

**MINOR PARTIES AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN GHANA'S
FOURTH REPUBLIC, 1992 – 2022**

By

ERIC YOBO

(Student No: u20761032)

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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Department of Political Sciences
Faculty of Humanities
University of Pretoria



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Supervisor: Prof. Victoria L. Graham

DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that this thesis presented on “Minor Parties and Democratic Governance in Ghana’s Fourth Republic” is the results of my original research work. This work has never been presented in whole or in part for any other degree of this University or elsewhere.

Eric Yobo

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Pretoria, August 2023

ABSTRACT

Despite the rising interest in party politics in Africa, minor party activism remains largely understudied, particularly in the context of plurality-based two-party systems. This study therefore examined minor parties in Ghana's emergent two-party system (1992-2022), with the aim of investigating their continued motivation for electoral competition; the constraints on their electoral success; and their contributions to Ghana's democratic governance.

The study was based on a multiple-case study research design, relying on semi-structured in-depth interviews and observation to generate qualitative data on three minor parties in Ghana, namely, the Convention People's Party (CPP), the People's National Convention (PNC) and the Progressive People's Party (PPP).

Findings show that despite the minor parties' limited chance of winning elections, the rationale for competing is largely driven by the affordability of the minor party ticket, opportunities for party patronage, ideological inclination, pursuit of political recognition, amongst others.

The identified constraints on the electoral success of the minor parties are grounded predominantly in both institutional and non-institutional factors. The institutional constraints generally include the statutory rules, established norms and conventions pertaining to Ghanaian politics which tend to hinder minor parties' development; whereas the non-institutional constraints are mostly non-statutory, but prevalent endogenous and exogenous factors, which inhibit the minor parties' development and electoral viability.

Although the electoral impact of the minor parties in Ghana is indeed limited, they contribute to parliamentary enrollment; provide considerable space and alternative opportunities for citizens' participation in political life; promote constitutionalism and rule of law; influence public policy-making; and augment democratic accountability.

Whilst the minor parties are encouraged to harmonize their candidate nominations due to their shared political ideology, institutional reforms such as the adoption of a proportional representation system are recommended to augment their electoral viability and contributions to Ghana's fourth republican democratic governance.

Keywords: Democratic Governance, Duverger's Law, Election, Ghana, Minor Parties

DEDICATION

To the glory of God, this thesis is dedicated to:
My wife, Eunice; daughter, Janelle; and sons, Andy and Chris

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	-	Action Congress Party
AFAG	-	Alliance for Accountable Governance
ANC	-	African National Congress
APC	-	All Progressives Congress
APRP	-	All People's Republican Party
CI	-	Constitutional Instrument
CODEO	-	Coalition of Domestic Election Observers
CPP	-	Convention People's Party
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization
DCE	-	District Chief Executive
DFP	-	Democratic Freedom Party
DPP	-	Democratic People's Party
EC	-	Electoral Commission
EFF	-	Economic Freedom Fighters
FCUBE	-	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
FPTP	-	First-Past-The-Post
GCPP	-	Great Consolidated Popular Party
GFP	-	Ghana Freedom Party
IEA	-	Institute of Economic Affairs
IPAC	-	Inter-Party Advisory Committee
ISS	-	Institute for Security Studies
KEEA	-	Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem
NACAP	-	National Anti-corruption Action Plan

NAL	-	National Alliance of Liberals
NCCE	-	National Commission for Civic Education
NDC	-	National Democratic Congress
NDP	-	National Democratic Party
NEC	-	National Executive Committee
NHIS	-	National Health Insurance Scheme
NIP	-	National Independent Party
NLC	-	National Liberation Council
NLM	-	National Liberation Movement
NPP	-	New Patriotic Party
OSP	-	Office of the Special Prosecutor
PAP	-	People's Action Party
PDP	-	People's Democratic Party
PFP	-	Popular Front Party
PHP	-	Peoples' Heritage Party
PNC	-	People's National Convention
PNDC	-	Provisional National Defense Council
PNP	-	People's National Party
PP	-	Progress Party
PPP	-	Progressive People's Party
PR	-	Proportional Representation
PUP	-	Palmer United Party
PWDs	-	People with Disabilities
ROPAB	-	The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill

RPD	-	Reformed Patriotic Democrats
SDF	-	Social Democratic Force
SNP	-	Scottish National Party
STV	-	Single Transferable Vote
TFP	-	Third Force Party
UFP	-	United Front Party
UGCC	-	United Gold Coast Convention
UGM	-	United Ghana Movement
UK	-	United Kingdom
UNC	-	United National Convention
UNP	-	United Nationalist Party
UP	-	United Party
US	-	United States

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xiii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction and Research Theme	1
1.2 Statement of the Research Problem	4
1.3 Research Aim and Objectives	5
1.4 Research Questions.....	6
1.5 The Scope of the Study	6
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	7
1.7 Overview of Theoretical Framework.....	7
1.8 Overview of Methodology.....	8
1.9 Structure of the Research.....	9
1.10 Conclusion.....	10
CHAPTER TWO.....	12
REVIEW OF CONCEPTUAL, THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE.....	12
2.1 Introduction.....	12
2.2 Conceptual Definitions.....	12
2.2.1 Democratic Governance	12
2.2.2 Multi-Party System Versus Two-Party System.....	20
2.2.3 Plurality System Versus Proportional Representation.....	22
2.2.4 Minor Party	23
2.3 Theoretical Framework.....	28
2.3.1 Rational Choice Theory	29
2.3.2 Duverger’s Law	31
2.4 Empirical Literature.....	33

2.4.1	Drivers of Minor Parties' Electoral Competition.....	33
2.4.2	Barriers to Minor Parties' Success.....	38
2.4.3	Democratic Relevance of Minor Parties.....	49
2.5	Conceptual Framework	58
2.6	Conclusion.....	59
CHAPTER THREE		61
HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF MINOR PARTIES IN GHANA'S DEMOCRATIC POLITICS, 1947- 2020.....		61
3.1	Introduction.....	61
3.2	Minor Parties During the Pre-Independence Era, 1947 – 1957	61
3.3	Minor Parties Under Ghana's First Republic, 1960 – 1966.....	64
3.4	Minor Parties Under Ghana's Second Republic, 1969 – 1972	65
3.5	Minor Parties Under Ghana's Third Republic, 1979 – 1981	67
3.6	Minor Parties Under Ghana's Fourth Republic, 1992 – 2020	69
3.7	Conclusion.....	75
CHAPTER FOUR.....		77
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		77
4.1	Introduction.....	77
4.2	Philosophical Assumption.....	77
4.3	Research Design.....	78
4.4	Research Approach.....	79
4.5	Sources and Methods of Data Collection	80
4.6	Population of the study	81
4.7	Sampling	81
4.8	Data Analysis	83
4.9	Limitations of the Study	84
4.10	Ethical Consideration.....	85
4.11	Conclusion.....	85
CHAPTER FIVE		87
MINOR PARTIES AND ELECTORAL COMPETITION IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC		87
5.1	Introduction	87
5.2	Accounting for Minor Party Candidature in Ghana's Fourth Republic	87
5.2.1	Affordability of Minor Party Ticket	88
5.2.2	Political Patronage.....	90

5.2.3	Ideological Motivation	93
5.2.4	Pursuit of Public Recognition	97
5.2.5	Expression of Grievance	99
5.2.6	Alternate Political Leadership	100
5.3	Accounting for Minor Parties' Failure in Ghana's Fourth Republic	102
5.3.1	Institutional Constraints.....	102
5.3.1.1	Constitutional Restraints	102
5.3.1.2	Campaign Finance Laws	106
5.3.1.3	Ballot Access Requirements.....	108
5.3.1.4	The Electoral System	113
5.3.1.5	Presidential Debates	115
5.3.2	Non-Institutional Constraints	117
5.3.2.1	Limited Media Coverage	117
5.3.2.2	Defective Leadership.....	120
5.3.2.3	Financial Constraints.....	123
5.3.2.4	Organizational and Campaign Deficiencies.....	127
5.3.2.5	Lack of Inter-Minor Party Coordination.....	129
5.3.2.6	Ideological Purity	131
5.3.2.7	Major Party Stratagems.....	133
5.4	Conclusion.....	137
CHAPTER SIX		138
DEMOCRATIC RELEVANCE OF MINOR PARTIES IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC		138
6.1	Introduction.....	138
6.2.	Why Minor Parties Matter in Ghana's Emergent Two-Party System	138
6.2.1	Augmenting Political Participation	138
6.2.2	Voter Education	140
6.2.3	Augmenting Political Inclusion	142
6.2.4	Parliamentary Representation.....	144
6.2.5	Democratic Accountability.....	150
6.2.6	Promoting the Rule of Law and Constitutionalism.....	154
6.2.7	Issue Advocacy and Policy Influence	157
6.2.8	Electoral Impact and Democratic Consolidation.....	161
6.2.9	Towards the Legitimization of Democratic Elections	163
6.3	Conclusion	165

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	166
7.1 Introduction.....	166
7.2 Summary and Conclusion	166
7.2.1 Objective 1: The Minor Parties’ Drive for Electoral Competition in Ghana’s Fourth Republic.....	166
7.2.2 Objective 2: The Constraints on the Electoral Success of Minor Parties in Ghana.....	167
7.2.3 Objective 3: The Contributions of the Minor Parties to Ghana’s Fourth Republican Democratic Governance	173
7.3 Contribution to Knowledge	176
7.4 Recommendations	177
A. Recommendation For Minor Parties.....	177
B. Recommendation For Policy-makers.....	178
C. Recommendation For Future Research	179
REFERENCE	180
APPENDICES	208
Appendix A: Sample Distribution of Interviewees.....	208
Appendix B: Letter of Informed Consent	209
Appendix C: Interview Schedule	212
Appendix D: Sample of Letter from the NDC Requesting for Refund of Candidate Nomination Fees for the 2020 General Election.....	215
Appendix E: Ethics Approval	216
Appendix F: Age Distribution of the 2020 Ghanaian Voters Register	217
Appendix G: Some disparaging news headlines on minor parties in Ghana	218
Appendix H: PPP sues Government of Ghana over Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE)	219
Appendix I: Minor Party Parliamentarians and Committees of Parliament, 1997-2016.....	220
Appendix J: PNC’s Council of Elder Intervention & 2020 PNC Filing Fee	221

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: 1969 Ghanaian Parliamentary Election Results	66
Table 3.2: 1979 Ghanaian Presidential Election Results.....	67
Table 3.3: 1979 Ghanaian Parliamentary Election Results	68
Table 3.4: Parties Contesting Parliamentary Elections & Seats Won, 1996 – 2020 .	69
Table 3.5: Results of Presidential Elections, 1992 – 2020	71
Table 5.1: Party Primaries Nomination Fees of the Minor Parties vs. Major Parties, 2004 – 2020	89
Table 5.2: Electoral Commission’s Candidate Nomination Fee, 1992 – 2020	109
Table 5.3: Parliamentary Nominations of CPP, PNC and PPP, 1996 – 2020.....	111
Table 6.1: Parliamentary Representation of Minor Parties under Ghana’s Fourth Republic, 1993 – 2021.....	145
Table 6.2: Some minor party functionaries who have served in NDC and NPP administrations, 1993 – 2022.....	160

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework	58
Figure 6.1: Images from the PPP-led anti-corruption demonstrations	153

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and Research Theme

Minor parties, also known as ‘third’ parties, have assumed a permanent feature of democratic politics despite their limited success (Pineda et al. 2021; Rosenstone et al. 2018; Sanders 2017; Gillespie 2012). A minor party is any political party competing for votes that failed to receive more votes than either of its two formidable rivals, or in the case of upcoming polls is considered implausible to do so (Epstein 2012; Gillespie 2012). Gillespie (2012), for instance, notes that minor parties have been an established component of American politics, both at the federal and state level. Even in a political system which is onerous for them to function, minor parties have stalwartly challenged the two dominant parties, raised issues and influenced public policy throughout American history (Goff & Lee 2019; Rosenstone et al. 2018). Minor parties have also been active players in some European democracies and in Australia (Monro 2019; Hughes 2019; Sanders 2017). In the British two-party system of the Conservative and Labor Parties for instance, minor parties such as the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and the Liberal Democrats have persistently registered their participation in electoral politics to challenge the status quo (Hughes 2019; Sanders 2017).

While minor parties have been an enduring component of political systems across the globe, the general consensus among scholars is that minor parties are rarely successful in single-member plurality¹ rule systems like those found in the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US) (Neville-Shepard 2019; Hughes 2019). The picture in Australia is quite dissimilar as several minor parties such as the Australian Greens and the Australian Democrats have attained significant electoral success, with continual periods of representation in the Australian Senate due to the use of a variant of proportional representation (Monro 2019; Kefford 2017; Kefford & McDonnell 2016;

¹ Plurality refers to an electoral format wherein each voter is entitled to vote for only one candidate, and the candidate who polls the most votes (a plurality) is elected.

Gauja 2010). Proportional representation describes electoral systems in which parties gain legislative seats in ratio of votes cast in their favor. The essence of such systems is to constitute a legislative assembly that reflects the overall dispersal of public support for each political party (Buisseret & Prato 2020).

As a political party whose electoral strength is quite weak to gain elected office, a minor party nevertheless offers electorate alternatives and seeks to influence the behavior of the major parties (Goff & Lee 2019). The dichotomy between minor parties and mainstream parties lies in their membership strength, outreach capacity and the number of candidates they are able to sponsor in elections. Minor parties sparsely nominate candidates in elections and often do not garner significant numbers of votes (Sifry 2013; Copus et al. 2009). The reasons for minor parties' failure reveal important systemic constraints and biases against smaller parties operating within strong two-party systems. As Sifry (2013) observed, minor party candidates are often denied a competitive chance through discriminatory ballot access regulations, unequal campaign funding, winner-takes-all contests, and derisive media coverage. Nevertheless, because minor parties rarely win elections or form governments, they are often neglected in public discourse and receive limited scholarly attention (Demirkol 2019; Gillespie 1993). As Gillespie (1993, p. 2) puts it more succinctly, minor parties are often "relegated to the periphery of political life" due to their relative electoral inconsequentialities.

The African continent, in particular, is inundated with several fragile minor parties seeking to win election and implement their manifestoes. Nigeria, for instance, had 93 registered political parties as at January 2020 (Shaban 2020), yet only the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC) are considered major parties. The rest are all minor parties (Chidi 2015; Shaban 2020). Likewise, a small African nation like the Republic of Benin has approximately 20 minor political parties on the electoral roll. In South Africa, 28 completely new [minor] parties contested the 2019 South African general elections and an aggregate of 88 new smaller parties have been formed in the post-1994 era (Labuschagne 2020). This phenomenon is partly due to the unrestrained founding of new political parties, coupled with the prevalent dearth of party institutionalization across the African continent (Labuschagne 2020; Elischer 2013; Salih & Nordlund 2007).

Despite rising interest² in party politics in Africa, the activities and roles of African minor parties remain understudied, particularly in the context of emerging two-party systems (Bertrand 2021; Stroh 2010). Stroh (2010), for instance, opined that by reason of the apparent and sometimes patent frailty of Africa's minor parties, a methodical inquiry of their political behavior has not been viewed as relevant. This is apparently as a result of the fact that minor party candidates do not often appear on ballots and, even when they do, they are not regarded as viable candidates. With relatively little data to analyze in this area, researchers have not paid considerable attention to minor parties in Africa (Aidoo & Chamberlain 2015; Ishiyama 2009). Yet, the Ghanaian two-party system, and the marginalization of minor parties within that system, is a worthy subject of inquiry due to the phenomenal growth in the number of Ghana's minor parties following the return of multiparty democracy in 1992.

Since Ghana's Fourth Republican democratic dispensation occasioned the current de facto two-party hegemony of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP), only a few minor party nominees have been voted to the nation's parliament, and almost none come close to capturing the presidency (Bob-Milliar 2019; Yobo & Gyampo 2015). Hence, for three decades of uninterrupted constitutional rule in Ghana, public life has been dominated by a political duopoly comprised of its two main political parties – the NDC and the NPP (Agomor 2019). Given that it is immensely strenuous for minor party candidates to win elections in Ghana, it is quite astounding that they even resolve to continue to participate in the electoral process. This study is, therefore, designed to explore in-depth the motivation for running under a minor party label, its associated obstacles, as well as the significant contributions of minor parties' platforms towards democratic governance within the specific context of Ghana's emerging two-party system. For the purpose of this study, democratic governance is operationalized as comprising five key elements: a political system for selecting government through free and fair periodic elections; the active participation of the people in political life; transparent and accountable government; safeguard of

² See, for instance, Dawson et al (2023); Kronke et al (2022); Bertrand (2021); Bob-Milliar (2019); Muhammad (2016); Sarakinsky and Fakir (2015); Chidi (2015); Daddieh and Bob-Milliar (2014); Kadima 2014; Elischer (2013); Osei (2013); Stroh 2010; Ishiyama (2009); Gyampo (2009); Gyimah-Boadi and Debrah (2008); Salih and Nordlund (2007)

the fundamental rights of all people; and a rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all people (see Diamond & Morlino 2005; 2016).

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

A research problem is defined as a specific area of concern or gap in scholarly literature that points to the need for further understanding and enquiry (Creswell 2017). In this study, the research problem is described thus:

The third wave of democratization which swept across Africa, including Ghana in the early 1990s, has occasioned an influx of many political parties in these new democracies (Sanches 2020; Bratton & van de Walle 1997; Huntington 1991). The evolution of these political parties includes minor parties, which are smaller political establishments with defective organizational and outreach capability to effectively contest and win elections. Since these parties rarely win elections, scholars concentrating on democratization tend to denigrate their essence in the political process (Demirkol 2019; Aidoo & Chamberlain 2015).

In Ghana, like many other democracies, the use of single-member plurality rule makes it exceedingly onerous for minor parties to thrive (Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017). Paradoxically, Ghana's Fourth Republican electoral democracy continues to witness an influx of minor parties attempting to acquire state power in order to govern. While some of these minor parties are secessionists from the two dominant parties, the NPP and the NDC, others have independent ancestries. Regardless of their heritage and constituent, the abject certitude is that these minor parties are marginalized and have consistently performed abysmally during competitive elections. Whilst their chances of winning elections are almost non-existent, an upsurge in the number of minor parties can be observed during Ghanaian general elections (Bob-Milliar 2019; Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017). Kwofie and Bob-Milliar (2017, p. 42), particularly, note that the decision by minor parties in Ghana to contest in general elections is problematic, and it is quite more alarming that "they compete in constituencies where they know they cannot win." Yet there are relatively few systematic analyses or theoretical explanations for this state of affairs.

This apparent scholarly neglect of minor parties has not only moderated the number of studies on minor parties, but reveals to a large extent researchers' bias against non-major parties. Assuming the electoral weakness of minor parties, the few studies on minor parties have overly concentrated on reasons behind their failure (Neville-Shepard 2019; Goff & Lee 2019). Likewise, some other minor party studies tend to focus on the rationality of minor party voting (Monro 2019; Chamberlain 2012), rather than the motivation for their electoral participation as well as their contribution toward democratic development. Hence, scholarship has not typically interrogated the role that minor parties might play in either deepening or actually impeding democracy. This study is therefore designed to address this research gap by focusing on minor party activism in Ghana; one of Africa's promising democracies, ranked 7th by the 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (Mo Ibrahim Foundation 2023.). This is because salient empirical queries are raised by the presence of numerous minor parties in Ghana's electoral democracy. Why, for instance, do minor parties persist in running in elections when they rarely ever succeed? What accounts for the emergence of minor parties in an otherwise two-party system? What influence – electorally and otherwise – do minor parties or their candidates have on Ghanaian democracy? These are the key issues that drive this study.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The main aim of the study is to examine minor parties' activism in the context of Ghana's emergent two-party system. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. Critically examine minor parties' drive for electoral competition in Ghana's two-party system.
- ii. Critically analyze the constraints on the electoral success of minor parties in Ghana.
- iii. Critically examine the contribution of minor parties to Ghana's democratic governance.

1.4 Research Questions

A research question is the specific inquiry that a researcher sets out to answer. Emanating directly from the above stated research objectives, this study will address the following research questions:

- i. What drives minor parties' electoral competition in Ghana's two-party system?
- ii. What are the constraints on the electoral success of minor parties in Ghana?
- iii. How, if at all, do minor parties contribute to Ghana's democratic governance?

1.5 The Scope of the Study

The scope of a study describes the extent to which a research area is explored, and at the same time specifies the parameters within which a study operates (Akanle et al 2020). The scope of this study is limited to Ghana's Fourth Republic, (i.e., 1992-2022). This marks Ghana's fourth attempt at constitutional democracy after several decades of military interventions, culminating in eight successive general elections from the founding election of 1992 to the recent 2020 elections.

Again, this study focuses only on 'significant' minor parties in Ghana. By 'significant' minor parties, I mean any minor party that has either ever won parliamentary seat or, short of that, placed third position in presidential elections at least twice. Based on the criteria outlined, the significant minor parties that this study examines are: the People's National Convention (PNC), the Convention People's Party (CPP), and the Progressive People's Party (PPP). Hence, other minor parties which have at best been only passive players in Ghana's electoral politics are precluded from this study. The purposefully selected minor parties (i.e., PNC, CPP and the PPP) are information-rich cases owing to their continual participation in Ghana's fourth republican electoral politics.

Furthermore, unlike some other minor party literature or studies which tend to focus on either the presidential (see for instance, Neville-Shepard 2019; Allen & Brox 2005; Magee 2003) or the sub-presidential levels (see for instance, Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017; Ghazarian 2012; Chamberlain 2012; Charnock 2009; Gold 2002), this study's

scope comprises analysis of minor party activities both at the presidential and parliamentary levels with the object of attaining a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under observation.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Political parties, including minor parties, are “public utilities” as argued by Biezen (2004, p.702). This is because in a democracy, political parties serve in governance either directly as “the ruling party” or indirectly as “the opposition”. The function of minor parties, in democratic societies, is therefore no less important than that of the official opposition or even the ruling party (see, for instance, Goff & Lee 2019, p. 1326; Sebudubudu & Osei-Hwedie 2010, p. 85). Yet what is known of minor parties, particularly in two-party hegemony like that of Ghana, is quite limited due to the limited scholarly attention. Nonetheless, minor parties not unlike major parties equally deserve proper scholarly attention in the governance literature. Hence, this study is designed to address the issue of knowledge chasm on minor party activism within the specific context of Ghana’s nascent two-party system.

This study thus fills the gap in the extant literature on minor parties in African democracies by focusing on Ghana; an emergent two-party African democracy. Empirically, the study highlights the key constraints of minor parties in Ghana, their motivation for electoral competition in the plurality system, and how they contribute to democratic deepening despite their constraints in the plurality rule system. Theoretically, this study also contributes to the attempt by Duverger’s Law adherents to empirically test the proposition that single-member plurality rule marginalizes minor party development.

1.7 Overview of Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by both the rational choice theory and Duverger’s Law. The utility of both theories – Rational Choice theory and Duverger’s Law – to this study is discussed in great detail in Chapter Two of this study. (See section 2.3 of this study). However, as an overview, the rational choice theory is a framework for modeling and understanding human decision making. It states that actors rely on rational calculations to make rational choices and attain results that are aligned with their

personal goals and self-interests (Hudik 2019; Wittek et al 2013; Sen 2008). The deployment of this theory is to aid the understanding of the motivation behind minor parties' decision to run in competitive elections even when they have unrealistic chance of winning. As the rational choice theory suggests, actors are rational and seek to maximize self-interest, it is therefore hypothesized that minor party candidates choose to enter the electoral arena based on a rational calculation of the potential socio-economic and political benefits after having factored cost.

Duverger's Law, which is the second theory used in this study, draws from a model of causality from an electoral system to a party system. Duverger's Law states that a proportional representation system, in which parties gain legislative seat(s) in ratio of votes cast in their favor, creates the electoral conditions necessary to nurture the growth of multiple parties whilst a plurality voting system marginalizes smaller political parties (Duverger 1972). According to Duverger's Law, a two-party system often evolves in a plurality voting system due to the marginalization of the smaller parties. In plurality voting in which the winner of the seat is determined purely by the candidate with the most votes, several characteristics serve to discourage the development of minor parties and reward the two dominant parties (Duverger 1972). The Duverger's Law is well suited for the analysis of minor parties in Ghana's plurality system as it points to the cause(s) of minor parties limited electoral success and development.

1.8 Overview of Methodology

This study adopted the interpretivist epistemology. Interpretivists believe that reality is socially and discursively constructed and requires subjectivity to make meaning of social phenomena (Schutz & Zembylas 2016; Blackburn 2005; Marsh & Furlong 2002). In keeping with the researcher's interpretivist perspective of reality, a qualitative case study research design was adopted. A qualitative case study is linked with an in-depth investigative study; and it permits investigators to examine complex phenomena within their natural settings using data from variety of sources (Yin 2014).

Hence, data was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary data sources were journal articles, books and other published works. The primary data was obtained mainly from field interviews and observation. Through a combination of both purposive and snowball sampling techniques, a total of forty- eight (48)

interviewees were sampled from political parties in Ghana, civil society organizations, members of academia, the media and the Electoral Commission of Ghana. The selected interviewees were interviewed with the aid of a semi-structured interview guide. The interview questions were open-ended in order to stimulate expressive answers which were pertinent to the specified research objectives (See Appendix C).

The data gathered were analyzed using thematic analysis approach. Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data which involves the identification of significant themes and patterns from text data through a researcher's careful examination and constant comparison (Maguire & Delahunt 2017). Throughout the research process, ethical considerations such as informed consent, voluntary participation, respect for intellectual property, anonymity and confidentiality as contained in the University of Pretoria Code of Ethics for Research were duly observed. Please refer to Chapter Four of this study for a detailed discussion of the Research Methodology adopted for this study.

1.9 Structure of the Research

This study is structured into seven main chapters. **Chapter One, Introduction**, which is the present introductory chapter, constitutes the introduction and research theme, statement of research problem, research objectives and research questions. It also specifies the scope of the study, the significance of the study, an overview of the research methodology, a synopsis of the theoretical framework, as well as the structure of the study.

Chapter Two, Review of Conceptual, Theoretical and Empirical Literature presents the conceptual reviews, a detailed discussion on the theoretical framework and a review of relevant empirical literature on minor parties and democratic governance. Specifically, the theories deployed are; Duverger's Law and the Rational Choice Theory. The literature review covers the concept of minor party; the drivers of minor parties' electoral competition; the barriers to minor parties' success; and minor parties' relevance in democracy. This chapter, on the whole, aims to position the study in its proper scholarly perspective.

Chapter Three, presents a detailed historical analysis of minor parties in Ghana's party politics. The chapter chronologically traces the development of Ghana's minor parties from the pre-independence era, where the nationalist parties first emerged, to the first republic, through to the second, third and fourth republican dispensations of Ghana. The goal is to provide the milieu for the analysis of minor parties' activism in the current Ghana's Fourth Republic.

Chapter Four presents the **Research Methodology** employed in this study. The chapter commences with a brief discussion on the philosophical assumption underpinning this study. The chapter subsequently discusses the research design, sources and methods of data collection, population of the study, sampling procedure, and the framework for analyzing the data. The limitation of the study as well as some ethical issues are also discussed under this chapter.

Chapters Five and Six are both devoted to the presentation and discussion of the empirical findings. **Chapter Five**, entitled "**Minor Parties and Electoral Competition in Ghana's Fourth Republic**", will present and discuss the findings related to the first and second research objectives. Specifically, the chapter deals with the research findings on the motivations, and the constraints of minor parties' electoral competition in Ghana's emergent two-party system.

Chapter Six, "**Democratic Relevance of Minor Parties in Ghana's Fourth Republic**", will present and discuss the findings related to the third research objective of this study. Specifically, the chapter is devoted to the findings on minor parties' contribution to Ghana's democratic governance under the Fourth Republic.

Chapter Seven, "**Summary and Conclusion**", will summarize the major research findings, draw conclusion and formulate policy relevant recommendations on minor parties' activism in Ghana. Under this chapter, the implications of the major research findings as well as the potential avenue for future research are also discussed.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter focused mainly on the introduction and identification of the research theme, statement of research problem, aims and objectives of the study, as well as the research questions that guide the study. This introductory chapter also clearly

delineated the scope of this study and provided a justification for the study. It argued that due to limited scholarship on minor parties' role in democracies, particularly in plurality rule systems such as Ghana, this current study is significant to address the knowledge gap. This study is, therefore, intended to address the gap in extant literature by investigating the motivation for running under a minor party label, its associated obstacles, as well as the contributions of minor parties' platform towards democratic governance, within the specific context of Ghana's emergent two-party system. The structure of the research is thus laid out, as consisting of seven main chapters.

In the subsequent chapter, the conceptual, theoretical and empirical literature is discussed.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF CONCEPTUAL, THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Having introduced the study in Chapter One, this chapter is devoted to a review of conceptual, theoretical and empirical literature relating to minor parties and democratic governance. The review attempts to clarify the issues under inquiry by situating the study in its proper scholarly context and provides the conceptual framework within which this study is implemented. The chapter is subsequently organized as follows: The first part, conceptual definitions, describes key concepts of the study which include; democratic governance, multiparty system, two-party system, plurality system, proportional representation, and the concept of minor party. The second part proceeds with a discussion on the body of theories that guide the implementation of this study. In the main, the Rational Choice theory and Duverger's Law are presented. Whilst the Rational Choice theory helps to explain the drivers of minor parties' electoral competition, the Duverger's Law explicates the issue of minor party failure. The third part is a review of empirical literature focusing on three key themes, founded on the three main objectives of this study (as specified under chapter one), which include, the drivers of minor parties' electoral competition; barriers to minor parties' success; and democratic relevance of minor parties. Finally, the conceptual framework which guides the study is presented, followed by a concluding remark.

2.2 Conceptual Definitions

2.2.1 Democratic Governance

Democratic governance is quite a nebulous concept, both in theory and praxis (Marta et al. 2020). Indeed, democratic governance is a classic example of an "essentially contested" concept (Gallie 1956; Collier 2006; Grenade 2020), since there is not now, nor will there likely to be, a definite consensus by scholars on its definition or full content. The concept consequently defies any single watertight definition (Etuk & Aweting 2020; Landman 2007). The two keywords of the concept – democracy and

governance – are both elusive constructs yet “conceptually integrated” (Marta et al. 2020, p. 112).

Etymologically, democracy emanates from the Greek word *dēmos* meaning “people” and *kratos* meaning “rule”. Democracy, in the classical sense, thus means the “rule by the people” (Gaavson 2019; Enemu 1999). Hence, Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of United States of America is quoted to have simply described democracy as “the government of the people, by the people and for the people” (as cited in Nnamani 2020, p. 31). This definition emphasizes the direct and active involvement of the citizenry in public affairs. While the classical meaning of democracy opines that each [eligible] citizen is free to participate directly in the political community’s self-rule, it omits essential aspects of the concept of democracy as practiced in modern states, which include *inter alia*, constitutionalism, elected representatives, rule of law, promotion and protection of civil liberties (Daly & Jones 2020; Luna 2020; Singh 2018).

Democracy has definitely evolved beyond its originally direct practice in the ancient Greek city-state of Athens, which required the direct participation of all eligible citizens in public affairs. As a result, most contemporary definitions of democracy take notice of the representative or liberal nature of modern democracy (Gaavson 2019; Diamond & Morlino 2016; Bratton & van de Walle 1997). Bratton and van de Walle (1997, p.13), in their seminal work, thus described democratic governance as a political regime wherein citizens elect, in competitive elections, public office holders to steer the affairs of the polity. Bratton and van de Walle’s (1997) definition identifies competitive elections that result in legitimate and accountable political leadership as a significant feature of democracy. Luna et al. (2020), Grenade (2020) and Norris (2017) uphold this viewpoint by averring that election is the most notable and defining element of democracy. Schedler (2002), however, cautioned that “electoralism” must not be equated to democracy, since elections sometimes occur in non-democracies as well. Democracy, therefore, entails more than just the conduct of elections (Kumah-Abiwu & Darkwa 2020; Chigudu 2019; Schedler 2002).

Nevertheless, democracy provides constitutional opportunities for citizens to choose their governing representatives through periodic election without recourse to a revolution (Luna et al. 2020; Grenade, 2020; Balogun & Ogunleye 2019). Hence, Balogun and Ogunleye (2019, p. 87) has defined democratic governance as a form of

government wherein the citizens rule themselves through an elected few who represents the majority. This definition underscores the representative nature and majoritarian rule of democratic governance. It further reinforces democracy's central idea of "sovereignty vested in the people". Towards this end, Thompson (1994, p. 3) stressed that "democracy connotes a system of political structures in which sovereignty belongs to the people".

Strikingly, democratic governance is distinct from other forms of governance on the basis that it is not dictatorial or autocratic (Etuk & Aweting 2020). Etuk and Aweting (2020), therefore, explained democracy in contrast to autocracy. They labelled democracy as a system of governance wherein no one can unilaterally arrogate to himself the power to govern. This definition thus places particular emphasis on the supreme authority of the people to decide on whom to govern them (Etuk & Aweting 2020). It is perhaps in this sense that Elaigwu (2011 p.172) also defined democracy as:

A system of government based on the acquisition of authority from the people; the institutionalization of rule of law; the emphasis on the legitimacy of rulers; the availability of choices and cherished values (including freedoms); and accountability in governance.

The core debate here is that a democratic society accords the people the supreme authority to choose their governing legislation and to influence the policy direction of the government. Hence, the notion that democracy is a system of governance grounded on some degree of popular sovereignty and shared decision-making remains largely unchallenged (Etuk & Aweting 2020; Elaigwu 2011; Landman 2007).

Whilst no consensus exists on the definition of democracy, popular participation, guarantee of political freedoms, periodic free and fair elections, universal suffrage and respect for rule of law, have been widely identified as key features (see for instance, Goldstone & Diamond 2020; Igwe 2020; Mollah 2019; Singh 2018; Haque 2016). Doorenspleet (2019) corroborates that genuine democratic process requires established procedures and institutions such as the legislature, independent judiciary, free press, vibrant civil society, and political parties (including minority parties) via which public opinion is expressed into public policy. Thus, democracy provides opportunities for the largest possible part of the population to be involved in governance and public decision-making.

Democratic governance guarantees the crafting of political institutions through which varied interests are aggregated and represented in government, with institutionalized mechanisms to change government without recourse to violence and leaders held accountable to the public will (Rosenblatt 2018). The concept of “government of the people, by the people and for the people” is that through competitive elections, political elites are held answerable for their stewardship and those who are considered to have under-performed are replaced at the polls. Accordingly, the risk of electoral defeat and scathing criticisms by political opposition are effective stimuli for political elites to be responsive to democratic citizens’ felt needs (Marta et al. 2020; Nogales & Zelaya-Fenner 2013). Nogales and Zelaya-Fenner (2013, p. 6) have therefore maintained that democratic governance is that system in which citizens take part in public decision-making and planning, whilst public office holders respond to citizens’ needs with a sense of accountability and transparency.

Several variants of democracy exist, both in theory and practice. However, the two basic forms of democracy are direct and representative. In a direct democracy, also known as pure democracy, such as the Athenian democracy, the citizenry openly deliberate and decide on legislation (Etuk & Aweting 2020; Gaavson 2019; Mbah 2006). Mbah (2006) avers that, the direct type of democracy permits all eligible citizens to personally partake in deliberations and decisions on all matters pertaining to the polity. In spite of its eminence in the then Athens and other ancient Greek city-states, direct democracy was expressly reviled by Plato since according to him it “breeds anarchy and mediocrity, and is dependent on the citizens’ impulses rather than wisdom and reason” (cited Etuk & Aweting, 2020, p. 36). Furthermore, direct democracy is impracticable for modern nation-states due to population upsurge and the complex nature and scope of contemporary public policy issues (Etuk & Aweting 2020; Gaavson 2019).

The inverse variant of direct democracy is the indirect or representative democracy. Representative democracy draws its theoretical foundation from the social contract theories of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704) and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) (see Muskaj 2020; Vallier 2020; Johnston 2005; Morris 1999). In a representative democracy, the citizenry choose their governing representatives to run the affairs of the polity for a specified term and no arbitrary restraints apply to

any person aspiring to become a representative (Nwogu 2015) Thus, representative democracy permits competitive elections which uphold fairness among all eligible citizens, and also ensures that the rules of the electoral game are clearly set out beforehand, and do not favor any individual or group of persons over another (Dahl, 2020; Nwogu 2015; Dahl et al. 2003). Besides these two broad variants of democracy, there have been a profusion of further varieties including consensus democracy (Hendriks 2017; Landman 2007; Lijphart 1999), procedural democracy (Broom 2020; Palonen 2015; Saffon & Urbinati 2013), social democracy (Kautsky 2020; Abou-Chadi & Wagner 2020; Berman & Snegovaya 2019), and liberal democracy (Dahl 2020; Doomen 2014; Landman 2007). In the dominant variant of liberal democracy, the majority exercises political power within the context of a representative democracy, yet the constitution restrains the majority and safeguards the minority through the universal enjoyment of basic freedoms, such as freedom of speech, freedom of movement, freedom of assembly, freedom of association and the right to life (Doomen 2014).

Liberal democracy is, therefore, a system of government wherein representative democracy functions under the tenets of liberalism (Dahl 2020; Carugati 2020; Doomen 2014). To describe the system in practice, liberal democracy is characterized by political pluralism with periodic competitive elections among multi-parties on the basis of universal franchise, a separation of powers of the various organs of government, a free market economy with private property right, the rule of law in daily life as an integral component of an open society, and the equal protection of fundamental rights for all people (Singh 2018; Doomen 2014; Hardin 1999).

Liberal democratic states typically rely on a constitution, either codified³ (such as in Ghana, South Africa, France, and the US) or uncoded⁴ (such as in the UK, Israel, and New Zealand), to delineate the powers of government (Johari 2006; Hardin 1999). The liberal democratic constitution further delineates the democratic character of the state. A liberal democracy may thus adopt various constitutional arrangements as it may be a republic (such as Ghana, South Africa, France, Germany, India, the US) or

³ A written constitution, consolidated into a single document and officially adopted.

⁴ An uncoded constitution, may definitely be written, but does not take the form of a single document, as it composed of several varied legal sources.

a constitutional monarchy (such as the UK, Australia, Canada, Denmark). It may likewise have a parliamentary system (such as South Africa, the UK, Australia, Germany, India, Japan), or a presidential system (such as Ghana, Indonesia, Argentina, the US) (Yilmaz 2018; O'Neil 2010; Fenichel 2004).

From the foregoing, the notion of democratic governance as applied in the context of this study proceeds from the liberal democratic ideals; with its emphasis on constitutionalism, rule of law, popular participation, public accountability and transparency, protection of fundamental human rights, multipartyism and the legitimacy of free and fair elections. Particularly so because the politics of Ghana, which is the locus of this study, operates within a liberal democratic framework, with a republican constitution which provides for multi-partyism (Agomor & Asante 2020; Boafo-Arthur 2007).

The presence of political parties is a sine qua non for the survival of modern liberal democracy (Muirhead & Rosenblum 2020). As an indispensable democratic institution, political parties provide the platform for the people to organize and compete in elections, with the ultimate purpose to capture state power and exercise governance in democratic society (Sardarovna 2020; Clark et al. 2012). Whether major or minor, political parties are further required to ensure “the sustenance of the democratic system” (Muhammad 2016, p. 231), as their very existence is dependent on democracy. Hence, scholars aver that “democracy is unthinkable without political parties” (Matlosa & Shade 2008, p. 3), since modern liberal democracy is “party democracy” (Muirhead & Rosenblum 2020, p. 98).

Plethora of existing literature on democracy (see for instance Muirhead & Rosenblum 2020; Daly & Jones 2020; Doorenspleet 2019; Grugel & Bishop, 2013; Luna et al. 202; Clark et al. 2012; Randall & Svåsand 2002) acknowledge that political parties generally strive to fulfill their democratic functions, but the extent and mode minor parties fulfill such functions, and their constraints remain relatively unexplored (Luna et al. 2020). Herein lays a lacuna in the extant literature relating to the democratic value of minor parties, particularly in emerging democracies such as Ghana. Ghana reverted to multiparty democracy in 1992 following several years of military interruptions. However, the practice of multiparty democratic governance in Ghana for the past three decades seems to be consolidating a de-facto two-party due to the

gradual and continuous loss of strength of the minor parties (Agomor 2019). An in-depth analysis of minor parties' participation, constraints and democratic contributions could therefore enhance their analytic value.

One cannot justly conclude this conceptual discourse on democratic governance without pointing to some of its criticisms. Democracy is often reviled on the basis that it permits more space "in society to ignorant and atomized poor people" to participate in governance as well as its tendency to oppress the minorities due to its majoritarian procedures (Edosa 2014, p. 113). Nevertheless, many scholars such as Treisman (2020), Goldstone and Diamond (2020), Acemoglu et al. (2019), Mudacumura and Morçöl (2014), Bratton and Houessou (2014), Fukuyama (2013), Norris (2012), Beetham (2009) and Sen (1999) acknowledge that democracy is today's best form of government. Hence, democratic governance is sometimes used interchangeably with the term "good governance" due to its built-in mechanisms for promoting the rule of law, accountability, popular participation, transparency, responsiveness, and equitable public service delivery (Mudacumura & Morçöl 2014). Nonetheless, whilst democracy is just one of the many forms of government, *inter alia*, communism, monarchy, aristocracy, autocracy; good governance is actually the process wherein a state's affairs are administered effectively in the sphere of financial accountability, public accountability, political and administrative accountability, responsiveness and transparency, all of which must display in the interest of both the governed and the governors (Odo 2015). Whilst most scholars are doubtful of instances of good governance in the other forms of government (i.e., communism, dictatorship, monarchy, etc.); there is scholarly consensus that "good governance thrives in a democratic setting; hence to achieve good governance, there must be a democratic system in place" (Odo 2013, p. 3).

Notwithstanding its popularity in the global West (i.e., Western Europe and North America), democracy is not alien to African culture. Africans, like other political beings, equally value the essence of people-oriented government and good governance, which is all what democracy espouses (Etuk & Aweting 2020). As its Greek cognates "*demos*" people and "*kratos*" rule denote; democracy is principally about the ability of the people to determine who rule them, by which law they are ruled, and the ability to make their ruler conform to the will of the people. By this characterization, many

African tradition governance systems are democratic. The Akan [Ghana] traditional governance system and the traditional governance system of the Yoruba people of Nigeria are archetypal democracies because even though these indigenous political kingdoms are monarchical, they are people-oriented, responsive, consensual, participatory, with inbuilt accountability mechanisms (Etuk & Aweting 2020; Ake 1996; Wiredu 2001; 1996). According to Fayemi (2009, p. 109-110):

In the case of the Yoruba for instance, an investigation into their socio-cultural history will reveal the democratic structure of their political-cultural heritage, evident in their process of choosing leadership, the principle of checks and balances, the kingdom structure, their recognition of and respect for rights and freedoms, and representational and participatory features of political organizations and social ordering. This is despite the fact that at the surface, it is arguable that the traditional Yoruba system of governance was monarchical.

In the opinion of Fayemi (2009), while multiparty elections are important feature of western-style democracy, the absence of periodic elections in the African indigenous democracy does not make it less democratic since the process of choosing leaders and public decision-making in the latter arrangement rely largely on consensus building, which is a key feature of democracy. African scholars such as Etuk and Aweting (2020), Chigudu (2019), Fayemi (2009) have therefore maintained that Africa requires somewhat more than the western liberal type of democracy that is currently being foisted on it. These scholars thus attribute the failure of western liberal democracy in Africa, as manifested in the rampant political instability and bad governance, to the system's disregard of Africa's indigenous democratic values. According to these African scholars, western democracy in its nobility, should be adapted to the African norms and values, rather than the blanket imposition (Etuk & Aweting 2020). Toward this end, Etuk and Aweting (2020) and Fayemi (2009) have argued for an African theory of democracy, which takes into cognizance African indigenous political culture of communalism. Communalism is a distinctive feature that defines the African, in all aspect of public life, including political governance. It is entrenched in "African unitary ontology, which reflects interrelatedness of beings" as opposed to western ethos of individualism and liberalism (Etuk & Aweting 2020, p. 48). These scholars have therefore proposed the innovative exploitation of indigenous African democratic norms for the construction of authentic model of democracy relevant to the African context (Etuk & Aweting 2020; Fayemi 2009).

Without doubt, from the aforesaid, the concept of democratic governance is still abstract and keenly contested. Hence, for the purpose of this study, democratic governance is operationalized in the modern liberal sense as consisting of five key elements: a political system for choosing government through free and fair elections; the active participation of the people in political life; transparent and accountable government; protection of the fundamental freedoms of all citizens; and a rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens (see Etuk & Aweting 2020; Diamond & Morlino 2016; 2005). Particularly so because, as already noted, the political governance of Ghana' Fourth Republic, which is the locus of this study, is exercised within a liberal democratic framework (Agomor & Asante 2020; Boafo-Arthur 2007). Since modern democratic governance do not operate in a vacuum but within a political party system, the next section attempts to compare and contrast multi-party and two-party systems, since an appreciation of the two systems are considered quite pertinent to the analysis of this inquiry.

2.2.2 Multi-Party System Versus Two-Party System

Multi-party system describes a political structure wherein several political parties run for national election, and all have the capacity to win elected offices (Sardarovna 2020). A key defining feature of multi-partism is therefore the existence of competitive multiple political parties, whereby all of them have reasonable chance of forming government, either separately or in a coalition (Sardarovna 2020; Boragave 2019; Mayer & Schultze 2019; Nicholson et al. 2018). Nicholson et al. (2018) have observed that multi-party systems tend to be predominant in parliamentary systems than in presidential systems, and far more predominant in countries that apply proportional representation as opposed to those that utilize plurality rule. Across the democratic world, Germany, France, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Tunisia are some practical examples of countries that are multi-party in nature. In these countries, usually no single party has a legislative majority without a coalition (Boragave 2019; Mayer & Schultze 2019). Thus, multi-party systems are typically characterized by coalition governments, where several parties cooperate for the purposes of creating power blocs and securing legitimate mandate (Mayer & Schultze 2019; Nicholson et al. 2018).

Conversely, in a two-party system, only two main political parties are viable during elections (Anthony & Carl 2019; Hofmeister & Grabow 2011; Suttner 2006). Unlike one-party systems, most two-party systems as well as multi-party systems permit the formation of multiple and distinct political parties, who compete for votes from the enfranchised constituents (i.e., electorate) (see for example, Drutman 2020; Nicholson et al. 2018; Clark et al. 2012). Accordingly, a two-party system does not necessarily mean or suggest the existence of only two political parties in a polity, but rather it defines a political structure or system where only two parties are dominant in national politics, either by law or default (Anthony & Carl 2019; Muhammad 2016). This therefore leads to a distinction between to a de-facto two-party system and a de-jure two-party system; where the latter implies the lawfully recognition of only two political parties, and the former means a two-party system by default as a result of the weakness of third parties (Muhammad 2016). In both cases, all or almost all elected representatives are affiliates of the two dominant parties, and minor parties hardly gain any legislative seat. A classic example of a two-party system is the US, where the Democratic Party and the Republican Party dominate the political landscape (Anthony & Carl 2019).

To emphasize the dichotomy between two-party and multiparty systems, it is observed that the parties in a multiparty system typically form government by a coalition, and occasionally unaided, whereas in a two-party system, coalition government is inconceivable (Nicholson et al. 2018). Nevertheless, as stated by Drutman (2020) there is not always a strident disparity between a two-party and a multi-party system as there are instances where a [defacto] two-party system may have evolved from a multi-party system (Drutman 2020; Muhammad 2016). A theoretical explanation why a multi-party system may result in a two-party has been attributed to the use of plurality voting system. A foremost theory, known as Duverger's Law, avers that a two-party system is a typical outcome of plurality voting method (Grofman et al. 2009; Duverger 1954; 1972). In the next section, plurality and proportional representation electoral systems are described in detail.

2.2.3 Plurality System Versus Proportional Representation

Electoral systems vary enormously across the democratic world. Electoral system explains how votes are translated into seats in electoral democracy for the purposes of representation (Ellis 2018; Grofman 2016; Adjei 2013; Farrell 2011). Nonetheless, the most common of the taxonomy of electoral systems are plurality/majoritarian systems and proportional representation, with its variations (Linhart et al. 2019; von Schoultz 2018; Norris 1997).

The plurality system defines a voting arrangement in which each voter is entitled to vote for only one candidate, and the candidate who receives the most votes (a plurality) is elected. This system of voting is otherwise known as first-past-the-post or the winner-takes-all system (Anthony & Carl 2019; Hughes 2016; Gerring 2005). Plurality voting is distinguished from a majoritarian system in which a winning candidate must necessarily obtain an absolute majority of votes (i.e., more than 50% of total valid votes). In a plurality system, the candidate with the highest number of votes wins, with no prerequisite to obtain a majority of votes. In Ghana, for instance, whereas members of the legislature are elected by plurality system (first-past-the-post), the president is elected by a majoritarian system (i.e., 50% plus one – an absolute majority) (Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017; Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014). Plurality system is used for national and/or local elections in about 43 electoral democracies including Ghana, UK, and the US (Hughes 2016; Dunleavy & Diwakar 2013). Nevertheless, the plurality system is inimical to the development of multipartyism as it naturally gravitates toward a two-party system, in which only two political parties have a real prospect of being elected. This gravitation is explained by Duverger's Law (see Duverger 1954; 1972). Proportional representation, contrariwise, does not have this tendency, but allows multiple major parties to emerge in a political system (Grofman 2016; Grofman et al. 2009).

The proportional representation system strives to resolve the biases of the plurality and majoritarian systems, which essentially reward larger parties and penalize smaller ones (Koriyama et al 2013). Proportional representation strives for a representative body that reflects the overall distribution of public support for each contesting political party. Unlike plurality systems, proportional representation affords smaller parties a measure of representation proportionate to their electoral support. To this end,

Buisseret and Prato (2020) defined proportional representation as a voting format wherein parties gain legislative seats in proportion to the sum of votes cast in their favor.

The two main categories of proportional representation systems are list proportional representation and single transferable vote. With list proportional representation, the political parties specify candidate lists and electorate vote for a list. The comparative vote for each list determines how many candidates from each list are essentially elected. Under single transferable vote, voters cast only one vote each but rank individual election candidates in order of preference. During the vote enumeration, as candidates are elected or rejected, excess votes that would otherwise be wasted are transferred to the tally of other candidates according to the preferences, until all the open seats are filled. Noteworthy, all proportional representation systems involve the use of multi-member electoral districts since it is impractical to fill a single seat in a proportional manner (Ellis 2018; Rainey 2015; Geller 2004; O'Neill 2004).

Since proportional representation system does not favor major parties over smaller parties, as does the plurality system, in countries with proportional representation there are almost always multiple and distinct political parties represented in the legislature, and a coalition government comprising two or more parties is usually required to earn legislative support for the government's policies (von Schoultz 2018; Boragave 2019; Grofman 2016). For this reason, Grofman (2016) highlights that proportional representation nations are almost always multi-party in nature, with a high prevalence of coalition governments.

2.2.4 Minor Party

The description of a minor party first requires a definition of a political party. Despite definitional variations, a political party is generally defined as an assemblage of citizens who by acting together as a political unit, profess a common political ideology, with an ultimate aim to acquire and exercise state power (Sardarovna 2020; Anthony & Carl 2019; Elischer 2013; Sebnem 2013; Hofmeister & Grabow 2011; Sartori 2005; Maor 1997; Ware 1996). This definition enables one to differentiate a political party from other political entities, including pressure groups, in the sense that the latter merely strives to shape public policy in the interest of a particular cause while political

parties seek to gain control of actual public decision-making and implementation. Whilst a political party, in itself, is not a public policymaking institution, scholars agree that when entrusted with legitimate mandate (i.e., when in power), political party pursues its ideology by enacting the relevant legislations through its elected representatives (Schmid 2021; Hofmeister & Grabow 2011; Sartori 2005).

Whether or not they gain control of state power, political parties partake in political governance either directly as “the ruling party” or indirectly as “the opposition”. In a multi-party system, defeated parties constitute the opposition and through constructive criticism the ruling party is held in check (Bertrand 2021; Hofmeister & Grabow 2011; Sebudubudu & Osei-Hwedie 2010). Osei-Hwedie (2001, p. 58) reiterates that opposition parties, including minor parties, “check and balance the operations of the ruling party, prevent abuses of power and ensure, inter alia, that the government does not neglect the public interest.” Whilst a minor party is typically an opposition party, it is instructive to note that not all opposition parties can be classified as a minor party (Goff & Lee 2019; Gillespie 2012; Epstein 2012). Hence, a clear delineation of a minor party is important.

Minor party refers to any political party competing for votes that failed to poll more votes than either of its two main rivals, or in the case of upcoming elections is impossible to do so (Epstein 2012; Gillespie 2012; 1993; Voss-Hubbard 1999). The term “minor party” is often used interchangeably with the term “third party” (Monro 2019; Rosenstone 2018; Hughes 2019; Brenton 2013; Allen & Brox 2005). In American politics, a minor or third party is any political party except the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. The biggest and perhaps the most persistent ones since the mid-twentieth century, in the US, include the Green Party and the Libertarian Party (Neville-Shepard 2017; Allison 2013; Epstein 2012). In the UK, a minor party is a national political party other than the Labour Party and the Conservative Party (Sanders 2017; Calvo & Rodden 2015; Webb 2005).

The delineation of the concept of minor party is more perspicuous in two-party systems where two main political parties control the political landscape. Minor parties typically have an unrealistic prospect of forming a government or their candidates securing the position of head of government (Neville-Shepard 2019; Gillespie 2012). In presidential systems, minor party nominees are scarcely elected president.

Similarly, in parliamentary two-party systems, only the major parties have a real probability of forming a government (Sanders 2017; Copus et al. 2009; Bibby & Maisel 2003; Gillespie 1993). Hence, it is often stated that minor or third parties die when they succeed (Rosenstone et al. 2018; Chamberlain 2010; Hofstadter 1955). In his classic book “The Age of Reform”, Hofstadter (1955, p. 97) succinctly put it as thus: “Third parties are like bees; once they have stung, they die”.

Scholars, studying minor parties, have paid glowing tribute to the identification of the various forms of minor parties ubiquitous across the globe. These include, but not limited to, single issue party, splinter party, economic protest party, ideological party, and candidate-centred minor party (Monro 2019; Allison 2016; Ceron 2015; Tavits 2007; Bowler & Lanoue 1992; Goodin 1992). Monro (2019) asserts that single-issue parties mainly concentrate all their efforts on only one political issue. The party’s name usually specifies the issue they tend to focus on. Single issue parties such as the Right to Life Party (Abortion), Green Party (environmental issues) and the UK Independence Party (Immigration and Euroscepticism) are convenient examples. It is therefore argued that single issue party sometimes blur the understanding between a pressure group and a political party owing to their narrow focus. Such parties are rarely successful in gaining elected office; yet, through systems such as instant runoff voting⁵ and proportional representation they can have considerable impact on voting outcomes. Correspondingly, first-past-the-post voting format has a tendency to foil their influence (Kefford 2017; Gauja 2010; Bowler & Lanoue 1992).

The splinter party is whereby adherents of an existing political party secede to form another party usually as a result of disagreement over a specific issue (Ceron 2015; Allison 2016). For instance, in the late 1940s, some members of the Democratic Party of the US seceded to form the States' Rights Democratic Party (commonly branded as the Dixiecrats). These were mostly southern Democrats who wanted to maintain racial segregation policies, something the Democratic Party was moving away from (Buchanan 2005). Also, elsewhere in Africa, intra-party conflict and a feeling of

⁵ In instant-runoff voting which permit defeated parties to specify where their votes are reallocated, single-issue parties may be created as a means to channel more votes to another candidate with quite dissimilar policies.

marginalization within ones' political party have resulted in the formation of splinters such as the Democratic Freedom Party (from Ghana's NDC); and the Congress of the People (from South Africa's ANC) respectively (Sarakinsky & Fakir 2015; Aidoo & Chamberlain 2015). Although sometimes short lived, splinter parties in general can have implications at the polls as they are able to siphon votes from their parent/rump party in some instances, potentially aiding the opposition (Allison 2016).

Economic protest parties are minor parties that arise in periods of economic distress and or dissatisfaction. Such parties may lack a definite ideological base, but they mainly assert their discontent for the major parties' economic decisions and demand economic reforms (Crab 2015; Lucardie 2000). An example of an economic protest party is the Greenback Party from 1876 to 1884 (Ritter 1997). Tavits (2007), Harmel and Svasand (1997), and Lucardie (2000) corroborate that fiscal recession upsurges entries of economic protest parties, as it affords new party elites the opportune moment to benefit from the economic policy failures of the governing parties.

The ideological minor parties are those built on specific set of principles – a comprehensive view of social, economic, and political philosophies. These parties represent an ideology considered too radical by the mainstream parties. A glut of such minor parties are formed on some shade of Marxist ideals, such as the Communist and Socialist parties. Empirical examples include the Norwegian Socialist Left Party (Olsen 2010), the Social Democratic Party in the UK (Sifry 2013) and the United States' Libertarian Party (Neville-Shepard 2017).

The “candidate-centered minor party”, is yet another type of minor party identifiable in the extant literature. This category of minor party revolves around powerful or wealthy personalities seeking to capture state power to implement their beliefs (Kefford & McDonnell 2016; Sifry 2013; Allen & Brox 2005). They are also referred to as personality-based parties (Sifry 2013). Global examples of this taxonomy of minor parties include the Palmer United Party (PUP)⁶ of Australia (Kefford & McDonnell 2016), and Ross Perot's Reform Party of the United States of America (Allen & Brox 2005). Henry Ross Perot, for instance, is an American wealthy business magnate who formed the Reform Party, under its banner he contested the 1996 US presidential race,

⁶ PUP is an Australian political party founded in 2013 by businessman Clive Palmer.

after having ran an independent presidential campaign in 1992, with almost 19% of popular votes (Goff & Lee 2019; Allen & Brox 2005). Henry Ross Perot “did not clearly anchor himself at one end of the ideological spectrum” but “occupied a more centrist position” outside of the two-party system of the United States politics (Allen & Brox 2005, pp. 625- 626).

According to Schuerman (2010), the category of minor party that arises is contingent on whether the election is political or ideological in nature. To Schuerman (2010), if there is a dearth of comprehensive coverage of the political arena a short-lived party may aspire to contest and fill the observed void. Short-lived parties are minor parties that emerge by means of dissent or as a splinter from a mainstream party (see Gillespie 1993). These parties typically do not survive since the major parties ultimately modify their policy stance or recruit new nominees to fill the vacuum in the election. If the vacuum is more ideological, a doctrinal party could endeavor to win the election. Doctrinal parties mainly concentrate their campaigns on specific ideological issues that are quite pertinent to their existence and strive towards attaining that specific ideological objective (see Gillespie 1993; Schuerman 2010). Schuerman (2010) corroborates Gillespie (1993) that, doctrinal parties have limited success rate compared to short-lived parties owing to the meager appeal of their issue platforms. Key (1964), in his seminal work, also differentiated between transient and doctrinal minor parties. Richmond (1978), building on the work of Key (1964) devised three classifications: secessionist, aggrieved minority and doctrinal to classify third parties in Australia.

Ghazarian (2012), in his study which focused on Australia’s political system, analyzed the typology of minor parties elected to the Australian Senate from 1949 to 2010. Ghazarian (2012) shows that minor parties elected before 1980s were formed on account of major-party disintegration and strived to exploit their privileged status in the Senate to either balk the mainstream parties or serve as “watchdogs”. Minor parties elected since 1984, however, advanced policy agendas with linkages to social movements. Ghazarian (2012) thus argued that the first minor parties to gain representation in Australian senate could be described as “secessionist” minor parties, whereas those elected since 1984 could be designated as “movement” minor parties.

Based on empirical research conducted on minor parties in Irish political life, Coakley (1990) loosely categorized Irish minor parties into agrarian, nationalist, left-wing and right-wing parties. The most important category in electoral terms, according to Coakley (1990), is that of agrarian parties which claimed to mobilize voters on alternative political issues. The nationalist and left-wing parties seek to contest mainstream parties on traditional issues, contending that the latter had abandoned the ideals they had initially claimed to address. The right-wing category comprises political parties which related in more varied ways to the conventional party system; some seek to mobilize electorates along alternative political issues, others seek to publicize a cause even if there was limited chance of electoral victory.

Though not mutually exclusive, from the foregoing literature review, it can be argued that the classification of a minor party is based on either its origin, avowed goal, organizational and/or ideological characteristics (Monro 2019; Kefford 2017). More importantly, for the purpose of this study, a minor party is conceptualized as an opposition political party other than the major opposition party in a particular election or an impending election. In the specific context of current Ghanaian politics, the term “minor party” refers to any competing political party other than the two major parties; the New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress. These parties are organizationally weak and garner only a trifling percentage of votes share in general elections (see Table 3.5).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

A theory is generally defined as a coherent set of propositions used as principles of explanation, understanding and/or prediction of the apparent relationships of certain observed phenomena (Sandberg & Alvesson 2021; Zikmund et al. 2013). This study is guided by both the Rational Choice Theory and Duverger’s Law. While the Rational Choice theory elucidates the motivation behind minor parties’ decision to participate in competitive politics, the Duverger’s Law helps to illuminate conventional understanding of minor party failure. The utility of both theories – Rational Choice theory and Duverger’s Law – to this study are discussed sequentially hereafter.

2.3.1 Rational Choice Theory

Rational choice theory is a framework for modeling and understanding human decision making (Hudik 2019; Amadae 2017; Sen 2008; Lovett 2006). Rational choice theory argues that individuals apply rational calculations to make rational choices and accomplish results that are best aligned with their own personal goals and self-interests. Hence, rational choice theorists assume that all political actors, whether they are electorates, political parties, election candidates, bureaucrats, pressure groups, or the government seek to optimize personal utility in politics as in the marketplace (Opp 2019; Wittek et al. 2018; Susanne 2008; Lovett 2006).

Using rational choice theory, it is anticipated to produce outcomes that offer people with the maximum utility and satisfaction given the choices they have available (Hudik 2019; Wittek et al. 2013; Sen 2008). The core assumptions underlining this theory are that:

- An individual acts rationally in pursuit of his/her own self-interest and not in the interests of others. Individuals seek to gain the most at the least cost.
- An individual has full and perfect information on which to base a choice.
- An individual has the cognitive ability, time, and resources to assess each alternative against the others.

The deployment of this theory is to aid the understanding of the motivation behind minor parties' decision to run in competitive elections when they have no realistic chance of winning. As the rational choice theory suggests, actors are rational and seek to maximize self-interest. It is therefore hypothesized that minor party candidates choose to venture into electoral politics based on a rational calculation of the potential socio-political and economic benefits after having factored costs and benefits. As Labuschagne (2020, p. 47) aptly points out, 'politicians' personal interests, political opportunism and political ambitions often play an important role' in political entry decisions, even as minor party candidates in an institutionalized duopoly.

According to Opp (2019), and Amadae (2017), rational agents act as though evaluating costs against benefits to arrive at action that enhances private gain. The rational agent is presumed to consider all existing information, chances of events, and

probable costs and benefits in shaping choices, and to act consistently in selecting the self-determined best choice of action. In simplified terms, the choice theory submits that every person, even when executing the most routine of tasks, undertake their own personal cost and benefit analysis so as to determine whether the action is worthwhile for the best conceivable outcome (Opp 2019).

As noted supra, the application of the rational choice theory is based on the assumption that an individual or party has sufficient information upon which to base a choice (Sen 2008). Thus, the rational choice theory is deemed apposite for the study of the political behavior of minor parties as the rules of electoral game in democracy are formalized and familiar to all the principal actors – the political parties, candidates and the voters. The policy proposals of political parties and candidates are quite known to the voting public through the various parties' platforms. This aids the voting public to form and choose their preferences. Likewise, the preferences of the voters also are known to political parties, including minor parties, which enable them to formulate strategies to win votes.

In the specific context of Ghana's Fourth Republic, the country has witnessed eight successive general elections with three alternations of power between the two major political parties, viz., the NDC and the NPP (Graham et al. 2017). Hence, the rules of the electoral politics, the prospects and threats are well-known to both the major parties and the minor parties, at least following the first three consecutive national elections in 1992, 1996, and 2000. Moreover, the preferences of the voting public regarding the caliber of candidates that they prefer to have as their elected officials are known to the political parties through the outcomes of past elections. Hence, minor parties' decision to run for office is believed to follow a kind of evaluative procedure by taking in account the cost and benefit associated with such action whilst ultimately seeking to maximize personal utility.

Critics of rational choice theory have argued that individuals do not invariably make rational utility-maximizing decisions. Herbert Simon's bounded rationality, for instance, states that individuals are not always equipped with all the information required to make the best possible choice (See Grune-Yanoff 2012; Simon 1985). Nonetheless, this researcher upholds that the rational choice theory is apposite to evaluate the rationale for minor parties' participation in Ghana's electoral democracy. Typical of

rational choice theory behavior, electoral competition is considered to be a form of political interaction where people interact with the political system if the estimated benefits offset the estimated costs arising from the interaction (i.e., the political competition). For instance, one may decide to enter into an electoral contest if s/he believes s/he will gain out of the contest than the burden the contest may impose upon him/her. By extension of this argument, a minor party nominee may participate in a competitive election not necessarily to win office but due to other expected benefits or considerations that may be accrued. This may include but not limited to; public recognition and post-election patronage from winning parties.

2.3.2 Duverger's Law

Duverger's Law is a theory that suggests a relationship between voting systems and party systems. Duverger's Law states that plurality voting systems structured within single-member districts leads to two-party competition, whilst proportional representation systems foster multi-partism (Duverger 1972; 1954). The realization of this trend is accredited to Maurice Duverger, a French political scientist who detected the effect and documented it in various academic essays between 1950s and 1970s (see for instance, Duverger 1972; 1954). In the course of further research, other contributors started labeling the effect a "law" (Neville-Shepard 2019; Dunleavy & Diwakar 2013; Reed 2010; Fey 1997; Riker 1982).

As Duverger (1954, p. 239) states:

An almost complete correlation is observable between the simple-majority single-ballot system and the two-party system: dualist countries use the simple-majority vote and simple-majority vote countries are dualist.

To Duverger (1954), a two-party system generally grows in plurality voting systems where each voter casts a single ballot and the candidate with the highest votes tally wins. In this system, several features can serve to daunt the growth of minor parties and consolidate the dominance of the two major parties (Neville-Shepard 2019; Schlesinger & Schlesinger 2006; Colomer 2005). Duverger (1954) submits two key explanations why plurality voting system fosters a two-party system. One is the result of the coalescence of the smaller parties into larger ones, and the second is the rejection of smaller parties by the electorate, by which he implies that electorates

progressively abandon the smaller parties on the basis that they have no realistic chance of winning (see, Wada 2014).

The plurality rule therefore rewards only those who win elections (winning party) and tends to suppress minority parties. As Schattschneider (2004, p. 75) states:

It is clear that the operation of the system is to exaggerate the victory of the strongest party and to discriminate radically against lesser parties. The system discriminates moderately against the second party but against third, fourth, and fifth parties the force of this tendency is multiplied to the point of extinguishing their chances of winning seats altogether.

Duverger's discovery of a causal relationship between plurality rule and two-party systems is further reinforced by the research of Douglas Rae. In an inquiry of 107 nations, Rae (1976) observed that countries using plurality voting in single-member districts lean towards a two-party whereas those that operated other forms of electoral format overwhelmingly had multi-party systems. Steven Reed, in a series of studies, also demonstrated the validity of Duverger's Law in Italy and Japan (Reed 2010; 1990). Similarly, empirical studies by Neville-Shepard (2019), Dunleavy and Diwakar (2013), and Chhibber and Murali (2006) have established the general validity of Duverger's Law in three prominent plurality systems in the world *viz.* the US, the UK, and India.

Admittedly, the Duverger's Law is not without critique. Dunleavy and Diwakar (2013), and Chhibber and Murali (2006), thus, record a few counter-examples to Duverger's Law partly attributable to the influence of minor parties that have the bulk of their electoral strength concentrated in a limited number of constituencies rather than dispersed across several constituencies. Chhibber and Murali (2006), for instance, demonstrate that there are constituencies in India where Duverger's Law does not apply. Towards this end, Dunleavy and Diwakar (2013) corroborating Chhibber and Murali (2006) posit that strong regional parties can violate the Duvergerian principle, resulting in more than two parties gaining considerable legislative seats.

Duverger perhaps did not consider his proposition as irrefutable, but rather cogently propounded that plurality rule elections generally would hinder the development of new political parties and expedite the annihilation of existing smaller parties, while a proportional system would have an inverse consequence (Duverger 1972). According to Duverger (1954; 1972), a proportional system creates electoral settings that nurture

the growth of multiple parties, whilst a plurality system marginalizes minor parties, eventuating in what is recognized as a two-party system.

Although Duverger's Law has been scorned by some scholars (Wada 2014; Dunleavy & Diwakar 2013), several others argue that it has stood the test of time and found support in several studies over the years (Neville-Shepard 2019; Reed; 2010; Chhibber & Murali 2006; Colomer 2005; Fey 1997). Duverger's Law is thus well suited to the analysis of minor parties in Ghana as it points to the cause of minor parties' limited electoral success and development.

As it is predicted by Duverger's Law, Ghana's plurality voting system has ushered Ghanaian politics into a two-party system, which means that there are only two major political parties (i.e., the NPP and the NDC), with extreme difficulty for any election candidates to attain electoral success under the label of other political parties. It is therefore hypothesized that the use of single-member plurality voting system which has occasioned Ghana's political duopoly works to the detriment of minor parties' development in the country.

2.4 Empirical Literature

2.4.1 Drivers of Minor Parties' Electoral Competition

With minor party activism notoriously noted for lack of success, the motivation behind minor party electoral competition has attracted some curious scholars' attention (Bob-Milliar 2019; Rosenstone et al. 2018; Lee 2012; Tavits 2007; Lem & Bowling 2006; Hug 2001; Mazmanian 1974; Hicks 1933). In attempt to explain why minor parties emerge in the first place, John Donald Hicks, as early as 1933, noted that minor parties "have come about as natural by-products of our diverse sectional interests" (Hicks 1933, p. 27). Similarly, whereas Mazmanian (1974) states that minor parties are upshot of periods of crisis, Rosenstone et al. (2018) corroborate Key (1964) that several dissentient movements initiate as interest groups and only metamorphose into alternate political parties when the mainstream parties fail to grant those groups a proper audience. Rosenstone et al. (2018) therefore observed that the rise of minor parties in many democracies is as a result of citizens' response to major party failure.

In 2007, Tavits explored the political entry decision of new parties, mostly minor parties, in fifteen (15) East European countries. The study found that the elite-level calculation of whether or not to enter the electoral arena is founded on the cost of entry, the benefits of office and the prospect of voters' support. In the opinion of Tavits (2007), the more proportionate the system, both in terms of the voting format used and the size of the electoral district, the more minor parties are likely to arise as the cost of gaining a seat is lowered. Tavits's (2007) findings confirm other extant literature that acknowledge the cost-benefit calculation upon entry (see also Bob-Milliar 2019; Hug 2001; Cox 1997). Cox (1997), for instance, maintained that a new or minor party will enter the electoral arena if the estimated net benefit of seeking election as a minor party is positive.

Using binary logit analysis, Ishiyama (2009) likewise examined candidate nominations of minor parties to single-member districts for parliamentary elections in sub-Saharan Africa. The study which focused mainly on Zambia, Malawi, and Ethiopia, found that social demography of electoral districts had diminutive influence on whether or not a party nominates a candidate for the district competition. Nevertheless, the number of candidates running in a contest and the use of an electoral arithmetic by the parties determined whether minor parties chose to nominate election candidate in a particular electoral district. According to Ishiyama (2009), the minor parties in the surveyed countries nominate candidate to electoral districts only where they perceive the prospect of electoral victory is greatest. The study thus concludes that the minor parties in sub-Saharan Africa act rationally much the same way as parties elsewhere in the world, in respect of candidate nomination.

Relying on dataset on Australian Senate elections from 1922 to 1998, Donovan (2000) also shows that minor parties organize and field more candidates when electoral rules lower the quota required to win a seat. Additionally, economic downturn is also found to intensify the mobilization of minor party candidates and voter support. Political elites respond to this by contesting more elections when economic conditions are worse and there is a lower quota for winning (Donovan 2000). Donovan's (2000) study thus corroborates extant literature (such as Cox 1997; Barthélémy 2018; Neville-Shepard, 2019) that emergence and longevity of minor party activism is conditioned on the

prevailing electoral system and economic conditions. In her study of minor parties in the Republic of Ireland, Barthélémy (2018, p.170) particularly notes:

New [minor] parties emerge when social, economic or political issues or interests come to the forefront and the electorate feels that the existing parties do not respond accordingly or do not adopt the appropriate measures.

In view of the institutional bias against minor parties, particularly in plurality systems, Lem and Dowling (2006) investigated the motivation for minor party candidacy in US gubernatorial elections. Unlike many other studies which often focus on federal politics, Lem and Dowling (2006) concentrated on gubernatorial elections by developing a model to explain minor party participation that consider both the political and legal opportunities that stimulate minor party candidacy. As Lem and Dowling (2006, p. 472) expressed; for a prospective minor party candidate to pursue elected office, “the opportunity to do so must be present”. In their view, “opportunity” entails the contextual or structural level potentials as well as limitations that impact the actions of an actor, in this circumstance, minor party candidate. The authors thus identified two forms of opportunities – political and legal opportunities – that motivate minor party candidacy. Political opportunity, according to Lem and Dowling (2006), denotes the strategic prospects that develop in a specific year or state which may render minor party candidature quite attractive to prospective candidates. Factors that create the political opportunities include *inter alia*, the extent of party competition among major parties, the condition of the gubernatorial seat, and incumbency. The condition of the gubernatorial seat generates political opportunity that prospective minor party candidates may wish to exploit. Specifically, if minor party contenders perceive the voting public is displeased with the incumbent, they may be quite enthusiastic to compete in an effort to win over some of the defecting votes. Conversely, the existence of a formidable incumbent may discourage minor parties from running given the limited prospect of polling sufficient votes to win the office or swing policy. Lem and Dowling (2006) further argued that though political opportunities may be available to prospective minor party aspirants, the legal opportunity to run in the election may be nonexistent. Legal opportunity hinges on ballot access laws. States with less stringent ballot access laws present a huge legal opportunity for many prospective minor party contenders to run for office, and vice versa.

Studies show that national elections offer an immense platform for a minor party's stance on public issue to be recognized (Rosenstone et al. 2018; Brenton 2013; Feasby 2003). The incentive for minor parties' electoral participation, in this instance, may be to draw public attention on issues that major party candidates loathe to address. If such issues gain acceptance with the masses, the major parties may modify their policy commitments to attract the minor party's platform. For this reason, Brenton (2013) corroborates Feasby (2003) that a candidate may run under minor party label because he/she wants to establish him/herself as a proponent for an issue. The recognition from the polls can yield benefits for the candidate later, either in the form of policy recognition, ministerial portfolio or other political appointment (see also Bob-Milliar 2019; Brenton 2013).

Scholars such as Rosenstone et al. (2018), Schuerman (2010), and Goot (2004) uphold that minor party candidates run for office mainly when there is a firm belief that the major parties are too identical or too distant apart to offer satisfactory coverage of the entire political arena. Reference to the Australian political spectrum, Goot (2004, p. 653) states that minor parties including the One Nation Party, the Green Party, and the Nuclear Disarmament Party were all "founded on the basis that the major parties were too close together rather than too far apart". The rise of the Greens, for instance, is best noted in terms of opening up issues that the mainstream parties had hitherto discounted. The Australia Democrats, on the contrary represents a party formed owing to a perceived wide gap that existed between the Labour Party and Liberals of Australia [the two mainstream parties in Australia]. Goot (2004, p. 653) thus emphasized: "voters who saw themselves in the ideological middle are what the Democrats got". Inferentially, minor parties' motivation to participate in competitive politics is borne out of their belief that they can potentially help to streamline the policies of election candidates to avoid extreme deviation from the needs and aspirations of the voting public (see also Rosenstone et al. 2018; Lee 2012). This further confirms Goff and Lee (2019) that minor parties are important corrective to major party polarization as they help hold the major parties answerable and initiate positive change.

Goff and Lee (2019) further support Goot (2004) that new [minor] parties may also emerge along with successful independents, for reasons that have less to do with

policy variances. Ross Perot's 1996 US presidential bid is a classic example (Goff & Lee 2019). Labuschagne (2020), Bob-Milliar (2019) and Chidi (2015) also show that in many African democracies, minor parties have organized out of parochial interests than ideological or policy position. This partly explains the multitude of minor party presidential candidates in many emerging democracies of Africa (Labuschagne 2020; Chidi 2015). Chidi (2015, p. 59), for instance, found that in Nigeria, several minor political parties were formed ahead of the 2003 general election "to pursue ethnic agenda and some other primordial interest". Similarly, in South Africa, notwithstanding the dearth of electoral support received by the minor parties and their high attrition rate, their numbers keep growing in each election year due to self-centered political ambitions (Labuschagne 2020). As Labuschagne (2020) illustrates, most minor party candidates in South Africa often overrate their electoral support and run for elections due to personal interests and political opportunism. Labuschagne (2020) further concurs with scholars such Sadie (2017) that South Africa's proportional voting system, with its low threshold, provides additional stimulus for the various minor parties to participate in elections. Furthermore, the study argued that exponential growth of minor parties in South Africa is suggestive of current dissatisfaction with the ruling African National Congress (ANC); especially where most of these new parties are formed by politicians who were once connected to the ANC (see also Mbete 2015; Sarakinsky & Fakir 2015).

Whilst literature on incentive for minor parties' electoral competition in Ghana is scanty, Bob-Milliar (2019, p. 1) observed that, despite their characteristically abysmal electoral fortunes, the Nkrumahist minor parties continually participate in competitive politics due to "post-election patronage opportunities provided by winning parties". In a related study, Kwofie and Bob-Milliar (2017) found that minor parties in Ghana employ candidate nomination process as a strategy to make their party platforms noticeable in the political sphere, just to create an impression as though the party has grassroots support and not necessarily to win seats. This somewhat corroborates Ishiyama (2009), when he argued that despite the ripeness of ethnicity in African politics (i.e., where minor parties sometimes epitomize specific ethnic groups or interests), most minor parties in Ethiopia and Malawi strive to identify as non-ethnic or multi-ethnic, by running candidates in many constituencies as possible, even those outside of their core districts, just to portray the image that they are not "ethnic" parties.

The results of these studies (Ishiyama 2009; Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017) implicitly divulge a motivation for running minor party campaign even in unwinnable constituencies.

To better appreciate minor party failure, there is a need to review scholarly literature that examine the barriers to minor parties' electoral success. This is, therefore, the focus of the subsequent section.

2.4.2 Barriers to Minor Parties' Success

Several scholarly works have highlighted restrictive ballot access requirements as key structural impediment to minor party candidacy (Zounmenou et al 2021; Neville-Shepard 2019; Goff & Lee 2019, Allison 2013; Burden 2007; Winger 2006; Stratmann 2005). Winger (2006, p. 170), for instance, reports that in the US, every election year registers "at least a dozen constitutional ballot access lawsuits involving minor party or independent candidate access to the general election ballot". Stratmann (2005), in his study on ballot access restrictions and candidate entry in US elections, also found that higher nomination fees and signature requirements often deter minor party candidates from contesting public office than major-party nominees.

Stratmann (2005) corroborates Lewis-Beck and Squire (1995) that incumbents have the penchant to use these requirements to safeguard themselves from competition by limiting entry of other parties into the electoral arena. The incentive to limit ballot access, in the opinion of Lewis-Beck and Squire (1995, p. 420-421), is greater in US politics as "the major-party politicians owe their own success to the two-party system". Writing on strategic party behavior and presidential ballot access in American politics, Lewis-Beck and Squire (1995, p. 420) emphasized:

In seeking to limit competition, a major party in power concentrates its energy on minor parties - where it [minor party] is more likely to be successful. Each major party, once in office, acts the same way. Since both (Republican and Democrat) seek to limit minor-party competition, it may appear that they are 'co-operating' to exclude third parties.

Rather than battling for votes on multiple fronts competitively, Goff and Lee (2019), and Lee (2012) highlight that, mainstream parties would favor a situation that exclude minor party contenders from the political arena. In view of the fact that one of those two major parties, Republicans and Democrats, mostly controls government in the US, they have the ability to enact regulations that limit minor party entry into electoral

competitions (Goff & Lee 2019; Schraufnagel & Milita 2010; Lem & Bowling 2006; Stratmann 2005). Democrats in office seek, especially, to eliminate left-wing parties (such as those with extreme peace or eco-friendly platforms), and Republicans in office seek, especially, to eliminate right-wing parties (such as those with extreme religious or militaristic platforms) (Goff & Lee 2019; Lee 2012; Lewis-Beck & Squire 1995). To Lewis-Beck and Squire (1995 p. 421), “the more a party dominates a state's politics, the more easily it can restrict those minority parties it finds most undesirable”. Thus, in densely Democratic states, for instance, extra exertion would go to limiting the participation of leftist minor parties.

Elsewhere in the Republic of Benin, Zounmenou et al (2021) observed that major parties – the Republican Bloc and Progressive Union – succeeded in eliminating minor opposition parties from participating in the Benin’s 2021 presidential polls on account of the adoption of a new endorsement requirement which specifies that presidential and vice-presidential nominees be endorsed by not less than 16 parliamentarians or mayors, or both. Since the Republican Bloc and Progressive Union were the only parties with representatives in the National Assembly and collectively control 70 out of the 77 local councilors, all other [opposition] parties – mainly minor parties – were effectively excluded from the presidential run. The findings of Zounmenou et al (2021), as well as Lewis-Beck and Squire (1995), Stratmann (2005) and Allison (2013) are congruous with the notion that incumbents often set high obstacles to entry in order to safeguard themselves from competition. A key theoretical implication is that in the game of politics, “strategic parties make institutional choices in their favor” (Lewis-Beck & Squire 1995, p. 420).

Lewis-Beck and Squire (1995, p. 419), however contend that some obstacles to entry seem necessary “otherwise the list would be unwieldy”. Labuschagne (2020, p. 44) appears to corroborate this assertion when in his recent paper on the electoral volatility in South Africa, argued that the “unrestrained and rampant formation” of new minor parties could destabilize the South African political system. Nevertheless, efforts to restrict ballot to only mainstream parties via limiting minor party access are, arguably, tantamount to curtailing voters’ free electoral choice (Neville-Shepard 2019; Burden 2007). Burden (2007) argues that such occurrence is inimical to the principles of universal suffrage and freedom of association; both key tenets of modern participatory

democracy. Just as Lewis-Beck and Squire (1995) earlier argued, Labuschagne (2020) and Winger (2006) maintain that lenient ballot access laws could be chaotic and a recipe for boundless ballot list. Winger (2006, p. 172) thus identified three general criticisms associated with lenient ballot access regulations. First, lenient ballot access regulations lead to avoidable multiplication of political parties in a political system. Second, lenient ballot access regulations may give rise to too many election candidates appearing on the ballot, instigating voter confusion. Third, lenient ballot access regulations preclude the possibility of a formidable third force due to the possibility of several feeble minor parties appearing on the ballot. However, with restrictive ballot access laws, Winger (2006) argued, the most resilient minor party may be the only alternate to the major parties on the ballot, and that sole minor party will then benefit from its privileged position.

Winger (2006) seems to support the institution of restrictive ballot access laws which permit only political parties with considerable voter appeal on the ballot. He, however, observed that though restrictive ballot access laws make it tougher for minor party candidates to appear on the voters' ballot, these laws have not "inhibited would-be minor party candidates from running" in US elections (Winger 2006, p. 173). Richard Winger demonstrates this with empirical evidence from the United States:

In the period of most lenient ballot access laws, 1892–1930, the average number of parties at any given time was 6.7. In the years of strictest ballot access laws, 1964–1996, the average number of parties was 7.7 (Winger 2006, p. 172).

Winger's (2006) observation thus supports Rosenstone et al. (1996) earlier assertion that an increasingly higher percentage of American electorates have confronted ballots governed by candidate access restrictions; nevertheless, the possibility of a prominent politician mounting a minor party campaign has not dwindled.

Plethora of extant literature also pinpoint plurality rule system as a major institutional barrier to minor party success (see for instance, Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017; Schraufnagel & Milita 2010; Stratmann 2005; Lem & Bowling 2006; Abramson 1995; Lewis-Beck's & Squire 1995). Schraufnagel and Milita (2010; p. 34), for instance, note that "the single-member district plurality rule hurdle is simply too difficult for minor parties to transcend". Kwofie and Bob-Milliar (2017), Lewis-Beck and Squire (1995) as well as Abramson et al. (1995) respectively demonstrate how electoral systems that

use first-past-the-post, which is typical of plurality voting system strengthens dominant parties to the detriment of minor parties' development. Lewis-Beck and Squire (1995), particularly, highlight that a plurality rule system invariably preserves the power structure of the dominant parties and stifles the development of any minor party. In their observation of US electoral politics, Schraufnagel and Milita (2010) firmly maintained that the difficulty of an American minor party to win elected office is a function of the electoral system. Specifically, both the practice of the presidential system and the inherent features of the single-member plurality rule tend to support a political duopoly (see also, Goff & Lee 2019; Allison 2013; Lem & Bowling 2006). A theoretical underpinning of these assertions hinges on Duverger's Law which postulates that single-member plurality rule engenders two-party system and tends to weaken minor party platforms (Duverger 1963; 1972).

Scholars such as Goff and Lee (2019), Neville-Shepard (2019) and, Bowler and Lanoue (1992) concur that in a plurality-based system, electorates are inclined to cling to one of the major parties to avoid wasting their votes on minor parties. The premonition that a minor party candidate has unrealistic prospect of electoral success makes it more likely that electorates will practice what Burden (2005) and Abramson et al. (1995), in their separate works, referred to as "strategic voting", by voting for the best major party nominee. The debate that electorates should avoid wasting their votes on election candidates who have less prospect of winning is well documented (Neville-Shepard 2019; Allison 2013; Burden 2005; Abramson et al. 1995; Aldrich 1993). Abramson et al. (1995, p. 354), for instance, recount that in the 1932 US presidential election, Franklin Roosevelt's campaign urged American electorate not to waste their vote on Norman Thomas, the Socialist nominee. More recently, the 2016 Hillary Clinton's Campaign on the ticket of Democratic Party had blunt word for potential minor party voters: "A vote for a minor party candidate is a vote for Donald Trump" (see Neville-Shepard 2019; Schwartz 2016; White 2016; Gonchar 2016). These rhetorics confirm Aldrich's (1993, p.270) claim that strategic politicians apprise electorates of the wasted-vote debate and persuade at least some electorates that it is injudicious to support minor party candidates. Through such negative framing, minor party contenders are either labelled as unimportant actors who have less chance of winning, or as fringe outsiders with the probability of tilting "election in favor of a major-

party nominee”, leaving electorates with an inkling that they will be wasting their ballot if they vote for a minor party candidate (Kirch 2013, p. 40).

Whilst scholars (such as Neville-Shepard 2019; Hillygus 2007; Burden 2005; Fisher 2004; Bowler & Lanoue 1992) largely agree that minor parties suffer from strategic voting behavior, Abramson et al. (1995, p. 354) remarked that Ross Perot’s 1992 Presidential bid “countered the wasted vote argument with the slogan: “Don’t waste your vote on politics as usual” to incite voters rather against major party candidates. Abramson et al. (1995), therefore, maintained that the “vote wasting mantra” is well known to both major and minor party politicians and has been articulated frequently by both (see also, Burden 2005). Nevertheless, studies show that minor parties are the leading casualties of the wasted vote argument (Kroeber et al. 2021; Kirch 2013; Fisher 1973).

Notwithstanding the undue emphasis, in extant literature, on the injurious effect of strategic voting to minor parties’ electoral fortunes, Burden (2005) has distinguished *instrumental* strategic voting that impairs minor parties from *expressive* strategic voting which offers minor parties a boost. Burden (2005) arrived at this classification when he examined the distinction between constituents’ specified preferences and their actual votes in three US presidential polls *viz.* 1992, 1996 and 2000. Burden (2005) shows that the 2000 Ralph Nader campaign, for instance, suffered instrumental strategic voting and lost support in most states, mainly those where the major party competition was keen. Conversely, Nader’s pursuit for 5 percent of the popular vote to attain federal funding for the Green Party offered additional incentive for expressive voting in favor of Ralph Nader and his Green Party in 2000. Though Nader failed in the end, Burden (2005) maintained, the threshold was a factor supporting expressive voting.

Studies show that major parties frequently coopt minor parties’ platforms and fold their supporters into their membership (Neville-Shepard 2019; Goff & Lee 2019; Rapoport & Stone 2008). Focusing on the 2016 US presidential election, Goff and Lee (2019) show how Republican’s Donald Trump co-opted electorates doubtful of the incumbent; which is a group that have a tendency to support minor parties. Donald Trump’s populist and anti-establishment rhetoric, which had some equivalence with erstwhile minor party campaigns, co-opted many of the potential minor party voters in 2016 (Goff

& Lee 2016). Similarly, the Republicans in 1996 adopted most of the policy positions of the Reform Party through a shift in issue commitments to undercut their support (see Rapoport & Stone 2008). These studies (Goff & Lee 2019; Rapoport & Stone 2008) concur that America's minor parties are often unsuccessful because the major parties take preemptive actions including co-optation of policy goals to minimize their success. Neville-Shepard (2019, p. 280) thus observed that, major parties surmising the burden of political campaigning by coopting platforms is quite inimical to the longevity of a minor party.

In their 2021 study, Arriola et al revealed that frailer incumbents are more likely to deploy cooptation, as a political strategy to undercut minor party support. Using dataset on presidential polls across 35 African countries from 1990 to 2016, Arriola et al (2021) show that incumbents purposefully instigate opposition fragmentation by appointing some opposition party adherents, including minor party elites, to ministerial positions, with the goal to avert the emergence of a strong opposition that might threaten them in future electoral contest. By this conduit, Arriola et al (2021) document a distinct channel via which incumbents asphyxiate minor parties and the general threats of multi-party electoral contest, without being culpable of any institutional manipulation nor electoral malfeasance. However, "this co-optation strategy comes at a cost for the incumbent: by offering a ministerial position to a member of the opposition, the incumbent risks alienating members of the ruling party who expect their own share of patronage" (Arriola et al 2021, p. 1). Arriola et al (2021) study thus validates the correlation between co-optation and fragmentation of opposition [minor] parties through a game theoretic model as the study results demonstrate that past co-optation of opposition politicians is linked with a more fragmented opposition field in successive elections. Arriola et al (2021, p. 7), accentuate that opposition politicians who have the chance to secure appointment in a ruling party tend to "run for office independently, splintering off from major parties or running on minor party tickets, rather than coalescing into larger parties".

Writing on the southern African country, Sebudubudu and Osei-Hwedie (2010) attribute the poor electoral performance of Botswana's minor parties to factionalism and fragmentation within their platforms. The paper observed that political opposition in Botswana has failed dismally because opposition parties, mainly minor parties, are

“divided among and within themselves” (Sebudubudu & Osei-Hwedie 2010, p. 87). Relatedly, but with a focus on Ghana, Bob-Milliar (2019, p. 10) asserts that “weak party organization and factionalism among the members” and party leadership render the Nkrumahist minor parties unattractive to the Ghanaian electorate. Bob-Milliar (2019) further accused the major parties in Ghana for engineering the disintegration of the Nkrumahist political tradition into rival blocs by exploiting existing rivalries and cleavages to ensure that the Nkrumahist tradition remains fragmented.

Brenton (2013) has examined the electoral constraints to Green parties seeking to enter parliament and the challenges in pursuing an environmentalist agenda. The paper mainly focused on Australia and the chances of the Australian Green Party, in what remains essentially a two-party system. Two key factors are identified by Brenton (2013) to explicate the Australian Greens’ relatively weaker and trifled electoral performance as compared to other Green Parties around the globe. The first is the type of the voting or electoral format in use in Australia. Brenton (2013) explained that the Australian Greens are able to gain more seats in the Senate, which relies on proportional representation, than in the House of Representatives due to its majoritarian voting rule. This observation gives credence to Buisseret and Prato (2020) that proportional representation enhances minor parties’ electoral fortunes whilst single-member plurality voting hampers minor parties’ electoral success. The second factor, according to Brenton (2013), is the unavailability of space for the Greens on political and policy spectrum. This is because, as Carter (2007) rightly observed, ecological matters are now established on the political agenda, and have either been spearheaded by a devoted Green Party or integrated into the platforms of major parties. Brenton (2013) thus corroborates Carter (2007) that even in the UK, there has been condensed political space for the Greens to inhabit since both mainstream parties (i.e., Labour and Conservative) embrace environmental politics to some degree. The Greens’ goal of gaining legislative representation is fairly endangered when the mainstream parties co-opt their agenda. To Brenton (2013, p. 303), the more the Labor party “co-opts the Greens’ agenda, the less electorally attractive the Greens become” in the UK.

Carter (2007) reports that the policy influence of Green Parties in some countries has been mediated via ministerial appointments, which have largely been connected to the

environment. However, as Poguntke (2002, p. 143) advised; “taking over the Ministry of the Environment is probably the most problematic choice for a Green Party” as it involves the major potential for confrontations with the very core of the Green constituency. This is because, as Brenton (2013, p. 301) asserts, ardent Green voters who loathe mainstream parties are “unlikely to support too much cooperation”. Hence, Green parties in several countries (including Sweden, Finland, and Czech Republic) have often lost electoral support after they acceded to coalition. The Greens’ leadership has apparently recognized this quandary and proactively endeavored to distance the party from governments (Brenton 2013). Brenton’s (2013) paper thus confirms Harold (2001) when the latter argued that Greens usually lose supporters by seeking ideological purity and rejecting compromise.

Studies show that the inability of minor parties to field candidate territory-wide also has ramification on their visibility and ultimately, electoral fortune (Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017; Aidoo & Chamberlain 2014; Ishiyama 2009). Unlike major parties that are able to nominate candidates territory-wide, minor parties often lack the organizational resources to cover the entire country with candidates as they tend to concentrate mainly on where the party’s prospects of winning are the greatest (Ishiyama 2009). Even in some instances, studies show that the candidates minor parties nominate are less qualified for the office they seek (Rosenstone et al. 2018; Neville-Shepard 2019). Writing on Ghana, Kwofie and Bob-Milliar (2017, p. 25) observed that the inability of the Nkrumahist minor parties (i.e., the CPP and the PNC) to field candidates nationwide renders them noticeable only in few electoral districts during general elections; “an absence that has been attributed to financial constraints and organisational weakness”.

The strain of raising adequate resources to contend with major parties serves as a major setback to minor parties’ growth and success (Neville-Shepard 2019; Allison 2016; Epstein 2012; Pottie 2003). Even in jurisdictions where public funding of political parties exists, minor parties often prove inadequate of requirements due to the hurdles they face in attaining representation (Rosenstone et al. 2018; Gillespie 2012; Olaore 2005). As Rosenstone et al. (2018) argued, rarely has a minor party nominee been able to meet the requirements for federal campaign funds as the party’s nominee is required by law to poll at least 5 percent of the popular vote in the general election.

Similar obstacles hinder state-level minor party nominees from obtaining funding for taxpayer-financed campaigns (Rosenstone et al. 2018). Biezen (2004, p. 710) similarly posits that “party finance regimes as in Spain penalize smaller parties” and may in fact make it more “problematic for new entrants to enter the system or for minor parties to challenge the status quo”. Matlosa (2004) likewise validates that the proportionality approach of public funding of political parties in South Africa tends to discriminate against smaller parties with no representation. Prempeh and Asare (2017) also found that due to dearth of direct public funding of political parties in Ghana, opposition parties including minor ones typically complain of inadequate campaign resources to fund their activities.

Whilst availability of campaign funds and name recognition are the two most central elements in the success of minor party campaigns (see Rosenstone et al. 2018), financial constraints of minor parties impede their ability to accrue resources that are vital to mounting a serious challenge to the major parties (Rosenstone et al. 2018; Neville-Shepard 2019). As Neville-Shepard (2019, p. 274) opined, most minor party contenders struggle to raise adequate funds to be competitive. Minor political parties are often unable to hire experts to administer surveys, handle social media outreaches, garner political intelligence, court the media, or manage campaigns due to their limited financial capacities (Neville-Shepard 2019; Sifry, 2013). Sifry (2013) for instance maintains that even in the digital era, paid televised campaign commercials are indispensable to political campaigns as it affords election candidates the opportunity to reach out to targeted electorates in a controlled manner. Hence, the inability of a minor party to sponsor campaign advertisements presents dire consequence for their publicity and ultimately, their electoral fortunes.

Minor parties often suffer from politics of exclusion (Anthony & Carl 2019), partly as a result of unequitable media coverage which has ramifications on their outreach capacity (Neville-Shepard 2019; Kirch 2015; Kirch 2013; Small 2008). Minor parties are basically not treated as newsworthy as the mainstream parties, and also often their candidates excluded from televised debates (Kirch 2015; Kirch 2013; Gillespie 2012; Small 2008; Hackett 1991). Hackett (1991, p. 216) found a significant disparity in the volume and quality of media attention that major and minor parties receive, with the latter getting much less reportage. Small (2008, p. 55), likewise, observed in Canada

that the total press time the Liberal Party benefited is far greater than the aggregate time received by all five minor parties in 2004. Similar evidence is found by Kirch (2013, p. 40) when he argued that “coverage of gubernatorial campaigns shows that Green and Libertarian Party candidates receive significantly different coverage than do major-party contenders”. A related study by Kirch (2015, p. 399) stressed that during the 2002 gubernatorial campaigns in Wisconsin and California, pressmen produced very little coverage of even the most serious minor party contenders as they viewed “the campaign almost exclusively as a contest between the Democrats and Republicans”. All these literature point to the fact that the media treat minor parties and their candidates as distractions, acting to deflect attention from the main two-party attractions (Anthony & Carl 2019; Kirch 2015; Kirch 2013; Hackett 1991).

Rosenstone et al. (2018) confirm that minor parties hardly receive substantial media attention except when they nominate a zestful candidate or when they are connected with a crusade that taps into public concerns. Focusing on US politics, Rosenstone et al. (2018) as well as Gillespie (2012) observed that minor party nominees are usually eliminated from televised presidential debates in which major party contenders participate. A concession was Reform Party’s nominee, Ross Perot, whose campaign was boosted by his inclusion in the 1992 presidential debate alongside Republicans’ George Herbert Walker Bush and Democrats’ Bill Clinton. By being permitted to participate in the 1992 presidential debates, Ross Perot attained nationwide prominence and symbolic parity with the incumbent George H. Walker Bush and Democrats’ nominee Bill Clinton. Ross Perot subsequently received significant media attention from his debate performance. These benefits were, however, denied the Green Party’s Ralph Nader as he was barred from the 2000 US presidential debates because the Commission on Presidential Debates ruled that Nader did not have adequate voter appeal to warrant admission (Rosenstone et al. 2018; Paletz et al. n.d.).

Elsewhere in Africa, particularly Ghana and Kenya, minor parties without representation in parliament have suffered similar exclusion (or threat of exclusion) from televised presidential debate (Moss & O’Hare, 2014; Gyampo 2009). Gyampo (2009) reports that Ghana’s maiden presidential debate in 2008 was restricted to only four (4) main political parties who had representation in parliament, namely, the NDC,

the NPP, the PNC and the CPP. In Kenya, the eleventh-hour court-ordered inclusion of Paul Muite (of Safina Party) and Mohammed Abduba Dida (of Alliance for Real Change) in the Kenya's novel 2013 televised presidential debate "exemplifies how contested and coveted the debate platform was" (Moss & O'Hare 2014, p. 82). Whilst Moss and O'Hare's (2014, p. 2) study revealed that Kenya's 2013 presidential debate offered, particularly the minor party nominees, free and unparalleled publicity, Gyampo (2008) maintained that presidential debates have a negligible role in positively affecting the electoral gains of political parties in Ghana and contribute insignificantly in whipping up voter support for candidates in Ghana, even among undecided voters. Thus, as to whether the exclusion or inclusion of minor party candidates from presidential debate has any significant impact on their electoral fortunes remain contested in the literature. Nonetheless, what scholars seem to agree is that frontrunners often prefer fewer candidates admitted into presidential debates on the basis of polling data (Rosenstone et al., 2018; Moss & O'Hare 2013; Gyampo 2008).

Despite being sidelined by traditional media, Pineda et al (2021) found that minor parties in Spain seem to have taken advantage of social media, particularly Twitter, as a counterbalance to the mainstream media that overly focuses on major party candidates. With a sample of 1,498 tweets from the official twitter profiles of the four main minor parties: the Animalist Party against Cruelty to Animals, Communist Party of the Spanish People, Zero Cuts, and VOX, Pineda et al (2021) content-analyzed Spanish minor parties' social media communications in the specific context of the 2019 Spanish election campaigns, and concluded that the internet offers Spanish minor parties unfettered access to reach out to electorate. Whilst the cyberspace has the potential to balance the playing field for minor parties, Small (2008) found that in spite of equal accessibility to cyberspace, there is unequal success in the cyberspace for Canadian [minor] parties. Relying on data from the 2004 federal election, Small (2008) concludes that the cyberspace has not equilibrated party competition in Canada. Similar evidence is found in the work of Gibson and Ward (2002) which focused on Australia. These results further confirm Gibson and McCallister (2015), Margolis and Resnick (2000) whose studies maintained that the main beneficiaries of e-politics are not minor parties but rather the established ones.

Whilst several minor party studies have overly focused on minor party entry challenges to parliaments, Thompson (2018) rather takes a look at the challenges minor parties face while in parliament. Using the case of the Scottish National Party (SNP) in the British House of Commons, the article argued; even though the UK 2015 General Election generated more prospects for the SNP as the third-largest party in the House of Commons, the SNP faced an uphill task in its quest to make an impact in the Commons. Drawing mainly on elite interviews with SNP legislators and party staff, Thompson (2018) found that minor party rights in the British House of Commons are not as weighty as those conferred on the official opposition. There exists very real disparity between the rights accorded to the Official Opposition party and those of the minor parties. The paper thus identified myriad of parliamentary, organizational, and procedural challenges confronting minor parties at Westminster and how they combined to frustrate SNP's efforts in the UK Parliament. This notwithstanding, the SNP circumvented some of these obstacles to record quite a few remarkable parliamentary feats. These include; SNP MP Alison Thewliss' crusade on the so-called 'rape clause' within the UK government's tax credit policy, Eilidh Whiteford's successful Private Member's Bill and Roger Mullin's successful campaign to reform Scottish Limited Partnerships. Thompson (2018) shows that, but for the differences in status and rights accorded to minor parties in Westminster, the SNP may have accomplished more parliamentary feat with its third-party status. As Thompson (2018) revealed, representation obstacle is not the only significant factor affecting minor parties but also differentials in parliamentary rights and status.

Notwithstanding the enormous constraints of minor parties in democracies, in general, it is the assumption of this study that minor parties are latently relevant to democratic practice. Hence, in the subsequent section, the review directs attention to the literature on the democratic relevance of minor parties.

2.4.3 Democratic Relevance of Minor Parties

Minor parties play important roles in democracies despite their limited electoral success (Goff & Lee 2019; Miragliotta 2013; Brenton 2013; Epstein 2012; Lee 2012; Gauja 2010; Marion & Oliver 2010). Lee (2012, p. 138), for instance, cautions that minor parties are an integral component of democratic politics, and "one should not take their apparent lack of electoral success as an indication of their irrelevance." Not

unlike mainstream political parties, minor parties seek to influence public policies, aggregate and articulate voters' interests, and provide opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process (Bertrand 2021; Epstein 2012).

In the opinion of Miragliotta (2013, p. 722), minor party platform serves as a political "refuge for disgruntled major party voters" as they seek to broaden the policy debate by raising issues that the major parties' platforms fail to address. With more alternatives at the balloting booth by reason of minor parties' candidature, voter participation would plausibly upsurge; thereby enhancing the quality of electoral competition (Miragliotta 2013; Marion & Oliver 2010; Epstein 2012). Focusing on Australia's electoral politics where voting is compulsory, Miragliotta (2013) corroborates Brenton (2013) that the Australian Greens and the Australian Democrats, the two main minor parties in Australia, seem to provide a "safety valve" for electorates to record dissatisfaction against the major parties, while also serving a repository for marginalized policy issues. Likewise, as Bartels and Remke (2021, p. 1) observed, minor parties in Germany invigorate competition and as well keep the establishment on its toes "by diffusing topics and posing a potential electoral threat to established parties". To this end, it is argued that minor parties cater to a niche and integrate citizens into the democratic process (Bartels & Remke 2021; Miragliotta 2013).

Even as minor parties are considered permanent component of British political practice, Copus et al. (2009, p. 4) concede that "little is known of the way in which they contribute to politics ... and the impact they have on the functioning of democracy" in the UK. Copus et al. (2009) argue that UK's mainstream parties face continuous challenge from smaller parties and independents electorally and on policy debates, which keep them responsive to citizens' demand. Hughes (2019) and Webb (2005) substantiate that the vote share conjointly accounted for by the Labour Party and the Conservatives has declined considerably from an average of 90 percent between 1945 and 1970 to approximately 65 percent in recent times. The basic attendant of this trend, of course, is that minor parties are doing correspondingly better. Despite their limited representational success, UK's minor parties such as the British National Party, Green Party and RESPECT Party are widely recognized for their attention on specific political agenda and set of objectives; an agenda which then shines through the

policies they develop on a wider range of issues (Hughes 2019; Copus et al. 2009; Webb 2005).

Whilst literature is replete with evidence of minor parties' failure to win elections at the presidential level, a few minor party candidates have however gained some measure of success (Rosenstone et al. 2018; Lee 2012; Marion & Oliver 2010). Rosenstone et al. (2018), Whitmore (2008), Bibby and Maisel (2003), and Abramson et al. (1995) have documented the account of prolific minor party presidential nominees in the US. Most notable is the Progressive's Teddy Roosevelt and his 27.5% popular votes in 1912. In the 1968 US presidential elections, George Wallace of the American Independent Party also polled an enviable 13.5% of popular votes and 46 electoral votes. Though Wallace recognized he could not win the election outright, his avowed aim was to hinder either Hubert Humphrey or Richard Nixon from obtaining a majority of the electoral vote (Marion & Oliver 2010; Abramson, 1995).

In recent past elections, Ross Perot was rated viable contender in the 1992 US presidential poll and eventually polled nearly 19% of the popular votes. Though Perot's vote share was evenly dispersed nationwide, he was unable to parlay his support into any electoral votes (Marion & Oliver 2010; Burden 2005; Abramson et al. 1995). The support Perot garnered propelled him to form his own political party, the Reform Party, under which he contested for President in 1996. The Reform Party is celebrated for focusing attention on fiscal and governmental reforms, such as federal balanced budgeting, campaign finance and constitutional amendment for term limits. As Rosenstone et al. (2018) and Jelen (2001) claimed, a large section of the Reform Party's support base was grounded in the belief that the party was addressing vital issues mainly ignored by the two major parties.

The exit of Perot from the Reformed Party's ticket in the 2000 US election sanctioned the Green Party to take up the role of America's foremost minor party (Allen & Brox 2005). Nader's third-party campaign, on Green Party's ticket, is best noted for its role in the outcome of the 2000 US presidential polls (Lee 2012; Allen & Brox 2005; Magee 2003). The key slogan and mobilization ideology of the 2000 Green Party platform was that no disparity exists between Republicans and Democrats, and that both parties are "out of touch with the progressive values that should govern America" (Allen & Brox

2005, p. 625). Whilst some studies demonstrate that Nader siphoned off some votes from Democrat's Al Gore in the 2000 US presidential election (Whitmore 2008; Burden 2005; Allen & Brox 2005), others suggest that the electorates Nader won to his campaign were persons who would not have voted for Democrats irrespective of the context (Ceasar & Busch 2001). Nonetheless, it is still widely held that Nader and his Green Party drew enough votes from Democrat's Al Gore to affect outcomes in multiple states, causing the latter to lose the election (Lee 2012; Whitmore 2008; Burden 2005). Burden (2005) recounts that Democrat's Al Gore garnered half a million more popular votes than Republican's George Bush yet lost the election as Nader polled almost three million votes nationwide. Lee (2012), Marion and Oliver (2010), and Burden (2005) further corroborate that in the crucial state of Florida, Nader gained many times more than the insignificant vote variance between Bush and Gore. This analysis shows clearly that minor parties, despite their limited success, do matter as they have the capacity to flip the outcome of elections depending on the magnitude of votes they poll. This validates Berger's (2005, p. 386) assertion that "when non-major party candidates have the opportunity to impact an election, that impact is often considered destructive".

Studies also show that minor party's electoral support has the propensity to alter the electoral balance between the mainstream parties (Lee 2012; Hirano 2008; Burden 2005; Magee 2003). Burden (2005) and Magee (2003), in their separate articles, demonstrate how minor party platforms shaped the 2000 US presidential campaign. According to Magee (2003), the presence of the Green Party's candidate, Ralph Nader, in the presidential race gave Democrats' Al Gore a motivation to orient himself farther to the left ideologically. George Bush's ideological orientation was also affected by Pat Buchanan's (of the Reform Party) participation. The effect of minor parties' campaigns on the entire 2000 US presidential campaign lend support to Lee's (2012, p. 146) assertion that, "the mere threat of" minor party candidature engenders "major party candidate divergence". Lee (2012) and Hirano (2008) further demonstrate how this divergence could be anticipatory.

Whilst the upsurge in major party polarization in the US raises apprehensions about the quality of representation and governance, Goff and Lee (2019, p. 1326) contend that minor parties "are one potential corrective to the current state of affairs". The focus

is not necessarily to supplant one of the major parties, but to hold them accountable and initiate positive change, by inducing major parties to adopt policy positions that reflect minor parties' demands. Goff and Lee (2019) corroborate Gillespie (2012), Marion and Oliver (2010) that minor parties contribute significantly to American politics by championing abandoned policy issues. Gillespie (2012), for instance, documents that minor parties advocated for and won policy innovations such as the abolition of slavery, women's suffrage and child labor laws. Marion and Oliver (2010), likewise, observed that minor parties have made great strides in shaping crime policies in the US. To Sifry (2013), the direct election of US senators, federal farm assistance, and unemployment benefits are policies passed on account of minor party initiatives. These studies lend support to Mazmanian (1974), when in his seminal paper "Third Parties in Presidential Elections", argued that minor parties are catalysts for change by focusing attention on contentious issues, which major parties are less likely to raise. Based on this particular function of minor parties, Melusky (2000) labelled minor parties as "issue finders".

In their study of minor parties' platforms in American politics, Nancy Marion and Willard Oliver comprehensively touted the significance of minor parties in America's institutionalized political duopoly as follows:

Despite the fact that no third party candidate has ever won the executive seat in the White House, this does not mean third parties are irrelevant to the American political process. Rather, they have historically proven to be vital in elections for they have often drawn attention to specific campaign issues that may otherwise have been entirely ignored, they often increase voter turnout in elections, they serve as a protest vote to the candidates or issues of the two main parties, and sometimes they shape the outcome of elections (Marion & Oliver 2010, p. 476).

There has also been some scholarship on the role minor parties play in Australia's party politics and democratic governance (see for instance, Monro 2019; Miragliotta 2013; Gauja 2010; Charnock 2009). Recounting the accomplishments of the Australian Democrats, Gauja (2010, p. 499) notes that as of July 2005, the Democrats had lost its esteemed balance of power status in Senate yet many of the policies it advocated since its inauguration, inter alia, climate change and global warming, nuclear power, uranium mining, and usage of water resources have now "moved into [the] mainstream and been adopted by the major parties". This succinctly captures Rosenstone et al. (2018, p. 44) postulation that: "Third parties often lose the battle but,

through co-optation, often win the war". Though the Australian Democrats may be incapable of claiming direct recognition for any future legislative developments in these policy areas, their function in agenda setting could be viewed as a permanent political accomplishment (Gauja 2010).

While there is widespread claim among scholars (Rosenstone et al. 2018; Gauja 2010; Herrnson 2002) that minor party's electoral accomplishment offers some signal to established parties about the appeal of minor party's platform, Hirano's (2008) study of the Populist Party and US congressional roll-call votes linked to populist issues suggests that there is no much evidence that the major parties coopt only electorally successful minor parties' platforms. Hirano (2008) exploited the distinctive historical context which surrounds the formation of the Populist Party in 1892 to understand the influence of the party's electoral success on congressional roll-call votes pertaining to anti-elitist matters. Hirano (2008) found that the co-optation of Populist policies does not appear to be correlated with the electoral success of the Populist candidates. Although Hirano's (2008) study focused on just one particular minor party, the notion that mainstream parties react to the mobilization and the electoral threats of minor parties — not only to the actual electoral success of minor parties — is unlikely to be exclusive to the Populist Party case.

Gauja (2010) examined the success of the Australian Democrats, a minor party that gained parliamentary representation and played key role in Australian Senate between 1977 and 2008. The party's contribution to Australian democracy is examined along three key dimensions: electoral, organizational, and parliamentary. Gauja (2010) emphasized that the Australia Democrats' leadership was analytically significant to the party's success in all three areas. Somewhat paradoxically, features that contributed to the Australian Democrat's accomplishments also caused its debility: the party's organization, its electoral performance, parliamentary concentration and the balance of power status the party held in the Australian Senate that enabled it to negotiate with key political actors. Nonetheless, the Australian Democrats' activities mobilized other minor political parties and created an indelible awareness that minor party voting constitutes an effective mechanism for realizing accountability in Senate (Gauja 2010). Gauja (2010, p. 497) highlights that perhaps the Democrats' lasting contribution to

Australian politics, as a minor political party, was to espouse and to prove “the capability of the Senate to act as more than a rubber stamp”.

Charnock (2009) has discussed the possibility of the Australian Greens’ ability to evolve into a party that plays an equivalent minor party role in the Senate analogous to that played by the Australian Democrats for most of their existence. Based on attitudes underlying voting behavior, Charnock (2009) submits that the Australian Green Party cannot afford to act contrary to its position as part of a leftwing bloc without risking a considerable part of their support base. Charnock (2009, p. 256) observed that with the weakening of the Australian Democrats, the Australian Labor Party government requires Greens’ support in the Senate to ratify legislation. This feat of the Australian Greens resonates in Miragliotta’s (2013) claim that the Greens have been allowed an influential role in the legislative process when there is disharmony between the major parties. Miragliotta (2013, p. 707) notes that the Green Party has therefore defied the presuppositions of those who averred that “they would prove a flash phenomenon”.

Miragliotta (2013) observed that during the first two decades of the Australian Greens’ existence, its electoral strength grew considerably, culminating in ever-increasing numbers of its nominees gaining seats in Australian parliaments. Miragliotta (2013) thus analyzed the basis of electoral support for the Australian Greens, and its prospects in the two-party dominance structure. The study concludes that whilst the Australian Greens may never rise beyond a minor party status, the source and nature of its electoral strength, coupled with certain characteristics of the institutional context, provide it with a basis for a relatively stable institutional and electoral presence (Miragliotta 2013). The Australian institutional setting, especially its permissive electoral system, provides enriched opportunities that aids smaller parties to convert support into representation. Similarly, availability of public subventions and liberal conditions of ballot access augment the pecuniary and organizational aptitude of Australia’s smaller parties (Miragliotta 2013).

While being criticized for failing to capitalize on the eminence of climate justice and other ecological sustainability matters on the political agenda, Bluhdorn (2009) maintains that the Greens’ policy focus has in recent times shifted to new left issues and social policy areas. In Europe, for instance, the Greens have been quite effective

on social justice issues, such as racial injustice, immigration, income gap and same-sex rights, rather than on environmental issues, such as ecological taxation and rejecting nuclear power (Bluhdorn 2009; Poguntke 2002).

In spite of their almost non-existent chance of winning seat during federal elections, Bartels and Remke (2021) argued that the accrescent number of small and marginal parties in Germany is noteworthy as these parties fulfil plethora of functions in the political system. Firstly, small and marginal German parties interact with parliamentary parties through personnel enlistment. On one hand, these parties are able to offer the parliamentary parties with proficient personnel, as exemplified when many officials of Die Freiheit (the Freedom) joined the Alternative for Germany (AfD). Conversely, they can eliminate personnel from parliamentary parties via party splits, as with the Liberal Conservative Reformers (LKR), the Awakening of German Patriots (Aufbruch deutscher Patrioten) and the Blue, all of which seceded from the Alternative for Germany. Secondly, German minor parties also serve as political agenda-setters, as shown in the case of the German Pirate Party, which has only gained a few parliamentary seats at the state level while still managing to have a contagion influence and thereby obliging the parliamentary parties and media to address the subject of digitalization.

Chamberlain (2010) teased out a key significance of minor party campaign by innovatively conceptualizing the Republican primary campaign of Ron Paul as a minor party candidacy within the precincts of a major party. According to Chamberlain (2010), minor party candidature within a major party necessitates that the aspirant had been a minor party nominee for a major public office and reverted to the major party to compete for office without disowning either or both the ideals or links with the minor party. Chamberlain's (2010) article mainly focused on the 2007/2008 Republican presidential primary campaign of Ron Paul, an ex-minor party presidential nominee for Libertarian Party in 1988. Founded on a viewpoint that contends the campaign needs to be examined as a minor party campaign within a major party, the findings suggest that Ron Paul gained support from states that were Western, with vast concentration of military veterans, and, above all, were supportive of his Libertarian Party presidential campaign during 1988. Chamberlain's (2010) study enhances our understanding of minor parties by illustrating how a minor party platform can be

exploited as a means to promote a candidate to a nationwide constituent rather than as a means utilized by a prominent candidate or individual to defy the two-party system. In the opinion of Chamberlain (2010), Ron Paul still fits the Rosenstone et al. (1996) characteristics of a minor party campaign by addressing apparent failures in the Republican Party, drawing support from outside the major party structure, and affording disgruntled electorates (including Republicans) a choice distinct from all other primary aspirants.

Writing on South African party politics, Sadie (2017) contends that a number of minor parties in South Africa such as Freedom Front Plus, African Christian Democratic Party and Pan Africanist Congress of Azania fulfil a critical function by representing certain population's interests, checking on abuse of state power, and exposing corruption. Based on a framework which views the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) as a nascent populist third party, Mbete (2015) also shows that the EFF has been quite impactful in South Africa's parliamentary politics. The EFF has effectively applied its engagement with national and provincial legislatures to demand, among other things, the expropriation of land without compensation and nationalization of mines, banks and other strategic sectors of the South African economy without compensation. According to Mbete (2015, p. 35) EFF's populist "style has clearly struck a chord with a portion of the South African electorate" by endearing itself as a "party of the people", particularly in North West and Limpopo provinces, to become the official opposition in these provinces. Nevertheless, as Mbete (2015, p. 55) argues, EFF's accomplishment "represents a turn towards a dangerous populism in South African politics."

Except Aidoo and Chamberlain (2015), empirical studies that specifically examine the role of minor parties in Ghana is lacking. Focusing on the participation of minor parties in Ghana's 2012 elections, Aidoo and Chamberlain (2015) have claimed that the smaller parties in Ghana, to a certain extent, contribute to the nascent democratic culture in the country. As Aidoo and Chamberlain (2015) assert, the aptitude of Ghana's minor parties to repeatedly contest elections, over several years, and concede defeat after losing repeatedly is a valuable sign of healthy democratic culture. The paper, however, failed to explicate how regular or repeated electoral participation of minor parties amounts to improving democratic culture.

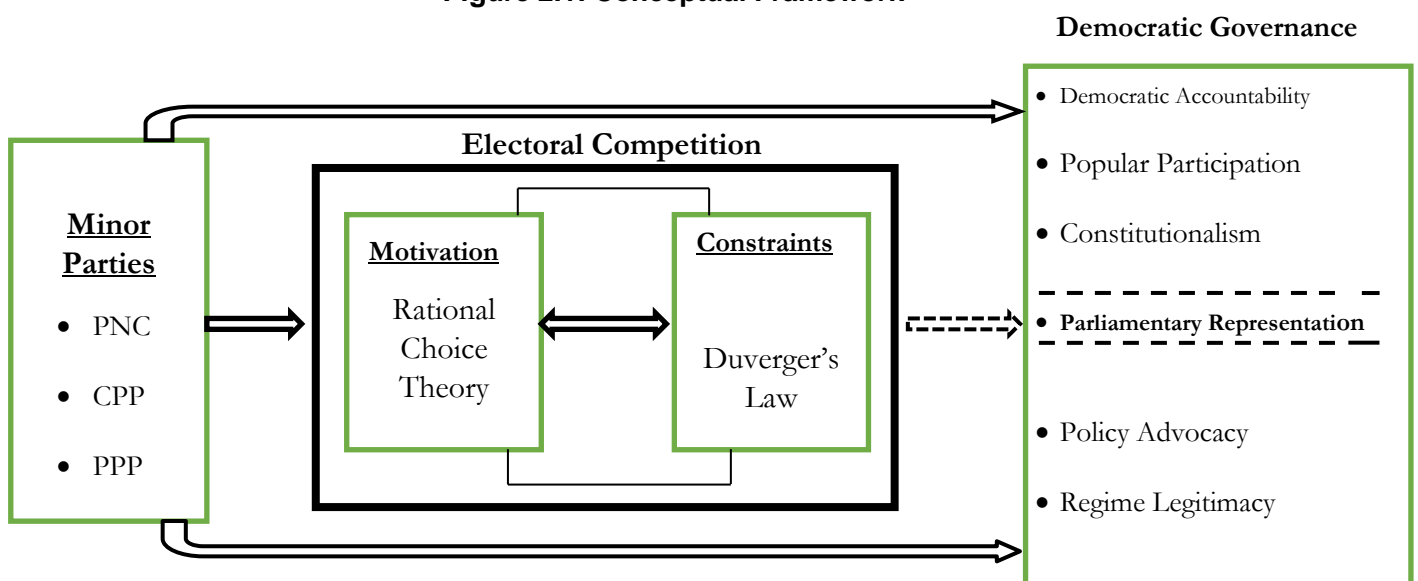
As evident throughout this review, studies on the role of minor parties in democracy has mainly focused on advanced democracies (such as US, UK, Australia, Canada), leading to scant literature on minor parties' relevance in emerging democracies of Africa, including Ghana. This is as a result of the fact that African minor parties are seldomly the focus of studies in Political Science, partly due to the difficulty in gathering significant data about them; their electoral inconsequentiality; and the undue scholarly fixation on ruling parties (Bertrand 2021). This researcher recognizes the lacuna in the literature and intends to address the literature gap by interrogating the value and relevance of minor parties in Ghana's democratic development, in keeping with the third research objective of this study.

Based on theoretical and empirical literature thus far reviewed, the next section proceeds to present the conceptual framework that guides the current study.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework, in the opinion of Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 18), is “a visual or written product, one that explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied – the key factors, concepts, or variables – and the presumed relationships among them”. Based on the theoretical framework and literature reviewed, this study proposes the conceptual framework below (see Figure 2.1) to guide this study.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Author's Construct, 2022

The framework conceptualizes how the selected minor parties (i.e., CPP, PNC, and PPP) contribute to Ghana's democratic governance, whilst accounting for their motivation to participate in electoral competition and the factors that inhibit their electoral success. The framework suggests that electoral competition presents minor parties with both motivations (to compete) and constraints (that limit their chances of success). The "motivation" of minor parties to participate in electoral competition despite their limited chance of electoral success is explained by the rational choice theory. Consistent with rational choice theory, political actors make decisions based on a cost-benefit analysis with the goal to maximize personal benefits (Hudik 2019). Hence, it is conjectured that the decision of minor parties to participate in electoral contest is motivated by the pursuit of personal benefits or self-interests after a cost-benefit analysis by the primary actors.

The "constraints", conversely, are those factors either institutional or non-institutional that serve as barriers to minor party's success in electoral competition. The Duverger's Law thus provides the theoretical explanation for the failure of minor parties. According to Duverger's Law, plurality rule system as practiced in Ghana, fosters a two-party system and marginalizes minor parties (Duverger 1972). The framework further illustrates that minor parties may contribute directly to democratic governance without necessarily entering into electoral competition. However, to obtain parliamentary representation, a minor party definitely has to go through electoral competition yet with limited chances of electoral success due to their avowed constraints. As observed in Figure 2.1, in the box labelled "*Democratic Governance*", some of the envisaged democratic contributions of minor parties include the promotion of: democratic accountability (i.e., answerability of public officials), popular participation (i.e., citizens' involvement in public decision-making, including voting), constitutionalism (i.e., the use of the national constitution to limit governmental powers to avoid abuse of powers). The rest are; parliamentary representation, policy advocacy, and regime legitimacy (see Diamond & Morlino 2016; 2005).

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to a review of theoretical and empirical literature. The chapter began with conceptual definitions of key terms such as democratic governance, minor party, plurality system, and proportional representation.

Furthermore, the chapter discussed the two main theories – the rational choice theory and the Duverger's Law – which guide the conduct of the current study. While the rational choice theory, which states that actors are rational and are motivated by self-interest, helps to understand the motivation behind minor parties' decision to participate in competitive politics in an institutionalized political duopoly like Ghana; the Duverger's Law illuminates the conventional understanding of minor party failure.

The literature clearly delineated minor party as any political party competing for votes that failed to poll more votes than either of its two main rivals, or in the context of future elections is considered implausible to do so (Epstein 2012). According to the literature reviewed, minor parties are largely seen as citizens' response to major party failure. However, some minor parties also emerge to pursue ideological, ethnic and some other primordial interests. The extant literature revealed that minor party and their candidates typically fail, largely because they often suffer restrictive ballot access, effects of plurality systems, unequal campaign financing, derisive media coverage, and anti-minor party sentiments, among others. Although minor parties rarely win elections or form government, the literature identified significant democratic contributions associated with minor party platforms such as providing opportunities for citizens to participate in political processes as they seek to broaden policy debate by raising issues that major party platforms refuse to address.

In the subsequent chapter, a detailed historical analysis of minor parties' development in Ghana's party politics is discussed. The purpose is to provide a context for understanding minor party activism in Ghana's Fourth Republican democratic dispensation.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF MINOR PARTIES IN GHANA'S DEMOCRATIC POLITICS, 1947- 2020

3.1 Introduction

Any serious analysis of Ghana's current minor parties cannot detach itself from the historical context or antecedents of party politics in Ghana (formerly, Gold Coast). This chapter, therefore, attempts to document the development of minor parties in Ghana since the 1940s when party politics emerged in the former British colony, presently called Ghana. This is approached through a five-pronged phase: the pre-independence era (1947-1957); the first republican era (1960-1966), the second republican era (1969-1972), and the third republican era (1979-1981). Finally, a review of the recent history of minor party development under Ghana's Fourth Republic (i.e., 1992 – 2020) is submitted.

3.2 Minor Parties During the Pre-Independence Era, 1947 – 1957

Political parties have been instrumental in the evolution of Ghana's democratic politics since the early 1950s when the nation was in transition from colonialism to independence. Between 1947 and 1957, nine political parties emerged to contest the pre-independent elections (Ninsin 2006). These pre-independent political parties include, the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), the Convention Peoples' Party (CPP), the National Democratic Party, the National Liberation Movement (NLM), the Northern People's Party, the Muslim Association Party, the Togoland Congress, the Anlo Youth Association and the Ga Shifimokpee. Whilst some of these political parties were founded to express sub-national or ethno-regional identities, others held onto religious or supra-national identities (Nam-Katoti et al. 2011; Ninsin 2006).

The 1951 Gold Coast Legislative Assembly election was the first ever universal suffrage held in the Gold Coast (now Ghana). In this elections, three political parties contested, namely, the CPP which was led by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah; the UGCC, led by Dr. Joseph Boakye Danquah; and the National Democratic Party, led by Dr.

Frederick Victor Nanka-Bruce. The CPP won 34 of the 38 elected seats in the Assembly. While the main opposition, the UGCC, performed below popular expectation with only 2 seats, independents captured the remaining legislative seats. The National Democratic Party, the only minor party, performed abysmally with no legislative seat (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014).

The National Democratic Party, popularly called “the Demos”, was a right-wing political party formed in 1950. This typically Accra-based political party was a product of a merger of the Kojo Thompson’s Ga Mambii Party and the Dr. Nanka-Bruce and Akilagpa Sawyer’s Accra Ratepayers Association. With its motto: “Sure, Solid, Self-government”, the National Democratic Party favored a gradual transition self-government for the then Gold Coast, just like the UGCC’s “Independence Within the Shortest Possible Time” rhetoric. This contrasted sharply with the CPP’s motto: “Independence now” (see Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014).

The minor party National Democratic Party, in coordination with the UGCC campaigned against the CPP which favored “self-government now”, contending that the CPP was too radical and their nominees inexperienced; whereas the National Democratic Party’s nominees (just like that of the UGCC) were rather labelled to be reputable and experienced as they were mainly lawyers, physicians and wealthy merchants (see Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014). However, the shock of the poor performance of the National Democratic Party in the 1951 elections led to its dissolution to merge with the UGCC and other minor parties to form the Ghana Congress Party in May 1952 (Stockwell 2000; Mason 1997). Nevertheless, the merger could not propel the newly formed Ghana Congress Party to major party status as the subsequent 1954 Gold Coast Legislative Assembly election produced the CPP and the Northern People’s Party as the two dominant parties with 72 and 15 seats (out of 104 seats) respectively. In that election, the Togoland Congress gained three (3) seats as the leading minor party, whilst the Muslim Association Party, the Anlo Youth Association and the Ghana Congress Party polled a seat each. Eleven (11) independent candidates secured the remaining seats (Stockwell 2000).

The reason for the poor electoral performance of these minor parties is reflected in the fact they were largely ethno-regional and socially exclusive in their orientation; unlike the CPP which was more socially and ethno-regionally inclusive (Kufour 2009;

Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014). The Muslim Association Party, for instance, avowedly represented the interest of Muslims living in southern coastal cities and the forest belt; whereas the Ga Shifimokpee pursued greater representation for the Ga ethnic people, the autochthones of Accra. The Anlo Youth Association, a pro-ethnic Ewe minor party, primarily operated in south-eastern Gold Coast, where the ethnic Anlos⁷ are located; and its main platform was to canvass for the Ewe people in British Togoland to remain as part of Ghana after political independence.

Formed in 1951 by some Ewe nationalists, the Togoland Congress was largely driven by its campaign for the reunification of British Togoland with French Togoland to form a distinct Ewe State (see Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014). Nevertheless, the Togoland Congress failed in its campaign for the reunification of the Ewe ethnic people in British Togoland with French Togoland when the matter was decided in the May 1956 United Nations' supervised plebiscite⁸. Both the Anlo Youth Association and the Togoland Congress later became part of the newly formed opposition group, the United Party (UP), following the enactment of the Avoidance of Discrimination Act of 1957 by the CPP government. The purpose of the Avoidance of Discrimination Act of 1957 was to ban the existence of political parties that were based on predominantly ethnic, religious or other sectional interests (Kufour 2009).

Founded in September 1954, the Ashanti-based NLM was a coalition of wealthy cocoa farmers and traditional rulers concerned about the reduced cocoa price and the CPP's redistributive socialist policies. The traditional rulers were also anxious of their diminishing influence and privileges under a unitarist Nkrumah (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014). The NLM thus advocated a federal system of government, with enhanced powers for traditional authorities and the various regional administrations. As a result of its advocacy for a federation, the NLM vehemently challenged the process of centralization by the CPP. The NLM apparatus was thus perceived to be a stern critic of the governing CPP and its dictatorial tendencies. As Daddieh and Bob-Milliar (2014, p.114) have noted, "the NLM posed the greatest threat to the vision of Nkrumah and the CPP" in the prelude to independence. For instance, in unison with another

⁷ The Anlos are a subgroup of the Ewes found in Ghana and Togo.

⁸ This was for the Ewe people to decide whether to be part of Ghana after independence or rejoin French Togoland.

regionalist group (i.e., the Northern People's Party), the NLM boycotted the discussions on a new constitution towards self-government. This threatened the CPP administration; that the British Crown might consider the boycott as an indication of disunity and unreadiness of colony for the next phase of political independence. Nonetheless, the outcome of the 1956 Legislative Assembly elections emphasized the CPP's dominance in the pre-independence political landscape as the main opposition, the Northern People's Party garnered only 15 seats against the CPP's 71 seats out of 104 seats. Whilst the Togoland Congress ceded one (1) of its three (3) seats it held in the 1954 Legislative Assembly, the Muslim Association Party, and the Anlo Youth Association retained their single seat each. The NLM annexed 12 out of the 104 seats and assumed the third largest party in the 1956 Legislative Assembly. It is significant to highlight that the pre-independent minor parties largely thrived on ethnoreligious support, with no or little influence outside their socially defined enclave. As Aidoo and Chamberlain (2015, p. 199) have noted, the success of these pre-independent "minor parties was based on how well they tapped into ethnic and religious sentiments to energize their bases"; yet same reason also accounted for their electoral failures.

The ethnocentric tendencies of these pre-independent minor parties signaled grave threats to national cohesion. Hence, the CPP government's decision to pass the Avoidance of Discrimination Act in 1957. However, as Kufour (2009) argued, a key political motivation of the CPP for the enactment of the Avoidance of Discrimination Act was to erect a legal obstacle to forestall the minor parties from gaining traction. This act by the CPP lends credence to Lewis-Beck and Squire's (1995) notion that, in seeking to limit competition, a major party in power would favor a situation that eliminates minor parties from the political arena. As the next section highlights, further dictatorial tendencies of the Nkrumah's CPP administration weakened minor party activism under Ghana's First Republic.

3.3 Minor Parties Under Ghana's First Republic, 1960 – 1966

On 1st July 1960, Ghana was declared a Republic by the country's first president, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. The 27th April 1960 Ghanaian presidential election initiated Ghana's First Republic. This was the maiden presidential election held in Ghana. The 1960 presidential election was a straight contest between Nkrumah's CPP and Danquah's UP. At the end of the polls, Nkrumah's CPP polled 1,016,076 votes representing 89.07

percent to win the presidency against Joseph Boakye Danquah's UP, which obtained 124,623 votes representing 10 percent. In this election, there was no minor party participation by reason of the enactment of the Avoidance of Discrimination Act of 1957, which among other things banned political parties founded on racial, regional, or religious orientations, causing the UGCC and other opposition parties such as the Muslim Association Party, the Anlo Youth Organization, the Northern People's Party, the Togoland Congress, the Ga Shifimokpee and the NLM to coalesce as a single party under the UP, with Dr. Joseph Boakye Danquah as its leader. The Nkrumah's CPP government deployed the Avoidance of Discrimination Act to promote national cohesion at the expense of silencing minority voices in the country (Kufour 2009). This further drifted the nation into one-party state, as the 1960 Constitution elevated the CPP as the sole political party authorized as the national vanguard in building a socialist society (Republic of Ghana 1960, p. 6).

Parliamentary elections were conducted in Ghana in 1965 but as the country was essentially a one-party state at the time, no political party except the CPP was allowed to participate. Hence, all 198 parliamentarians representing the CPP were voted unchallenged. This was the first election for the country's parliament since the pre-independence 1956 Legislative Assembly elections. Accordingly, opposition parties, including minor parties, were annihilated and did not gain representation in the nation's First Republic parliament. Through concerted efforts, political pluralism was effectively outlawed by the CPP government in 1964 through a referendum. The cumulative consequence of these political developments was the sudden military overthrow of the CPP administration on 24 February 1966. A military edict disbanded the CPP and subsequently proscribed the 1960 Constitution (Kufour 2009; Gyimah-Boadi & Debrah 2008). The overthrow of Nkrumah's CPP by the National Liberation Council (NLC) junta and its aftermath ushered in Ghana's Second Republic in 1969.

3.4 Minor Parties Under Ghana's Second Republic, 1969 – 1972

Efforts towards the inauguration of the Ghana's Second Republic led to the liberation of the political space by the NLC junta. By May 1969, when the NLC reversed the prohibition of political party activism in Ghana, twenty (20) new political parties were established. Five of these political parties including the Progress Party (PP), the National Alliance of Liberals (NAL), the United Nationalist Party (UNP), the People's

Action Party (PAP), and the All People’s Republican Party (APRP) satisfied ballot access requirements to participate in the 1969 polls (Gyimah-Boadi & Debrah 2008). However, as Manu (1993) observed, only two political parties – the PP and the NAL – seemed viable during the Second Republic. The PP, an offshoot of the defunct UP, was led by Kofi Abrefa Busia whereas the NAL, a regroup of Nkrumahists, had Komla Agbeli Gbedemah as its leader. The remaining political parties (i.e., UNP, PAP, and APRP) lacked substantial following and was reflected in the outcome of the 1969 elections (Nunley 2006).

Table 3.1: 1969 Ghanaian Parliamentary Election Results

Party	Votes	%	Seats
Progress Party	877,310	58.3	105
National Alliance of Liberals	463,401	30.8	29
United Nationalist Party	57,652	3.8	2
People's Action Party	51,125	3.4	2
All People's Republican Party	27,328	1.8	1
Independents	27,216	1.8	1
Total	1,493,371	100	140

Source: African Election Database

In the parliamentary elections conducted on 29th August 1969, the NAL gained 29 seats in the National Assembly while the PP polled 105 of the National Assembly's 140 seats. The remaining seats, however, went to the minor political parties, namely the UNP (2 seats), the PAP (2 seats), and the APRP (1 seat). (Refer to Table 3.1). According to Nunley (2006), these minor parties did not profess any clear-cut political ideology and as a result disappeared almost immediately after the 1969 elections, leading to lack of scholarship on them. However, unlike the minor parties before them, the minor parties of the Second Republic did not mobilize on ethno-regional or religious divisions. Since the 1969 Constitution of Ghana was modeled along the Westminster system of governance, the leader of the PP, Kofi Abrefa Busia, assumed the Prime Minister position on 3rd September 1969, but was soon overthrown in 1972, in a military coup (Yakohene 2009).

3.5 Minor Parties Under Ghana's Third Republic, 1979 – 1981

The era between 1972 and 1978 is often perceived as the period of stagnation and under-development of party politics in Ghana. The country experienced four different and successive military regimes, leading to a protracted ban on partisan politics (Chazan 1983). When the injunction on political party activities was finally lifted in January 1979, though several political parties surfaced, only six gained ballot access to contest the 1979 elections; namely, the People's National Party (PNP), the Popular Front Party (PFP), the United National Convention (UNC), the Social Democratic Force (SDF), the Third Force Party (TFP), and the Action Congress Party (ACP) (Manu 1993).

As evident in Table 3.2, the 1979 Ghanaian presidential election was settled in a runoff between Hilla Limann's PNP and Victor Owusu's PFP, with the former winning 62% of the total valid votes. The UNC polled 17.51% of the popular votes in the first-round of the presidential election, with 13 seats of the total 140 legislative seats (see Table 3.3) to assume the third largest party in the Third Republican parliament, behind the PNP (71 seats) and PFP (42 seat) respectively. Other minor parties such the ACP captured 9.38% presidential votes with 10 seats whereas the SDF garnered only 3.72% presidential votes, with 3 legislative seats.

Table 3.2: 1979 Ghanaian Presidential Election Results

Candidate	Party	First round		Second round	
		Votes	%	Votes	%
Hilla Limann	People's National Party	631,559	35.32	1,118,305	62.0
Victor Owusu	Popular Front Party	533,928	29.86	686,097	38.0
William Ofori Atta	United National Convention	311,265	17.41		
Frank Bernasko	Action Congress Party	167,775	9.38		
Ibrahim Mahama	Social Democratic Front	66,445	3.72		
John Bilson	Third Force Party	49,104	2.75		
R. P. Baffour	Independent	8,812	0.49		
Kwame Nyanteh	Independent	8,480	0.47		
Mark Diamond Addy	Independent	5,959	0.33		
Imoru Ayarna	Independent	4,874	0.27		
Total		1,788,209	100	1,804,402	100

Source: African Elections Database

The UNC, in particular, was a splinter group from the PFP and it centered around the personality of William Ofori-Atta, a veteran politician who was a member of ‘the Big Six’⁹ of the UGCC. The UNC attracted to its fold some adherents of Komla Gbedemah’s NAL, including its General Secretary, Dr. Obed Asamoah. The ACP was under the leadership of Colonel George Bernasko; one of the few army officers who severed relationship with Ignatius Kutu Acheampong’s military regime, which ruled from 13 January 1972 to 5 July 1978 (Awoonor 1990). Thus, the minor parties of the Ghana’s Third Republic were largely personality-based parties.

Table 3.3: 1979 Ghanaian Parliamentary Election Results

Party	Votes	%	Seats
People's National Party	645,080	36.44	71
Popular Front Party	541,659	30.60	42
United National Convention	310,062	17.51	13
Action Congress Party	156,484	8.84	10
Social Democratic Front	69,052	3.90	3
Third Force Party	31,887	1.80	0
Independents	16,165	0.91	1
Total	1,770,379	100	140

Source: African Elections Database

The 31st December 1981 coup d’état by the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) derailed Ghana’s third attempt at multi-party democracy. As it was the case after the 1966 and 1972 coups, the PNDC proscribed the 1979 Ghanaian Constitution and disbanded all political parties (Gyimah-Boadi & Debrah 2008). Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings’ PNDC junta governed for the next decade until multiparty democracy was finally reinstated in 1992 to inaugurate the Fourth Republic (Yobo & Gyampo 2015). Since the commencement of Ghana’s Fourth Republic, whilst the NDC and the NPP

⁹ The Big Six were six leaders of the UGCC, the first political party formed in Ghana (then Gold Coast). The members of the Big Six were: Kwame Nkrumah, Ebenezer Arko-Adjei, Edward Akufo-Addo, J. B. Danquah, Emmanuel Obetsebi-Lamptey, William Ofori Atta.

remain the two major parties, several minor parties have participated in electoral politics. It is the analysis of these minor parties, which are often understudied, that would be the concentration of the current study. The next section, thus, provides a contextual overview of the development of minor parties in Ghana's Fourth Republic.

3.6 Minor Parties Under Ghana's Fourth Republic, 1992 – 2020

Despite the majoritarian bias of Ghana's Fourth Republic, a number of minor parties have participated in competitive politics under the Fourth Republic (Bob-Milliar 2019; Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017; Aidoo & Chamberlain 2015; Yobo & Gyampo 2015; Nugent 2001). Whilst several minor parties have contested parliamentary elections under Ghana's Fourth Republic, the PNC and the CPP are the only minor parties that have actually gained legislative seat since the 1996 elections (see Table 3.4). Nevertheless, in most instances where they won, it was with the backing of one of the two dominant parties (i.e., the NPP and the NDC) (Bob-Milliar 2019; Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017; Yobo & Gyampo 2015).

Table 3.4: Parties Contesting Parliamentary Elections & Seats Won, 1996 – 2020

	1996	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016	2020
NDC	133	92	94	116	148	106	137
NPP	61	100	128	107	123	169	137
PNC	1	3	4	2	1	0	0
CPP	5	1	3	1	0	0	0
PPP	NA	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0
Independent	-	4	1	4	3	0	1
Total seats	200	200	230	230	275	275	275

Source: Authors' compilation based on Electoral Commission data, 2021

During the 1996 elections, the PNC gained a lone seat for the first time under the current Fourth Republic; but managed to capture 3 seats in the subsequent 2000 parliamentary elections; and increased to 4 seats in 2004. Nonetheless, the party lost 2 of its 4 legislative seats to the major party NDC in the 2008 election, and subsequently obtained a single seat out of the 275 constituencies which were available for capture in 2012. The CPP, on the other hand, secured 5 seats in 1996 but it lost 4 in the 2000 Ghanaian parliamentary polls. In the 2004 and 2008 polls, the CPP polled

3 seats and a seat respectively. Remarkably, in the 2012, the PNC was the only minor party to win a seat in parliament. Nonetheless, a CPP candidate annexed the Kumbungu Constituency seat from the incumbent NDC in a later by-election held on 30th April, 2013.

The electoral victory of the CPP in the Kumbungu Constituency by-election was quite significant because it represents the first time a minor party candidate won a parliamentary by-election in Ghana since the return of multiparty democracy in 1992. This political feat gave the CPP, which had no representation in the nation's parliament after the close of the 2012 polls, a seat in the law-making body. In that by-election, it is argued that the main opposition NPP aided the CPP to win the seat (see Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017, p. 34). This is because the NPP had boycotted the by-election in remonstrance of its electoral fraud petition (known popularly as the 2012 Election Petition), which was then awaiting determination at the Supreme Court of Ghana (Yobo & Gyampo 2015).

As indicated in Table 3.5, the Nkrumahist-inspired PNC is the only minor party that has participated in all eight (8) presidential elections held under the Fourth Republic of Ghana; yet with insignificant electoral support. Established in July 1992, the PNC originates from the 1979 Imoru Egala-Limann political tradition of the PNP. Dr. Hilla Limann, the president of Ghana's short-lived Third Republic, formed the PNC after numerous failed efforts to organize a single Nkrumahist front. As an appendage of Nkrumahists, the PNC upholds Dr. Nkrumah's version of socialism and Pan-Africanism, popularly referred to as *scientific socialism* (Nugent 1996; Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017). Since its debut in 1992 when the party polled 6.7 percent to place third position, the PNC's electoral support has been on continuous decline. The PNC's votes declined to 3 percent in 1996; 2.9 percent in 2000; 1.92 percent in 2004; 0.87 percent in 2008; 0.22 percent and 0.21 percent in 2012 and 2016 respectively. In sum, the poor showing of the PNC, in the 2020 presidential election represents a negative variance of 6.49 percent against its 1992 electoral results. Note-worthily, northern Ghana appears to be the electoral fortress of the PNC as it has won all its parliamentary seats from that part of the country. Towards this end, Gyimah-Boadi and Debrah (2008, p. 149) labelled the PNC as a "Northern-based party". Instructively, most of the party leaders have hailed from northern Ghana. For instance, the first

leader, Dr. Hilla Limann, was a native of Gwolu, in the Sissala West District of the Upper West Region. The multiple-time PNC presidential nominee, Edward Mahama; Alhassan Agariga, the 2012 flagbearer; David Apasera, the 2020 flagbearer; as well as Party Chairmen, Ahmed Ramadan and Bernard Mornah, all hail from the northern Ghana. The “northern tag” on the PNC somewhat impacts adversely on the party’s appeal among southern voters (Aidoo & Chamberlain 2015; Osei 2013). Osei (2013) for instance observed that, the only significant PNC supporters among southerners are perhaps people of northern descent living in the south and Muslim migrants in southern Ghana.

Table 3.5: Results of Presidential Elections, 1992 – 2020

Parties	Percentage of Votes							
	1992	1996	2000 (1st Round)	2004	2008 (1st Round)	2012	2016	2020
NDC	58.3	57.4	44.5	44.9	47.9	50.7	44.53	47.36
NPP	30.4	39.6	48.2	52.5	49.13	47.7	53.72	51.30
PNC	6.70	3.0	2.90	1.92	0.87	0.22	0.21	0.08
CPP	Not Formed	No ballot access	1.80	0.99	1.34	0.18	0.24	0.09
PPP	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	0.58	0.99	0.05
NIP	2.80	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct
PHP	1.75	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct
NRP	Not Formed	Not Formed	1.20	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct
UGM	Not Formed	Not Formed	0.30	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct
DPP	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	0.10	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct
DFP	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	0.33	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct
RPD	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	0.08	Defunct	Defunct	Defunct
GCPP	Not Formed	Not Formed	1.00	No ballot access	No ballot access	0.35	No ballot access	No ballot access
UFP	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	0.08	No ballot access	No ballot access
NDP	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	Not Formed	No ballot access	0.16	0.05

Source: Authors’ compilation based on Electoral Commission data, 2022

As Agomor (2019) argued, party politics under Ghana's Fourth Republic has principally projected a political duopoly and alienated minor parties to the periphery. As a consequence, many of the [smaller] political parties that started the Fourth Republic have become inactive, whereas others have coalesced, aligned, or collapsed (Agomor 2019; Yobo & Gyampo 2015; Ninsin 2006). As evident in Table 3.5, splinter minor parties such as United Ghana Movement (UGM), Democratic People's Party (DPP), Democratic Freedom Party (DFP), and Reformed Patriotic Democrats (RPD) could only make a one-time entry in the electoral arena and became defunct. Stunned by their dismal electoral performances in the 1992 elections, the Peoples' Heritage Party (PHP) and the National Independent Party (NIP) have also, since the 1992 election, disappeared from Ghanaian politics (Yobo & Gyampo 2015). These two minor parties, NIP and PHP, who claimed Nkrumahist lineage coalesced with other Nkrumahists (such the People's Convention Party) to re-form the CPP in 1996. The Fourth Republican variant of the CPP is thus a reorganization of adherents of the First Republic CPP of Kwame Nkrumah; the nation's first president. Whilst these mergers were expected to boost the electoral performance of the Nkrumahists, the CPP continues to straggle in competitive elections in Ghana's Fourth Republic.

As observed in Table 3.5, from 1.80 percent in 2000 presidential race, the CPP's vote declined to 0.99 percent in 2004, 1.34 percent in 2008, 0.18 percent in 2012, 0.24 percent in 2016, and 0.09 percent in 2020 respectively. Despite wide-held claims of attracting Persons with Disability's votes, the 2016 CPP presidential nominee, Ivor Kobina Greenstreet, a physically-challenged lawyer, polled only 0.24 percent (25,395 votes). Though this represents an improvement (a variance of 0.06%) over the 2012 electoral performance of 0.18 percent when Dr. Foster Abu Sakara was the party's nominee, it is still considered paltry. The CPP also lost its lone legislative seat in the 2016 parliamentary elections. The party seems not to make any progress beyond its initial 1.80 percent votes in the 2000 presidential election.

A lack of inter-party coordination anchored in extreme factionalism among the Nkrumahist minor parties has been identified as a key obstacle to the Nkrumahists' vision of capturing power under the Fourth Republic (Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017; Bob-Milliar 2019). Despite professing a similar political ideology, Kwofie and Bob-Milliar (2017) have observed that, there is very little cooperation between the CPP and the

PNC. Both parties have practically failed to coordinate their candidate nomination strategies as it occurs in some democracies such as Australia where ideologically similar minor parties strike pre-electoral alliance deals to circumvent votes splitting (see Kadima, 2014; Ishiyama 2009; Herron 2002). This injudicious political behavior of the Nkrumahists minor parties is incongruous with existing theories on inter-party collaboration and strategic candidate selection procedures as they compete against each other even in constituencies where they could have effortlessly collaborated to win (Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017, p. 42). As Yobo and Gyampo (2015) and Agomor (2019) averred, several pre-election alliance opportunities have portentously eluded the Nkrumahists minor parties owing to their usual misapprehensions. For instance, whilst the 2004 pre-election coalition¹⁰ of the Nkrumahists could have been revolutionary for the Nkrumahist minor parties, the CPP in the rush withdrew. The Nkrumahists front, specifically the CPP, suffered a further pronounced dissection when Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom (the 2008 CPP presidential nominee) disaffiliated from the CPP to launch his Progressive People's Party (PPP) in 2012.

Founded barely a year to the 2012 polls, the PPP placed enviable third position after the NDC and the NPP respectively; yet with inconsequential 0.58 percent of the total valid votes (Yobo & Gyampo 2015). Yobo and Gyampo (2015) contend that the PPP was able to outpoll all the other "veteran" minor parties including the CPP and the PNC, due to reasonably access to campaign finance which was available to the flagbearer of the party, Papa Kwesi Nduom; an affluent Ghanaian entrepreneur. In the case of the 2016 PPP's presidential bid, the PPP polled 0.99 percent of the total votes to secure third position for the second time in a roll. However, the party's electoral output was considered disproportional to the grandeur campaign ran by the party's nominee, Papa Kwesi Nduom. This is because the PPP was the only minor party that was able to field parliamentary candidates in more than two-third of the 275 constituencies nationwide. Again, the party's campaign posters were ubiquitous in almost every constituency amidst significant media coverage due to Nduom's personal ownership of several media houses. Yet, not unlike the other minor parties, weak

¹⁰ Popularly known as the Grand Coalition (see Yobo & Gyampo 2015, p. 13)

organizational capacity coupled with the adverse effect of the Ghana's plurality electoral rule stifled the PPP's efforts (Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017).

As Asekere (2021) and Bob-Milliar (2019) revealed, recent past elections (i.e., post 2012) in Ghana have been quite gloomy for minor parties and their candidates. Specifically, since 2016 elections, all the 275 parliamentary seats have repeatedly been settled in favor of the two major parties and sometimes independents. Yet, several minor parties including the PPP, the CPP, the PNC, the Great Consolidated Popular Party (GCPP), the National Democratic Party (NDP)¹¹, and the United Front Party (UFP) competed in both 2016 and 2020 general elections (Asekere 2021). In the specific case of the 2016 presidential race, minor party voting was abysmally low as the vote sum of all the five contending minor party candidates accrued only 1.60 percent of the total valid votes; a vote proportion which is far less than the 9.19 percent vote differential the winner of the 2016 polls, NPP's Nana Akufo-Addo, used to unseat incumbent John Dramani Mahama of the NDC. The landslide victory of the opposition NPP deprived the minor parties the opportunity to exploit their coalition potential in an envisioned runoff election, as it had been the case in the 2000 and 2008 presidential runoffs (see Bob-Milliar 2019, pp. 16-17).

Whilst there are over twenty minor political parties registered in the books of the Electoral Commission of Ghana, Kwofie and Bob-Milliar (2017) report that owing to financial limitations and poor organization, most of these parties are often incapable of fielding nominees in most constituencies. And even where they do compete, as Nugent (2001) observed, they are just little more than onlookers in a two-horse race between the NPP and the NDC. Consequently, Paul Nugent, a keen observer of Ghana's political landscape, demeaned Ghana's minor parties as "also-rans" owing to their pronounced limited electoral influence over the years (Nugent 2001). The "also-rans" in Ghana's current Fourth Republic include but not limited to the NDP, and the UFP. The UFP was founded in 2010 by dissatisfied factions of the NPP and the NDC in the Ashanti region of Ghana as an alternative to Ghana's two leading political parties. Notwithstanding the UFP's stated vision of attracting young Ghanaian voters, with its motto: freedom and empowerment, the party polled a humiliating 0.08 percent

¹¹ National Democratic Party (NDP): This party is different from the National Democratic Party which was led by Dr Nanka-Bruce during the pre-independence era.

of the total votes with no parliamentary seat in the 2012 election (Aidoo & Chamberlain 2015). Due to intra-party conflict, the UFP could not organize to contest the 2016 Ghanaian presidential election, and in 2020 its flagbearer failed to meet ballot access requirement.

The NDP, likewise, is a splinter party from the NDC which emerged in October 2012 over disagreement by the rank and file of the NDC. While the NDP failed to satisfy ballot requirements for the 2012 Ghanaian presidential election, its candidate, former first lady Nana Konadu Agyemang Rawlings, polled just 0.16% of the total vote in the 2016 election. It is, however, noteworthy that the 2016 polls represent the first time in the annals of Ghanaian politics a woman ran for the presidency (Agomor 2019, p. 77). The minor party, the NDP, is thus credited with producing the first female presidential aspirant since the inception of party politics in Ghana. Nevertheless, in the recent 2020 Ghanaian presidential election, three minor parties namely, the PPP, the NDP and the Ghana Freedom Party (GFP) produced female presidential nominees; yet with inconsequential electoral performance.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the history and development of minor parties in Ghana. As the chapter demonstrates, Ghana's pre-independence minor parties mainly represented ethnic and sometime religious interests with no clearly defined political ideology. The leading minor parties at the time included the Northern People's Party (representing mainly the northern territories), Muslims Association Party, the NLM (which was mainly an Ashanti-based political party), and the Togoland Congress and Anlo Youth Association (mainly ethnic Ewes). Nevertheless, during the immediate post-independent Ghana, all such parties were outlawed on account of the passage of the Avoidance of Discrimination Act of 1957, which among other things prohibited the formation of political parties on the basis of racial, regional, or religious orientations. Unlike Ghana's pre-independent National Assemblies (of 1951, 1954, and 1956), when minor parties had legislative representation, the dictatorial tendencies of the then ruling CPP rendered Ghana a one-party state in the early 1960's under Ghana's First Republic. Hence, political opposition, including minor parties, were annihilated and had no representation in the parliament of Ghana's First Republic. Also, the chapter demonstrates that owing to repetitive military interventions

in Ghana's politics, which was always characterized by the proscription of party politics, the development of minor party in Ghana was essentially stalled. More so, as evident in the review, due to the ephemeral nature of both the Second and the Third Republics of Ghana, minor party activism has been negligible. Howbeit, the resilience of Ghana's Fourth Republic has provided more space for minor party activism.

In the subsequent chapter, the research methodology adopted to implement the empirical research for this study is presented.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines in details the research methodology adopted to implement the empirical research. Essentially, it discusses the researcher's philosophical assumption, the chosen research design, source and methods of data collection, the population of the study, the sampling procedure and the framework for data analysis. Furthermore, readers are exposed to the issue of potential limitations and problems associated with the selected research strategy and its implementation. Finally, the chapter closes up with a discussion on ethical norms which were observed throughout the implementation of the research to ensure scientific integrity and overall quality of the research output.

4.2 Philosophical Assumption

A researcher's philosophical assumptions of the world influence the kind of research methodology that s/he adopts for a study. Philosophical assumptions are views about ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (what counts as knowledge and how knowledge claims are justified), axiology (the role of values in research), and methodology (the process of research) (Creswell & Poth 2018; Bhattacharjee 2012; Marsh & Furlong 2002). To Marsh and Furlong (2002, p. 17), ontology and epistemology are the foundations on which a researcher must build his/her study as "they shape the approach to theory and the methods."

The two main ontological assumptions are foundationalism and anti-foundationalism (Schutz & Zembylas 2016). Foundationalists hold that there is a real world that is independent from our knowledge and upon these foundations life or the world is constructed. Anti-foundationalists, however, believe there is no real world but the world is socially and discursively built and hence dependent from a particular epoch or culture (Schutz & Zembylas 2016; Blackburn 2005; Marsh & Furlong 2002). One's epistemological standpoint reflects the "view of what we can know about the world and

how we can know it” (Schutz & Zembylas, 2016, p. 288). In our case here, the question is: what and how can we know about minor parties in democratic politics?

The two main epistemological perspectives are positivism and interpretivism. An investigator with a positivist orientation of the world, i.e., someone who accepts that reality is objective and independent of the beholder and so can be measured and predicted, would be interested in testing theories and drawing inferences from a tested sample (Marsh & Furlong 2002). Positivism adopts a foundationalist ontology. It developed from the empiricist tradition of natural science and perceives social science capable of the same potentials that are there in the natural science. Positivists usually adopt quantitative methods as research tools, as these are considered objective and the results generalizable and replicable (Audi 2003). This researcher does not uphold a positivist orientation of the world, neither is he attempting to test theories nor generalize from a sample population.

As an interpretivist, this investigator upholds that a comprehension of the world can only be obtained through social interaction, and that such interaction in turn is understood in terms of the setting of the interaction (place and time). The interpretivist view of the world fits in with this investigator’s perspective of the world and his overall aim of garnering diverse stakeholders’ viewpoints to gain an insight of the constructions held by people [related to minor parties in the context of Ghana’s Fourth Republic]. As stated by Mertens (1998), if an investigator elects to accept the ontological assumption linked with interpretivism, that multiple realities exist that are context and time bound, they elect to implement their research using qualitative methods so that they can gain a deeper understanding of the constructions held by individuals in that context. In view of this, as would be discussed subsequently, this researcher adopts a qualitative research design as the overall blue-print to implement the empirical study.

4.3 Research Design

A research design is the overall masterplan of how a researcher intends conducting a research based on the philosophical underpinnings of the goal of the study (Creswell & Creswell 2017). Consistent with the interpretive worldview of this researcher, this study adopts a qualitative research design. According to Osuala (2007), the burden of

a qualitative researcher is to record what participants say and do as an outcome of how they construe the intricacy of their world, to understand events from the perspectives of the participants. Thus, like all other qualitative inquiries, this study is interested in “validity of multiple meaning” – through cogent description and explanation of event – as against “behavioural statistics” associated with quantitative study (Osuala 2007, p. 170). This study is best suited for qualitative inquiry since the nature of the investigation involves interpretations, inferences and opinions rather than statistics. The use of qualitative research design allows this researcher to examine in depth minor parties’ political participation in Ghana, relying on data from variety of sources.

4.4 Research Approach

Given the nature of this research – an in-depth study of minor parties’ political participation – in a complex environment (political system), where a variety of participants’ viewpoints are required and where the underpinning philosophical assumption is based on an interpretivist worldview, a strategy that meets the objectives of this study is the case study approach. Case study is one of the five approaches of qualitative research, *inter alia*; narrative, grounded theory, phenomenology and ethnography. A case study refers to an up-close, in-depth, and detailed investigation of a particular case or cases, within a real-life setting (Creswell & Poth 2018; Yin 2009). As stated by Flyvbjerg (2011, p. 302), “Much of what we know about the empirical world has been produced by case study, and many of the most treasured classics in each discipline are case studies.” George and Bennett (2005, pp. 4-5), for instance, reported that in recent times, approximately “half of all articles in the top political science journals have used case studies.” Case study research thus enjoys a wider use and acceptance among qualitative researchers due to its in-depth and context-dependent analysis (Creswell & Poth 2018; Yin 2014; Denzin & Lincoln 2005).

Whilst a case study could be based on a single case or many cases, Yin (2009, p. 53) posits that “evidence from multiple cases is considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust” since multiple-case design yields to comparative analysis. Hence, the multiple-case study approach was followed to execute the empirical study. This study is, therefore, based on data collected on

three (3) minor parties in Ghana, namely, the CPP, the PNC and the PPP. These three minor parties (i.e., PNC, CPP and PPP) were purposively selected. The purposively selected minor parties are considered information-rich cases owing to their continual participation in Ghana's fourth republican electoral politics. Formed in July 1992, the PNC has participated in all eight national elections held under Ghana's Fourth Republic. The CPP, likewise, has consistently participated in national elections since its re-inauguration in 2000. Both the PNC and CPP have gained a total of 11 legislative seats each under Ghana's Fourth Republic. The PPP, a splinter party from the CPP, has since its inauguration in December 2011 participated in all national elections; placing third in the 2012 and the 2016 Ghanaian presidential elections respectively.

4.5 Sources and Methods of Data Collection

Essentially, there are two main sources of data collection available to this study. These include primary and secondary data sources. Secondary data sources include journal articles, books and other published works. The primary sources are mainly interviews and observation. Interviews and observation are suitable methods of gathering qualitative data, and mostly utilized in case studies (Creswell & Poth 2018; Yin 2003). Yin (2003, p. 89), particularly, upholds that "interviews are essential sources of case study information", mainly because most case studies involve human affairs (as it is with this case study) and that interviews offer insights into intricate human circumstances (an expectation of this study).

The field interviews were conducted between October 2021 and February 2022, with the aid of an interview schedule (see Appendix C). The interview questions were mainly semi-structured. It covers issues relating to the research objective set out at the beginning of this study. This instrument was essentially used to capture qualitative primary data from 48 interviewees across political parties, policy think-thanks, academia, the media and the Electoral Commission of Ghana, with each lasting approximately fifty (50) minutes. All the questions were open-ended in order to stimulate expressive responses which are pertinent to the specified research objectives. The interview responses were mainly audio-recorded and later transcribed for further analysis. The observation method complemented the interviews so that information that could not be obtained from the interviews were accessed through

direct observation. This involved *inter alia*; the researcher's visits to party offices of the surveyed minor parties, attending press conferences and symposia of the minor parties.

As earlier indicated, secondary data were also generated to form part of the analysis. The secondary data, coupled with the interview data, and the direct observation assisted in providing a rich picture of Ghana's minor parties and democratic politics. This was done in the interest of triangulating the data sources. Triangulation is where diverse accounts of the same phenomena – in this case minor party activism – can be compared and contrasted (Bhattacharjee 2012). At a minimum, triangulation is said to occur “as the use of two or more methods of data collection” (Cohen & Manion 1995, p. 106); in this case, interviews, observation and documented sources, are conjointly utilized to provide a more comprehensive explanation of a phenomenon by studying it from more than one viewpoint.

4.6 Population of the study

Population of a study describes the domain within which research participants are selected for data gathering (Creswell & Creswell 2017). The population of this study includes minor party activists, party officials, officials of the Electoral Commission of Ghana, media practitioners, academics, and civil society representatives whose work relate to Ghana's party politics and democratic governance. The identified population is considered appropriate for this study for the reason that it composes of relevant expertise for generating essential data to address the stated research objectives.

4.7 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting participants from a study population (Creswell 2017). This study has as its primary goal of attaining an in-depth and qualitative insight into the phenomenon of minor parties' activism. Hence, a non-probability sampling procedure is considered apposite to select research participants in order to gain the required insight rather than idealized generalization, which is a function of randomization (probability sampling) (Creswell 2017). While this researcher is aware of several non-probability sampling techniques, the most apposite for this study are the purposive and snowball techniques. Purposive sampling is commonly used in

qualitative inquiry for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest. This involves a predetermined selection of participants or informants from a study population based on their expressed knowledge and/or experience of the phenomenon under inquiry (Palinkas et al 2015).

Snowball is a multistage sampling technique – beginning with a few people and growing through referral (Boateng 2016). As Palinkas et al. (2015) and Miles and Huberman (1994) corroborate, snowball as well as purposive techniques place key emphasis on saturation (i.e., gaining a complete understanding of a phenomenon by continuing to sample until no new substantive information is attained). Consequently, a total sample size of 48 interviewees were drawn from the targeted population via these techniques, for qualitative interviews until data saturation was attained. Saturation is a core methodological principle in qualitative inquiry; and it is generally understood to mean that, on the basis of the data that have been generated or analyzed hitherto, further data collection and/or analysis is needless (Saunders et al 2018).

Specifically, the researcher purposively selected 6 key interviewees each from the selected minor parties viz. the CPP, the PPP and the PNC. The key interviewees include the National Chairpersons, the General Secretaries, presidential nominees and parliamentary candidates/former parliamentarians. These are top functionaries of the selected case studies (the CPP, the PNC, and the PPP), with rich experiences of the phenomena under inquiry. The choice of these research participants supports Sørensen's (2000) idea of politically important sample. According to Sørensen (2000), politically important sample refers to the purposive selection of participants who are well known and would create wide interest in the study; potentially enhancing the likelihood of the research being noticed, having an impact and acted on. In addition, 5 card-holding members (i.e., party activists) of each of the selected minor parties were sampled via purposive sampling technique and referrals (i.e., snowball) to participate in the study. This was intended to balance the elite-level (party executives) viewpoints with that of the masses (party members). In sum, 11 interviewees each (comprising 6 party officials and 5 card-bearing members) were selected and interviewed from each minor party. Interviewing different participants from the same organization (in this case, the political parties) augmented the probing process to ensure that responses obtained were reliable and valid.

Furthermore, the National Chairpersons and General Secretaries of the two major parties in Ghana – the NPP and the NDC - were purposively sampled to obtain general information on the role of minor parties, major parties' relationship and perceptions towards minor parties. To augment further the empirical data of this study, the researcher purposively selected a key official each from four (4) policy think tanks in Ghana whose work are predominantly related to political parties and democratic politics in Ghana. These Policy Think-tanks include; the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), Centre for Democratic Development (CDD), Institute of Democratic Governance (IDEG), and IMANI Center for Policy and Education. Whilst the IMANI Center for Policy and Education has in recent times organized series of presidential debates for candidates of minor political parties in Ghana, the IEA, IDEG and CDD have for the past decades, devoted efforts to the promotion of multi-partyism and democracy in Ghana. Also, 4 media practitioners, 2 academics and an official of the Electoral Commission of Ghana were purposively selected to participate in the study. The participants from the think tanks, academia and media were interviewed primarily on the motivations, role and constraints of minor parties in democratic politics. By this means, the researcher aimed at gathering pertinent, nonpartisan, and factual data to gain in-depth understanding of the specified research objectives.

Overall, a total of 48 research participants participated in this research. This researcher upholds that the sampling procedure and size outlined for the purpose of primary data gathering is adequate for research of this nature. Whilst the participants from the minor parties represent the viewpoint of the case studies; those selected from the academia, the think-tanks and the media represent the broader perspective of civil society; whereas the participant from the Electoral Commission of Ghana represent the viewpoint of the regulator of Ghana's electoral politics. All these stakeholders contribute variously to Ghana's Fourth Republican democratic politics. Please refer to Appendix A for details on the sample distribution of the interviewees.

4.8 Data Analysis

A significant part of this study is the method by which the empirical data collected was analyzed and interpreted. Hatch (2002) defined data analysis as a methodical search for meaning from a pad of information and data. This allows researchers to

scientifically process raw data, so that what has been investigated can be communicated meaningfully to research audience. This study employed thematic analysis approach to analyze the data generated for the study. Thematic analysis is an intellectual exercise aimed at interpreting volume of a text data by identifying significant themes and patterns through an investigator's careful examination and constant comparison (Maguire & Delahunt 2017). To achieve that, the interview data was transcribed into text, manually coded, categorized and common themes derived along the stated research objectives. The interview data plus the documented (secondary) data was further synthesized through a process of iterative comparison to produce a thicker description of the phenomena under inquiry. In some instances, excerpts from transcribed interviews were used to reinforce the explanation of the themes. The thematic analysis approach was adopted as an analytical tool by reason of its ability to make faithful inferences (Miles et al. 2013).

4.9 Limitations of the Study

This study, not unlike other researches, is not without limitations and challenges. Limitations of a study are those aspects of a research process (i.e., design or methodology) that could restrain the researcher in making generalizations (Osuala 2007). A key limitation that hindered the smooth execution of this study was the initial stress of obtaining access to the research participants to participate in the study. This is because the targeted participants were mainly senior party officials (politicians), leaders of civil society organizations and governance experts, seasoned journalists and academics who were usually preoccupied with busy schedules. Nonetheless, this investigator instituted measures such as advance notices and constant visits to create a close rapport with them to court their maximum cooperation.

Also, the absence of random sampling inherent in the qualitative case study approach means the study's findings cannot be generalized. Nevertheless, in an inquiry of this nature where the views of experts (i.e. information-rich informants) are required on the subject, this investigator maintains that the selected cases and sampled participants were strategic in capturing pertinent data to address the specified research objectives. The case study approach and the chosen sampling procedure

offered an in-depth understanding of the research objectives rather than statistical generalization.

Again, it is acknowledged that employing interviews as a foremost source of primary data relies on individual opinions which may be disposed to prejudices and imprecisions (Creswell 2017). This is mostly as a result of human features such as poor memory, exaggerations and interviewee preconceptions. However, this was mediated by giving interviewees sufficient time, ahead of the interview schedule, to sufficiently prepare for the questioning.

4.10 Ethical Consideration

Research ethics involves the application of fundamental ethical principles to the collection, analysis, reporting, and publication of data about research participants (Creswell & Poth 2018). To ensure high ethical standards, this study was conducted following an approval from the Ethics Committee in the University of Pretoria (see Appendix E for Ethics Approval Letter). Specifically, ethical values such as informed consent, voluntary participation, respect for intellectual property, anonymity and confidentiality as contained in the University of Pretoria Code of Ethics for Research were observed throughout the research process. Anonymity and confidentiality involve the safeguard of the interests, right to privacy and identities of the research participants; whilst informed consent and voluntary participation require that no research participant is coerced or deceived to partake in the study (Creswell & Poth 2018).

Finally, all sources of materials and data consulted for this study are appropriately acknowledged in order to avoid the incidence of plagiarism and to earn the trust of the academic community.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter has thoroughly outlined the methodology of this study. It clearly articulated an interpretivist epistemology founded on the anti-foundationalist ontology owing to the researcher's belief that reality is socially and discursively constructed and requires subjectivity to make meaning of social phenomena. In keeping with the researcher's interpretivist perspective of the world, a qualitative case study research

design was adopted. The methods of data collection, including sampling procedure and techniques are also discussed. The chapter further presented thematic analysis as the chosen framework for data analysis owing its ability to generate meaning from text data through the identification of important themes and patterns, and iterative comparison. Also, the thorny subject of limitations associated with the elected methodology are discussed and remedies outlined. In conclusion, the elected research methods are apposite for a study of this nature, which seeks in-depth understanding of minor party activism.

Having described the methodology, the next two chapters of this thesis are devoted to the presentation and discussion of research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

MINOR PARTIES AND ELECTORAL COMPETITION IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is the first of the two chapters (i.e., Chapters Five and Six) devoted to the empirical findings of this study. Specifically, this chapter presents and discusses the research findings relating to the first and second objectives of the study. As a recap, the first objective of the study was to explore minor parties' drive for electoral competition in Ghana's emergent two-party system. The second objective examines the constraints on the electoral success of minor parties in Ghana. Hence, in line with these research objectives, this chapter is structured into two main sections. The first section discusses the motivation for minor party candidature in Ghana's electoral politics under the Fourth Republic. The second section then proceeds to analyze the factors that account for minor party failure in Ghana's electoral politics. The analysis is largely informed by field interviews, observations and secondary data.

5.2 Accounting for Minor Party Candidature in Ghana's Fourth Republic

Since Ghana's Fourth Republic created the political duopoly of the NPP and the NDC, only a few minor party nominees have been elected to the nation's parliament, with none coming close to capturing the presidency (Kpessa-Whyte 2021; Agomor 2019). Given that it is enormously difficult for minor parties and their candidates to win elected office in Ghana, the first research objective of this study sought to understand why the minor parties and candidates continue to defy electoral realities to participate in competitive electoral politics. Consequently, based on data from the fieldwork, this section thematically presents and discusses the drive for continued minor party candidacy in Ghana's emergent two-party system. Altogether, six main themes emerged from the data as key drivers for minor party candidature in Ghana. These themes are systematically presented hereinafter.

5.2.1 Affordability of Minor Party Ticket

A dominant theme which emerged from the data as a key motivating factor for running under a minor party label in Ghana's electoral politics revolves around affordability. More than half of the interviewees averred that the minor parties (i.e., the CPP, the PPP and the PNC), comparatively, offer cheaper platforms to prospective candidates seeking elected public offices in Ghana. As one interviewee highlighted; "the initial cost of pursuing elected office on a minor party's platform, at least in terms of party nomination fee, is far cheaper compared to doing so on a major party's platform" (University Lecturer, 2021). This therefore seems to entice a lot of people who are interested in aspiring for elected offices but may not have adequate resources. One other interviewee also corroborates: "It is always less expensive contesting on a minor party's ticket than on a major party's ticket as the latter's primary elections are more often cost-intensive" (Former CPP MP 2021).

It is worth noting that many of the interviewees claimed that major parties' candidate nomination processes are highly monetized and prohibitive, particularly for young aspirants. Indeed, a joint report by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and the Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) (n.d., p. 5) have also described Ghana's major political parties' primary elections as a "very costly affair". According to the report, due to the competitiveness and the incidence of vote buying during major parties' primaries, it costs a parliamentary aspirant at least USD \$85,000 to secure a major party's primary nomination in Ghana. Given that the annual salary of a parliamentarian in Ghana is approximately USD \$51,000, the outlay on party primaries per candidate is considerably prohibitive as a successful election campaign on major party ticket, on the average, costs a prospective aspirant almost the equivalent of two years' remuneration of the office s/he aspires. Hence, "an average income prospective candidate would rationally avoid these major parties and resort to minor party platforms for affordability", an interviewee emphasized.

Table 5.1: Party Primaries Nomination Fees (¢) of the Minor Parties vs. Major Parties, 2004-2020

Y E A R	MINOR PARTIES						MAJOR PARTIES			
	CPP		PNC		PPP		NDC		NPP	
	Presidential	Parliamentary	Presidential	Parliamentary	Presidential	Parliamentary	Presidential	Parliamentary	Presidential	Parliamentary
2004	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	-	500
2008	10,000	500	5,000	200	--	-		2,000	-	1,000
2012	20,000	500	10,000	500	25,000	1,000	20,000	10,000	-	15,000
2016	15,000	1,000	10,000	500	30,000	1,000	55,000	10,000	85,000	15,000
2020	170,000	1,000	30,000	1,000	10,000	2,000	300,000	25,000	200,000	20,000

Source: Author's compilation based on data generated from the Political Parties, 2022

As observed in Table 5.1, the minor parties' candidate nomination fees are always fixed at lower rates, with all intent and proposes, to attract potential aspirants. This is also partly as a result of the non-competitiveness of the minor parties' candidate selection processes (see Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017). For instance, in 2020, whilst the two major parties, the NDC and the NPP levied GH¢ 25, 000 and GH¢ 20, 000 respectively for their parliamentary primaries, the minor parties levied just GH¢ 1000 (CPP and PNC) and GH¢ 2000 (PPP) respectively. Similarly, in the case of the presidential primaries, the PPP, the PNC, and the CPP levied a moderate fee of GH¢ 10,000, GH¢ 30,000 and GH¢ 170,000 respectively. Nonetheless, the major parties charged as high as GH¢ 300,000 (the NDC) and GH¢ 200,000 (the NPP) respectively. These are hefty fees, considering Ghana's per capita income of USD \$ 2, 176.60 as at 2020 (World Bank 2022). Hence, it is believed that this potentially drives some prospective election candidates, who lack the wherewithal, to resort to minor party platforms in pursuit of their political ambitions. Rationalizing her decision for contesting on a minor party's ticket, a former parliamentary candidate of the PPP, for instance stated;

Why should I waste that much [money] just on party primaries alone when I can actually contest without stress on PPP's ticket ... or can even decide to go independent... such resources could be used for the actual campaign (Field Interview 2021).

Another parliamentary candidate of a minor party also stated thus:

Haha...(laughingly) It's not that I don't want to contest on NPP or NDC's ticket. No! that's not it... the opulence and sheer display of money during their primaries is quite disheartening. Almost every delegate needs to be financially induced... to get his/her votes. How can you spend entire life-savings on party primary elections alone? (Field Interview 2021).

The statements above by the minor party parliamentary aspirants essentially demonstrate that election candidates are rational actors who seek to maximize utility at the lowest cost. Whilst they aspire to become Members of Parliament, they wish to do so with the least possible cost. Minor parties therefore appear to offer such economy platform; hence the drive to contest on such tickets albeit the ticket may present a limited chance of electoral success.

The subsequent interview excerpt from another minor party parliamentary candidate further illustrates the cost-effectiveness rationalization of minor party candidature:

I didn't initially have any intention of running for elections. I'll say, partly because of resources. But I was approached by some party executives, and as an activist I gladly accepted to run on the party's ticket. Because of that I didn't even have to pay for any nomination fee. The party waived it. Even the Electoral Commission fee the party took care of. Here, I want to say.... unlike the NPP and NDC that require huge sums of money to contest on their ticket, the PPP is not like that. In 2012 and 2016, the flagbearer financially supported almost all the parliamentary candidates ...posters, T-shirts. Although I didn't win the seat, I want to believe it was all good. ...In any case, I didn't spend that much. At least, others spent billions of cedis on NPP and NDC ticket yet they also lost (Field Interview 2021).

These findings suggest that minor party candidature, at least at the parliamentary level, is driven in the large part by the affordability of the ticket. Though no minor party presidential candidate or hopeful interviewed for this research specifically made any direct reference to affordability as a justification for his/her decision to run minor party campaign; all of them alluded to the capital-intensive nature of securing major party presidential nomination.

5.2.2 Political Patronage

In keeping with rational choice theory which upholds that political actors are invariably self-seeking and opportunistic in their transactions, this study found evidence to suggest that opportunities for [political] patronage drive minor parties' candidature in Ghanaian electoral politics. Political patronage refers to the practice of distributing state resources as a reward for political and electoral support. These state resources

may include well-paid public sector contracts and esteemed appointments in the public service. Under the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the President of the Republic is empowered to make various public service appointments such as ministers of state, ambassadors, members of the Council of State, members of public corporations' boards and Chief Executive positions. These public appointments are often awarded on a partisan basis, to persons who have politically supported the governing party. Findings of this study revealed that such opportunities for political patronage motivate not only major party activists, but also minor parties and their candidates to run for office in Ghana. This is aptly captured in the words of a top minor party official during the field interview. According to him:

Election is all about numbers. We also control some numbers among the electorate, no matter how small the figures may be. When we compete, we are able to mobilize our base better... that's where a major party sees our value in the event of a run-off. They come to us when they know the numbers we control among the electorates. ...If the party does not run in the general election, we may not be able, as leaders, negotiate with any major party in an event of a run-off in the presidential election (Field Interview 2021).

From the above interview excerpts, it is evident that prospects for party patronage significantly drives minor parties to compete in Ghanaian electoral politics, despite their limited chance of success. Given that Ghanaian elections are always keenly decided between the two dominant parties (i.e., NDC and NPP), usually with a slim differential margin (see Table 3.5 for Ghanaian presidential elections results), the minor parties contest in the hope that in a situation in which no party or candidate commands a clear majority (i.e., more than 50% of total valid votes as required by the 1992 Constitution of Ghana) to win the presidency, then they become relevant at that point. Hence, despite the declining electoral fortune of the minor parties since 1996 (see Table 3.5), a key incentive for their continual electoral competition is to attain a king-maker status in the presidential race and leverage on that to exact political patronage from the winning party. As one civil society representative succinctly noted:

Obviously, for these smaller parties, I do not think it's their goal to win power. I know, they know they can't win the presidency. But at least to secure a good percentage of votes to be able to push elections to a run-off, so that they could negotiate with any of the major parties who may need their support to succeed... often in return for appointments in government (Field Interview 2021).

This view was corroborated by a top official of the PNC when he voiced that:

We basically had no time for campaign during the 2020 election, mainly due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Hence, the PNC's strategy in the 2020 election was not essentially to win. As a party, we knew that was going to be tough, given the constraints. The strategy therefore was, at least, to gain some seats in parliament and garner a respectable share of the presidential votes. Something better than the 2016 results to be able to force the presidential [election] to a run-off... so that we could negotiate with any of the major parties who was interested in our votes or support ...in the highly anticipated presidential run-off. Be as it may, that couldn't materialize. But as the adage goes, he that fights and runs away lives to fight another day (Field Interview 2021).

From the above interview data, in spite of the PNC's acknowledged unfavorable circumstance, the prospects for post-election patronage opportunities served as a key incentive to the party's electoral participation. Based on the above, it is not inconceivable to forecast that the PNC will surely continue to contest subsequent general elections despite its poor performance in the recent 2020 general election. This determination is driven by the optimism that the party would be able to poll a decent vote share in future election(s) to push the presidential race into a run-off election so that the major parties could approach the party (i.e., the PNC) for campaign endorsement in return for patronage resources "as it occurred during the 2000 presidential run-off election, where we were able to strike a deal with the NPP to secure some ministerial appointments for our people" (PNC official, 2021)¹². This patronage-driven incentive for electoral competition of the minor parties is somewhat induced by what one interviewee referred to as the "parliamentary system mentality" of the minor parties, which is a function of the hybridity of Ghanaian presidential system, where the president is constitutionally required to appoint more than half of cabinet ministers from among Members of Parliament.

Even though Ghana practices the presidential system, these smaller parties have the mentality of the parliamentary system of government, where minor parties play the king-maker role. For this very reason, the CPP and the PNC, in particular, being the leading minor parties in Ghana with the prospect of obtaining significant minority votes, are always well motivated to contest general elections hoping that a major party will definitely need them to contribute the few seats they would annex to aid the governing party to effectively control the

¹² It is significant to underscore that both the PNC and the CPP during the 2000 Ghanaian presidential run-off election traded their electoral support to the then main opposition NPP, for a number of public offices. Consequently, some functionaries of the CPP and PNC were appointed to serve in various capacities, including ministerial positions in the Kufour-led NPP government between 2001 and 2008 (see Bob-Milliar 2019, p. 17).

House [parliament] ... or support them in case of presidential run-off election... in exchange for patronage resources (Field interview, CSO1, 2021).

As it is not uncommon in Ghanaian politics for minor party elites to be appointed as Ministers of State by a governing party (see Table 6.2), it is believed that minor party candidates are sometimes inspired to run for parliamentary elections as it enhances their chances of appointment should they win a parliamentary seat; particularly, in case the ruling party lacks numbers in parliament or sometimes just to court minor parties to their position or to showcase an inclusive government, as in the case during the Kufour-led NPP government where several minor party parliamentarians were appointed Ministers of State. For instance, whilst still being minor party parliamentarians, Moses Dani-Baah of the PNC, and Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom of the CPP were appointed Ministers of State under the Kufour-led NPP government between 2001-2008. Similarly, the Mills-led NDC government appointed Alhassan Azong, the only PNC parliamentarian in the 6th Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana, as Minister of State in charge of Public Sector Reform (refer to Table 6.2). In fact, with the recent appointments of Dr Edward Mahama, the veteran PNC presidential candidate, and Ahmed Ramadan, a former PNC National Chairman, both as ambassadors under the Akufo-Addo led NPP administration validate that minor party activism is quite rewarding, even without winning elections.

5.2.3 Ideological Motivation

Political ideology is a significant force field around which political parties organize to compete in elections (Olsen 2010). Remarkably, all the three surveyed minor parties – the CPP, the PNC and (even) the PPP – identify with the Nkrumahist political tradition in Ghanaian politics. Nkrumahism, in Ghanaian politics, simply refers to the radical (African) socialist political ideals of the first president of Ghana; Dr Kwame Nkrumah. This political ideology, which hinges on three main principles: self-determination, social justice, and Pan Africanism, held great prominence in the political history of Ghana, particularly between the 1950s and the 1960s when Dr Kwame Nkrumah ruled. The ideology of Nkrumahism has since the 1950s formed an essential element of the personality cult around Nkrumah and the party building efforts of his political party, the CPP (Biney 2011; Agyeman 1988; Gyan 1976).

An examination of the data collected revealed that the tenacity to rehabilitate Dr. Nkrumah's political legacy in current Ghanaian politics inspires many adherents of the Nkrumahist tradition, mainly CPP and PNC activists, to organize and to participate in competitive national elections, as a way of preserving the Nkrumahist vision. As one key interviewee noted: "despite the CPP's current state of lack of prominence in Ghanaian politics, its greatest inspiration in contemporary politics is perhaps to uphold the ideology and legacy of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah" (Field interview, University Lecturer, 2021). A leading member of the CPP, in an interview with the researcher, also observed:

We, in the CPP, represent a rich heritage. The legacy of *Osagyefo*¹³ Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the man who selflessly fought for our political independence and set Ghana on an enviable socialist developmental path. I've been a staunch believer of his ideology. That is, self-determination, social justice, and Pan-Africanism; and these form part of my fundamental motivation as a politician... and eventually my desire to contest for the office of the president on CPP's ticket (Field Interview 2021).

Echoing the ideological impetus for minor party candidacy, another interviewee also noted:

I'm an activist politician who believes in enhancing equal opportunities for all Ghanaians. I state these facts because it's an indication of my belief as a politician in a set of ideals that I think can best improve our country's prospects and provide opportunities to more of our people. And those are founded on a set of political beliefs that could generally be described as Nkrumahism or Nkrumahist principles, which can be defined as having three pillars; first, self-determination; second, social justice, and thirdly, Pan-Africanism (Field Interview, CPP Presidential Hopeful, 2021).

Strikingly, despite the difficulty of winning elections on CPP's ticket, most of the CPP activists and parliamentary aspirants interviewed seemed inspired to seek office under the party's label partly as a result of their political conviction in the ideals of Dr Nkrumah and the CPP tradition. A CPP parliamentary aspirant, for instance, noted;

I'm a proud Nkrumahist to the core ...even though it's somewhat difficult to win elections on CPP's ticket these days, Dr. Nkrumah's ideals must be preserved for this generation and the yet unborn. That's what we mean when we say 'Nkrumah never dies' (Field Interview 2021).

According to this interviewee, one surest way to ensure that the Nkrumahist heritage is preserved in Ghanaian politics is to keep the CPP active to compete in general

¹³ An appellation, which literally means a warrior. It is commonly used as prefix/title for Dr Kwame Nkrumah, for having led the fight against British Colonial rule in then Gold Coast (now Ghana).

elections. This observation resonates with an assertion by another interviewee, when she averred that: “I think the current CPP largely exists just to preserve the Nkrumahist ideology, perhaps to avoid its extinction from today’s politics” (Field interview with News reporter 2021).

Furthermore, most of the interviewees drawn from the PNC also seem to be motivated to contest election on the PNC’s ticket based on the ideological leaning of the party, which is largely Nkrumahism. For instance, a former PNC parliamentarian opined thus:

I was attracted to the PNC since 1992 mainly as a result of my inclination to the ideology and vision of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, which was much seen in the PNC. At the time, the CPP couldn’t mobilize to contest. So, most Nkrumahists, like myself, chose to be with the PNC. Though there were many other Nkrumahist groupings like the NIP, the PHP... but the PNC appeared to be the most organized. ...I’ve since then contested on PNC’s ticket four times and I’ve won two out of the four (Field Interview 2021).

A former PNC presidential candidate, likewise, noted as follows:

My dad was a member of parliament for Bawku Central during the Third Republic, belonging to the Imoru Egala-Limann political tradition of the PNP, which later became the PNC. So, growing up in an Nkrumahist family, I naturally became attracted to the political tradition of my father (Field Interview 2021).

From the preamble of the 2020 manifesto of the PNC, it is instructive to underscore that:

The PNC is a Socialist Political Party that believes in the ideals of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of the Republic of Ghana. The tradition continued and evolved with Alhaji Imoro Egala leading other Nkrumahists in the 3rd Republic with the formation of People’s National Party (PNP) which had Dr. Hilla Limann as its Presidential candidate and emerged as the 3rd elected President of the Republic of Ghana on 24th September, 1979. The Limann PNP government was however prematurely ousted due to the 31st December 1981 coup d’état (PNC Manifesto 2020, p. 3).

Hence, adherents of the Imoro Egala-Limann tradition are equally inspired by the Nkrumahist ideology. Indeed, this finding largely reflects the works of Bob-Milliar (2019) as well as Kwofie and Bob-Milliar (2017), both of which document that the ideological impetus for the PNC to seek political office is largely driven by Nkrumah’s values and legacies. In the words of a leading PNC activist; “the PNC has been the most stable Nkrumahist party under the current Fourth Republic”. The other Nkrumahist parties, including the National Independence Party (NIP), the People’s Heritage Party (PHP), and the National Convention Party (NCP), have all folded up after the 1992 polls (see Yobo & Gyampo 2015). Explaining the PNC’s sustained

motivation to compete in Ghana's electoral politics since 1992 despite the party's limited success, a leading member of the PNC recounted:

The PNC represented the true Nkrumahists bloc when the country returned to the polls in 1992 to usher in the current Fourth Republic. In that election, there was no CPP. It was the PNC which hoisted the Nkrumahists flag. The PNC has since then been motivated to honor Dr. Nkrumah and Dr. Limann of the First and Third Republic respectively, with our continuous resolve to compete in Ghana's electoral politics despite the numerous setbacks (Field Interview 2021).

As the empirical data suggests, whilst both PNC and CPP politicians are largely motivated ideologically (i.e., Nkrumahism) for competitive politics, the PPP on the other hand appears to be inspired by their policy commitments rather than ideology.

As one high ranking official of the PPP highlighted;

As a progressive party, the PPP exists to support winnable candidates in order to push for progressive policies that promote transformation of our country. Ideologically, I may say we are social liberals because we are an affiliate of the African Liberal Network and the Liberal International, but we are not driven by just ideology. We are more pragmatic and believe in pursuing whatever policies will work for Ghana. So, since 2012, the PPP has run candidates in elections and consistently campaigned on our ten-bulletin platform, dubbed "Agenda for Change". That is the PPP's manifesto (Field Interview 2021).

It is instructive to note that, whereas some of the interviewees drawn from the PPP, particularly the founding members, described themselves as Nkrumahists, none referred to the pursuit of *Nkrumahism* as an inspiration for running in elections. However, most of them indicated that their inspiration to contest for office on PPP's ticket emanated from their conviction in the PPP's manifesto. For instance, a national executive of the PPP who also doubles as a parliamentary candidate stated:

Yeah, we are from Nkrumahists stock. Once an Nkrumahist, always an Nkrumahist. But our presence in elections goes beyond Nkrumahism. Current politics is about pragmatic policies and programs. And none of the parties beat PPP when it comes to good programs. As a candidate, I'm always inspired by the party's manifesto. We call it "the platform", which contains an agenda for change built on the four pillars of stewardship, quality education, preventive healthcare, and job creation (Field Interview 2021).

This finding somewhat confirms Kwofie and Bob-Milliar (2017, p. 33) that: "Even though some of the other minor parties subscribe to the ideals of Nkrumahism, the CPP and the PNC have been more proactive with this ideology". Therefore, the findings of this study demonstrate that the desire to preserve the political legacy of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in current Ghanaian politics inspires both CPP and PNC adherents, in particular, to continuously maintain their participation in competitive politics under the Fourth Republic of Ghana.

5.2.4 Pursuit of Public Recognition

An analysis of the data shows that the prestige associated with public recognition accorded to officials of political parties in Ghana, including minor parties' candidates, is a significant incentive that drives the electoral entry decisions of some minor party politicians. These recognitions include but are not limited to; media attention, state and ceremonial courtesies extended to political party officials and election candidates. According to the interviewees, the minor parties' platforms offer a laid-back opportunity to cling onto political prominence due to the media attention on electioneering generally. Hence, some individuals choose to run minor party campaigns, either as president or member of parliament, to stoke their own self-image. As one interviewee stated; "even those minor party presidential candidates who do not poll even 1% of the total votes are accorded special treatment during state ceremonies. Almost every state function, seats are specially reserved for them". Indeed, [these] state courtesies are motivating enough for the politically ambitious to seek elected office on a minor party platform, no matter how gloomy the party's electoral fortunes may be. This is because, as one minor party activist admitted; "the two bigger parties are so thronged [sic] that it's not easy to rise through their ranks" (Field Interview 2021). Hence, some individuals consider minor party candidacy as a route to develop their personal political profiles and progress into political limelight. According to an interviewee:

Some of the activists of smaller parties have come to realize that when you contest elections it gives you national political prominence. So, no matter how unimportant the party's electoral strength, they choose to pay the nomination fee and get onto the ballot just for fame. In actual fact, it is just a form of advertisement for them and their businesses. They get to be introduced along major party contenders and form part of the broader national political discourse in the country. The media discusses them, seeks their opinions on national issues and they become popular (Field Interview 2021).

Another interviewee, particularly, emphasized:

...but for the PNC's 2012 presidential ticket, Mr. Hassan Ayariga, for instance, would have been unknown in Ghanaian politics. Yet, since his 2012 debut... which he woefully failed to even make a footprint, he is now a national political figure. Everyone in Ghana now knows Ayariga ... and has even succeeded in forming his own political party; the All People's Congress (Field interview with CSO official, 2021).

From the foregoing interview data, it seems apparent that while it is quite difficult to win elections as a minor party candidate, the party's platform offers a satisfactory opportunity to attain some form of "political celebrity-status" even as a neophyte

politician, which could be exploited for other gains including furthering ones' future political ambition or career. For instance, as one minor party parliamentary candidate asserted; "contesting on the PPP's ticket prepares me for future contest on any of those two major parties". Another minor party candidate also acknowledged: "more importantly, the election offered me the needed exposure for my future political career" (Field interview 2021). From these interview excerpts, it is argued that, some political elites consider running under minor party labels just to advertize themselves towards their future political ambitions, which presumably may include cross-carpeting to major parties. As one interviewee justified; "it is just like the big fish in a little pond syndrome. It is always much easier to attain prominence in the context of minor party activism, and then later transition to a major party" (Field Interview 2021). Consequently, in Ghana, there are several examples of politicians who after gaining popularity on minor parties' platforms, crossed carpet to one of the two dominant parties, either NDC or NPP, to secure top political positions. Many of the interviewees made reference to Ernest Owusu-Bempah,¹⁴ Abu Ramadan,¹⁵ and Freddie Blay, a former CPP parliamentarian, who later became the National Chairman of the ruling NPP.

These findings support scholars such as Bartels and Remke (2021), Bob-Milliar (2019), and Brenton (2013) who argue that notwithstanding the almost non-existent chance of winning election, minor party candidature sometimes yield dividend in the form of public recognition and reputation, and this potentially stimulate candidates' decision to contest on such platforms. Also, this finding validates the rational choice theory as individual candidates' decision to consider minor party candidacy is believed to follow a certain cost-benefit evaluative analysis, where one expects to benefit in some way such as recognition and respect.

¹⁴ Formerly of the National Democratic Party, who is currently a deputy communication officer of the governing NPP

¹⁵ A former National Youth Organizer of the PNC who defected to the NPP ahead of the 2016 general elections and got appointed as a deputy Director-General of Ghana's National Disaster Management Organization

5.2.5 Expression of Grievance

Reflecting other studies (such as Rosenstone et al. 2018; Allison 2016; Sarakinsky and Fakir 2015), findings from this study corroborate that minor party electoral entry decision is sometimes inspired by dissatisfaction against the status quo, which often culminates into protest actions, including party split. In this study, such a finding was peculiar to the PPP only. This finding came to the fore as a result of probing effort to decipher the rationale of PPP's formation ahead of the 2012 general elections as a splinter [minor] party, from another minor party (i.e., the CPP), in an institutionalized two-party system of Ghana, where minor parties' electoral fortune has been quite poor.

Many interviewees described the PPP's formation and maiden entry in the Ghanaian electoral arena as a protest action mainly led by Dr Nduom, the 2008 CPP presidential nominee, owing to dissatisfaction within the CPP. According to interviewees, the formation of the PPP by Dr Nduom to contest the 2012 polls, in particular, was an act of political protest directed against the CPP establishment. As one key interviewee explained:

The best way, in 2011, to fix the vendetta that pitched Dr Nduom against the new CPP chairperson, Samia Nkrumah, was to exit the CPP and form his own party to run for the presidency ...and perhaps do better than whoever the CPP was going to nominate as their presidential candidate for the 2012 polls (Field interview, PPP Official 2021).

Whilst the formation of the PPP followed a pronouncement made on 28th December 2011 by Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom “for progressive and independent-minded people to rise and cause to be formed an alternative political movement to compete for political power for a major transformation of the Ghanaian society”, according to the party's website¹⁶; a field interview with a leading member of the PPP divulged that:

The PPP's goal in the 2012 election was not necessarily to win power...but somehow, to prove to Samia Nkrumah [then CPP Chairperson] and her cohorts in the CPP that, without Dr Nduom's bloc, the CPP was a zilch. You will agree with me that the 2012 election results demonstrated the PPP's superiority over the CPP ...See CPP's performance without Dr Nduom. Yet, they thought Dr. Nduom was the problem of the CPP (Field interview 2021).

Indeed, the PPP polled a respectable third position in the 2012 presidential election, albeit with an insignificant 0.58% of the total valid votes ahead of its rump party CPP, which managed only 0.18% of the presidential votes. The PPP has since the 2012

¹⁶ <https://www.pppghana.org/history/> (accessed 9 November 2020)

election remained a constant feature of Ghanaian electoral politics by running candidates in subsequent general elections and always doing better electorally than the CPP (refer to Table 3.5) until the recent 2020 elections when Dr Nduom was not the candidate, following his resignation from active politics. While many factors may have accounted for Dr. Nduom's exit from active party politics, one interviewee's observation is quite intriguing:

Obviously, he formed the PPP to contest out of vexation. I'm sure he wanted to flex some muscle. ... after having proven this point with his performance in 2012 and 2016 election... he quietly yielded the PPP ticket to his vice-presidential candidate. ...I don't think Dr Nduom is going to contest elections again. He has made his point. PPP is the third largest party... CPP is down there ... hmmm (Field Interview, News Editor 2021).

The above comment by the interviewee, to a certain degree, highlights the perception that Dr Nduom's electoral motivation on the PPP's ticket was protest-driven. A protest driven by the ego of Dr Nduom in remonstrance of the imbroglio that had ensued between him and the CPP's new leadership, led by Samia Nkrumah. This aspect of the research findings broadly mirrors the work of Rosenstone et al. (2018) as well as Sarakinsky and Fakir (2015), which found some minor party campaigns in the US and South Africa, as means for expressing political dissatisfaction, mainly against a major party. However, as counterintuitive as it may seem, in the specific case of Ghana's PPP, its dissatisfaction [that inspired its formation and electoral competitions] was directed towards another minor party (i.e., the CPP).

5.2.6 Alternate Political Leadership

The aspiration to offer an alternate political leadership to the political duopoly of the NPP and the NDC provides also another important electoral motivation for some minor party candidates in Ghana. Some of the minor party politicians, consulted for this study, held the view that the NPP and the NDC which have alternated power for the past three decades have failed on their campaign to deliver socio-economic development to the people of Ghana. Thus, in this study as in others (such as Rosenstone et al 2018), the perception or reality of major parties' failure seems to create an incentive for minor parties to compete in Ghana's electoral politics. In the words of a former presidential candidate of one of the minor parties under inquiry, it

can sufficiently be deduced that among his motivation for the presidency included, a perceived dearth of efficient political leadership in Ghana. He remarked as follows:

Look, if I ever felt Ghana had good leadership, I wouldn't have offered myself for election. If we look at Ghana today, why do you think we are suffering? It's never the issue of resource scarcity; but the absence of competent leadership. The nation is well blessed with enormous resources of all kinds. But our greatest problem as a nation is the political dominance of the incompetent NPP and NDC. Even as a private person, who has never been in government, I'm able to use the resources I've acquired from private business to impact the lives of many people on daily basis. Then you ask yourself, why do you sit down and watch others mismanage what you can do better! So young man, these are some of the factors that pushed me in 2012 to run for the presidency at that youthful age of 40 (Field interview 2021).

Another minor party presidential hopeful also voiced:

The NPP and NDC may be the big tent parties, but none of that translates in effective leadership. My ambition for the presidency is closely linked with the people's needs and aspirations to transform the economic fortunes of our beloved country through an incorruptible political leadership, which has eluded this country under both the NPP and the NDC stewardships (Field interview 2021).

Some minor party parliamentary candidates, in an interview with the researcher, also expressed similar rationale for running for elections. For instance, one CPP parliamentary candidate stated:

For the past 16 years this constituency has been represented by the NPP and the NDC, the constituency hasn't seen any significant development. We still have issues of poor road network, lack of potable water, and high unemployment rate among our youth to contend with. Nothing much really seems to happen in Okaikwei North. It is against this backdrop, I decided to present myself to the good people of Okaikwei North Constituency as the best alternative. We have experimented with the so-called major political parties... clearly, they have nothing to offer (Field interview 2021).

Another parliamentary aspirant also stated:

... the motivation is based on the reality that the NPP and NDC who have governed for the past three decades have not met our expectations. Our lack of success in elections notwithstanding... We, in the Progressive People's Party, continue to inspire hope to those who thought that all politicians in Ghana are corrupt. Our presence in elections assures many that there are some groups of people outside this duopoly of NPP and NDC, who genuinely seek to transform the governance of this country (Field Interview 2021).

From the above, it is argued that the minor parties and candidates' see little difference between the two dominant parties; hence their resolve to compete for power and terminate the dominance of their duopoly. This is coupled with their hope that when

given the mandate to govern they can better manage the resources of the country than the NPP and the NDC.

5.3 Accounting for Minor Parties' Failure in Ghana's Fourth Republic

In line with the second objective of this study, which is to “examine the constraints on the electoral success of minor parties in Ghana”, this section proceeds with the presentation of empirical findings relating to the constraints on the electoral viability of the surveyed minor parties. Based on the analysis, the identified constraints are broadly categorized as either institutional or non-institutional factors. The institutional constraints generally include the statutory rules, established norms and conventions pertaining to Ghanaian politics which tends to hinder minor parties' development; whereas the non-institutional constraints are mainly endogenous and exogenous non-statutory factors, which inhibit minor parties' development and electoral viability. These non-institutional constraints include; limited media attention, leadership failures, resource limitation, ideological disposition, organizational and campaign errors as well as major parties' strategies that undermine minor parties' success.

5.3.1 Institutional Constraints

5.3.1.1 Constitutional Restraints

The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana imposes certain restraints on political parties generally, which tend to render minor parties unviable. Whilst the Constitution guarantees the right to form political parties, certain provisions tend to restrict how political parties function. Among others, Article 55 (4) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana requires that “every political party shall have a national character and membership shall not be based on ethnic, religious, regional or other sectional divisions.” The Constitution further enjoins all political parties, under Article 55(7), to have branches in all the regions of Ghana and in at least two-thirds of the districts of each region (Republic of Ghana 1992). Essentially, these constitutional provisions ban ethno-regional parties in Ghana. Enacted on the account of historical antecedents of party politics in Ghana, these constitutional injunctions are quite insensitive to the development of minor parties as they are legally restrained from exploiting the benefits of sectionalism or localism to augment their electoral viability. As some interviewees

pointed out, the minor parties in Ghana lack the organizational resources to effectively cover the entire country as prescribed by law; yet they are proscribed from identifying as regional or sectional party unlike in other jurisdictions such as the US, where there are many state-only parties¹⁷ (see, Chamberlain, 2012; Gillespie, 2012).

According to an official of the PPP:

All the smaller parties find it extremely difficult to maintain administrative offices in two-thirds of all the districts in Ghana as required by law. Because you would have to rent an office, employ someone and pay monthly allowances, and get the office furnished and also pay utility bills as well. Among all the smaller parties, we are doing far better in terms of respecting this law. Though we intend to have offices in all the 275 constituencies very soon; currently, we have about 10 constituencies with functional offices, 180 constituencies have offices that are not fully functional and it only gets open as and when. As I said, the legal requirement is to have in more than two-thirds of the districts, so at least we are compliant. The key challenge has to do with the rate at which more constituencies and districts are being created every day. Even at the headquarters here, we have to lay off most of the staff, in order to survive. Party administration is quite expensive... so when more constituencies are being created, it poses more stress for smaller parties to expand to cover new constituencies (Field interview 2021).

Many other minor party officials, interviewed, expressed similar views regarding the difficulty of maintaining branches in all the regions of Ghana and in at least two-thirds of the districts of each region as stipulated by the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. A governance expert further explains how this constitutional provision puts enormous financial and organizational stress on the minor parties. According to him:

Maintaining functional party offices alone in not less than two-thirds of the over 260 districts in Ghana is not a child's play. This requires a lot of resources, which the minor parties do not have. Yet, government keeps creating more districts almost every year. Currently, there are about 260 districts in Ghana and still counting. This burdens the smaller parties in terms of organization. In as much as the objective may be to deepen decentralization and administer development, the spillover consequence on political parties is real. Anytime a new district is created, it portends a lot more cost to the smaller parties' organizational efforts. Don't forget political parties in Ghana are privately funded. The major parties may not really feel the impact of this ...because they have had the benefit of being in government before. The recent creation of additional 6 new regions in the country, for instance, add more salt to minor parties' injury because of the need to keep functional offices in these new regions in conformity with law (Field interview 2021).

¹⁷ Examples of state-only parties in the United States include, inter alia, the United Utah Party, Independent Party of Oregon, Liberal Party of New York, and Vermont Progressive Party

Arguably, the law regulating political parties in Ghana (as stipulated under Article 55 (4) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana), is somewhat inimical to minor party growth and development. With no capping on districting in Ghana, the minor political parties stand stretched, as far as applying their limited resources to create physical presence in two-thirds of the districts in Ghana is concerned. This must be appreciated in the context that, political parties in Ghana are self-financing as there are no public funding schemes. Furthermore, according to an official of the PNC, whilst the PNC respects the constitutional injunction against the formation of political party along ethnicity, he believes that:

The PNC would be doing much better if it concentrated its efforts and resources in the Upper West Region, where the party gets the bulk of our votes. The region has been quite loyal to the PNC ...that's where our founder hails. In fact, I think there is no need to stretch our meager resources just to showcase we have national appeal (Field interview 2021).

This viewpoint, as expressed by the interviewee above, corroborates Chamberlain (2012), when he argued in the literature that minor parties with regional focus, in plurality rule systems, are more electorally successful than those with territorial-wide focus. Whilst the extant literature (see also Sanders 2017) shows that regionally focused minor parties are more electorally viable than spatially dispersed ones, the 1992 Constitution of Ghana proscribes all political parties, including minor parties, from formally having a regional, ethnic or religious appeal. Hence, it is argued that the provisions of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana regarding political party mobilization unwittingly renders the minor parties unviable. This is because, assuming *arguendo*, if political parties in Ghana were legally permitted to organize on ethnic or regional lines, the PNC for instance would have made a lot more inroads in the Upper West Region of the Republic of Ghana since that is where majority of the support are concentrated, as alluded by the interviewee. Likewise, the CPP, would be doing electorally better in the Western Region of Ghana, because out of the 11 parliamentary seats the CPP has held since the inauguration of Ghana's Fourth Republic, 8 were located in the Western Region.

Furthermore, another constitutional provision, which interviewees identified as having a deleterious effect on minor parties' development is Article 55 (3), which debar political party participation in the mid-term elections at the local level, which is used to select councilors (i.e., Assembly and Unit Committee Members) to the various local

government authorities and units. Article 55 (3) of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana explicitly states:

Subject to the provisions of this article, a political party is free to participate in shaping the political will of the people, to disseminate information or political ideas, social and economic programmes of a national character and sponsor candidates for elections to any public office other than to District Assemblies or other local government unit (Republic of Ghana 1992).

According to the interviewees, the non-partisan nature of Ghana's local government elections arguably denies minor parties' an opportunity to grow their support gradually from the local level politics. Noteworthy, throughout the extant literature, high levels of minor party support are found at the state/local level (see for instance, Kirch 2015; Chamberlain 2012). However, in Ghana, the district/local level elections which could have afforded the minor parties the opportunity to remain active, develop and gain elected office, is by law non-partisan. As one interviewee noted:

If District Assembly elections were partisan, definitely minor parties could easily capture some seats in the various Assemblies ... and thereby building our support base. This why we in the PPP were in favor of a YES vote in the referendum which was intended to facilitate a partisan district level election. It is so unfortunate the referendum was aborted in the last minute (Field interview, PPP Official 2021).

It is useful to highlight here that a proposed national referendum, which was meant to decide on an amendment of Article 55 (3) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana to enable political parties to sponsor candidates during local level elections was aborted on December 1, 2019 by the governing NPP (Debrah et al. undated)¹⁸. This research findings seem to suggest that the nonpartisan nature of Ghana's local level election is injurious to the growth of minor party support. This is because when a minor party fails to win office during a general election and have to await the next general election (in a four-year interval), their messages and agendas are largely forgotten by the electorate. However, with a constant electoral participation (both at the national and the sub-national/district levels as it is the case in other jurisdictions), minor parties that

¹⁸ Article 55 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana is an entrenched provision, which requires a national referendum to be amended, with a threshold of 40% voter turnout and 75% affirmative vote. A referendum was thus scheduled on 17 December 2019 to enable Ghanaian citizens to vote on a proposed amendment of Article 55(3) of the Constitution that bars political parties from participating in District Level Elections. The largest opposition NDC, however, campaigned for a "No" vote on the proposed amendment since according to the NDC, that will further polarize the nation along the partisan lines. Foreseeing the unlikelihood of the proposed referendum polling the required threshold of support, President Akufo-Addo on 1 December 2019 announced the withdrawal of the bill that had been laid in Parliament for the amendments, citing lack of national consensus on the proposed amendment.

are endeavoring to grow would have the chance to remain active in the electoral arena. Similarly, the minor parties are most likely to benefit from localism to gain some seats in the various district assemblies to remain relevant in the political system.

5.3.1.2 Campaign Finance Laws

Ghana's campaign finance laws present another significant statutory feature with proclivity to repress minor parties in electoral politics. While political parties in Ghana are financed privately due to the lack of public funding scheme, party financing in Ghana is regulated by Article 55 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana as well as the Political Parties Act, Act 574 of 2000. These regulations permit only Ghanaian citizens and private Ghanaian businesses to contribute in cash or in kind to the funds of a political party. Article 55(15) of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana explicitly states: "Only a citizen of Ghana may make a contribution or donation to a political party registered in Ghana". This constitutional injunction is further elaborated by section 24 of the Political Parties Act, Act 574 of 2000 as follows:

A non-citizen shall not directly or indirectly make a contribution or donation or loan whether in cash or in kind to the funds held by or for the benefit of a political party and no political party or person acting for or on behalf of a political party shall demand or accept a contribution donation or loan from a non-citizen (Republic of Ghana, 2000).

The intent of the law is to insulate Ghana's party politics from the undue influence of foreign interest groups. Nevertheless, the Political Parties Act, Act 574 of 2000 does not preclude a government of any country or a non-governmental organization from providing assistance in cash or in kind to the Electoral Commission of Ghana for the collective use or benefit of registered political parties (Republic of Ghana, 2000). Essentially, whilst foreign entities cannot make a direct donation to a political party, there is no ban on donations from foreign entities directly to the Electoral Commission of Ghana for the collective benefit of registered political parties in Ghana. Consequently, the Electoral Commission of Ghana has periodically been a recipient of foreign aids and same shared or utilized proportionally among the registered political parties. However, as one interviewee noted; since the proportionate formula often pertains to a party's vote share or parliamentary representation, and not necessarily need-driven, minor parties tend to lose out. Another interviewee also observed; "the smaller parties are always shortchanged in these allocations due to the

over reliance on the use of parliamentary representation as resource distribution formula” (Field Interview, CSO 2021). Indeed, an official of the PPP, in an interview with the researcher, noted that the PPP has never benefited from such support from the Electoral Commission of Ghana. This is plausible because the PPP, since its inception in 2012, has never held a parliamentary seat to qualify for such allocation.

Furthermore, a significant deficiency in Ghana’s campaign finance laws, which portends acute inequity against the minor parties, is the apparent lack of ceiling on contributions and expenditure of political parties. The campaign finance regime in Ghana neither requires political parties or candidates to disclose which persons or entities gave them money nor does it set a limit on how much donations persons or entities can make [over a time period or given election cycle]. Again, there is no limit to the amount of money a political party or candidate can expend in a given election or election cycle. This study therefore argues that the absence of a ceiling on donations and expenditure towards political campaigns further widens the resource inequality gap existing between the minor parties and the major parties in Ghana. Suffice to say that since there is no limit to the amount of money a political party or candidate could raise and spend, major parties become opulent and extravagant during electioneering because they have the wherewithal; with seemingly no concern for smaller parties’ indigence. Ayee (2017) and Sakyi et al. (2015), for instance, lend support to this claim when in their separate studies they accused both the NPP and the NDC, the two leading political parties in Ghana, of vote-buying and extravagant political campaigns. Nonetheless, a ceiling on political financing has the advantage of bridging the resource/expenditure gap between major and minor parties; attempting to offer a level playing ground for minor parties to be financially at par with the major party counterparts.

It is worth noting that the findings of this study do not essentially reflect Biezen (2005) and Rosenstone et al. (2018), whose work found that campaign finance regimes as in Spain and the United States of America discriminate against minor parties in terms of public allocation of funds, since Ghana has no direct public funding scheme for political parties as it pertains in those jurisdictions. However, the findings of this current study rather reveal a tacit discrimination against the minor parties on account that Ghana’s campaign finance regulations, by de facto, permit major parties and their candidates

to raise and expend unlimited campaign funds, at the expense of minor parties who hardly attract private donations. While this discrimination is tacitly implied rather than explicit, it is contended that if legislation is not enacted to address this limitation in the law, the major parties will continue to exploit this legal chasm; whereas the minor parties would successively have a financially difficult task to mount any competitive political campaigns akin to their major party counterparts.

5.3.1.3 Ballot Access Requirements

From the data gathered, ballot access regulations present another major institutional obstacle to minor party candidacy in Ghana. Ballot access refers to the rules and procedures regulating the conditions under which an election candidate or political party is eligible to appear on voters' ballot (Winger 2006). In Ghana, ballot access requirements are mainly in the form of signature requirements and nomination filing fees. As per Ghana's Public Elections Regulations, C.I. 94 of 2016 as amended by C.I. 127 of 2020, nomination forms of a presidential candidate require signatures from two (2) registered voters from each district assembly in Ghana; and in the case of a candidate for election to Parliament, twenty (20) signatories of registered voters in the constituency are required. According to interviewees, these minimum signature requirements are not difficult to satisfy. Indeed, all the minor parties under inquiry (i.e., PNC, PPP, and CPP) have often met this requirement with minimal difficulty. Nevertheless, as the chairperson of one of the surveyed minor parties noted: "the issue is not the signatures but the cash" (Field Interview 2021). From this interview excerpt, what appears to be uneasy for the minor parties to satisfy in order to appear on the ballot is the nomination fees payable by election candidates to the Electoral Commission of Ghana.

Table 5.2: Electoral Commission’s Candidate Nomination Fee, 1992-2020

Election Year	Presidential (Amount in GH¢)	Parliamentary (Amount in GH¢)
1992	500	200
1996	500	200
2000	500	200
2004	500	200
2008	5000	500
2012	10,000	1,000
2016	50,000	10,000
2020	100,000	10,000

Source: Electoral Commission of Ghana, 2022

As indicated in Table 5.2, between 1992 and 2004, the candidate nomination fees charged by the Electoral Commission of Ghana was fixed at GH¢ 500 for presidential and GH¢ 200 for parliamentary candidates respectively. In 2008, the Electoral Commission of Ghana raised the nomination fees to GH¢ 5,000 for presidential nomination and GH¢ 500 for the parliamentary nomination. New filing fees announced for the 2012 elections were fixed at GH¢ 10,000 and GH¢ 1,000 for the presidential and parliamentary nominations respectively. For the 2016 election, the Electoral Commission of Ghana further increased the filing fee vastly to GH¢ 50,000 for the presidential election and GH¢ 10,000 for the parliamentary election, representing a 400% increment for the presidential and a 900% increment for parliamentary respectively. Some minor parties vehemently opposed the percentage increment in the fees, describing it as “arbitrary, exorbitant and intended to frustrate smaller political parties” (Clotey 2016). The minor party PPP, for instance, filed a lawsuit at the Accra High Court against the Electoral Commission of Ghana after the latter had declined to consider a reduction of the fees following the minor parties’ agitations. Nevertheless, the lawsuit was dismissed by the Court on the grounds that it lacks the jurisdiction to hear the matter; a situation the minor parties described as a deliberate step to jettison them from the electoral contest (Arku 2016).

It is instructive to highlight that when the Electoral Commission of Ghana opened nominations for the 2020 general elections, the Commission maintained the fees for the parliamentary candidates at GH¢ 10,000 but increased that of the presidential

candidates from GH¢ 50,000 to GH¢ 100,000, representing a 100% increment. Again, amidst complaints by the minor parties, a deputy chairperson of the Electoral Commission, Dr. Eric Asare Bossman, justified the increment citing inflationary reasons. The Deputy Chairperson of the Electoral Commission is quoted thus:

It is important you look at the value of GH¢50,000 in 2016, then compare it to GHS50,000 in 2020 then you will notice that the Commission has not increased it much. And even when you look at the [filing fee for] parliamentary [aspirants], the GHS10,000, you will realize that the Commission has reduced the price because we all know that GHS10,000 in 2016, is not the same as GHS10,000 in 2020 (Ansah & Ullo 2020).

Similarly, in 2016, when the Electoral Commission raised the filing fee by 400% for the presidential and 900% for the parliamentary aspirants respectively, a spokesperson of the Electoral Commission justified that:

This is a decision taken by the Commission at the very highest level, and I would say that it is not 'elimination by rough tactics', as they put it. These are fees which have been informed by a lot of considerations (Clotney 2016).

Whilst Ghana's Election Management Body refutes that its candidate nomination fee is prohibitive and intended to frustrate the minor parties, empirical evidence suggests that the ballot access fees levied by the Electoral Commission of Ghana, to a large extent, constrain the minor parties' ability to field enough parliamentary candidates nationwide. Evaluating the impact of exorbitant ballot access fee on minor party campaigns, a key interviewee, for instance, attributed his party's abysmal performance in the 2016 polls to the Electoral Commission's decision to raise the cost of nomination fee. According to this interviewee, the Electoral Commission's decision to fix presidential and parliamentary filing fees at GH¢50,000 and GHC10,000 respectively destabilized his party's (i.e., the CPP) 2016 campaign financially and made it extremely difficult for the party to procure needed campaign logistics. This is because, "over 80% of the party's resources that had been generated for the 2016 campaign went into paying nomination fees for parliamentary candidates", he emphasized. He explicated thus:

What destabilized our efforts in 2016, for instance, was the filing fees that we eventually had to pay to the Electoral Commission. We were shocked, if not horrified, when those fees were announced. We, literally, had to cough GH¢ 10,000 each for the 220 candidates – about 2.2 million cedis. You may recall that in 2012 the filing fees for the parliamentary candidates was a GH¢ 1,000 so we were expecting an increase to perhaps a GH¢ 1,500 or GH¢ 2,000 thereabout. Unexpectedly, it was upped by almost 1000% for parliamentary candidates. That certainly destabilized our budget, resulting in some logistical

challenges. ...and ordinarily it would have been better to apply those funds in specific constituencies where we could have made some gains or even retained our single seat. We ended up losing it (Field Interview 2021).

Following from the above interview data, though the hike in nomination fee charged by the Electoral Commission of Ghana did not cause a reduction in CPP's total parliamentary nominations in the 2016 election, it had a telling effect on the party's finances as it did siphon off financial resources meant for campaign activities.

In the case of PPP and PNC, there was observable decline in their total parliamentary nominations in 2016 elections (see Table 5.3). The PNC, for instance, recorded a sharp decline in the total number of parliamentary candidates filed for the 2016 polls. As observed in Table 5.3, the PNC filed only 63 candidates out of the 275 parliamentary seats which were available for capture (representing just 22.9%) as against its 100 nominations in 2012 and 127 nominations in 2008 respectively. On the part of the PPP, the number of candidates filed reduced drastically from 253 candidates (during 2012 polls) to 174 candidates (during 2016 polls), and to only 9 candidates (during 2020 polls) out of the 275 constituencies nationwide.

Table 5.3: Parliamentary Nominations of CPP, PNC and PPP (1996-2020)

Election Year	Total No. of Constituencies	Number of Candidates			Nominations (%)			No of Seats Won		
		CPP	PNC	PPP	CPP	PNC	PPP	CPP	PNC	PPP
1996	200	-	121	-	-	60.5	-	5	1	-
2000	200	188	155	-	94.0	77.5	-	1	3	-
2004	230	172	124	-	74.8	53.9	-	3	4	-
2008	230	205	127	-	89.1	55.2	-	1	2	-
2012	275	159	100	253	57.8	36.4	92.0	0	1	0
2016	275	220	63	174	80.0	22.9	63.3	0	0	0
2020	275	42	36	09	15.2	13.0	.03	0	0	0

Source: Author's compilation based on Electoral Commission's data, 2021

The PNC particularly blamed its inability to file for more of its members to contest in the 2020 parliamentary elections on the increase in the 2020 presidential filing fee. As one official of the PNC stated; “We initially wanted to file for 100 parliamentary candidates but had to settle on only 36 candidates in order to meet the high cost of the presidential filing fees” (Field Interview 2021). It is important to note that the GH¢ 50,000 increment in the 2020 presidential filing fee could pay for five (5) additional parliamentary candidates.

Many of the interviewees expressed concern about the rate at which Ghana’s Electoral Commission increases candidate nomination fees during election years. According to some interviewees, the practice is quite unfair to smaller political parties who typically lack the wherewithal; and constitutes an abuse of the Electoral Commission’s use of discretionary power in contravention of Article 296 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. Noteworthy, the non-partisan Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) has described the recent increase in candidate nomination fees payable to the Electoral Commission of Ghana by election candidates in order to appear on the voter’s ballot as arbitrary, which has a tendency to restrict electoral competition to those with deep pockets (GhanaWeb 2017). Indeed, an official of the PNC, in an interview with the researcher, accused the two major parties of conspiring with the Electoral Commission to hike filing fees; just to make life unbearable for the smaller political parties. He noted:

I was at the IPAC [Inter-Party Advisory Committee] meeting when the EC Chairperson made that announcement. Both the NPP and the NDC reps did not say anything about the increment. They didn’t complain when all the other political parties raised issues with it. One could easily detect that they had somehow planned just to get some of us out of the race. Because they knew we couldn’t afford (Field Interview 2021).

This observation by the PNC official, is quite intriguing and to a large extent, echoes Panzer (2013) when he wrote of major parties’ strategies aimed at undermining smaller parties. However, an official of the [major party] NDC, in a field interview, retorts that the major parties often do not complain of Electoral Commission’s nomination fees because “with reference to past electoral performance, both the NDC and the NPP are always confident they will meet the threshold to qualify for a refund of nomination deposit, whether win or lose” (Field interview, NDC Official 2021).

By law, an election candidate is entitled to a full reimbursement of nomination deposit if s/he polls at least 25 percent of total valid votes in the case of the presidential candidate, and 12.5 percent of the votes in the case of a parliamentary candidate. For the major parties, this is never an issue since they have always passed the 25 percent electoral threshold in every general election under the current Fourth Republic. (See Appendix D: sample of letter from the major party NDC requesting for refund of parliamentary and presidential filing fees for the 2020 general election). However, minor party candidates are the hardest hit since their electoral performance in most constituencies hardly attain 12.5 percent of total votes, and always less than 4 percent of total votes in the presidential polls, except in 1992 when the PNC's presidential candidate polled 6.7 percent of the total votes cast. [Refer to Table 3.5, under Chapter Three of this study, for Ghana's presidential elections results since the Fourth Republic]. Essentially, this institutional design of reimbursement of nomination fees is munificent to only the two major parties and their candidates while having a malign effect on minor parties and their candidates. This is because the minor parties often perform below the threshold to qualify for refund of nomination fees; and even to the point of losing all candidate nomination deposits.

These findings generally validate earlier studies by Rosenstone et al. (2018) and Stratmann (2005), which claimed that ballot access regulations hinder minor party candidates from contesting political office more than major-party candidates. However, as evident by this study's findings, candidate nomination fees rather than signature requirement often hinder minor party candidates' ballot access in Ghana. This discovery is expected as it appears to confirm that Ghana as a developing country generally has lower income levels and thus financial impediment to ballot access is likely to be common.

5.3.1.4 The Electoral System

From the data analysis, another key institutional obstacle to the minor parties' electoral success is the use of the majoritarian and plurality electoral systems in Ghana. Whilst the President of the Republic is elected by a majoritarian vote (i.e., more than 50% of the total valid votes cast), the 275 Members of Parliament are elected by a plurality vote (i.e., first-past-the-post rule) in a single-member constituency system. This is modeled after the American single-member district plurality system (see Neville-

Shepard 2019). The plurality rule does not reward parties who place second or third, despite the popular vote a party or candidate may poll. Instead, it tends to “exaggerate the victory of the strongest party and to discriminate radically against lesser parties” (Schattschneider 2004, p. 75). As a consequence, this electoral format accentuates the political duopoly of the NPP and the NDC, since they are the dominant political parties in the country with the capacity to muster the majority vote needed to win the presidency, and also capture more legislative seats. As predicted by Duverger’s law, “some voters who prefer a candidate or party that they think cannot win will cast a vote for their first choice among the major-party candidates” (Abramson et al. 1995, p. 353). Typically called “strategic voting”, the surveyed minor parties (i.e., the PNC, the CPP and the PPP) suffer from this mechanical effect of Ghana’s electoral system as “it naturally flows from the design of the plurality-vote-win system” (Neville-Shepard, 2019, p. 275).

In an interview with a Governance Expert from one of the pro-democracy policy tanks in Ghana, he noted:

A country with over 20 registered political parties, only two are represented in the nation’s parliament. That is worrying! Where lies the multi-party principle guaranteed by the Constitution? ...the voting system is to be blamed. You cannot subscribe to a plurality rule and still aspire to multipartyism; practically it doesn’t work. It has not shown to work anywhere in the world. Theoretically, yes! ...the parties will be plenty in the political system but will only play fringe (Field interview 2021).

A Senior Research Fellow with another think tank in Ghana, also shared similar sentiment and advised thus:

Our electoral system is the largest single obstacle to the electoral viability of the minor parties. Parliamentarians are elected by single-member constituencies, and the first-past-the-post formula is used to determine the winner. For a simple mechanical reason, a minor party is unlikely to gain much representation unless its support is geographically concentrated or the party is strategic enough to form some kind of electoral alliance with one of the established parties. Basically, it is for this simple reason, none of the other parties have a seat in parliament. Overtime, they have all lost their parliamentary seats. The system does not favor them. If we want to see other parties represented in parliament, then we must have the courage as a people, to reform the electoral system and adopt a more proportional system of allocating seats (Field interview 2021).

The above interview data lends much support to Adjei’s (2013) work in which he concludes that minor parties in Ghana would be “better off under the proportional representation system” (p. 17) than the current first-post-the-post system. Adjei (2013)

arrived at his conclusion after he had run the vote share of each political party, in the 2000 Ghanaian parliamentary election, in a proportional representation formula which saw the seats of the major parties decline whilst the seats of the minor parties increased.

The choice of an electoral system is one important institutional decision for any electoral democracy since it is that which translates votes cast in an election into seats won (see Farrell 2011). Without doubt, the minor parties are failing to win parliamentary seats virtually as a result of Ghana's use of plurality rule. As Schraufnagel and Milita (2010; p. 34) have pointed out, "the single-member district plurality rule hurdle is simply too difficult for minor parties to transcend". The majoritarian bias of the plurality system militates against the electoral success of the surveyed parties, to the extent that none currently holds a seat in parliament despite their assertive political behaviors viz; holding rallies, running media adverts, and contributing to policy debates. The finding of this study therefore confirms extant literature which claim that plurality-based systems maintain the power structure of the two major parties but stifle the development of smaller parties as their supporters are inclined to vote tactically for the "lesser of two evils" to avoid vote wasting (see for instance, Neville-Shepard 2019; Allison 2013; Schraufnagel & Milita 2010; Burden 2005; Lewis-Beck & Squire 1995; Abramson et al. 1995; Duverger 1963).

5.3.1.5 Presidential Debates

Presidential debates in Ghana remain the brainchild of the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), who in the year 2000 introduced the first ever presidential debate in Ghana's democracy. The IEA-sponsored Presidential Debate provides an institutionalized platform for Ghanaian voters to assess the policy positions of political parties and election candidates to inform voting decisions. Since its inception, admission into the debate is restricted to presidential candidates of political parties with parliamentary representation. This however tends to discriminate against minor parties and candidates.

The CPP and the PNC are the only minor parties in Ghana whose presidential nominees have ever participated in IEA Presidential Debates. Both parties' presidential nominees qualified to participate in the 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012 versions

of the IEA Presidential Debates; but were both disqualified in 2016 on the grounds that they lacked parliamentary representation. Likewise, since the inception of the PPP in 2012, none of its presidential nominees has participated in the IEA Presidential Debate due to the party's inability to satisfy the eligibility criteria.

Although the IEA varied its rules for the conduct of the 2016 Presidential Debate, the new caveat essentially excluded all minor party candidates as they were required to have polled 5 percent of the national vote in the previous 2012 election, in addition to having a seat in the nation's parliament (see Aidoo & Chamberlain, 2015, p. 205). The IEA's intent was to have a separate presidential debate for the two frontrunners in the 2016 presidential election (i.e., John Mahama of the NDC and Nana Akufo-Addo of the NPP), and another for the candidates of the minor parties. Rationalizing the IEA's decision to have two separate presidential debates in the build up to the 2016 general elections, the IEA's Executive Director argued: "Presidential candidates of parties without representation in parliament equally have good ideology that if it is made public can be tapped into by whoever emerges as the winner" (News Ghana, 2016). The minor parties protested against the segregation regarding the conduct of the 2016 Presidential Debate; citing that such a move by the IEA delegitimizes the smaller parties in Ghana. Hassan Ayariga of the All People's Congress party, and a former PNC presidential candidate, once described the IEA's intended action as "discriminatory and an affront to Ghana's multiparty democracy" (Peacefmonline, 2016). A policy analyst of the PPP, Kofi Asamoah Siaw, also opined:

Organizing another debate for smaller parties because we have complained is not the way to go. IEA's attitude is something that we need to watch. If you are an institution that is interested in promoting democracy, you go according to a certain benchmark and not your own guidelines that you have introduced. In a multiparty democratic setting, our attitude and our actions must seek to promote multiparty principles and not a duopoly (GhanaWeb, 2016).

The 2016 IEA Presidential Debate could not come off as initially outlined, following the major parties' boycott at the eleventh-hour. However, as one key interviewee noted: "the action of institutions such as the IEA through its discriminatory presidential debates, over the years, throws the spotlight on only the NDC and NPP, but discriminates against non-NDC and non-NPP candidates" (Field Interview, Minor Party Official 2021).

As the minor party candidates are repeatedly excluded from institutionalized presidential debates during electioneering, it denies them an equal opportunity to publicize their platforms to attract mass following among the electorate. Exclusion of minor party candidates from presidential debates somewhat reinforces public perception that they are fringe actors, as they are denied the same space to advertise their policy alternatives alongside major party candidates. This finding supports Kirch's (2015; 2013) argument that exclusion of minor party candidates from televised presidential debates has ramifications on their media coverage and ultimately, on their electoral fortunes. This finding also broadly reflects earlier studies by Rosenstone et al. (2018) and Gillespie (2012) when they found that minor party nominees are often disbarred from televised presidential debates in the United States by the Commission on Presidential Debates.

5.3.2 Non-Institutional Constraints

5.3.2.1 Limited Media Coverage

Findings from this study show that the media in Ghana is more than just a neutral channel that links the public to electoral politics, particularly as several media houses in Ghana are owned by political elites who are mainly aligned to the major parties. For example, the Ahotor FM, Radio Gold, Power FM, Radio XYZ are all pro-NDC media as they are owned by NDC stalwarts; whereas Asaase Radio, Oman FM and Net 2 Television are pro- NPP and aligned to NPP's wealthy politico-business executives. Similarly, among the print media, Western Publications Limited (operators of *Daily Guide* newspaper and *News One*) and the *Statesman* are pro-NPP, whilst the *Daily Heritage*, the *Ghana Palaver*, and the *Ghanaian Lens* are pro- NDC in their reportage. As one interviewee emphasized: "the control of the privately-owned media houses in Ghana is almost close to a bipolar. If it's not owned by an NPP person, then it is for NDC man" (Field interview, CSO 3). Whilst there are a few independent media houses, the Ghanaian media ownership landscape largely reflects the political duopoly of NDC and NPP (see Thompson 2021). Through news framing, these privately-owned media outlets serve the political interests of their proprietors by projecting their party's candidates as leading contenders in any election, while minor parties are at best ignored and at worst disparaged. To some extent, such media sway adversely affects minor party candidates' public image, and the consequential effect is that voters are

often inclined to “tactical voting” in which they do not cast a ballot for a minor party or candidates because the media opines their candidates cannot win or a vote for them is wasted (See Appendix G for some disparaging news headlines on minor parties in Ghana).

Furthermore, due to the dominance of the two major parties in Ghana, most media houses [including even some state-owned media], rarely invite minor party officials nor their candidates to their discursive programs (be it newspaper reviews and political talk shows). Hence, panel composition for such media programs is always biased towards the two major parties – the NDC and the NPP. As an interviewee observed:

the usual morning political talk shows on radios and televisions have over the years developed a template of newspaper reviews, with just the two main political parties providing panelists for discussions. Minor parties are rarely represented during these important political programs (Field Interview 2021).

Another interviewee also corroborates that: “only one out of ten radio/TV political discussions may include a minor party official or communicator”. She explained that news consumers are often uninterested in minor parties’ platforms, and since media houses operate in a very competitive environment in Ghana, program managers and producers are inclined to empanel discussants from major parties (Field Interview 2021). This finding reflects Kirch’s (2013; 2015) studies, when he argued that in the United States, minor party representatives rarely constitute a member of a media panel discussing topical national issues which are of interest to the citizenry.

It is instructive to highlight that almost all the minor parties’ officials [i.e., from the PPP, the CPP and the PNC] interviewed, accused the Ghanaian media of paying less attention to their activities. An official of the PPP, for instance, remarked; “sometimes pressmen have to be induced before coming to cover our press conferences”. A national officer of the PNC also mentioned; “Even though the PNC periodically issues press statements and positional papers, the media fails to take notice”. A CPP communicator also corroborates that; “the CPP issued several releases regarding the recent 2020 voter registration exercise brouhaha but the media failed to accord it the needed attention”. According to this CPP communicator; “it would be naive for anyone to assume that there is any neutral media in Ghana” (Field interview 2021).

Indeed, three out of four journalists consulted for this study admitted having devoted less press time to minor party candidates and their activities during the recent 2020

general election, yet their respective media houses have no editorial policy against minor parties. One of the journalists noted that: “as a political reporter, you are more or less constrained to spend the limited journalistic resources on candidates whom you believe will make headlines”. Another journalist, also noted:

The X¹⁹ has no editorial policy against covering minor party candidates. However, the newspaper may be more inclined to devote much press space to major parties than to minor parties. While the lens is often on the NDC and the NPP, occasionally we do stories on newsworthy candidates from the smaller parties too (Field Interview 2021).

The above interview data lends support to the argument that media outlets in Ghana pay fairly less attention to minor parties and their candidates since reporters do not consider them as newsworthy or viable candidates. News reporters produce little coverage of even the most serious minor party contenders as political competition in Ghana is almost defined exclusively as a contest between the NDC and the NPP. However, as an interviewee, argued:

The smaller parties face a chicken-and-egg dilemma: they do not receive media coverage because the media view them as losers, however they may be typically losing elections because they do not receive media coverage (Field Interview 2021).

Nonetheless, an editor of a state-owned media maintained that in the spirit of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, the state broadcaster provides fair opportunity to all political parties, both major and minor, to present their programs to the public. He, however, explicated that “coverage of major party activities may be making headlines not necessarily because they have been prioritized over the others but perhaps, they are the ones organizing more activities to merit coverage” (Field interview 2021). Whilst the right to equal access to the state-owned media by all political parties and candidates is enshrined in the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (Republic of Ghana 1992), this right may not be guaranteed in practice since the ruling party always has an unfettered access to the state media to the disadvantage of the opposition parties, including minor political parties. According to an official of the PPP, “hardly do you see a state media assigning a dedicated reporter to the flagbearers of any of the minor parties. Yet, the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation always has reporters for John Mahama and Nana Akufo-Addo, and not for Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom or Madam Brigitte Dzogbenuku” (Field Interview 2021).

¹⁹ Name of a media house. Identity is protected to ensure anonymity.

All these arguments point to the notion that the Ghanaian media has not been fair to the minor parties and their candidates in terms of press coverage, which poses serious challenges for their electoral viability.

It is however worth mentioning that the PPP appears to have a little media visibility edge over its peer minor parties, due to Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom's (i.e., founder of PPP) ownership of several media outlets under the Groupe Nduom (GN) Media Empire; *inter alia*, Ahomka FM, Enyidado FM, Agoro FM, Okyeman FM, ATV, First Digital TV, Ocean1 TV, Light FM, Wa FM, Kasapreko FM, Adehye FM, Suhupieli FM, and Today Newspaper. However, as one key interviewee remarked; "these media stations under the Groupe Nduom Media Empire are not in the mainstream". According to this interviewee, the creation of Groupe Nduom Media Empire was "in furtherance of Dr. Nduom's political ambition, having recognized the politically skewed nature of the Ghanaian media landscape" (Field interview, PPP Official 2021). It is therefore argued that the CPP and the PNC are the worst affected by the limited media attention as no particular media outlet is affiliated to any of these two minor parties. Dismally, in this age of information technology, the CPP and the PNC, unlike the PPP, have no website to promote their parties' ideals. Nevertheless, the CPP and the PNC could have taken advantage of the internet to reverse their media obscurity or, as it were, improve their media visibility but that has not been the case as the two parties do not even maintain a functional website. Hence, despite the potential of the cyberspace to level the playing field for the minor parties, this is not utilized in full effect by both the PNC and the CPP. This particular finding, to a large extent, lends credence to Small (2008), and Margolis and Resnick (2000) earlier studies that the key beneficiaries of e-politics are not minor parties but rather the established parties.

5.3.2.2 Defective Leadership

From the findings, except the PPP, both the PNC and the CPP exhibit leadership failure. Unity of purpose and internal cohesion appear to be lacking among the leadership of both the PNC and the CPP. Indeed, as of the time of data collection (between 21 October and 30 December 2021), internal wrangling within the PNC had led to the party's national headquarters in Accra being locked up by the Ghana Police Service as factions within the party struggled over control of the party office. This was after a violent confrontation had ensued among party officials at the party

headquarters during a press conference on Wednesday September 1, 2021 following a contested suspension of party General Secretary, Janet Nabila. The embattled General Secretary had also hauled both the 2020 PNC presidential nominee (i.e. David Apasera) and the National Chairman of the PNC (i.e., Moses Dani-Baah) to court for allegedly embezzling party funds (see Caesar n.d.).

On the part of the CPP, as one interviewee intimated; “the CPP has been weakened systematically by the frailty in leadership where those who have led the party have subsumed our objective under the whims of other political parties” (Field interview 2021). From this comment, the interviewee appears to accuse successive CPP’s leadership of vending the CPP to the major parties. Another interviewee also asserts; “In recent times, the executives the CPP has elected at its congresses have not really strived to represent the interest of the party, but have been working in the shadows of either the NPP or NDC” (CPP Member, 2021). Relatedly, a card bearing member of the PNC noted that; “the cause of PNC’s inability to make any impact in today’s politics is attributable to leadership crisis in the party. There is always infighting and confusion among leadership as if we are in competition against ourselves”. Indeed, a top official of the PNC admitted that “the PNC has had a leadership crisis for some time now”. He further argued; “the party’s poor performance in recent elections is due to the collective failure of party leadership” (Field Interview 2021).

Remarkably, none of the interviewees alluded to leadership crisis in the PPP, except to say that few constituencies do not have the full complement of party executives. Many of the interviewees thus commended the PPP for exhibiting high level of leadership and intra-party cohesion even with the exit of its founder, Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom, from the 2020 electioneering campaign. Nevertheless, the leadership of the CPP and the PNC were particularly accused of using the party’s platform for selfish personal gains. As one interviewee emphasized;

the leadership of the PNC has no aim to win election to govern this country! Their aim, perhaps, is to support other parties in return for petty cash and handouts. Unfortunately, the leadership of the party [PNC] has succeeded in selling the party to the NPP and NDC for their selfish gains (PNC member 3, 2021).

Another interviewee also observed that;

Some executives of these minor parties put their parochial interests over and above the collective interest of the party which they claim to serve. It is not uncommon to see some of their leadership supporting almost everything of the major parties, sometimes against their own party's position (CSO Official 2).

Another element of leadership deficiency that contributes hugely to the minor parties' failure is leadership indiscipline, which sometimes results in conflicting party positions on national issues. A case in point was the controversial 2020 New Voter Register compilation proposed by the Electoral Commission of Ghana, which split the PNC leadership even ahead of the 2020 general elections. Whilst party chairman, Bernard Mornah, claimed the PNC's official position was against the call for New Voter Registration Exercise, party's General Secretary Atik Mohammed, on the other hand, advocated for a new voter register. Similarly, towards its 2020 National Delegates Congress, the PNC leadership again portrayed a high level of leadership incongruence. Whereas the National Executive Committee (NEC) of PNC, led by its chairperson Bernard Mornah, scheduled the party's National Delegates Congress on September 19, 2020, a separate directive from 2016 flagbearer, Dr. Edward Mahama, overturned NEC's earlier directive by announcing a new date for the congress without recourse to the PNC's National Executive Committee. This impasse between the NEC of the PNC (led by party chairman Bernard Mornah, on one hand) and flagbearer Dr Edward Mahama, on other hand, had to be mediated by the party's Council of Elders (Anaba 2020). Refer to Appendix J for further details regarding the PNC's Council of Elders' intervention. This situation is particularly disturbing because it was barely four months to the 2020 Ghanaian general elections. Such leadership imbroglia creates doubts about the party's political direction and thus creates the impression in public minds that discipline and cohesion have broken down in the party, thereby making the party unattractive to the general electorate.

Also, the inability of party leadership to sanction indiscipline members as well as party officials is counter-productive to the success of the minor parties. According to one PNC member; "Sometimes senior members openly support other parties' presidential candidates against our presidential candidate and no disciplinary action is preferred against them. Such behavior cannot go unpunished in any serious party" (Field interview 2021). Accounting for the PNC's abysmal performance in the recent 2020 general election, a top official of the PNC highlighted that; "some of our own party

executives stabbed the party in the back by supporting other presidential candidates” (Field Interview 2021). Similarly, some CPP officials, in an interview, also alluded to instances where leading party members, including national executives and CPP sitting members of parliament openly campaigned against the party’s flagbearer yet without being sanctioned.

Furthermore, another key element that seems to further weaken the leadership structures of the CPP and PNC especially is the frequent resignations of top party officials in the recent past. First, it was Dr. Nduom, the 2008 CPP flagbearer who resigned and formed the Progressive People’s Party. Second, Dr. Foster Abu Sakara, the 2012 CPP flagbearer, also resigned from the CPP in wake of the 2016 general elections. This happened days after Mr. Hassan Ayariga, the 2012 PNC flagbearer had also resigned from the PNC to found his All People’s Congress (APC). Noteworthy, the issues that lead to the breakaway of these three former flagbearers *viz.* Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom, Dr. Abu Sakara and Hassan Ayariga from their respective parties relate to internal party conflict. These resignations of former flagbearers seem to suggest that either the leadership of these two minor parties – CPP and PNC – lack the capacity to resolve internal party disputes or some individuals are just impatient in dealing with internal party conflicts. Altogether, the exits of such top officials from both parties have had ramifications on the parties’ formidability and electoral fortunes.

5.3.2.3 Financial Constraints

To be successful in electoral politics in Ghana requires enormous financial resources due to current trends of sophistication in political campaign and the monetization of the electoral process (see Sakyi et al 2015; Prempeh & Asare 2017). As already demonstrated, under the ballot access requirement obstacles (refer to section 5.3.1.3 of this chapter), candidate nomination filing fees charged by the Electoral Commission of Ghana alone constitute a huge prohibitive cost the minor parties have to bear. In addition, the cost of political advertisements and general campaign is quite huge. This study, however, found that all the surveyed minor parties have vulnerable income sources as they are unattractive prospects for donations from citizens and private businesses. Hence, the main sources of revenue for the three minor parties under observation are; nomination filing fees from prospective party executives and personal funds of election candidates and party officials. Membership dues form only a

negligible source of fund for the minor parties owing to their insignificant membership base coupled with the fact that the average Ghanaian party member rather expects handouts from party officials in return for their support (see Prempeh & Asare 2017). As one interviewee stated; “only a handful of party members pay membership subscription dues... and out of the few who pays, it is often paid for, on their behalf, by their political patrons”. Another interviewee also emphasized:

Financing is the major challenge. Ghanaians are not use to paying dues to political parties. The same Ghanaian who will pay GH¢ 1,000 to a church as tithe or offering, will not pay even GH¢1 to support a political party he/she claims to be a member. He thinks it’s the party who must rather give him money (PPP official, 2021).

Indeed, the complaint over the difficulty of financing political activities of the minor parties echoed in almost all the field interviews. As the minor parties struggle to mobilize enough funds to be competitive in elections, they conveniently resort to charging “exorbitant” nomination filing fees during internal party primaries. A critical examination of the internal nomination filing fees charged by the parties indicates that the parties are heavily dependent on such fees to run party activities, including campaigns. To be a presidential candidate of the CPP for instance, the party fixed its 2020 nomination fee at GH¢170,000 (US\$ 29,406.53) while national chairperson aspirants were required to pay GH¢70,000 (US\$ 12,108.57). Aspirants for the positions of National Vice-Chair, Treasurer and General Secretary were required to pay GH¢50,000 (US\$ 8,648.98) as filing fees. Aspirants for National Organizer paid GH¢30,000 (US\$ 5,189.39), while those seeking the position of Women Organizer and Youth Organizer were required to pay GH¢20,000 (US\$3,459.59) as filing fees.

On the part of the PNC, the party fixed its 2020 nomination fees at GH¢ 30,000.00 for presidential aspirants whereas the National Chairperson aspirants paid GH¢ 20,000. The Vice Chairperson and General Secretary aspirants were levied GH¢ 10,000 each. The other national officer positions namely, the National Organizer, National Women’s Organizer, National Treasurer and National Youth Organizer were also levied GH¢ 5,000 each as filing fee. These figures must be appreciated in the context of the fact that being a party official is an unpaid job. Likewise, the PPP in 2020 charged between GH¢1,000 (US\$ 172.43) and GH¢ 4,000 (US\$ 689.74) for national executive aspirants depending on position; whilst parliamentary candidate aspirants and presidential

aspirants paid GH¢ 2, 000 (US\$ 344.87) and GH¢10, 000 (US\$ 1724.34) respectively. However, in 2016 the National Executive Committee of the PPP approved a fee of GH¢10,000 (US\$ 1,724.34) to pick a presidential nomination form, while filing of the nomination attracted an additional fee of GH¢30,000 (US\$ 5,173.03) per candidate.

Even though the minor parties always lament over the nomination fees charged by the Electoral Commission of Ghana as being prohibitive, their own internal nomination fees are averagely much higher than that of the Electoral Commission's nomination fees in each election year (refer to Table 5.2). Apparently, the parties require such fees levied on prospective party officials to finance party affairs. As one interviewee noted: "the filing fee is one of the main sources to generate some funds for party business. However, only a few persons actually file nominations" (Field Interview 2021). Deductively, the parties do not even get to raise enough funds from filing fees as expected.

Whilst overseas branches and Ghanaians in diaspora have been a significant source of party funding for the two major parties (see Prempeh & Asare 2017), the minor parties could not boast of any serious presence overseas to benefit from such foreign remittances. According to a key interviewee, the CPP used to receive support from the UK-Ireland branch of the party but such support is not forthcoming in recent times because the branch is currently inactive. An official of the CPP thus emphasized; "by far, the biggest challenge the CPP has faced in recent times, and continues to face, is the issue of raising funds for effective electoral campaign". She explained thus: "our key financiers are gradually becoming tired of us ... and I can appreciate... sponsoring a political party for many years and not winning is quite dispiriting" (Field Interview 2021).

Similarly, an official of the PNC also indicated that the PNC during its inception in 1992 had quite a few entrepreneurs who used to support the party financially. However, following years of unsuccessful electoral attempts, most of these entrepreneurs have abandoned the party to join either NPP or NDC (i.e., the two major parties). Indeed, the minor parties are inherently at a fundraising disadvantaged position because, as Agomor (2015) argued, most political financiers in Ghana typically contribute to political party funds with an assumption of getting access to an elected official for political favors; yet funding minor party rarely provides such returns due to their limited

chance of electoral victory. As an interviewee highlighted, “most political financiers are often hesitant to sponsor minor party candidates due to the higher probability of their electoral failure”. Other interviewees, from the minor parties, also highlighted political victimization of their financiers as a key reason why business leaders are averse to sponsor their candidates in recent times.

As political parties in Ghana are generally required by law to rely on membership dues and citizens’ donations, amidst the absence of state funding option, the minor parties are heftily affected by resource paucity. The financial limitations of the minor parties hinder their efforts to mobilize adequate logistics that are vital to mounting a serious challenge to the two dominant parties who have alternated power under the Fourth Republic, with state resources at their disposal. Indeed, the leadership of all the surveyed minor parties gravely lamented over paucity of campaign logistics including vehicles, party souvenirs, among others. Nevertheless, as the former national treasurer of one of the surveyed parties intimated; “if we can somehow manage to fix the challenge of fundraising, I believe many of our internal challenges regarding campaign logistics would be significantly ameliorated” (Field Interview 2021).

As observed in the literature (see for instance, Sifry 2013), financial constraints of political parties have implications for party’s access to media space and airtime. Minor parties’ media advertisement, and ultimately public image, could significantly be enhanced if financial resources are available and effectively utilized. However, due to lack of resources, the PNC and the CPP in particular run only limited paid political advertisements in the traditional media during electioneering. The PPP is comparatively ubiquitous in the media with significant commercials due to Dr. Nduom’s ownership of some media outlets. An official of the CPP admitted that “the CPP is often unable to run paid commercials as expected due to financial constraints”. An executive of the PNC also corroborated that due to lack of funds, the PNC rarely sponsor paid televised commercials to project its candidates. She argued further as follows:

Beside the airtime the party benefits from Ghana Broadcasting Corporation [the state broadcaster], we also need to engage electorates on privately owned radio and television stations in order to reach out to the masses who are inclined to these Akan [language] stations i.e., UTV, Adom FM, Peace FM and the likes. Yet, the party doesn’t have the financial muscle to do that (PNC National Executive 2, 2021).

Notwithstanding the high levels of mistrust and electoral irregularities that sometimes occur at various polling stations in Ghana, owing to bereft of funding, the minor parties are often unable to afford the recruitment of party agents to represent their interest at the various polling stations just as the major parties always do. With a total of 33,367 polling stations nationwide, having to pay allowances to party volunteers is indeed a huge financial cost, and only the major parties are able to do so. However, it is the contention of this study that the lack of agents for minor party candidates sometimes contributes to instances where they become victims of electoral fraud at polling and coalition centers.

5.3.2.4 Organizational and Campaign Deficiencies

Findings from this study show that all three surveyed minor parties struggle to provide the organizational structures vital to win elections. Notwithstanding their few party offices, mainly improvised structures spotted in a few major cities in Ghana, depicting a form of physical presence, the minor parties lack real grassroots mobilization and a coordinated agenda vital to prosecute effective campaign. As one key interviewee noted:

The smaller parties are ill-organized, fragmented and are run by only a few individuals ... they lack a mass following. Worriedly, they do not have the means to undertake mass political mobilization across the country to remain relevant (Field Interview, CSO4, 2021).

Another interviewee also adds that:

Apart from the national capital [Accra], they have only rudimentary structures in the regions, and the constituencies, with no regular party life. They often lack functional executives in most constituencies across the country, even to oversee the day-to-day party activities (Field interview, Senior Research Fellow 2021).

Moreover, the minor parties nominate candidates in only a few constituencies (See Table 5.3) “and every so often fail to campaign in constituencies they fail to field parliamentary candidates” (Field interview 2021). However, as an interviewee highlighted; “No matter how small or weak a political party may be, when it is able to field parliamentary candidates across, it augments the party’s activism in the constituencies” as the candidates run the day-to-day campaign in the constituencies, for themselves and for the presidential candidate. Hence, the inability of the minor parties to field parliamentary candidates in most constituencies has dismal

consequences on the parties' overall prominence and the presidential candidates' electoral fortunes.

Additionally, the quality of candidates the minor parties present at the polls have been scorned. Whilst major parties' candidate selection processes are often competitive (see Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017; WFD & CDD n.d.), producing high quality candidates, the minor parties struggle to recruit well qualified candidates with ample political clout to run on their ticket. This results in situations where the minor parties are sometimes compelled to field low morale candidates, thereby entrenching a poor public perception of the party, which sequentially culminates into poor electoral output. In line with this observation, an interviewee described the candidates of the minor parties in Ghana thus:

Their candidates are mostly inexperienced... uninspiring and sometimes ill-resourced. This makes it quite difficult for them to execute any effective political campaign capable of attracting enough electoral support (Field interview, Media Practitioner 2021).

Similar assertions, like the above, were made during other interview sessions with the CSOs regarding the poor quality of some minor party candidates including presidential nominees. Indeed, with exception of Dr. Hilla Limann of the PNC who was a former Head of State during the Third Republic of Ghana, and Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom who had had previous political office experience as parliamentarian and Minister of State before becoming the 2008 CPP's presidential nominee and PPP's presidential nominee in 2012 and 2016 respectively; most of the minor party presidential nominees had no previous political office experience. The PNC's Hassan Ayariga, for instance, entered the 2012 presidential race as a political novice at age 40. The PNC's multiple presidential nominee, Edward Mahama, likewise had no prior public office experience. Also, on the ticket of the CPP, from George Hagan (in 1996) to George Aggudey (in 2004), Foster Abu Sakara (in 2012) and to Ivor Greenstreet (in 2016 and 2020), all had no previous political office experience; unlike major parties' candidates like John Kufuor, Nana Akufo-Addo, John Mahama, John Mills who had either been a Member of Parliament, Minister of State, and sometimes a former Vice-President of the Republic. Such political exposures augment election candidate's prominence and chance of electoral success. Yet, most minor party presidential candidates lack this important political exposure.

Again, whilst the choice of a presidential running mate is supposed to augment the ticket of a presidential nominee, the running mates of the surveyed minor parties are usually political novices and thus lack the political clout required to invigorate third-party political campaigns. For instance, the 2016 PPP vice presidential nominee, Ms. Brigitte Dzogbenuku, a former beauty queen, was described by some interviewees as a political novice and weak addition to Dr Nduom's candidature; likewise, the PNC's Hassan Ayariga's running mate, Helen Sanorita Dzatugbe Matervi, in the 2012 polls. Also, Edward Mahama who has been five times presidential nominee of the PNC has changed running mates several times, yet none of them is a household name in Ghana's party politics. Similarly, CPP's vice presidential nominees since the 2000 election could not be described as candidates with requisite political clout needed to invigorate the minor party's campaign. As ticket splitting and voting based on candidate personality is gradually becoming a normal trend of voting behavior among Ghanaian electorate (Agomor et al 2020), the minor parties stand a chance to enhance their electoral prospects if they field candidates who command voter appeal. However, as one political scientist puts it: "the caliber of their candidates, organizational and campaign deficiencies are the real reasons for minor party failures in Ghana" (Field interview 2021).

5.3.2.5 Lack of Inter-Minor Party Coordination

Inter-party cooperation among ideologically similar minor parties is vital to their electoral viability (see Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2017; Ishiyama 2009). Nevertheless, findings from this study show that the minor parties rarely coordinate their campaign efforts despite their shared ideology. Whilst both the CPP and the PNC ideologically identify with the socialist philosophy of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the country's first president; the PPP also subscribes to "social liberalism" yet with Nkrumahist lineage since its founding members are mainly former CPP stalwarts who seceded alongside with Dr. Nduom in 2012. As a matter of fact, the founder of the PPP was a former Member of Parliament on the ticket of the CPP, and also the 2008 Presidential Candidate of the CPP. Notwithstanding their shared ideology, there is very little collaboration between these three minor parties, either in the form of electoral alliance or strategic nomination to improve their electoral fortunes.

During the 2004 Ghanaian general election for instance, the PNC and the CPP together with another Nkrumahist minor party (i.e., the Great Consolidated Popular Party) attempted an electoral coalition but the CPP at the eleventh-hour pulled out of what later became known as the Grand Coalition, due to misapprehension and lack of cohesion. Several similar efforts by the PNC and the CPP to merge have also failed in recent times due to personality conflict, factionalism and lack of compromise. As one interviewee maintained, “disunity and rancorous fragmentation have been the bane of the Nkrumahists parties”. She adds that, over years “the leaderships of both the CPP and the PNC have not demonstrated enough commitment towards the Nkrumahists unification, yet it remains vital to their common success in current Ghanaian politics” (Field Interview, media practitioner 2021).

Also, another interviewee noted, “there seem to be a kind of power play among the minor parties as each strives to assert itself as the dominant third force” in Ghanaian politics. Following its noble third place in presidential elections consecutively (i.e., 2012 and 2016), the PPP appears to have attained a “big brother” status among the minor parties. As the PPP appears to assert itself as the largest third party in Ghana, the CPP and the PNC however hold themselves as traditional parties which have been in existence since the inauguration of Ghana’s Fourth Republic. This posturing somewhat undermines efforts towards electoral coalition among these parties. Strikingly, the relationship between the CPP and PPP remains quite frosty since the latter’s secession in 2012. As these three minor parties appear to battle among themselves for influence, at any slightest opportunity, they choose to fraternize with the major parties. However, such minor party alliance with the major parties has only a short-term significance, with grave long-term ruins for the minor parties. For instance, in a compromise deal with the CPP and the PNC, the major party NPP did not nominate candidates in four constituencies namely, Sissala East, Komenda-Edina-Eguafo-Abirem (KEEA), Ellembelle, and Evalue-Gwira during the 2004 parliamentary elections to aid the ticket of the two minor parties. Notwithstanding the fact that the minor parties won in all the four constituencies, this study agrees with Kwofie and Bob-Milliar (2017) that the then governing NPP however became the ultimate beneficiary of these alliances in the long-run. All the minor party nominees who won their parliamentary seats on the magnanimity of the NPP aligned with the majority NPP throughout their parliamentary tenure, and very often supported the majority NPP

positions in the fourth parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. Also, through such electoral alliances, the major party NPP subsequently poached into its folds the beneficiary minor party parliamentarians. A classic example is Freddie Blay, who finally resigned from the CPP to join the NPP and rose through the NPP's rank to become its National Chairman. Kojo Armah of CPP and Moses Dani Baah of PNC, both beneficiaries of the 2004 compromise deal, in the Ellembele and Sissala East constituencies respectively were also wooed to support the NPP's nominee in the 2008 presidential election. Thus, as the minor parties are disinclined to building effective coalitions among themselves, their penchant for building coalition with major parties has proven to be counter-productive in the long-run, occasioning in poaching which further weakens their platforms.

5.3.2.6 Ideological Purity

While ideological fluidity permits a political party to espouse and campaign for electoral support on a diverse range of issues, the desire to seek ideological purity restrains political parties from reaching out to mass public (see Neville-Shepard 2019). Reflecting Neville-Shepard (2019), findings from this study shows that the CPP and the PNC lose broad electoral appeal among the Ghanaian electorate by seeking ideological purity as Nkrumahist parties. Indeed, the avowed commitment of both CPP and PNC to retain the Nkrumahist outlook causes them to lose broad electoral support as they appeal to only a minute segment of the Ghanaian voting public.

Some of the interviewees were particularly critical of the 'modern' CPP ascribing to an ideology that can hardly be reminisced by the current generation of Ghanaian voters. As one interviewee remarked:

It's always not clear in their campaign, what exactly the PNC and the CPP intend to do should they win power. You only hear them talk of what Dr. Nkrumah did in the 1960s and that Ghanaians should vote for them. There is so much overreliance on Nkrumah's legacy by these two political parties. Who really cares about Nkrumahism these days? The point I'm making is that those two political parties [CPP and PNC] have simply been too narrowed in their orientation, making it very difficult to attract even floating voters (Field Interview, CSO 3, 2021).

Another interviewee also argued:

the Nkrumahist minor parties will continue to lose broad support as long as they continue to seek ideological purity and reject reforms. They are to rebrand if they really want to be relevant. Yes, because even if Dr. Kwame Nkrumah should be alive today to contest election in Ghana under the current Fourth Republic on the ticket of any political party other than the NPP or the NDC, he will lose. Nkrumahism has outlived its relevance and the parties who claim to be Nkrumahist must rebrand or as well forget winning elections. That is not to say Dr Nkrumah is not popular. No!, that is not what I mean. However, his political philosophy is no longer appealing to the current generation of Ghanaian electorate, particularly the youths (Field Interview, Media Practitioner 2021).

Thus, according to the interviewees, the failure of both the CPP and the PNC to revolutionize their avowed Nkrumahist political orientation to meet the aspirations of contemporary Ghanaian politics cost them substantial electoral support. This is particularly so as the majority of contemporary Ghanaian electorate identify less with Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and his political philosophy (i.e., Nkrumahism) owing to the youthfulness of the demography of the current Ghanaian voter population (see Appendix F: Age Distribution of the 2020 Ghanaian Voters' Register), as such many did not experience Nkrumah's regimes during the 1950/60s.

Moreover, in Ghana where the electorate are generally non-ideological, the modest ideological differences that exist are accommodated by the two major parties - the NDC and the NPP. Whereas the NDC has taken over the socialist leaning of Dr. Nkrumah, the NPP has anchored on the liberal capitalist philosophy of the Danquah-Busia tradition (see Lindberg & Morrison 2005). Notwithstanding this ideological encampment, the major political parties occasionally traverse ideologically,²⁰ in order to attract persuadable Ghanaian voters, who constitute almost 27% of the Ghanaian voting population (see Kpessa-Whyte 2021). Nevertheless, the CPP and PNC are too conservatively ideological in outlook and this does not seem to augur well for these two minor parties, in their quest to make any meaningful electoral inroads among these persuadable voters.

²⁰ It is not uncommon to see the NDC, which claims to be a social democratic party championing capitalist policies such privatization and divestiture of state assets, whilst the NPP which claims to be a liberal capitalist implementing some form of socialist policies, like the Free Senior High School Education policy and free maternal healthcare.

5.3.2.7 Major Party Stratagems

The study identified a number of stratagems often deployed by the two major parties in Ghana to de-legitimatize (weaken) minor parties' platform. These include the co-option of minor party agendas, infiltration and poaching of minor parties' members and candidates. Both the NPP and the NDC (the two major parties in Ghana) were accused of co-opting some minor parties' agendas onto their platforms to undermine their electoral support. As one interviewee noted; "let a minor party introduce something novel in our electoral politics ...be assured the NDC or the NPP will adopt and make it as if it is originally theirs... they even copy party slogans" (Field data 2021). For instance, during the 2008 electioneering campaign, the CPP came up with the slogan "yeresesa mu", a local parlance translated literally to mean "we are changing hands". As this slogan resonated very well with the Ghanaian electorate, the 2008 Atta-Mills' Presidential Campaign of the NDC hurriedly adopted it; depriving the CPP of its utility. Indeed, by that "call for change", the NDC won the 2008 polls in a run-off election to unseat the incumbent NPP. As one CPP activist highlighted: "the change we sought in the 2008 election with our slogan "yeresesa mu", rather yielded to the NDC because they [the NDC] trumpeted louder the slogan more than the CPP who originated it" (Field data, 2021).

Quite significantly, this study's finding further revealed that the major parties sometimes undercut minor parties' success by co-opting their key policy commitment. Interviewees, for instance, contended that the PNC was the first political party in Ghana to moot the idea of a National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) as a means to address the then "cash and carry system" of healthcare delivery in Ghana. However, this policy proposal was coopted and implemented by the John Kufuor- led NPP government in the year 2003, with the passage of the National Health Insurance Scheme Act, Act 650 of 2003. An official of the PNC explained that the cooption and the subsequent implementation of the NHIS²¹ idea by the NPP government, and its wide utility and popularity short-changed the PNC in the next general election which

²¹ The National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) is a health financing mechanism which enable subscribers to access healthcare without the need to pay out-of-pocket at the point of service. This replaced the then "cash and carry" system of healthcare delivery which made health care inaccessible by many Ghanaians at the time, due to non-affordability. In fact, this was a huge challenge for majority of the Ghanaian people.

was scheduled in December 2004. This is because, according to the interviewee, the main campaign agenda of the PNC, which was a pledge to reform healthcare delivery in Ghana, had been co-opted and implemented by the incumbent NPP. This finding somewhat validates John Hicks' claim: "Let a third party once demonstrate that votes are to be made by adopting a certain demand, then one or other of the mainstream parties can be trusted to absorb the new doctrine" (Hicks 1993 as cited Rosenstone et al 1996 1996, p. 8). In this case, the new idea or doctrine was the innovative way to deal with the issue of the "cash and carry system" of the Ghanaian healthcare delivery at the time.

Some interviewees from the PPP, likewise, accused the NPP of co-opting its idea of popular election of District Chief Executives (DCEs)²² during the 2016 electioneering; only to abandon same after winning the 2016 elections. According to an official of the PPP:

The NPP did not believe in getting DCEs elected. However, recognizing the popularity of PPP's idea of direct election of DCEs, as captured in our ten-point agendas, hurriedly they co-opted it just to attract voter support. I'm not surprised the process of the referendum was abruptly abandoned (PPP official 2).

While the major party NPP equally promised among others, the election of the DCEs during the run up to the 2016 general elections, many of the PPP officials strongly maintained that "the PPP was to first to propose the election of DCEs in 2012" (Field data 2021). Hence, in the view of the interviewees, the NPP only co-opted the PPP's proposal as an attempt to respond to the policy's popularity. This deed of the major party NPP, as averred by interviewees (particularly PPP official 2), lend credence to Lee's (2012) notion that major parties sometimes take preemptive actions to undermine minor parties' platform. Indeed, the *GhanaWeb* on May 17, 2011, under the news headline "*NDC & NPP Are Copy Cats*" published thus:

The CPP has been the worst sufferer in all these. It will be recalled that as early as 1992 even when the CPP remained unjustifiably banned in Ghana, the National Democratic Congress stole all CPP's colors and only added black. Again, in the run-up to the 2008 general elections, the CPP's '*Yeresesam*' slogan was stolen with impunity by the National Democratic Congress. The NPP has been no different. Nana Addo and his NPP are trying to steal yet another idea thought of and arrived by the CPP. He is saying the Junior High level education is going to be reviewed such that JHS [Junior High School]

²² Known in other jurisdiction as mayors, DCEs in Ghana are the political representatives of the President of the Republic at the Local Government level.

students would be passed on to the Senior High level after a simple assessment. This is a CPP policy on education (GhanaWeb 2011).

Beside the co-optation of policy ideas, campaign messages and slogans, the two major parties in Ghana also co-opt minor parties' top-notch politicians into their folds, which portends negative implication on the minor parties' development. Interviewees made copious references to the appointments of PNC's former flagbearer, Dr. Edward Mahama, and the former Chairman, Ahmed Ramadan, as ambassadors by the ruling NPP administration as evidence of poaching. By the appointments of these two top PNC's functionaries in 2017, the PNC was already demobilized ahead of the 2020 general election. As one interviewee observed; "these two top PNC politicians were conspicuously missing from the recent 2020 PNC campaign". Indeed, in the opinion of a PNC official:

The dominant parties, all of them, try to infiltrate and poach some of our fine members, particularly our experienced politicians. The net effect of such tendencies on political mobilization is the lack of allegiance to the PNC (Field interview 2021).

Highlighting the culture of infiltration of minor parties' camps by the major parties, a CPP stalwart and presidential candidate hopeful, also averred:

The CPP has been weakened systematically and continuously by the frailty in leadership where those who have led the party have subsumed our objective under the whims of other political parties (Field interview 2021).

From the above excerpt, it is inferred that the leadership of the minor parties are complicit in the co-optation agenda of the major parties. Consistent with this finding, it is unsurprising that a presidential candidate hopeful of CPP, during the CPP 2020 flagbearership contest campaigned with the refrain "I will not sell the CPP to the NPP and NDC like others have done in the past" (Dapatem 2020). This averment confirms interviewees' perception that some minor parties' leadership do work in the shadow of the NPP or NDC owing to infiltration.

Indeed, infiltration of minor parties' platforms by the two dominant parties is a real challenge to the minor parties' development. This is perpetuated through sponsorship and patronage. As a matter of fact, many of the interviewees alleged that the NPP and the NDC habitually sponsor some candidates of minor parties during their party internal contests. The two dominant parties do that to establish allies within minor parties' front and also to maintain influence in the political landscape.

Discussing infiltration within the PNC, it is interesting to note that most interviewees singled out the conduct of former General Secretary Atik Mohammed and National Chairman Bernard Mornah as evidence of infiltration. As one interviewee observed:

Those days were really interesting in the PNC. Whilst Chairman Bernard Mornah was busily defending the NDC, his embattled General Secretary, Atik Mohammed would also put up a spirited defense for the NPP. It was always difficult to decipher if they ever agreed on anything as the PNC's position on a national issue (Field interview, CSO 2021).

The above observation is further corroborated by a member of the PNC:

Just look at how Atik Mohamed and Bernard Mornah led the PNC. So chaotic. General Secretary and National Chairman are always on the opposite ends. If you were in the country, you may recall that the Chairman [Bernard Mornah] together with the NDC on one side formed the so-called Inter-Party Resistance against the Compilation of a New Voter Register, whereas Atik Mohammed [the former General Secretary] and other PNC members teamed up with the NPP under the auspice of Mass Action Committee, to back the Electoral Commission's call for a new voters' register (Field data 2021).

Another powerful device used by the NDC and NPP to undermine the ability of minor parties to be electorally successful is to play upon the tendency of the electorate to vote strategically, and avoid wasting their votes on minor party candidates. Indeed, many of the minor party candidates interviewed, believed that the "wasted vote" propaganda often proclaimed by major party campaigners weakens their chance at the polls. As one interviewee enunciated:

...the major parties use the wasted vote argument to lure some of our members from voting for us. Both NPP and NDC campaigners are quick to inform electorate that if you vote for the PPP, you have just wasted your votes. Even though our policies are good, unfortunately the electorate sometimes join the bandwagon. If you look at our 2020 campaign, we spent quite some time trying to correct such impressions.... that a vote for PPP is not wasted but it is rather a vote for yourself, for job creation, improvement in healthcare delivery and quality education. But hey, I'm pretty sure ...because of their loudness, some of our supporters end up voting for them ... to avoid wasting their votes...as they say (Field interview PPP official 2021).

The application of the rational choice theory is inherent in this psychological mechanism that dissuades the electorate from voting for minor parties. The effect can be categorized into two distinct phenomena: the avoidance of "wasting" one's vote and avoidance of "the spoiler effect" where one's least favorite candidate is elected through defection (see Aldrich 1993). This aspect of the research finding reflects earlier studies which argue that adept major party campaigners try to influence voting behavior, particularly in plurality rule system, by persuading electorate that a vote for a minor

party would simply be wasted (see Kroeber et al. 2021; Panzer 2013; Kirch 2013; Fisher 1973).

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored minor parties' drive for electoral competition in Ghana's plurality based two-party system, as well as the constraints that limit their electoral viability. This was in direct response to the first and second research objectives of this study. Based on the analysis, despite the minor parties' limited or non-existent chance of winning elections in Ghana, the rationale for competing is largely driven by affordability of the ticket, opportunities for party patronage, ideological inclination, pursuit of political recognition, among others. This chapter, however, demonstrated that the minor parties are typically constrained by both institutional and non-institutional impediments, which weaken their ability to be electorally successful. The institutional constraints, include, *inter alia*, constitutional restraints, campaign finance laws, ballot access requirements, and the plurality-based nature of the Ghanaian electoral system. The non-institutional impediments were exogenous and endogenous features of the minor parties, which inhibit their development and electoral viability. These non-institutional constraints relate to the individual minor parties' leadership capacity, financial handicap, organizational and campaign deficiencies, pursuit of ideological purity, and major party stratagems against minor parties.

In the subsequent chapter, which is the last of the empirical chapters, the relevance of minor parties to Ghana's democratic development is analyzed.

CHAPTER SIX

DEMOCRATIC RELEVANCE OF MINOR PARTIES IN GHANA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the empirical relevance of the surveyed minor parties to Ghana's democratic governance. This relates to the third research objective of this study: 'Explore the contribution of minor parties to Ghana's democratic governance'. To recap, 'democratic governance' is operationalized in this study as consisting of five key elements: a political system for choosing government through free and fair elections; the active participation of the people in political life; transparent and accountable government; protection of the fundamental rights of all citizens; and a rule of law, in which laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens (see Etuk & Aweting 2020; Diamond & Morlino 2005; 2016). As with the preceding empirical chapter (i.e., Chapter 5), various themes generated from the field interviews are analyzed and synthesized with extant literature to address the question of how, if at all, the minor parties in Ghana contribute to Ghana's democratic development.

6.2. Why Minor Parties Matter in Ghana's Emergent Two-Party System

6.2.1 Augmenting Political Participation

It is generally acknowledged in democracy studies that a vibrant democracy depends on the equal and active participation of all citizens (Etuk & Aweting 2020; Luna 2020; Grenade 2020; Doorenspleet 2019; Diamond & Morlino 2016). Findings from this study indicate that minor party activism in Ghana provides considerable space and alternate opportunities for citizens engagement and participation in political life as all three minor parties under inquiry undertake political and electoral mobilization activities. As is to be expected, many interviewees observed that the minor parties typically appeal to those in the electorate whose political preferences are different from the two main parties – the NDC and the NPP. Thus, by competing in elections, the minor parties offer the Ghanaian electorate with alternate electoral choices so that people who are discontented with the major parties – the NPP and the NDC – would

have a cause to participate in electoral politics; either as candidates or voters. Thus, notwithstanding their limited electoral support, the minor parties make elections in Ghana relevant for these group of electorates who are uninterested in major parties as some of these voters might potentially abstain from exercising their political right of franchise if minor parties were absent on the ballot. As one interviewee noted:

The willingness of some Ghanaian citizens to form political parties outside of the mainstream parties, and mobilize people to join enlivens participatory democracy in the country. Through their rallies and conventions people get to participate in political life as party supporters and leaders (Field interview, CSO 3, 2021).

Another interviewee also opined:

Almost half a million voters may have refused to assert their democratic right of participating in the recent 2020 general elections but for the participation of these smaller parties. I say so because the total vote share of the minor parties in the 2020 presidential election was 489, 088 votes. This may appear to you as quite insignificant, but it shows clearly that there are electorates who do not like the NPP and the NDC for various reasons. But for the minor parties' participation, they may not have voted altogether (Field interview, EMB Rep 2021).

From the above interview data, it is plausible to argue that in spite of the electoral weakness of the minor parties in Ghana, they mobilize a fair number of Ghanaian voters to participate in the democratic process of elections. Indeed, one minor party official highlighted thus:

As part of our mobilization strategy, we work with our regional, constituency and branch executives to make sure all eligible voters, particularly our loyal and potential supporters are registered to vote; have the education they need to cast a valid vote, and most importantly try to get them out to vote on election day (Field interview 2021).

A direct impact of the minor parties' electoral participation therefore is that they offer an outlet for discontented Ghanaian electorates who otherwise may not have participated in democratic politics to do so due to the alternate choices they provide at the voting booth. This has the merit of enhancing voter participation and turnout in general elections. Voter turnout is a significant dimension of democratic quality and an indirect measure of popular legitimacy of democratic election (Lindberg 2006; Lijphart 1999). This finding lends support to Lindberg's (2006) claim that unimpeded electoral participation of opposition parties, including minor parties, has a positive influence on voter turnout and the general legitimacy of democratic election. The findings further support Demirkol (2019) and Herzog (1987), who in their separate work, argued that notwithstanding the electoral unimportance of minor parties, their platforms serve as extensions of the electoral base.

6.2.2 Voter Education

It is generally agreed that an informed citizenry is at the heart of a robust democracy; and voter education forms an essential component of the basic civic/political education required by democratic citizens to enable their active and well-informed participation in the democratic process (Mann 2018; Malatras 2017; Paletz et al n.d.). Related to the preceding theme – *Augmenting Political Participation* – interviewees also identified that the surveyed minor parties contribute meaningfully to voter education in Ghana. Whilst it is generally acknowledged that civic and voter education in Ghana is within the constitutional mandate of the Electoral Commission of Ghana and the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE)²³, more than half of the interviewees observed that the surveyed minor parties, though not unlike the major parties, play a supportive role in the dissemination of electoral information. In his own words, an interviewee from the Electoral Commission opined that “all the political parties in one way or the other help in the dissemination of electoral information during general elections” (Field interview, 2021). He explained that, as part of campaign strategies, the parties adopt varied methods such as door-to-door canvassing, public service announcements and distribution of party leaflets with contents such as: (i) voter registration requirements and processes; (ii) identification of registration/voting centers; and (iv) how to mark a valid ballot on voting day.

A minor party chairperson also stated:

Despite our limited resources, we still allocate funds for voter education. We go all-out to ensure that at least our loyal and potential supporters are registered to vote, and have the education they need to cast a valid vote (Field interview 2021).

Similarly, another minor party official noted thus:

We do educate the public on the need to register as a voter, once eligible; and also, how to cast a valid ballot, particularly in our strongholds. I mean, where we think we can win some seats safely. Because we realized that sometimes even rejected ballots²⁴ are more than our candidates' votes tally in certain polling stations (Field interview 2021).

Whilst it is commendable that the surveyed minor parties contribute towards providing voter education in Ghana, the interview data above suggests that there is a difference

²³ See Articles 45 and 233 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana

²⁴ A ballot that cannot be counted as a valid vote cast for one or more of a range of reasons, including being unmarked, marked in a way that does not clearly indicate the choice of the voter, or is marked in such a way that the voter could be identified.

in the kind of voter education one should expect from a political party and that of a neutral state agency such as the NCCE or the Electoral Commission. Whilst the state agencies' voter education outreach programs are generic and nonpartisan (with a focus on how to vote rather than whom to vote for), the voter education provided by the surveyed parties is more often than not focused on maximizing votes cast in their favor. This is however not too surprising because, like any other political party, the surveyed parties have a selfish interest in reaching out to voters, and thus focus mainly on their perceived supporters.

It is also evident from the field interviews that the ability of the surveyed parties to embark on voter education is of course resource related. Thus, due to resource constraints, the minor parties are often unable to carry out this complimentary function extensively as they often concentrate their efforts in only a few constituencies where they believe their support is concentrated. In spite of their skewed focus, the surveyed minor parties complement the efforts by the mandated state institutions in educating Ghanaian electorate, at least, on how to cast a valid ballot on the day of voting. This contribution of the minor parties is particularly important because, as Gyampo (2009, p 282) argued, "the high incidence of rejected ballots that have so far characterized elections in Ghana if not checked, poses a severe threat to ...democratic consolidation in Ghana". Especially where sometimes "these rejected ballot papers have amounted to huge percentages of the votes in excess of the total number of votes garnered by some [minor] political parties" (Gyampo 2009, p. 283). Indeed, the interest of the minor parties in voter education despite their meagre resources is reflected in the fact that they may be the end beneficiaries if electorate are able to mark their ballot correctly during elections. This is because, as studies show (see Gyampo 2009), besides rural illiterate voters who are predisposed to cast an invalid ballot inadvertently, a significant segment of the Ghanaian electorate who are inclined to cast an invalid vote deliberately are those who do not wish to vote for a major party but again believe their votes for a minor party may still not propel the latter to victory and thus willfully cast an invalid vote. Hence, the quest to gain some likely votes by helping to reduce the incidence of rejected ballots plausibly explains the surveyed minor parties' engagement in voter education in Ghana during electioneering.

6.2.3 Augmenting Political Inclusion

Political inclusion is considered as one of the key goals of modern democratic governance. It refers to the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for marginalized members of society, such as women, people with disabilities (PWDs), and those belonging to other minority groups to fully participate and influence political outcomes (National Democratic Institute n.d.). As findings indicate, all the surveyed minor parties overtly promote political inclusion. The PPP's manifesto, for instance, promises to "build an inclusive society and promote affirmative action for women and PWDs" (PPP 2016, p. 5). Likewise, the CPP vows to "use affirmative action policies to address discrimination against women in all spheres of national life" (CPP 2020 manifesto, p.18). Also, the PNC has since inception emphasized that: "a PNC government will ensure that all obstacles are removed to guarantee women's economic and political empowerment" (see for instance, PNC 2012, p.11). Thus, as part of efforts to augment gender inclusivity in Ghana's democratic politics, the minor parties create opportunities for women to participate even at the upper echelon of political party leadership. As an interviewee broadly observed:

The female voice in the minor parties is quite louder compared to the major parties. The minor parties actually show commitment to women's political empowerment. The CPP, for instance, in recent times has produced two female chairpersons, in the persons of Samia Nkrumah and Nana Frimpomaa Sarpong-Kumankoma, and also the current General Secretary of the CPP is a woman. Currently, all the principal officers of the CPP are all women; the chairperson and the general secretary. The PNC, likewise, has a woman as its General Secretary. A very young and intelligent lady. In fact, none of the major parties here in Ghana give such top party positions to women. At best, it is the Women's Organizer position²⁵, often allotted to women (Field interview, CSO 1, 2021).

Strikingly, the minor party PNC is the first political party in the history of Ghana's Fourth Republic to have nominated a female as its vice-presidential candidate, in the person of Ms. Petra Amegashie, during the 2008 Ghanaian presidential election. The PNC repeated this in the subsequent 2012 presidential election by nominating another female, Ms. Helen Matervi, as a vice presidential candidate to Hassan Ayariga; the PNC's 2012 presidential nominee. The CPP likewise nominated a female, Nana

²⁵ The Women's Organizer is a leadership portfolio in most of the political parties in Ghana. The officer holder is responsible for coordinating the activities of the women's wing of the party, including mobilization of females into the party's membership.

Frimpomaa Sarpong-Kumankoma, for the first time as its vice-presidential candidate in the 2012 election. In similar fashion, the PPP has, since its inception in 2012, always nominated a female to its presidential ticket; either as the vice-presidential candidate or the main presidential candidate²⁶.

The significance of these female nominations by the minor parties to their presidential tickets must be appreciated in context; none of the major parties in Ghana (i.e., the NDC and the NPP) had in any election nominated a female to their presidential ticket until the recent 2020 election when the NDC nominated a female as a vice-presidential candidate for the first time in 28 years of its existence. It is also equally significant to highlight that, until now, no major party in the history of Ghana's democratic practice has nominated a female presidential candidate; but at least three²⁷ of Ghana's minor parties, including the PPP, have nominated female presidential candidates under the Fourth Republic. Hence, at this juncture, it is argued that, the minor parties in Ghana are the pace-setters in recognizing the competences of Ghanaian women as potential "presidential asset". Based on this *prima facie* evidence, it is further reasoned that the minor parties seem to demonstrate an overtly higher commitment in terms of promoting female presidential candidacy, in particular, and women's political empowerment in Ghana, in general, as compared to the two major parties. Though the mere inclusion of females on party list does not necessarily translate into gender-responsive policymaking at all times, women's active political inclusion as being promoted by the minor parties in Ghana is particularly essential as it helps advance gender equity goals and the course of Ghana's democratic development (Dar & Shairgojri 2022; Bauer & Darkwah 2022; Okonkwo 2022; Ballington 2012).

Furthermore, by way of promoting political inclusion of PWDs in Ghana, two of the parties under inquiry – specifically the CPP and the PPP – have since 2008 and 2012 respectively, always developed braille versions of their party's manifestoes to make their platforms accessible to the visually impaired. Findings also revealed that all the

²⁶ During the 2012 presidential election, Ms. Eva Lokko was nominated as the vice-presidential candidate to Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom of the PPP; whereas Ms Brigitte Dzogbenuku was the PPP's vice-presidential candidate in 2016 and subsequently became the presidential candidate for the 2020 polls on PPP's ticket.

²⁷ The other two minor political parties that have also fielded a female presidential candidate are the Ghana Freedom Party (in the 2020 election) and the National Democratic Party (in the 2016 election).

surveyed minor parties halve their filing fees for PWDs, women and youths contesting internal party positions and general elections. Whilst these course of actions by the minor parties, to some extent, augment inclusivity in party leadership and democratic politics generally, it has not led to more PWDs, females, nor youths being elected to parliament on a minor party's ticket. A common concern expressed by some minor party officials, during field interviews, pointed to the reluctance of women and PWDs, to exploit this affirmative measure instituted by the minor parties. However, it must be pointed out that the 50% discount as support on the filing fee for the identified marginalized population within the minor parties who wish to contest elections pales in comparison to the huge expenditure associated with electioneering in Ghana (see Gyeke-Jandoh 2021; WFD & CDD n.d.); and this might be the reason for the seeming lack of interest in the discount policy. Howbeit, it is worth-noting that the CPP has in two consecutive elections (i.e., the 2016 and 2020 Ghanaian presidential elections) nominated a PWD as its presidential candidate. Indeed, the 2016/2020 presidential nominee of the CPP, Mr. Ivor Kobina Greenstreet, a lawyer by profession, is the first and the only known PWD to have run for the presidency in Ghana. Altogether, these findings at least demonstrate that the minor parties in Ghana appear committed to enhancing inclusivity in Ghana's democratic politics. According to the National Democratic Institute (n.d.), democracy is more likely to thrive when all diverse members of society are empowered to participate and influence political outcomes without having to suffer bias or reprisal. Hence, the minor parties' efforts towards promoting political inclusivity are crucial to the sustenance of Ghana's emergent democracy.

6.2.4 Parliamentary Representation

Parliament is an important institution of democracy due to its representational, legislative and oversight functions (Coghill et al 2012). Findings indicate that since the inception of Ghana's Fourth Republic in 1993, there have been a total of twenty-two (22) representatives elected to Ghana's parliament on the minor parties' ticket (See Table 6.1). Hence, in spite of the minor parties limited electoral success (as discussed under Chapter 5 of this thesis), they contribute to parliamentary compositions under the Fourth Republic of Ghana. Noteworthy, the PNC and the CPP have jointly accounted for all the 22 minor party parliamentary representations under Ghana's

Fourth Republic, with each party producing 11 parliamentarians each (see Table 6.1). These representations occurred during the Second Parliament through to the Sixth Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic. The PPP remains the only minor party under inquiry that has not gained parliamentary representation since its inauguration in 2012.

Table 6.1: Parliamentary Representation of Minor Parties under Ghana's Fourth Republic, 1993-2021

Name of Parliament	Date of Inauguration	PNC	CPP	PPP	Total
1 st Parliament	7 January 1993	Elections Boycotted	Nonexistent	Nonexistent	0
2 nd Parliament	7 January 1997	1	5	Nonexistent	6
3 rd Parliament	7 January 2001	3	1	Nonexistent	4
4 th parliament	7 January 2005	4	3	Nonexistent	7
5 th Parliament	7 January 2009	2	1	Nonexistent	3
6 th Parliament	7 January 2013	1	1**	0	2
7 th Parliament	7 January 2017	0	0	0	0
8 th Parliament	7 January 2021	0	0	0	0
Total		11	11	0	22

** Obtained through a bye-election

Source: Author's Compilation, 2022

As observed in Table 6.1, the minor parties' parliamentary representation peaked²⁸ at a total of 7 membership during the Fourth Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic, as the PNC and the CPP gained 4 and 3 seats respectively. However, this represented only 3% of the then 230-seater legislature. The First, Seventh and the current Eighth Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana did not have any parliamentarian from the minor parties as no minor parties won a seat in the general elections that occasioned those parliaments.

Notwithstanding the relatively little parliamentary representation from the minor parties under the Fourth Republic of Ghana, findings suggest that the minor party

²⁸ A plausible explanation is that during the 2004 Ghanaian general elections, which occasioned the 4th Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic, based on a compromised deal with the CPP and the PNC, the major party NPP did not nominate parliamentary candidates in four constituencies *viz.* the Sissala East, KEEA, Ellembelle, and Evalue-Gwira, in support of the parliamentary candidacies of the two minor parties (i.e., the CPP and the PNC) in those constituencies. As a result, all these four constituencies' seats were won by the minor parties. Whilst the CPP secured the KEEA, Evalue-Gwira and Ellembelle seats; the PNC won the Sissala East in addition to 3 other seats. Bob-Milliar (2019) has explained the nature of these electoral alliances in the context of party patronage.

parliamentarians have been quite instrumental in parliamentary affairs. Beside their routine contributions to parliamentary debates and legislations, some have played key roles in the nation's parliament during their parliamentary tenure. For instance, Fredrick Blay, a CPP parliamentarian, served in parliamentary leadership as a Deputy Speaker of Parliament, and at one point, the chairperson of the Appointments Committee of Parliament during the 2nd through to the 4th Parliaments of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. Others such as PNC's Issifu Azumah (then MP for West Mamprusi) and CPP's Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom, served on prominent committees of parliament such as the Public Account Committee (of the 3rd Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic), and the Finance Committee (of the 4th Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic) respectively. John Ndebugre (of the PNC) and Kojo Armah (of the CPP), also served on the Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee of the 4th Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic. (See Appendix I for a detailed list of minor parties' parliamentarians and committees served during their parliamentary tenure).

As a member of the Constitutional, Legal & Parliamentary Affairs Committee of the 4th Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic, the PNC member of parliament for Zebilla Constituency, John Ndebugre, for instance, fervidly debated in favor of (and supported) the passage of the highly controversial²⁹ Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill (ROPAB) despite his party's (i.e., PNC's) opposition to the bill (*Daily Graphic* 11 February 2006, p. 13). The Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 699 of 2006 amended the PNDC Law 248³⁰, and extended voting right to diasporan Ghanaian citizens, at least 18 years old and of sound mind, to vote whilst abroad in Ghanaian public elections and referenda. The three CPP parliamentarians in the 4th Parliament, namely Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom, Fredrick Blay and Kojo Armah, similarly garnered support for the passage of ROPAB (Vuasi 2006). Though the governing NPP had the needed majority to pass its legislations, it is argued that, to a

²⁹ ROPAB is noted for the controversy it generated in Ghana around 2006 due to the stiff opposition mounted by the then largest opposition NDC as well as some opposition groups; asserting that oversea voting by Diasporan Ghanaian citizens, which the said bill espouses, cannot be credibly administered and monitored. The opposition NDC thus led several street protests in Accra against the bill amidst several days of parliamentary boycott (starting 9th February to 2nd March 2006) by NDC parliamentarians.

³⁰ This law (i.e., PNDC Law 248) which was in existing, limited voting by Ghanaians living abroad to only citizens employed by the government of Ghana or serving in the United Nations, and government-funded (international) students.

very large extent, the PNC/ CPP parliamentary group's support for ROPAB helped to counterbalance the minority NDC parliamentary caucus's belligerent opposition to the bill, thereby aiding the NPP majority caucus to effectively pass ROPAB on 23rd February 2006 (Vuasi 2006). Other Acts of Parliament that have equally benefited from the support of the PNC/ CPP parliamentary group include *inter alia*; Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715), Ghana's Human Trafficking Act, 2005 (Act 694), and the Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732) (see GhanaWeb 2004; Avenor 2017).

Whilst some of this study's participants argued that the parliamentary competence of some of the PNC and the CPP parliamentarians resulted in their re-elections for multiple terms, a repeated theme in the field interviews was a sense amongst some interviewees that "the PNC and the CPP parliamentarians were often unable to sufficiently assert themselves as real opposition members of parliament" during their parliamentary tenure. This impression is likely as a result of the fact that routinely both PNC and CPP parliamentarians have often elected to transact parliamentary business (i.e., align and work) with the majority caucus in parliament (which always happens to be the governing party), rather than the minority caucus (which always happens to be the main opposition party)³¹. Thus, by opting to align with governing parties, they tend to lose their assertiveness and the oppositional deportment as expected of typical opposition members of parliament. According to a key interviewee from a civil society organization in Ghana, the motivation of the minor party parliamentarians to always align with the majority caucus "is to exact patronage from the governing party" at the expense of serving as critical opposition to governing parties. This finding notwithstanding, most interviewees maintained that, between the Second and the Sixth Parliaments of the Fourth Republic of Ghana, there was a real depiction of multi-party legislature as envisaged by the Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana due to the minor parties' representation. This, according to some interviewees, somewhat enhanced ideological diversity in parliament³², and as well moderated major party

³¹ The Standing Orders of Parliament of Ghana strictly divide the House into majority-minority caucuses, and an elected member of parliament is required to align him/herself with either side of the divide for the purposes of conducting parliamentary business.

³² The four political parties (i.e., PNC, CPP, NPP and NDC) who were represented in parliament professed different political ideologies. Whilst both the PNC and the CPP are considered Nkrumahists, with a socialist and pan-African inclination, the NPP, an offshoot of the Danquah-Busia tradition represented a center-right position of the ideological spectrum. The NDC, on the other hand, is a social democratic party with a revolutionary ancestry.

polarization that often characterize two-party systems (see Goff & Lee 2019). As one interviewee highlighted:

During our days in parliament, though members from the Nkrumahist minor parties often opted to do business with the majority side, yet they were somehow like a linkage between both sides whenever there was a deadlock (Field interview, former MP cum major party official, 2022).

Inferentially, the influence of the minor parties on Ghana's parliamentary democracy is revealed in their ability to have served as an essential antidote to major party polarization in Ghana's parliament. This observation further resonates with a remark by another interviewee who opined that:

If the smaller parties were represented in the current parliament, perhaps we may have, as a nation, avoided the frequent legislation stalemates that have characterized the work of the current Parliament. The era of the passage of ROPAB, in 2006, was very turbulent in parliament yet no fisticuffs on the floor of the House (Field interview, CSO 2, 2021).

The current 8th Parliament of the Fourth Republic of Ghana suffers frequent stalemates due to its split nature with the two major parties (i.e., the NDC and the NPP) having 137 members each out of the total 275 seats; with no minor party parliamentarian but one independent member. Between November 2021 and March 2022 for instance, government's proposed tax on electronic transactions sharply divided parliament for months as the two main political parties in the legislature fiercely took entrenched positions on the proposed bill, resulting in an actual brawl on the floor of parliament on Monday December 20, 2021 (Benson 2022; Onukwue 2021). Again, it was this same partisan posture in parliament that resulted in the initial rejection of the 2022 Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government of Ghana, and as well as the legislative violence that occurred in parliament on the eve of 7th January 2021 during the election of the Speaker of the 8th Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic (Africanews 2021). This growing trend of major party polarization in the Ghanaian parliament, which is partly as a result of the lack of minor party parliamentary representation, raises apprehensions about the quality of representation and governance in the country. Indeed, a recent publication by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in South Africa indicates that Ghana's split parliament has failed to meet public expectations. According to the report, despite the prospects of strengthening the legislature to check on the executive, the equal split in Ghana's 8th Parliament has rather occasioned adversarial relations between the two parties, which often times

result in legislative violence (Aikins 2023). The Second Deputy Speaker of the 8th Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic, Mr. Joseph Osei Owusu, has similarly observed that, Ghana's hung parliament has made the legislature less efficient due to lack of cooperation among members of the house, resulting in passage of fewer bills than any other parliament in the Fourth Republic (Ghanaian Times 2023).

This study therefore asserts that the absence of minor parties in the current 8th Parliament, which to some extent, has contributed to Ghana's hung parliament, thus creates a fairly difficult legislative environment for the passage of bills due to the current bipolar partisan parliamentary posturing³³. Based on the foregoing discussion, this study further ratiocinates that having representation from minor parties in parliament helps in building a healthy legislative environment which is vital for democratic governance. This is because, as this study has demonstrated, more often than not, during their parliamentary tenure, the PNC and the CPP parliamentarians cooperated with governing parties to have the adequate parliamentary majority for smooth passage of legislations. Nevertheless, there are also a few instances where, some minor party parliamentarians have dissented (with the majority in parliament) and defended citizens' interests as part of their representational and oversight responsibilities. For instance, in 2008, in spite of his alliance with the NPP majority caucus, Dr Nduom (CPP MP for KEEA) openly opposed and criticized the parliamentary approval of the sale of 70% equity stake of Ghana Telecom to the British telecommunication firm; Vodafone. Dr Nduom had debated that Ghanaians must rather be offered opportunity to own shares in Ghana Telecom by listing it on the Ghana's Stock Exchange rather than offering the 70% equity to an expatriate firm for a meagre 900 million dollars; and thus accused the governing NPP of lack of transparency and corruption in the said transaction (GhanaWeb 2008).

The next section of this study's findings, focuses on how the surveyed minor parties contribute to Ghana's democratic governance by ensuring democratic accountability in Ghana's Fourth Republic.

³³ Parliament dominated by only two political parties which is characterized by a lack of cooperation between the rival parties.

6.2.5 Democratic Accountability

Accountability, whether vertical or horizontal³⁴, is central to democratic governance as it promotes transparency and responsible use of public resources whilst at the same time serves as a constraint on the use of power (Diamond & Morlino 2016; 2005; Lindberg 2013). Findings indicate that the minor parties, through their activism, provide considerable space in the political system for citizens to demand vertical accountability from government. For instance, barely a year after its inauguration, through a press release on 6 March 2013, as Ghana's marked her 56th independence anniversary, the Youth Wing of the PPP demanded accountability as to why the country had not seen much socio-economic development after 56 years of political independence. The 6 March 2013 press statement of the PPP's youth wing reads in part:

It is not amusing that we are celebrating our 56th birthday and we still linger in unstable power supply. No water, no electricity, no jobs for the graduates, coupled with electoral fraud and mass rape of our scarce resources by selfish leaders who pride themselves in saying we have "come a long way". We demand from our leaders to define the so-called "long way" Ghana has come. Why must government officials and appointees enjoy the best of life while the membership of UTAG [University Teacher Association of Ghana] continues to swell [sic] each year? Why do only a few people enjoy the national cake at the expense of the larger society?... It is only right for us to impress upon our leaders, the need for them to be more responsible. They have neglected the constitutional demand bestowed on them by our thumbs for our safety and welfare (PPP Press Statement, March 6, 2013, Accra).

In the main, the PPP's Youth Wing raised pertinent issues of socio-economic national development challenges such as wage inequalities in Ghana's public service, the high rate of graduate unemployment, erratic power supply and poor infrastructural development in the country. Although this study found no record of any direct government response to the aforementioned call for accountability, the PPP's platform afforded a section of some Ghanaian youths belonging to the PPP, who were dissatisfied with the governance of the country, a democratic space to demand answers to the country's under-development as democratic participants.

Similarly, as part of the CPP's efforts to ensure accountable governance and efficient use of public funds, the CPP on 12 June 2022 through a press release on the occasion of the CPP's 73rd anniversary in Accra, called on the Akufo-Addo led NPP government

³⁴ Vertical accountability refers to the ability of persons and groups in a society to hold state institutions answerable, whereas horizontal accountability refers to the ability of the state's institutions to hold one another answerable.

to render a full and detailed account of all funds received as grants to the state towards the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Part of the CPP's press statement reads:

The CPP is asking for accountability of the COVID -19 funds and all donations that have been made to the country in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic. There should be full disclosure on how the COVID largesse has been spent, as Ghanaians have the right to know (CPP press statement, June 12, 2022, Accra)³⁵

Subsequently, the Minister for Finance, on 22 June 2022, rendered an account to the Parliament of Ghana, relating to the receipt and utilization of the COVID-19 funds; first at the instance of parliament and second, partly satisfying the CPP's quest for accountability of the COVID-funds. According to the Minister for Finance, Ken Ofori-Atta, the Government of Ghana mobilized GH¢18.19 billion from various sources including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Union, the Africa Development Bank, and the Bank of Ghana; and out of the GH¢18.19 billion, GH¢12.036 billion was expended for the years 2020 and 2021 to tackle the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ghana (Doudu & Agyeman 2023). Subsequently, the President of the Republic, Nana Akufo-Addo, in a State of the Nation address delivered to parliament on 8 March 2023 also reiterated thus:

It is important to show clearly that the COVID funds were not misused. It is critical that we do not lose the confidence of the people that a crisis that they were led to believe we were all in together was abused for personal gain. Mr. Speaker, it was Government that asked for the COVID funds to be audited, and I can assure this House that nothing dishonourable was done with the COVID funds (President Akufo-Addo, 2023 State of the Nation Address, p. 6)³⁶.

From the foregoing discussion, it is the contention of this study that, although the minority caucus in parliamentary, mainly NDC MPs, had similarly requested for a detailed expenditure of the COVID-19 funds, the CPP's press release style of openly demanding accountability of the COVID-19 funds is worth-emphasizing as it may have potentially contributed to the finance minister's prompt response and the president's further comments on the subject of the COVID-19 funds' utilization. Altogether, it

³⁵ The full copy of the CPP's press release available at <https://ghananewsupdates.com/be-accountable-to-citizens-cpp-to-govt-as-it-marks-73rd-anniversary-politics/> (Accessed August 23, 2022).

³⁶ Message on the State of the Nation by the President of the Republic of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, on Wednesday, 8th March 2023, at Parliament House, Accra. Available at <https://gna.org.gh/2023/03/president-akufo-addos-state-of-the-nation-address-2023-full-text/> (accessed 17 March 2023)

demonstrates the minor party's (i.e., CPP) effort to ensuring accountability and transparency in the usage of public funds by state institutions.

Further findings also indicate that the surveyed minor parties undertake anti-corruption campaigns as part of efforts to ensure accountable governance in Ghana. As an official of the PNC noted; "the PNC continues to create awareness through series of organized platforms for the Ghanaian people to avert their minds and thoughts to the issue of corruption and its adverse socio-economic consequences". An official of the PPP likewise observed that; "within the past few years we have taken the fight against corruption to the people, by making every Ghanaian aware of how corruption is retarding the nation's efforts to develop" (Field interview, PPP 1, 2021). Another PPP official argued further that:

the PPP puts the matter of corruption and its negative impact on national conscience for every Ghanaian to appreciate how corruption impedes the nation's development. The PPP has, solely and collaboratively, organized several anti-corruption campaigns to emphasize responsible governance and the need to protect the public purse (Field interview, PPP Official 2, 2021).

Indeed, between October 2013 and January 2014 alone, the PPP organized three separate anti-corruption demonstrations in three major cities in Ghana *viz.* Accra, Kumasi and Cape Coast (Peacefmonline 2014; Boadu 2013; GhanaWeb 2013). According to media reports, hundreds of Ghanaians joined the PPP-led anti-corruption demonstration in Kumasi, the second largest city in Ghana, on Saturday 23 November 2013. This was the second in the series of three street demonstrations organized by the PPP's anti-corruption campaign coalition (Boadu 2013; GhanaWeb 2013). The first was held in Accra on Thursday 3 October 2013 and moved to Kumasi, and then to Cape Coast on Saturday 11 January 2014. In all, the PPP-led anti-corruption campaign coalition had one goal; to draw public attention to what it described as "wanton corruption and government's lethargic attitude towards the fight against corruption" (Field interview, PPP Official 3, 2021).

The conveners of the PPP's anti-corruption campaign particularly demanded among others, the creation of an Independent Public Prosecutor's Office, which is detached from the Minister of Justice, as a way of insulating the state's fight against corruption from the negative influence of partisan politics (GhanaWeb 2013). Though the ruling NDC did not support this idea, the government launched the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (2012-2021); yet as Gyampo et al (2017, p. 35) argued, "it was

implemented too late to redeem the NDC from electoral defeat” in the 2016 general elections. The then main opposition NPP however coopted the PPP’s ideation of an Independent Prosecutor into its 2016 manifesto and upon winning the 2016 elections, passed the Office of the Special Prosecutor Act, 2017 (Act 959). This Act established a specialized agency to investigate and prosecute specific cases of alleged or suspected corruption and corruption-related offenses in both the public and private sectors. It is thus argued that the establishment of the Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP) by the Akufo-Addo led NPP government somewhat reflects Rosenstone et al. (2018, p. 44) assertion that “third parties often lose the battle but through co-optation, often win the war”. This is because, thanks to the minor party PPP’s ideation of an independent prosecutor to handle politically exposed corruption cases, there is a creation of the OSP by the NPP government as part of the state’s renewed commitment towards the fight against corruption.

Figure 6.1: Images from the PPP-led anti-corruption demonstrations



Source: Myjoyonline.com (23/11/2013)

Anti-corruption campaigns like that of the PPP’s led street protests (see Figure 6.1) are essential to holding governments accountable; particularly in Ghana where “the only caution governments seem to heed is demonstration”, a media practitioner noted.

This is because whenever citizens demonstrate, it is often viewed as a potential threat to votes and government's popularity (see Odingo et al 2014). Indeed, it is believed that the Mahama-NDC administration lost its second term bid in the 2016 general elections generally on the altar of perceived corruption in the government (Gyampo et al 2017; Ayee 2017) as it was largely propagated by anti-corruption coalitions like that of the PPP and other pressure groups such as the NPP-aligned Alliance for Accountable Governance (AFAG).

In the foreword of Ghana's National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) document, corruption is described as:

an insidious plague that has a wide range of corrosive effects on societies. It undermines democracy and the rule of law, leads to violations of human rights, [...] undermines political stability and economic growth (Republic of Ghana 2011, p. 6).

Thus, the surveyed minor parties' efforts in holding governments accountable through press releases, requests for information, anti-corruption street protests, amongst others, are vital to the sustenance of the Ghanaian democracy and ensuring transparency in the public sphere. In the subsequent section, the analysis will focus on how the minor parties help to advance rule of law and constitutionalism in Ghana; all of which are key features of democratic governance

6.2.6 Promoting the Rule of Law and Constitutionalism

Findings indicate that all three minor parties under inquiry make significant contributions towards the deepening of constitutionalism and rule of law in Ghana. Constitutionalism involves the use of the constitution to limit governmental powers to avoid abuse of power, by emphasizing separation of powers, checks and balances, and the rule of law (Gyampo & Graham 2014; Doomen 2014). All of the surveyed minor parties pledge and act to uphold the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. Article 7 (b) of the CPP's Constitution, for instance, states expressly that the party aims "to safeguard and defend the Constitution of Ghana against its overthrow or abuse" (Convention People's Party 2012, p. 6). Likewise, the PNC's constitution acknowledges the supremacy of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. Articles 7 and 8 of the PPP's Constitution also has similar provisions to uphold and defend the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (Progressive People's Party 2011, pp. 2-3). Accordingly, by way of defending the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the PPP on 31 March 2014 invoked the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Ghana for

a declaration that; *on a true and proper interpretation of articles 25(1) (a) and 38 (2) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the Government of Ghana had only twelve years commencing from January 7, 1993 to January 6, 2005 to have delivered to the Ghanaian Children of School going age free, compulsory and universal basic education and that the Government has failed in discharging the said constitutional duty imposed on her by the people of Ghana* (Writ No. J1/8/2014).

The PPP's writ also requested the Court for a declaration that; *on a true and proper interpretation of articles 14 (1) (e), 25(1) (a) and 38 (2) of the 1992 Constitution, the government had a constitutional duty to compel children of school age within the Republic who refused and or failed so to do to be at school without fail and that the government's failure to so act thereto constituted an omission that was inconsistent with the 1992 Constitution of Ghana* (See Appendix H: PPP sues government over Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education). Essentially, the PPP's writ sought to pray the Justices of the Supreme Court of Ghana to compel the Government of Ghana to ensure the implementation of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy as envisioned by the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Although the PPP's writ was dismissed by the Justices of the Supreme Court on 14 May 2015, an official of the PPP maintained that:

The PPP believes in constitutionalism and rule of law. Hence, we have on quite a few occasions tested our laws, even up to the Supreme Court. In 2014 for instance, barely 2 years of our existence, we petitioned the Supreme Court to compel the Government to enforce the free and compulsory aspect of the FCUBE policy because in our considered view, successive governments had willfully failed to implement the policy as envisaged by the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Though some people ridiculed us following the Supreme Court's unfavorable ruling, we can all attest that after some years now almost everyone ...the various stakeholders in our educational system, NGOs have taken up the advocacy. Now, everyone is talking about enforcing the compulsory element of FCUBE (Field interview 2022).

Furthermore, to augment constitutionalism in Ghana, the minor party PPP has consistently made proposals for constitutional reforms in Ghana. The PPP, amongst others, has proposed an amendment to Article 78 (1) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, which states that "...majority of Ministers of State shall be appointed from among members of Parliament" (Republic of Ghana 1992). According to a key interviewee from the PPP, the provisions of Article 78 (1) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana do not create the needed space for effective checks and balances as at least

50% of Ministers of State are appointed from among Members of Parliament, resulting in the fusion of both parliamentary and executive functions concentrated in the hands of only a few individuals. Hence, “the PPP has proposed and continued to advocate for an amendment of Article 78 (1) to ensure strict separation of the legislative and executive arms of government to augment checks and balances”, as an essential condition for effective democratic governance in Ghana (Field Interview, PPP 2, 2022).

Other key features of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana that the PPP has proposed amendments to includes; Article 243 (1), which empowers the president of the republic to appoint District Chief Executives (DCEs) instead of popular election; and Article 88, which makes the Attorney General double as the Minister of Justice. According to an interviewee; “these are key constitutional provisions affecting our governance system as all Attorney Generals appointed under this Constitution have been unable to prosecute fellow appointees from the same party. Prosecutions of politically exposed persons have always targeted ex-government officials” (Field interview, PPP 1, 2022). Nevertheless, the vast powers of the Attorney General requires that the officeholder is detached from cabinet in order to garner the needed commitment and independence to prosecute political corruption even from an incumbent party. Similarly, the constitutional responsibility of the DCE as a development agent at the local government level requires that the officer holder is accountable to the local people through direct elections. Towards the attainment of these constitutional reforms, the PPP in September 2021 declared December 7th of every year as Constitutional Reform Day, dubbed *#FixTheConstitutionDay*, to institutionalize its advocacy for constitutional reforms in Ghana.

The first vice chairman of the PPP, Mr. Felix William Ograh, in a speech made during the maiden edition of the PPP’s Constitutional Reform Day on December 7, 2021, remarked thus:

In September 2021, we declared December 7th as the fix the constitution day. It was and still is our aim, to remind Ghanaians of the need to conduct a surgical operation on the 1992 constitution in order to make it a development and people-oriented constitution for the Republic of Ghana. It is evident that after three solid decades of operating this document, a number of the aspirations in its preamble have eluded the good people of Ghana. Ladies and gentlemen,

our consistent advocacy for changes to be made to the 1992 constitution is fuelled by our undying passion to see the people of Ghana prosper in peace³⁷.

While the PPP seems determined to see an amendment of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, as a minor party with unrealistic chance to form government anytime soon to directly sponsor a bill for constitutional amendment, the best tool available remains advocacy. However, while this study contends that *#FixTheConstitutionDay* of the PPP was innovative towards the advocacy for constitutional amendments in Ghana, the next scheduled edition was not observed. Nevertheless, the study found that, in November 2022, the PPP together with other stakeholders, mainly representatives of CSOs, political parties, and the leadership of Ghana's parliament participated in a series of Ghana's Institute of Economic Affairs' (IEA) sponsored dialogue on constitutional amendments. According to an official of the PPP, its participation in the IEA's sponsored dialogue on constitutional amendment was "a necessary collaboration towards the advocacy for constitutional amendment in Ghana" (Personal Communication, 2023).

Relatedly, in the next section, the presentation of this study's findings will mainly focus on issue advocacy role of the minor parties and how it augments Ghana's democracy.

6.2.7 Issue Advocacy and Policy Influence

As Sifry (2013) and Gillespie (2012) noted, minor parties serve as fount of innovative ideas in democracies. Along this claim, findings from this study indicate that the minor parties under inquiry contribute to the shaping of public policy in Ghana by innovating progressive ideas and institutions into politics and governance. For instance, the PNC claims that the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) implemented by the Kufour-led NPP government was its original idea advocated mainly by its 2000 presidential nominee, Dr Edward Mahama, during the 2000 electioneering campaign. According to an official of the PNC, "Dr Edward Mahama mooted this idea of a national health insurance policy to eliminate the then "cash and carry system" of healthcare delivery in Ghana, during the 2000 IEA presidential debate". A senior research fellow with a public policy institute in Ghana seems to support this point, noting that:

³⁷ Mr Orgah's speech available at <https://www.todaygh.com/press-statement-delivered-by-the-progressive-peoples-party-to-mark-december-7th-as-the-fix-the-constitution-day/> (accessed February 24, 2023)

You can thank the PNC and Dr Edward Mahama for the revolution in the healthcare delivery in Ghana. Ghana's innovative national health insurance scheme was largely his idea. The PNC, was the main political party, really in a big way, to float the idea of a tax-funded health insurance scheme in Ghana (Field Interview, CSO4, 2021).

Ghana's NHIS is often touted as one of the most innovative tax-funded national health insurance schemes on the continent of Africa. The NHIS provides equitable access and financial coverage for basic health care services to residents of Ghana (see Amporfu et al 2022; Anjorin et al 2022; Ly et al 2022; Wang et al 2017). According to the research fellow; "Ghana is close to attaining universal health coverage due to the implementation of the national health insurance policy, and that is largely as a result of PNC's idea" (Field Interview, CSO4, 2021).

Also, the PPP's issue advocacy role has focused on the direct election of District Chief Executive (DCEs) in Ghana. DCEs are the chief political heads at the local governance structure and key development agents. However, this important public office holder remains an appointee of the president and serve at his pleasure. Hence, there is always a seemingly general dearth of local accountability resulting in underdevelopment at the local level (see Adamtey 2014). Accordingly, the PPP has since its formation in 2012 been a keen advocate for an amendment to Article 243 (1) of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, to allow for popular election of DCEs to ensure local accountability and accelerated local development. Findings indicate that the major party NPP responded to this advocacy by coopting it into its own platform in 2016, and thus initiated a bill in 2019 for a constitutional amendment to get DCEs elected. Nevertheless, the said bill was later withdrawn and all related processes were aborted by the NPP government. Despite this fact, the PPP continues to advocate for the direct election of DCEs in Ghana.

In a press conference held on 14 October 2021 at the party's headquarters in Accra, the PPP reiterated its commitment toward the advocacy for the election of DCEs despite the NPP government's seemingly lack of interest. Furthermore, an official of the PPP in a field interview remarked thus:

A key issue, well-articulated by the PPP, which has featured prominently in our platforms since 2012, for which we have undertaken extensive advocacy and won the arguments for it is the election of District Chief Executives. We, in the PPP are committed to this, until power returns to the local people for them to elect their District Chief Executives (Field interview 2021).

Also, recounting the PPP's achievements as part of its 10 years anniversary, a press statement signed by the party's Communications Director, Emmanuel Kofi Mantey, further highlights thus:

We have advocated for the amendments of key constitutional provisions affecting our governance system in Ghana such as, the election of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives; separation of Attorney General's Department from the Minister of Justice; Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education with a goal of not leaving any Ghanaian child of school going age at home. Other policies include: Use of Government Purchasing Power to support Ghanaian businesses, Create Employment/job creation through industrialization using the rich natural resources of the country, Universal Health Care delivery focusing on preventable health care system, vigorous infrastructural development, effective and efficient pension scheme for the Ghanaian worker with a living wage to better their economic conditions (Mantey 2022).

Furthermore, significant part of all the surveyed minor parties' advocacy role has also focused on the subject of state funding of political parties in Ghana. According to a key interviewee drawn from a public policy institute in Ghana, "the minor parties are the leading advocates for state funding of political parties in Ghana". Nevertheless, as Sakyi and Agomor (2016) revealed, whilst the minor parties are the leading advocates for state funding of political parties in Ghana, disaggregated data shows that the ratio of members of the minor parties in favor of state funding of political parties are far lesser than those in the leadership. This, somewhat, reveals the general lack of popularity of the issue of state funding of political parties in Ghana; perhaps the very reason the minor parties have not been too successful with this advocacy. It is the belief that state funding of political parties will make resources available to parties and especially aid the minor parties to ameliorate some of their financial handicap to be competitive in the electoral arena and also carry out most of the functions expected of them in a democratic society.

Beyond issue advocacy and policy influence, as seen in Table 6.2, some functionaries of the surveyed minor parties in Ghana have actually served as Ministers of State and senior public officials in the government of both the NPP and the NDC; the two major parties that have alternated power under the Fourth Republic of Ghana. This corroborates Müller (2006) and Bob-Milliar's (2019) belief that the expertise required for democratic governance are sometimes located outside the government party.

Table 6.2 Some minor party functionaries who have served in NDC and NPP administrations, 1993–2022

NAME	PARTY AFFILIATION	POSITION IN PARTY	ADMINISTRATION	PORTFOLIO	PERIOD
Dr. Edward Mahama	PNC	Fmr. Presidential Candidate	Akufo-Addo-NPP	Ambassador-at-Large	2017-date
Alhaji Ahmed Ramadan	PNC	Fmr. National Chairman	Akufo-Addo-NPP	Ambassador to UAE	2017-date
Abu Ramadan	PNC	Fmr. PNC National Youth Organizer	Akufo-Addo-NPP	Dep. Director, National Disaster Management Organization	2017-date
Dr. Sulley Gariba	PNC	Founding Member	Mills/Mahama-NDC	Senior Policy Adviser to the Vice-President	2009-2013
Alhassan Azong	PNC	MP, Builsa South Constituency	Mills/Mahama NDC	Minister of State (Public Sector Reform)	2009-2013
Dr. Raymond Atuguba	PNC	Member, Party Lawyer	Mahama-NDC	Executive Secretary to the President	2013-2015
Bernard Mornah	PNC	General Secretary	Mills-NDC	Member, Local Olympic Committee	2009-2012
Dr. Edward Gyader	PNC	Fmr. Parliamentary Candidate	Mahama-NDC	Presidential Appointee, Council of State	2013-2017
Moses Dani Baah	PNC	MP, Sissala East Constituency	Kufour-NPP	Dep. Minister of Health	2001-2004
Mallam Issah	PNC	Fmr. National Chairman of PNC	Kufour-NPP	Minister of Youth & Sports	Jan-May 2001
Ambrose Dery	PNC	Party Lawyer	Kufuor-NPP	Regional Minister-Upper West Region	2005–2007
Papa Kwesi Nduom	CPP	MP, KEEA Constituency	Kufour- NPP	Minister, Economic Planning; Energy; Public Sector Reform	2003-2007
Prof. George Hagan	CPP	Presidential Nominee, 2000	Kufour- NPP	Chairman, National Commission for Culture	2001-2007
Kojo Armah	CPP	Parliamentary Candidate	Kufour- NPP	DCE, Nzema East	2001-2004
Agyemang Badu-Akosa	CPP	Presidential Candidate Aspirant, 2007	Kufour- NPP	Director General, Ghana Health Service	2003-2007
Dr Kwabena Duffour	CPP	Chairman, CPP's 'Ways & Means' Committee	Mills- NDC	Minister, Finance & Economic Planning	2009-2013
Prof. Nii Noi Dowuona	CPP	Ex- Gen. Secretary	Mills/Mahama-NDC	Member, National Council for Tertiary Education	2009-2013
Fredrick Blay	CPP	MP, Ellembelle Constituency	Kufour- NPP	1 st Deputy Speaker of Parliament	2005-2009

Source: Adapted from Bob-Milliar (2019)

Thus, whilst none of the minor parties have ever won power to form government, Table 6.2 demonstrates that indeed the expertise of their members has occasionally been relied upon to administer the governance of Ghana under the Fourth Republic. For instance, the PNC's Dr. Raymond Atuguba, served as the Executive Secretary to President John Mahama between 2013 to 2015, whilst its party Chairman Mallam Issah was once the Minister for Youth and Sport under the erstwhile Kufour-led NPP government. Also, Dr Papa Kwesi Nduom, a leading member of the CPP at the time,

served as Minister of State for Economic Planning in the first term of Kufour government. During a cabinet reshuffle in April 2003, Dr Nduom became the Minister for Energy, and later Minister for Public sector Reforms. While Dr Nduom was the Minister of State for Public Sector Reforms, Ghana qualified to access funds under the Millennium Challenge Account for massive infrastructural development. Indeed, the qualification of Ghana to access the fund with 16 other countries was based on good democratic governance credentials of the government. In recent times also, Dr. Edward Mahama and Ahmed Ramadan, former PNC presidential nominee and former Chairman of the PNC respectively, are serving as ambassadors in the Akufo-Addo led NPP government. Essentially, whilst elections in Ghana's Fourth Republic have invariably been decided between the NPP and the NDC to form government, the worth of minor parties in terms of the human resources they develop and offer at the disposal of governing parties to support the course of democratic governance cannot be understated.

6.2.8 Electoral Impact and Democratic Consolidation

This study also found that whilst there is an almost non-existent chance for the minor parties to win elections and form government, their electoral performance sometimes has a considerable impact on electoral outcomes and democratic development in Ghana. However negligible, the electoral fortunes of the minor parties (particularly the PNC and the CPP) somewhat contributed to the "no clear winner situation" in the 2000 and 2008 Ghanaian presidential elections respectively (see Agomor 2019; Nugent 2001). In the 2000 Ghanaian presidential election for instance, the two major parties secured 48.17% (NDC) and 44.5% (NPP) respectively; whereas the minor parties had a combined vote share of 6.7%. These votes could have enabled the candidates of any of the two major parties to secure the constitutionally required 50+1 % threshold to form government without recourse to a runoff.

However, due to the quite significant vote share of the minor parties in the 2000 presidential election, there was a run-off election between the candidate of the NPP, John Kufour and the NDC's candidate, John Mills on 28 December 2000. According to interviewees, the then major opposition NPP leveraged on the support of the minor parties during the 2000 presidential run-off election to snatch power from the incumbent NDC, which had ruled for almost two decades (Agomor 2019; Aidoo &

Chamberlain 2015). As one interviewee noted, “at the end of polls on the 28 December 2000 presidential runoff election, thanks to minor parties’ support, the opposition NPP won for the first time under Ghana’s Fourth Republic” with an overwhelming 56.9% as against NDC’s 43.1%. This resulted in the first ever democratic turnover of power from a civilian government to another in the country’s political history (Graham et al 2017).

Just like the 2000 Ghanaian election, the 2008 election was no different. The votes share of the minor parties were significant enough to push the presidential election into a run-off, for the second time, under Ghana’s Fourth Republic. This time, although the incumbent NPP’s Nana Akufo-Addo led in the first round with 49.13 % votes, he lost in the runoff as the minor parties mainly supported John Mills of the NDC to outpoll the NPP’s Nana Akufo-Addo, culminating in the second democratic turnover of power in Ghana’s Fourth Republic (see Gyampo et al 2017; Agomor 2019; Bob-Milliar 2019). At this stage, Ghana’s democracy was said to be consolidated, following Samuel Huntington’s minimalist prescription of democratic consolidation. According to Huntington (1991), at the barest minimum, a democracy is consolidated if two peaceful turnovers have occurred after the founding election³⁸. From the foregoing, it is argued that the role played by the minor parties in supporting the candidature of John Mills of the NDC during the 2008 presidential run-off which culminated into John Mills’ victory propelled Ghana to pass Huntington’s “two turn-over test” of democratic consolidation. Whilst Huntington’s ideation of democratic consolidation has been critiqued by the maximalists such as Beetham (1994) and Diamond (1999), its central idea of alternation of political power among civilian governments is an essential feature of democratic deepening. Thus, the contribution of the surveyed minor parties in this regard is worth-noting.

³⁸ Nevertheless, maximalists such as Beetham (1994), Diamond (1999) have critiqued Huntington’s “two turnover test” as too simplistic, and argue that beyond elections and turnover of political power, democratic consolidation encompasses the safeguard of civil liberties, availability of mechanisms for the expression of dissent, the institutionalization of vibrant civil society, independency of the judiciary and the press, as well as mechanisms for checking the exercise of power in the inter-election period.

The next section of this analysis attempts to show evidence of how the minor parties help consolidate Ghana's electoral democracy by supporting efforts aimed at legitimizing democratic elections in Ghana.

6.2.9 Towards the Legitimization of Democratic Elections

Another important theme identified by interviewees as a contribution of the minor parties to Ghana's democratic development relates to their role towards the legitimization of competitive democratic election in Ghana. According to interviewees, the comportment of the minor parties in Ghanaian politics supports the processes of legitimizing democratic elections in Ghana; to the extent that "elections have gained reputation as the only game in town for changing government since the return to multi-party democracy in 1992" (Field interview, CSO2, Accra). For instance, despite their recurring failure at the polls, the minor parties habitually accept electoral outcomes tranquilly, thereby granting some form of legitimacy to Ghana's electoral democracy. As one key interviewee observed, whilst losing elections has become a hallmark of the minor parties in Ghana, "their fortitude to always compete, typically lose, and yet accept electoral outcome without recourse to violence demonstrates their inherent commitment to Ghana's electoral democracy" (Field interview, media personnel, 2021). This is because, as previous studies suggest, "loser's consent" is an important barometer of a well-functioning democracy. Without such consent, rife protest and questioning of election legitimacy may diminish public trust in elected government and their right to govern (see Grant et al 2021; Norris et al 2015; Norris 2014).

An interviewee, consequently, described the minor parties in this way:

They are the real democrats. Very tolerant and peaceful. They don't engage in electoral malpractice. No rigging. Neither do they use party vigilantes to intimidate opponents during election, unlike the two bad boys [*referring to the major parties- NDC and NPP*]. I call them bad boys because they give us all the troubles in election management. In the just ended election for instance, though the minor parties won no parliamentary seat, lost almost all their candidate nomination deposits, yet they were the first to accept defeat and called on the largest opposition party candidate to also concede (Field interview, CSO 3, 2021).

Indeed, in spite of their habitual electoral defeats, the minor parties have refused to be sour-losers; with no violent tendencies to disrupt Ghana's constitutional democracy. Note-worthily, whilst the aftermath of the recent 2020 general election became

contentious due to the rejection of the election results by the opposition NDC,³⁹ six minor party presidential aspirants that contested the 2020 polls, including CPP's Ivor Greenstreet and PNC's David Apasera, in a joint press statement on Wednesday December 16, 2020 entreated John Mahama, the presidential candidate of the leading opposition NDC, to accept the electoral results and concede defeat or seek redress in court if dissatisfied with the Electoral Commission's result declaration (GhanaWeb 2020). The 16 December 2020 press statement by the minor parties' presidential candidates read in part:

We are calling on John Mahama that although his refusal to accept the result is democratic, we implore him and his followers to take democratic processes. Yes, protest is a form of the democratic process but it is indeterminate in the sense that you may not know what may happen during the demonstration (GhanaWeb 2020).

The minor parties' presidential aspirants via the press statement admonished the disgruntled NDC leadership to seek redress at the court rather than to resort to violent protest. John Mahama of the NDC subsequently filed an election petition at the Supreme Court of Ghana on 28 December 2020 to seek for the annulment of the Electoral Commission's declaration of the 2020 presidential results. However, Mr. Mahama's writ was dismissed by the Court on 4 March 2021, confirming incumbent Nana Akufo-Addo of the NPP as validly elected. Although some interviewees asserted that the NDC would have still gone to the Court regardless of the minor parties' admonishment; others also maintained that the intervention by the minor parties' presidential nominees, to a large extent, contributed to the resolve of Mr. Mahama and his NDC's decision to seek redress at the law court. In defense of the joint press release by the presidential candidates of minor parties, one of the presidential candidates of the minor parties during a field interview with the researcher argued:

Let me tell you something. That press release was very timely. As leaders of the political parties, we also have a stake in preserving the peace and stability of this Republic (Field Interview 2021).

³⁹ John Mahama, the 2020 presidential candidate of the largest opposition NDC rejected the presidential election results of the 2020 polls accusing the Electoral Commission of rigging the election in favor of the incumbent president Nana Akufo-Addo of the NPP.

This demonstrates a vested interest of the minor parties towards the preservation of the democratic stability of Ghana's Fourth Republic. From the foregoing, it is argued that the minor parties in Ghana are not sour losers who engage in or support post-election violence after electoral defeats. Rather than resorting to violence, the minor parties and their leadership appear committed to building a healthy democratic culture and sustaining Ghana's fourth attempt at constitutional democracy by upholding the sanctity of free and fair elections.

6.3 Conclusion

The relevance of minor parties in plurality-rule democratic systems like Ghana is often understudied owing to their limited capacity to influence governance. This chapter therefore analyzed in-depth the role of minor parties to Ghana's democratic governance under the Fourth Republic. It reasoned that, notwithstanding the electoral inconsequentiality of the minor parties in Ghana, they contribute to political and electoral mobilization by recruiting candidates for elections and mobilizing voters to participate in political life. As a result, Ghana's minor political parties have, until the 2016 Ghanaian general elections, represented certain constituencies in Parliament under the Fourth Republic of Ghana, thereby contributing to law-making and parliamentary oversight of the executive organ of government. This chapter also underscored that minor parties' activism in Ghana provides considerable space for citizens to demand accountability and transparency from the government. Furthermore, through their issue advocacy roles, the minor parties in Ghana help promote rule of law, constitutionalism and influence public policy-making by innovating progressive ideas and institutions into Ghanaian politics. Whilst no minor party in Ghana has ever won elections to form government, evidence abound that some minor party elites have served in different capacities in the government of both the NDC and NPP; the two main political parties that have alternated power under Ghana's Fourth Republic. This chapter therefore concludes that, notwithstanding the electoral weakness of Ghana's minor political parties, they are quite relevant to Ghana's Fourth Republican democratic governance on the account of the aforementioned.

The next chapter, which is Chapter Seven, will summarize the key research findings of the study, draw conclusion and offer recommendation.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the key research findings of this study by reflecting on and drawing conclusions about the study's objectives set out at the beginning of this research. To recap, the overall aim of the study was to advance an understanding of minor parties' activities in the context of Ghana's emergent two-party system. The specific research objectives were to:

- i. Critically examine minor parties' drive for electoral competition in Ghana's two-party system.
- ii. Critically analyze the constraints on the electoral success of minor parties in Ghana.
- iii. Critically examine the contribution of minor parties to Ghana's democratic governance.

This chapter will revisit the specified research objectives above, summarize the key research findings and draw conclusions based on the findings. In addition, the contribution of this study to knowledge will be clarified. Recommendations are made and discussed for the future progression of this research.

7.2 Summary and Conclusion

7.2.1 Objective 1: The Minor Parties' Drive for Electoral Competition in Ghana's Fourth Republic

The literature identified some key drivers of minor parties' electoral competition in spite of their limited chance of success. According to the literature, the rise of minor parties in most democracies is often as a result of citizens' response to perceived major party failure (Rosenstone et al 2018). However, the elite-level decision of whether or not to enter the electoral arena as a minor party candidate is often founded on the cost of entry, the (potential) benefits of office and the prospect of voters' support (see Bob-Milliar 2019; Ishiyama 2009; Donovan 2000; Tavits 2007; Hug 2001; Cox 1997).

The empirical findings also revealed that, notwithstanding the minor parties' limited or non-existent chance of winning elections in Ghana, the rationale for competing is largely driven by affordability of the minor parties' ticket; opportunities for post-election patronage; ideological inclination; pursuit of political recognitions, among others. The minor parties (i.e., CPP, PPP and PNC) offer relatively cheaper platforms to prospective candidates seeking elected offices in Ghana; hence, the drive to contest on such tickets despite the limited prospects. Consistent with the rational choice theory which upholds that political actors are invariably self-seeking and opportunistic, findings further highlighted that post-election patronage opportunities offered by winning parties significantly influence minor party candidature in Ghana. The minor parties and their candidates often leverage on their electoral support and participation in electoral competition to exact patronage resources, mainly in the form of political appointments, from governing parties. Others also use minor party candidacy as a means to stoke their self-image, for prominence and prestige. Additionally, the findings of this study demonstrate that the tenacity to preserve the political legacy and ideology of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in current Ghanaian politics inspires both CPP and PNC adherents, in particular, to continuously maintain their participation in competitive politics under Ghana's Fourth Republic.

Finally, there also appears to be an altruistic ambition among some minor party elites to offer an alternate political leadership to the political duopoly of the NPP and the NDC as some of the minor party politicians held the view that the NPP and the NDC which have alternated power under Ghana's Fourth Republic have failed to deliver socio-economic development to the people of Ghana. Hence, in this study as in others such as Rosenstone et al (2018), the perception or reality of major parties' failure seems to create an incentive for minor parties to compete in Ghana's electoral politics.

7.2.2 Objective 2: The Constraints on the Electoral Success of Minor Parties in Ghana

Findings revealed that the constraints on the electoral viability of the minor parties in Ghana are broadly in the form of either institutional or non-institutional factors. Nonetheless, these factors work in combination rather than as isolated phenomena to the detriment of the minor parties. The institutional factors generally include the statutory rules, established norms and conventions pertaining to Ghanaian politics

which tend to hinder the success of the minor parties; whereas the non-institutional factors are mainly non-statutory but prevalent endogenous and exogenous factors, which inhibit the minor parties' development and electoral viability.

A key institutional constraint on the minor parties' electoral viability is the use of the plurality electoral system in Ghana. Indeed, the Ghanaian plurality electoral system is the single most threatening (and fundamental) institutional barrier to the success of the minor parties in Ghana. As the 275 Members of Parliament are elected by a single-member plurality rule and the president of the Republic by a majoritarian rule, for a simple mechanical reason, the minor parties are unable to gain much traction to win election due to voters' inclination to vote strategically in such an electoral system to avoid "vote-wasting" and the spoiler effect of minor party voting. This is because the first-past-the-post/winner-takes-all feature of the Ghanaian electoral system only rewards the candidate who wins the plurality vote. Hence, just as Schraufnagel and Milita (2010, p. 34) pointed out, "the single-member district plurality rule hurdle is simply too difficult for minor parties" in Ghana to transcend. The majoritarian nature of the system militates against the electoral success of the surveyed minor parties to the extent that none currently holds a seat in parliament. This finding largely confirms Duverger's Law that single-member plurality systems weaken minor parties' development.

In addition, certain statutory provisions of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana were also identified to be detrimental to the development and success of the minor parties in Ghana. For instance, whilst the minor parties generally lack the wherewithal to undertake nationwide political mobilization to assume a national character effectively, they are proscribed by Article 55 (4) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana to organize on the basis of ethnic, regional, religious, or other sectional divisions unlike in other jurisdictions such as the US, where state-only parties are permissible (see Chamberlain 2012). Similarly, the non-partisanship of the District Local Elections as prescribed by Article 55(3) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana unwittingly poses a deleterious effect on the minor parties' development. Enacted on the account of historical antecedents of party politics in Ghana, these constitutional injunctions are inimical to the development of the minor parties as they set legal barrier for the minor parties to formally exploit the benefits of sectionalism/localism, which is

a key mobilizational asset of minor parties, to boost their electoral viability. According to extant literature (Chamberlain 2012; Sander 2017), minor parties with regional or sectional focus are more electorally successful than those with territorial-wide focus; yet the Constitution of Ghana bans political parties, including minor parties, from formally having an ethno-regional or religious appeal. It is therefore contended that the constitutional framework of Ghanaian politics unwittingly renders the minor parties unviable.

Ballot access conditions were also identified as significant institutional impediments for the minor parties. These were mainly in the form of signature requirements and candidate nomination fees. As the findings revealed, candidates from each of the minor parties under inquiry have ever suffered ballot access denial (or threat of it); with some resulting in lawsuits against the Election Management Body as a remedy to gain ballot access. Hence, qualifying to appear on the voter's ballot was seen as a major chore for the minor parties in Ghana. Whilst the literature frequently highlighted signature requirement as the predominant ballot access obstacle for minor parties in the US and other advanced democracies, this study found that candidate nomination fees levied by the Electoral Commission of Ghana is the most prohibitive ballot access condition for the minor parties in Ghana. Ghana's 1992 Constitution mandates the Electoral Commission of Ghana with a discretionary power to set candidate nomination fee for every electioneering season. Such fees often tend to be arbitrarily high and prohibitive for the minor parties and candidates due to the frequent hikes in the fees. Though the high ballot access fees do not necessarily prevent the minor parties from filing nomination but rather impact negatively on the total number of candidates they are able to field in elections.

Other significant institutional impediments for the minor parties are also located in Ghana's campaign finance laws as stipulated under Article 55 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana and the Political Parties Act, Act 574. Whilst Ghana's campaign finance laws bequeath party financing to private funding due to no provision for direct state funding of political parties in Ghana, it neither requires political parties or election candidates to disclose the identity of financiers nor does it set a ceiling on donations and campaign expenditures. The apparent lack of ceiling on contributions and expenditure permits the major parties, which usually have the wherewithal, to raise and expend unlimited

(often undisclosed) campaign funds to the disadvantage of the minor parties who rarely attract donations. This creates an uneven playing field for the minor parties and further widens the resource inequality that already exist between the major and the minor parties. The existing legal regime governing party financing in Ghana therefore stymies the development of a viable third party as the deficiencies in the law, to a large extent, boost the opulence of the major parties during electioneering at the expense of the minor parties.

As already indicated, the minor parties in Ghana also encounter a myriad of non-institutional constraints to success as well. These non-institutional constraints include *inter alia*, limited media attention, leadership failures, financial limitations, organizational and campaign errors as well as major parties' strategies that undermine minor parties. Due to Ghana's emergent two-party system, the Ghanaian media often throws the spotlight only on the two major parties (i.e., the NDC and the NPP). Hence, the minor parties rarely benefit from significant media coverage, even from the state broadcasters notwithstanding the "equal time" doctrine enshrined in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. This biased media attention significantly harms the minor parties as the media often frame news on elections in Ghana as a two-horse race between the NDC and the NPP. Likewise, the IEA sponsored presidential debate through its discriminatory admissibility criteria, typically excludes the candidates of the minor parties, thereby denying them equal platform to market their policy ideas alongside major party candidates. Altogether, the minor parties suffer politics of exclusion partly as a result of unequitable media coverage and frequent elimination from televised presidential debates, all of which have ramifications on their outreach capacity and electoral viability.

Furthermore, all three minor parties under inquiry suffer from organizational and campaign deficiencies as they struggle to provide the organizational structures vital to prosecute effective political campaigns. Besides the national level (in Accra), the minor parties rarely have the basic structures in the regions and the constituencies; hence, no regular party life at the grassroots. In some instances, they lack the full complement of party executives even to oversee the day-to-day party activities in some constituencies across the country. As findings highlighted, the minor parties typically nominate candidates in only a few constituencies out of the 275 parliamentary seats

available for grab. Indeed, the inability of the minor parties to nominate parliamentary candidates in most constituencies has dismal consequences on the parties' overall prominence and the presidential candidates' electoral fortunes as the latter every so often fail to campaign in constituencies where parliamentary candidates were not fielded. Disturbingly, despite their shared political ideology, the minor parties (i.e., PNC, CPP & PPP) fail to coordinate their candidate nominations to augment their electoral prospects. Coalition failures and extreme factionalism within the minor parties' front partly explain the minor parties' inability to coordinate their candidate nomination strategies.

The study also found that the avowed commitment of both the CPP and the PNC to seek ideological purity by retaining their Nkrumahist socialist orientation causes them to lose broad base electoral support as they appeal to only a minute segment of the Ghanaian voting public. This is particularly so as the majority of contemporary Ghanaian electorate identify less with Dr. Nkrumah and his political philosophy (i.e., Nkrumahism/Scientific Socialism) owing to the youthfulness of the demography of the current Ghanaian voter population and the fact that many contemporary Ghanaian voters did not experience Nkrumah's regime during the 1950/60s. Moreover, in Ghana where the electorate are generally non-ideological, the modest ideological differences that exist are already accommodated by the two major parties – the NDC and the NPP. While the NDC has taken over the socialist leaning of Dr. Nkrumah, the NPP has anchored on the liberal capitalist ideology of the Danquah-Busia tradition (see Lindberg & Morrison 2005). Notwithstanding this ideological encampment, the major political parties occasionally traverse ideologically just to woo persuadable Ghanaian voters, who constitute almost 27% of the Ghanaian voting population (see Kpessa-Whyte 2021). Nevertheless, the CPP and PNC are too conservatively ideological in outlook and this does not seem to augur well for these two minor parties in their quest to make any meaningful electoral inroads among these persuadable voters. Hence, the failure of both the CPP and PNC to modernize their Nkrumahist socialist political orientation to meet the aspirations of contemporary politics is believed to cost them substantial electoral support. It is therefore argued that the Nkrumahist minor parties – CPP and PNC – will remain weaker as long as they continue to seek ideological purity and reject reforms.

Lack of funding is also a major setback for the minor parties. During contest for campaign resources or sponsorship, the minor parties are vulnerable and unattractive prospect for sponsorship due to the extreme risk and their limited prospects to provide returns on financiers' 'political' investments. This is because most political financiers in Ghana typically contribute to political party funds with an assumption of getting access to elected officials for political favors; yet the minor parties rarely provide such returns due to their limited chance of electoral victory. This financial disadvantaged circumstance of the minor parties is further exacerbated by the absence of state funding for political parties in Ghana and the incapacitation of the minor parties to mobilize funds internally owing to non-payment of membership subscription dues. The bereft of funding for the minor parties directly impacts; access to paid media space; procurement of campaign logistics; ability to nominate parliamentary candidate nationwide; grassroots mobilization, all of which adversely affect their electoral viability. Indeed, a prime cause of the dearth of regular party life in the minor parties is quite simple; all party activities need to be bankrolled yet the minor parties lack adequate funding.

Finally, the study identified a number of major party stratagems, including infiltration, co-option, and anti-minor party propaganda often deployed by the two major parties in Ghana to de-legitimize minor parties' platform. Both the NPP and the NDC – the two major parties in Ghana – were culpable of co-opting some minor parties' agendas onto their platforms to undercut their electoral support. Beside the co-optation of policy ideas and campaign slogans, the two major parties were also accused of infiltrating the ranks of the minor parties and poaching their top-notch politicians to undermine their success. This is often perpetuated through sponsorships and party patronage. Also, the wasted vote propaganda often proclaimed by campaigners of the major parties in Ghana against minor party nominees seems to weaken the electoral chances of the minor parties. This aspect of the research finding echoes earlier studies (Kroeber et al. 2021; Kirch 2013; Aldrich 1993) which argued that adept major party campaigners try to influence voting behavior, particularly in plurality rule system, by persuading electorate that a vote for a minor party would simply be wasted.

7.2.3 Objective 3: The Contributions of the Minor Parties to Ghana's Fourth Republican Democratic Governance

Major important findings of this research also relate to the contribution of the minor parties to Ghana's Fourth Republican democratic governance. Findings indicate that the minor parties' activism in Ghana's Fourth Republic provides alternate space and opportunities for citizens' engagement and participation in political life. Indeed, a direct impact of the minor parties' electoral participation in Ghana is that they provide political alternatives for Ghanaian electorate who are disinclined to the major parties – the NPP and NDC – to have a cause to participate in democratic politics; either as candidates or voters. This has the merit of enhancing voter participation and turnout in general elections. Similarly, through their activism, the minor parties provide considerable space in the Ghanaian political system for citizens to demand accountability and transparency from government. Significantly, as part of efforts to ensure accountable governance and efficient use of public resources, all three minor parties under inquiry undertake anti-corruption campaigns. Such crusades by the minor parties are vital to the sustenance of the Ghanaian democracy as it helps keep ruling government accountable.

As democracy thrives on full and active participation of all citizens, the minor parties also contribute to efforts towards attaining political inclusion in Ghana by supporting marginalized populations such as PWDs, youths and females to participate fully and equitably in democratic politics. For instance, whilst participation of women in political leadership generally lags behind in Ghana, the minor parties observably commit to women's political empowerment by nominating and electing women to top party positions, including their presidential tickets. Women in political leadership is particularly important as it helps advance gender equity goals and the enactment of gender responsive policies in emergent democracies like Ghana. Remarkably, all the surveyed minor parties (i.e., PPP, PNC, CPP) halve their filing fees for women, PWDs and youths contesting internal party positions. Furthermore, by way of promoting inclusivity in democratic politics, two of the parties under inquiry – the CPP and the PPP – since 2008 and 2012 respectively always develop braille versions of their party's manifestoes to make their platforms accessible to the visually impaired.

Though the electoral impact of the minor parties is indeed limited, at least in terms of the simple assessment of seats won, they contribute to parliamentary enrollment under Ghana's Fourth Republic. Since the inception of Ghana's Fourth Republic, there has been a total of twenty-two (22) representatives elected to Ghana's parliament on minor party ticket. Noteworthy, the PNC and the CPP have jointly accounted for all the 22 minor party parliamentary representations, with each party producing 11 parliamentarians each between the 2nd and the 6th Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic. As the analysis revealed, the minor parties' legislators contributed significantly to law-making, and ultimately held the executive accountable through parliamentary oversights. The study further argued that the parliamentary representation of the minor parties, to a certain extent, enhanced ideological diversity in Ghana's legislature during the 2nd through to the 6th Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic when the minor parties had representation. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of the minor parties' parliamentarians as typical "opposition members of parliament" was fairly challenged by the fact that they routinely elected to align with the majority caucus (i.e., governing parties) rather than with the minority caucus due to patronage opportunities, viz. ministerial and parliamentary leadership appointments.

Findings also revealed that the minor parties make significant contributions towards the deepening of constitutionalism and rule of law in Ghana. For instance, to ensure strict separation of the legislative and executive arms of government to augment checks and balances, the minor party PPP has consistently advocated for amendments to Article 78 (1) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, which states that "...majority of Ministers of State shall be appointed from among members of Parliament". Other key provisions of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana that the PPP has proposed amendment to include Article 243 (1), which empowers the president to appoint District Chief Executives instead of popular election; and Article 88, which makes the Attorney General double as the Minister of Justice. Towards the PPP's spirited advocacy for constitutional reforms in Ghana, the minor party observes December 7 of every year as Constitutional Reform Day, with activities such as symposia and media engagement on constitutional reforms.

Furthermore, through their issue advocacy, the minor parties contribute to the shaping of public policy in Ghana by innovating progressive ideas and institutions into

governance. The PNC, for instance, claims that the National Health Insurance policy implemented by the Kufour-led NPP government to address the then inequitable access to healthcare in Ghana, was its policy idea. Likewise, PPP's issue advocacy role has significantly focused on the implementation of the FCUBE policy, with the goal of leaving no Ghanaian child of school going age at home as envisaged by the 1992 constitution of Ghana; and the direct election of DCEs in Ghana. Thus, the PPP has since its formation in 2012 been a keen advocate for an amendment to Article 243 (1) of the 1992 Constitution, to allow for popular election of DCEs to ensure local accountability and accelerated local development. The major party NPP responded to this advocacy by coopting it unto its own platform in 2016, and thus initiated a bill in 2019 for a constitutional amendment to get DCEs elected. Nevertheless, the said bill was later withdrawn and all related processes were aborted by the NPP government. Despite this fact, the PPP continues to advocate for the direct election of DCEs in Ghana. Beyond their issue advocacy and policy influence, some functionaries of the minor parties in Ghana have actually served in government of both the NPP and NDC as Ministers of State and senior public officials to help shape the course of governance. Thus, whilst the minor parties lack the capacity to win election and form government, the expertise of their members has occasionally been relied upon to administer governance under Ghana's Fourth Republic. This finding thus corroborates Müller (2006) and Bob-Milliar (2019) that the expertise required for democratic governance are sometimes located outside non-mainstream parties.

Also, whilst there is an almost non-existent chance for the minor parties to win elections in Ghana, their electoral performances do sometimes have a considerable impact on electoral outcomes and democratic development. However negligible, the electoral fortunes of the minor parties (specifically, the PNC and the CPP) in the 2000 and the 2008 Ghanaian presidential elections somewhat contributed to the "no clear winner situation" in these two elections. As findings indicated, the subsequent endorsement of the opposition candidates' campaign by these two minor parties (i.e., PNC and CPP) during the 2000 and 2008 presidential run-offs respectively, which culminated into political turnovers afforded Ghana the opportunity to pass Huntington's "two turn-over test" of democratic consolidation; for Ghana to be listed among consolidated democracies of the world.

Lastly, the political behavior of the minor parties alone constitutes a vital resource for the sustenance of Ghana's emergent democracy. The inclination of the minor parties to mobilize citizens and democratically compete for political power in spite of their conspicuous electoral limitations is commendable. Indeed, their composure during electioneering supports efforts towards legitimizing democratic elections in Ghana. Despite their recurrent electoral failures, the minor parties typically accept electoral outcomes tranquilly. Hence, unlike the major parties, the minor parties refuse to be sour-losers, with no violent tendencies to disrupt Ghana's constitutional democracy. Rather than resorting to post-election violence, the minor parties and their leaderships demonstrate keen commitment toward Ghana's democratic consolidation by upholding the sanctity of democratic elections, even as habitual electoral losers.

7.3 Contribution to Knowledge

In studying minor party activism in Ghana's emergent two-party system, this thesis has made the following contributions. First, it fills a gap in the literature on the rationality of minor parties' electoral competition in Africa's emerging plurality based two-party systems, focusing on Ghana; the African exemplar of two-party system (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014). Given the conventional failure of minor parties in plurality systems, their entry into the electoral arena is every so often viewed as irrational (see Kwofie & Bob-Milliar 2014). However, this thesis provides qualitative evidence that the minor parties in Ghana do act rationally in their decision to run in competitive elections. As the thesis demonstrates, by competing in national elections, the minor parties and their nominees seek to attain certain benefits that are aligned with their personal interests (i.e., post-election patronage resources, political recognition etc.), at a relatively minimal cost of political campaign, even if they fail to win elected office. Hence, this study contributes to the debate on the rationality of minor party's electoral competition in plurality-based two-party systems with a focus on individual candidates' motivations. The thesis thus departs essentially from other studies (Cox 1997; Rosenstone et al 2018, Gerring 2005; Donovan 2000) that typically focused on economic and institutional factors such as economic downturns, lower electoral quota and/or ballot access rules that stimulate minor parties' electoral competition in multiparty systems.

Secondly, this thesis has reinforced the general validity of Duverger's Law in Ghana's plurality-based system. Indeed, the study's findings demonstrated that Ghana's two-party system structured in a single-member plurality electoral format marginalizes minor party development to the point of obliterating their chance of winning seats. Hence, the thesis contributes to the attempt by Duverger's Law adherents to empirically test the proposition that single-member plurality rule marginalizes minor party development.

Lastly, this thesis made another contribution by filling a literature gap on the relevance of minor parties to Ghana's democratic governance for the first time. The current study departs from studies like Aidoo and Chamberlain (2015) that only examined minor parties' role in political competitions. This thesis rather took a broader view by discoursing how minor parties contribute to Ghana's democratic governance in entirety despite the fact that they do not have the capacity to form government. It provides empirical evidence that though minor parties have no realistic chance of forming government in Ghana's emergent two-party system yet they contribute diversely to the sustenance of Ghanaian democracy. Hence, this thesis challenges extant literature that seems to treat minor parties as distraction and/or unimportant political actors (see Kirch 2015;2013; Allen & Brox 2005; Magee 2003).

7.4 Recommendations

Against the backdrop of the findings and the conclusion of this study, the subsequent recommendations are made for the consideration of the surveyed minor parties, policymakers and future researchers.

A. Recommendation For Minor Parties

On account of the shared political ideology of the minor parties, it is recommended that they synchronize their candidate nominations, particularly in the parliamentary elections to win some likely seats; and ultimately pursue the possibility of a unification under one single party as a potent third force to challenge the political duopoly of the NDC and the NPP. The elites of the minor parties must be deliberate and strategic about this process, factoring all interests and factions to avoid coalition failure.

Furthermore, without prejudice to the above recommendation, it is suggested that the minor parties should endeavor to strengthen the existing party structures to support real grassroots mobilization and membership drive. Additionally, the parties must fix their leadership deficiencies through enhanced intra-party conflict resolution mechanisms and leadership trainings. Indeed, if the minor parties can manage to fix the leadership deficiencies, many of their internal challenges *viz.* internal party wrangling, campaign errors, intra-party indiscipline would significantly be ameliorated.

In the midst of limited traditional media coverage for minor party activities, the minor parties are encouraged to exploit the potential benefits of e-politics through the use of social media networks to boost publicity of their activism and campaigns whilst they also strive to be active in the media space to earn satisfactory media coverage.

Specifically to the PNC and the CPP, since their avowed desire for ideological purity as Nkrumahists is believed to cost them substantial electoral support, it is recommended that both parties should rebrand and/or revolutionize their Nkrumahist political orientation to meet the aspirations of contemporary Ghanaian politics in order to attract broad-based electoral support.

B. Recommendation For Policy-makers

As the institutional framework of Ghanaian politics significantly contribute to the failures of the minor parties in Ghana, there is an urgent need for some institutional reforms. First, a key institutional reform that is highly recommended is the adoption of an electoral system based on proportional representation to replace Ghana's single-member plurality rule. This is because proportional representation systems have the potential to resolve the unfairness of plurality rule by affording the minor parties a measure of representation proportionate to the sum of votes cast in their favor.

Secondly, to mitigate the adverse impact of high ballot access fees on the minor parties, it is recommended that the fixing of ballot access fee by the Electoral Commission of Ghana must follow as standardized benchmark to avoid the arbitrariness in the determination of such fees during election years.

Furthermore, it is recommended that Ghana's campaign finance laws should be revised to set ceiling on campaign donations and expenditures with the goal to close up the resource inequality between the minor and the major parties. It is the conviction

of this research that upper limit on campaign expenditure and donations will modulate the opulence of the major parties during electioneering, thereby creating some form of a level playing field during contest for political power.

Additionally, considering the dire financial limitations of the minor parties, this study recommends a public funding of a sort, to at least support minor parties that are making efforts to contribute to Ghana's democratic development. Allocation of such state funding must essentially be need driven based on a standardized need assessment.

Also, it is recommended that the non-partisanship of district level election must be reformed to allow political party participation. This will afford the minor parties the chance to exploit the benefits of localism by developing their electoral support from local politics and progressively parlay same to general elections.

C. Recommendation For Future Research

Despite the thorough research that has been conducted for this case study vis-à-vis the study's goal, there are other related areas that were not the focus of this thesis but are promising avenues for further studies. For instance, future research may focus on these areas which include, *inter alia*, the dangers or threats of minor party activism to democratic governance. This is because the current study explicitly focused on the relevance of minor parties to democratic governance. However, negative impact of minor party activism is conceivable. Hence, a future study may have to investigate how minor party activism could endanger democratic governance.

Also, for future progression of this study, other researchers are encouraged to replicate this research using different case studies or analytical tool/framework to validate the findings of this current study. Additionally, a comparative study of minor parties in different jurisdictions within the confines of single-member plurality system is desirable to expand our understanding of minor parties' activism in emergent two-party systems.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample Distribution of Interviewees

	CPP		PNC		PPP		Major Party Officials		Governance Institutions		
	Flagbearer	1	Flagbearer	1	Flagbearer	1	NPP	2	Electoral Commission	1	
	National Chairman	1	National Chairman	1	National Chairman	1	NDC	2	Academia	2	
	Gen. Secretary	1	Gen. Secretary	1	Gen. Secretary	1			Media	4	
	PC/MP	3	PC/MP	3	PC/MP	3			Think Tanks (IEA, IMMANI, IDEG, CDD)	4	
	Card-holding member	5	Card-holding member	5	Card-holding members	5					
Total		11		11		11		4		11	48

Appendix B: Letter of Informed Consent



Faculty of Humanities
Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Lefapha la Bomotheo

Department of Political Sciences



Department of Political Sciences
University of Pretoria
Pretoria 0002
012 420 2034 (office)

Researcher's contact: +233 243 020 325
Researcher's: ericyobo@gmail.com

Dear Participant

INTERVIEW: INDIVIDUAL INFORMED CONSENT

1. **I am Eric Yobo** a registered postgraduate student for the PhD degree in the Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria. I'm conducting a research on Minor Parties and Democratic Governance in Ghana's Fourth Republic under the supervision of Prof Victoria Graham.
2. The purpose of the study is academic (in fulfillment of degree requirements) and is aimed at examining the contribution of minor parties in Ghana's democratic development.
3. This interview is unstructured and explores themes pertaining to the research. The purpose of the interview is to obtain some perspectives, explanations and experiences on minor political parties in Ghana from experts in the field.
4. With your permission, the inputs of this interview will be utilised for purposes of writing and documenting the research thesis.
5. As a prospective interviewee, you may choose whether to remain anonymous or not and whether note taking, recording or both, would be preferred as a means for capturing the interview.
6. If requested in advance and to ensure that the account of views expressed as an expert in the field is correct, you will be given insight into all references attributable to you and the interview in the thesis prior to its examination and publication.
7. There will be no risks or discomforts (physical or mentally) to you as an interviewee.
8. As a prospective interviewee, you may – by notifying the researcher and without any consequences – withdraw and terminate your participation prior to, during or after the interview. Should you withdraw, records of the interview will not be used for research purposes and will be destroyed.
9. The data and/or notes generated by the interview will, in accordance with university policy and requirements, be stored for 15 years at Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria. The research results will be documented in the form of a thesis that will be available in the public domain at the University library.
10. The research data generated through the interviews will be used for the stated purposes of the aforesaid thesis and may also be reused for further research.

11. The interviewee has the right of access to the researcher and/or the academic department (see the contact particulars indicated in the letterhead) should the need arise.
12. Please complete and sign the attached form for individual informed consent and return it to the researcher for record purposes.

Sincerely
Eric Yobo

Department of Political Sciences
University of Pretoria
Pretoria 0002
012 420 2034 (office)

INTERVIEW: INDIVIDUAL INFORMED CONSENT

Student No: 20761032
Student Name: Eric Yobo
Contact No: +233 243 020 325 (ericcyobo@gmail.com)
Degree: PhD Political Science
Proposed Title of the Research: Minor Parties and Democratic Governance in Ghana’s Fourth Republic

I,,
 TITLE:
 INITIALS AND SURNAME:
 INSTITUTION / COMPANY/INTEREST GROUP:
 POSITION / APPOINTMENT:
 ADDRESS:

have been fully informed about the purpose of the research and understand the conditions of informed consent under which I shall be interviewed. I hereby grant permission for the interview on condition that:
 the interview *may / may not be *electronically recorded / documented in an electronic format / documented in a written form for research purposes
 *my name and affiliation to _____ may be used and cited for the purposes of *the thesis only/the thesis and related articles.

 *if the researcher wishes to pursue publication at a later date, my name and affiliation to _____ *may be cited / may be cited only with prior informed consent

 *my name may not be used or cited, or my identity otherwise disclosed, in this research project, thesis or related articles, but that the interview can be used or cited on a basis of anonymity

 *the interview may not be used or cited, or my identity otherwise disclosed, in the thesis or related articles

Interviewee signature: ----- Date:----- Place: -----
 Researcher signature: ----- Date:----- Place: -----
 Supervisor signature: ----- Date:----- Place: -----

Appendix C: Interview Schedule



Faculty of Humanities
Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Lefapha la Bomotheo



Department of Political Sciences

Department of Political Sciences
University of Pretoria
Pretoria 0002
012 420 2034 (office)

Student name and surname: Eric Yobo

Student Number: 20761032

Degree: PhD Political Science

Research title: Minor Parties and Democratic Governance in Ghana's Fourth Republic

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The broad research themes and questions to be explored in the interviews are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list of questions since new issues and questions may arise during the interview, due to the nature of unstructured interviews.

Questions for Minor Party Politicians

Motivation for Electoral Competition

1. What motivates you as a politician to contest on your party's ticket?
2. What form of support do you receive from your party or others as election candidate?
3. What incentives exist for minor party politicians or election candidates in Ghana?

Minor Party Constraints

1. Kindly highlight some of the key challenges minor parties face in Ghana?
2. Kindly describe the funding mechanism of your party, and how lack of funds affect your party?
3. How difficult is it to file a nomination with the Electoral Commission, taking into consideration all the statutory requirements?
4. Do minor parties and their candidates suffer any discrimination in law or from the Election Management Body? If yes, please explain.
5. Why is it difficult for your party to win elections in Ghana?

6. Please highlight some of the strategies of major parties which are inimical to the success/growth of your party?
7. What accounts for your party's weak organizational capacity?

Democratic Contribution

1. How does your party contribute its quota to Ghana's democratic governance?
2. What should your party be remembered for in the next couple of decades?

Questions for Major Party Officials/ Think thanks/Media/Academia and Others

Motivation for Electoral Competition

1. In your opinion, why do minor parties contest election despite their unrealistic chance of winning?
2. Can you please identify some benefits associated with contesting election as a minor party candidate?

Minor Party Constraints

1. Why do minor parties in Ghana typically fail in electoral politics?
2. What are some of the strategies that major parties execute to suppress/de-legitimize minor parties?

Democratic Contribution



1. How do minor parties contribute their quota to Ghana's democratic governance?
2. Can you please identify any key public policy proposal of third parties and how the major parties have responded to it?

Questions for the Electoral Commission of Ghana

1. Kindly describe the process of registering a political party in Ghana?
2. Kindly describe the process of filling a nomination as an election candidate in both parliamentary and presidential elections?
3. What are the determinants of candidate filing fees in Ghana?
4. How much have election candidates been required to pay as filing fees in each election year since 1992?
5. What challenges do minor parties face in Ghana?

6. Does the Electoral Commission provide some logistical support to political parties or election candidates? If yes, indicate the nature of support and the formula for allocation.
7. What are some of the contributions of minor parties to Ghana's democratic development?
8. What challenges do minor parties face in Ghana's electoral politics?

Appendix D: Sample of Letter from the NDC Requesting for Refund of Candidate Nomination Fees for the 2020 General Election

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS
NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

Our Ref: NDC/HQ/69/VOL2/278

Your Ref:

P. O. Box AN 5825
Accra - North, Ghana
Tel: +233 (0) 302 222 265
Email: ndcghq@gmail.com

The Chairperson
Electoral Commission
Ghana

Chief Accountant Date: 9/02/2021
For payment
2/3/2021

Dear Madam,

REQUEST FOR REFUND OF PARLIAMENTARY AND PRESIDENTIAL FILING FEES OF THE 2020 GENERAL ELECTIONS

The Functional Executive Committee (FEC) of the National Democratic Congress sends you warm greetings.

FEC also wishes to inform you that it is formally requesting for a refund of deposits it made in respect of its Presidential and Parliamentary candidates.

Regulations 46(1) and 46(3) of C.1.127 spell out the conditions for a refund or forfeiture of deposits made by Presidential or Parliamentary Candidates. A Presidential or Parliamentary candidate must obtain a minimum of 25% and 12.5% respectively in a General Election to qualify for a refund.

We would be grateful if you could refund their deposits into the NDC account with GCB Bank Ltd., Accra New Town Branch, A/C No. 1181130011568.

Please find attached a list of our candidates with their respective constituencies who met the legal thresholds for the refund.

Thank you.

Hon. Johnston Ayeddu Nketiah
General Secretary

ATTN
Director Electoral Services
M.O
23-2-2021

@Dot An Finance
PLS NDC qualified for refund of the Presidential deposit and 269 Parliamentary deposits as per the 2020 General Elections results @ 02/03/2021

Appendix E: Ethics Approval



Faculty of Humanities

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Lefapha la Bomotha



19 October 2021

Dear Mr E Yobo

Project Title:	Minor Parties and Democratic Governance in Ghana's Fourth Republic
Researcher:	Mr E Yobo
Supervisor(s):	Prof VL Graham
Department:	Political Sciences
Reference number:	20761032 (HUM041/0721)
Degree:	Doctoral

I have pleasure in informing you that the above application was **approved** by the Research Ethics Committee on 19 October 2021. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should the actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely,

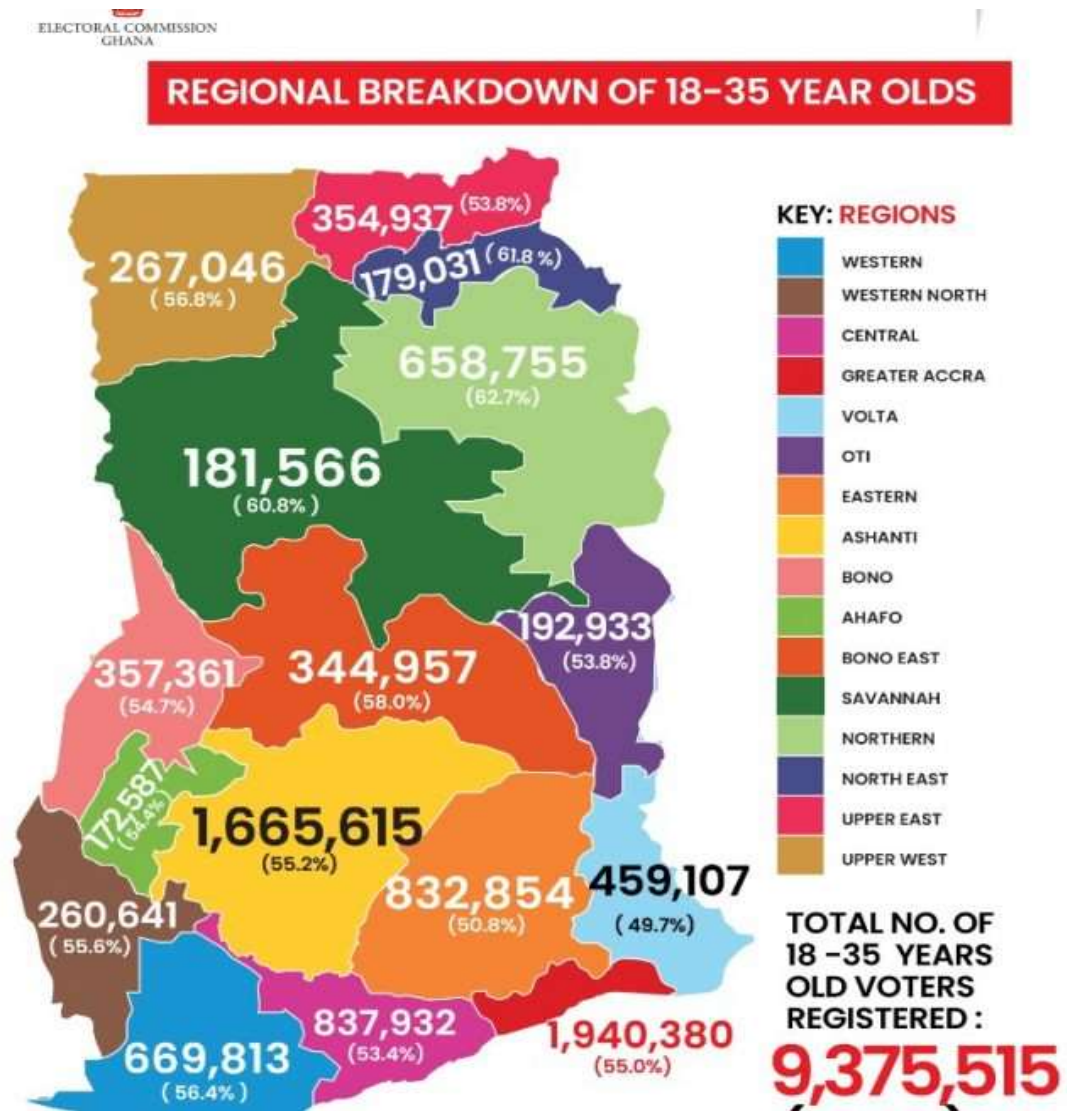
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Harris'.

Prof Karen Harris
Chair: Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: tracey.andrew@up.ac.za

Research Ethics Committee Members: Prof RL Harris (Chair); Mr A Biso; Dr A-M de Beer; Dr A dos Santos; Dr P Gubura; Ms KT Govinder Andrew; Dr E Johnson; Dr D Krige; Prof D Maree; Mr A Mohamed; Dr I Noomé; Dr J Okeke; Dr C Puttergill; Prof D Reysbarr; Prof M Soer; Prof E Tsjard; Ms D Mokalapa

Room 7-27, Humanities Building, University of Pretoria, Private Bag X20, Hatfield 008, South Africa
Tel +27 (0)12 420 4853; Fax +27 (0)12 420 4501; Email pghumanities@up.ac.za | www.up.ac.za/faculty-of-humanities

Appendix F: Age Distribution of the 2020 Ghanaian Voters Register



Source: Electoral Commission Website, 2022;

<https://www.ec.gov.gh/elections-gallery/>

Appendix G: Some disparaging news headlines on minor parties in Ghana



The screenshot shows the GhanaWeb mobile interface. At the top, the URL is 'mobile.ghanaweb.com'. Below the navigation bar, there are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. The article title is 'Never waste your vote on the smaller political parties'. Below the title is a grid of 17 political party logos and names, including NDC, PNC, CPP, PPP, and GCPP. A quote from the article reads: 'Voting for smaller political parties will be a waste of time'. The source is cited as 'Osei Tutu' and the date is 'Sat, 24 Oct 2020'. The main text of the article begins: 'When seventeen political parties and individuals filed nomination to contest the presidential race in the upcoming elections, I wrote an article and suggested that the number be pruned down to a manageable level.'



The screenshot shows the PeaceFM online website. The URL is 'peacefmonline.com/p...'. The article title is 'PNC, CPP, PPP, GCPP Are All Useless Parties', which is circled in red. The author is 'Sekou Nkrumah'. The article text reads: 'Dr. Sekou Nkrumah, the last son of Ghana's first President Dr. Kwame Nkrumah has described the minority political parties in Ghana as useless entities. He told XYZ Breakfast that: PNC, CPP, PPP, GCPP they are all useless, adding: Ghana's politics is now NDC and NPP it is clear that we are stuck with...'

Appendix H: PPP sues Government of Ghana over Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE)

18 Politics

April 1, 2014

Visit www.graphic.com.gh

PPP sues govt over FCUBE

By Michael Donkor, ACCRA

THE Progressive People's Party (PPP) has filed a writ against the Attorney General at the Supreme Court, praying it to compel the government to enforce the free aspect of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy.

According to the party, successive governments had only between January 1993 and January 2005 to complete the roll out of the FCUBE as stipulated by the 1992 Constitution but they defaulted.

It said governments had also failed to enforce the compulsory aspect of the FCUBE, resulting in children of school age loitering during school hours.

It is, therefore, praying the court to direct the government to take steps to ensure that all children of school age are made to benefit from the

FCUBE.

Statement of claim

A statement of claim accompanying the writ prayed for the true and proper interpretation of articles 25(1)(a) and 38(2) of the 1992 Constitution.

It also prayed for a declaration that on the true and proper interpretation of articles 14(1)(e), 25(1)(a) and 38(2) of the 1992 Constitution, the government had a constitutional duty to compel children of school age within the Republic who refused and or failed to do to be at school without fail and that the government's failure to so act thereto constituted an omission that was inconsistent with the Constitution.

It prayed the court for a declaration that Section 2 of the Education Act, 2008 (Act 778) as amended, to the extent that it failed to provide for compulsion on children of school age who refused and or failed to attend basic education instructions to so attend and also to provide for the law and procedure within which to exercise that compulsion, was an omission that was

inconsistent with and in contravention to articles 14(1)(e), 25(1)(a) and 38(2) of the 1992 Constitution and that consequently, to the extent of such inconsistency, the said Section 2 of the Education Act, 2008 (Act 778) was void and of no effect.

It further prayed for a declaration that Section 2(6) of the Education Act, 2008 (Act 778) as amended, to the extent that it derogated from articles 25(1)(a) and 38(2) of the 1992 Constitution, was inconsistent and in contravention of the Constitution and that consequently, to the extent of such inconsistency, the said Section 2(6) of the Education Act, 2008 (Act 778) as amended was void and of no effect.

The statement, among other reliefs, also prayed the court for an order directed at the government to take steps forthwith to compel children of school age within the Republic who refused and or failed to attend a course of instructions at the basic school to attend basic school instructions, including legislating to lay bare the laws and procedure thereto within which such compulsion was to be exercised.



Dr. Paa Kwesi Niihoo

CANDY



EASTER SALE

Appendix I: Minor Party Parliamentarians and Committees of Parliament, 1997-2016

SN	NAME OF MP	PARTY	CONSTITUENCY	PARL	C'TTEE	PARL	C'TTEE	PARL	C'TTEE	PARL	C'TTEE
1.	Moses Dani Baah	PNC	SISSALA EAST			3 RD	Subsidiary Legislation; Roads & Transport	4 TH	Special Budget; Roads & Transport; Selection; Health		Selection
2.	Kojo Armah	CPP	Evalue-Gwira		Constitutional, Legal & Parliamentary Affairs; Foreign Affairs & Information			4 TH	Constitutional, Legal & Parliamentary Affairs; Foreign Affairs & Information; Subsidiary Legislation; Communications; Local Govt & Rural Devt		
3.	Haruna Bayirga	PNC	Sissala West					4 TH	Appointments; Works & Housing; Poverty Reduction Strategy (Ad-hoc); Members Holding Offices Of Profit; Youth, Sports & Culture	5 TH	Govt Assurance; Finance
4.	Paa Kwesi Nduom	CPP	KEEA					4 TH	Finance; Local Govt & Rural Devt		
5.	Alhassan Azong	PNC	Builsa South							5 TH & 6 TH	Standing Orders; Judiciary; Members Holding Offices Of Profit
6.	Samia Nkrumah	CPP	Jomoro							5 TH	Govt Assurance; Standing Orders
7.	David Apasera	PNC	Bolgatanga			3 RD	Appointments; Foreign Affairs; Works & Housing; Judiciary	4 TH	Selection; Foreign Affairs; Works & Housing; Appointments		
8.	Issifu Azumah	PNC	West Mamprusi				Special Budget; Public Accounts				
9.	Fredrick Blay	CPP	Ellembelle	2 ND	Mines & Energy; Env't, Sci & Tech		Appointments; Standing Orders; Selection	4 TH	Privileges; Appointments; Food, Agric & Cocoa Affairs;		
10.	George Mpambi Dagmanyi	PNC	Bimbilla	2 ND	Food, Agric & Cocoa Affairs						Finance
11.	John Ndebugre	PNC	Zebilla					4 th	Judiciary; Constitutional, Legal & Parliamentary Affairs		

Source: Author's Compilation based on Parliamentary Data, 2022

Appendix J: PNC's Council of Elder Intervention & 2020 PNC Filing Fee



HEADQUARTERS

Location:
Abavana Junction
Kotobabi-Accra
Ghana, West Africa

PEOPLES NATIONAL CONVENTION

MOTTO: SERVICE WITH HONESTY

P.O.Box AC 120

Arts Centre

Accra, Ghana

Tel: +233(302)230351

Email: pncghana1992@yahoo.com

PEOPLE'S NATIONAL CONVENTION'S COUNCIL OF ELDERS' INTERVENTION REGARDING THE OPENING OF NOMINATIONS AND SCHEDULES NATIONAL CONGRESS FOR 26TH SEPTEMBER 2020

The Council of Elders of the People's National Convention at its emergency meeting held in Accra on Saturday 22nd August 2020 has decided in the larger interest of the party to intervene to resolve the impasse between the National Executive Committee members and the Leader of the Party regarding the dates for the filing of nominations and filing fees for the party's impending congress prior to the 2020 General Elections.

The Elders have accordingly resolved as follows:

1. Per the directive of NEC, nominations shall remain open at all regions of the country for all aspirants who are contesting for positions of the party till 7th September 2020.
2. The submissions of forms by the aspirants must be done by close of work on Monday the 31st of August 2020.
3. The Filing fees shall be as follows;

	GH¢
i. Flagbearer	30,000.00
ii. National Chairperson	20,000.00
iii. National Vice Chairperson	10,000.00
iv. General Secretary	10,000.00
v. National Organizer	5,000.00
vi. National Women's Organizer	5,000.00
vii. National Treasurer	5,000.00
viii. National Youth Organizer	5,000.00