike most articles that attack one party or the other, Essumah notes that the support of just the Ashanti Region with a population of 2.3 million and the Volta Region with that of 1.1 million is not sufficient to push either party into the presidential seat, and therefore it was important to look at the voting patterns in Ghana in their entirety. Like what most of my research on this topic has revealed, although Akans are all culturally and linguistically the same, they have very different political aspirations and outlooks.

In this piece, Essumah also discusses how flag bearers are chosen within the NPP and the NDC. In his description he discussed how past NDC leaders backed their vice- presidents as being next in line for the flag bearer position, and this was the ‘natural’ way. However, stated the NPP will never be able to adopt this ‘natural’ process of succession, due to the tribal politics that takes place within the party. He concludes by affirming the presence of ethnic voting in Ghanaian politics, however, as the author in some parts of the article attempts to stay neutral, you find that he eventually chooses sides and praises the NDC as staying non- ethnic and non- partisan, while chastising the NPP.

In most of these articles, it is fair to say that the writers usually don’t pass fair judgments on the parties and rally up the population with their assumptions and biases towards one party or the other.

On February 1, 2010 the Daily Guide run an article with the title “Otumfuo fuming with rage over tribal politics.” The Otumfuo, also known as the Asantehene- meaning the Chief of the Asante, in this article expressed his disappointment over the tribal politics being played by the present government in regard to the dismissal of some Asantes for positions in the civil service and from their workplaces with no real explanations for their dismissal. At a Durbar of Chiefs from other parts of the region, and important men in the Ghanaian political scene, he expressed his fear of potential problems arising if this was to continue, and the government in power kept victimizing Asantes. He blamed the stall in development in the country on tribal politics played by the government as people capable of doing certain jobs were sidelined for less competent people because of ethnicity.

Through our discussion in the section on ethnicity and politics, this newspaper article has made it clearer why the ethnic and partisan cleavages become so exasperated as elections draw closer. The clientelism discussed in earlier chapters are proven as w come to find that people are given jobs just due to their ethnic identification of support for party. Politicians who partake in this form of clientelistic and divisive behavior while in power contribute a lot to the ethnic cleavages formed within Ghana. Through laws passed by Kwame Nkrumah which state that the ethnicity of a public servant should not be known, and therefore should not count as a factor to their employment or maintenance of their position, we come to find that this has been neglected, and the present government in an attempt to maintain the end of their bargain and provide jobs in the tight market for their party faithfuls lead up to this ethicized job shifting.

Another article written January 2010 also discussed the present governments choice of people the place into government positions. Understanding the link between the NDC and the Volts Region as being the ‘World Bank’ of votes for the party the article entitled “A “Better Ghana” promise turns into a “Better Volta” agenda” the writer of the article accuses the government of playing ethnic politics, and brings to light the ethnic lean in the government’s cabinet and civil service by providing the general public a list of all Voltarians. Written in an extremely pro- NPP manner, the writer accuses the government of ignoring the warning is in the media about the detrimental effects of tribalist politics played by the Ghanaian political elite. In his article, he makes refrenece to the different ethnic groups that make up Ghana reminding the readers of Ghana’s multi- ethnicity and includes percentages to further illustrate his point. He refers back to the President’s speech during his inauguration in which the President states that he would ensure that the national cake is shared fairly amongst all groups, as he became know as the “father of all” Ghanaians. Before listing off the names of the fifty- four Voltarians in top governmental positions, he made reference to article 79(1) of the 1992 Republican Constitution, which states that “the president in his political appointments to ensure that there was not only regional balance, but also ethnic and religious balance to reflect the entirety of the Ghanaian multi- ethnic society.” He exposes government contracts to provide the Volta region with a massive face- lift, promising them new roads and infrastructure, and the reference by the President that the Volta Region is his ‘second’ home.

Although Ghana continuously fight to ride itself of ethnic politics and clientelistic politics, governments that come into power continue to reinforce this notion as they attempt to please the voters that stood behind them in hope that they will continue to keep them in power. It is easy to understand better through this kind of exposure of government favoritism people develop such hostilities along partisan and ethnic lines around the time of elections as it means their access to a larger portion of the national cake as a reward for voting for the party they did if the party comes into power. Between the NPP and the NDC, it can easily be noted that they support the notions of being an Akan based or Ewe based party respectively through their actions and appointments when they are in power. However, it could be noted that in Ghanaian politics when most voters are unable to analyze fully the platforms of the candidates and rely on what they see the government doing for their particular ethnic group, it becomes important for the government to be as contribute to this ethnic and patron politics too keep it voters loyal to their camp.

There seemed to me a trend in the reports in newspapers of the NDC in particular being the party that has played a lot of tribal politics in Ghana, and a win for them is a win for especially the Volta Region, whether the flag bearer is from the region or not, we come to find that the ethnicity and party alignment still works in their favor. In an article written by Ben Ofosu- Appiah in December 2003 named “Ghana, Democracy, And the Survival of the Nation,” he discusses the ways in which the Ghanaian democracy is being shaken by actions of the government, the role of the media, and dependence of the people. Although in the article he maintains a sense of neutrality, criticizing both governments for their contributions to the problems of Ghana’s democracy, he discusses the role of ethnicity/ tribalism as another factor hurting Ghanaian politics; and makes the same references to the old NDC government like the writer of the “Better Volta” article did. He made a brief reference to their Volts sway in the appointment of top governmental positions as a means of maintaining the Volta vote, whether it would serve the country well or not. It notes that, Ghana’s democracy has been difficult to practice for this reason.

“Did the NDC not win substantial votes in the Akan areas? Did the Ashanti Region not give NDC, its second highest votes in the country? Were all those who wasted their 450,000 + votes on this useless, Ewe- centric party, in Asante Region not Asantes? Aknas, wake up. You’ve been in slumber for too long. It is only because of lack of self- love, inter/intra ethnic love within the Akan family, that is permitting these Ewes, mostly of Togolese origin, and an inconsequential minority in Ghana, to ride heads and shoulders over us.” This excerpt was taken out of a newspaper article printed on February 1, 2010 and appeared in the Ghanaian newspapers, and online on ‘Ghanaweb’ which is an internet site that allows Ghanaians at home and around the world to have access to newspaper articles from Ghana. Probably one of the few most blatantly ethnic pieces I will be discussing, this piece by Nathan Harvey not only speaks down on Ewes in conjunction with the NDC and the government in power but also calls all Akans to arms.

In the piece the author referred to western countries and the colonial past and uses examples in which violence and unorthodox means of suppressing a minority have been used for the majority to be recognized as a majority once more. With the already existant notion in Ghana that Akans have been noted as being imperialist and wanting to take over the country, this piece calls to question the real motive of Akans as seen in the eyes of other Ghanaians even though it is a piece written by one person.

In the article Harvey accuses all Ewes of not being of pure Ghanaian heritage but of being Beninios and Togolese, trying to come and lord over the Akan land. From my research, and almost a form of common knowledge in Ghana, even though not blatantly discussed, the Ewe- Akan cleavage continues to at different points in time come closer together and oush apart when articles like this appear in the newspapers, and tribalist sentiments run high. However, with an article like this, Akans not only have to worry about the Ewes but of the other minority tribes that are being taked down unto indirectly by Harcey. As the NPP fights to ride itself of the image of being an Akan party, articles like this in the newspaper do not work to their benefit. In asking the Akans to take arms, what medium does the author hope this sentiment will channeled through, but through the ‘Akan’ party? How will this work to the benefit of the NPP in opposition fighting to come bck into power, and with the voting of their next Presidential rick holder coming up, as the person will probably be from the Akan tribe?

The author then goes on to refer to Akans and people of other tribes in the NDC party as being “window dressers” although the real agenda of Ewe domination is still being advanced. He provokes a lot of ethnic sentiment as he accuses Akan chiefs of being bought by the NDC government, and of their endless bickering. With the conscious effort of the government and parties to curb ethnic cleavages and strong sentiments such as this to promote peace, the media is in a sense here playing “devil’s advocate” as they stir up such strong ethnic emotions and present it to the general public. As laws in the Ghanaian constitution protect freedom of speech and protect the newspaper and author of the article from any form of harassment, articles like this as you will come to find come up in Ghanaian newspapers and continue to foster the tensions in Ghana along ethnic lines even though for the most part they are usually less radical.

Although some articles in the newspapers have accused the NDC of being extremely tribal in their dealings, some citizens are on the other edge of the fence and have accused the NPP of being an exclusive, tribal party, with many inter party tribal rivalries. In an article called “Tribalism in politics: NPP needs to wipe the slate clean” the author, Mr. Kow A. Essuman discussed into depth his opinions of the inter- Akan rivalry that appears rife within the NPP. Throughout the literature the party has been known as representing Akans only, has been noted as being very exclusive in their selection of flag bearers to lead the party into victory. In summarizing the history of the party, Mr. Essuman noted that, the NPP was formed out of two different Akan parties, one lead by Akyems and the other by Asantes, which finally merged and attempted to stay united as long as an Ashanti or Akyem was not presented as being the leader of the party. However, he believes that with the new trend the party has adopted, as having only Ashanti or Akyem contestants is what has lead to the divisions between the party. The writer notes that a lot of the information for the article, and the inspiration behind his writing his pice was based off another newspaper article. In Ghana, as you have come to see, the complete freedom of the press to publish anything has cause people from everywhere to be able to express their opinion to the public, whether factually true, or half true, which has tended to cause some trouble. In the first part of his article he states that the party decided from its founding to stay clear of Ashanti or Akyem leaders. However, in the second part of his article he noted that since the founding of the party, it has been dominated by Akyems or Ashantis, which to me seems to be a little contradictory.

In understanding that his arguments were strongly based of another article in the newspapers by Nana Boadaa called “Ethno- Politics, The Bane of The New Patriotic Party,” I believe his source to be a little radical as he assumes that the demise off the NPP is near, and there will be a split between the Akyems and the Ashantis, as the 2012 flag bearer position is contested between Nana Akuffo- Addo, and Akyem and Alan Kyerematen, an Ashanti. In an ethnic country such as Ghana, it seems as though all political tension said to be caused due to ethnic tensions and dislikes. In the run up to the 2008 elections, like it is suggested in the article by Nana Boadaa, the media turned the competition between Akuffo- Addo and Kyerematen into a historical Akyem- Ashanti rivalry, for the pleasure of rallying up ethnic sentiment before the elections.

In reading through the comments made about this article, I came to find people that rallied behind the author, and showered praises onto him for his analysis of the party, however, there were many who questioned his information and the truth behind some of his assumptions, and there were some who stood up in tribal arms and advocated their tribes as the best in Ghana. The author was accused of leaving out some facts and twisting them to suite the image of the NPP he was trying to etch in people’s minds, in his discussion of the formation of the UP and the chronology of the formations of the “tribal parties” he made mention to. However, in instances like this, I realize how much trouble the media can cause, during tribally charged atmospheres such as those found around the time of elections. Although intellectuals such as the writer of this article accuse the government and political elite of being tribal and bringing division within the country, I question what he assumes articles like this cause. One of the commentators of the article questioned the motive behind the article, which caused me to question whether the media that is really supposed to provide the public with factual, unbiased information, is serving its purpose through articles such as this.

In the article Ethnicity and Religion in Ghana’s Politics, the author Mustapha Abdul- Hamid condemns the use of ethnicity and religion in Ghanaian politics, because of its exclusive and divisive tendencies. He describes Ghana as being multi-ethnic and multi- religious and therefore the creeping of ethnic and religious undertones in Ghana’s political discourse can cause serious problems for the country. Again, he sends out a warning to the NPP and their leaders and warns them against this tactic of rallying up support. In bringing up the Constitution he reminds politicians of their requirement to represent an ethnic balance.

However what continues to catch my attention in the constant reference only to the NPP in some of the newspaper articles in discussing ethnicity and politics. From my knowledge, Ghanaian politicians and even the civilians all fall culprit to using ethnicity as a means of solidifying identity and rallying up support for one party or the other.

In an article written in November 2007, which appeared in ‘The Statesman,’ one of Ghana’s oldest papers called “NPP is tribe” most of the notions of the Akyem- Ashanti rivalry within the NPP are shaken. The author of the article states that making people believe that there is this internal conflict within the NPP camp is for the gain of what he terms a ‘short- term’ gain baseless propaganda. The author goes on to describe the whole of NPP as one tribe, encompassing the different sub- tribes represented within the larger tribe- that is the party. He argues that although people make it seem as though people of no other ethnic background than Akans are allowed to hold the flag bearer position, decisions made by the party are based on competence and merit. He puts to rest all of the rumors about Akyems claiming their turn to lead the party to victory, that we have seen come again many times even in the present time as party elections draw close again for 2012. He mocks people that continue to push the Akyem- Ashanti division within the party, but continue to insist that the NPP is an Akan party. Not only the Akyem and the Ashanti within the party seem to be campaigning within the party with the ethnic card- as noted. Playing the ethnic and religious card, Aliu- Mahama, another presidential candidate hopeful, and the former vice- president continues to advocate against ethnic campaigning, however the author noted that in all his campaigns his ethnic and religious references have been his strongest selling points.

Although in the article, the author makes strong points disregarding the Akyem- Ashanti division within the NPP, after the 2008 elections into the 2012 competition for the flag bearer position in the party, this same issue has arisen again within the party. Whether the notion of the NPP splitting because of this perceived rivalry is short term or could actually cause the break up of the party. However, this rivalry has stemmed from the beginnings of the party and has been engrained in the fabric of the party, and if it has not torn it apart now and the party still stands, there seems to be some hope.

The article also seems to refer notions expressed in the literature about the importance of ethnic roots of a party in helping the party grow and sustaining it in elections. The author states that maybe the problems regarding the growth of the CPP, is caused by the party’s inability to latch onto a large ethnic group, but has remained a predominantly regional party. Like the political critics that discussed this view point as ethnicity being essential to the sustenance of a party in Ghanaian politics, the author notes that the two major parties in Ghana- the NDC and the NPP- including the PNC used ethnic roots to establish themselves and grow their parties. So therefore the pertinence of ethnicity in African politics, seems in many ways undeniable and can not be ignored as being as important a factor as it is to the sustenance of African and specifically Ghanaian democracy.

In an article the appeared in ‘The Statesman’ entitled ‘Jake for Massive Win’ we are exposed to the behind the scenes ethnic engineering that goes in within political parties. As the NPP rallies up for its elections to determine officials of the party and the flag bearer for the 2012 elections, Jake Obetsebi- Lamptey, an aspirant for the national chairmanship position, has been guaranteed a massive win, and people argue that his ethnic identification as a Ga is what makes this win seem more crucial. In an attempt to win back the Ga votes in the Greater Accra Region, a Ga at the head of one on the parties national positions seems be important to this gain. However, Mr. Obetsebi- Lamptey has denied that his ethnic identification plays any important role in his large support base.

According to Mr. Haruna, in an interview for the paper he noted that, “ … the NPP did a lot of strategic planning in terms of ethnic permutations for top positions in the party to prevent the situation in which the NPP will continue to brand it pro- Akan not withstanding the advantages to its perception. All being equal the flag bearer position will remain with the Akans. The Gas, an important ethnic group in the politics of the country should be given the chairmanship with Volatarians and Northerners taking other national executive positions to balance the situation.”

Although this analysis seems very forward thinking and could have gone very far in altering people’s views of the party and maybe their voting base, appearing in the newspapers for public view as something that seems planned to makes it seem less genuine and could potentially affect the returns they hoped from this political marketing.

It has been noted that Mr. Obetsedi- Lamptey’s Ga roots, but inability to speak a Ghanaian language makes him the best candidate for the NPP chairmanship position, because it diffuses any strong ethnic alignments, and he will have the ability to communicate with all the people in the different regions and rally a lot of support.

In a newspaper article written by Abdulai Hanan R. Confidence, entitled “I Blame J.J. Rawlings,” the writer replies’ back to an article in which the writer of the article refered to the” shabby dressing” of the Ghanaian president when Obama visited, and compared his attire to that of “the KUSASI watchman at my family's hotel” in the words of the author. The Kusasi are a northern tribe in Ghana, and Mr. Confidence, a Northerner himself took such offense to the writings because of the nature in which the author used a Northern tribe to represent something negative.

Although entirely wrong, we come to find that people in Ghana tend to make the same mistake as the writer of the previous article made. In my analysis of ethnicity in Ghana, I explained that although Northerners were not an ethnic group, but people from the north from different ethnic backgrounds that have been grouped together as one large ethnic group in Ghana. Northerners in Ghana have been labeled as being more economically and socially backward than the southern parts of Ghana, and this is why in the past, Northern elites formed the Northern People’s Party as a means of elevating their status and demanding political representation. They also used this medium as a means of protecting themselves from being over run by what they deemed a more powerful south, due to colonizers paying more attention to the south than they did the North. Present southern Ghanaians continue to associate the North with being backward, and see all northerners in a certain light, and I believe this is why the author of the article Mr. Confidence was replying to made the reference that he did in describing the choice of attire of the president.

However, a disturbing part of the article came when the author, Mr. Confidence blames Rawlings for making Ghana democratic again, because it gave people the right to free speech and to say in the media what thy wanted. However, Mr. Confidence, by being able to publish this article himself is taking advantage of free speech that was made available to all under the democratization of Ghana. However, this view, not in an extreme a manner as presented by Mr. Confidence, ahs been expressed by many top men in the media, and government. The media is slowly beginning to over step its boundaries in Ghana, and through articles such as this, ethnic tensions and divisions are further exasperated.

In another article written by the same author entitled “NPP Destroyed Dagbon and Dagombas,” Mr. Confidence discusses the death of Ya- Na Yakubu Andani II, the Imam of the North and how it has been linked to the NPP. In accordance with the article, the NDC campaigned in 2000 that if the NPP was elected into power they had plans of killing the Ya- Na. However, being seen by the Northerners as expensive propaganda by the NDC in an attempt to malign the NPP government they overlooked it and went ahead and voted for the NPP. However, during the period that the NPP was in power, the Ya- Na was indeed killed and blamed by the NDC on the ruling government, making people of Dagomba and surrounding Northern town believe that the NPP had a part to play in it, and has caused Northern Ghana, especially the Dagombas to be staunch supporters of the NDC.

Although no one knows who killed the Ya- Na, the NDC has used this as a means of further deepening the ethnic cleavages in Ghana as a means of gaining more votes for themselves, regardless of consequence. As Mr. Confidence sated in his article, this attachement of the death of the Ya Na to the NPP caused a lot of problems in the North. Marriages between people were broken apart, youth organizations were closed and people begun to divide along ethnic and partisan lines as they expressed disappointment and hostility, in an in- group- out- group manner. Mr. Confidence’s ability to rally up poitcial and ethnic sentiment through the article I believe will significantly also affect voting patterns for the NPP. Although not a strong contender against the NDC in the North, the NPP started gaining some ground in the line up to the 2000 elections, and received a lot more support amongst the Dagombas. However, with the importance attached to the Ya- Na as a symbol of their ethnic history, religion and being, Confidence appeals nationally through his article to think twice about the NPP, which is attached to the Akan tradition and therefore causes divisions on two fronts.

It can be argued that Atta- Mills being an Akan should therefore have caused problems for the NDC amongst the Dagomba. However, the Dagombas in the 2004 and 2008 elections voted ethnicity and party allowing the NDC their continual support and further deepening partisan and ethnic tensions.

Recently, the Chief Justice of Ghana, Mrs. Justice Theodora Georgina Wood at a speech given at the 61st Annual New Year School in Ghana, was reported to have strongly advocated condemning ethnic politics in Ghana as a means of consolidating the fragile democracy and prompting peace and unity.

After the 2008 elections, when ethnic tensions ran high, a dialogue has opened around the issue, and through newspaper articles, and in everyday discourse people are sharing their opinions on the issue. However, as elections for the Flag bearer positions of the two biggest parties in Ghanaian politics are drawing closer, and there have been signs of ethnic preference being seen in the present government, ethnic sentiments seem to have been rising high again in Ghana as people begin to align with their ethnic groups as a means of maintaining solidarity and aligning with a larger group to ensure inclusion as people advocate for more resources to be awarded to their ethnic groups collectively, receive some of the benefits being awarded to the respective ethnic groups, or fight for their partisan or ethnic group to be pushed into power so they can reap some of the benefits.

This appeal for unity called for by the Chief Justice is nothing new. It seems as though through the years this same appeal has been made to the general public in Ghana, and the political elite in an attempt to curb ethnic sentiments. However, through newspaper articles and through the research conducted, it is important to understand the immense role ethnicity plays on Ghana’s political front. With this, I believe it will be useful to suggest ways in which the government can channel ethnic sentiment in a more positive direction as opposed to trying to convince people to do away with ethnic sentitments especially expressed in the political realm, because it seems engrained in the Ghanaian political fabric.

On the other end of the spectrum to articles written in the papers to malign and slander other ethnic groups, are those written to celebrate Ghana’s ethnic diversity. In an article written by Nana Amma Obenewaa, called “On Ethnicentricity, and Ghana’s Fragile Democracy: Dr. Kwame Okoampah Under Nana Amma Obenewaa’s Surgical Knife,” the author writes in response to an article written by Dr. Kwame Okoampah, about his pride as an Akyem, and in the process puts down other ethnic groups. In the article calls all Ghanaians to embrace their multi- ethnicity, which she believes is a sign that our rich cultures are merging together and as we find ourselves in others cultural spaces we should take the opportunity to educate ourselves and enrich our own cultures. She expresses her fears about the growing number of ethnocentric articles in the media, and the people that will be docile enough to read all the constructed falsehood and join in these radical causes that will tear down the nation.

In the article she responded to, Dr. Lwame Okoampah refered to the Akyem ethnic group as being authentic, therefore suggesting that the other Ghanaian ethnic groups were not. However, Obenewaa argues that we are constantly coming into contact with people of other ethnicities and cultures, and picking and learning from them to enhance our own cultures, and therefore the ethnic journey of the Akyem group is not completely pure and neither has is stopped growing, and therefore his notion of “authenticity” in relation to his culture was far reached. She questioned his historical knowledge in his writings of the Akyem colonial history, as he discredited other ethnic groups of their contributions to the forming of Ghana’s rich history.

In agreeing with the points put forward by Obenewaa, I think it is important to expand further on ther point about the growing ethnic articles in the media. Although this piece was written in 2007, I have come to find that even in many articles of this nature continue to find their way into the Ghanaian newspapers, causing unnecessary conflict and divisions due to the strong emotions backing these ethnic pieces. Ethnicity is the most discussed cleavage in the Ghanaian media when politics in Ghana is being addressed, and although many political critiques argue that the salience of ethnicity in deeming political outcome seems to be going down, the sentiments expressed in newspaper articles seem to be giving off a different image of the ethnicity and politics situation in Ghana.

**Method Section**

My interviews were conducted between the 10th and 29th of December, 2009. The data was collected in four regions in Ghana being the Central Region, the Ashanti Region, the Volta Region and the Greater Accra Region. During the limited time period that I had to conduct the interviews, I tried to obtain a random sample that was as representative of the Ghanaian voting population as I could get.

After a careful analysis of Ghana’s voting patterns and literature written on Ghana, these reasons were chosen as a sample of the Ghanaian voting population. Both the Central Region and the Greater Accra region are considered swing regions in Ghana. I choose the Central Region not only of its swing voting, but because the presidential candidate for the NDC that is known to be an Ewe party, Professor Atta- Mills, an Akan comes from the region. In choosing the Central Region, I though it will be interesting to look at how people voted n that region, and whether their swing in some constituencies from the NPP to the NDC, and the “skirt- and blouse” voting witnessed in some consistencies could be attributed to ethnic voting. In the Greater Accra region, the region in which the capital is located in where I did most of my interviews, I thought it will be interesting to look at how migration, ethnic diversity and living in an urban area affects whether people vote ethnically or not. During my interviews with experts on this subject, they discussed how being in a densely populated multi- ethnic area, like Accra, could affect the effect of ethnic voting and ties to an ethnic group which causes people to vote ethnically. I choose the Volta Region and the Ashanti Region too, for the opposite reasons that I choose the first two regions. I believed, just like other people who have conducted research in Ghana pertaining to voting patterns that it was important to look at the two major parties strong holds in analyzing ethnic voting. The Volta Region is considered the “world bank’ of the NDC and the Ashanti the same for the NPP. However, in the 2008 elections, it was interesting to analyze voting patterns in those two regions because the flag bearers of the two parties were neither Ewe for the NDC or Ashanti for the NPP.

During this period of time, I conducted a hundred and seventeen interviews, in different constituencies in the regions chosen. The number of interviews conducted in each region was not all equal and were done in proportion to the size of the region, as a means of portraying their effect on voting patterns. In the Central region and Volta Regions, 24 and 23 interviews were conducted respectively and in the Ashanti and Greater Accra Region, 34 and 36 interviews were conducted respectively to obtain some balance in vote shares and region size. In an attempt to obtain a random sample with no list of voters, or people in the region, I selected at random people that were willing to talk about their voting behaviors and voting patterns based on ethnicity in Ghanaian elections. I choose different parts of the regions, for example, I choose the market areas, the university, the fishing district in the Central region, and found my way into some people’s homes. In doing this, I was looking to get people of all age groups, education levels and occupations, as a means of accessing what group of people tend to vote more along ethnic lines in Ghana. I tried to figure out how younger people in bars, and hanging out with their friends on street corners compared to their parents and their grandparents and whether that made some difference. In Ghana today, due to the opportunities being offered younger people to go to school because of the free school program that was launched, the younger generations tend to be more educated and sometimes more politically knowledgeable than the older generations, and that was an important dynamic to explore.

In preparing for this process, I initially made a survey I hoped to conduct, however in analyzing the groups of people I intended to interview, some with a low level of education, and none at all, it made it difficult to use a survey. People in Ghana speak different ethnic languages as well, and even though English is the country’s lingua franca, not everybody can understand or write English and it became important to try and keep the answers and understanding them as uniform as possible. Therefore all the interviews were conducted in interview form, and translated into the different languages people could understand with the help of research assistants, and my knowledge of the different Ghanaian languages. In my preparation, I came to the conclusion that interviews might also be better suited for this work because it also allowed people to express their opinions on the issue more without being constricted by the space provided on a survey. In understanding that people would have been more honest and have been willing to talk more if it was conducted in survey form which gave them some anonymity, I tried to maintain this same form of anonymity by explaining to the respondents that this was only going to be used for a school project, and did not ask their names or place of residence, making them more comfortable.

In choosing my questions, I did a lot of research on what other researchers had done in looking at voting patterns in Ghana, and also had a fair idea of what I wanted to look at in creating my interview questions. I used a combination of close and open- ended questions to attempt to also quantify the data I received. I wanted to look at how age could affect ethnic voting. Through my research, I found that scholars assumed that education level played an important role in affecting ethnic voting, and I thought this would be an interesting dynamic to look at in Ghana, knowing that a majority of the Ghanaian population is illiterate, or has had a low level of education. In talking to people knowledgeable on this topic, the urbanization of Ghana was noted as being one of the reasons why ethnic voting in Ghana seemed to them to be going down. So, I decided that looking at ethnic or rural divides, will be interesting in my attempt to explain ethnic voting in Ghana. However, due to the limited resources and time to conduct the interviews, it became difficult to go into the deep rural areas to interview people and find out their opinions. However, I managed to talk to a number of people that lived in rural areas during my interviews.

Another interesting factor I wanted to look at was whether the number of times people had voted within Ghana’s Fourth Republic, affected whether the voted ethnically or not, or even if it had ever been a reason why they made the voting decisions they made in one or two of the elections. In the In 1996 and 2000, the presidential candidates for the NPP and NDC came from the Ashanti region and Volta region respectively and this could have affected the way their strong holds voted in those elections as compared to the other elections, especially in 2008, when the presidential candidates at the heads of the parties were not from the stronghold regions. Another interesting factor that I thought could come out of this question was whether newer voters will vote more based on ethnic ties that people who had been voting for much longer. Most of my interview questions were coded as being close-ended qualitative questions, with questions that allowed them to explain their answers depending on their answers to their close- ended questions. The question were also based on asking people questions that did not make them seem like they were being questioned about whether they voted based on ethnicity directly, but also looked at whether they thought other voter voted ethnically and whether they though this was negative or positive for Ghana’s democracy. I believe that it was also important to look at whether their ethnicities affected their answers and whether they thought people voted ethnically or not. Another important factor that I though should be taken into consideration was how important they felt their ethnic identification was and whether this translated into their own admittance of ethnic voting or whether they felt people voted based on ethnicity.

In conducting my research however, I stumbled on some limitations and some problems. The first of this was the time limitation and resources. With such a short period of time, it became difficult to collect a larger number of interviews, which would have allowed a larger and more representative sample size. I would have been able gain access into the more rural parts of the regions to better test the theory that urbanization has an effect on whether people vote ethnically or not. Another problem with the time limit was that I was also forced to choose constituencies that were relatively close together, allowing me a less wide base of possibilities and impressions. If time allowed, it would have also been interesting to collect data fro the northern part of Ghana, which could have added a new perspective to the research. As explained before, although the north of Ghana is made up of a variety of people of different ethnicities and cultures, they are usually grouped as belonging to one ethnic group. In Ghana’s history, the ‘Northerners’ have fought for equality with the south of Ghana. Looking at the voting patterns, it looks like most of the northern regions have voted as a block for the NDC, however, from 2000, their block seemed to be infiltrated with some NPP votes, and it will be interesting to look at whether the choosing of a Northerner as an NPP ice- presidential candidate for the 2000 elections made some difference. In 2008, with Northerners in the vice- presidential slot for both parties, it would have been interesting to look at how ethnicity affected voting patterns in the northern part of the country too.

It was a little difficult getting people to respond to our interviews sometimes because of the fact that I had to record all the interviews and transcribe them later due to the time limitation and making sure that I got all the information I needed. People were sometimes worried that I was a journalist, and afraid that their thoughts were going to be used on the radio or in some other way, which made them nervous. People turned us down when I brought out the tape recorder, or were unable to completely express themselves and their views on the topic because of the fact that they were being recorded. I found that younger people were also more willing to be recorded than older people, and with most, education level also made them more willing to share their thoughts on the issue.

Due to the fact that the time limits also meant that most interviews had to be conducted during the day, and mostly during the week when people were busy at work, it made it difficult for people to take their time to answer the questions when trying to do their work. I found this problem especially in the markets and at the fishing dock where the sellers were busy calling out to people to buy their goods and the fishermen were busy weaving their nests and looking out for their boats. A lot of times, I also found that when people took the time out to answer the questions, they sometimes got preoccupied in the middle and didn’t come back to finish the interview.

Another limitation I experienced came with the different languages that I had to conduct my interviews in. In some ways I believe that it affected the uniformity of the interviews conducted. Some questions were harder to be translated directly to portray the same meaning to some people. In translating the interviews from the different languages sometimes were also difficult because sometimes the sentiments and answers explained in the different Ghanaian languages also could not be directly translated back into English with the same meaning that was intended. Sometimes people were unable to answer the answers I asked them or, answered the questions but not in the way I intended because of the language barrier. In asking some of the close- ended questions as well, it became difficult to translate all the answer options, and therefore people gave their own answers which did not always fit into the answer options I had, or had to in some ways to molded to fit into the answer options I had set out.

**Data Analysis**

In conducting my research, there were a couple of factors that I though were important as to whether people will admit to ethnic voting or not, and will affect whether they felt others voted based on ethnicity. In conducting my research, I wanted to prove that age, income and educational level were important to people admitting whether they voted based on ethnicity or not. Factors such as importance of ethnic identification and number of elections people had voted in I believe also played a role in whether people voted based on ethnicity and admitted to doing so.

During my analysis, I came to find that with conducting interviews with people it became hard to know whether they truly voted based on ethnicity or not. Therefore in making my findings more accurate it became important to analyze my information based on admittance to ethnic voting.

There were some clear conclusions I drew from my interview results. Although not drawn from a large sample, I came to find that age did not affect whether people admitted to voting based on ethnicity or not, as I assumed previously. In asking people whether they voted based on ethnicity or not, I asked people in the previous question about the issues that were most important to them when it came to the elections they has voted in. After this question, without asking directly if they voted based on ethnicity, I asked how the ethnicity of the presidential of vice- presidential candidates in the two parties being the NPP or the NDC rated in comparison to their top most issue during the elections.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age** | **Ethnicity more important** | **Ethnicity equally important** | **Ethnicity less important** | **Admittance to ethnic voting** | **No admittance to ethnic voting** |
| A | 1 |  | 10 | 1 | 10 |
| B |  |  | 13 |  | 13 |
| C | 4 | 1 | 13 | 5 | 13 |
| D |  | 1 | 8 | 1 | 8 |
| E |  |  | 19 |  | 19 |
| F | 2 |  | 16 | 2 | 16 |
| G |  |  | 9 |  | 9 |
| H | 1 |  | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| I |  |  | 3 |  | 3 |
| J |  |  | 5 |  | 5 |
| NULL |  |  | 9 |  | 9 |

Figure 1.1 Table showing age compared to importance of ethnicity compared to voting issues compared to admittance to voting ethnically

Looking a Figure 1.1, although I believed that age will be a factor in deciding whether people voted based on ethnicity or not and admitted it, I found no clear patterns indicating this. However, looking at the table, I found that respondents between the ages of thirty and thirty- four were more willing than the respondents in the other age brackets to admit to voting based on ethnicity. From my interview data analysis on the correlation between age and ethnic voting it will seem as though Ghanaians did not vote based on ethnicity, but looked at other factors in determining their vote. Through the data, I found that over 90% of the respondents found it more desirable to disagree with ethnic voting than admit to doing it. I found that during my interviews, some people when it came to this question seemed to contradict themselves. They rated ethnicity as being less important than their topmost issue during an election period, however in answering the question on whether they believed other people voted based on elections, they answered the question and shared views of their own as to why they felt it was helpful that people voted based on ethnicity. A comment I heard often from people was “bibi wo wu fieh a 3y3” meaning that “if something is in your house it is good,” indicating that it was good to vote for people based on ethnicity to maintain good fortunes for your people.

Although most people did not openly admit to ethnic voting, I came to find that out of the hundred valid answers to the question as to whether they believed people voted based on ethnicity, 66% of the respondents believed that Ghanaians voted based on ethnicity. Of the people left, 13% were on the fence in regards to ethnic voting, and 21 % of the respondents believed people did not vote based on ethnicity.

With most of the respondents who did not believe that Ghanaians voted based on ethnicity; I believe their answers came from the fact that they personally voted for someone from a different tribe as them, and therefore induced that other Ghanaians did the same making it impossible for Ghanaians to vote based on ethnicity. One of the respondents said that although he did not believe that Ghanaians voted based on ethnicity, he felt as though ethnic voting was going up, looking at the happening of the 2008 elections. Another of the respondents discussed the effect of clientealism in Ghanaian elections as having a larger effect on the voting population. He noted that a majority of the Ghanaian population was illiterate, and impoverished and therefore when given goods and services by the politicians in exchange for their votes, they were easily swayed. According to Lindenberg and Morrison (2005), in developing African countries, some voters use ‘primordial’ shortcuts such as clientelism and ethnicity as a means of deciding whether to vote for one party of the other. In Ghanaian politics, clientelism seems to me one of the strong factors, other than ethnicity, leading a majority of voters to vote for one party or the next. From my survey evidence, it is easy to say that although clientelism is important, a lot of voters find these clientelistic ties within their ethnic groups as well, causing them to vote based on ethnicity as a means of gaining benefits for themselves and their regions through their votes. Another of the respondents in the Greater Accra Region that believed that Ghanaians did not vote based on ethnicity based his argument on the fact hat even though he would have felt differently before, in 2008; he came to find that the New Patriotic Party lost all their strongholds and therefore ethnic voting did not happen anymore. Although this might be true, we find that in the 2008 elections, a lot of Akans who are usually in the NPP camp, swung their voted and voted for ethnicity and candidate instead of ethnicity and party- the Fantes.

In discussing why Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, there were three main reasons given that seemed to encompass a lot of what the respondents believed. The first of these reasons was in the case of benefits that people believed their ethnic groups would attain if someone from their region became president. A lot of people referred to the saying that if something was home it was good, because then everyone benefited from the success. For a majority of illiterate Ghanaians who do not know too much about the party platforms and the policies of these two parties, this was enough reason and means of direction to choose a candidate to vote for. One of the older respondents talked about Afrifa as a reason as to why people seemed to believe that voting for someone from your tribe would bring benefits to your region. According to him, when Afrifa became president, he broke down most of the structures in his hometown of Krobo, and rebuilt them for the people. A woman in the Volta region noted that she believed that it was important for people to vote for people from their tribe or for the party that had their tribe at heart because under an oppositional government, the government only focused on their tribesmen and therefore left the other regions and people to suffer. Interviewees discussed how Ghanaians voted heavily on ethnicity because they believed that when a government came into power that was favorable to your tribe it was easier to get jobs and benefits that were closed out to other ethnic groups. These ideas for ethnic voting are not completely unfounded. In articles written in the Ghanaian newspapers, such as the article written by Katakyie Agymeng, called the “Better Volta” (Ghanaweb 2010) agenda of the present government in which he listed all the government appointments that were swayed towards the Volta Region, which is the NDC’s supposed stronghold; it is easy for people to want to gain these benefits and vote for people from their tribes too.

Another important reason as to why people believed that ethnicity played an important role in Ghanaian elections stemmed from politicians. A lot of the respondents discussed the role of politicians in making ethnicity such a part of elections in Ghana. According to the responses from my interviews, respondents commented that politicians actively only made a difference in the towns that were believed to have voted for them, with the NPP this was the Ashanti Region and with the NDC it was the Volta Region. This caused people to continue to continue to vote according to ethnicity and in voting blocs, causing the ethnic voting they believed was present in Ghana. The respondents also noted politicians to have made blatant comments that suggest that people should partake in ethnic voting causing the ethnic voting that is experienced in Ghana today. Politicians were quoted by many of the respondents talking negatively about other ethnic groups. One of the respondents talked about how as an Ashanti, it was hard for him to vote for the NDC because even if he wasn’t a part of the party, one of the politicians stood on a platform and said he hated Kufour the past Ghanaian president, not because he did not do a good job during his term but because he was an Ashanti.

According to the respondents, and even the Akans and Voltarians themselves, these two groups have formed strong voting blocs for the NPP and NDC respectively based on ethnicity and party, which have become the norm in Ghanaian politics. Through my interviews, a lot of the Voltarians and Akans- especially the Ashanti made comments about these connections, and in some ways seemed to fit the mold. There were respondents who were Akan and remained NPP while their wives or husbands were Voltarians and therefore were NDC. In the Volta Region I spoke to a man who believe that even if a goat was put at the head of the NDC and a competent politician put at the head of the NPP, he believed that the Voltarians will still vote for the goat just because of their ethnic connection to the party, and the notion that the NPP was an Akan party.

Through this observation, I felt that it will be interesting to look at responses made by Akan and Ewe respondents, through my interviews, and analyze whether they would be able to admit to ethnic voting themselves; since most of people I interviewed believed that they did. Another important thing I thought I would look at still concentrating on these two groups was whether they felt as though other people voted based on ethnicity. This was important because these two groups that have always been indicated in literature the on Ghanaian elections to vote in ethnic voting blocs, and through my own research, a lot of the respondents seemed to feel the same way about these two groups.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tribe** | **Total** | **Not Admit to ethnic voting** | **Others voted based on ethnicity** |
| Akan | 63 | 56 | 50 |
| Ewe | 19 | 19 | 15 |

Fig. 1.2 Table showing Akan and Ewe who did not believe they voted based on ethnicity, but believed others did

In looking at the responses in Figure 1.2, my hypotheses about these two groups were confirmed. Both the Akan and Ewe groups were unable to admit themselves to voting based on ethnicity, but were quick to accuse other groups as voting based on ethnicity. According to responses I received from people of other ethnic groups, most of them believed strongly that the Akan- especially the Ashanti- and Ewe voted in blocs. One of the respondents made a comment that this had become the status quo in voting in Ghana, where these two ethnic groups could be interchanged during the election period to represent the NPP and the NDC respectively. In conducting my interviews in the Volta Region and the Ashanti Region, without asking I got a lot of interesting comments from both the Akans and the Ewes about the fact that the Ashanti or the Ewe vote based on ethnicity. Some of the respondents used strong words such as “hate” when describing the feelings between the Akans and the Ewe. He believed that over 55% people voted based on ethnicity because of strong ethnic sentiments such as this- because of where someone came from, especially between these two ethnic groups, people usually put competence aside and vote for someone from their own ethnic groups. One of the respondents had such an interesting viewpoint on this issue. He discussed growing up and being taught that Akans do not like Ewe people and therefore, he was expected to grow u and not vote for the Ewe because it is an Akan party, however, he commented that he was a strong NPP man, because he was not of the primitive mentality that most Ewe held that the founder of the NDC- J.J. Rawlings- is their own man.

\*\*PUT IN SOMETHING- INGROUP/ OUTGROUP PERCEPTIONS\*\*

The Akans in the Volta Region especially I believe had such strong perceptions about Ewe people ethnic voting. Through my interviews, I seemed to stumble across Akans that had run for positions in the local NPP or NDC groups in the region and experienced some trouble because of their ethnicities. An Akan who had ran for a position for the NPP in the Volta Region discussed being denied a position in the constituency elections in the Volta Region because he was an Akan, and this further reassured him that Ghanaians, especially the Ewe voted based on ethnicity. In the same region, the Voltarians believed that the NPP government did nothing for them because they were Ewe and they were tagged to the then opposition- NDC party. However, talking in to Akans in the region, they believed that the Ewe also just voted for people because they were from the same town. One of the respondents noted that he believed all the MPs in the Volta Region did nothing for the region, but voted them into their high positions because they were from the same tribe and because they would never vote for an NPP candidate because it was an “Akan” party.

In researching for this paper, I had extensive conversations with people were knowledgeable about ethnicity and voting in Ghana and many of them believed that urbanization will affect the prominence of ethnic voting. I had my own believes about this hypothesis, and believed that the more ethnically mixed a town, it made ethnic voting in blocs less prominent. Through our conversation, Dr. Ziblim discussed the fact that as people struggled to survive in an urban area, issues such as economic survival became more important t them during an election than what their ethnic group felt, because now they had come into contact with so many other people of different ethnic groups, and to some extent stereotypes were also being broken.

In conducting my research, time and resources made it hard for me to really be able to go deep into the rural areas in Ghana to full y test this hypothesis, however, most of my intervies conducted in urban areas such as Cape Coast, Bantama and Accra, seemed to confirm this fact. Out of the one hundred and eighteen interviews conducted mostly in urban areas with one or two from the rural regions, one hundred and nine of the respondents rated ethnicity as being less important than their most important issue during the time of the elections. In conducting my interviews, a lot of people rated the economy as being one of the most important factors as to why they voted for the people that they voted for, followed by making Ghana a better place, which I believe, fell under development and the economy; which was then followed by the inefficiency of the past government.

In discussing urbanization as changing whether people voted based on ethnicity, it becomes important to question that even though most of these urban dwelling interviewees denied ethnic voting themselves, they seemed to all believe that a majority of Ghanaians continue to vote based on ethnicity; and ethnic voting was going up as opposed to decreasing. So where were all these people that were voting based on ethnicity? Although urbanization is an important factor in decreasing ethnic voting, it has not completely changed the way in which Ghanaians vote. People in Cape Coast, an urban area in Ghana, still voted based on ethnicity, especially during the 2008 elections. Before, the Fante people voted based on ethnicity and party connections, being Akan meant that they voted for the NPP, which was noted as being an Akan party. During the 2008 elections however, a man I interviewed who was Fante discussed why a lot of Fantes voted based on ethnicity and candidate even though the NDC was not their party, saying that everybody, even politicians where accusing the Fante people of being stupid because they were denying a son of their soil the opportunity to be President, and continued to vote for the NPP when they did not have particularly a Fante running in the top position. So to them, I found a lot of my respondents talking about the Fante people feeling as though their time had come. So even though a majority of these people resided in urban areas, ethnicity affected their vote because they wanted to vote for a Fante to come to power so they could gain what they felt will be direct access to the decision making apparatus of the country to gain resources for themselves because the President will be from their ethnic group, which could also prove beneficial whether in an urban or rural area.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age** | **Ethnicity more important** | **Ethnicity equally important** | **Ethnicity less important** | **Admittance to ethnic voting** | **No admittance to ethnic voting** |
| A | 1 |  | 10 | 1 | 10 |
| B |  |  | 13 |  | 13 |
| C | 4 | 1 | 13 | 5 | 13 |
| D |  | 1 | 8 | 1 | 8 |
| E |  |  | 19 |  | 19 |
| F | 2 |  | 16 | 2 | 16 |
| G |  |  | 9 |  | 9 |
| H | 1 |  | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| I |  |  | 3 |  | 3 |
| J |  |  | 5 |  | 5 |
| Null |  |  | 9 |  | 9 |

Fig 1.3 Table showing Age compared to importance of ethnicity to their most important ethnic issue during voting, compared to ethnic admittance

Another important factor that I believed would affect ethnic voting in Ghana was age and how it affected to importance of ethnicity, and how much people were able to admit to ethnic voting. Before conducting my interviews, I was convinced that younger people will be more likely to vote based on ethnicity, and will be more readily to admit to ethnic voting. I though this will happen because even though younger people might be predominantly found in urban areas, they had less experience with voting and less issues to weigh, and therefore will be more prone to use ethnicity as a means of direction in voting.

However, in looking at fig 1.3, which is a compilation of my responses from my interviews, I seemed to realize that in Ghana it seemed as though ethnic voting happened across age boundaries, and people between the ages of thirty-one and thirty- five seemed to admit to ethnic voting more than people within the ages of eighteen and twenty- four, which I assumed before.

A limitation in analyzing whether age affected the way people voted based on ethnicity or not was that am majority of respondents to my interview were people within an older age bracket, making it easier for their views to distort the results in some ways. Another reason that could have affected the results of my survey was that a lot of the people within the eighteen to twenty- four-age bracket that I believed will be more prone to vote based on ethnicity were educated urban dwellers, mostly on university campuses, who were less likely to be affected by ethnic voting as a means of voting.

I thought it was interesting that going into this research, I strongly believed that younger people were those that were more prone to ethnic voting, however, through my interviews, a lot of respondents seemed to have given up on the older generations, and wanted the solutions for ethnic voting to be focused on the younger generations who they believed could still be rescued from Ghana’s ethnic voting problem. The older people that voted based on ethnicity always were more vocal about their reasons for voting based on ethnicity, and really were quicker to justify their decisions. I believed the older generations too especially were able to refer back to Afrifa and how he worked for his people and were able to look back and see that no one from their tribes had come to power and use that as a justification as to why they voted based on ethnicity, whereas the younger generations have become more educated and forward thinking and were probably not as interested in elections in the past years, and therefore overlooked past ethnic voting patterns.

Education was also another factor that I believed would affect whether Ghanaians voted based on ethnicity, and could admit to ethnic voting.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Education** | **Admittance to ethnic voting** | **No admittance to ethnic voting** | **Null** |
| A | 2 | 8 | 1 |
| B | 3 | 38 | 2 |
| C | 3 | 26 | 2 |
| D |  | 13 |  |
| E |  | 6 | 1 |
| F |  |  |  |
| Null | 1 | 6 |  |

Fig. 1.4 Table showing education compared to admittance to ethnic voting

Looking at the above table, it is easy to come to the conclusion that education in Ghana does not have a particular pattern that seems to affect ethnic voting in Ghana. However, it in this case, it is important to pay attention to the limitations of the sample size and the people represented within the sample. Education could possibly affect voting in Ghana because if we pay close attention, the people that admitted to ethnic voting seemed to have a lower level of education rating from no education at all to a secondary education.

In analyzing the results, paying attention to the size of the sample and where the sample was drawn from, being mostly urban settings, I came to find that through all the groups, a majority of the respondents, whether educated or not did not admit to voting based on ethnicity. Within the groups that had a tertiary or post- graduate education, even though a majority of them did not admit to ethnic voting, we come to realize that none of them admitted to voting based on ethnicity, which could serve to confirm my theory that education made people less likely to vote based on ethnicity. I believe that people who are educated are more armed to analyze the different party policy platforms, and will look at voting based on ethnicity or clientelism as affecting the state because of their education and their understanding of the importance of competence of the person voted for as a means of moving the country forward as opposed to someone with no education, and an inability to make informed decisions.

Along these lines it could be argued that in Ghana from the other side that because most of the results collected are urban based results, these non- educated people still listen to the radios, which have a huge influence on the decisions people make. So, although people might not have the education to read and analyze newspapers themselves, on radio programs these same discussions are carried out in the different local languages allowing people the access to the information needed to make informed decisions as to who they should vote for. Although a strong argument, a lot of the radio stations and newspapers as we have discussed in the previous chapter on the effect of the media has informed us as to how biased the media can be, and therefore being unable to compare the information reaching the masses and constantly having to hear different sides of one issue may cause someone with little education to look to ethnicity a the easiest means for directing their vote. In many rural areas, many people might not have access to these radio discussions, because they might not have access to radios, or televisions at all, leaving them to depend on their traditional leaders, or their ethnic groups as a means of directing their votes.

It still remains however that although people are unable to admit to ethnics voting themselves, they still believe strongly that a majority of Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity. In asking people what they believed would be the best means of curbing ethnic voting if they believed that it was an issue in Ghanaian elections, a lot of people that education will be Ghana’s savior in terms of ethnic voting. People believed that people should be educated and this gave them the necessary tool to make informed decisions themselves making it unnecessary for them to depend on their ethnic identifications and allegiances to make their decisions in terms of voting. Education allows people to take the things they hear with a grain of salt, and allows them to analyze the situations for themselves. I believe that in analyzing my interview results in regards to the sway of a majority of even uneducated people to not admit to ethnic voting was that in urban setting people came into contact with people from all walks of life; allowing them to engage in conversations and be in environments that allowed them to get educated themselves and question views making them more armed to vote on other issues but ethnicity, something most people in rural areas have less access to.

In answering the question about the ways that the respondents thought ethnic voting in Ghana could be solved, a majority of the respondents also felt as though it will be important to target town elders and chiefs as a means of gaining access to the people. Ethnic identification is important to most Ghanaians, and especially in rural areas, people paid great attention to what their village elders and chiefs thought and this is what directed an ethnic group to vote in a block for one party or the other. Being exposed to this solution made me question the importance of ethnic identification and how that affected whether people would admit to ethnic voting or not. Before starting my research I strongly believed that how important your ethnicity is to your person played an important role in whether one voted based on ethnicity or not, and were able to admit to this.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Importance of ethnic identification** | **Admittance to ethnic voting** | **No admittance to ethnic voting** | **Null** |
| High | 4 | 29 | 1 |
| Moderate | 2 | 2 |  |
| A little |  | 5 | 1 |
| Not at all |  | 19 | 4 |
| Null | 3 | 38 | 1 |

Fig.1.5 Table showing the importance of ethnic identification to an individual and how that affects admittance to ethnic voting

Looking at the figures above, I came to find through my research that my hypothesis about ethnic identification and admittance to ethic voting was right. Although many more respondents did not admit to ethnic voting, looking at the results the highest number of respondents that admitted to ethnic voting were those that considered their ethnic identification highly.

People that were very happy to be of their ethnic groups I believe have a stronger sense of allegiance to people from their tribes cause them to vote for people based on ethnicity. From the table, it could be argued that a large number of people who did not admit to ethnic voting still held their ethnic identity highly. Although true, I argue that taking into consideration that most of these interviews were conducted in urban areas, people’s admittance to voting based on ethnicity could be skewed due to the undesirability of ethnic voting. According to my theory, if given access to the resources to research this hypothesis, I believe that ethnic identification amongst rural dwellers is strong as they are mostly surrounded by people of their ethnicity, most probably continue to practice local traditions and cultures and have owe closer allegiance to their chief or king, which all make ethnicity more important to them. I continue to support this theory because some of my respondents that admitted to ethnic voting in the urban areas continued to refer to someone fro their tribe as their siblings, or a part of their family, making it important for them to support them in their endeavors, and I believe this commitment or sense of duty will be higher in a rural setting.

A lot of the respondents in my respondents during my interviews seemed not to care too much about their ethnic identification as well, however, I came to find that most Ashanti did. People felt as though their ethnic identifications were a part of them they could not choose or get rid of, and therefore just seemed to embrace it. A lot of people that were unable to rate the importance of their ethnic identification to them I found during my interview strongly placed admittance to ethnic identification lower than their most important election issues. People that rated their ethnic identification, as being a little important or not important at all did not ever admit to voting based on ethnicity. These observations, I believe further work to support my theory about ethnic identification intensity and admittance to ethnic voting.

In Ghana, people’s incomes are very personal information to them, and unfortunately I did not realize this before I went into this project. A lot of my respondents were very private about their incomes, and were eve weary to let me know what age bracket they fell within. A lot of times during my interview, another problem I faced was that even when people were willing to tell me their incomes they were unable to tell me how much they made a year, because they did not really keep account of how much they were using and spending during the month, and less so during a year. A lot of people in answering this question always asked me to also qualify whether I meant their incomes that they just received from work, or in general through things they did to again some extra income on the side. For a lot of the people who answered to question, a lot of them lived hand- to – mouth and therefore my results seemed to concentrate mainly on a small sample of working and lower class people instead of the wide scope of respondents I thought I would get.

Before conducting my interviews, I believed that people in lower income brackets would be more prone to voting based on ethnicity. For people in these lower income brackets gains from the government were important to them and they depended on the forged connections with the ruling apparatus to gain benefits**. \*Ingroup- outgroup theory as people using racial/ ethnic ties as the most efficient way to gain resources\***

Through my interviews, I came to find that people in all income groups seemed to vote based on ethnicity, or at least let ethnicity affect their thought about competence and who should run for positions in some ways. People in lower income brackets did not admit readily to ethnic voting and some of them were strongly opposed to it. One of the respondents I spoke to in the Volts Region I remember was so disheartened by ethnic voting that he recounted the nostalgic days for him when Ghana was under military rule so people were not allowed to vote and make decisions that could break the country apart. Even though a lot of people in the higher income bracket were ever willing to tell me how much they made, I use their professions as judgments to determine their income levels. People who I interviewed did mention that although the poor and illiterate were guilty of ethnic voting a lot politicians and “big men” as they called them were guilty of the same problem and therefore it was just not a problem of illiteracy in Ghana, it was part of Ghana’s voting fabric.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number of elections** | **Ethnic voting going up** | **Ethnic voting going down** | **Ethnic voting remains the same** | **Null** |
| Null | 1 | 2 |  |  |
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3 | 6 | 5 |  | 12 |
| 4 | 5 | 4 |  | 4 |
| 5 | 18 | 11 | 4 | 18 |

Figure 1.6 Table showing how the number of elections one has partaken in and how that affects whether they feel ethnic voting is going up, down or remains in the same place

As I begun my interviews, I strongly believed that the number of elections one has participated in will allow them a better understanding of ethnic voting and they will be better able to analyze whether ethnic voting in Ghana has gone up or down. I believed that the more elections that people had voted in, the more they would judge ethnic voting as going up. I also theorized before my research that people who had just voted in the past elections (2008), will believe that ethnic voting is going up. As you have seen through the project, ethnic voting is a large part or Ghanaian elections, but some of the literature on Ghanaian elections disputes this fact. As people argued that ethnic voting in Ghana was going down or did not exist at all, the 2008 elections I argue was the most ethnically charged election in Ghana, and therefore for people who had voted in many other elections, they will be able to see the rise in ethnic voting because they would have always paid attention to voting trends. I thought this will also hold true for those who were just beginning to vote also because they will have a new interest in voting and therefore might be able to notice the ethnic trends.

Through an analysis of my interviews, there were three important trends that I noticed in this area. Respondents that I interviewed who had only voted in one election, even though not a very representative sample, seemed to had an almost equally spread impression as to whether ethnic voting has gone up or down. However, a lot more of them were unsure about the ethnic voting trends for various reasons. Some noted that they just liked the parties they voted for; others noted that they voted based on family ties, or a like for the candidates. Another interesting trend I found was that people who had voted in more than three elections seemed to be almost evenly split as to whether ethnic voting had gone up or down. These same groups of people also had a large number of respondents who were unsure as to whether ethnic voting had gone up or down in Ghana. An important theory I believe could explain this reason is that a lot of these people are more mature voters, and therefore deem it inappropriate or socially unacceptable to admit openly to ethnic voting, and although a majority of them did, many would rather not answer the question. However, many of these respondents who had voted in more than three elections did prove my theory and admitted to an increase in ethnic voting in Ghana. I found along these lines however that a lot of Ghanaian voters across the board usually choose to glide over an admittance to ethnic voting and therefore a lot of the respondents responded as not know whether it had gone up or down.

Many of the respondents believed that ethnic voting was negative, and therefore it explains a lot as to why people were a little resistant in admitting to ethnic voting themselves, but always managed to pin it on others, stating high probable numbers of ethnic voting in Ghana during my interviews.

What was interesting about this question I believe was that a number of respondents said that they themselves unable to say whether ethnic voting was good or bad, and could not judge the decisions made by others during the elections. For those that were in the middle as to whether ethnic voting was negative or positive, an interesting observation that some of these respondents had said they had never voted based on elections before, however were hesitant to state that ethnic voting was as negative as it is, maybe because they refused to admit that it had some effect on themselves.

This conversation about whether they believed ethnic voting was personally negative or positive led me into my question as to whether they believed that ethnic voting was affecting or had an effect Ghana’s Democracy. Before asking the question, a lot of the respondents jumped immediately to discussing not only why they felt ethnic voting was negative, but in their explanations as to why they felt ethnic voting was bad a majority of the respondents discussed that they felt it was negative because it affected Ghana’s democracy.

There were two main reasons given by the respondents as to why ethnic voting was bad for Ghana’s democracy. People noted that if people voted solely based on ethnicity, they will be unable to make informed judgments about the candidates and therefore people will not vote for competent people making Ghana’s growth stagnant. However, I found it interesting that some of the respondents who though ethnic voting was negative said that they felt as though ethnic voting did not affect Ghana’s democracy. They believed that if people voted for people from their tribe that could do the job, then at least they had used ethnicity to give them direction instead of not at all. Another explanation someone gave for this was that a person felt as though ethnic voting caused certain towns to move forward, then eventually the whole country will also progress.

The second reason people gave was that ethnic voting could completely halt Ghana’s democracy because it can cause civil unrest that will tear the country apart. People cited examples of other African countries where ethnicity had caused wars such as in the Ivory Coast and in Rwanda, come of these countries not far from Ghana. A respondent discussed how if ethnic voting continued Ghana could be in for a lot of trouble because people of different ethnicities lived closely together in Ghana, there have been intermarriages and a majority of people are not all ethnically homogeneous anymore, and therefore Ghana will face a big problem when this happened.

Through my data analysis, I believe that it is important to note that I fell into some shortfalls while collecting my data for this analysis. In having to conduct some of the interviews in Twi, Fante and Ewe and having to translate them back into English, I believe some important expressions were lost through the translations making people’s views less solid than I preferred them to be. Another important shortfall with collecting my data came from the fact that it was hard to translate some of my questions into the different local languages effectively, and sometimes the meaning conveyed by myself or my research assistant did not always yield the answers I was looking for from the respondents, forcing me to cut put some of the interviews which eventually narrowed my pool of respondents. In Ghana, I came to find that people seemed to use tribe and ethnicity interchangeably, and therefore I had to conduct most of my interviews asking about tribe differences and using the words interchangeably, which could pose as a problem for some scholars, but worked in this situation

**Conclusion**

I believed that it was important in this case to address the problem, and identify it through out my interview, but in the end, I also wanted people to address ways in which the problem of ethnic voting could be curbed in Ghana; and by so doing, people could identify to me the main people or areas where ethnic voting was taking place the most. There were three very popular solutions given to ethnic voting and these were by education of especially the youth in the country, by targeting politicians and chiefs in the different regions to stop them from being ethnically divisive, and then there were the people who believed that nothing could be done about ethnic voting in Ghana.

For people that believed that the youth should be targeted and educated, a lit of them also stated education in general as a means of curbing ethnic voting in Ghana. This call for education was not just education attained through sitting in the classroom and learning even though they noted that as also being important, but educating the rural or unknowing Ghanaian about politics, and voting so they could themselves make more informed decisions. An interesting quote I heard was one of my respondents quoted from the Bible and said, “ Even God said that, but for a lack of knowledge my people perish..” and this is what he believed was going wrong in Ghana. As a means of educating people, respondents suggested the use of the media to broadcasts television shows that help people understand the importance of making more informed decisions. Some others blamed the problem on shear illiteracy on Ghana and believed that the education should be focused on the large number of illiterates we have in Ghana. A respondent noted that the time of the older generation had passed and there was no hope there, but it was important to educated the upcoming voters as a means of halting the problem, and allowing them to make more informed decisions that will aid Ghana move forward.

Another solution hat was brought up by the respondents many times was that politicians and chiefs in different towns must be enlisted to try and stop ethnic voting from continuing in Ghana. People blamed the way politicians campaigned in divisive ways to try and secure voted for themselves, and used clientelistic means as enlisting some chiefs to persuade their people to vote for one party or the other as one of the major causes of ethnic voting in Ghana. Respondents noted that an appeal to these “big men” many of them called them will be important so that the people who look up to them will learn lessons from them. They believed that politicians and chiefs should be working to bring people together and not trying to divide them for their own personal gains, which I believe, is also important.

Some more pessimistic people did not believe that Ghana could be helped at all, or that the ethnic problem will be difficult to get ride of. People argued that ethnic voting was such an important part of the Ghanaian voting fabric that if change was to come it would come slowly. Especially when it came to ethnicity in party in relation to the two major parties being the NPP and the NDC who are so set in their traditions with their roots deep in these ethnic differences. People also argued that people made their own decisions based on their own thought process and felt as though it will be impossible at this point to attempt to change someone’s mind and make them believe that ethnic voting is negative when that is all they have known. I thought these were both very strong reasons as to why it will be hard for people in Ghana to completely disregard ethnicity as a factor in voting in Ghana and this is why I stated my argument in the beginning of this project about the importance of ethnicity in Ghanaian politics. As mature as Ghana is becoming as a beacon of democracy in Africa, ethnic voting is a significant factor in the fabric of the nation and therefore even though it can be curbed to some extent it makes it hard to completely discard.

through interviewing people who were not literate or had little education.

Through my analysis, I conclude that ethnic voting in Ghana, although it might be less prevalent now as Ghanaians are becoming more educated and Ghana itself it is becoming more urban, ethnic voting still plays an important role in the decisions of both the parties and the individuals making decisions as to what party to vote for. Ghana is continuing to grow as a beacon on democracy in Africa, and I believe that if controlled ethnic voting might not be as detrimental for the country, because as some of the respondents noted, ethnic voting allows some people the direction necessary to help them make the decisions that will contribute to moving the country forward.

**Appendix**

**Appendix I**

**Eastern Region**

**Cape Coast and Elmina**

Interview 1

1. 29
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 1
6. Voted for a better Ghana
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. Akan

Interview 2

1. 33
2. JSS
3. Urban Area

(5)Yes

1. Number of elections: 3
2. Voted for his favorite party 🡪 like for the founder of the party
3. Ethnicity is less important🡪 is always a member of the party that he voted for regardless of the candidate
4. For others it varies- it could be because they like the candidate, for clientelistic reasons/ what the party has done for them, and sometimes it can be because of where the candidate of the party comes from🡪 but a lot of people focus on where someone id from before voting for them
5. Akan

Interview 3

1. 34
2. Secondary school
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 3
6. Campaign🡪 family ties
7. Ethnicity is more important🡪 because people in his party dominate where he is from and he believes that they have done a good job/ however it has not affected all the elections he has voted in
8. Some people vote based on ethnicity🡪 some people say that even if the candidate offered is a bird, as long as the person is in their party or from where they are from they will vote for them
9. Akan

(10)It is very important to him

Interview 4

1. 21
2. Post- graduate education
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 1
6. Economy
7. I don’t really look at where the person is from when I vote, because I think the economy is important, what the person says in their manifesto
8. Ethnicity is important🡪 because in Ghana it seems as though it is the order of the day. It is known that most Ewes are NDC and Ashantes are NPP, even though that is not what you are supposed to look at🡪 percentages during the times of elections show the trend, it has been the same since she was born
9. Northerner

Interview 5

1. 28 years
2. Post- graduate education
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 2
6. Considered the government, the way they governed the country
7. Ethnicity is less important🡪 focus on how competent the person is
8. Ghanaians focus on ethnicity when voting because looking at the last elections most of the candidates that run for presidency pulled a lot of votes from the areas in which they came from
9. Ethnicity has remained the same🡪 but competency of the person should be what is focused on more, therefore it is a big problem for Ghana
10. Akan
11. Not very important

Interview 6

1. 27 years
2. Post- graduate education
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 3
6. Family ties/ economy/ ideologies of the candidates running
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. People vote based on ethnicity🡪 long history, form Danquah/ Busia tradition and from the time of Nkrumah and that has continued until now
9. Akan
10. Not very important

Interview 7

1. 21 years
2. Secondary school
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 1
6. Voted for the party she liked, believed in the party
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. Believes that Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity
9. Akan
10. Not very important

Interview 8

1. Urban area
2. Registered voter
3. Number of elections: 3
4. Because she is a responsible citizen
5. Ethnicity is less important
6. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity
7. Akan

Interview 9

1. 45 years
2. Urban area
3. Registered voter
4. Number of elections: 3
5. Ethnicity is more important🡪 she always will vote for someone from her town/ of the same ethnicity
6. People vote based on who the like, she is not sure about the rest of the people: come people vote on clientelism or dislike for the party because of something they have done
7. Akan
8. Very important

Interview 10

1. 28 years
2. Secondary School
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 10 times
6. Voted for a change in government because of the economy/ inefficiency of the government
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. Does not believe Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity🡪 believes that Ghanaians pay attention to the candidates platform or ideas before they vote
9. Ga- Dangme
10. Not important

Interview 11

1. Urban area
2. Registered voter
3. Number of elections: 3
4. For a better, and more peaceful Ghana
5. Ethnicity is less important
6. Doesn’t believe that Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, but decide who is better for Ghana
7. Akan

Interview 12

1. Urban area
2. Registered voter
3. Number of elections: 1
4. Voted for a better Ghana
5. Ethnicity is less important
6. People in Ghana vote based on ethnicity🡪 people say that because the person is from my town, they will vote for them. That people say that it is not right for them to vote for someone from a different ethnic group, but they have to vote for someone fro their own ethnic group
7. Akan
8. Not very important

Interview 13

1. Urban area
2. Registered voter
3. Number of elections: 3
4. Form 4
5. Voted for the candidate that he liked and his manifesto
6. Ethnicity is less important
7. Most people prefer people from their towns, or of their ethnicity, because the believe that when the person comes they will be able to help their town
8. Akan
9. Very important

Interview 14

1. Registered voter
2. Number of elections: 5
3. For peace and for a better Ghana
4. Some people will look at the candidates from where they come from and will vote for them based on if they can do a good job, others will vote for a candidate if they took money from the candidate, then, those people are only just voting without thought. For the past elections she noted that it was said that a Fante has never been a head of state before and therefore they all voted for the NDC regardless of if it was their party or not
5. Ethnicity is less important🡪 she has always been a part of the Progress Party and the NPP
6. Akan
7. Not very important

Interview 15

1. 49
2. primary school
3. Urban Area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 5
6. Voted for someone who would help Ghana progress
7. Does not believe people vote based on ethnicity. People vote based on persons performance in power.
8. Ethnicity is less important- Did not vote based on ethnicity because whether or not he came from you town he was still a Ghanaian. Ghana as a whole is more important
9. Akan

Interview 16

1. 31 years
2. no education
3. Urban area
4. Number of elections: 3
5. Voted for someone who he thought could help
6. Sometimes you don’t always know where someone is from.
7. Ethnicity is important- voted for some one to help and that though that if they voted for a Fanti like himself he will be very helpful to the fishermen in the town
8. Akan

Interview 16

1. 45 years
2. no education
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 2
6. For a better Ghana- in terms of economic survival
7. Voted for the person she voted for because he came from the same tribe as herself
8. Some people do, but not everyone looks at where people are from
9. Akan

(10)Ethnic identification more important

Interview 17

1. 42 years
2. Started Technical School
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 5
6. No real issue, voted for the party he has always voted for
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. Does not vote based on ethnicity
9. Does not believe Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity. Ghanaians vote based on the manifestos of the candidates, and they have to test you to see whether what you are saying is true

(10)Akan

(11)Ethnic identification is less important

Interview 18

1. 40 years
2. form 4
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 5
6. Voted for someone who can take care of the country, if you can’t they change them
7. Ethnicity is less important- believes that Ghanaians have brought these separation of ethnicity unto themselves, that ethnicity does not matter at all because we are all Ghanaians but must pay attention to whether the person can govern the country or not- believes ethnicity voting is a new phenomenon and should not matter, if the person is from her town and can not do the job she will not vote for them
8. It is just recently that she has heard people say that because a candidate if a fanti, they are going to vote for them- people are saying they are going to vote for someone who comes from their home town
9. Akan

(10)Ethnic identification somewhat important

Interview 19

1. Vocational school
2. Urban area
3. Registered voter
4. Number of elections: 4
5. Vote because she liked the candidate, she wanted to see what he could offer since he has never been given the chance
6. Ethnicity is less important
7. A lot of people vote based on ethnicity
8. That ethnic voting affects Ghana because we are all the same people regardless of which region they come from
9. Akan

Interview 20

1. JSS
2. Urban area
3. Registered voter
4. Number of elections: 10
5. Voted for the person he voted for because he just liked the candidate. Wanted a change of party
6. Ethnicity is less important
7. People vote for people based on ethnicity, because if you are intelligent you will vote from someone from your town- used a saying that basically meant if someone from your town is well then so are you
8. Does not believe that when people vote for people based solely on where they are from it does not affect the country
9. Akan

(10) Ethnic Identification is most important

Interview 21

1. JSS
2. Urban area
3. Registered voter
4. Number of elections: 3
5. Voted for a better Ghana
6. People vote based on ethnicity- as a means of choice making
7. It hurts Ghana a little that people vote based on where they are from because if the person is not competent it affects Ghana
8. Akan
9. Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 22

1. 48 years
2. Primary school
3. Registered voter
4. Number of elections: over 10
5. Voted for a better Ghana- for better schools and jobs, and for change
6. Ethnicity is lass important
7. People vote based on ethnicity
8. It affects Ghana when people based vote based on elections because if the person does not bring change, then they did not succeed
9. Akan

(10)Ethnic identity not important

Interview 23

1. 31 years
2. JSS 2
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 4
6. Voted for someone who will enhance education
7. Ethnicity is of equal importance- if the person from her town wins, she will also reap the benefits
8. People vote based on ethnicity, that Ashanti people vote based on ethnicity a lot and therefore she also voted for someone from her tribe. Asantes believe that they are the biggest town (i.e. boastful) therefore she voted for someone from her tribe
9. Akan

(10)ethnicity identification somewhat important

Interview 24

1. 55 years
2. no education
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: many (5)
6. For a better Ghana- development and peace of mind
7. Ethnicity is more important- when the person reaps the benefits of being in power, they will bring it home
8. Some people vote for people that come from where they do, just because if everything goes well for the person from their town, then the person/ ethnic group will also reap the benefits- all will be well if the person from the individual’s town wins
9. Does not believe it affects Ghana’s democracy

(10)I think about my town, when Ghana is good, then where we come from will also be good

**Ashanti Region**

**Bantama, Suame Magazine and Ashanti Newtown**

Interview 1

1. 34 years
2. Polytechnic
3. Registered voter
4. Number of elections: 4
5. Responsibility as a citizen/ economy- liberal democrats/ believed in ideologies of the ideologies of the NPP- incumbent government- believed they were competent
6. Ethnicity is less important
7. Ghanaians in general vote based on ethnicity, even within the NPP there are divisions- there are the Ashante/ Akyem lines, and there are the Bongo people (Northern tribe) following the Busia tradition- so based on where they come from people believe that people from their tribes should be selected to rule the country
8. Increased role of ethnicity- as voter population goes up, ethnic voting goes up
9. Ethnic voting is not the best, and that competency should be the hallmark, that people’s abilities is what is most important

(10)Akan

(11)Ethnic identification of little importance

Interview 2

1. 35 years
2. Urban area- Bantama
3. Registered voter
4. Number of elections: 3
5. Voted for the person who will enhance the economy- and be able to give loans to people
6. Ethnicity is less important- regardless of where the person comes from, just so we can all have peace of mind
7. In Bantama, people do not vote based on where a person comes from, but asses one’s competence before voting for the person

(10)Ghanaians vote a lot based on ethnicity, people can stand there and say that “their government has come”, how has your government come? It is not for just those individuals but for everybody. People feel as though they can do what they want because someone from their ethnic group is president- people can say to someone to leave their job because they are not of the same partisan or ethnic group as the government in power, and therefore have rights to the positions that they have

(11)Closer to the elections it went up, and that is when you heard a lot of that, but these days you don’t hear people say that a lot

(12)It is very bad for the Ghanaian democracy because if you are going to say people should only vote for someone from your tribe, then there will definitely be unrest in the country- because we are all one- because incompetence will affect all of us

(13)Akan

Interview 3

1. 23 years
2. Secondary school
3. Urban area
4. 5 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 2
7. For continuation of what the past government did- competency of the past government- economy (employment)
8. Where candidates came from did not affect their chances- ethnicity is of less important
9. People do vote based on tribalism in Ghana- people can be like someone is from the North, and because of that there is no way that I should vote for someone from the north because of the stereotypes attached to them, however those of us that have been educated and are God- fearing don’t pay attention to things like that

(10)Ethnic voting is at the same place at it has been over the years he has voted

(11)Ethnic voting is not good for Ghana because it should be based on how the person can come and help Ghana and its people, and not based on where they come from

(12) education is essential to curbing ethnic voting in Ghana- educating the people

(13) Has not affected Ghana’s democracy

(14) Akan

(15)Ethnic identification not important

Interview 4

1. 52 years
2. Elementary school
3. 5- 7 Million/ yr
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 4
6. Competence of incumbent government
7. Ethnicity is less important- evident in the fact that she is a Northerner
8. Believes that the selection of presidential and vice- presidential candidates based on ethnicity has some benefit- but did not work with the NPP vice candidate this year because of the violence that ensued in his town
9. Does not believe people vote based on ethnicity where she comes from, some people do though

(10)It has come down

(11)Ethnic voting is not good for Ghana, people must look at how competent a person is before they vote for them/ how good the person is at their job

(12)Dagomba- Dagbani

(13)Ethnic identification is important

Interview 5

1. 30 years
2. JSS
3. 4 million/yr- est.
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 3
6. Policies of the respective parties
7. Ethnicity is less important- look at the qualities of the person
8. The ethnicity chosen for the NPP flagbearer was not helpful to the party’s success
9. People vote a lot based on tribalism

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11) It is not good for Ghana- competency should be paid attention to

(12)Educate people about listening to people’s policies and not base it on tribalism

(13)Sometimes when people share their views, people will just dismiss it because of the ethnicity of the person🡪 has not helped with democracy

(14) Akan

(15)Ethnic identification is very important

Interview 6

1. Bachelor’s Degree
2. Urban area
3. –
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 1
6. Efficiency of the past government, and a need for change
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. Ethnicity has never been a deciding factor as to who she voted for
9. Believes Ghanaians vote based on elections

(10)ethnic voting is increasing

(11)ethnic voting negatively affects Ghana🡪 someone who belongs to a different ethnic group might be able to be more effective at governing Ghana and because you might not belong to the same ethnicity you might not vote for the person

(12) Ethnic voting a problem for Ghana’s Democracy

(13)Akan

(14)Ethnic identification is somewhat important

Interview 7

1. 53 years
2. middle school
3. South Sentrsu
4. Over 15 million
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Competence of the past government-🡪 economic progress/ economy
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. For some people, they vote based on ethnicity, people know that the Ashanti Region is the strong hold for the NPP, so looking on that aspect people believe Asantes vote based on ethnicity, but people pay attention to the work of the government in making their decisions. If you compare the Volts Region and the Ashanti region, people think ethnicity plays a role, but you can not say that around Ghana, there is any ethnically homogenous region🡪 some people just pay attention to clientelistic promises made by the candidates in making their decisions—> listens to programs on radio where the debate about the democracy, before Democracy in 1992, the currency equivalent to the dollar was hich, but when Rawlings was leaving power, it had shot up, showing his incompetence as a leader

(10)Ethnic voting is negative, and affects nation building

(11) People who vote based on ethnicity vote like that because of a lack of knowledge, and even the bible declares that “because of a lack of knowledge my people perish.”🡪 Education has not reached the poorer masses

(12) Ethnicity is a problem for the democracy

(13) Akan

(14)ethnic identity is not important

Interview 8

1. 27 years
2. Secondary School
3. Urban area
4. 10 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. Citizenship responsibility
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ethnicity is important in Ghanaian elections

(10)Ethnicity is not good for the Ghanaian democracy because people should be able to access whether someone can do the job or not before voting for the person.

(11)Brings problems to the Ghanaian democracy

(12)Akan

(13)Ethnicity identification is of little importance.

Interview 9

1. 32 yrs
2. Secondary Technical School
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. Economy
8. Ethnicity is not important
9. John Mahama as MP and vice- presidential candidate from the NDC, people knew him well, however the Vice- Presidential candidate from the NPP, no one really knew, and therefore when he spoke people were a little hesitant🡪 they were both northerners and therefore it was dependant on their popularity. On the Presidential candidates, it was based off the impressions people had of Atta- Mills as being calm, and Nana Addo as being arrogant

(10)Ethnic voting has reduced because if you look at the North, the NPP could not get a lot of votes, but now they are doing better

(11)Ethnic voting has a negative effect on the Ghanaian democracy

(12)Change depends on the “big men” in Ghana, the politicians, because now all the different ethnic groups are mixed🡪 the people I have grown up with and work with are of different ethnicities, and therefore if we allow these ethnic divisions to continue, it will bring problems to Ghana. The NDC campaigned hard on ethnicity in 2008, and that was not helpful, because people would then say that if they saw a northerner who was NPP, they won’t understand what they were thinking, so they need to take that away (politicians).

(13) Akan

(14)Ethnic identity is not important

Interview 10

1. 28 years
2. Secondary school
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 4
7. Just believes that every government must be allowed two terms to make a change, after four years, it is enough and the government must step down and let others take their place.
8. –
9. Believes that tribalism is an important factor in Ghanaian elections, because if he sees someone from the Ashanti Region, how can he not vote for the Ashanti but go ahead and vote for someone of a different tribe, but if he sees the person is who is Ashanti is not qualified, and he sees a Northerner also up for that position who is qualified, he has to vote for the Northerner

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11) Believes that it is hard to say whether ethnic voting is good or bad, because everybody reasons differently. There are people that have been to school and know how to balance things, however there are people who have not gone to school and when it comes to time to vote, all they see is someone of their ethnicity and that is what directs their vote

(12)Believes that it is a problem in Ghana’s democracy

(13)Educating both the literate and illiterate, they have to put programs on the television and radio that educate people to help straighten people’s minds on this issue

(14) Akan

(15)Ethnic identification is important

Interview 11

1. 45 years
2. Secondary school
3. Urban area
4. 15 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. Votes for a good President- someone who can take care of the country well
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Believes that where the presidential and vice- presidential candidates cam from affected the votes they received

(10)Believes that ethnic voting people vote ethnically because they believe the person can come and help them

(11) Ethnic voting is a problem, because we can not live based on tribalism, we must base votes on competency

(12)Ethnic voting is coming down

(13)Akan

(14)Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 12

1. 40 years
2. Secondary School
3. 24 million/yr
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 5
6. Votes for a better Ghana for all people🡪 for infrastructural and economic development
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. Parties choose based on ethnicity, if you look at the NDC, “scream fuo” are more than everyone, and at some point during their campaigns, they use the ethnic card to taint the name of the Ashante to Ewe people, and it is not like that. However, we live in peace with them. The party he voted for did not have an ethnic focus
9. Division based on ethnicity is not important at all, however, if you delve further you realize that some people of other ethnic groups really do not like Ashantis, however Asante people like people of all tribes, and if you can see, we can marry people from all tribes. We are very welcoming of people from all tribes, but there are some who do not like people of other tribes, and will even not vote for them, but some people don’t pay attention to that
10. It really bring a problem to Ghana’s democracy
11. Ethnic voting has gone up
12. People must change their minds and help a good government do well

Interview 13

1. 50 years
2. Elementary education
3. Urban area
4. 2 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. For ethnic prosperity🡪 work and a lot
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Does not believe people in Ghana vote based on ethnicity

(10)ethnic voting is going up

(11)It is bad for the Ghanaian democracy🡪 because it is not going to help the Ghana move forward and can even incite violence

(12) It is hard to change people minds because of the notions of the Ashanti being the NPP strong hold and the Volta being the NDC stronghold that has been engrained into our political fabric

(13) Akan

(14)ethnic identification is important

Interview 14

1. 50 years
2. Form 4
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Vote for someone who will make Ghana better and bring peace🡪 schools,ect
8. –
9. ethnicity Is less important

(10)-

(11)Does not believe that people vote based on ethnicity

(12)-

(13) Akan

(14)Ethnic identification is not important

\*\* Missed interview- (had tertiary education/ between 50-55/ participated in all 5 elections/ Registered voter/ Part Gonja and part Ashanti/ ethnicity is not important)- man talked about how politicians ethnic engineering has made it difficult for people to vote without being affected by ethnicity in one way or the other. An Ewe man in government commenting about how he hated Kufour because he was an Ashanti🡪 therefore as Asante, it makes it hard for them to vote outside an ethnic bloc, because of strong sentiments expressed by people of other ethnicities against them, because of what they are perceived as. Ghanaians must ignore ethnicity all together an not think about ethnic identification is their decision making

Interview 16

1. 25years
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. Over 25 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Vote for a better economy🡪 someone to bring jobs
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. People vote for people based on what the candidates come round and promise them, candidates select people based on ethnic balancing so they don’t label the parties as being of a certain ethnic group

(10)believes people vote based on ethnicity, people will say that because the person is an Akan, they will help Akans, or bring good things to them, and this is how some presidential candidates win the elections, because of their ethnicity

(11)Believes ethnic voting is going up and can never come down

(12)It is a ad attitude because people must look at a person’s competence to place their vote instead of their ethnic identification

(13) Educate the illiterates, because they are too many

(14)ethnicity affects Ghana’s democracy

(15)Akan

(16)Ethnic identification is important

Interview 17

1. 23 years
2. Tertiary education
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 2
7. Just voted for the party he has always liked
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ethnicity will never be a factor

(10)Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity because as Africans e pay a lot of attention to ethnicity 🡪 as a Fante, and someone else being a Fante you have a strong connection to the person and see them as “family”

(11) Ethnic voting is going down

(12)Ethnic voting is negative because you might not how competent the person is and therefore ethnicity must be forgotten and the person who can make Ghana better must be chosen

(13)people should be educated so that they are able to think more about ethnic voting

(13)Akan

(14)Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 18

1. 35 years
2. accredited tertiary course
3. urban area
4. 8 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. How much the people appealed to him, made him vote for the person, how much you trust the person
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ethnicity has never affected his vote

(10)Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity because of a lack of education, they don’t know the effects, “they don’t know anything” somebody will just convince people in anyways to vote for them

(11)Ethnic voting is going down

(12) ethnic voting is negative🡪 if you are from Ghana, you are from Ghana and you just need to pay attention to how much you trust the person, because where the person comes from is not beneficial

(13) How we can maneuver people will change it through education, and campaigning

(14) Akan

(15)Ethnic identification is less important

Interview 19

1. 18 years
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. 2.5 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Economy
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. Ethnicity does not play a part in Ghanaian voting
9. Ethnicity voting is increasing🡪 because not people realize the benefits they can get from ethnic or partisan ties

(10)Ethnic voting is negative because maybe the person will be unable to do the work well, but because they come from the same ethnic groups, people might vote for them

(11)It is big problem in the Ghanaian democracy

(12)This can be changed through educating the upcoming youth, and the elders in the rural areas to not vote based on ethnicity

(13)Akan

(14)Ethnic identity is less important

Interview 20

1. 24 years
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 2
7. For peace and for things to go on well
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians don’t all vote based on ethnicity, but some say that that person is from my town so I have to vote for them

(10) Ethnic voting is going down

(11)Ethnic voting is negative because if we all vote for people based on ethnicity it will cause problems

(12)the elders in the town must be the people to talk to the voters to change this

(13) Bana🡪 minority group (other)

(14) Ethnic identification is less important

Interview 21

1. 22 years
2. Bachelor’s Degree
3. Urban area
4. 36 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 2
7. Economy
8. Parties consider ethnic background of their presidential/ vice- presidential candidates
9. Ethnicity did not affect the respective parties votes

(10)Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity🡪 due to the belief of people that if you vote for the NPP then you are Ashanti, so they do vote on ethnicity

(11)Ethnic voting Is increasing

(12)Ethnic voting is not negative or positive

(13) Change to more issue based voting that can be encouraged through education

(14)Akan

(15)Ethnic identification is important to him, but does not use it as a yardstick to judge others

Interview 22

1. 70 yrs
2. No education
3. Urban area
4. -
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. A government that is helpful and will make things go smoothly
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ethnicity did not affect votes to his knowledge

(10)Ethnic voting does not happen in Ghana

(11)Ethnic voting is very bad🡪 because everybody is human, and therefore if capable, must be supported

(12)talk to the people who vote ethnically to change their minds

(13) Affects Ghana’s democracy

(14)Akan

(15)Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 23

1. she is not sure how old- very old
2. no education
3. urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 5
6. For someone to come and take care of the country
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. She believes that people vote based on ethnicity, how she might want an Ashanti, a Dagomba might want a Dagomba, and she believes that people do it thinking than when they vote for the person, they will do good things which will eventually benefit them
9. Ethnic voting is going up

(10)You can not say ethnic voting is bad because the person has a secret vote and has done what they want to do, you can say nothing

(11)It is not good for Ghana’s democracy

(12) Akan

(13)Ethnic identification is very important

Interview 24

1. over 70 yrs
2. No education
3. Rural area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections:5
7. The person’s manifesto🡪 what the person says he will do
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ethnicity allowed the candidates to get more votes

(10)People vote based on ethnicity

(11)-

(12)Ethnic voting is negative

(13)-

(14) Akan

(15) Ethnic identification is important

Interview 25

1. 37 years
2. Form 4
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. For the country to be better and for the children coming up to have a good life
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Does not know if ethnicity affected candidates votes

(10)Does not believe ethnic voting affects elections in Ghana

(11)Ethnic voting is going up

(12)Ethnic voting is negative, because it is what has caused fights in other parts of the world

(13)Ethnic voting is hurts Ghana’s democracy

(14)She would ask Ghanaians to look at if the person is capable of doing, and as long as the person is Ghanaian, they should support the person

(15)Akan

(16)Ehtnic voting is very important

Interview 26

1. 50 yrs
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Economy/ for the government to make Ghana better, and for his kids to get a good education
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. –

(10)Some people vote based on ethnicity, especially those that are not educated. The President now for example, some people did not pay attention to what he can do, but just voted based on ethnicity

(11)ethnic voting is stable

(12)ethnic voting is negative, because the person might not be good, and therefore if you vote for the person just because they come from where you come from it is wrong

(13)It can be changed through campaigning, or through peers talking

(14)It affects Ghana’s democracy before people are not looking at the competency of the person

(15)Akan

(16)Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 27

1. 59 years
2. Form 4
3. Urban area
4. 2 million /mnth
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Vote for someone with a strong educational background, how effective/ efficient the person is in their lives
8. Ethnicity is less important🡪 a Ghanaian is a Ghanaian no matter where they come from, it the way the person speaks and comports themselves
9. If we look at people from different tribes you can see that Northerners, Ewes, and others vote to one place as a block, but it brings division, and it should not be like that. And now, he fells ike they should try the CPP and stop this NPP and NDC voting

(10)Ethnic voting is increasing

(11)Ethnic voting is negative and will not help us because, some politicians are now campaigning based on ethnicity, and it is not good at all because it will not help us. People sometimes will listen to people’s names, and then immediately discredit them based on their ethnicity, when they don’t even know them.

(12)People must come together as Ghanaians and forget these ethnic divisions, and put Ghana first

(13)It is a problem for Ghana’s democracy

(14)Akan

(15)Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 28

1. 49 years
2. Form 5
3. Urban area
4. 20 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Ghana economy/ for money to come
8. Ethnicity is not important
9. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, depending on who they are

(10)Ethnic voting is going down

(11) Ethnic voting is not negative

(12) Ethnic voting is not bad for Ghana’s democracy

(13) Akan

(14) Ethnic identity is important

Interview 29

1. 45 years
2. Polytechnic
3. Urban area
4. 48 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. What the candidate can do for the country- economically, for jobs
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ethnic affiliations of the party contributed to the party’s votes

(10)Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, because everybody is looking to vote for someone that is from their ethnic group in hopes of gaining help from them

(11)Ethnic voting is negative

(12)Ethnic voting is a problem for Ghana’s democracy, because we should be looking to develop places that need it, regardless of ethnicity

(13) If we are one people, then we must stick together as one nation and put someone at the head who will help the country

(14) Akan

(15)Ethnic identification is important

Interview 30

1. 32 years
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. 36 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Analysis of the incumbent government/ peace
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ethnicity did not affect parties votes
10. Does not believe Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity
11. Ethnic voting is going up
12. Ethnic voting is negative, because we are al Ghanaians
13. Through the media, students and politicians- education
14. Akan
15. Ethnic identification is very important

Interview 31

1. 29 yrs
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. 12 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. Economy
8. Ethnicity is not important
9. Ethnicity affected some people’s vote

(10)Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity due to all the conversations about ethnic affiliations to the president, or party in power. People use ethnic identification as a means of belittling people and that also does not help

(11) Ethnic voting is going up

(12)Ethnic voting is negative because it spoils a nation.

(13)It is a problem for Ghana’s democracy

(14) Educate people – especially the youth

(15)Akan

(16) Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 32

1. 45 years
2. Form 4
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Economy to grow—accessibility to loans
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ethnicity affected people’s voted🡪 Ghana was playing tribal politics, some woman just around the corner’s family rang her and said that Ashanti people are beating Ewes. Her mother called her that she should just come home, and she told her mother that it was not true—this was during the elections.

(10)Some Ghanaian tribes are the people that vote based on ethnicity, because of jealousy and anger—some Akyems against Ashantis too—people just assume things and accuse people, especially Ashantis of being too pompous when it is actually not the case

(11) Ethnic voting is going up

(12) It is negative because it robs people of opportunity

(13) To stop it we must learn to understand each other

(14)Akan

(15) Ethnic identification is very important

Interview 33

1. 73 years
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Votes for someone to take care of Ghana and for peace
8. Ethnicity I less important
9. Ethnicity helped votes for the respective parties

(10)Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, because if you look back to the times of Afrifa, he is Krobo, when he was in power, he broke down all the houses and built new ones, and so people hope for that for themselves, regardless of how selfish

(11) Ethnic voting is at the same place as where it has been

(12) Ethnic voting is negative, because if you only vote based on ethnicity it distorts things, it is not supposed to happen like that

(13) Ethnic voting does not affect Ghana’s democracy too much

(14)Change through education and crusading

(15) Akan

(16) Ethnic identification is important

Interview 34

1. between 56- 60 yrs
2. Elementary school
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Analysis of efficiency and abilities of the candidates
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ethnicity affected the voted the respective parties received

(10)People vote based on ethnicity

(11)Ethnic voting is going down in some regions and remaining stable in some

(12) Ethnic voting is negative because if you look at Burundi and Rwanda these tribal friction is what brought them to their present state

(13) We must learn to live as one and in peace for this to end

(14)Affects Ghana’s democracy

(15)Chamba tribe

(16) Ethnic identification is important

**Volta Region**

**Ho and Juapong (N. Kpong)(soldierman district)**

Interview 1

1. Between 40-44yrs
2. Tertiary
3. -
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 5
6. For a better Ghana, Democracy is the whole thing, and a good leader
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. Unsure whether people vote based on ethnicity, some might vote based on that, it is human instinct to vote for people from the tribe or family, just so they can say that the person ruling is from their family
9. –

(10)People need to be educated to stop voting according to ethnicity, and it can affect the voting process and individuals, and look for any tribe, as long as the person can deliver

(11)Ewe

(12)Ethnicity is not very important

Interview 2

1. 50 and above
2. Middle school
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 5
6. For a better Ghana, and develop their hometown/ peace
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. Ghanaians do not vote based on ethnicity, before it used to happen, but these days things are moving forward
9. Ethnic voting has gone down

(10)Ethnic voting is negative, and does not promote peace

(11)Educate people to understand everyone and voting

(12)Ewe

(13)Ethnicity identification is very important

Interview 3

1. 25 years
2. Secondary school
3. Urban area
4. 24 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 4
7. Economy
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Tribalism does not affect Ghanaian elections

(10)Tribalism is not good or bad, it depends on the person

(11)Through the Chief of the town influencing the people of the town and educate the people/ the assembly men and women

(12)Ewe

(13) Ethnicity is very important

Interview 4

1. 38 years
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. Registered voter
5. Number of elections: 5
6. Voted based on issues at stake, and always wanted to be neutral
7. Ethnicity is less important
8. Ghanaians basically vote based on ethnicity, from what he sees, even though someone might not be performing well, people will vote for them because they come from their tribe, and the same thing is seen in the region, because the person who was more competent was the opposition and where he coming from they did not want him to win, “… they were saying it behind close doors.” They say they don’t like Akans- they just hate them (the Ewe)- I know, they even attribute it to football teams🡪 thinks 55% of the people vote based on ethnicity
9. –

(10)Ethnic voting is not good, you vote for someone who will develop your area and not for someone from where you are from

(11)Ethnic voting affects Ghana’s democracy

(12) To change the effects of democracy, you have to start from the grassroots, so that children coming will know about these things before they reach voting age, even those that did not go to school will be taught at home, and it will change

(13)Akan

(14)Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 5

(1) 18-24 years

(2) SSS

(3) Urban area

(4)-

(5) Registered voter

(6) Number of elections: 1

(7) Economy

(8) Ethnicity is less important

(9) Believes that Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, because they think the person they are voting for comes from their home

(10) Ethnic voting has gone down

(11)Ethnic voting is negative

(13)Ethnic voting is bad for Ghana’s democracy

(14)Ewe

(15) Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 6

1. 45 years
2. middle school- Form 4
3. Urban area
4. 14.4 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Economy (living standard) and for democracy
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. If you talk of the Volta Region, tribalism here is number 1. They say that other parties are Akan speakers parties (but the NDC). Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, because even now when people vote here they say they won’t vote for the NPP because it is an Akan party🡪 He went to stand for the constituency elections, and they said they won’t vote for him because he is an Akan and he should let someone else who is in their tribe come and stand for the constituency🡪 after elections usually people forget party/ ethnic affiliations and differences
10. –

(11)Ethnic voting really affects Ghana’s democracy

(12)Education of the illiterate people/ the Chiefs should also talk to the people to move Ghana forward

(13)Akan

(14)Ethnic identification is important

Interview 7

1. 38 years
2. Form 4
3. Urban area
4. About 18 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. For a better Ghana/ jobs/ economy
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Most Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, Ashantis area

(10)Ethnic voting is negative

(11)To change this, Ghana should just go back into a military rule, because people are being too free, and Ghana needs more command.

(12)Ewe

(13)Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 8

1. 50 yrs
2. Tertiary school
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Just voted or the party
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. The previous government did not thing for us (Voltarians) because we are not in their party, like for us the market women, when they were doing something they only invited those who are in their party, and only give to partisan members, and all those things. She believes other party dwells on tribalism/ ethnicity because, there is a factory everyone depends on and it broke down, and has not been fixed because she believes that it is because they are the Volta Region and they believe that they are all NDC, so when the NPP was in power they did nothing, and did not help us.

(10)Ethnic voting is negative

(11)-

(12) Ewe

(13)-

Interview 9

1. 19 yrs
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 1
7. Economy/ change of government
8. Ethnicity is less important🡪 wants country to move forward
9. J.J. is an Ewe man and that is why many people vote for the NDC here.

(10)It is at the same place that it has been

(11)Ethnic voting is negative, because it stunts Ghana’s growth. If you vote for someone because they are from the same town as you, then he might not be able to do the best for Ghana and sometimes even for you

(12)Change: vote for any competent person so that Ghana moves forward

(13)Hausa

(14)Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 10

1. 33 years
2. Tertiary school
3. Rural area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. The entitlement to vote is why he votes—competency of the past government—seizure of civil incompetence
8. Ethnicity is less important🡪 During the 2008 elections he voted for the NPP for the presidential race, but for the NDC for parliamentary because the NPP parliamentary candidate was too pompous
9. There is ethnic voting, if you come here, the Akans are not lie that, but the Voltarians vote a lot based on tribalism🡪 If you come to the Volta Region, all the MPs that have won the elections have done nothing positive for the region, however, but as long as he is from their town, and of the NDC, they will vote for the person. Even if you put a goat at the head of the NDC and put a human at the head of the NPP, they will vote for the NDC, because of that connection they have to the party. But as for Akans, we are able to way problems and vote based on problems. I am married to an Ewe, she is NDC and I am NPP, and she does not face facts either, even though Kuffour has improved the town, they still don’t like him because he is Akan. Especially the Voltarians look amongst themselves, but Akans vote less as a block. The Akan vote is shared. They have made the NDC into an Ewe party because of the founder of the party, even though Atta- Mills is Akan, they feel like once you are an Akan in the party, you are of them, that is what I think

(10)Ethnic voting ha gone up🡪 At some point my wife and I will be sitting together and she will be talking and I will have to stop her. They turned it into a kind of Ewes against Akans thing these 2008 elections.

(11) It really hurts Ghana’s democracy, if it wasn’t for the understanding in Ghana, we will be in trouble. If we go to the other African countries like, Ivory Coast (Cote d’ Ivoire) and the rest, that is what has caused conflict. Like me, I am married to an Ewe and we have kids, so what happens when conflict comes, and ll though ethnic differences might affect us, it is not too much.

(12) Akan

Interview 12

(1) 30- 34 yrs

(2) Tertiary education

(3) Urban area

(4) around 96 million/yr

(5) Registered voter

(6) Number of elections: 4

(7) Influence of the environment in which he was, and the efficiency of the incumbent government seen in the environment

(8)Ethnicity is less important🡪 I am an Ewe, but I am a strong NPP man, my father is Ewe and an NDC, I don’t pay attention to those things

(9)Ethnic politics is a dirty game, Kuffour is an Ashanti, and I have always grown up and taught that Ashanti people don’t like Ewes, but I know that is not true. Because that should not bring a division amongst us. And what has NDC done for me for me to attach myself to them so much? A vast majority of Ghanaians vote of ethnicity. The politicians get in there, convince the people, throw some money at them and they vote for them. I am lucky to be educate, the village people still hold on to that primitive mentality that J.J. is their own man and must vote for him, but I try to educate them

(10)Ethnic voting is coming down

(11) It is affecting Ghana’s democracy, I will blame some of the politicians who are using this dirty means of campaigning to gain the vote, it nearly throws us into chaos. And what happened in Rwanda, can happen here. But, Ghana is making headway, out leaders are ready to accept their mistakes and work on it

(12)By putting our politicians right🡪 some of the NPP politicians do it here within the party, not knowing where I come from and then I put them right. When they mount the platform what they tell the people is sometimes sad, and it is with the NDC too, but we have to put them right. Most of them are playing tribal politics

(13) Ewe

(14)-

Interview 13

1. 34 years
2. Polytechnic
3. Rural area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Inefficiency of the past government
8. Ethnicity of the candidate is more important
9. Ethnicity has never affected the person he has voted for

(10)Ghanaians vote based on tribalism because for people influence others to vote for people from their tribe, especially the Akan, they do that a lot, but Voltarians don’t

(11) Ethnic voting has increased

(12)Ethnic voting is negative

(13)Ethnic voting is bad for Ghanaian democracy, because we are all Ghanaians and we have to come together as a team and do one thing

(14) Using the media, and forming groups to unite ourselves, and the parties, promoting unity

(15) Guan

(16)Ethnic identification is very important

Interview 14

1. 48 years
2. O’level- form 5
3. Urban area
4. -
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Nostalgia for the party she voted for/ Economy/ Stability
8. Ethnicity is not important
9. Ethnicity has never affected vote

(10)Ethnicity does not affect (man interjects: general opinion that at some places that certain people should control a polling station, and this happened mostly in the Ashanti Region, in the Ashanti Region you saw that there were about 90% of Ashanti voting for the NPP government, and the same applies to the Volta Region.)

(11) Man: it is going down because of the awareness

(12) Woman: You will never personally gain anything from the person in charge so why bother voting ethnically, the issue is the economy—Ethnic voting is not bad

(13)Ewe

(14) Ethnic identification is very important

Interview 15

1. 46 years
2. no education
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. If the person is humble he will vote for them
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Some people vote based on ethnicity

(10)-

(11) Ethnic voting does not help us- it is negative

(12) Bad for Ghana’s democracy because it divides Ghanaians

(13)Does not think you can change people’s minds, if we correct people’s mistakes

(14) Frafra (Dagbani side)—Upper East

(15)Ethnic identification is very important

Interview 16

1. 29 years
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections:5
7. Inefficiency of past government/ family ties
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, because they want to put someone from their ethnic group as a leader, so they can just say it

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11) It affects Ghanaian democracy, economy is not improving because of ethnic favoritism, and it is affecting development in some places

(12)Ga

(13)Ethnic identification is important to him

Interview 17

(1) 45- 49yrs

(2) Diploma in Basic education

(4) Urban area

(3) About 36 million/ yr

(4) Registered voter

(5) Number of elections: 5

(6) Management of the country🡪 economic and education

(7) Ethnicity is less important

(8) Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, because people just say because the person is from their ethnic group they are voting for them. Because also they are ignorant and following blindly

(9)It affect Ghana’s democracy because the literates are less than illiterates

(10) Illiterates must be talked to and educated

(11) Ewe

(12) Ethnic identification is important

Interview 18

1. 31 years
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. About 24 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 4
7. Voted for the party and not the people—only votes for the NDC/ family ties
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on elections, it is like marriage, if you look at someone from your town and you like them you will vote for them

(10)Ethnic voting does not affect Ghana’s democracy🡪 lots of Ewes vote for NDC

(11)Ewe

(12) Ethnic identification is very important

Interview 19

1. 24 years
2. Diploma
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 1
7. Because he belongs to that party/ the party’s vision
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, for example, he speaks Ewe, and if he sees anyone who is Akan, and I am NPP, they will ask why because all Ewes are NDC, it is a notion that all Ewes are NDC and al Akans are NPP, but it does not hold as far as he is concerned

(10)Ethnic voting is very bad for Ghana, because if he is in party A and he knows you have clear visions for Ghana you have to follow me to improve your life, or atmosphere, even if you don’t receive material goods

(11) Ewe

(12) Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 20

1. 38 years
2. technical education
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. For a change in government—just for a change to enhance democracy
8. Ethnicity is not important
9. Ghanaians do not vote based on tribalism

(10)Ethnic voting is negative

(11) Ethnic voting does not affect Ghana’s democracy

(12) What can be done? –

(13) Ewe

(14) Ethnic identification is important

Interview 21

1. over 70
2. Bachelor’s Degree
3. Urban area
4. 36 million/yr
5. registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Just to carry out franchise-- no party affiliation—competency of the parties—incumbent governments performance
8. Ethnic identification is less importance
9. Hesitate to declare, some may and others don’t

(10)Ethnic voting is going down

(11)Affects heightens Ghanaian democracy because president Mills received a lot form the Volta region when not from there

(12) Ewe

(13) Ethnic identity is very important

Interview 22

(1) 60- 65 years

(2) SSS

(3) Urban area

(4) previously around 54 million/ yr now retired

(5) Registered voter

(5) Number of elections: 3

(6) The manifesto of the party/ economy

(7) Ethnicity is less important

(8) Ethnicity affects the way Ghanaians vote it is so obvious. The Voltarians vote for the NDC and the Ashanti for the NPP

(9) Ethnic voting is going up

(10) It is bad for Ghana’s democracy

(11) Change people’s minds through education

(12) Ewe

(13) Ethnic identification is very important

Interview 23

1. 32 years
2. middle school
3. urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. The persuasive ways that the parties campaigned/ personality/ economy
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, because for Voltarians they are into NDC because the feel as though the NPP is an Akan party, and she thinks that those who support the NPP also think that the NDC is an Ewe party🡪 perception

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11) Ethnic voting is negative

(12) Bad for Ghana’s democracy because it does not allow for qualified leaders

(13) Ewe

**GREATER ACCRA REGION**

**Malata Market, Osu market, Labadi, Kaneshie Market**

Interview 1

1. 70 yrs
2. Class 1- primary school
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. She has always voted for the same party, because of the (P)NDC making her loose her money🡪 inefficient of past government
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, and may Gas voted for ethnicity

(10)Ethnic voting is bad for Ghana

(11)Pray for good insight

(12) Ga

Interview 2

1. 37 years
2. no education
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Their manifesto
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Unsure whether Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, but it is there. People say a lot of things that allude to the fact that they vote ethnically

(10)Ethnic vote is going up

(11)It hurts Ghana’s democracy because you must look at the person and access them to help

(12)It will be hard to change people’s mind, because they have to want to change themselves

(13)Krobo

(14) Ethnic identification is not important

Interview 3

1. 24 yrs
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. 8.4 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. The personalities of the potential presidential candidates🡪 their attitudes and the way they carry themselves
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on elections because they think they can get favors from the candidates if they win and are of the same ethnicity as them

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11)Ethnic voting is bad for Ghana because we might overlook qualified people for that reason

(12) Change through starting from the youth , and education

(13)Krobo

Interview 4

1. 43 years
2. Form 4
3. Urban area
4. 100 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Just for a change of government
8. Ethnicity is not important
9. Some Ghanaians say they have to vote for their brother, so sometimes they vote based on ethnicity

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11)Ethnic voting is bad for Ghana because it will produce bad leaders and Ghana can not move forward then

(12)To change it, people must be educated

(13)Ewe

Interview 5

1. 51 years
2. Middle school
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. Economy
8. Ethnicity is not important
9. Ghanaians vote based of tribalism because they believe that people from their tribes/ ethnic groups will help them out
10. Ethnic voting is going down

(11)Ethnic voting is bad for Ghana, because you will choose a bad person

(12)-

(13)Ewe

Interview 6

1. 40 years
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Economy
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on tribalism, however does not think in the 2008 elections people voted based on ethnicity because all though the Akans are many they did not vote for the Akan to win

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11)Ethnic voting is worrying Ghana’s progress- because considering the Akan and the other ethnic groups, the Akans are many and it can cause a problem

(12)Ethnic voting is negative for Ghana’s democracy, because people are suffering and Ghana is not progressing

(13)Akan

Interview 7

1. 40yrs
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Voted because of a believe in the party
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, because she knows NDC came to Ghana through ethnic voting

(10)—

(11)-

(12)-

(13) Ga

Interview 8

(1) 39 yrs

(2) middle school

(3) Urban area

(4)-

(5)Registered voter

(6)Number of elections: 5

(7)Impressed with the performance of the incumbent government

(8)Ethnicity is not important

(9)Ghanaians do not vote based on ethnicity, because most Gas voted for the NPP even though it is supposed to be an Akan party

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11)Ethnic voting is negative because even those who voted last year because of tribalism are regretting their decision because of the lack of improvement

(12)To end tribalism the whole country must decide to stop it

(13)Fante- Eastern region

Interview 9

1. 30 yrs
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 4
7. Economy
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians did not vote very much based on ethnicity in 2008, because looking at the strong holds of the NPP, they lost in those strong holds meaning that people considered other factors in their voting

(10)Ethnic voting is going down

(11)Ethnic voting is negative

(12)Ga

(13)-

Interview 10

1. 39 years
2. primary school
3. urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 4
7. Voted based on the economy and for peace
8. Ethnicity equally important
9. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, but other factors also play a role in voting

(10)Ethnicity affects the Ghanaian democracy negatively because someone may consider ethnicity, and end up voting for someone who is incompetent. In previous elections tribalism played a major role in people’s decisions

(11)Ethnic voting is going down

(12) People should be educated to consider the manifestos of the candidates when voting

(13)Ga

Interview 11

1. 49 years
2. –
3. Urban area
4. -
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 4
7. Inefficiency of the past government economy
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians don’t vote based on ethnicity, because non- Fante people voted for Atta- Mills. Even though her party is the NPP, she looked at the capabilities f the parties, and voted

(10)Ethnic voting is increasing

(11)Ethnicity can be positive, because if the person voted for can do the job it can lead to a progression of the country

(12) –

(13) Ga

Interview 12

1. 42 years
2. no education
3. urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 4
7. Inefficiency of the past government
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity and played a major role in the past elections , because many people alluded to the fact that they weren’t Fante and therefore did not vote for Atta- Mills

(10)Ethnic voting is going down

(11)Ethnic voting is negative because it is not going to help the country and economy move forward

(12)Change ethnic voting through education to look at the qualifications of the person

(13) Ga

Interview 13

1. 52 years
2. form 4
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. The efficiency of the past government
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ethnicity of Ghanaians vote based on elections especially in these elections. Ethnic voting is a part of Ghana’s voting fabric

(10)Ethnic voting is going down

(11)Ethnicity is negative of Ghana’s democracy

(12)Ethnic voting can be stopped through education and the performance of the incumbent government

(13) Ewe

Interview 14

1. 44 years
2. Form 4
3. Urban area
4. 25.2 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 4
7. Inefficiency of the past government
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. In Accra does not think ethnicity played a major role in the elections, looking at the strong holds of the respective parties, the still voted based on ethnicity

(10)Ethnic voting is increasing

(11)Ethnic voting is negative for Ghana’s elections, because the qualities of the candidates is more important

(12)People should be educated to look at the manifesto of the respective candidates

(13)Ga

Interview 15

1. 19 years
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 1
7. Voted based on ethnicity: “ye se a dieh wo feiah eye”🡪 they say if something is home it is good
8. Ethnicity was more important
9. Ghanaians look at the parties manifestos, but consider tribalism too

(10)Ethnic voting is going down

(11)Ethnic voting is not good for Ghana’s democracy

(12) Akan🡪 Fante

Interview 16

1. 33 years
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. About 48 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. Voted based on the candidates manifestoes and the economy
8. Ethnicity was less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, Gas look at tribalism a lot, but we Akans we don’t do that, we look at what you are saying and how you will help the country first

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11) It is hurting Ghana’s democracy because it is not allowing us to vote the good people into power

(12) People should learn to look at people’s manifestoes

(13) Akan

Interview 17

1. 32 yrs
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. Around 18 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 2
7. For change
8. Ethnicity is more important—I voted for NPP in 2000 for a change, but in this election the man is from my town so I voted for him, some politicians also are not helpful. Some politicians said when Atta- Mills lost the first two times that Fantes are stupid and that they are bringing something to their home and they are rejecting it, so therefore this time we seized the opportunity
9. Ethnic voting is going up

(10)Ethnic voting is negative for Ghana

(11) Akan

Interview 18

1. 43 years
2. Elementary school
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Just for a change in government
8. Ethnicity was less important
9. For Ghanaians majority of them vote based on ethnicity

(10)Ethnic voting is stable

(11)It is bad for Ghana’s democracy because it can cause conflict

(12) Ga

Interview 19

1. 23 years
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 1
7. Voted for the party he likes/ family ties
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on elections, and it is very important in Ghana. It is something that is there, the two strong parties, it is seen in the the voting patterns of the different regions

(10)Ethnic voting had gone down

(11) It is negative for Ghana because it distorts the way the other regions votes

(12)-

(13) Akan

Interview 20

1. 47 yrs
2. O’ level
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Economy
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians sometimes vote based on ethnicity, a lot of people who are illiterate and don’t know anything do that

(10)Ethnic voting is going down

(11) Ethnic voting is bad for Ghana because if you follow someone just because of ethnicity whether they are good or bad it is very wrong

(12)-

(13) Ga

Interview 21

1. 40 years
2. Form 4
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. –
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Does not think ethnicity plays an important role in Ghanaian elections, because she is from a different ethnic groups as Atta- Mills, but still voted for him

(10) Unsure whether ethnic voting is going up or down

(11) Ethnic voting is negative because it does not help the country progress

(12) Does not believe it is happen and therefore can not give advice on the issue

(13)Ewe

Interview 22

1. 45 years
2. Primary school
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Progress and peace/ there must be change for progress
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Believes some Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity

(10)Ethnic voting is negative because the best person will not be voted for then

(11)Ethnic voting is decreasing

(12)-

(13) Akan

Interview 23

1. 27 years
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. 5 million/yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 2
7. Inefficiency of past government
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. In these 2008 elections that is what happens, some famous Ghanaian woman “Mamame Dokunu” was in NDC and as Akuffo- Addo was the flag bearer she jumped to the NPP, and made him realize that tribal politics was going on

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11)Ethnic voting is bad for Ghana because it can bring fighting in Ghana

(12)Ghanians should stop tribal voting because it could bring fighting, they must talk to the people

(13) Akan

Interview 24

1. 32 years
2. O’levels
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. Economy and change
8. Ethniity is less important
9. Some people pay attention to ethnicity and others do not

(10)Ethnic voting is going down

(11)Ethnic voting is negative

(12) People should be educated to vote for people who will help them

(13)Dagomba

Interview 25

1. 35 years
2. Form 4
3. Urban area
4. About 6 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 3
7. Efficiency of the past government
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians can really look at ethnic voting a lot, at home where I live some of the people are Fante and come are Ga, and there were times where there were fights in the house even between close friends and relatives

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11)Ethnic voting is hurting Ghana because we all need to be one, and look for the person who will come and bring us peace

(12) –

(13) That we should educate the people to vote for the people that will help Ghana and bring us some peace and freedom

(14)Akan

Interview 26

1. 59 years
2. –
3. urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Because of the love of the founder of the NDC and trusts him/ justice
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Some Ghanaians vote based on tribalism/ ethnicity, but others don’t

(10)Ethnic voting is very bad for Ghana

(11) Ethnic voting is going down

(12) That people should be educated to vote based on the truth and direction from God

(13) Gonja

Interview 27

1. 33 years
2. Diploma/ Tertiary
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 4
7. For a change in government🡪 eight years enough for turnover
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. A lot of Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity, due to a belief that it is time for them to have someone coming from their region

(10)Ethnic voting is going up

(11) Ethnic voting is bad because when we consider some regions are larger than others,and therefore it will be imbalanced and some regions will benefit more than other

(12) People should be educated to vote based on issues because when the president comes he is not going to consider his region alone

(13) Northerner

Interview 28

1. 45 years
2. no education
3. urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Ghanaian and must exercise franchise
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians do not vote based on ethnicity

(10)

(11)Ethnic voting is bad because then we will never be able to select a president in Ghana

(12)-

(13) Frafra

Interview 29

1. 32 years
2. Primary school
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 4
7. The love for the party/ family ties
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians do not vote based on ethnicity

(10)-

(11)-

(12)-

(13) Akan

Interview 30

1. 41 yrs
2. No education
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. We are all Ghanaians and when there is someone put up as a presidential candidate if in my heart I like him I will vote for him
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. A small number of Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity/ tribalism, but some don’t as well

(10)Ethnic voting is going down

(11) Ethnic voting is bad for Ghana, because it will eventually spoil the country

(12)-

(13) People should be told to not bring me tribalism into politics

(14) Busanga

Interview 31

1. 55 yrs
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Just because she loved the party
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Some Ghanaians vote based on tribalism/ ethnicity, but others look at what the person can come and do for you

(10)Ethnic voting is stable

(11) Ethnic voting is negative for Ghana, but if you vote for someone bad because he is from your town it is negative

(12)-

(13) Northerner

Interview 32

1. 55 yrs
2. no education
3. urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Voted for a better Ghana
8. Ethnicity is not important
9. Ghanians don’t vote based on ethnicity

(10)-

(11)-

(12)-

(13) Dagomba

Interview 33

1. 60 yrs
2. No education
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. For a better Ghana🡪 economy
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Some Ghanaians vote based on tribalism

(10)Ethnic voting is going up in some places and down in some

(11)Ethnic voting is bad for Ghana, because there is not peace

(12)-

(13)Ewe

Interview 34

1. 46 yrs
2. SSS
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. For elections you have to look and see if something is not going well and you need to change, you need to change
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Some Ghanaians vote based o ethnicity, and some base it on that fact that if they are Fante, the have to vote for a Fante

(10) Ethnic voting is going up

(11)Ethnic voting is negative because people must pay attention to people who can do the job

(12) Akan

Interview 35

1. 26 years
2. Bachelor’s degree
3. Urban area
4. –
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 2
7. Economy/ change in government
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians vote based on ethnicity because people just want to feel proud that someone from their tribe is the president

(10)etjnic voting is decreasing

(11) Ethnic voting is bad for Ghana’s democracy because we will not be moving in the right direction

(12) change come through campaign strategies and politicians

(13) Ga

Interview 36

1. 44 yrs
2. JSS
3. Urban area
4. 36 million/ yr
5. Registered voter
6. Number of elections: 5
7. Voted for change
8. Ethnicity is less important
9. Ghanaians don’t vote based on tribalism, but vote when change is needed

(10)-

(11)-

(12)-

(13) Akan

**Appendix II**

**Central Region election results**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Constituency | 2008 | 2008 | 2008 | 2004 | 2004 | 2000 | 2000 | 1996 | 1996 |
|  | Prz-1 | Prz-2 | parli | prez | parli | prez | parli | prez | parli |
| Abura/ Asebu/ Kwamankese | NDC | NDC | NDC | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC |
| Agona East | NDC | NDC | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC | NDC |
| Agona West | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC |
| Ajumako/ Enyan/ Esiam | NDC | NDC | NDC | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP |
| Asikuma/Odoben/ Brakwa | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC |
| Assin North | NDC | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC |
| Assin South | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC |
| Awutu Senya | NDC | NDC | NDC | NPP | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC | NDC |
| Cape Coast | NDC | NDC | NDC | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP |
| Effutu | NDC | NDC | NDC | NPP | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC | NDC |
| Gomoa East | NDC | NDC | NDC | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC |
| Gomoa West | NDC | NDC | NDC | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC |
| Hemang Lower Denkyira | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | \*NDC | \*NDC | \*NDC | \*NDC |
| K.E.E.A | NDC | NDC | NDC | NPP | CPP | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC |
| Mfanantseman E. | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC |
| Mfanantseman W. | NDC | NDC | NDC | NPP | NPP | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC |
| Twifo Atti Morkwa | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC | NDC | \*NDC | \*NDC | \*NDC | \*NDC |
| Upper Denkyira E. | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | \*NPP | \*NPP | \*NPP | \*NPP |
| Upper Denkyira W. | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | NPP | \*NPP | \*NPP | \*NPP | \*NPP |

\* IN 2000, TWIFO ATTI MORKWA AND HAMANG LOWER DENKYIRA NOW TWO DIFFERENT CONSTITUENCIES SINCE 2004, WERE ONE CONSITUENCEY🡪 TWIFO/HEMANG/LOWER/ DENKYIRA🡪 UPPER DENKYIRA WAS ALSO ONE CONSITUENCY

**Appendix III**

Feature Article of Tuesday, 12 June 2007

**Columnist:** [Obenewaa, Nana Amma](http://ghanaweb.net/GhanaHomePage/features/columnist.php?S=Obenewaa,%20Nana%20Amma)

**On Ethnocentricity, and Ghana's Fragile Democracy**

**Dr. Kwame Okoampah-Ahoofe Under Nana Amma Obenewaa’s Surgical Knife.**

I am worried by the revival of ethnocentricity on Ghanaweb. I forcefully oppose Dr. Kwame Ahoofe’s narrow definition of ethnicity, and the faultlines it creates among Ghanaweb visitors. For reason of argument, and clarity, I will divide this article into two parts. Firstly, I will challenge Dr. Ahoofe’s constructivist understanding of ethnicity. And, secondly, I will discuss the importance of this concept, and its value in 21st century Ghana’s integrative democratic politics.

I am unnerved by Dr. Kwame Ahoofe’s ethnocentricity, and his stance of ethnic identity. Equally troubling is the learned scholar’s projection of “Akyemkwa, as a monolithic concept; a posture that deifies contemporary reasoning on national identity and citizenship. As Ghanaians, we are all tainted by different cultural experiences, inter-ethnic associations, and globalization among other unlisted variables. Against this backdrop, the waffling mindset that certain ethnic groups are “Islands unto themselves” is a flawed construct peddled by a subset of indigenous neo-imperial revelers, who still prance to the “asafo-ntweni” (i.e. the drums) of 17th century. No person in Ghana can claim exclusive right to belonging to a pristine ethnic group. As Ghanaians, we are all mixed. Each one of us is an extracted product from many cultures, different ethnicities, and clans.

Contrary Dr. Kwame Ahoofe-Akyemkwa’s definition of ethnicity, and his belief in serological purity, historical interconnectivity denies every Ghanaian any special claim to a single, and supposedly, an untainted ethnicity. In a global village, (our) individual identities, irrespective of one’s ethic membership, are interconnected, whether we like this fact or not. Being an “Akyem” doesn’t give Dr. Ahoofe the prerogative to deny others their “Ghanaianness”. In many of his mordant writings, Dr. Ahoofe has never shied away from supplanting the value of Ghanaian citizenship with his “Akyemkwa” identity. True Ghanaians are not, and should not be, ashamed to trace their genealogical roots to other ethnicities. If anything, our familiarity with our multicultural heritage, and crisscrossed ancestry, must bolster our pride as worthy citizens, and add to our determination to convert our nation’s colourful experience, history, wealth of knowledge, and social capital to solidify Ghana’s democratic credentials, and achievements.

I reject Dr. Kwame Ahoofe’s ethnocentric stance, which puts his “Akyem” ethnic group on the royal pedestal, while he devalues, particularly, Voltarians as less acquiescent to basic human rationality. For example, he condemns Dr. Asamoah-Botwe, a Voltarian by blood, an Akyem by birth, and a Ghanaian by nationality, for his crusty writings on “Akyem” colonial politics, and Dr. J.B. Danquah’s betrayal of the nation’s independence cause. Matter of fact, he calls Dr. Asamoah-Botwe a “dancer,” and not a “historian,” despite the known fact that the said scholar has a Doctorate Degree in History. Knowledge-production, be it from an Ewe-Ghanaian, a Ga-Ghanaian, an Akyem-Ghanaian, or an Ashanti-Ghanaian, seeks to reinforce our nation’s cultural diversity. It also underscores the many substantive roles that each ethnic group has played, and continues to play, in preserving our nation’s socio-cultural capital, growth, and development. Those who support Ahoofe (i.e. Oyokoba) in rejecting others based on their ethnicity only undercut our nation’s collective efforts to unlock the unexplored treasures of knowledge and inter-ethnic engagements. Secondly, it also stalls increasing undertakings by the government, and civil society, to knit together our fragile nation which has become less tolerant in the face of incendiary ethnocentric writings, which come with no prescriptive therapy to addressing our nation’s growing problems. Dr. Ahoofe’s siege mentality, and his cunning ability to win ethno-converts to his cause, will harm our nation’s inter-ethnic relations.

No culture is authentic, and neither are the people who believe in this constructed theory. Ethnicity, like human culture, is an unending journey. As we navigate our way through many cultural spaces, and alleyways, we unconsciously pick unknown cultures to complement our own; an experience which has helped, and continues to help, to shape our understanding of other practices beyond our cultural territory. In recent times, Western scholarship, culture, and the fashion industry have appropriated romanticized, exoticized, eroticized, and commoditized indigenous African art, artistry, and dance. The West has successfully integrated the stated into new areas of specialty. In a funny twist, the Western fashion industry has made billions out of “Thongs” and G-Strings” which are stolen designs from “Ye Nananom Amoasin.” In a global village, Western corporate executives understand the profits that come with integrative creativity, and the commodification of Africa’s originality.

Despite the rivalry between many of the world’s religions, and Christianity’s negation of other religions as ungodly, we see some form of commonality between historical ecclesiastical adversaries, and increased calls for inter-denominational accommodation to minimize world conflicts. The rebirth of the worship of Yoruba’s “orishas” in North America attests to the intersectionality of global religions as humanity migrates to each other’s cultural spaces.

As a nation, we will always stumble upon the malcontented Ahoofes who convulse at seeing others who don’t look, talk, walk, dance, sing and think like them. We will also encounter the many Vice Ressiens who fail to acknowledge “Ashantis” as equal partners in nation-building. However, beneath the edifice of Ahoofe’s ethnocentric constructivism are patriotic Akans, and non-Akans, who have contributed immensely to our nation’s growth, and development, despite years of their rejection by dominant ethnic groups, and the bleeding wounds afflicted on them by depraved politics, and policies. No ethnic group can assert “lordship” over the other. Let’s embrace each other, and respect what we bring to the table. To deny other ethnic groups their rightful place in national politics is to assault the values of freedom and justice for all.

The 21st century requires that we place less emphasis on our ethnicity. It should not hold sway over our dealing with others, and the state’s distribution of the nation’s assets and resources. Let’s respect, and see each other’s ethnicity, and culture, not as a threat, but rather as strength. Out of diversity, comes unity. Finally, by no means is this article an attack on Dr. Ahoofe’s personality. He is a fine scholar, and a gentleman. On the contrary, it is meant to call for a dialogue, and reaching a common understanding that we all are Ghanaians, no matter one's ethnicity. Good day and cheers.

**Appendix IV**

Feature Article of Monday, 13 August 2007

**Columnist:** [Abdul-Hamid, Mustapha](http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/columnist.php?S=Abdul-Hamid,%20Mustapha)

**Ethnicity and Religion in Ghana's Politics**

Multi-party democracy has proven to be the most effective and viable system of governance all over the world. This is the system of governance that allows all shades of opinions to grow and flourish. This is in spite of the fact that opponents of multi-party democracy have argued against it, especially on the basis that it fosters tribalism.

Indeed political arrangements in most African countries are aimed at ostracising the evil of tribalism. Ghana as one of the leading lights in democracy in Africa has as part of its political arrangements said for example that before a political grouping is given a certificate to operate as such, it must show evidence of having an office in all the districts of Ghana. This has been deliberately made to ensure that no political party implants its roots in only one part of the country. Prior to Ghana’s independence in 1957, Muslims and people of Northern extraction attempted to form political groupings based on their religiosity and ethnicity. The Muslims formed a party known as the Muslim Association Party (MAP). Muslims of the Zongo communities formed the MAP in early 1954 in order to consolidate their position in the Ashanti kingdom. It is significant to state that, Muslims in Ashanti had hitherto enjoyed a special status in the court of successive Ashanti kings as professional amulet makers and spiritual consultants. Besides, with no more wars to fight between the Ashanti and the British colonial rulers, there was little need for this mostly migrant community. There was therefore the need to consolidate their positions and establish their legitimacy as bona fide Gold Coasters. In particular, a large number of Muslims resented the restrictions placed by the Convention Peoples Party (CPP) controlled municipal councils on Muslim traders in the markets. The Northern Territories on the other hand under the leadership of J.A Braimah, also thought that their interest would best be guaranteed under their own political grouping. They therefore formed what was known as the Northern Peoples Party (NPP). According to the inaugural document, their aim of forming the NPP was: To ensure that there is respect for the culture of the people of the Northern Territories. Their political and social development Their just treatment Their protection against abuses. Both the MAP and the NPP were anti-CPP. Alfai Larden, the then chairman of the Kumasi branch of the party for example wrote: “True Muslims can never be friends with the CPP”. Unfortunately, both the NPP and the MAP performed woefully in the 1956 elections. In 1957, the CPP passed the Avoidance of Discrimination Bill which outlawed parties and political groupings based on religiosity and ethnicity. Ever since, we have decided as a country to keep religion and ethnicity out of our body politic. Indeed northerners in particular have since the NPP debacle learnt to be more nationalistic than ethnic centered. Thus when the late President Hilla Limann formed the Peoples National Convention (PNC) and contested the 1992 election with the man who overthrew his democratically elected government, northerners overwhelmingly rejected their own in support of Jerry Rawlings. Dr. Edward Mahama continued to suffer the same fate with his northern brothers. As for Professor Atta Mills’ fate in the Central Region, the least said about it the better. Thus from Hamile to Axim, the people of Ghana have shown their aversion for politics based on religion and ethnicity. We need to emphasise competence, capability and experience rather than ethnicity in our body politic. For example after the collapse of apartheid the African National Congress (ANC) was divided between the returned exiles led by Thabo Mbeki (Oliver Thambo’s protégé) and those who fought apartheid from South Africa. Initially Mandela did not want Mbeki as his deputy (Vice President) after the 1994 election. Mandela feared having two Xhosas running the country so that they are not perceived as tribal. He favoured Cyril Ramaphosa, a Venda, the popular former trade-union leader and ANC stalwart. In the end, others persuaded him (Mandela) to put Mbeki (leader of the other faction and a Xhosa) on the ticket. Then in the United States of America in 1992, the Democratic Party against all expectations and predictions presented a double south ticket of Bill Clinton and Al Gore and defeated the incumbent Republican party that presented the traditional North/South ticket of George Bush Snr. (South) and Dan Quayle (North). Indeed if we were to decide as a nation to conduct our political affairs based on religion and ethnicity, it will mean deliberately deciding that certain portions of our population be left out of political discourse in this country. The 2000 population census puts the religious divide of this country into 69.0% Christian, 15.6% Muslim and 8.5% Traditional. Across the regions of Ghana, the predominance of Christianity is observed except in the Northern and Upper East Regions. Indeed the only region in which Islam is reportedly dominant is the northern region. With regards to ethnicity, the 2000 population census shows that the Akan are 69.1%, the Mole-Dagbani, 16.5%, Ewe, 12.7% and Ga-Adangbe, 8.0%. By these statistics, if we were to decide that we should conduct our politics on the basis of religion or ethnicity, then some of us especially Northerners and Muslims would be effectively left out of political discourse in this land of our birth. I therefore find the creeping incidence of religion and ethnicity in our politics a very dangerous development. Certain candidates in the race for the flagbearership of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) have started to play the ethnic card in order to win the automatic allegiance of their compatriots. We all need to join hands to condemn this development. Lets remember what ethnicity has done to Rwanda and Cote D’Ivoire. Besides, the directive principles of state policy as enshrined in our constitution makes it mandatory for governments to ensure the equitable distribution of the nation’s resources. Therefore no one ethnic group can under the pretext of alleged discrimination seek to make ethnicity the central plank of its political engagement.

**Appendix V**

TUESDAY, 30 JUNE 2009

[Tribalism in politics: NPP needs to wipe the slate clean](http://thechixfiles.blogspot.com/2009/06/tribalism-in-politics-npp-needs-to-wipe.html)

**Introduction**

1. I would refer to myself as a Ghanaian whenever I am asked what my nationality is; regardless of where in the world I am. It is my national identity. All Ghanaians belong to different tribes and have different cultural values. The only thing that brings all these tribes and cultures together is the national identity as Ghanaians. Since we all identify ourselves as Ghanaians, one will naturally assume that we will relate to each other as Ghanaians and run the affairs of the country as Ghanaians. However, it is sad to observe and say that such is not the case; particularly in the politics of Ghana. I will not attempt to compare political parties in this short opinion except focus on the main differences in the way things are done in the NPP and maybe draw examples from the main political parties.

**"National" to "New"**

1. The founders of the New Patriotic Party (as it is called now) had agreed on naming the party National Patriotic Party. However, at a press conference to outdoor the party, the interim chairman, Mr B J da Rocha announced the name of the party as the "New Patriotic Party" and dropped the "National" to the surprise of all of those who were present at the earlier meeting at which "National" was adopted. He later explained that many of the parties that had been formed in Ghana, following the lifting of the ban on party politics had "National" in them and he thought the NPP should sound different. (See <http://www.npp-ghana.org/index.php?categoryid=8>).
2. I never thought deeply about the above paragraph until very recently when I read an article about the history of the NPP. Was the reason behind dropping "National" for "New" given in good faith? I would rather have a political party with the word "National" in its name because then I would feel the party serves the interest of everyone who identifies as a Ghanaian national. But then with the word "New" substituting "National", I question whether the NPP has a national interest. The article I read summarized the history of the NPP as follows: tension between two parties – one dominated by Asantes and the other dominated by Akyems – finally led to a united political party. To avoid further tensions, both sides agreed to select a leader not from one of the dominating tribes i.e. Asante or Akyem. Busia, a Bono, was picked and eventually led this newly formed party to victory. Therefore, with the NPP deriving its foundations from the Progress Party and the Danquah/Busia Tradition, it is safe to say that the NPP is a large Asante-Akyem base. (Read the entire article here <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=163697>).

**Asante – Akyem Rivalry**

1. You may ask why any of this tribal classification is relevant. Fast forward to 1992 when the NPP was formed, the word "National" is substituted for the word "New". I fail to see what is new about the NPP. The NPP is still dominated by Asantes and Akyems, seventeen years since the formation of the NPP. There is nothing new in that is there? Tribalism has never been so palpable in the party until now. Many will disagree with me on the last statement. Nonetheless, those who disagree are only living in denial and it will be in the party's interest to deal with this issue before it escalates. Ultimately, it will be in the interest of Ghana and its young democracy.
2. The party through its presidential candidate, Mr. J.A. Kufuor (an Asante), won the 2000 elections in a run-off. For a party founded to reflect the strong principles of the Progress Party, one would assume they would have upheld the agreement not to have a leader from either dominating tribes until all tribes within the party were equally represented. There is the argument that, Mr. Kufuor deserved to be the presidential candidate as he was duly qualified. I strongly believed that Nana Addo (an Akyem) also deserved to be the presidential candidate as he was also duly qualified. He played a significant role in the formation of the NPP; contributed to the party financially and intellectual; appeared on television shows such as Talking Point to defend the position of the NPP whilst the NPP was in opposition; and participated in demonstrations such as "Kumi Preko" whilst the NPP was in opposition. I was under the blind impression that he would secure the presidential candidacy of the NPP for the 2008 election without strong opposition.
3. However, the beauty of the democracy existent within the NPP proved me wrong. Or at least I thought it did. Nana Addo's strongest opponent was Alan Kyerematen (an Asante). Comparing the two men from an objective point of view, taking into account who had made significant contributions to the party since its formation and who will serve as a better leader, I had no doubt in my mind that Nana Addo was the better man. Amongst the contestants for presidential candidacy were other duly qualified members who had contributed significantly to the NPP as Nana Addo had. For instance, Jake Obetsebi Lamptey (a Ga) had contributed significantly to the formation of the party and whilst the party was in opposition. However, he was overlooked when it came to selecting a presidential candidate because he was not Asante or Akyem.
4. Given the contributions by these men, you would have expected Mr. Kufuor to have rendered his support to either of them or any of the other contestants who had contributed to the party from its formation through the time when the party was in opposition. On the contrary, Mr. Kufuor threw his support behind his fellow Asante man, Alan Kyeremanten. He immediately won the support of the Asante arm of the party resurrecting the supposedly buried tribalism within the party. Nana Addo lost the election in a run-off. Since then, there have been calls for him to remain as the presidential candidate. Others argue that he had his chance and he lost it. The latter comes from the Asante arm of the party. As much as I would like to see Nana Addo run as the presidential candidate in 2012, I am afraid such tribalism in politics is eating up the party.
5. Many people refer to the NDC as an "Ewe" party primarily because majority of the votes the NDC receives comes from the Volta Region. It is their strongest hold amongst the other regions. However, the composition of the NDC party is very diverse. In fact, almost all tribes are represented within the NDC. In any event, it is arguable that "Fantes" are a majority within the NDC. The NDC can therefore hold itself out as a party with a national interest at heart. Similarly, the CPP has a diverse membership.

**"Patriotic" in NPP**

1. The NPP may argue that the word "Patriotic" in the name of its party demonstrates its national interest. A patriot is a proud supporter or defender of his or her own country and its way of life. Is this what the NPP is about? I argue that the NPP is a proud supporter or defender of the Asante and Akyem tribes and its way of life and not Ghana as a nation. The NPP's motto is "Development in Freedom". How is there freedom when members of other tribes are not able to compete fairly for presidential candidacy? Some members argue that the running mate is always from the northern part of Ghana; so given that, the party reflects representation across the entire country. That argument only supports how the NPP takes for granted the other tribes in the country. In order not to appear tribally biased, they select a northerner as a running mate in every election year. Why can't a northerner be a presidential candidate?

**Final Thoughts**

1. In fact, if the NPP wants to portray itself as a Ghanaian party or an all inclusive tribe party, then the presidential ticket for the 2012 election should have someone from the northern part of Ghana as a presidential candidate and either someone from the Central Region, Western Region, Brong Ahafo Region or Greater Accra as a running mate. Alternatively, if the NPP wants to play the game of politics, it can concentrate on southern Ghana to win the election. In that case, the presidential ticket should have someone from the Central Region with the running mate from Brong Ahafo Region. This gives the party a fighting chance and at the same time appearing as an all tribes party – a Ghanaian political party and not an Asante-Akyem party. This will limit if not stop members of the NPP joining political parties that appear to be Ghanaian parties.
2. At the moment, the NPP is neither a national party nor is it a patriotic party and there is nothing new about the party. So as the party takes steps to amend its constitution, it should bear in mind the effect tribalism has in splitting a country and not only a political party. The party seeks to enlarge the Electoral College and limiting the number of contestants for presidential candidacy. Enlarging the Electoral College will not solve the current tribalism problem unless the Electoral College is diverse and fully represents the other tribes in Ghana. Furthermore, putting a cap on the number of contestants for presidential candidacy undermines democracy. Instead, I suggest that the party re-adopt the agreement not to have an Asante-Akyem leader or presidential candidate for some time. This position should be adopted for peace and unity within the party. In the process, it will allow the party to even out and be a more nationally represented party. And hopefully, members of the party will identify themselves as Ghanaians and not by tribes.

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Forrest, J. (2004). *Subnationalism in africa : Ethnicity, alliances, and politics*. Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner Publishers. The main purpose of the book is to analyze the growth of subnationalist movements in post-colonial Africa. In the chapter "Back Towards the Future," Forrest discusses the growth of subnationalist movements in Ghana and how they affected political movements in the country. It describes mainly the struggle between the Akans and the Ewes, the ethnic groups that are the basis of both the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC) respectively. It is important to my research because it puts into perspective the ancient struggle between the two groups and how it affects politics and their cohesion in present times. Forrest has written many books on African politics and is knowledgeable about the continent and ethnic disparity within the continent.

Fridy, K. S. (2007). The elephant, umbrella, and quarrelling cocks: Disaggregating partisanship in ghana's fourth republic. *African Affairs, 106*(423), 281-305. doi:10.1093/afraf/adl040 The Article looks at ethnicity and politics in Ghana's Fourth Republic, between the 1992 to 2004 elections. It focuses on the debate as to how important ethnicity is as a factor that affects voting patterns based on literature on the topic and an analysis on past survey results attained. This journal article is of great importance to my research because it focuses a lot on the research that I intend to do myself. It looks as other factors such as urban/rural divides in its analysis of ethnicity and politics in Ghana. It discussed that ethnicity continues to be an important factor in voting in Ghana, but did not do a thorough analysis as to why ethnicity is less of a deciding factor now and due to when it was written does not include the 2008 elections.

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Hydén, G. (2006). *African politics in comparative perspective*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from Table of contents only <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0515/2005018124.html> Publisher description <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy0633/2005018124-d.html> <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0515/2005018124.html> <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy0633/2005018124-d.html;> Table of contents only <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0515/2005018124.html> Publisher description <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy0633/2005018124-d.html> <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0515/2005018124.html> <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy0633/2005018124-d.html>  Chapter nine of the book focuses on ethnicity and conflict. Although this is not what my project is focusing on, the chapter discuses ethnicity as a form of identification in Africa and how institutions and other variables, such as economic variables contribute to the re- enforcement of the different ethnic groups. The intent of the analysis is for policy and political reform and therefore has a lot of depth in its analysis of the role of ethnic identity and its effect on politics and its tendency to cause a rise in conflict. It uses countries such as Uganda and Rwanda as a basis for its analysis, but the information could be transfered to help analyze Ghanaian ethnic identification.

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