

Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

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**The Intricacies of Peace, Democracy and Development in the
Central African Sub-Region: Understanding the Trends and
Challenges.**

Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this PhD thesis entitled “The Intricacies of Peace, Democracy and Development in the Central African Sub-Region: Understanding the Trends and Challenges.” is the outcome of my own labor. It doesn't include any content that has already been submitted, in whole or in part, to any educational institution for the purpose of conferring another degree or diploma. To the best of my knowledge, all previously published resources included in this thesis have been properly cited. Unless otherwise referenced or recognized.

Candidate's Signature:.....

Date:

Name: Formella Collins Nkapnwo

Supervisor's Declaration

I declare that this dissertation entitled “The Intricacies of Peace, Democracy and Development in the Central African Sub-Region: Understanding the Trends and Challenges.” submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Mr. Formella Collins Nkapnwo is the record of research work carried out by him under my guidance and supervision. This work has not formed the basis for the award of any other degree, diploma, fellowship, associateship or other titles in the Ludovika University of Public Service or any other University or Institution. To the best of my knowledge,

- The thesis embodies the results of original work
- Literary presentation is satisfactory, and the thesis is in a form suitable for defense
- The thesis exhibits the capacity of the candidate for critical examination and independent judgement.
- The thesis is made as per the guidelines provided by the Ludovika University of Public Service

Prof. Dr. Szabolcs Pásztor PhD



Abstract

This study delves into the intricate connections between peace, democracy, and development in the Central African sub-region, a region often characterized by political unrest and economic hardships. Through a comprehensive analysis of the link between these three aspects, the research aims to reveal prevailing patterns and identify the persisting obstacles hindering advancements in these domains. This dissertation makes use of a combination of both descriptive and correlational research design to elucidate the trends and challenges plaguing this geopolitically volatile area. It focuses its attention on countries such as Cameroon and Central African Republic comparing them with countries like Ghana and Kenya, with the aim of dissecting the multifaceted relationships that link political stability or peace with democratic governance, and economic development. Through a detailed descriptive analysis, this study outlines the current state of political affairs, the democratic processes, and their current levels of economic development, including an exploration of historical conflicts, governance frameworks and economic performance metrics. It then makes use of the correlation technique to identify and quantify the relationship between these three variables, in a way that permits the reader to understand how each of these variables influences and predicts the others. With an extensive use of data involving secondary data from reports from non-governmental organizations and international databases, the analysis derived helps to provide a nuanced understanding of how the presence of or lack of each of these variables affects the other. The findings reveal that the Central African sub-region is characterized by a cyclical pattern of political instability, which profoundly affects democratic governance and economic growth. It is quite clear that periods of instability correlate with sharp declines in democratic practices and economic stagnation. Conversely, to the situation in Cameroon and Central Africa, this study also highlights in a careful comparative case study, instances which prove that efforts towards democratization and improved governance bring about more sustainable peace, and economic development as exemplified in Ghana and Kenya. On the otherhand, this dissertation equally identifies key challenges, such as deepened political corruption, clientelism, and external political forces, which contribute to suppress these variables in all societies. This research posits that achieving sustainable peace and development in the Central African sub-region hinges significantly on the creation of robust democratic structures and inclusive governance mechanisms. This dissertation a section towards proposing policy recommendations that aim

to reinforce democratic institutions, improve economic sustainability, thus promoting unity and peace. It also emphasizes on the need for support that prioritizes local needs and conditions.

Absztrakt/Összefoglalás

Ez a tanulmány a béke, a demokrácia és a fejlődés közötti bonyolult összefüggéseket vizsgálja a közép-afrikai alrégióban, amelyet gyakran politikai zavargások és gazdasági nehézségek jellemeznek. E három szempont közötti kapcsolat átfogó elemzésén keresztül a kutatás célja, hogy feltárja az uralkodó mintákat, és azonosítsa az e területeken a fejlődést gátló, továbbra is fennálló akadályokat. Ez a disszertáció a leíró és korrelációs kutatási terv kombinációját alkalmazza annak érdekében, hogy megvilágítsa az ezt a geopolitikailag ingatag térséget sújtó tendenciákat és kihívásokat. Figyelmét olyan országokra összpontosítja, mint Kamerun és a Közép-afrikai Köztársaság, összehasonlítva azokat olyan országokkal, mint Ghána és Kenya, azzal a céllal, hogy feltárja azokat a sokrétű kapcsolatokat, amelyek a politikai stabilitást vagy békét a demokratikus kormányzással és a gazdasági fejlődéssel kapcsolják össze. A tanulmány részletes leíró elemzésen keresztül felvázolja a politikai ügyek jelenlegi helyzetét, a demokratikus folyamatokat és a gazdasági fejlődés jelenlegi szintjét, beleértve a történelmi konfliktusok, a kormányzási keretek és a gazdasági teljesítmény mérőszámainak vizsgálatát. Ezután a korrelációs technikát használja fel e három változó közötti kapcsolat azonosítására és számszerűsítésére oly módon, hogy az olvasó megérthesse, hogy az egyes változók hogyan befolyásolják és jelzik előre a többit. A nem kormányzati szervezetek jelentéseiből és nemzetközi adatbázisokból származó másodlagos adatok széles körű felhasználásával a levezetett elemzés segít árnyaltan megérteni, hogyan befolyásolja az egyes változók pontossága vagy hiánya a másik változót. Az eredmények azt mutatják, hogy a közép-afrikai szubrégiót a politikai instabilitás ciklikus mintázata jellemzi, amely mélyen befolyásolja a demokratikus kormányzást és a gazdasági növekedést. Teljesen egyértelmű, hogy az instabil időszakok a demokratikus gyakorlatok erőteljes visszaesésével és gazdasági stagnálással járnak együtt. A kameruni és közép-afrikai helyzettel ellentétben ez a tanulmány egy gondos összehasonlító esettanulmányban olyan eseteket is kiemel, amelyek bizonyítják, hogy a demokratizálódásra és a jobb kormányzásra irányuló erőfeszítések fenntarthatóbb békét és gazdasági fejlődést eredményeznek, ahogyan azt Ghána és Kenya példája mutatja. Másrészt ez a disszertáció ugyanúgy azonosítja a legfontosabb kihívásokat, mint például az elmélyült politikai korrupció, a klientelizmus és a külső politikai erők, amelyek hozzájárulnak ahhoz, hogy ezek a változók minden társadalomban elnyomják ezeket a változókat. Ez a kutatás azt állítja, hogy a fenntartható béke és fejlődés elérése a közép-afrikai szubrégióban jelentősen függ a szilárd demokratikus struktúrák és az inkluzív kormányzási mechanizmusok létrehozásától. Ez a

disszertáció egy olyan szakpolitikai ajánlásokat javasol, amelyek célja a demokratikus intézmények megerősítése, a gazdasági fenntarthatóság javítása, ezáltal az egység és a béke előmozdítása. Hangsúlyozza továbbá, hogy olyan támogatásra van szükség, amely a helyi szükségleteket és feltételeket helyezi előtérbe.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of all the people that have lost their lives in the Cameroon Anglophone crisis. To my parents and family, whose unwavering support, encouragement, and love have been my greatest source of strength. To my mother, for her endless patience and understanding, and Daddy Ngefac Tasong, for his wisdom and guidance, I owe my deepest gratitude.

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List of Abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
AFRC	Armed Forces for Revolutionary Council
APRD	Popular Army of the Restoration of Democracy
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BTI	BertelsmannStiftung Transformation Index
CAR	Central African Republic
CHR	Centre for Human Rights
CIGs	Common Initiative Groups
CNU	Cameroon National Union
CPDM	Cameroon Peoples Democratic Movement
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CPJP	Patriots for Justice and Peace
CPP	Convention People's Party
CRM	Cameroon Renaissance Movement
CRTV	Cameroon Radio and Television
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations

DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DW	Deutsche Welle
DWB	Doctors Without Borders
EC	European Commission
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit
ELECAM	Cameroon National Electoral Commission
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICC	International Criminal Court
IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
IEP	Institute for Economics and Peace
IIAG	Ibrahim Index of African Governance
IIDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KNDP	Kamerun National Democratic Party
KPU	Kenya People Union
LON	League of Nations

MESAN	Social Evolution Movement of Black Africa
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MRC	Mouvement pour la Renaissance du Cameroun
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NLC	National Liberation Council
NPP	New Patriotic Party
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PDA	Preventive Detention Act
PNDC	Provisional National Defense Council
PNP	People's National Party
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
RTI	Right to Information
SCNC	Southern Cameroons National Council
SDF	Social Democratic Fron
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UC	Union Camerounaise
UFDR	Union of Democratic Forces for Unity
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UPC	Union of the Peoples of Cameroon
USDS	United States Department of State
WGI	Worldwide Governance Indicators

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since independence, many countries in the African continent have experienced a checkered and questionable economic history, defined by a cycle of short-term gains, regression, and stagnation. This history is characterized by persistent incidences of public demonstrations, due to the disappointments from retrogressive economic policies and the continents' historical roots, which have led to elite capture, dependency, and institutional deficiencies. These historical underlying forces seemingly contribute a great deal to its present status-quo, thus enclaving the political setting of these countries and consequently the consolidation of democracy. Neo-colonial lineages, embezzlement of state resources and corruption have stood at the top of these country's economic agenda since they were promised independence in the 1960's. These habits are no longer relics of the past; rather, they have developed into intricate systems of impunity and patronage.

This persistent dysfunctioning of the system or what I prefer to call 'anomaly', is based on the fact that it remains an issue conducted and of no consequential concern as to putting an end to it by the leaders of these countries. A large percentage of the population is systematically excluded from political and economic involvement as a result of this "anomaly," which has solidified into a culture of governance that feeds on opacity and exclusion. This has misguided the composition and operation of the body politics of these countries, further impeding and frustrating the already precarious peaceful coexistence and effective service delivery of public goods and services provoked by the colonialists. I will highlight that the outcomes of economic policies and citizens' participation in elections and electoral outcomes in these countries have been very discouraging, as the politics of self-interest, accompanied by corrupt governments, who retain power through electoral malpractices remains the day-to-day state of affairs in these countries. Instead of being true manifestations of democratic will, elections are all frequently converted to ceremonial events.

There remains an influx of political, bureaucratic and socio-cultural constraints to economic development, consequently the lack of democratic consolidation and peace. Despite recorded improvements in local participation in developmental schemes throughout these countries, genuine participation and responsibility within the leaders and the peoples has not been marked to be growing. In most cases, rather than empowering communities, this superficial involvement serves to legitimize objectives led by the elite. Evidence of this is that these countries continually are being stormed by intricate webs of crises, clientelism, electoral malpractices, decaying economic policies and moral and political decay with ceaseless regime and leadership failures, who continually try to wriggle themselves out of these situations that are more or less of their own proper creation.

Such unproductive policies remain nothing but stumbling blocks to meeting the development needs of these developing economies, thus requesting an urgent need for different strategies to wipe out poverty, by bringing in place sustainable development at all levels of the economy. Reviving civil society as a check on state authority, establishing transparency, and fostering a leadership culture based on public service rather than private benefit must be the first steps in this process. Emphasis as this study shall further reveal must lay this task to the strengthening of proper checks and balances possible in civil society establishments and lastly the encouragement of genuineness and selflessness among leaders. Effective governance and democratic legitimacy can thrive in this normative framework.

Democracy has been experimented in Africa for several years now and people continually wait impatiently to see some desired results, but their aspirations have always been cut short. Majority of these countries' populace who are poor continue to hope for change that seemingly may never come, especially with the present state of affairs characterizing the political activities of these countries. This status-quo prompted me to reason out some positive remedies to such undemocratic and retrogressive development entrapment. As it is always said, that necessity is the mother of invention, initiating and institutionalizing reform should, in my opinion, be the primary focus of citizen participation, which is led by organized civil society organizations that represent the true desires of the people. These groups must actively participate in budget monitoring, governance procedures, and policy co-creation in addition to advocacy. Such civic movements can exert the force required to shape change in the face of a receptive, or occasionally pressurized, administration. This study shall seek to establish an alternative approach to the existing democracy rhetoric, approaching democratic development

by laying emphasis on development economics and the role of economic growth in the transformation of these countries.

The Central African sub-region and almost the whole of sub-Saharan Africa has been characterized by an intricate chemistry of dynamics regarding peace, democracy and development. This dissertation aims to take the painstaking task to examine the sophisticated relationships, the prevailing trends, and significant challenges that shape the connection between peace, democracy and development in the Central African region. In so doing, this research seeks to brighten the multidimensional nature of these interactions by investigating the underlying factors that either enable or obstruct the achievement of sustainable peace, vigorous democratic institutions, and meaningful and sustainable development in this especially unique part of the world. Additionally, it will look at how international financial institutions, regional economic communities, and geopolitical actors have shaped these processes.

Despite the great attention that debates surrounding peace, democracy and development in the Central African sub-region and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in general have received, their importance remains paramount due to several ongoing factors whose evolving dynamics makes them even more of pressing need. This dissertation aims to make up for the deficiency of modern solutions to the ever-changing environment by offering a pragmatic exploration of the intricate dynamics that characterize the region. The geographical and political landscape of the Central African sub-region is constantly evolving, with new actors, new interests, and influence which shape the region. This dissertation thus tries to capture these changes and provide a nuanced understanding of the ways in which both internal and external influences impact the pursuit of robust peace, democratic consolidation and sustainable development. It also funds a deeper understanding of these intricate issues by providing valuable guidance for policies and actions that can result to positive and long-lasting changes in the Central African sub-region. By doing this, it hopes to function as a guide for regional institutions, civil society actors, and governments looking to enact significant change in addition to being an academic contribution.

The purpose of this study is to model a unique analysis, which provides a sustainable path towards tracing first the problems facing the implementation of strong civil societies to ensure that development is not only economic, but also human and also reflected in other aspects, then evaluating how effective the implementation has been so far at attaining its objectives. It will

present a practical explanation of why the Central African Region is lacking behind other regions of Africa, in terms of good governance, development and peace. This study shall seek to establish an alternative approach to the existing democracy rhetoric, approaching the democratic development by laying emphasis on development economics and the role of economic growth in the transformation of these countries. The work will close the gap between theory and practice by relating institutional analysis to grassroots realities, offering empirically supported ideas that can guide practical solutions. This thus makes the research unique and interesting.

1.2 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Several compelling reasons drove the desire towards the choice of this topic for this doctoral research. An overview of the motivations for this topic is provided below:

- The persistent need of addressing the several issues that plague the Central African sub-region. The interval of occurrence of issues in the nature of conflicts, political instability, and underdevelopment do not only make the search for a solution a moral imperative but also critical for the well-being of the people in the region and the stability of Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole.
- Also, this topic tackles the interconnections between peace, democracy, and development, distinguishing that any progress made in either domain can positively influence the others. This presents a holistic viewpoint which is very important in formulating the much desired inclusive and solutions.
- The history, cultural diversity, and challenges surrounding the Central African sub-region make it a unique geopolitical point of interest. This regional specificity is important because it highlights the important of localized research, in order enables the ability to draw upon historical experiences, learn from past initiatives and their successes and failures. This makes it possible for more operational strategies based on regional and historical distinctiveness to be developed.
- Another very important reason for choosing this topic is driven by ethical and moral imperative and the need to implant a potential impact. Engaging in research that backs

principles such as human well-being, human rights, which are associated with peace, democracy and development, is a responsibility. This research has the prospective of informing policy decisions, interventions, and strategies that can lead to sustainable peace, democratic consolidation and robust development, thus positively influencing the lives of those living in and around the region.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

In order to fill the existing policy gap and correctly analyse the assumptions, practices and also compare the different concepts, methods and theories that have been so far used in the analysis of issues surrounding the lack of peace, democracy and development in the Central African sub-region, the foundation of this dissertation is guided by the following research questions:

- To what extent has the lack of economic sovereignty and democratization affected peace and development in the Central African region? This question seeks to address the lapses faced in the democratic consolidation process in the countries of Central Africa Region, who with a common historical background, also face common problems regarding their democratic and development structures, which have transcended into their economic and social development. It is crucial to acknowledge that these common historical legacies, especially the colonial administrative systems, still have an impact on modern governance and institutional structures. The region's political economy is significantly influenced by post-colonial dependencies, fragile state institutions, and a political culture dominated by elites, which has side-lined citizen participation. We also have to bear in mind that the concept of democracy since its adoption by many African countries has been understood and defined by many to be the holding of regular elections. Looking at this closely, this research also seeks to address this issue of democratic lapses by investigating and providing answers to the question that;
- Does the holding of regular elections guarantee the process of democratic consolidation as enshrined during the 'third wave'? This dissertation shall focus on analysing 'what is it that has to be ruled and run in a democratic manner, particularly if we want a political system subtle and so sensitive that it can catch small signals from the people and convert them into concrete ideas that can be

put on the agenda and ultimately also into practice. In this particular scenario, the research also considers the structural barriers to responsiveness and effective representation in political systems where civil rights are still severely curtailed and electoral cycles are managed to strengthen incumbents. It investigates whether, in these situations, democratic institutions benefit the general populace or if they only serve to justify authoritarian governance masquerading as democracy.

The focus of this study shall in effect divert and pay greater attention to the role and importance of strong civil societies. Studies on democracy in Africa have more often only laid emphasis to electoral irregularities, regime longevity and constitutional reforms, with very little emphasis given to civil society, which is the people, who should be the focal point of every talk of democracy. A strong and educated people equal a strong and consolidated democracy. Under such a structure, community-based groups, local leadership, and grassroots mobilization play a crucial role in influencing public opinion and holding the government responsible. Without these systems, social marginalization and political indifference are made worse by the growing divide between the state and society. This has hardly been the case, as things that are supposed to be outspoken are mouth-tapped.

The need for social transformation has often been largely neglected in Africa. Accountability remains oblique as far as social life in most African countries is concerned and as such, the truth remains unknown because of the lack of a robust civil society, which has consequently denied majority of these countries' populations' access to the good life they all deserve. Restrictive legal frameworks, intimidation, and a lack of funding all exacerbate the marginalization of civil society actors and damage the culture of political participation and dissent. By exposing the ideological and institutional limitations that impede the region's civil society's capacity for emancipation, this study aims to critically examine these dynamics. Investments in strengthening the knowledge-base of civil societies empower the people to be aware of their duties and prerogatives, which permit them, live a better and peaceful life.

The main goal of this thesis is to examine and gather empirical evidence related to the above-mentioned research questions and also to reveal their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and finally try to deduce policy options that may help advance the situation. In the process, the study also aims to develop practical suggestions that are sensitive to the context and flexible enough

to accommodate the socio-political realities of the various Central African sub-regional nations.

1.4 HYPOTHESES

Within the context of the comparative case-study that this thesis undertakes on the correlation between advances in peace, democracy and the level of political stability and development in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), my analysis will be directed by the following hypothesis:

- It is assumed that the democratic deficit in the former French colonies in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) can be associated to the decline in political stability and the level of development in the region as will be examined in the case-study countries.
- Inversely, it is also assumed that the advances in democracy in former British colonies in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) can be associated to the increase in their levels of political stability and development as will be examined in the case-study countries.

The divergence between French assimilationist efforts and the British model of indirect rule stems from the administrative remnants of colonial governance. In the post-independence era, these distinct legacies have had a lasting impact on decentralization, institutional development, and the character of state-society relations. To further support these presumptions, donor policies, regional alliances, and civil-military relationships in both categories of countries are examined.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This study draws its significance from the fact that it tackles a very pertinent, pressing, and challenging issue confronting the stability and development of Sub-Saharan African countries' decline in democracy. The political landscape in most Sub-Saharan African states is marked by a decline in democratic governance evident in human rights violation, shrinking of the civic space, election malpractices, unbridled corruption amongst others. Using two countries in the Central African sub-region (Cameroon and Central African Republic) as case-studies, this thesis tries to provide a meticulous breakdown of the interaction between democratic decline, political stability and development. To guarantee a thorough examination, it takes a

multidisciplinary approach, incorporating ideas from international relations, political science, sociology, and development studies. Drawing nuanced conclusions across many national and regional contexts is made possible by this triangulation, which also strengthens the findings' robustness. While several scholars have written individually on the three aforementioned political phenomena, some academic inquiries have been undertaken to address the interplay between the three. Very few academic literature and research pieces focuses on a comparative study on the interplay of these three issues in the framework of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This thesis is one of the few to focus entirely on this issue. This therefore seeks to make a noteworthy addition to the corpus of knowledge in the field of African governance in general and on the impact of democratic decline in African countries.

This thesis makes a unique contribution to knowledge on democratic governance in Africa through its comparative approach, which looks to identify parallels and discrepancies in the democratic experience and its impact on political stability and development. This approach examines both the subregional level, using Cameroon and the Central African Republic in Central Africa as case studies, and the regional level, with cases from Ghana in West Africa and Kenya in East Africa. The incorporation of nations from various subregions offers a more comprehensive analytical framework for recognizing the ways in which diverse colonial histories, post-colonial developments, and regional institutions like the African Union and ECOWAS impact governance results.

Finally, the significance of this thesis is also embedded in the fact that it does not just seek to add another academic work on the shelves but intends to act as a resource and informational guide for policy-makers in Africa and beyond who are confronted with addressing the challenges of governance in Sub-Saharan African countries. Its guidelines are meant to be useful instruments for international cooperation initiatives, focused capacity-building, and reform initiatives that support sustainable development and democratic institutions.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

In terms of scope, this thesis has both a subregional and regional outlook. It focuses principally on two countries in the Central African sub-region as its case-studies: Cameroon and the Central African Republic. However, to offer a more comprehensive background and viewpoint, it compares the experience of the two case study countries, which are both former French

colonies, to that of two other African countries with a different history, approach and outcome in democratic governance: Ghana in West Africa and Kenya in East Africa. This comparative analysis is crucial for emphasizing the diversity of democratic experiences across Africa and challenges the overly simplistic narratives that portray the continent as uniform. By exploring both commonalities and differences, the study uncovers deeper insights into the internal and external factors driving democratic transformation and resilience.

A more sophisticated understanding of how various colonial legacies, legal frameworks, state-building paths, and international alignments have influenced the governance models established throughout Sub-Saharan Africa is also made possible by the regional comparison. The variety in levels of political stability, economical development, and democratic consolidation also influenced the choice of case studies, offering a chance to evaluate both areas of ongoing struggle and best practices.

Methodologically, this thesis relies extensively on secondary sources given the financial and logistic constraints involved in undertaking field trips to gather data from primary sources. To circumvent this limitation, this researcher has made use of online data repositories containing primary data like composite indices published by the World Bank and the Mo Ibrahim Foundation's Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG). To further enhance the qualitative aspect of the study, the thesis also includes content analysis of scholarly journals, policy papers, media sources, and historical writings.

However, the use of secondary data has some restrictions on how in-depth the research can be. For example, secondary data might not provide the context-specific information that surveys or field interviews might. Furthermore, the conclusions may be impacted by biases included in the original sources or indicators that international organizations utilize. Rapid political events may also be missed by datasets, particularly those updated annually, due to the dynamic and fluid character of governance in many Sub-Saharan nations.

Although the study's focus is on the trinity of democracy, peace, and development, other significant factors including gender equality, youth involvement, environmental governance, and regional integration are recognized but not thoroughly investigated. These might provide directions for further study. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the research aims for analytical rigor by critically assessing the body of existing literature and triangulating sources. It provides

a strong framework on which more empirical, participatory, and multidisciplinary research can be conducted, particularly studies that involve stakeholder participation and data collecting on the ground.

1.7 THESIS STRUCTURE

There are eight chapters in this thesis. The subject matter and the thesis's main questions are outlined in the introduction chapter, along with the objectives, the significance and contribution of the research, It also describes the research's scope the relevant literature and hypotheses related to peace, democracy and development in Sub-Sahara Africa. It also defines the limits of the study.

The second chapter delves deep into the methodology, research design and strategy, the justification for the use of a mixed-method approach. It equally discusses the reliability and validity of the study.

Chapter 3 of this thesis looks at the nature of politics in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with a comparative case-study between two former British colonies (Ghana and Kenya) and two former French colonies (Cameroon and Central African Republic). It shall explore the nature of democratic governance in these countries and highlight similarities and differences.

The fourth chapter shall provide a critical analysis of rigid constitutionalism, legitimacy, and democracy in politics of SSA countries.

Chapter 5 is going to examine the decline of democracy and its impact on political stability in the two main case-study countries of this thesis—Cameroon and Central African Republic.

The sixth chapter shall focus on the decline of democracy and its impact on political stability in Cameroon and Central African Republic.

Chapter 7 shall present a comparative analysis between the effect of the level of democracy on political stability and development in SSA. It shall compare the case of Cameroon and Central Africa (former French colonies) to that of Ghana and Kenya (former British colonies).

The eight and last chapter will focus on a general conclusion of the entire thesis. It will provide

an overview of the key ideas, and conclusions from each of the different chapters and determine whether or not the hypothesis that was set forth at the beginning of the thesis can be validated or not based on the facts brought forth in this thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Understanding the problem of democratic deficiency in Central Africa and its impact on peace and development in the region requires a robust research methodology. The methodological framework of the thesis is the primary focus of this chapter. It identifies and explains the various choices in terms of approach, procedures and techniques that would be employed in collecting and analyzing data on the interplay between peace, democracy, and development in the Central African region. This study will adopt a mixed method, which constitutes qualitative and quantitative methods alongside positivist and interpretivist research techniques, which attempts to understand the reality of a phenomenon using objective legal principles. The dissertation will embrace a cross sectional case study method, which will complement each other; to enable it to better execute the research agenda. It will focus on Cameroon, Central African Republic; countries which having a common heritage of colonization, face serious governmental problems with weak political systems, whose governments though elected, have been almost transformed to autocratic regimes, and rigged by corruption, poverty and underdevelopment.

The study also acknowledges the limits of using a single methodological approach to reflect the complexity of the region's governance concerns. This technique will therefore be used to improve validity and guarantee that results are independent of methodology. This involves combining survey data, and document analysis to record lived experiences as well as institutional patterns. A dynamic lens for comprehending not only what is but also what should be in terms of democratic practice in Central Africa is also provided by the application of both normative and empirical methodologies.

2.2 LOGIC OF INQUIRY

Generally, there are two logic of inquiry researchers can use in their quest to acquire knowledge on different phenomena: inductive and deductive approach. An inductive approach or reasoning

is a method of inquiry, which begins with observations on specific cases and seeks to establish generalizations at the end (Hyde, 2000). Inductive research design is especially helpful in sectors with little prior information because it is frequently associated with the development of new ideas rather than the analysis of preexisting ones (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Inductive research design, according to Bernard (2011: p.7), "consists of the search for pattern from observation and the development of explanation theories for those patterns through series of hypotheses." An inductive research methodology is very useful for the development of theories or concepts given that it identifies patterns from data collected through observation and try to derive general propositions from them (Sheppard, 2020). This approach, which is usually exploratory, enables researchers to stay receptive to fresh perspectives as they arise from the data (Thomas, 2006). Qualitative research usually follows an inductive approach but theories based on this method of inquiry is often untested (Hyde, 2000). Inductive approach can be considered a bottom-top approach in carrying out research.

Deductive approach, on the other hand is the reverse of inductive approach in that it begins with generalizations, which are applied to specific cases. Bingham and Witkowsky (2022) point out that deductive analysis entails "applying theory to the data to test the theory". Deductive research is particular useful for qualitative or quantitative research works that involve hypothesis testing. Wilson (2010: p. 7) summarizes the essence of deductive approach as one that involves "formulating a hypothesis (or hypotheses) grounded on an existing theory, and then creating a research strategy to test the hypothesis." The deductive approach guarantees that study findings are firmly rooted in established theories, enabling them to either support or challenge preexisting knowledge (Bryman, 2016). The line of reasoning guiding this approach is the idea that if a causal link is implied in a particular case study or theory, one can use deductive research design to test the potential of such link existing in a generalized situation (Gulati, 2009). Deductive research focuses on testing theories through empirical analysis, as opposed to inductive approaches, which seek to develop theories.

Concerning the logic of inquiry for this study, the deductive approach has been chosen. The motive for this decision resides in the fact that this thesis employs a theoretical framework and contains hypotheses to be tested concerning the subject of enquiry. Deductive research approach is highly adapted for scientific enquiries, which involves theory and hypothesis testing given their rigor in terms of logical analysis. This claim has been affirmed by Snieder and Larner (2009: p. 16) who point out that: "the deductive approach follows the path of logic most

closely. A theory serves as the foundation for the reasoning that produces a new hypothesis. When this hypothesis is put to the test, it encounters observations that either support or refute the hypothesis. Additionally, by evaluating hypotheses against observable evidence rather than depending solely on subjective interpretations, the deductive method reduces researcher bias and fosters objectivity (Gabriel, 2013).

The use of a deductive technique in this investigation would allow it to successfully examine the connection between democracy, peace, and development in the Central African Subregion. It starts from a hypothetical model that there exist positive and mutually enhancing relationship between democracy on the one hand, peace, and development on the other. To put it another way, democratic societies are seen to be defined by inclusiveness, rule of law, human rights respect, and effective governance, all of which are essential components of long-term peace and sustainable development (UNDP, 2022).

Using statistical analytic techniques like regression models and comparison scoring frameworks, this logic will be put into practice by extracting measurable indicators from these democratic principles and comparing them with development indices and peace measurements. In order to strengthen the findings' scientific credibility, the deductive framework will also permit falsification, allowing the researcher to reject null hypotheses when evidence conflicts with theoretical presumptions. Furthermore, because it enables the development of practical insights based on theoretical validation or refutation, the deductive approach is consistent with research that is relevant to policy.

In the circumstance surrounding the Central African sub-region, this study shall attempt an analysis the impact of democracy on its pursuit of development and political stability. It shall examine if its record in the pursuit of democracy can explain the relatively poor performance of the sub-region (compared to other sub-regional counterparts). In particular, the research will investigate if chronic instability, underdevelopment, and violence in nations like the Central African Republic, Chad, and Cameroon are associated with deficiencies in democratic government (Freedom House, 2024). In order to provide a multi-layered assessment of current governance outcomes, it will also take into account historical trajectories, transitional governance eras, and patterns of institutional reforms following independence.

A detailed comparison between nations within the sub-region as well as with other regions, such as West or Eastern Africa, where distinct democratic trajectories have resulted in diverse development pathways, would be made possible by these layers.

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

In terms of research design, this study is both descriptive and correlational. It is descriptive in the sense that this thesis explores the interplay of political phenomena like democracy and peace in an in-depth manner as well as a classification and summarization of differences and similarities in the manifestation of the phenomena investigated in various countries in Central Africa. Exploration, summarization, and classification are all characteristics of descriptive research design (Kramer, 1985). By describing the distinctive characteristics of complex social events without necessarily looking into causal linkages, descriptive research is crucial in giving a fundamental knowledge of them (Babbie, 2020). The combination of these three features of descriptive research would enable this thesis to come out with a comprehensive examination of the subject matter (the impact of democracy and peace on development in Central Africa). In order to provide a detailed knowledge of political evolution, this architecture enables the researcher to map out the political history of each nation, highlighting significant turning moments such as post-colonial transitions, constitutional amendments, and significant peace agreements.

Another peculiar feature of descriptive research is its systematic and accurate portrayal of situations (Dulock, 1993). This study also seeks to present facts in a systematic and accurate manner, which is befitting of any true scientific inquiry. It will pursue a thorough examination of the background circumstances surrounding democracy in the Central African sub-region in particular and Africa as a whole before focusing on a closer and comparative look on the case study countries (Central African Republic, Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Congo). The study recognizes the significance of contextual elements in influencing political development and uses descriptive approaches to give comprehensive assessments of each nation (Neuman, 2014). It shall provide statistical and factual analysis of the development of democracy in the aforementioned case-study countries from independence to the situation as it stands today. Tracing democratization and de-democratization trends, military takeovers, election violence, and the influence of foreign players on democratic norms are all included in this.

Correlational research helps to establish the relationship between variables (Seeram, 2019; Comiskey & Curtis, 2015). This thesis looks at the correlation between peace, democracy and development in Central Africa. It examines how these variables interact with each other and if there is a positive or negative relationship between them in the context of specific Central African countries. In political science, correlational designs are especially helpful when it's hard to prove direct causation because they let researchers observe patterns of relationship in a variety of contexts (Bryman, 2016). A correlational approach is essential to elucidate the cause of the developmental stagnation and political instability that has characterize many countries in the Central African sub-region. This research will use correlation to examine whether nations with slightly higher democratic ratings have a tendency to have lower rates of internal violence and more stable economic growth, as well as whether variations in governance indicators might occur before shifts in development metrics.

A correlational analysis shall be carried in this study using composite data on the performance of the case-study countries in democracy and good governance and how that affects their outcome in development and peace. International composite indices on democracy would be useful for data analysis in this study. These include the Freedom House Index (published by Freedom House), which appraises countries' performance on political rights and civil liberties globally (Freedom House, 2022). Additionally, the Democracy Index (published by the Economist Intelligence Unit) examines the status of democracy in relation to civil rights, electoral processes, government operations, political engagements, and political culture (EIU, 2022). The Human Freedom Index (jointly published by the Cato Institute, the Liberales Institute of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, and the Fraser Institute) focuses on personal and human freedoms worldwide (World Population Review, 2022). A triangulation of democratic quality is made possible by this multi-index method, which provides a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of governance over time and location. From formal institutions to civic freedoms, each index represents a distinct aspect of democratic practice, and when combined, they provide a more comprehensive view of the state of democracy.

For assessing governance, one can rely on global composite measurements of governance performance. Among these is Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), which diligently assigns to countries, rankings according to how corrupt their public sector is thought to be (Transparency International, 2021). Additionally, the World Bank's Worldwide

Governance Indicators (WGI) assesses governance through six global dimensions: Political Stability and the Absence of Violence or Terrorism, Voice and Accountability, Control of Corruption, Regulatory Quality, Government Effectiveness, and the Rule of Law (World Bank, 2022). For correlational research looking to examine changes over time, these indices offer both longitudinal monitoring and cross-national comparability, which is essential (Kaufmann & Kraay, 2015). In contrast, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation's Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) focuses specifically on African countries, tracking performance in four key governance areas: Participation, Rights, and Inclusion; Security and the Rule of Law; Foundation for Economic Opportunity; and Human Development (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2022). By offering both breadth and contextual specificity, the triangulation of global and region-specific indicators improves the level of detail of the research findings. Additionally, it aids in spotting localized irregularities that would not be apparent using just global indices.

Additionally, this study uses a case-study design in trying to unravel the deficit of democracy in Central Africa and its impact on peace and development. A case study, according to Crowe et al (2011: p. 1), is "a type of research methodology that is used to produce a comprehensive, multifaceted understanding of a difficult subject matter in its real-life context". It involves gathering data from a variety of sources and through different methods of data collection like observation and interviews (McLeod, 2019). When researchers aim to preserve a comprehensive viewpoint while documenting contextual circumstances that are thought to be extremely relevant to the phenomenon being studied, case studies are particularly effective (Yin, 2018).

Case study can be focused on a single case where it is possible to intensively investigate the phenomenon or case under consideration or multiple cases otherwise known as cross case where the researcher focuses on multiple cases (Zainal, 2007; Gerring, 2006). Generally, case-study investigation pay attention on individual group representative, a phenomenon, or an organization (Hancock et al, 2021). According to Swanborn (2010), case studies are suitable to answer broad research questions concerning social process and can provide solutions to explanatory issues at micro-levels, which can be applied in social science theories. Case-study as a research approach enjoys huge attraction and usage across several discipline especially social science, health, law, political science and has formed the basis of the production of a vast number of publications including classics in several disciplines (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Gerring 2004). In politically unstable situations where access to quantitative data may be restricted but

qualitative insights are rich and illuminating, the case study approach's adaptability is especially helpful.

Case-study research has a huge appeal in the discipline of political science especially among researchers on political economy and political scientist with an inclination to quantitative research for instance: Acemoglu et al (2003); Rodrik (2003); and Bates et al (1998). These timeless works frequently show how well chosen case studies can illuminate more significant structural patterns or historical processes that could otherwise go undiscovered. In a similar vein, this study intends to use case studies to both comprehend the distinct developmental paths of each nation and to derive insights that may be applied to more general theoretical debates on the relationship between democracy and development in post-colonial African governments.

This thesis employs a cross-case type of case study that focuses on the seven countries that constitute the Central African sub-region; Central African Republic, Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo and Congo. It shall undertake a comparative case study of the aforementioned countries given their distinctiveness. This methodological decision enables an empirical foundation for assessing conflicting theoretical assertions in the particular Central African setting, such as modernization theory vs structuralist theories of development.

Comparative case study materialized as a political science methodology in the middle of the 20th century within the framework of interstate comparison between various states in the US or between the governments of different countries in the world (Barnhurst, 2005). According to Dion (1998), comparative case studies is usually based on the selection of a dependent variable, which is comprised of a phenomenon that generates political interests. Goodrick (2014: p.1) notes that comparative case studies are particularly effective in analyzing and synthesizing "the resemblances, dissimilarities and trends between two or more cases that share a common objective or goal". By adjusting for as many irrelevant variations across instances as feasible, comparison techniques empower researchers to isolate key variables (Lijphart, 1971). A more accurate understanding of how institutional variations, historical legacies, or leadership dynamics influence governance results in otherwise similarly situated nations is made possible by this variable isolation. In addition to improving the explanatory power of research findings, this method gives policymakers a better understanding of the kinds of policy interventions that are most likely to succeed in particular structural or contextual circumstances.

Such an approach would be very helpful in investigating and identifying patterns and distinctiveness in the evolution of democracy in the various countries of the Central African sub-region and also, how such has affected their path towards development and peace. Researchers can start to understand how colonial administrative legacies, degrees of ethnic fractionalization, or the military's engagement have influenced democratization outcomes by tracking the paths of democratic transitions, setbacks, or stagnation across cases. It is important to remember that Central Africa is the most endowed sub-region in Africa in terms of natural resources (Mwanasali, 1999) but seems to be suffering from resource curse as the region remains generally poor. A comparative case-study analysis can shed more light on this paradox. By exposing the institutional and political elements that moderate the impact of resource riches on development and governance, it can also refute deterministic interpretations of the resource curse. It can distinguish, for instance, between resource-rich nations that have made investments in infrastructure and human development and those that have redirected funds to military expenditures or patronage networks. Making this distinction is crucial to creating development policies that are sensitive to context.

Another reason why a cross-case analysis is better suited for this research is the reality that countries of the Central Africa sub-region have a little bit of diversity in their performance on democracy, governance, development, and peace. Regarding democracy, all countries in the Central African Region have performed poorly in various indices of democratic governance. The Economist Intelligence Unit (2021) categorizes all Central African countries selected as case studies as 'Authoritarian' in the most recent Democracy Index rankings. Their scores and global rankings are as follows: Gabon (3.40/10; 121/167), Congo (2.79/10; 137/167), Cameroon (2.56/10; 143/167), Equatorial Guinea (1.92/10; 158/167), Chad (1.67/10; 160/167), Central African Republic (1.43/10; 162/167), and Democratic Republic of Congo (1.40/10; 164/167) (EIU, 2022). All of them are also classified in the not free category in the 2022 Freedom House's annual Freedom in the world report with the following scores: Gabon (21/100); Democratic Republic of Congo (19/100); Republic of Congo (17/100); Cameroon (15/100); Chad (15/100); (7/100); and Equatorial Guinea (5/100) (Freedom, House). This persistent pattern of poor democratic performance suggests systemic problems with governance that cut across national boundaries and are a reflection of broader regional trends in institutional deterioration, political stagnation, and repression.

These issues are ingrained in these regimes' political economies and are not limited to civil freedoms or election procedures. Political systems where state institutions frequently fulfill the objectives of the governing class rather than the general populace have been produced by the legacy of autocratic rule, militarized governance, and personalist regimes. This has led to extensive networks of patronage, a reduced rule of law, and severely limited civic spaces, all of which have exacerbated the region's democratic weaknesses.

Furthermore, stability and resource access have frequently taken precedence over democratic reforms in the eyes of external parties, especially former colonial powers and multinational enterprises. This has created a geopolitical climate in which, provided they do not interfere with foreign economic interests, authoritarian governments may hold onto power with no external pressure. The region's self-reinforcing cycle of authoritarian durability is exacerbated by this global complacency.

Table 1. Freedom in the World Report for Central Africa, 2022

Country	Freedom Score 2022	Freedom Status
Gabon	21/100	Not Free
Democratic Republic of Congo	19/100	Not Free
Republic of Congo	17/100	Not Free
Cameroon	15/100	Not Free
Chad	15/100	Not Free
Central African Republic	7/100	Not Free
Equatorial Guinea	5/100	Not Free

The 2023 Democracy Index illustrates trends in democratic governance across the world and it reveals a very disappointing image of democratic governance among all Central African

countries in this study (Gabon, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Congo) during this time (See Figure 1).

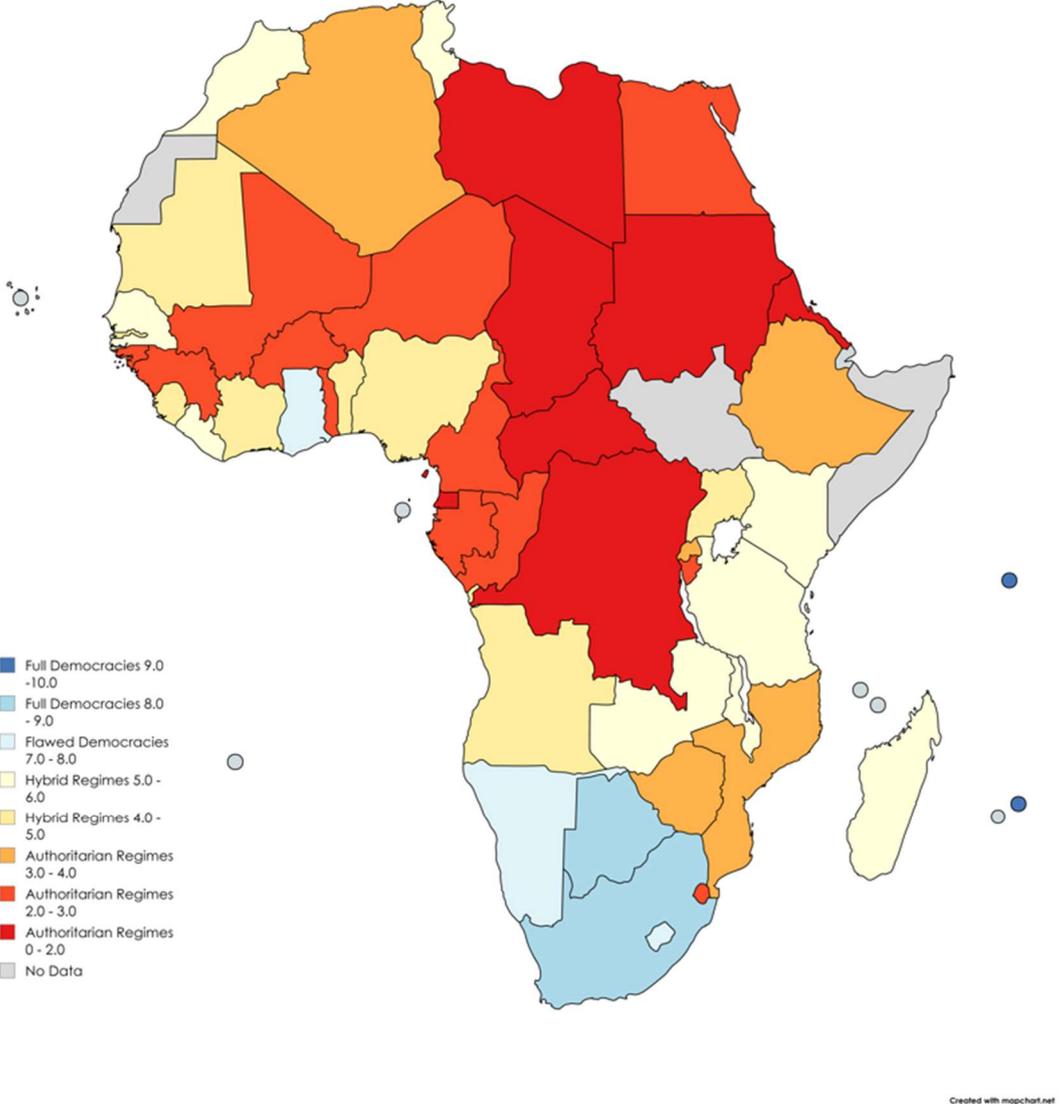


Figure 1. Map adapted from data by EIU's Democracy Index 2023

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit: <https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2023/>

The Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) offers the following bleak assessment of governance in the Central African Region:

“Central Africa is a region struggling under the legacy of conflict and authoritarian rule. Many of its governments’ leaders or their families have been in power for

decades, and elections have rarely met the standard of free, fair, and credible. There is persistent violence in eastern Congo, Anglophone Cameroon, and the Central African Republic” (CSIS, 2022).

A status quo of impunity and substandard state institutions is reinforced by this deeply ingrained leadership pattern, which also significantly limits democratic innovation, citizen involvement, and generational political renewal.

According a recent United Nations Security Council (UNSC) briefing on the state of affairs in the Central African Region provided by senior UN officials, the region is going through a paradox of strides in democracy and adverse security conditions (UNSC, 2022). The brief highlighted the following situations in the region:

“...while several countries of the region are on track to hold elections in 2022 and 2023, notable challenges threaten to derail those efforts. In Cameroon, the crisis emanating from Boko Haram splinter groups and displaced persons fleeing neighbouring countries has only grown, with the situations in the country’s north-west and south-west regions of particular concern as violence flares. In Chad — which is undergoing a transition following political turmoil in 2021 — “the most important challenges lie ahead” as constitutional talks begin. Meanwhile, heinous attacks continue against civilians and Government troops in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and bilateral relations between Kinshasa and its neighbours are deteriorating” (Ibid.).

The above circumstances show how permeable borders, unresolved identity disputes, and precarious political transitions all contribute to an ongoing cycle of instability. They also emphasize the necessity of inclusive political discourse and regionally coordinated security measures.

Poor governance seems to have made the sub-region vulnerable to violence and political instability. A good example of this is the Central African Republic, which has remained identified by many scholars and international organizations as a typical example of a failed state (Hearth, 2021; Aidi, 2019; Cleenewerck et al, 2017; Lizak, 2016; International Crisis Group, 2007). Violence and political instability seem also to be pushing the sub-region towards a

humanitarian crisis as noted in a report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) on the sub-region (UNOCHA, 2021). Concerning the selected case-study countries in the Central African sub-region, the UNOCHA Report notes the following about the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic and Cameroon:

“In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR), long-running conflict and protracted crises continue to affect millions of people, with severe protection risks, forced displacement, and high levels of food insecurity. In western Cameroon, violent conflict in the South-West and North-West regions has displaced more than 700,000 people.

As the crisis deepens, an entire generation is affected. The education of millions of children is compromised. Across the Sahel, some 6,000 schools are closed or non-operational due to violence, jeopardizing children's future, especially girls who are the least likely to return to school after prolonged interruptions. In the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon, two out of three schools are closed, affecting up to 700,000 students. Across the Central Sahel, over 137 health centres remain closed due to insecurity, while most of the ones still open are not fully functional.

Women and girls are at heightened risk of sexual and gender-based violence. In Mali, the number of reported gender-based violence cases increased by 40 per cent compared to last year. In the Central African Republic, gender-based violence is the first identified protection risk, and the percentage of women and girls who experienced a protection incident doubled compared to the same period in 2020” (Ibid.).

Decades of slow development accomplishments are in danger of being undone by the combined effects of ongoing insecurity, displacement, and deteriorating infrastructure. Additionally, it increases the area's susceptibility to outside shocks like worldwide economic downturns or natural calamities brought on by climate change.

The African Center for Strategic Studies traces several armed conflicts within Africa to the absence of accountability and lack of legitimacy in African states. It classifies all the case study countries in this thesis as either autocratic (Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, Republic of

Congo and Democratic Republic of Congo) or semi-authoritarian (Gabon, and Central African Republic), and identifies four of them (Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Central African Republic and Chad, and) as having an active conflict (See Figure 2). Exclusionary politics and the repression of dissent may act as triggers for violence rather than deterrents, as these classifications highlight the link between authoritarian governance and the frequency of civil unrest.



Figure 2. Map showing autocracy and instability in Africa

Source: Africa Center for Strategic Studies: <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/autocracy-and-instability-in-africa/>

Unlike the case of democratic governance where all the case-study countries have similar performances in global composite indices, there are significant disparity concerning economic expansion and human development statistics. Equatorial Guinea and Gabon have maintained a

A comparative case study would offer an opportunity to better comprehend the aforementioned disparities in the Central African Sub-region. Such an approach enables researchers to make more comprehensive and policy-relevant conclusions by offering a multifaceted perspective that incorporates political, economic, and social data. Additionally, it increases the possibility of transnational learning, whereby effective reform programs in one nation might guide attempts in nearby governments facing comparable difficulties.

2.4 RESEARCH METHODS

When it comes to research methodology, this thesis shall employ a mixed approach as it combines both quantitative and qualitative research techniques in its collection and analysis of data. A more comprehensive knowledge of complex events is made possible by the pragmatic approach provided by the mixed methods approach, which goes beyond the conventional paradigmatic divisions between quantitative and qualitative research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Mixed method refers to a research approach wherein the investigator intergrates both quantitative and qualitative research methods in the conduct of his study (Shorten & Smith, 2017; Creswell, 2002; Maxwell & Loomis, 2003). This integrative approach aims to provide a more comprehensive, pluralistic view of complex research challenges while acknowledging the limitations of depending only on either narratives or numbers. It is especially helpful in areas like the Central African subregion, where lived experiences and statistical data provide important insights into sociopolitical issues.

Though researchers have been engaged in the combination of quantitative and qualitative data for several years, mixed methods of inquiry only emerged in the 1980s (Molina-Azorin, 2016), and gain recognition as part of the third methodological movement in the fields of psychology, health science, sociology, and education (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2021; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie) in recent times. The necessity for hybrid approaches that are both analytically sound and contextually aware has been further highlighted by the growing complexity of social challenges, particularly in areas where governance, development, and conflict crises combine. This increasing awareness can be credited to the understanding that a more comprehensive and nuanced representation of social reality may be obtained by fusing narrative experiences with numerical trends (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Creswell states that the following steps are a summary of how mixed research is conducted:

“It involves the collection of both qualitative (open-ended) and quantitative (closed-ended) data in response to research questions or hypotheses.

It includes the analysis of both forms of data.

The procedures for both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis need to be conducted rigorously (e.g., adequate sampling, sources of information, data analysis steps).

The two forms of data are integrated in the design analysis through merging the data, connecting the data, or embedding the data.

These procedures are incorporated into a distinct mixed methods design that also includes the timing of the data collection (concurrent or sequential) as well as the emphasis (equal or unequal) for each database. These procedures can also be informed by a philosophical worldview or a theory,” Creswell (2014).

One of the main benefits of mixed methods research is its flexibility in design, which allows researchers to adjust their strategy to the particular requirements of their subject. When examining the intricate relationships among democratic institutions, economic growth, and peacebuilding in societies that are prone to conflict, for instance, researchers may opt for a sequential explanatory design, in which qualitative interviews are conducted after quantitative data gathered from national indicators to examine underlying dynamics. A convergent design, on the other hand, might make it possible to gather surveys and story data at the same time, producing combined insights at the interpretation phase.

In particular, mixed methods mitigate the shortcomings of both qualitative and quantitative inquiry while allowing the researcher to capitalize on the benefits of each (depth of understanding and breadth and generalizability) (Bryman, 2006).

This study shall collect both quantitative data through survey and quantitative data in the form of published works (books, peer-review journal articles, online news sources, etc) to carry out analysis on the phenomenon under study. Democracy indices (such the EIU Democracy Index and Freedom House ratings), peace and security indicators (like the Global Peace Index and ACLED data), and development measures (like GDP per capita, HDI, and IAG scores) will all

be used in the quantitative component. While the qualitative component will offer deeper comprehension of the relevant elements influencing these relationships in the Central African sub-region, the quantitative component will enable statistical evaluation of the association between democracy, peace, and development indicators (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). A deeper comprehension of the sociopolitical dynamics and the methods whereby elite conduct, historical heritage, international interventions, and grassroots mobilization have shaped the paths of peace and government throughout the region will be made possible by this. The results are more credible, valid, and thorough when both forms of data are triangulated (Jick, 1979). By lowering bias and cross-validating results, triangulation improves the research's interpretive power. It is especially important in politically delicate or unstable research settings where access to trustworthy data may be restricted or disputed.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NATURE OF POLITICS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: CASES OF GHANA, KENYA VS CAMEROON, AND CENTRAL AFRICA REPUBLIC.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

There are a total of 46 countries identified by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), grouping them to be Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This grouping has a few exceptions from the total 54 countries that comprise the continent of Africa, all at different stages of economic, political and social development. SSA is particularly one of the most heterogeneous part of the world, comprising of people of diverse cultural heritages and religion, which has translated into the political lives of these states. However, despite the heterogeneity of these states, they all exhibit certain general characteristics or developments relating to the nature of statehood and governance, which is almost unique in the world. The following section tries to identify these general characteristics and then proceeds to shed additional light on the characteristics of politics in the selected case studies upon which this dissertation bases its findings.

Global geopolitical changes, post-independence conflicts, and Sub-Saharan Africa's colonial past have all had a profound effect on the political evolution of the continent. Some academics have referred to the post-Cold War era as Africa's "second liberation," at which time there were greater demands for economic liberalization and democratization (van de Walle, 2001). However, the results have differed significantly amongst nations, mostly due to historical state capacity, international alignment, and local political alliances. Furthermore, hybrid systems that don't always follow standard Western forms of governance have resulted from the persistent interplay between modern state institutions and traditional governing frameworks. Even though they appear to be informal, these hybrid systems frequently mirror deeply rooted historical customs and sociocultural norms that have a big impact on official political institutions.

- As of the beginning of the 1990s, many of these countries in Sub-Saharan Africa went through or at least began a process of political transformation and since then, there has been frequent regime changes in some of these countries. The continent thus became more open to western values such as democracy and people's involvement in political activities such as in elections increased compared to the pre 1990 period. However, this opening has frequently been fragile, as incumbent elites have used clientelist politics, election tampering, and constitutional amendments to influence democratization processes in order to hold onto power. State capture by long-standing ruling elites who use democratic institutions for their own or their party's benefit has often caused the democratic achievements of the 1990s to either stall or completely reverse.
- SSA is amongst the world's most ethnically and culturally diverse areas, thus harbors great potential for ethnically driven conflicts.¹ While ethnic diversity contributes to a rich cultural legacy, elites have frequently used it as a political tool to rally support, discredit opponents, or defend discriminatory practices. Ethnic patronage systems have resulted from this, weakening institutional justice and national cohesion by regularly determining access to public resources and political representation based on one's ethnic or regional identity.
- Despite the fact that there have been several instances of political transformation and regime change in the countries of SSA region, there is insignificant effect felt on how accountable these regimes are. There is regime change but patrimonialism and neo-patrimonialism continue to dominate the continent's political activities.

True political reform has been hampered by the continuation of neo-patrimonial rule, in which ruling elites plunder public resources to increase their authority and devotion. Public jobs are seen as avenues for accumulating riches, and political appointments are frequently made based more on loyalty than qualifications. As a result, accountability institutions including the courts, legislatures, and anti-corruption organizations have been seriously undermined.

- In addition, common to all SSA countries is the inability to deliver essential social and economic services and weak governance all due to inadequate policy conception and delivery. Fragmented bureaucracy, a lack of technical expertise, constrained financial

resources, and politicized public service systems all contribute to this failure in service delivery. Long-running conflicts have severely weakened the potential of the state to supply essential services in nations like South Sudan and the Central African Republic, making non-state actors and international NGOs the de facto suppliers of security, health, and education services.

- Despite haven adopted some form of political transformation since the 1990s, several major governance deficits continue to plague these countries, necessitating serious and unrivaled efforts by these governments to get things working well. The effects of these governance deficits have spread towards other sectors of these countries, and inflicted serious economic and social damages that continually pose a threat to their long-term stability.

In the field of public financial management, where governments are deprived of vital resources for development due to ambiguous budgeting procedures, off-budget spending, and illicit money flows, governance deficiencies are especially noticeable. Although the African Union and the African Peer Review Mechanism have made an effort to advance good governance principles, they are still not very effective at enforcing them.

- All countries of SSA rely heavily on remittance inflows, which according to the World Bank, steadily increased; only slowing down during the COVID-19 crisis due to the restrictions. Remittance inflows into SSA surpasses foreign direct investments (FDI) and external support or aid. Funds from remittances provide a stable source of much-needed external funding to facilitate economic enlargement in general and finance development in particular, thereby helping these countries to attain their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According the the most recent data published by the World Bank, this interest-free source of finance for major developmental projects and driver for economic growth in SSA grew by 6.1% in 2022 to a whopping \$53 billion and \$54 billion in 2023, with an additional 1.9% growth rate (World Bank-KNOMAD, December 2023 and 2023). Apart from reliance on remittances and FDI, SSA has external support, which comes in the form of aid, donations, and loans from both major international organizations and bilateral partners. These external aid and loans have an extremely significant influence on the formulation of policies and the composition of the political

structures of these countries. The general scenario is the weakening of governance structures due to their over reliance on external aid and the conditionalities that come with these. Discussions concerning the "aid dependency syndrome," whereby governments put the wishes of donors ahead of the interests of their constituents, have been spurred by this phenomena. Debt servicing obligations and structural adjustment plans frequently provide limited financial space for domestic development agendas. Furthermore, political responsibility can occasionally be distorted by the infusion of external funding, making leaders more liable to contributors than to their own constituents.

- Another important facet of political life in Sub-Saharan Africa is increasing repressive measures against political opponents, human rights activists, and other perceived threats to the regimes. These activities are often justified by the famous “War on Terror”, which began subsequent to the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States of America. The global counterterrorism discourse has been co-opted by authoritarian establishments in the region to challenge opposition under the guise of maintaining national security. This tactic has been particularly evident in countries such as Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Ghana and Kenya, though in varying degrees, but all in the façade of maintaining the security of the nation.

The adoption of widely construed anti-terror laws as a result of this securitization of politics has been used to restrict civil freedoms, penalize opposition, and stifle independent media. Because they have a stake in regional stability and counterterrorism cooperation, international actors, especially security allies such as France and the United States, have periodically ignored these coercive tactics. This has given governments more confidence to stifle dissent and solidify authoritarian rule.

3.2 STABILITY AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION IN SSA

We should note that while it is common practice for Authoritarian structures to give way to more plural regimes around the world, 21st century politics reveals the same pattern in SSA. Though following the tides, a number of countries in SSA are in a situation that could be described as being in a regression pattern, with conservatism gaining grounds increasing coups with much popular support for them, thus strengthening authoritarianism. This trend is

further highlighted by the recent wave of military takeovers in Sub-Saharan Africa, including those in Mali (2020, 2021), Guinea (2021), Sudan (2021), and Burkina Faso (2022), highlights this pattern. According to expert suggestions, these coups have been enabled by weak democratic systems, poor economic management, and declining confidence in civilian governments (Barka & Ncube, 2012). Furthermore, the instability is exacerbated by the emergence of populist politicians in the area, many of whom use nationalist sentiments to solidify their grasp on power. In order to mobilize popular support, these leaders frequently exploit historical grievances and ethno-religious divisions, which strengthens democratic institutions and solidifies extremely polarized nations. Some sections of the population find radical measures, such as military operations, appealing and even patriotic due to the widespread disenchantment with democracy among the populace, especially among the youth, who experience unemployment and disenfranchisement. With the current trend, it appears that SSA is lagging behind in achieving the targeted goals of the African Union's Agenda 2063. This long-term calculated framework aims to establish the African continent as a dominant global force and has as goals; inclusive economic growth and sustainable development; political unity and good governance; Pan-African identity and heritage; peace, security and stability, empowered and engaged youth and women; innovation, technology and infrastructure development; and a strong global voice (African Union, 2015). However, the conflicting political realities, where authoritarianism coexists with hopes for democratic change and continental unification, showcase the stark difference between normative promises and real-world political actions. The Agenda 2063 policy recommendations in many nations are still merely theoretical instruments rather than practical plans, frequently thwarted by institutional weakness, political will, and corruption. Unlike other regions of the world, SSA possesses the poorest average ratings regarding democratic progress in the 21st century in the developing world. The number of regimes that exhibit tenets of democracy such as regular elections has significantly increased since the 1990s with the exception of Eritrea, Somalia, and South Sudan, who are yet to hold any direct elections based on consensus of its entire population. However, the integrity of these elections is often questioned, as issues such as voter suppression, electoral fraud and the absence of transparency are common in many SSA countries. The Electoral Integrity Project is of the assertion that several elections in the area, including those in Uganda (2021), Zimbabwe (2018), and Gabon (2016), experienced major irregularities, which have cast doubt on the legitimacy of these democratic processes (Norris et al., 2019). The widespread adoption of such defective electoral systems has resulted in what some academics call "electoral authoritarianism," in which elections serve as tools for legitimizing the government rather than

as a means of ensuring accountability. The recurring trend of incumbents prevailing by absurdly large margins, frequently as civil freedoms and dissent are suppressed, shows how democracy is being undermined in favor of centralized personal power.

Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the areas in the world that has seen the highest fluctuations in terms of simultaneous progress and regression in democratic standards (Zamfir, 2021:5). Freedom House concluded that in 2019, SSA region amongst other regions of the world stood at the forefront in both positive and negative progress towards democratic growth. It concluded that out of 12 largest global democratic backsliders, 7 of the countries were from SSA and out of the 7 largest global democratic progress recorded, 6 were from SSA. This further explains the heterogeneity of the continent and the unique way in which its politics is different compared to other regions. However, countries like Ghana, Botswana, and Namibia have continuously demonstrated democratic strength, characterized by relatively autonomous judicial systems, transparent and fair elections, and active civil society engagement (Gyimah-Boadi, 2015). Peaceful handovers of power and frequent changes in government have been made possible by these nations' entrenched political tolerance and comparatively independent electoral commissions. Even in the face of larger regional authoritarian reversals, these states' robust civil society and enlightened electorate have been essential in preserving democratic standards.

Political stability and transformation have a pattern of distribution in the continent. The wind of change carrying democratization has affected visible impacts in certain Sub-regions such as South Africa and West Africa, while neo-patrimonialism and patrimonialism, authoritarianism has continued to flourish in Central Africa, while East Africa remains in a myriad of both scenarios. Chad, Cameroon, and Equatorial Guinea for instance, continue to grapple with long-standing authoritarian governance, marked by a lack of press freedom and political suppression (Mbaku, 2020). On the other hand, nations like Kenya and Tanzania exhibit hybrid regimes, where democratic structures are present but frequently compromised by electoral manipulation and executive overreach. These hybrid regimes function under centralized, frequently autocratic control while maintaining the appearance of constitutionalism by conducting frequent elections and allowing some degree of media freedom. Frequently, their democratic institutions are appropriated, making judicial monitoring ineffectual and opposition parties weak. Such governments must balance suppressing opposition to secure their survival with preserving enough legitimacy to appease foreign donors.

Public confidence in state institutions has also been damaged by the continuation of conflict-driven politics, unequal democratization, and electoral and legal system manipulation. The effects of conflict and state collapse still threaten the consolidation of democracy in nations like the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Similar to this, Burundi's decline into political violence after President Nkurunziza ran for a third term in 2015 is a prime example of how constitutional manipulation may spark legitimacy crises that have international repercussions. As a result, efforts to establish states in the area have been made more difficult by transnational armed organizations, refugee flows, and cross-border insecurity.

This era is even more complicated than when the continent just attained independence and democracy was yet to be the guiding governing principle as it is now. The expansion of liberal democracy seems to be slowing in the continent same as it is slowing everywhere around the globe with the emergence of conservative populist political movements and strengthening of political positions by reigning leaders. This “*va et viens*” trend of democracy in Africa, which exhibits it to be in a constant state of advancement and retreat, has led to a mosaic of political arrangements. While some of these regimes like Sudan have been toppled by popular uprisings following the Arab spring that started in North Africa, these moves have been frustrated by some of the leaders who remain in power through political manipulations. In 2019, Sudan experienced an uprising which resulted in the forceful removal of Omar al-Bashir from power. However, the military's subsequent takeover in 2021 underscored the challenges in sustaining a government led by civilians (Al-Amin, 2022). Such regimes and some who gained power through military coups and other forceful means in SSA have succeeded to thrive with very little opposition, and even benefit from international recognition despite the external pressure exerted on them. China's growing economic and political power in SSA has contributed to the strengthening of authoritarian governments through providing investment financial support without demanding democratic governance as a prerequisite (Brautigam, 2009). Somewhere somehow, there has continued to be the pervasiveness of what Larry Diamond (1996) calls “pseudo democracies” and “feckless democracies” as designated Thomas Carothers (2002).

The sociopolitical and economic shortcomings of the many nations in the region, remnants of the very doings or ill policies of the leaders have been severally exploited as baits to strengthen their positions in power. The outbreak of civil conflicts and infiltration of terrorist groups into some countries such as the Boko-Haram encroachment in Cameroon, Mali, and Chad have been exploited by the leaders to influence law makers to implement decisions that strengthen their

hold on power. Additionally, the actions of terrorist organizations like Al-Shabaab in Somalia and ISIS-affiliated groups in Mozambique have been leveraged as justifications for imposing emergency rule, restricting political freedoms, and extending presidential terms beyond what is constitutionally permitted (Felter, 2021).

Another variant of authoritarianism that the SSA region is witnessing that continuous to impede democratization is what many scholars have come to term “authoritarian development/modernization”. The norm has been these leaders resort to giving preference to socio-economic outcomes at the expense of democracy, while strengthening their positions in doing so. Glaring examples exist in SSA such as Ethiopia and Rwanda, with the later being the most distinct of these regimes. Under Paul Kagame’s leadership, Rwanda has experienced tremendous economic expansion and infrastructure improvement. However, political opposition is rigorously suppressed, and there are stringent limitations on press freedom (Reyntjens, 2016). In a similar vein, Ethiopia, during Meles Zenawi's tenure, prioritized economic growth through its state model, although it was condemned for human rights abuses and the stifling of dissent (Clapham, 2018). From this point, it can be generalized that the current issues facing the SSA region especially socio-economic backwardness and increasing terrorist activities has led to several constitutional amendments through-out the region, a tide which seems to be cutting across every corner of the globe, which changes in policies aimed at limiting the activities of these jihadists. The situation in SSA however tends to aggravate the already very complicated political terrain, and favors the continent’s strong men in consolidating their regimes against building sustainable democratic institutions. Development authoritarianism as mentioned above though it creates some degree of socio-economic expansion, it nonetheless still contributes to the demise of these states as it creates class divisions due to corruption, leading to uneven growth and a broadening gap between the wealthy and the impoverished. The problem with the regimes in SSA is that unlike the East Asian examples from which they try to copy from, they do not expand in the domains of economic, civil, and political rights for all citizens.

Sub-Sahara Africa’s colonial past also has a significant part to play till date on the acquisition, the rise/use and also the erosion of state power. Jeffrey Herbst offers a great overview of this relationship and poses some intriguing questions about the future of Africa, which are really worth pondering on. He questions whether constitutional democracies in Africa could/can be developmental? And also, whether competitive democratic political systems in Africa can

deliver or give rise to an effective government which securely holds the sole right to power and authority, (Herbst, 2014). As SSA continues to tackle these obstacles, it is crucial to implement institutional reforms, bolster the rule of law, and boost civic engagement to guarantee lasting democratic stability.

3.3 A DIFFERENT PATH FOR SUB-SAHARA AFRICA?

Looking at the nature of politics in the region and the various paths the drive for democratization seems to be taking since it swept through the region in the 1990s, it is undoubtedly reasonable that the SSA region is unique. The culture of democracy is relatively very new and seemingly foreign to the terrain. This has been blamed to the colonial legacies that left behind fragmented political systems, weak institutions, and artificial borders that do not fit with indigenous governance structures (Ake, 1996). Furthermore, the democratization process has often been externally driven, with Western models imposed without adequate consideration of local settings and precolonial governance traditions (Gyimah-Boadi, 2004). While elections are held as a result of this externally driven democratization, deeper aspects of democratic government like the separation of powers, the rule of law, and genuine political competition are still elusive. Consolidation of democracy has been made more difficult by the creation of hybrid regimes in many cases, which combine authoritarian tactics with democratic fronts. This believes that there should be greater discussions and debates among the various African cultures, peoples, and nations on traditional interpretations of history and modern, practical definitions of democratization and democracy. This issue has been previously highlighted by scholars such as Peter P. Ekeh who garnered towards Africa's "unique historical configuration" which to him has stood as a barrier between the new "public" institutions and the communal structures that have persisted and continue to exist even though imposed political settings come and go (Ekeh, 1975). When evaluating the governance issues in SSA, Ekeh's idea of the "two publics", one being civic and the other primordial, continues to be essential. This is due to the fact that formal state institutions frequently function alongside informal networks based on kinship and ethnicity. This duality has resulted in persistent governance challenges, where loyalty to the "primordial public" often hinders national development initiatives. Uneven development outcomes among areas and ethnic groups, political clientelism, and gaps in policy execution are all examples of how these two groups are at odds. Furthermore, as politicians frequently put clan or ethnic ties ahead of the interests of the country, these conflicting allegiances can act as a fertile environment for corruption and the personalization of power.

Another prolific African scholar who shares these views is Achile Mbembe, who in one of his essays proposes that if ever answers are to be sought regarding African solutions to its democratic institutions, much emphasis must be alluded to the political activities that transpired out of the formal political structures and emerge from below (Mbembe, 2001). Mbembe's exploration of "necropolitics" reveals that authoritarian regimes in Africa frequently resort to violence and repression to retain power, thereby complicating the transition to true democracy. This highlights how important indigenous associations and civil society organizations are in shaping political dialogue (Branch & Mampilly, 2015). The strength of citizen agency in opposing enduring authoritarianism is really demonstrated by the dynamism of grassroots movements, such as the pro-democracy demonstrations in Sudan and youth-led rallies in Nigeria (such as the #EndSARS movement). The fragility of democratic victories is highlighted by the fact that grassroots movements frequently encounter harsh governmental repression and lack the institutional support necessary to shift from protest to policy.

The heterogeneity of African cultural dispositions and the success of East Asia and China opened a new chapter in Africa especially SSA causing leaders to question transitions to pluralist democracy. China's state-driven economic strategy to some African leaders has been particularly enticing, as it promised the prospect of quick economic expansion without the political turmoil often associated to multiparty systems. Ethiopia and Rwanda, for instance, have clinched to developmental authoritarianism, citing China's ascent as a model of how economic prosperity can precede political liberalization (Mkandawire, 2015). Even so, critics contend that such models might not be viable in Africa due to weaker bureaucratic structures and the absence of robust state institutions (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). Furthermore, important contextual differences including historical state formation processes, industrialization levels, and civic involvement are sometimes overlooked when the East Asian model is replicated in Africa. Many African nations lack the unified national identity and centralized administrative capability that allowed for rigorous development planning, in contrast to China or South Korea. Though their arguments have always been debunked as self-serving, these views have continued to flourish around the region with increasing momentum. Authoritarian development has been adopted by a handful of nations in the region as a more suitable path by poor countries as opposed to pluralist democracy, which many describe as "competitive clientelism" (Stiglitz et al., ed. 2013). Countries within the SSA region which have sought to adopt pluralist democracy unlike their tougher counterparts who have adopted authoritarian modes of governance, placed the primacy of political order and showed their

ability to maintain force domestically and externally. In contrast to authoritarian peers like Cameroon, Chad or Equatorial Guinea, countries such as Ghana have cultivated a democratic culture through institutional changes, a free press, and rather peaceful political transitions. This discrepancy emphasizes how important local leadership and agency are in determining democratic outcomes. Research indicates that, despite their challenges, pluralist democracies typically outperform authoritarian regimes with characteristics such as long-term political stability, upholding human rights more effectively, and fostering economic growth, while authoritarian regimes frequently experience leadership crises and a lack of accountability (Diamond, 2008). However, these democracies are still susceptible to democratic backsliding, which is frequently brought on by military meddling, electoral tampering, or constitutional revisions intended to lengthen presidential terms. Therefore, judicial independence, watchful civil society, and ongoing civic education are just as important to the survival of democracy in SSA as electoral procedures.

Despite the different paths different SSA countries seem to be adopting, authoritarianism continues to hold its grounds in the region. As reported by Freedom House (2022), over one-third of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are still deemed to be "not free," highlighting the persistence of authoritarian rule. Nations such as Uganda and Cameroon have maintained long-term regimes despite having insignificant democratic frameworks, whereas others like Ghana and Senegal have shown a relatively strong democratic resilience. Constitutional and pluralist democracies continue to be resilient in the region at least for at least some countries. However, history has proven that for the 1990s democratic enthusiasm to be re-established and realized, several factors must be incorporated into the state-building capacity. Efforts to strengthen institutions, promote political inclusivity, and stimulate economic growth that lessens reliance on patronage systems are essential (Van de Walle, 2001). Importantly, restoring confidence in democratic institutions depends on election reform that guarantees openness, unbiased electoral commissioners, and equitable media access. Additionally, forums for inclusive discourse that unite underrepresented groups, including young people, women, and ethnic minorities, can advance political legitimacy and national cohesion. Additionally, the influence of international entities, for instance the African Union and sub-regional economic groupings, is crucial in upholding democratic principles and addressing unconstitutional shifts in governance. Also, a blend of domestic and international parties must be ready to work genuinely to create a state that is not only authoritative, but also effective in the delivery of the needs of the citizens, and also accountable. A robust political opposition, an independent media, and a robust civil society

are essential for limiting government excesses and nurturing a democratic code that resonates with everyone. Furthermore, education and economic empowerment are vital to enabling citizens to engage in governance beyond just casting ballots in elections. In addition, social media and digital technology offer avenues for political engagement, but they also need to be shielded from government monitoring and repression. Given that young people comprise a sizable fraction of the population, the digital civic space is becoming more and more important to SSA's democratic future.

A neglect of one aspect, siding with one against another such as choosing the authoritarian development model against the pluralist democratic model will only lead to several limitations which will affect state-building in the future. Adopting a balanced strategy that incorporates democratic values while taking into account local governance frameworks and economic circumstances might be the most effective path for political development in SSA (Hyden, 2013). Governance in SSA is poised for change, bringing with it both potentials and challenges. However, a comprehensive and context-aware approach is crucial for achieving long-term development. The capability of both the public and leaders to fashion a new social contracts that balance contemporary state institutions with traditional authority, economic realities, and the ambitions of a fast changing society will ultimately determine the prospects for Sub-Saharan African democracy. The area can only forge a really unique and sustainable course by implementing such inclusive and practical governance approaches.

3.3.1 HOW SSAS COLONIAL PAST SETS THE STAGE FOR ITS CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS

Africa's present problems can be partly blamed on its colonial past even though some argue that times have passed and the continent's leaders are in a position of making decisions that should favor them. According to scholars like Walter Rodney (1972) and Basil Davidson (1992), colonialism systematically stalled Africa's development by disrupting local political and economic systems, resulting in a lasting system of dependency. Tracing the origins of Africa's problems cannot be concluded without making reference to the 19th century, an era when European powers drew political frontiers to secure their respective spheres of influences, irrespective of the diverse indigenous cultural and territorial jurisdictions that already made up the African continent. The artificial partitioning imposed during the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 ignored ethnic and linguistic differences, leading to the socio-ethnic conflicts that persist

to this day (Asiwaju, 1985). This very period saw the forced occupation of African lands by Europeans who equally forced hundreds of thousands of indigenous Africans into becoming laborers and migrant workers in their companies and plantations around the globe. In addition to altering geographical borders, these disruptions of pre-colonial social structures also weakened ties within communities and destroyed indigenous systems of government, economic cooperation, and dispute settlement. Traditional rulers were either completely removed or co-opted into the colonial apparatus as indirect rule agents in many areas. This not only diminished their legitimacy in the eyes of their subjects but also broke long-standing sociopolitical hierarchies that had maintained communal peace. The void left by these erasures was consequently filled with fragile, imposed administrative structures devoid of institutional depth and cultural legitimacy, making post-independence state-building even more challenging.

The result of this cruelty was that at the end of this era in the 1960s, the continent had been almost completely depleted of its resources and working population. Moreover, colonial authorities devised economic strategies that exploited resources, prioritized extracting raw materials for European manufacturing. This approach cemented Africa's position as a supplier of unprocessed goods (Amin, 1976). Such policies also stifled the growth of local industries and technological progress, resulting in African economies being structurally vulnerable at the time of gaining independence. Also, exploitative policies had been enshrined in the minds of the few indigenous personnel whom they trained, and who continued the process of administration. This era also streamlined African economies towards the raw material supply chain as it was mainly extractive, leading to a cycle of reliance and economic stagnation (Mkandawire, 2010). A legacy a legacy which the continent is still yet to recover from as it is further compounded by systemic corruption, embezzlement and governance challenges. At independence in the 1960s, almost all national economies in the SSA were only producers of cash crops such as coffee, cocoa, palm oil, etc. all geared towards exportation to European markets with prices set by global commodity markets that are predominantly influenced by Western financial entities (Bates, 1981). In addition to reinforcing Africa's periphery within the global economy, this economic model promoted mono-cultural economies that are nevertheless quite vulnerable to external economic fluctuations. For example, entire national economies can be thrown into crisis by a single poor harvest or a decline in the price of commodities globally. Furthermore, the colonial focus on resource extraction produced strongly established privileged elites that dominate access to capital and land, frequently at the expense of the general population. Because they benefited from colonial economic arrangements that have been passed

down to them, these post-colonial elites have frequently opposed attempts at diversification or redistribution out of concern that their profits and power would be lost. As a result, there have been intermittent and inadequate attempts at industrialization and value-added industry.

The extractive nature of these economies resulted in the youthful population being concentrated along the urban centers established by the Europeans and this led to progressive population boom at the expense of simple necessities like proper housing, sanitation and other infrastructures. The constant relocation of people moving from rural areas to metropolises has led to rapid urban growth, resulting in overcrowded urban areas, creating slums that lack basic amenities like clean water, healthcare, and electricity (Davis, 2006). This situation was further worsened by growing unemployment, which has remained uncontrollable. The lack of industrialization and the development of a robust manufacturing sector has resulted in millions of young people being unemployed, consequently contributing to rising crime rates and political unrest (AfDB, 2021). As a result of this urbanization, local governments, which are frequently understaffed and ill-equipped to manage sizable, densely inhabited informal settlements are under unprecedented pressure. The absence of long-term urban planning and widespread corruption in housing and service distribution have resulted in the creation of exceptionally unequal cities with affluent neighborhoods encircled by expansive slums. Additionally, when political players take use of disgruntled populations for temporary advantage, these circumstances have created an environment that is conducive to extremist recruitment, youth radicalization, and electoral violence. Social cohesion and long-term growth are threatened by the ensuing volatility.

The successive governments in a bid to alleviate the sufferings and advance on the quality of infrastructure and services resorted to borrowing from multilateral external agencies and bilateral partners. Nevertheless, financial aid from these external organizations frequently comes with stipulations, such as the structural adjustment programs (SAPs) enforced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank during the 1980s and 1990s. These programs necessitated significant budgetary reductions, privatization, and currency devaluation, which often worsened poverty instead of reducing it (Mosley et al., 1991). Thus leading to inadequate policy realization and thus more crisis compounded by the increasing growth in their borrowing figures. These programs had serious policy implications for countries down the ladder of poverty. Many countries in the SSA region currently face serious financial crises resulting from the huge external debts they have gradually build-up over the

years. According to UNCTAD (2022), numerous countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are wedged in a debt cycle, where a substantial percentage of their GDP is designated towards loan repayments instead of being directed towards sustainable development projects. Numerous nations in the SSA region are currently grappling with severe financial difficulties due to the substantial external debts they have accumulated over time. A significant portion of these countries' export revenues is allocated to debt servicing, leaving minimal resources for investment in sustainable long-term development projects, which in turn leads to further borrowing. Consequently, SSA countries remain susceptible to global economic disruptions, such as commodity price fluctuations and interest rate increases, which further constrain their fiscal capacity and development opportunities (Gelb, 2000). These nations find themselves trapped in a relentless cycle with little chance of escape. Developing countries are further disadvantaged by the global economic system through mechanisms including unfair trade agreements, prohibitive intellectual property laws, and strict requirements for foreign direct investment. African countries are unable to fully engage in and profit from globalization because of these systemic obstacles. Furthermore, vital resources required for growth have been depleted by the ongoing capital flight from African nations, both legal and illegitimate. Underdevelopment is further entrenched by research showing that illicit cash outflows from Africa outnumber inflows of development aid. Meanwhile, long-term national planning and governance change are still being hampered by political instability, which is partly caused by austerity brought on by debt and decreased state legitimacy (UNECA, 2020). Some experts suggest that potential solutions include debt relief measures, economic diversification, and the expansion of intra-African commerce by means of initiatives like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) (UNECA, 2021). Nonetheless, achieving enduring economic stability necessitates structural reforms, investment in education and technology, and effective governance.

Additionally, it necessitates a rethinking of development paradigms that place an emphasis on endogenous growth models grounded in Africa's distinct advantages, such as its youthful population, abundant natural resources, and rich cultural legacy. In addition to increasing resilience against external shocks, policies that promote entrepreneurship, enhance digital infrastructure, and extend regional value chains have the potential to generate millions of jobs. Similarly, strengthening democratic processes and enhancing accountability are two benefits of empowering civil society actors and local governments, both of which are essential for sustainable development. SSA runs the risk of repeating its past trend of externally driven

policies that fall short of meeting the continent's basic needs if it does not adopt bold, context-specific measures.

The sections that follow will provide the chequered political and constitutional histories of the case study countries this study seeks to examine, to lay the ground foundation for the understanding of subsequent unfolding throughout this dissertation.

3.4 OVERVIEW OF POLITICS IN GHANA

A new era in Sub-Saharan African politics began on March 6, 1957, when Ghana opened the way to become Africa's first country to be set free from the colonial system, when its independence was restored. Ghana's independence was preceded by periods of unrest driven by the people's zeal for self-rule, during which leaders were arrested for defying colonial authorities. These acts prompted the British administration to establish the 'Coussey Committee,' which suggested drafting a colonial constitution in 1951 to facilitate the handover of control to the nationalists (Abdul-Gafaru, 2009). Ahlman recounts that Democratic practice in modern Ghana originates as early as 1951, several years before the country gained independence, when prospective leaders and nationalists luring for political independence from Great Britain, held their first democratic elections. This was the first of its kind in any British African colony and characterized to have been a universal suffrage (Ahlman, 2011). It is worth noting that, unlike in some African countries where colonial powers chose the leaders they left behind, the democratic process in Ghana had already demonstrated signs of maturity. This maturity resulted in the people voting for their own leader in a free and competitive election, which included three native political groupings: the Convention People's Party (CPP), the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), and the National Democratic Party. These elections saw the CPP emerging victorious and at its helm was Dr Nkwame Nkrumah, who became the country's first Prime Minister in 1952 (Abdul-Garafu, 2009). His party later again won another election in 1954, which catapulted Ghana to independence in 1957 with Dr. Nkrumah, being the first president of any Sub-Saharan country.

3.4.1 DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS IN GHANA SINCE INDEPENDENCE.

Ghana's independence was granted and ratified by the 1957 constitution, and is highlighted to have maintained some colonial traits, which provoked 1960 constitution to be instituted to

enable Ghana attain its status as a republic (Osaf-Danso, 2015: 49). The joy of democracy and independence in Ghana were however short-lived as shortly after the country became independent, its first democratically elected government was deposed in a military takeover in 1966. Haynes maintains that Dr. Nkrumah's government had become governmentally authoritarian and had transformed Ghana into a one-party system (1993: 451). Another variant justifying the coup adds that Dr. Nkrumah's institution of the Preventive Detention Act (PDA) had given him the powers to arrest and imprison his political adversaries without fair trials (Sarfo, 2014).² Ghana's 1966 *coup d'etat* was but one of many that happened during the country's early years of independence, which almost destroyed its democracy, with very short-lived periods characterized by elected governments. These coups are a reflection of the larger post-independence problems that the African continent has faced, as attempts to establish democratic authority have frequently resulted in military intrusion in the political system. Ghana's early post-independence history demonstrates how newly independent African nations struggled to strike a balance between the need for strong, centralized leadership and democratic values. This period also saw the re-writing of Ghana's constitution and transitioned the country from one republic to another. Following the short-comings and the authoritarian nature of the 1960 constitution, Ghana's second republican constitution was drafted which ended the 3 years military rule led by General J.A. Ankrah. He seized power in Ghana, freed all political prisoners imprisoned during Nkrumah's regime and re-introduced multipartyism in Ghana in 1969 after an election.

This constitution ushered Ghana into a Parliamentary Government, a new system of governance to enable power sharing, and divided the posts of head of state and head of government and from the election results, Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia who came victorious was then inaugurated as head of government/prime minister (Asare & Prempeh, 2010). While the electoral college picked Edward Akuffo to be the president and head of state. Despite the introduction of separation of powers, this newly formed government was overthrown in another coup led by General Ignatius Kutu Acheampong on January 13th 1972. Ghana's second republic initiated in 1969 met its end with this coup Keatley, (2011). Acheampong's reign was however more extensive than that of his predecessor, General J.A. Ankrah, as he controlled Ghana from 1972 to 1978, but due to his highly unsuccessful policies, he was deposed in an internal coup led by General Frederick Akuffo on July 5, 1978 (Bonye et al., 2013). Significant economic instability, including hyperinflation, shortages of essential goods, and decaying infrastructure, also affected Ghana during this time, further undermining public confidence in military rule. The foundation

for future democratic advocacy was laid as civil society players, like as trade unions, student unions, and religious institutions, started to express opposition to extended military rule. General Akuffo's reign was brief and faced an unsuccessful rebellion may 15, 1979 by some junior officers of the Ghanaian armed forces, which led to the arrest of Lieutenant Rawlings and some others for trial on counts of treason (Osam, 2008: 114). On June 4, 1979, another coup took place, which overthrew Akuffo, then freed Rawlings from custody and members of the coup made him front-runner of the newly formed Armed Forces for Revolutionary Council (Ibid). Owusu narrates that Rawling's AFRC embarked on an exercise "house-cleaning" which tackled the general public and the armed forces, aimed at reinstating a feeling of accountability and moral responsibility and integrity in Ghana. These house-cleaning exercises led to the execution of all of Ghana's military heads of state as well as some members of the armed force on charges of subverting constitutional rule (Owusu, 2006: 190). Despite their controversy, these killings sent a clear statement about the repercussions of corruption and power abuse in public life. But they also spurred discussion about due process, the rule of law, and violations of human rights, exposing the nuanced moral landscape of Rawlings' revolutionary leadership. Owusu further narrates that Lt. Jerry Rawling's AFRC passed on power peacefully to the People's National Party (PNP) led by Dr. Hilla Limann, victors of the democratic election which was already in plan before the coup on September 24, 1979 (Ibid).

Dr. Hilla's victory to the presidency in 1979 marked the beginning of Ghana's third republican constitution which was cut short lived, toppled again in a coup in 1981, barely seven months into his term of office by Lt. Jerry Rawlings under the banner of the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) (Osafo-Danso, 2015: 53). Ghana, the torch bearer of democracy in Africa had sunk gradually into oblivion of successive coups with an uncertain political and economic future. However, certain steps were taken to re-engage civil society, improve the economy through Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), and establish the groundwork for new democratic experimentation even within the PNDC government. The return of Lt. Rawlings to military rule in Ghana in 1982 is described by many as a turning point in Ghana's history (Osam, 2008, Handley and Mills, 2001: 39, Adedeji, 2001), and a subject of many controversies also (Ninsin, 1993, Haynes, 2003). Ghana's transition from military to civil rule took more than 10 years as Lt. John Rawlings ruled Ghana uninterruptedly till 1992 when the fourth republic was inaugurated, and has remained the supreme law of Ghana under which its current democracy operates (Abdul-Garafu, 2009). Haynes describes the decade of military rule under Rawlings as "distinguished by a strongly nationalistic orientation, development programs

with a social focus, and a foreign policy that combines anti-imperialism and pro-Western initiatives in unusual ways” (Haynes, 1993: 451). Both internal and external forces, such as the international donor community, civil society, and multilateral organizations like the World Bank and IMF, which increasingly connected aid to democratic reforms, sparked Rawlings' final decision to move toward democratic governance. Despite being condemned by some as having flaws, the 1992 elections signaled Ghana's return to constitutional democracy by offering a framework for institutional governance and peaceful political rivalry.

3.4.2 THE NATURE OF POLITICS AND DEMOCRACY IN GHANA

Ghana has remained relatively very stable since the Fourth Republic's establishment under the 1992 Constitution, enacted during Jerry Rawlings' democratically elected government. This transition marked a pivotal shift from decades of martial rule (comprising of Rawlings' own earlier coups in 1979 and 1981) to a constitutional democracy (Gyimah-Boadi, 2001). It also signaled the end of a protracted of instability characterized by frequent coups and authoritarian rule. The political stability of Ghana has been maintained by the rotation of authority and control between the two primary parties, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), which has fostered a tradition of democratic governance. The seeds of democracy in Ghana were sown during this period and Ghana has become an example to follow once again in the African continent. However, it is worth investigating the nature of democracy in Ghana today under its current democratic setting. Academics such as Cheeseman (2018) counsel against supposing that holding elections equates to complete democratization, emphasizing that genuine democratic progress requires active civic engagement, robust institutions, and accountability that extends beyond just voting. The following sections will provided insight into some important tenets of democracy around the world which goes beyond just the right to vote to include beliefs such as freedom of the press, freedom of association, electoral transparency and presidential term limits. Furthermore, factors like judicial independence, political accountability, and civic engagement will be look at, as they are essential for assessing the extent of democracy in Ghana (Diamond, 1999). This is to expose at what level Ghana currently stands in the world to give any reader a clear picture of democratic progress in Ghana as of the writing of this dissertation, to evaluate how institutionalization through sustained political practice has affected democracy in Ghana positively and negatively. Before delving into the details, noteworthy is the fact that the government in Ghana has used the War on Terror narrative to justify actions against political opponents and critics, particularly

in its handling of extremist groups in the Northern regions, such as the threat from Islamic militants. Recent studies suggests that the securitization of political dialogue in Ghana has resulted in a decreased civil liberties. Government officials have expanded surveillance activities and curtailed certain freedoms, citing national security as the justification (Aning & Salihu, 2022). Adarkwah on the case of Ghana argues that while counter terrorism is essential for national security, the current legal framework lacks sufficient safeguards to stop the government from abusing their power, thus posing significant risks to individual liberties and human rights (Adarkwah, 2020).

3.4.2.1 Press Freedom In Ghana

Ghana's 1992 constitution which ushered in the fourth republic, introducing once more multiparty democracy in Ghana is said to have guaranteed for its citizens some social, political, and economic rights and also advanced the level of consciousness amongst the citizens (Abdul-Gafaru, 2009). The importance of a free press in upholding democracy cannot be exaggerated, as it serves as a crucial mechanism for checking and balancing state power (Norris, 2008). The press is a gadget of political suppression and is also a defense system for citizen liberation and advocacy, and government actions and private expression and viewpoints are shared with the general public through press freedom. While the political institution in place plays a great role in determining press freedom, it should also be noted that it is also relatively functional based on the differences in socio-cultural, economic and political settings.

Just as one would imagine the early years of press in Africa after independence, the media system in Ghana was no different, characterized by institutionalized controls due to the high centralization of power. Ahmad, Pride and Corsy citing Biney, (2011) and Anokwa, (1997) maintain that Nkrumah's grip on power between 1957 and 1966 and his ideology highly affected the development of media in Ghana, and had petrifying consequences on journalists (2016: 62). Media censorship is something acquainted to Ghanaian politics especially with its long history of military coups as each coup leader put in place laws to control the media, even though a few media organizations dared to defy these laws, (Ibid). Ghana's media environment has undergone dramatic changes since gaining independence, marked by development of private media companies and the introduction of digital journalism. However, issues such as political meddling, self-censorship and financial limitations, continue to be prevalent (Fombad, 2019). Ghana has over the years since the beginning of civil rule in 1992 known a lot of progress

in terms of press freedom and increase in the presence of private media due to media liberalization as instituted in the 1992 Constitution Chapter 12. 162(1).³

Despite this guarantee of media freedom, independence and pluralism, Ghana has recently been on the headlines as a hard place for journalists. This came following a very intensively investigated report aired by a group of investigative journalists exposing high levels of state-level orchestrated corruption, which forced these group of journalists into hiding after their colleague was shot dead while driving in Ghana's Capital, Accra (Reporters Without Borders, 2019).⁴ These assaults on journalists highlight the ongoing dangers to press freedom in Ghana, where media narratives are shaped by the influence of government officials and business leaders (Nyarko, 2021). Hussein-Suale belonged to the *Tiger Eye*, a group of independent investigative journalists in Ghana led by popularly known Anas Aremeyaw Anas, who operates by the motor: "Name, Shame, and Jail" (Engmann, 2020). Reporters Without Borders place Ghana on number thirty (30) according to the 2021 World Press Freedom Index, out of 180 countries they observed.⁵ While little has been made by the government to curb threats against investigative journalist especially in Ghana, the government of Ghana however concluded and officialized a law on access to state-held information, which was initiated 20 years after its introduction into parliament. The Right to Information act represents a significant action taken by the Ghanaian government to put in place transparency and ensure awareness by the public of all official matters, meeting up demands of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and thus promoting democracy. The RTI act passed consented to by the president on May 21, 2019⁶ to complement the stipulations of Ghana's 1992 fourth republican constitution. However, it essential be reiterated that the passing of the RTI alone does not guarantee press freedom in Ghana, but it entails a lot of institutional collaboration and implementation to make the country standout as a press free state in SSA. Nonetheless, media experts maintain that for the RTI Act to be effectively implemented, it is essential to have robust institutional structures, sufficient financial resources, and a makeover in bureaucratic culture to promote openness (Mensa-Bonsu, 2022).

3.4.2.2 Freedom Of Association In Ghana

Ghana's 1992 fourth republican constitution was instituted after a nation-wide referendum during a military led regime by the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) under Lt. Jerry Rawlings, following pressure from human right groups both internal and international,

which finally yielded to a fair guarantee of rights for all. Amongst the sections of this constitution was the Bill of Rights and its provisions were correlated to freedom of assembly and association as preserved in Article 21 (Rutinwa, 2001:23). Article 21 of Ghana's 1992 Constitution guarantees the right of Ghanaians to;

“... freedom of assembly, including the freedom to participate in processions and demonstrations, ... freedom of association, which shall include freedom to form or join trade unions, or other associations, national and international, for the protection of their interests; ... the right and freedom to form or join political parties and to participate in political activities subject to such qualifications and laws as are necessary in a free and democratic society and are consistent with the Constitution”.⁷

Although the constitution provides guarantees, it is reported that opposition parties and civil society organizations continue to encounter bureaucratic hurdles and sporadic harassments, especially during election times (Gyampo, 2017).

Ghana is one of the most politically and socially independent nations in the Sub-Saharan African region. Freedom House's Freedom in the World Index 2024 classifies Ghana on a Global Freedom score of 80 out of 100, considering Ghana free.⁸ Ghana has enjoyed decades of freedom since the inception of the 1992 Constitution. This however, recent years have proven that institutional bottle-necks may hinder the involvement of smaller political parties in the political process due to the increase in the party/candidature registration fees for both presidential and parliamentary candidates. Though Rutinwa sees some of the conditions for party registration in Ghana as being pitched against registering non-nationalistic parties, he however highlight that these conditions are too many and cumbersome often beyond the abilities of some of the parties to bear, (2001: 26). The overall performance of Ghana in terms of civil liberties is generally very high as observed International IDEA (2024) on the figure below and justifies the observations made by Freedom House.

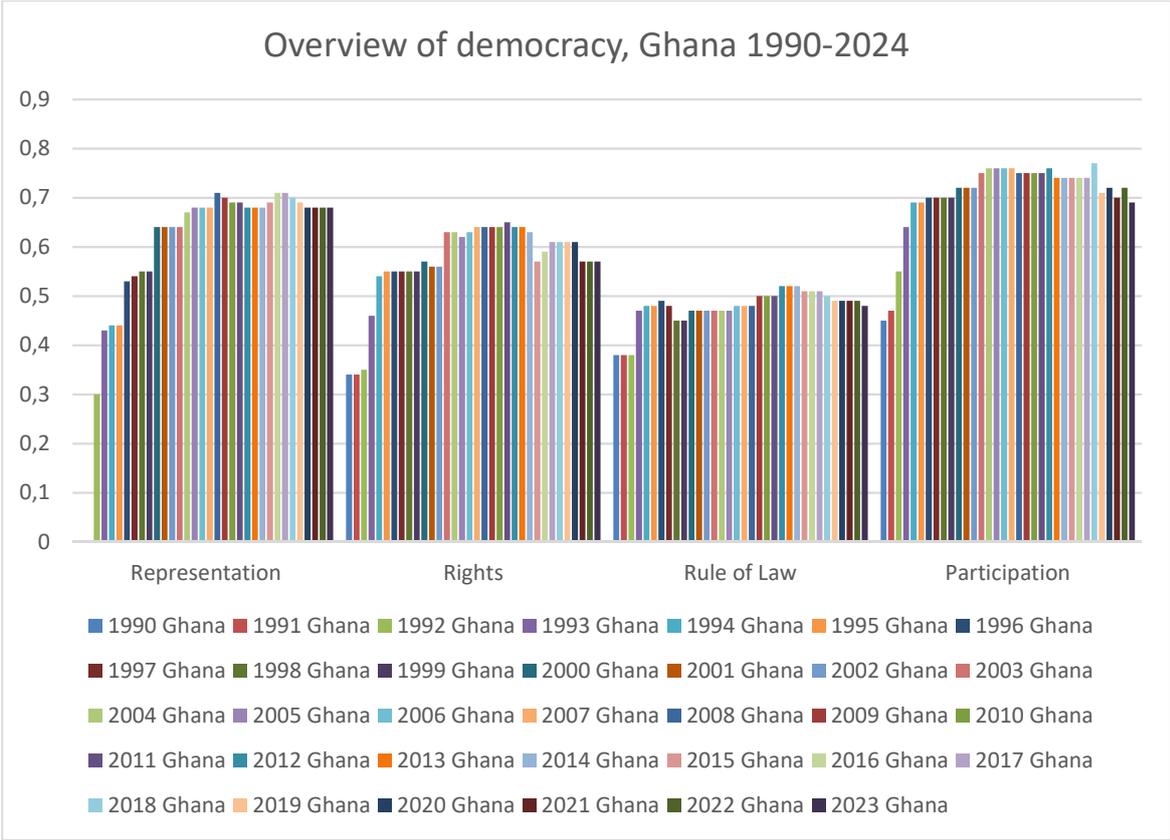


Figure 4 General overview of the level of democracy for Ghana, 1990-2024

Source: Adapted from data from International IDEA, 2024.

3.4.2.3 Electoral Transparency And Credibility And Presidential Term Limits In Ghana

The voice of the citizens in choosing their leader is principal tenet of democracy, and has been used as a standard for the measurement of democracy by many authors. The significance of maintaining transparency in elections to support democratic values is huge, as elections that are free and fair are essential for ensuring that political leaders truly represent the people's will. How free and fair this process is also significant in determining the level of democracy enshrined in every democratic constitution. Przeworski maintains that through elections, citizens get to hold their leaders responsible for their actions and governance (Przeworski, 2011). Furthermore, ensuring that citizens can take part in the electoral process without the dangers of coercion or fraud is crucial to its legitimacy (Diamond, 1999). Ghana's democracy after independence was constantly interrupted by incessant *coup d'états* until Ghana's return to

multi party politics during the induction of the fourth republic in 1992, which represents a pivotal moment in the nation's political history. Since then, elections have come to be seen as a crucial test of its democracy. The 1992 constitution of Ghana unlike many constitutions around the world which have been amended to increase the number of years spent in office, mandates presidential elections every four (4) years to allow the people choose their president and also parliamentarians. The regular scheduling of elections and the transparent atmosphere in which they have been, have bolstered political stability and enhanced the legitimacy of Ghana's political system (Gyampo, 2017). Since 1992, Ghana has been able to stand out amongst its African counter-parts as an ideal democracy with its good democratic practices during elections. Ghana's electoral organism has gained recognition for its reliability, receiving commendations from global establishments like the United Nations and the European Union who have consistently lauded the nation's electoral procedures (International IDEA, 2020). Elections in Ghana are carried out under the supervision of the Electoral commission (EC) which is established under Chapter Seven the 1992 Constitution (Nkansah and Gawu, 2020). Though the president of Ghana as per Article 70(2) reserves the right to designate the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Electoral Commissions, Article 46 of the same constitution stipulates that

“... in the performance of its functions, the Electoral Commission shall not be subject to the direction or control of any person or authority” (Ghana 1992 (rev. 1996)).⁹

The constitution protects the Electoral Commission's independence, thus setting a fair ground for democracy to prevail. Maintaining independence is vital because it guarantees that elections are conducted impartially and without external interference. This represents a noteworthy achievement for Ghana, especially when compared to other African countries where electoral commissions are frequently subjected to political manipulation (Ayee, 2000). Ghana continues to be among the few African nations that has seen successive change of power between the opposition and the incumbent, a situation which remains very rare in Africa. This is accredited to the high degree of credibility and independence the Electoral commission enjoys. The seamless transition of power between political parties has become a defining characteristic of Ghana's democratic development (Agyemang, 2018). There have so far been little or no instances of violence in any of the seven elections held in Ghana since the beginning of the fourth republic, and despite the few cases of electoral disputes registered, the legal system for settling these disputes has proven effective, with courts playing a crucial role in deciding cases

related to elections (Gyimah-Boadi, 2004). Due constitutional process has always been followed to address the irregularities successively with no violence (Ghana 1992 (rev. 1996).

Even though political power in Ghana since 1992 has revolved between two political parties, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the successive leaders have abided by the stipulations of the 1992 Constitution restricts the number of presidential terms to no more than two four-year terms. The constitutional restraint has played a vital role in enabling the smooth transition of power and averting the consolidation of authoritarian governance (Gyampo, 2017). Additionally, Ghana's political stability is bolstered by the regular occurrence of elections, which facilitate a peaceful competition for power among a diverse range of political participants, thereby fortifying the nation's democratic framework (Norris, 2008). Ghana's strong constitution can thus be applauded for setting the right grounds on which vigorous elections trod, propelling Ghana over time to serve as a symbol of democracy in the Sub-Sahara African region. The achievements have been bolstered by civil society groups and the media, which have persistently ensured government accountability by promoting transparency and examining the electoral process (International IDEA, 2020).

3.5 OVERVIEW OF POLITICS IN KENYA

Kenya gained fame in Africa for its anti-colonial war dubbed the “Mau-Mau revolution”, which was among the African continent's worst anti-imperialist struggles. Kenya's mau-mau rebellion pitted the British colonial administration and white settlers against the Kenyan Secret society known as “Mau-Mau”, which led to the establishment of the Legislative Council in 1957. The conflict was marked by fierce guerrilla warfare, mass arrests, and harsh counter-insurgency measures by the British authorities, leading to a considerable death toll and the extensive displacement of native populations (Anderson, 2005). In addition to inspiring the fight for independence, this uprising established a legacy of resistance that still shapes political discourse in Kenya today, making it a pivotal moment in the nation's political consciousness. Following these violent struggles for independence and long negotiations, which began in 1957, the British authorities finally agreed for elections to be organized in 1963 according to the “one person, one vote” premise, marking it the first democratic elections in Kenya. Following this pivotal year in contemporary Kenyan history, General elections were held between May 18-26 to elect representatives into the senate (41 seats), house of representatives (129 seats), seven assemblies regions and a prime Minister (Sanger and Nottingham, 1964). Following these elections, Jomo

Kenyatta's party, the Kenya African National Union was victorious at the elections and he became the first Prime Minister of Kenya on June 1, 1963, and prepared Kenya for the signing of its independence. Finally, on December 12, 1963, Kenya's independence was proclaimed making it Kenya the 34th African country to gain independence (Sanger and Nottingham, 1964). On December 12, 1964, on the first anniversary of independence, Kenya's first Republic was proclaimed, with Jomo Kenyatta becoming the first president of Kenya (Carol, 2012: 16). Since Kenya had not only freed itself from colonial power but also become a possible model for future liberation forces against imperial dominance, this moment was celebrated throughout the continent.

Following the one-party system train that was cutting through the continent, Kenyatta's KANU party and the main opposition party, the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) colluded to pave the way for a de facto one-party system (Branch and Cheeseman, 2009: 6). KANU cemented its hold on power by leveraging political patronage, silencing dissenting opinions, and incorporating potential adversaries into governmental roles (Throup and Hornsby, 1998). This concentration of power reflected comparable trends in other African nations during that era, including Ghana under Nkrumah and Tanzania under Nyerere, where one-party control was justified as a means of achieving national unity but frequently resulted in elitism and repression. This system was not accepted by all as in 1966, a new opposition party was founded, the Kenya People Union (KPU) by Oginga Odinga, but was short-lived as it was later banned barely three years after its formation and its leaders were imprisoned following KANU's monopoly of force and resources (Mueller, 1984). Jomo Kenyatta monopolized Kenya and went through three successive re-elections as president of Kenya without opposition until his death in 1978 and power was peacefully transferred to Daniel arap Moi, his fellow party member and former co-prisoner during the "Mau Mau" (Tamarkin, 1979). Moi won the 1979 presidential elections in Kenya without any opposition and in 1982, instituted a constitutional amendment on Section 2A, that made Kenya a de jure one-party state (Throup, 1993), thus preventing any opposition party from registering. The amendment faced opposition from pro-democracy activists, who were harshly suppressed, resulting in the incarceration of many opposition leaders, journalists and students (Oyugi, 1994). Kenya forged through another two rounds of presidential elections in 1983 and 1988 on this principle of a single party, but with the dawn of the 1990's evidence of dissatisfaction and undemocratic rule following KANU's monopoly of power and resources had flooded Kenya, causing a pandemonium throughout the country, which resulted in a failed coup. Moi's regime faced further weakening due to extensive corruption, economic challenges

and mounting international demands for democratic reforms (Brown, 2001). Kenya had become significantly divided ethnically between the tribes of former president Kenyatta and Moi, as the shares of prebends were not flowing as they used to under the Kenyatta reign. Moi's government quickly succumbed to the observations of Bates as he lost control, with economic decline, rise in political uncertainty which sparked a heavy crack-down on political dissidents and public demonstrations (Bates, 2015). Tensions that would flare up in different ways over the ensuing decades were exacerbated by political repression, ethnic favoritism, and a failing economy.

1991 saw the dawn of a new era for Kenyan politics after the demands for constitutional reforms finally yielded in the repealing of Act No 7 OF 1982 that had instituted a one-party system. The system was finally restored in 1991 and multipartyism restored. As stated by Bratton and van de Walle (1997), the abolition of Section 2A was driven by both domestic opposition groups and external pressure from Western donors, who threatened to withhold financial assistance unless democratic reforms were carried out. The interaction between conditional foreign aid and internal political pressure in Kenya exemplifies a larger trend in Sub-Saharan Africa, where democratization in the 1990s was commonly supported by external forces but opposed internally by the ruling elites.

With the repealing of the one-party system, multipartyism was instituted and with it followed the first multi-party presidential elections in 1992, since the country gained its independence (Throup, 1993), which saw the incumbent, Daniel arap Moi, being re-elected for a fourth term. Intense constitutional review activity followed during the 1990s driven by stringent actions by civil society and the forces of opposition parties. Despite the constitutional, public freedom and press freedom witnessed, the 1997 December elections shockingly revealed Moi's re-election for a fifth term in office after a disputed presidential election (Southall, 1998: 109). Moi managed to stay in power due to the failure of the opposition to come together around a single candidate, despite growing popular dissatisfaction (Mutua, 2008). In December 2002, Kenya held another democratic election and, in this election, the KANU, Kenya's long reigning party since independence was defeated and power was transferred to the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), marking a turning point in the political history of Kenya. It is important to remember that the constitution prevented Daniel arap Moi from competing in these elections, leading the rise of Mwai Kibaki to power on December 27, 2002. The transition to Mwai Kibaki welcomed a new era in Kenya with democracy flourishing until the controversial elections of

2007, when Kenya quickly shocked the world, switching from a vibrant democracy to a battle field. Human rights watch described the situation in Kenya in 2007 as “ballots to bullets”.¹⁰ Post-election violence following the controversial elections led to more than 1100 deaths and the internal displacement of more than 600 000 peoples, and with several reasons to blame for this violence (Barkan, 2013, Burchanrd and Djak, 2013) which quickly obscured the feeling of political progress. The major factors contributing to the violence included ethnic tensions, longstanding disagreements over land allocation and accusations of election fraud (Kagwanja & Southall, 2009). The violence was followed by the signing of several agreements between President Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga, the two main competing contenders for the elections on February 1, 2008, urging for a cessation to the violence, and a second deal was signed on February 8, 2008, to institute power sharing between both parties (Horowitz, 2008, Cheeseman and Murray, 2017). The power sharing agreement resulted in the constitution being amended, creating the office of Prime Minister¹¹, leading to the formation of a coalition government bringing Raila Odinga to power as Prime Minister of Kenya in April 2008, and Mwai serving his second term as president. Though the power sharing agreement was plagued with its own pitfalls, it necessitated the coalition government to deliver to Kenyan citizens a new constitution and this was one of the most significant periods in Kenyan history. Previous constitutions were all aimed towards strengthening the position of the executive against other arms of government and granted the president authority over the electoral commission, the legislature, and the judiciary (Nyadera et al, 2020). Kenya’s 2010 constitution laid the foundation for a stronger democracy in Kenya by limiting the power of the president and thus was an enduring solution to Kenya’s longstanding dictatorship problems. This significant reform also established a system of decentralized governance, allowing regional governments greater autonomy and diminishing centralized authority (Ghai, 2011).

3.5.1 DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS IN KENYA SINCE 1991.

The 2010 constitutional amendment laid a strong foundation for democratic government in Kenya, and has since kept the country on a stable path, healing the wounds of the country’s rough past under its various dictatorial regimes. The constitution introduced significant democratic ideas, such the decentralization of authority, a more robust judiciary, and enhanced protections for human rights, marking a departure away from Kenya's history of authoritarian rule (Ghai, 2011; Cheeseman, 2014). However, it is crucial to take into account the overall progress the country has made through its institutions towards the advancement of certain

important tenets of democracy, in order to fully ascertain at what level the country is democratically ruled, by looking at data and investigations by independent international organizations. Kenya has been heavily involved in counterterrorism operations, particularly in response to threats from the Somali-based al-Shabaab militant group. While several measures have been introduced in Kenya to strengthen its War on Terror framework, there have been several key developments that many consider as a means of cracking down on political dissent and civil liberties. For instance, international human rights groups have voiced concerns that counterterrorism legislation has been employed to suppress opposition organizations and restrict press freedoms under the pretext of ensuring national security (Human Rights Watch, 2022). For instance, international human rights organizations have raised concerns that counterterrorism laws have been used to silence opposition groups and restrict media freedoms under the guise of national security (Human Rights Watch, 2022). Kenya's Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) has been amended over the years to expand the powers of civil security agencies, allowing more extensive surveillance and control over civil society organizations, mandating them to report to the Counter-terrorism Center.

Despite the fact that these legal measures have been effective in reducing terrorist threats, they have also sparked claims of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings, particularly in regions with a Muslim majority, where security operations have been most prevalent (Amnesty International, 2023). This draws attention to a conundrum in democratic governance: the delicate balance between civil freedoms and national security is still up for debate, and authoritarian impulses may resurface there while appearing as justifiable state action. Also, the Digital Surveillance Legislature, which provides capabilities of using digital tools for counterterrorism has been widely criticized as being used instead for targeting political dissent or infringing on privacy rights as reported the Fund for Global Human Rights (2024). According to Freedom House (2023), Kenya's digital landscape, once hailed as a center for civic engagement, has increasingly turned into a conflict zone where opposition members, journalists and activists come across online harassment, surveillance, and censorship. Therefore, even though Kenya has made constitutional progress, democratic standards are still not fully implemented and respected in the digital and security spheres. Particularly in hybrid regimes where conventional democratic institutions coexist with authoritarian behaviors, these paradoxes highlight how delicate democratic gains are. The figure below however shows a general overview of the level of democracy in Kenya as per International IDEA's observations, which considers several factors to arrive at its conclusions.

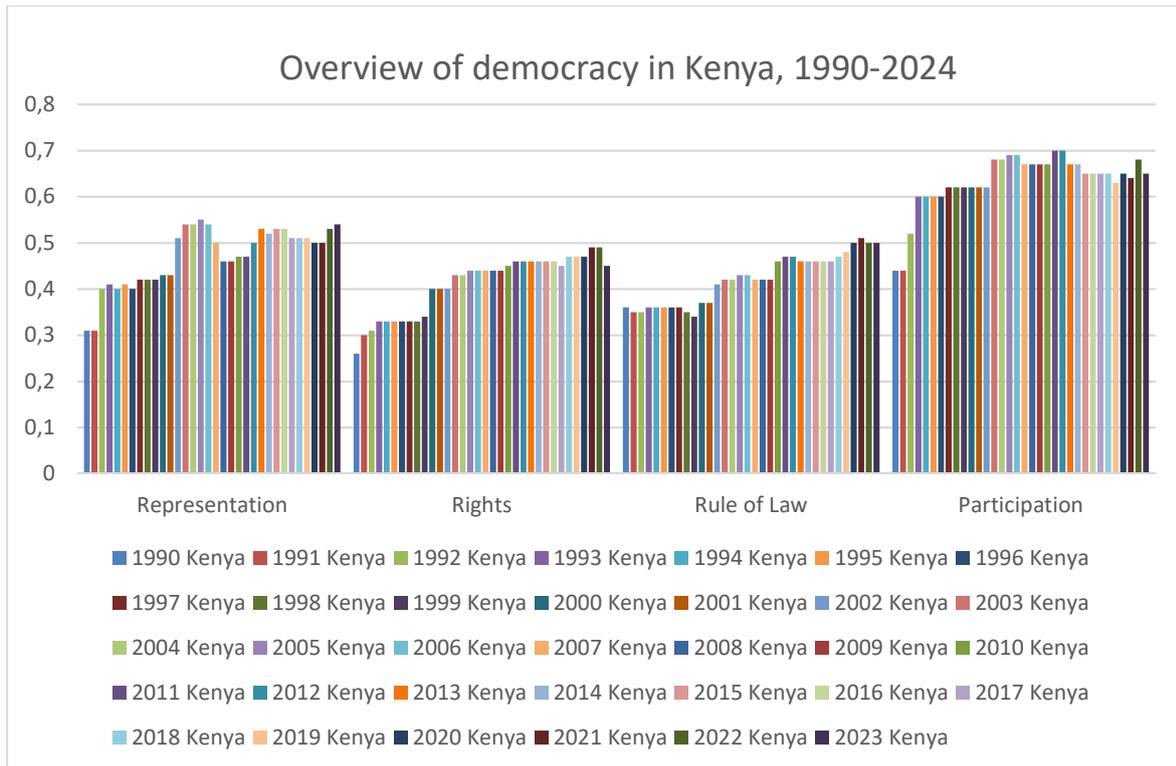


Figure 5. General overview of the level of democracy for Kenya, 1990-2024

Source: Adapted from data from International IDEA, 2024.

3.5.1.1 Press Freedom In Kenya

Press freedom is an important tenet of democracy according to which the libertarian theory (Siebert et al. 1972) argues that media in a liberal system has a set of critical roles and functionalities that are clearly spelled out in the constitutions. This is to guarantee that the media remains free from state control to keep the citizens informed and play a watch-dog role to thwart the government from overstepping its bounds. Nyadera, Agwanda and Maulani citing Dahl, remind us that Kenya's information sector throughout the 1960s to 1990s, remained largely represented by the state-run radio and television network, which were used to disseminate state propaganda and also silenced anyone who attempted to reveal state crimes (Nyadera et al. 2020). This can be alluded to the nature of the government in power, the one-party system of governance that largely characterized the nation since independence (Ochilo, 1993). Kenya has always been proliferated by the presence of several media organizations, including privately owned, independent and state-owned media houses. The free practice of the press however is largely dependent on the political situation witnessing the country at one stage or another. Kenya's 2010 Constitution guaranteed press freedom, but the respect of this clause of the

constitution has largely been unwarranted and depended on the nation's political and economic circumstances. Despite the fact that the constitutional framework guarantees freedom of the press, the actual situation is marked by a concerning pattern of threats, detentions, and suppression faced by journalists who probe into corruption or misconduct by government officials (Mogekwu, 2011). Since 2010, Kenya has gone through a sequences of political mayhems, which have resulted in several instances of government crack-downs on freedom of the press. Reporters Without Borders reports that the Covid-19 pandemic, similar to Kenya's past unstable political scene, also played a great role in restricting press freedom. During this period, authorities exploited pandemic measures as a pretext to suppress dissenting journalists, leading to incidents of intimidation, detentions, and even physical attacks on media workers (Human Rights Watch, 2021). The influence of politicians over the media continues to be felt, through media censorship. While they rank Kenya on 102 out of 180 countries in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index, they score Kenya on 33.72%, maintaining that the media in Kenya is still largely not free.¹² Furthermore, the issue of media ownership persists, as a sizable portion of Kenya's main media organizations are controlled by political elites or people connected to government officials, which further undermines the independence of news reporting (Cheeseman et al., 2019). It is also important to note that Article 35 of the 2010 Constitution of Kenya ensures every Kenyan the right to seek access and acquire, public information from both public and private institutions (if they are acting in a public nature). This clause was concretized in 2016 with the passage of the Access to Information Act.¹³ Nonetheless, the implementation is still lacking, as government agencies frequently hesitate to disclose crucial information, particularly in matters related to corruption or anomalies in elections (Transparency International, 2022).

3.5.1.2 Freedom Of Association In Kenya

Every Kenyan citizen is guaranteed the “right to freedom of association, which includes the right to form, join or participate in the activities of an association of any kind” according to Article 36(1) of the 2010 Kenyan Constitution (Constitution of Kenya 2010). This article equally encourages the establishment of trade unions and for them to design their agenda in a way that does not infringe the law. The Kenyan government as can be anticipated, however, has continually used its monopoly of force to crackdown on any gathering or trade union activities that it considers as undermining its authority. A rare instance reported by DW news in 2017 saw the arrest and incarceration of several medical doctors, leaders of the doctor's

union, around the country for staging a protest that allegedly crumbled the health sector.¹⁴ Related forms of repression have been observed in student activism, labor strikes, and civil society movements that advocate for electoral justice and measures against corruption (Branch, 2018). The squelching of peaceful protesters is a common practice throughout Kenya especially when the interest of the leaders are at stake. Freedom Houses' 2024 Freedom in the World Index ranks Kenya 52 out of 100 in terms of political and civil liberties, and classifies the country as partly free.¹⁵ This can be suggested to the fact that despite the fact that the country's constitution guarantees these laws for every citizen, the institutions in place have exercised prejudice in implementing these laws. Civil society organizations are encountering growing limitations, such as legal and administrative barriers that hinder their activities, especially those that challenge the government (Amnesty International, 2023). The observations by Freedom House are complemented by those made by International IDEA as can be seen on the previous figure exhibiting the country's profile.

3.5.1.3 Electoral Transparency And Credibility And Presidential Term Limits In Kenya

Elections have been taking place in Kenya for a long time before the country gained its independence. However, the credibility of the elections held in Kenya has always been subject to several controversies. The years following independence up to the re-establishment of multi-party politics in 1992 in Kenya, saw the country holding presidential elections in a de facto and de jure one-party system without any opposition (Throup, 1993). The legitimacy of the democratic process in Kenya during the one-party system and during multipartism has always been characterized by debates, leading to legitimacy crisis. Elections in Kenya are under the supervision of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) instituted in 2011 by the 2010 constitution in the IEBC Act to oversee electoral processes in Kenya. Its commissioners are chosen by the president of Kenya and approved by the legislative assembly for a six-year term. The IEBC, tasked with guaranteeing free and fair elections, has been charged with accusations of bribery, political meddling, and voter data manipulation (Barkan, 2013). The commission's reputation suffered a significant setback in 2017 when its chairman openly expressed doubts about the election results' integrity (Cheeseman & Klaas, 2018). All this, despite the introduction of computerized voter registration and the biometric data system. The history of elections in Kenya under the IEBC shows post-electoral violence (2013, 2017). Freedom House reports that violence and intimidation stained the 2017 elections and questions

of transparency were raised after one of the commissioners of the IEBC in charge of vote counting, Chris Msando was murdered and found dead, from torture few days before the elections, while another member fled Kenya for the United States. These elections saw president Kenyatta being victorious for a second term with 98.3 percent of the total vote after a rerun was conducted, boycotted by the primary opposition candidate, Raila Odinga (Freedom House, 2020). The monopoly of force by the interim has repeatedly been reported to be a disfavoring factor for the opposition parties whose rallies are constantly dispersed by police brutality. Allegations have been made against the police for employing excessive force during election times, including shooting protesters with live rounds, resulting in multiple injuries and mortalities (Human Rights Watch, 2018). The drama that has so far characterized elections in Kenya has seen criticism from both the International Criminal Court and Transparency International. However, Kenya being a member of the Rome Statute has severally forewarned to withdraw from the ICC when the ICC indicts the Kenya leaders for gross human rights violation and for going against the rule of law (Harbeson, 2014: 205).

With regards to presidential term limits, Kenya's 1992 Constitution initiated changes, which according to Article 142(2) restricted how many terms a president could serve to two terms of five years. This important clause of the constitution has been largely respected since its inception in Kenya and a 2020 Afro barometer survey shows that about 78 percent of Kenyans are still in favour of this ruling, while another 85 percent are in favor of adding age restrictions to the clause to promote democracy.¹⁶ The Republic of Kenya despites its history of political polarization and instabilities resulting from electoral violence, fueled by ethno-regional differences has so far respected the presidential term limit. The 2022 elections in were expected to test Kenya's commitment to this democratic principle once again, as President Kenyatta ended his two terms, paving the way for new political dynamics.

3.6 OVERVIEW OF POLITICS IN CAMEROON

This section digs deep into the bumpy constitutional and political history of Cameroon to give a full understanding of the French and English systems prior to the country's independence, which has shaped the nature of politics in modern day Cameroon. It will then conclude with an analysis of the events that caused the French system of administration to dominate, which has become the most talked about aspect of governance in Cameroon.

The German annexation of Cameroon in 1884 marked the beginning of the country's political history, then known as “Kamerun” and the country gained its first presence in the international scene through its participation in the First World War in 1914, serving as German soldiers. Two years later, the country was partitioned between Britain and France as conquered territories in an Anglo-French condominium that concluded the war which saw Germany defeated, and ousted from Cameroon (Chiabi, 1997:9-10, Ngoh, 2001:1-2). This partitioning was not based on geographical or ethnic considerations but rather on political interests, which resulted in artificial divisions that would subsequently fuel internal conflicts (Nfi, 2014: 109). The conquered territories were further placed under international administration as “mandated” territories by Britain and France in 1919 after they both signed the “Versailles Treaty”. In 1922, Cameroon then officially became a mandated territory of the League of Nations (LON) assigned to both Britain and France and lasted for 23 years until 1945 when this status was replaced by a Trusteeship agreement when the LON was dissolved and replaced by the United Nations (UN). The different governance approaches of the two colonial powers resulted in distinct developmental trajectories for the various areas, resulting in variations in their administrative frameworks, legal and educational that persist today (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2003: 27). Deep-rooted differences in administrative proficiency and civic expectations between Anglophone and Francophone Cameroonians were exacerbated by these institutional legacies; these differences continue to be apparent up in the nation's governance patterns, citizen-state relations, and attitudes toward central authority.

The territorial division of Cameroon into two unequal parts since 1916 between Britain and France marked the genesis of Cameroon's political turmoil, which will mature into a civil war after 100 years in 2016. The British and French administration of Cameroon with their respective policies officially ended in 1960 (for France) and 1961 (for Britain) when both sections gained independence and unified in 1961, marking the beginning of the country's highly disputed constitutional foundations. This unification plunged Cameroon into a myriad of governmental issues ranging from bad governance to legitimacy crisis, which has resulted to the lack of peaceful coexistence by both parties. This throws more light to the fact that the country's politics cannot be completely understood or discussed without referring to its colonial past. Although the goal of independence was to establish self-governance, it instead reinforced France's significant control over Cameroon's political affairs, a situation many political experts call "neo-colonialism" (Joseph, 1977: 73). This supremacy is still apparent in Cameroon's economic and military alliances with France, as well as the continuous use of the CFA Franc,

which links Cameroon's financial system to France's monetary policies (Mbaku, 2005: 128). The continued presence of French consultants in delicate government ministries and France's historical involvement in obtaining contracts for natural resources and military bases are two examples of the neo-colonial imprint. These agreements continue to incite anti-French sentiment among civil society organizations and intellectuals in Cameroon, who see them as a betrayal of the country's spirit of independence.

The involvement of natives into the political scene in Francophone Cameroon has been dated as far back to 1925, at what time the French administration formed what was then known as the “Conseil de Notables”. This was in a bit to absorb and integrate local chiefs who were the leaders of the indigenous groups into the process of administration (Le Vine, 1964: 92-94). It should be noted that the appointment of these local chiefs was based on colonial (French) administration’s interests and as such, they made anyone who favored their interests, chief, sparking a leadership conflict in Cameroon with the creation of artificial chiefs. The alteration of traditional leadership frameworks undermined indigenous governance systems and led to enduring disputes among local communities (Awosom, 2000: 73). It should be noted that the French colonial administration administered through the policy of “*indégenat*”, a policy that prevented natives from participating in political activities Rubin sees this as the “most disliked aspect” of French prejudice in Cameroon (Rubin, 1972: 51). A legacy of political centralism and authoritarian bureaucratization that is still embedded in Cameroon's political apparatus was left behind by this form of government, which was based on the assimilation strategy and stood in sharp contrast to the British system of indirect rule.

While the French administration in Cameroon can be characterized as being more direct, the British oversaw their own part of Cameroon through the “Indirect System” of government through the use of chiefs and fons who were the leaders of the natives. These local authorities were tasked with administering their natives, thus extending their original functions of maintaining law and order to include tax collection for the colonial authority (British) and also the delivery of basic services such as health services and educational facilities.

It is worth noting that Southern Cameroons during the British mandate was divided into two and administered as part of Nigeria. This attachment to Nigeria and the lack of autonomy gave the Cameroons a bargaining disadvantage in terms of projects and finance due to the lack of proper representation in what was then known as the Central Legislative Council (Ngoh, 2001:

61). This disadvantaged position prompted Southern Cameroon natives to begin pressuring for autonomy from Nigeria. The founding of political entities like the Kamerun National Congress (KNC) and the Kamerun People's Party (KPP) offered Southern Cameroonians a means to voice their concerns and push for self-rule (Chem-Langhëë & Njeuma, 1980: 45). The fight for autonomy began to give way for Southern Cameroon natives in 1954, when the provisions of the Lyttleton Constitution granted Southern Cameroon with a quasi-federal status including a Legislative Assembly and also an Executive Council (Lyttleton Constitution) while still being part of the Nigerian Federation. This status was later improved with the creation of a 'House of Chiefs' in 1957, which became the first upper legislative body in Southern Cameroon, alongside a ministerial government. This government was consolidated in 1959 when John Ngu Foncha, leader of the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP), won the elections, and by 1960, administrative power was transferred from the Governor General in Nigeria to the Commissioner of Southern Cameroon (Nghoh, 2001). The Southern Cameroonians' strong desire for institutional autonomy and the preservation of their own legal and cultural traditions was highlighted by these initiatives toward self-governance, especially in light of growing concerns about integration into a Francophone-dominated system.

Regarding independence, while French Cameroon gained independence after the UN Resolution 1349(XIII) was passed declaring independence for the region on January 01 1960 to a government that had allegedly been carefully selected and favored by France (Enonchong, 2021: 13). The unconventional nature of the independence immediately sparked an old rebellion in the newly self-governing Republic of Cameroon, spear-headed by the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (UPC) political party, which had earlier warned the UN General Assembly of the unrepresentative nature of the government that the French were preparing for Cameroon. These allegations were debunked by the UN visiting mission to Cameroon. However, evidence of French interest was immediately felt once more as it quickly favored the government to crush the rebellion (Atangana, 2010: 98).

Unlike the Republic of Cameroon's independence that was well planned as well as finalized by the UN General Assembly, the Southern British Cameroons suffered a different fate. Often described as a neglect and lack of support from the UN, the independence and autonomy of the region could not live to see the day's light (Atanga, 2011: 47). Faced with a lot of dismay and disappointment from the actions of the UN who had promised the peoples of Southern British Cameroons a plebiscite to help them decide their fate, the peoples of Southern British

Cameroons had no choice but to settle on accepting to “achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroon”. The second and only option on the plebiscite cards was that; “Do you wish to achieve independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria?” The lack of a genuine third option, which could have granted Southern Cameroons complete autonomy and independence, has been extensively criticized by academics as infringing upon their right to self-determination (Nkwi, 2017: 112). Note should be taken that the leaders of the governing administration under Foncha and opposition in Southern British Cameroons had in contemplating for the options for independence due to the lack of a consensus, petitioned the UN General Assembly in a joint statement for the plebiscite to be postponed. Their petition was however counteracted by UN Resolution 1352(XIV) which slated that the plebiscite was scheduled for March 1960 at the latest.¹⁷ The course of Cameroon’s present predicament was set by the reluctance of both the UN General Assembly and Great Britain to oversee their role of trusteeship in Cameroon to the latter. This has had significant implications in the history and future of the country, as their entitlement to autonomy was denied, forcing them to join an unequal alliance/marriage with the Republic of Cameroon in 1961, 11th of February, sealed by UN Resolution 1608(XV) taking effect as from 1st October 1961. Many political experts contend that the enforced unification was a catalyst for the current Anglophone crisis, as English-speaking Cameroonians have felt sidelined by the prevailing Francophone leadership (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 1997: 219). The map below shows the territory of Cameroon before June 1, 1961, with clear demarcations of the part in red shown the former British administered territories and the part in green showing the former French administered territory. It should be remembered that Northern Cameroons voted during the February 11, 1961 plebiscite to join Nigeria, thus becoming part of the Federal republic of Nigeria. This merger with Nigeria was officially administered on June 1, 1961, while their counterparts in Southern Cameroons achieved their own independence on October 1, 1961, thus changing the map of Cameroon to what it is today.

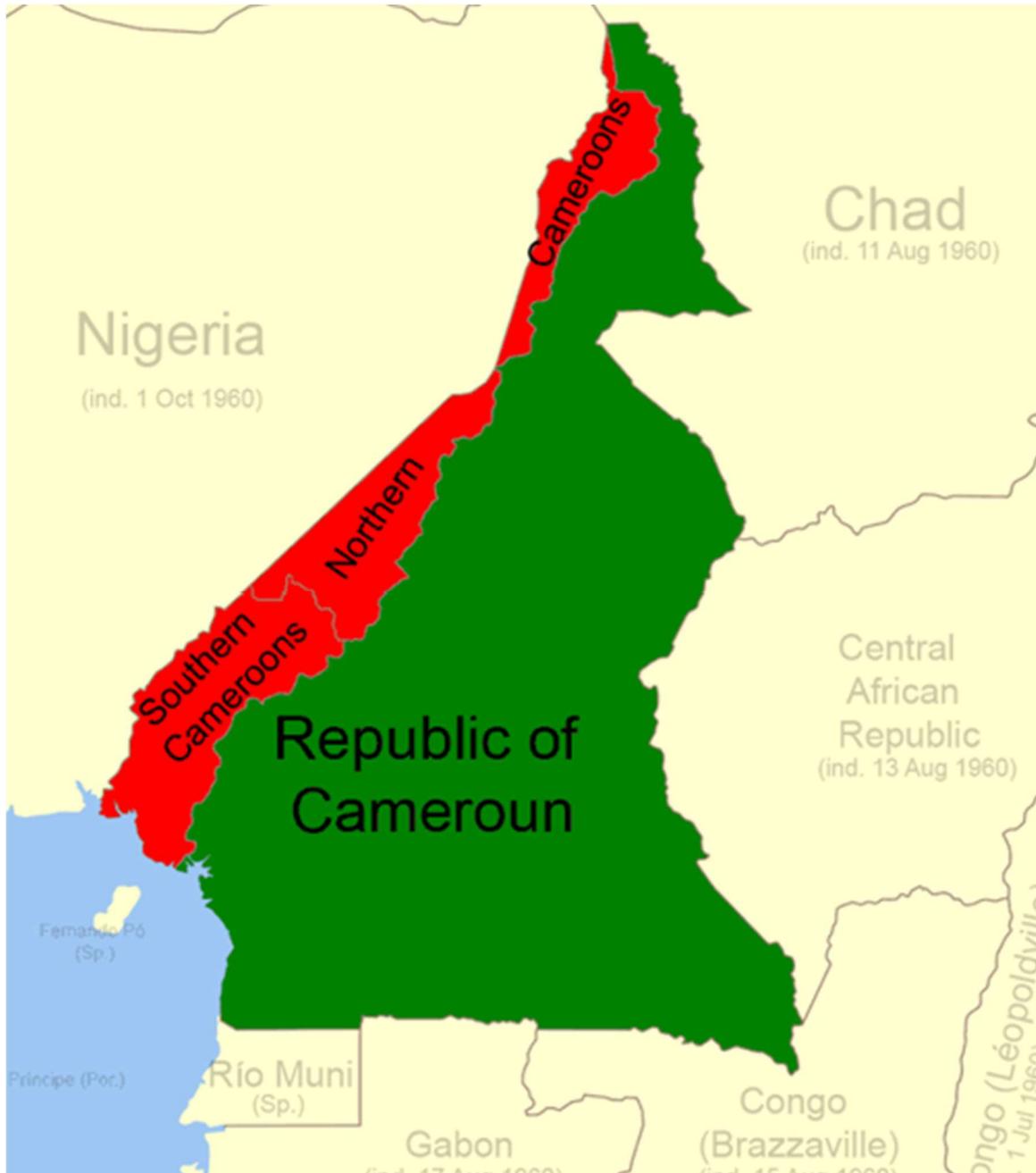


Figure 6. Map of Cameroon from June 28, 1919 to June 1, 1961, following Northern British Cameroons' decision to join the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

3.6.1 THE EVOLUTION OF POLITICS IN CAMEROON SINCE THE REUNIFICATION

Several scenes have been witnessed on the political stage in Cameroon since its reunification on the basis of a federal structure on October 1st 1961. The country briefly enjoyed multipartyism shortly after reunification, but later was transformed into a single party system,

put in place by president Amadou Ahidjo while trying to put in place his ideas of a grand and unified Cameroon and inclusive development. In post-independence Africa, the shift towards a centralized system reflected a larger movement in which leaders sought to consolidate authority to promote national unity and economic progress. According to scholars like Nzongola-Ntalaja (1987), many African leaders of this era often defended authoritarianism as essential for ensuring stability in newly sovereign states. This was during a period when multipartyism was being considered in many parts of Africa as a means of depleting resources which could be unified under a single party to foster development. Cameroon finally surfaced again as a multiparty state in 1990 thanks to new wave of democracy that was cutting across Africa, heavily shaped by the Berlin Wall's collapse and the worldwide movement towards democratic governance. This was instituted as a result of a constitutional amendment triggered by several violent clashes and political unrests. In the early 1990s, widespread protests and demands for reforms emerged, notably led by opposition figures like John Fru Ndi, the front-runner of the Social Democratic Front (SDF). His emergence in 1990 signified a pivotal shift in the nation's political landscape (Takougang & Krieger, 1998). This period of evolution in Cameroon's political development shall constitute the main part of the analysis of this dissertation. This era ushered in a multitude of dynamic political parties with a complicated network of relationships. This study's analysis of the political scene in Cameroon, based on primary and secondary data, reveals that since the country's reunification, a single political party has dominated the political landscape: the Cameroon Peoples Democratic Movement (CPDM). The CPDM's history dates back to the early years of the country's independence when it was administered under a de facto one-party state led by Amadou Ahidjo and the Cameroon National Union. It is important to remember that the current head of state who is also leader of the current ruling party CPDM was the vice president of Cameroon during the one-party regime under the Cameroon National Union, which he later renamed CPDM after he became president in 1985. Politics in Cameroon despite the introduction of multipartyism has also been characterized as being strongly influenced by networks of clientelism and patronage, where political allegiance often leads to economic and social rewards rather than ideological commitments (Bayart, 1989).

Decades of political activities have proven that Cameroon is indeed a facade multiparty system, which often finds itself faced with an illusion of pluralism, fueled by the objective observation of the many political opposition parties scattered everywhere and the harshness of the struggles between them. Sindjoun (1994) describes the country as moving from opposition in a one-party system to opposition in a multiparty system. In this regard, some researchers contend that the

establishment of multipartyism in Cameroon is primarily aimed at satisfying international donors and democratic observers, rather than promoting authentic political competition (Pommerolle, 2007). The activities and actions of political parties in Cameroon since reunification have helped to validate the country's status as a pluralist democracy. This is due to the fact that political parties exist, which defines what political pluralism means. A strategy aimed at promoting freedom of expression amongst the people. In reality, the opposition faces significant challenges due to institutional barriers like electoral fraud, legal intimidation, and government control of the media (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2003). Although opposition parties are present, their ability to effectively challenge the ruling party is greatly hindered by these institutional and legal limitations. The main characteristics of politics in Cameroon is that of people ascending into public offices in order to derive certain benefits. A form of politics commonly known as neopatrimonialism, this concept involves the utilization of government resources to gain the allegiance of elites instead of serving the public good (Erdmann & Engel, 2007). Jean-François Bayart described this type of politics as "*politique du ventre*" or politics of the belly (1989: 439).

The disguise democracy practiced in Cameroon since the introduction of multipartyism has operated with oppression and intolerant of opposing voices and all forms of criticisms. This however, domestic demands for political liberalization have increasingly continued to be seen in the country as highlighted by Victor J. Ngoh in Mbaku and Takougang (2004: 434-437). Amongst the most outstanding demands for political liberalization has been the long-lasting cry by the Anglophone minority, who have been through decades of constant marginalization as regards to politico-socio-economic development within a supposedly united Cameroon (Konings, 1999: 305-307). The government has since independence been unable to manage the diverse nature of the Cameroons, which has led to decades of antipathies especially emanating from the Anglophone minority due to unfair political representation and socio-economic neglect. The nature of affairs in Cameroon today are unquestionably haunted by the diversified and chequered nature of its history which has made the country relatively unstable since independence and reunification. A handful of reasons exist that account for the numerous legal, political and administrative matters fuddling development efforts in Cameroon, but the country's colonial past and inaccurate preparation of the colonies especially the Anglophone minorities towards self-determination is largely to be blamed.

3.6.2 DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS IN CAMEROON SINCE INDEPENDENCE.

Cries for political liberalization in Cameroon since independence and reunification have never been attempted to be tendered to until the 1996 Constitution which ushered in some measure of political liberalization in Cameroon. Nonetheless, numerous analysts contend that these constitutional changes were mostly cosmetic, designed to create an appearance of democratic advancement while ensuring the ruling party's continued dominance (Yenshu, 2006). Cameroon continuous to be marred by undeniable governance and development challenges which have rendered national consolidation measures vulnerable and led to a stalled democratic process. The outburst of the 'Anglophone Crisis' (Agwanda et al. 2020) in 2016 is just the tip of the iceberg on all the inert grievances that the peoples of Cameroons have been enduring since independence and reunification. The 1996 Constitutional amendments by the Cameroon government came in as a means to decentralize the state structure, however, in reality; the majority of power is held by the executive branch, leaving local governments with limited autonomy and financial means to effectively govern their own regions (Enonchong, 2021). Prior to these amendments, the Anglophone minority have historically always been divided in their own views, some calling for a return to the original terms of reunification in 1961 which guaranteed a federal structure thus preserving their ideal form of statehood and unique identity. Another faction built up with time more aggressively and stood for total secession as the only means to genuinely preserve their identity. Enonchong emphasizes that despite the decades of cries by the Anglophone minority for fair treatment, the government continuously denied of the existence of such allegations and instead encouraged a divide and rule policy to further hollow the two anglophone regions against each other (2021: 178).

While the 'Anglophone Crisis' has brought Cameroon into the limelight, it has raised several questions on the democratic progress the country has made since attaining independence. Following the encroaching activities of Boko Haram from the North and the spark on the Anglophone crisis, Cameroon has employed the War on Terror to justify increasingly authoritarian measures, especially in its fight against insurgency in the Anglophone regions, where separatist movements (the Ambazonia Movement) have sought independence. The Cameroon government thus frames this insurgency as "terrorism" and, in doing so, has claimed the right to suppress any opposition or protest movement under the banner of national security and unity. Authoritarian governments frequently misuse the concept of national security to

legitimize the repression of civil liberties. This pattern is not exclusive to Cameroon; it is also evident in nations dealing with internal strife, such as Ethiopia during the Tigray conflict and Turkey's crackdown on Kurdish separatists (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Although counterterrorism measures are essential, their implementation significantly influences their effect on democratic values. In Cameroon's situation, the deployment of excessive military force, arbitrary arrests, and the stifling of opposition raises concerns about the weakening of democratic standards (International Crisis Group, 2022). Reports show that the government has used the suppression of dissent, whereby, political opponents, journalists, and human rights defenders have faced harassment and intimidation. The military is also accused of committing pervasive human rights violations, comprising of arbitrary detentions, extrajudicial executions, and forced disappearances, actions all rationalized as part of a counterterrorism operation against "seperatists" Amnesty International (2023). Human rights organizations have extensively recorded these violations, which have severely damaged Cameroon's reputation globally. Both the United Nations (UN) and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights have condemned the government's actions, urging independent probes into the human rights violations (United Nations Human Rights Office, 2023). Nevertheless, despite these criticisms, the government persists in its oppressive measures, highlighting the limitations of international influence in fostering democratic changes. The paragraphs that follow will briefly cut across the application of some important indicators of democratization such as liberty of the press and expression; freedom of association; the nature of holding transparent and credible elections; religious freedom and its influence on politics in Cameroon; and finally, the limitation of presidential mandates. These factors will give any reader a clear position as to which position Cameroon finds itself on the democratic scale.

Respect for democracy, democratization, good governance and good government are terms that have gained prominence in modern political discourse. Often, in order to pass judgment on a country's governance system, its leaders and elites, it is strictly necessary to use an analytical grid and data set comprising the various principles of a democratic state. Several carefully carried out surveys have determined the standards of democracy across the globe which can be relied upon to establish some acceptable degree of conclusions on democracy based on indicators observed in each of these states. For instance, the "Freedom in the World" index by Freedom House offers a thorough assessment of democratic governance, classifying nations as "free," "partly free," or "not free" based on their political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House, 2024). In a similar vein, the Democracy Index from the Economist Intelligence Unit

examines civil liberties, democratic culture, government performance, political participation, and electoral procedures, giving a comprehensive view of global democratic patterns (EIU, 2023). These indices indicate that Cameroon has consistently underperformed, highlighting the persistence of autocratic governance and a decline in democratic practices (EIU, 2023). Despite the fact that there is disagreement over the precise definition of democracy and the ways of measuring it, events in Cameroon show a glaring example of whether or not the state is being governed well enough or not. International data set have seen Cameroon occupy disturbing positions internationally in terms of democratic advancement. In the 2023 Democracy Index, Cameroon was labeled as an "authoritarian regime," receiving notably low scores in areas of political participation and civil liberties. This designation is consistent with findings from Transparency International, which has repeatedly branded Cameroon as one of the most corrupt nations in the world, further undermining its democratic standing (Transparency International, 2023). Considering the fact that Cameroon is a young democracy, the target of this segment is to provide responses to some pertinent questions such as; are there certain factors which could allow Cameroon to be considered a democracy or an authoritarian state? What can we learn from the analysis of democratic indicators in relation to the situation in Cameroon? Does this sectoral analysis reveal the state of politics and democracy in Cameroon more advanced than they have seem?

3.6.2.1 Press Freedom In Cameroon

Press freedom is a fundamental argument and of overriding value in all democracies and the preamble of Cameroon's 1996 guaranteed both freedom of the press and of expression. Press freedom allows the citizens to be informed about the state of their country and keeps them current with all happenings and actions of leaders and daily news. Nonetheless, constitutional provisions alone do not surety freedom of the press. In reality, press freedoms in Cameroon have progressively worsened due to government oppression, censorship, and the intimidation of journalists (Reporters Without Borders, 2023). Independent media is crucial for holding democratic systems responsible, yet Cameroonian journalists work under a climate of fear and control, with some risking incarceration or even death for their reporting. There is a plethora of newspapers and media houses in Cameroon with news articles and programs that openly challenge the president and his government, which a first glance will give a very positive image for press freedom. However, there has been a long and steady decline in press freedom in Cameroon as defamation and slander remain a criminal and civil offense liable to a prison

sentence and a hefty fine and even a death penalty when found guilty as per section 305 of the Penal code. The situation appears to be even more complex and without meddling into the politics of press independence, this section focuses more on press freedom as a desirable value for a democracy. Reporters Without Borders in their 2021 World Press Freedom Index ranks Cameroon 135th out of 180¹⁸ countries in their index. This ranking shows a steady decline in the country's position as compared to previous years as they qualify Cameroon as "one of Africa's most hazardous countries for journalists". It is the observation of the author that media works in Cameroon are carried out either in fear of infuriating the governing authorities, or the journalist take the side of the authorities and openly praise them to the impairment of the general public. This fear of the practice of journalism was aggravated with the outbreak of the Anglophone crisis in 2016, Cameroon's government enacted a controversial law on the basis of human rights violations, apparently aimed at further muzzling journalists. The 2014 controversial anti-terrorism legislation permitted the government to outrightly label journalists, government critics and other outspoken personalities including activists as "terrorists", making them liable to trial in military tribunals (Ngangum 2021: 236). These incommunicado arrests and detentions of journalists has worsened lately with the political turmoil the country is currently facing. Panic struck the journalism community in 2020 when a popular Anglophone journalist Samuel Ajiekah Abuwe, popularly known as Wazizi was reported dead in after several months in detention.¹⁹ Few years later in 2023 precisely on January 22, the whole country and the international community is again shocked with the discovery of the mutilated body of another popular Cameroonian journalist in the capital city of Yaounde, Arsène Salomon Mbani Zogo, popularly known as Martinez Zogo. Martinez Zogo was the main anchorer of a morning radio program called 'Embouteillage', where he regularly reported on and denounced corruption involving prominent individuals. It is worth noting that few days before his abduction, which took place on January 17 2023, Martinez had voiced out during his program that he had information that some individuals involved in corruption wanted him dead. Also, the operation of media houses in Cameroon is highly censored. The country is known to place politically motivated temporal and permanent bans on media houses which engage in politically sensitive topics to publicize alternative discourse.

The lack of a free and independent press in Cameroon, which has over the years, become a more authoritarian state, makes democracy a far-fetched dream for the country. It should not be overlooked that the president has been in power since 1982 and as it is the case with all authoritarian governments, will do everything to control the narrative and twist the truth to

favor them. In the same vein, press freedom is further trampled upon because there is no law in the country which compels public officials to disclose public information to the public, thus forcing journalists to often rely on secondary sources of information, which in most cases are debated. The past years have been difficult for the country, with the increasing encroachment of terrorist activities, from Boko Haram in the North, to the Secessionist factions in the two Anglophone regions. The government has effectively combined investigative journalism, which continually threatens its position, with terrorism, creating a cocktail that stifles press freedom in Cameroon. The anti-terrorism law in Cameroon needs careful reformation, after which it will be possible to observe the articles of the constitution, which protect human rights and the right to free press. This law is also contradictory to several international treaties which Cameroon is signatory to, thus a big setback to democracy in the country.

3.6.2.2 Freedom Of Association In Cameroon

Freedom of association represents another very important tenet of democracy in a country. The alludes to the right to unite around a common cause, to associate in different organizations in order to share and be stronger and have the support of a group. While it is common place to be able to create all kinds of associations or groups without fear of repression or reprisals, as long as they do not overstep on the constitution as written in the Preamble and Article 10 (1).²⁰ With these promises in the constitution, the situation in the country is however very different. Freedom House's 2024 Freedom in the World Index classifies Cameroon on 15th on a scale of 100 on the Global Freedom Score, categorically stating that the country is not free.²¹ It should be noted that the methodology used by Freedom House is derivative of the measures from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which Cameroon is signatory to and by that means compelled to it. This rating/score takes into account real-world rights and freedoms enjoyed by individuals and not that their constitutions promise. The government of Cameroon which has been in power for decades has a record of using state resources for political patronage while restraining the activities of alternative voices and opposition parties.

Preparations for the recent presidential elections and its aftermath revealed that there is no freedom of association in Cameroon especially in regards to political participation. The targeting of Maurice Kamto's Cameroon Renaissance Movement (CRM) serves as a prominent example. Kamto, who ran against President Biya in the 2018 elections, was detained alongside his followers for organizing demonstrations against purported electoral misconduct

(International Crisis Group, 2023). The government stifled their activities as their rallies were outlawed and those who resisted the prohibitions were arrested. This repression underscores the limitations on political diversity in Cameroon. The organization and operationalization of political groups is severely limited in Cameroon due to risks of arrest and detention by the forces commanded by the state. Opposition rallies are regularly forbidden throughout the country raising question as to the true nature of multipartism in Cameroon as the country has remained largely controlled by a single party since independence despite the plethora of political parties in Cameroon. Similarly, the government in 2017 placed a ban on the Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC), an association made up of Anglophone politicians, whose purpose was to advocate greater self-determination for the two Anglophone regions.

3.6.2.3 Electoral Transparency And Credibility In Cameroon

Elections are an important determining element in any democracy, because through it, the voices of the people are expressed through the ballot. Huntington maintained as early as the 1970s that the ‘holding of free and competitive elections is accepted as a sign of pluralist democracy’ (Huntington and Moore 1970: 509). The history of elections in Cameroon shows constant disgruntlements from the opposition and the aftermath conclusion from international observers, the population and the local press paints the elections as fraudulent. The current constitution of Cameroon stipulates that the president who is also the head of state is chosen through a single direct voting round to serve a limitless number of terms. The most recent presidential elections took place in 2018 which saw the long serving president Paul Biya emerging with a 71 percent lead largely described as being tainted by irregularities. Cameroon's elections have consistently faced accusations of fraud, voter intimidation, and a lack of transparency (African Union Election Observation Mission, 2018). The electoral process’s credibility is further eroded by the absence of term limits and the disproportionate influence of the ruling party. Insufficient trust in the electoral processes and the absence of genuine democratic competition in Cameroon has gradually contributed to lessening voter turnout. A huge scandal came over the Cameroon government after when a television report on Cameroon’s national TV, CRTV²² showed some supposed electoral observers from Transparency International applauding the smooth running of the elections. These personalities were quickly challenged by a statement issued by Transparency International declaring that they had no electoral observers in Cameroon (Freedom House, 2019: 201).

The National Electoral Commission (ELECAM) is the main organization that governs elections in Cameroon, but the organizational build up has always been a topic of criticism as the President of the republic reserves the authority to name the Director General, Deputy Director General and other members of the organization.²³ Since its creation in 2006 it has been widely dominated by appointees from the ruling party, and as such casts doubts to the proper functioning and true nature of the organization. ELECAM's close attachment to the government and partisanship attachment has seriously destroyed its integrity and independence. Unlike independent electoral commissions in operational democracies, ELECAM is perceived as an arm of the ruling party, given that its principal officials are appointed by the president. This arrangement raises significant concerns about the impartiality of electoral management in Cameroon (International IDEA, 2023). The electoral process in Cameroon supervised by ELECAM exhibits several stages of irregularities starting from inappropriate voter registration stage, to voter cards, which are often arbitrarily issued, to intimidation of the citizens, to ballot stuffing, to visible indelible ink, to handling of ballot boxes while they're being moved to special counting centers, to publication of election results. Basically, every stage of the election process in Cameroon has been reported to have instances of fraud at one stage or another, and this justifies why the regime has been able to uphold its position for almost four decades.

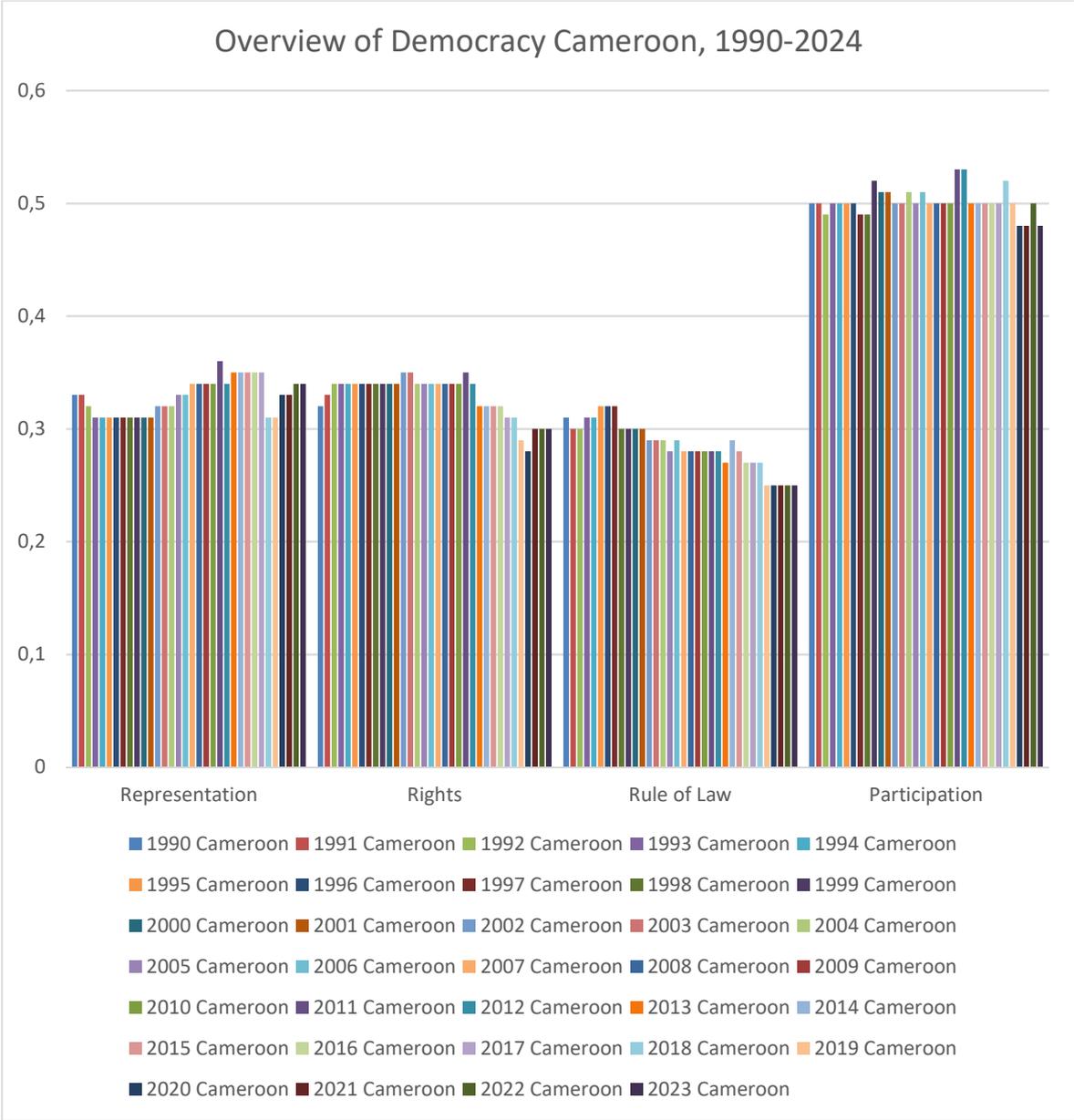


Figure 7. General overview of the level of democracy in Cameroon, 1990-2024

Source: Adapted from data from International IDEA, 2024.

The data above shows that for Cameroon since 1990, in regards to political representation, rights and rule of law has not even reach the mid point set by International INDEA’s methodology to be classified as a democracy, and despite this, there is still some degree of political participation from the citizens, signifying hopes for change.

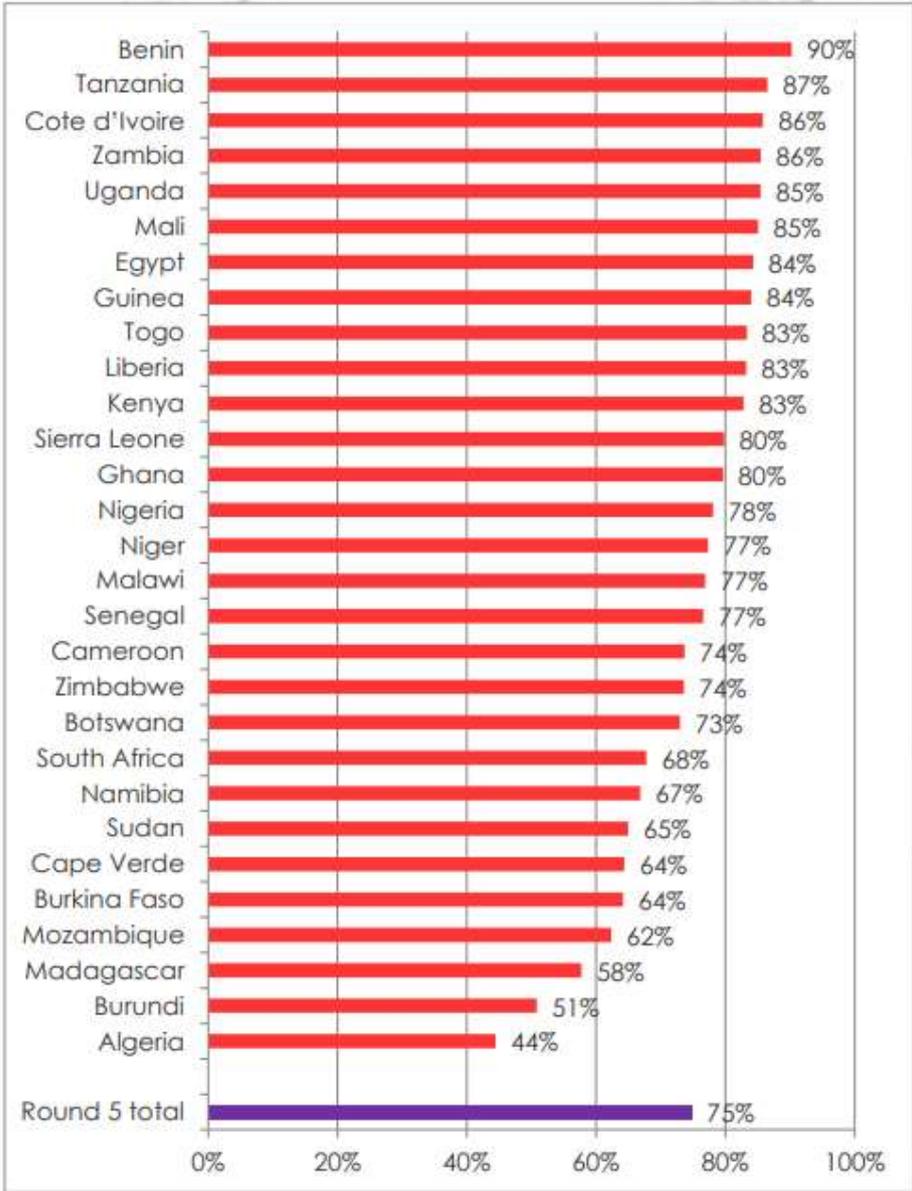
3.6.2.4 Presidential Term Limits

While transparent and credible elections remain a cornerstone of democratic progress, they need to be paired with effective power transitions to uphold the legitimacy of governance and safeguard democratic values. Cameroon's president Paul Biya is one of Africa's and the world's longest-serving presidents, having held office since 1982. The Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), with minimal political rivalry and restricted civic engagement (Freedom House, 2024), predominantly controls the political scene in the country. Despite all these decades as president, the country continues to suffer from glaring problems such as social inequalities, rising unemployment, worsening insecurity, poverty and an apparent risk of secession. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit (2023), Cameroon routinely performs poorly on governance metrics, with low scores in areas for example civil freedoms, political rights, and transparency in governance. This political stagnation has led to widespread corruption, weakened institutions, and growing public discontent with the electoral process. Several authors and political scientists such as Gelman and King believe that the restriction of presidential terms allows a certain political renewal and helps prevent what they call "incumbency advantage" (1990: 143). In Cameroon, it is common for those in power to utilize state resources, sway media narratives, and rig election processes to maintain their hold on power; these are practices that have been broadly documented (Transparency International, 2023). This advantage position that incumbents occupy against their oppositions has extended over decades, gradually weakening any chances for the opposition succeeding in electoral processes, which nevertheless exhibit significantly bias in support of the ruling party. The suppression of political dissent is further intensified by electoral fraud, media censorship, and manipulation of the judiciary, as emphasized in numerous reports from election observers (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Milan Svolik in support of term limits notes that term limits through regular power sharing among politicians help to promote regime stability (2012). Political term limits also help protect the people from their leaders. In a similar vein, Przeworski, Stokes & Manin noted that political term limits and change in power constitutes a major characteristic of their formal understanding of democracy because it gives the people the power of accountability in democratic settings in order to get rid of rogues (1999). The presidential term limit issue and the transition of power is especially urgent in Cameroon, where the absence of leadership renewal has fueled increasing political instability, regional discontent, and civil unrest. The lack of term limits has resulted in an aging leadership that is largely disconnected from the aspirations of the country's young population, with more than 60% of

Cameroonians being under 25 years old (World Bank, 2023). It is concerning that at 92 years old, President Paul Biya has governed Cameroon for 42 years without establishing a clear plan for succession, heightening the uncertainty surrounding the nation's political future. The 2008 amendment to Article 6(2) of the constitution, which eliminated presidential term limits, was widely criticized and protested by both local and international observers, as it reinforced Biya's grip on power (Amnesty International, 2023). Whether or not limiting term limits or removing them has been beneficial to Cameroon has with time proven to have serious political downturns as it has intensified political polarization, eroded public trust in government, and widened social rifts, especially between Francophone and Anglophone communities (International Crisis Group, 2023). These divisions already existed in the country before presidential term limits were scrapped off the constitution. While the aftermath of some elections in some African countries like Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Chad, Somalia, Eritrea, etc. and the suffering that followed these political transitions may provoke a line of argument against power alternation, presidential term limits remain an integral part of democracy. On the contrary, other African nations for example, Ghana, Senegal, Uganda, Mali, Tanzania, Cape Verde, and in Benin have recently demonstrated the potency of smooth power transitions and respect of term limits, reinforcing democratic consolidation and political stability. Demers-Labrouse et al justify the controversial amendment in Cameroon to the relative peace the country has enjoyed since independence (2012: 117). Nonetheless, this peace remains delicate, as Cameroon is experiencing increasing turmoil due to electoral fraud, violations of human rights, and shortcomings in governance (United Nations Human Rights Office, 2023). More details on the effects of this controversial constitutional act and the legitimacy of the leaders are explored in the subsequent chapters, where the effectiveness of governance, public opposition, and the influence of international entities in fostering democratic transitions will be examined in greater detail.

Although it can be contended that altering constitutional term limits is becoming increasingly common in Africa, as observed in nations like Guinea (2001 and reinstated in 2010), Tunisia (2002 and reinstated in 2014), Togo (2002), Gabon (2003), Chad (2005), Uganda (2006), Algeria (2008), Cameroon (2008), Niger (2009 and reinstated in 2010), Rwanda (2015), and the Republic of the Congo (2015) (Zamfir, 2016), this trend is widespread. However, there is frequently a lack of true democratic legitimacy in the way these reforms are executed. Typically, these constitutional amendments are passed through majoritarian referendums or manipulated legislative procedures that create a facade of democratic involvement while

actually reinforcing authoritarian governance (Dulani, 2015). An Afrobarometer survey reveals that a substantial majority of respondents from 29 African countries surveyed favor the institution of presidential term limits as a safeguard against authoritarianism (Dulani, 2015).



Respondents were asked: Which of the following statements is closest to your view? Choose Statement 1 or Statement 2.
Statement 1: The constitution should limit the president to serving a maximum of two terms in office.
Statement 2: There should be no constitutional limit on how long the president can serve.
 (% who "agree" or "agree very strongly" with Statement 1)

Figure 8. Support for presidential term limits | 29 countries with presidential or semi-presidential regimes | 2011/2013

Source: Dulani, 2025: page 3.

With the few democratic indicators analyzed above, Cameroon's democracy is clearly still fragile and not fully developed. The absence of political renewal, the frailty of institutions, and ongoing authoritarian rule impede democratic advancement, causing many Cameroonians to feel disheartened about the likelihood of significant political change. Political analysts and observers consistently point out the deficiencies in Cameroon's democratic framework, stressing the importance of institutional reforms, transparent elections, and authentic political competition to rebuild public confidence in governance (Freedom House, 2024). At times, the call for change is expressed through popular resistance movements, youth-driven activism, and the involvement of civil society, all of which reflect a strong societal desire for democratic renewal and political transformation in Cameroon.

3.7 THE NATURE OF POLITICS AND DEMOCRACY IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

The Central African Republic (CAR) has experienced one of the most dramatic histories that any African country has had to experience in the last two centuries and the country continues to make headlines around the world with its difficult political terrain. The combination of historical colonialism, resource exploitation, and governance issues has created a persistent cycle of political instability and economic stagnation (Mehler, 2018). Annexed by France in 1880, the country was later partitioned among commercial concessions in the greater Ubangi-Chari area in 1894, and by 1910, the Ubangi-Chari area had become part of the Federation of French Equatorial Africa (US Department of State, 1969). The fight for autonomy from France began between the 1920s and 1930s following excessive abuses by the concessionaires, and in 1946, Ubangi-Chari had its own assembly and was represented in the French parliament by Barthelemy Boganda, who was the leader of the Social Evolution Movement of Black Africa (MESAN) a pro-independent movement in the area (Azikiwe, 2009: 47). Boganda's goals went beyond merely achieving national independence; he envisioned forming a cohesive Central African entity capable of resisting external pressures, a concept that later encountered significant resistance from colonial powers (Titley, 1997). Boganda pushed the Ubangi-Chari area to achieve self-government within French Equatorial Africa in 1958 and became the country's first Prime Minister, but died in 1959 in a plane accident, and his nephew, David Dacko took control of the MESAN. He then led the country to independence and became the first president in 1960 as the Central African Republic (CAR) (US Department of State, 1971).

Many post-colonial trajectories in Africa were similar to this one, with charismatic nationalist leaders rising quickly to power under optimistic hopes but lacking the institutional structures necessary to sustain the development of democracy. Personalized rule and authoritarian drift were made possible by the lack of robust state structures and the importance of the presidency.

It is important to remember that the Central African Republic's first constitution was adopted on February 9, 1959, by the Constituent Legislative Assembly and amended in December 1960. This constitution proclaimed the nation's "attachment to the Rights of Man, to the principles of democracy and of the self-determination of peoples," guaranteed the autonomy of the judiciary, and outlined the president's authority, which largely centralized authority in the president's hands (US Department of State, 1971). The consequences of the monopolization of powers by the presidential office were immediately felt in 1962, when the government dissolved and placed a ban on all opposition parties, and the duration of office for the president was stretched from 5 years to 7 years in 1963 (USDS, 1971). This damaging and undemocratic move was similar to the wave of one-party governments that proliferated the African continent at this time and Dacko cemented his position as president in the nation's first presidential elections in 1964 in which he was the only candidate. Although there were assertions of political stability, Dacko's administration's ineffective economic management progressively weakened state institutions, setting the stage for military intervention (Kalck, 2005). David Dacko's reign was interrupted in a coup orchestrated by Jean-Bedel Bokassa, a military commander in 1965, with a mission to eradicate corruption and better-up the economy.

However, Bokassa's coup substituted military authoritarianism for civilian incompetence, as was the case with many military takeovers in Africa at that era. Emblematic of Cold War-era African strongmen, the post-coup justification rhetoric was based on nationalist populism that promised reform but instead brought persecution. This pattern resembles what academics have called "praetorianism," in which, in the absence of strong civilian supervision, the military simultaneously arbitrates and enforces political authority.

Bokassa's reign in CAR was the most dramatic the country ever witnessed, as he abolished the constitution, dissolved parliament, and turned over administrative duties to his appointed cabinet and allowed no opposition, though he had promised that his reign will be brief (O'Toole, 1982:140). Bokassa's reign is allegedly to have succeeded largely due to the good relationship he maintained with French president Valery Giscard (Ryan, 1981: O'Toole, 1982). After

declaring himself president for life in 1972, he proclaimed himself “Emperor” in 1977, in a lavish coronation following the footsteps of Napoleon Bonaparte to lead Central Africa to what was briefly known as the “Central African Empire”. Bokassa’s crowning ceremony, with an estimated cost of \$20 million, was harshly criticized as a flamboyant display of authoritarian extravagance in one of the world's most impoverished countries (Wrong, 2009). His extravagant rule, characterized by human rights violations, resulted in his removal from power in 1979 through a French-backed coup that restored David Dacko (Mercereau, 2004; O'Toole, 1982: 143). Under the pretense of geopolitical or economic interests, former colonial powers continue to exert influence in domestic matters in post-independence African governments, as demonstrated by the rise and fall of Bokassa. France's backing of Bokassa and subsequent involvement in his overthrow serve as an example of selective interventionism, which frequently serves strategic objectives over democratic principles.

Dacko’s reign was also brief as he was ousted in another coup just 2 years later in 1981 by another army commander, Andre Kolingba, who ruled as president from 1981 to 1993. During Kolingba’s reign, political parties were no longer prohibited and several other reforms were made that saw some degree of economic and political progress, evidenced by the second holding of democratic presidential elections in 1993 that saw Ange-Félix Patassé emerge victorious, though the elections had been annulled the year later by the supreme court when incumbent president Kolingba was defeated. The Kolingba- Patassé peaceful transfer raised hopes for the country as for the first time in the country’s history, an incumbent ceded power following a democratic election. Ange-Félix Patassé’s reign was marred by a series of civil unrests, an abortive coup (2001), which eventually led to a coup in 2003, by a rebel leader, General François Bozizé masterminded a coup that ousted Patassé and took over the presidency. This era underscored the delicate nature of democratic transitions in CAR, where elections frequently resulted in increased instability rather than better governance (Carayannis & Lombard, 2015). The CAR's electoral processes were vulnerable to contestation and violent reversals due to the absence of institutional stability and elite unanimity on democratic standards. Instead of serving as tools of legitimacy, elections turned into arenas for elite competition and global scheming, exposing a type of "electoral authoritarianism" concealed behind democratic processes.

A new constitution was approved for the country in a plebiscite in December 2004, and the following year, Francois Bozizé was announced winner of the presidential elections following

the run-off vote. Bozizé's government was followed by years of unrests and the infiltration of several militia and rebel factions from neighboring countries such as People's Democratic Front led by Abdoulaye Miskine, the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army, the Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR), the Popular Army of the Restoration of Democracy (APRD), the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP). Several peacekeeping missions were also deployed by independent countries and International Organizations to intervene in the conflicts in Central African Republic, but finally, Bozizé was ousted in a coup by the leader of the Seleka rebels, Michel Djotodia in 2013, and is sworn in as president of CAR. Djotodia's incapacity to bring the country to order by putting a stop to the activities of the rebel groups which had become sectarian caused him to resign as interim president in January 2014, and was succeeded by Catherine Samba-Panza. The worsening humanitarian situation in Central Africa Republic triggered a UN Security Council resolution to take over peacekeeping, stationing more than 10.000 military personnel²⁴, called operation MINUSCA²⁵ and the European Union's mission under the banner of France was equally in place. With its focus on stabilization, transitional justice, and civilian protection, MINUSCA's arrival signaled a significant change in international peacekeeping operations in the CAR. However, the lack of a legitimate national reconciliation framework, the dispersed character of rebel groupings, and inadequate logistical coordination hindered its success. Although Samba-Panza's transitional leadership was a unique instance of female leadership in the subregion, her government lacked the resources and ability to fundamentally alter the course of peace and governance.

The incessant violence in Central Africa saw the intervention of several parties, multilaterally and unilaterally, with each playing significant role in either easing the situation or aggravating it. A UNSC follow-up report on a previous resolution (2127) proved that the violence was escalated by the non-respect of the arms embargo placed on the country by Iran and China, who continually supplied the Seleka fighters with ammunition. Additionally, several arms smuggling operations were interrupted at border crossings, revealing that the place of manufacture for these ammunition was Europe.²⁶ The skirmish in the Central African Republic quickly took on a sectarian nature, tearing apart Christians and Muslims who had lived together for decades. According to some analysts, the geneses of this sectarianism can be traced back to colonial-era tactics that sowed rifts among ethnic and religious communities (Marchal, 2017). The interventions from some bilateral partners, especially France, which has faced significant criticism, can be examined in light of "rent-seeking" behaviors and the predictions of Collier and Hoeffler (2004), who revealed the close relationship between the increasing odds of civil

war in natural resource-endowed countries and the potential to finance these conflicts with those resources. Though not formally documented, the activities of the warring parties in CAR and their supportive partners who seek to exert their influence on resource rich areas further thwarted the situation. With all this going on, the War on Terror has been manipulated by the government to suppress opposition forces and consolidate power. Using terrorism as a cover, the government in CAR has often portrayed opposition groups as “terrorist organizations” in order to justify violence responses. It equally frames its military actions as part of the broader global counterterrorism effort, thus justifying human right violations such as arbitrary detentions, extrajudicial killings, and torture of suspected militants and political opponents, committed during these military responses as reported the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (UN OHCHR, 2024). Casting opposition as a threat to national or international security, this securitization of governance reflects a global trend in which weak governments use international discourses on terrorism to justify repression. Such tactics delegitimize nonviolent protest and strengthen impunity in the CAR, making democratic recovery more challenging. Future routes to peace in the CAR will rely on the development of open institutions that can fight against the use of violence for political purposes in addition to disarmament and inclusive political discourse.

3.7.1 DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC SINCE INDEPENDENCE

From this juncture, the level of political and democratic development in Central Africa Republic (CAR) has been rather retrogressive and casts many doubts to the country’s future. The country’s 2016 presidential election ended with a newly elected president, Faustin-Archange Touadera who promised stability and peace for the country. Nevertheless, CAR continues to be caught in cycles of instability, placing it among the most fragile nations globally (International Crisis Group, 2019). The lack of democratic processes is exacerbated by frail institutions, a dysfunctional judicial system, and ongoing violence that weakens governance and state power (Mehler, 2018). Numerous international organizations consistently place CAR at the lowest position on global indices, with several of these entities describing the country as a “failed state” (Helman and Ratner, 1992; Rotberg, 2003). Elections have been held on a regular basis in CAR, however, the insecurity in the country has not permitted for the smooth functioning of this process, thus leaving all the elections with post electoral violence. Also, regular elections alone

are not a determining factor for democratization, but an array of other factors such as the rule of law, the presence of political diversity, and the integrity of institutions (Diamond, 2008), which must be carefully considered. In this vein, the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index (HDI), which has been an enduring tool for determining or at least suggesting some democratic progress remains handy in investigating democracy. Central Africa Republic has for a very long time occupied the worst positions in a classification of 189 countries and as its position for 2019 was 188 out of 189, with a value of 0.397, with an increase of only about 18.9 percent since 1990, when its value was 0.334 (UNDP, 2021). The methodology utilized by the UNDP to conclude observes the overall progress of states made in human security, poverty, gender, inequality, socio-economic sustainability, health, education, income, demography, environmental stability, etc. The indicators underscore ongoing governance issues in CAR, where a fragile state finds it difficult to deliver basic services (Carayannis & Lombard, 2015). Boré describes the Central African Republic as a “ghost nation” and a “sham state” (2014). The figure below by International IDEA present a fair representation of the nature of democracy and politics in CAR, which similar to other observations made by other organizations, shows the country to be on a pervasive course towards collapse.

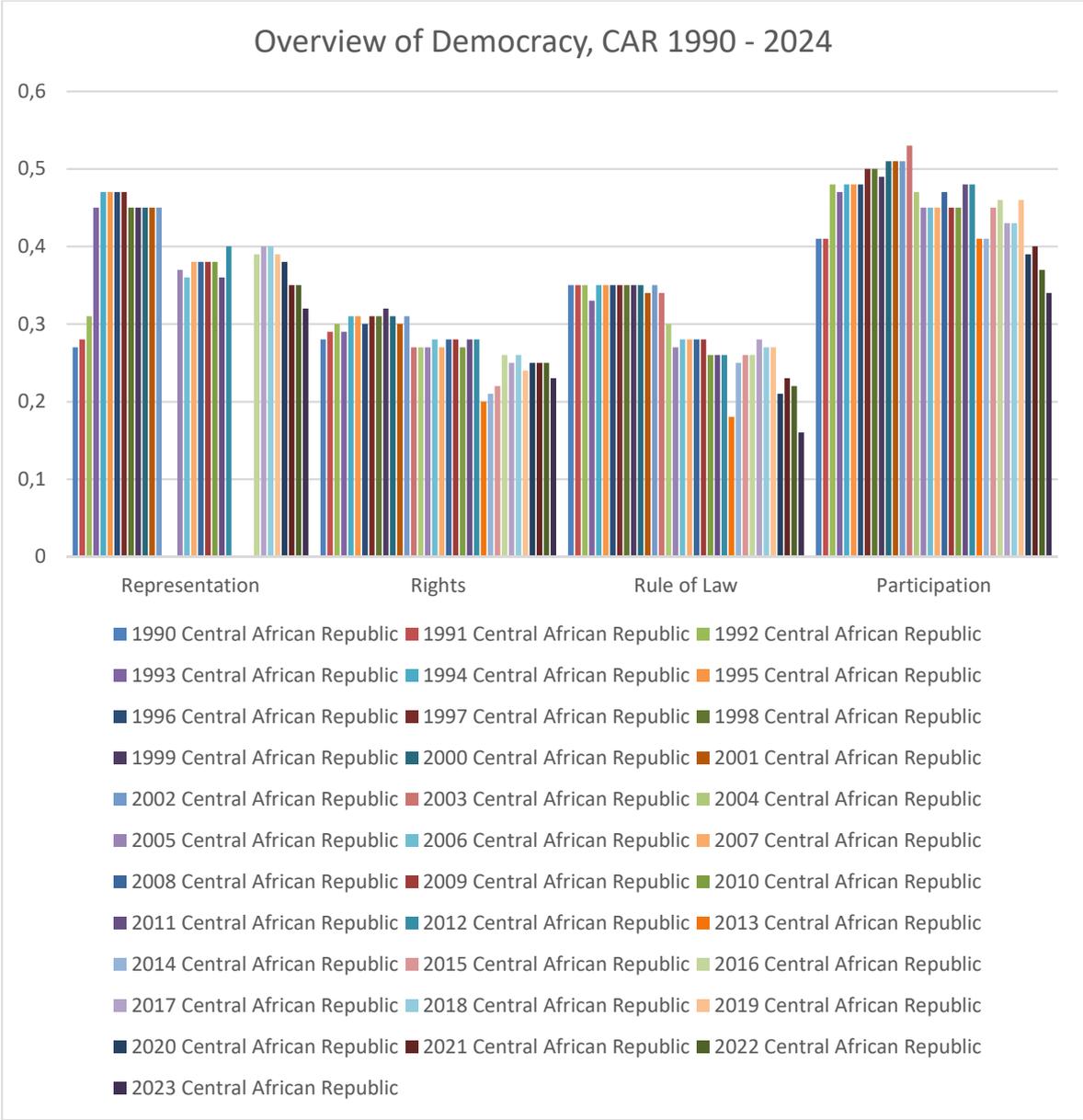


Figure 9. General overview of the level of democracy in Central African Republic, 2024

3.7.1.1 Press Freedom In the CAR

It will be a surprising that amidst the pervasive insecurity and absence of state authority, the Central African Republic will be a safe place for freedom of speech and expression. Press freedom in the CAR remains fragile and limited due to persistent instability, low institutional capacity, and government interference. The media environment in the country is further complicated by factors such as economic hardships, self-censorship and restricted access to independent information sources (Reporters Without Borders, 2023). Despite the adoption of a more democratic framework since the 2016 elections, journalists continue to face threats,

ensorship, and occasional arrests, particularly when covering sensitive topics like government and rebel conflicts. International reports indicate that press freedom in CAR is among the lowest globally, with many media outlets operating in restrictive environments that limit critical coverage and investigative reporting. This restrictiveness is largely worsened by the conflict-driven reliance on international actors for support, creating a challenging atmosphere for independent media to flourish. Freedom House' 2024 Freedom in the World Index places CAR on a score of 5 out of 100, considering the country as "Not Free", taking into consideration factors such as political rights and civil liberties.²⁷ This Freedom House report investigates that despite the enormous efforts by the High Commission of Communication to regulate media activities to be independent from the state and foreign intervention since 2017, the situation remains unaffected, as media activities remain largely very risky. Despite Articles 136 and 137 of the 2016 Constitution guaranteeing the autonomy and liberty of the High Commission of Communication, these rights are frequently compromised by executive interference and instability (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

3.7.1.2 Freedom of Association In The Central African Republic

The Central African Republic's history of freedom of association is complex, shaped by fluctuating government policies and frequent insurgencies. Since independence, civil society groups have had an evolving role, especially in mediating peace, fostering community resilience in conflict zones. However, the ability for civil society to operate freely remains constrained, mostly with financial dependency on international donors, which often shapes the agendas of these civil society groups. Security concerns also continue to limit the reach and influence of grassroot civil society groups, thus hindering their impact. Ongoing political turmoil intensifies the vulnerability of civil society, hindering lobbying efforts (Marchal, 2017). It is worth mentioning initiatives like the 2015 Bangui Forum, where civil society groups played important mediating roles between the governing administration and the several factions operating in the country. The constitution of Central African Republic officiates freedom of association on Article 14, which clearly makes it a secular state, thus allowing the citizens the freedom of the practice of every religion they choose (Article 10). However, ethnic and religious cleavages have gotten interwoven with the country's political disunions, causing a rift between Muslims and Christians. CAR has been at the forefront of international attention for years as a result of the sectarian divide and recurring cycles of tensions.

3.7.1.3 Electoral Transparency and Credibility and Presidential Term Limits in CAR

Post-electoral violence has been the norm in Central Africa Republic and the credibility of the elections and the legitimacy of the leaders cannot be fully ascertained. The 2015-2016 elections signaled a change in direction in CAR, being one of the few relatively peaceful transitions in the nation's history. However, the 2020 presidential and legislative elections were again tarnished by insecurity, irregularities and limited access to voting in areas under rebel control. The electoral system in CAR is still vulnerable, with political leaders frequently manipulating it to conserve their position of authority (International Crisis Group, 2021). Despite international response by the United Nations and the African Union to support election monitoring, widespread violence still undermines the transparency and legitimacy of electoral outcomes.

It is quite challenging to assess adherence to the constitution and the rule of law in a lawless state such as the Central African Republic. In the CAR, presidential term limits have been a contentious issue, reflecting broader challenges in establishing stable governance. The constitution currently limits presidential power to two five-year terms. However, political leaders have occasionally attempted to alter or bypass these limits, sparking national and international concern over democratic integrity. A heroic act by Central African Republic's Constitutional Court in 2020 declined a government draft intended to extend presidential term limits amidst suspicions that the elections may be delayed by the corona virus (Rolland, 2020). President Faustin-Archange Touadéra's party, the United Hearts Movement (Mouvement Cœurs Unis, MCU) further pushed this dishonest move, in 2022 demanding a change in the constitution to permit a third term for the president. The Constitutional Court once more ruled this out as "unconstitutional" (Human Rights Watch, 2024). This demonstrates that some institutions may still uphold their values and strive to preserve the essence of their purpose. This act would have contradicted Article 35 of the 2016 Constitution which clearly states that

“In no case, may the President of the Republic exercise more than two (02) consecutive mandates or extend it for whatever motive that may be.”²⁸

As tensions rise in anticipation for the 2025 elections in CAR, the international community and human rights organizations will closely be monitoring the political climate surrounding CAR.

Recent events recorded in 2021 marking the increasing in activities of rebel groups such as the CDC shows that the country continues to demonstrate all the features of a dysfunctional state, with no immediate indications of improvement. The presence of both vertical and horizontal inequalities and the lack of social cohesion and peace, the government's incapacity to regulate its borders, and heal the ethnic and sectarian divides has left the CAR a country of repeated cycles of conflicts, split with profound mistrust.

3.8 GENERAL REMARKS

An in-depth analysis and field work may make it possible to detect important progress and interesting achievements in governance overall in the African continent, which may be insurmountable at first glance. The growing influence of opposition parties, the activism of civil society, and electoral reforms in certain nations suggest advancement (Cheeseman, 2018). With this, possible solutions seem to appear, bringing a nuance to the completely negative perception that the world have of Africa. However, the reality of things here are neither white nor black, but a mixture of both. This study believes that the important indicators of democracy highlighted above in some places at some times are respected. Without wishing to hide the weaknesses and deny that many improvements are still needed in these areas, our analysis and experiences in many African countries forces us to accept that there is a certain degree of political and democratic maturity in Africa's young political systems. The heterogeneity of Sub-Saharan Africa has made the reality about the existence of democracy in the region a subject of many debates in which opinions differ deeply. Some writers see democracy in the region as just a façade, with too many features negatively influencing its progress, amongst which corruption, stark poverty, illiteracy, multiethnicity and diversity, and the alternation of power are often invoked. Though there still exist quite a number of authoritarian and hybrid regimes in the continent, democracy in Africa is not just a utopia, but has come to stay and is work in progress. The presence of opposition and pressure groups in the continent's politics is a milestone towards democratization, demonstrating how tolerant times have evolved since the one-party times, raising hopes for more fundamental values in these democracies. The unique situation of each state, the many cultural diversities, the historical aspect differentiating one country from another, and the politics of these different countries, are elements that make it problematic to analyze democracy for the whole continent. The peculiarity of these differences however creates common situations which makes it possible to draw common conclusions with and between these states.

Also, the African Union (AU) and regional organizations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have taken on a larger role in establishing democratic standards in recent years, particularly when it comes to stepping in to stop illegitimate transitions of administration. Their efforts represent a growing regional understanding that democracy and good governance are essential to peace and development, although occasionally being constrained by domestic politics and resource limitations. For instance, the 2007 African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance of the African Union has emerged as a key document for enhancing electoral integrity and encouraging public engagement.

CHAPTER FOUR

RIGID CONSTITUTIONALISM, LEGITIMACY AND DEMOCRACY IN THE POLITICS OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN STATES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section looks at Central Africa's political legitimacy situation and how it affects the region's efforts to consolidate democracy. We must keep in mind that authoritarian control is intimately associated with political legitimacy, which is still one of the most crucial pillars of democratic stability and a defining feature of regional politics since independence. Given that the countries in the region are still forging their democratic paths, the issue of political legitimacy in the area continues to pose significant difficulties. In Africa, the line between authoritarian governance and the strengthening of democracy is often difficult to distinguish due to the underdeveloped state of political institutions (Schatzberg, 1989: 445).

The majority of the region's countries started holding elections, legalizing multi-party systems, and introducing term limits for the president after the events of the 1980s, which saw many nations change to follow the democratization waves that were "blowing across the globe," as Broadbent (1992: 102). Prospects for democracy in the Central African Sub-Region and the rest of the continent increased after these events at a rate never seen since the countries' independence. By examining how the existence or absence of political legitimacy has affected democracy in the area, this chapter aims to provide proof of the fundamental connection between political legitimacy and democracy. This chapter also offers evidence that the region's democratic impulse may have been subverted by issues with political legitimacy and that internal political forces, not external ones, are what are fundamentally undermining democracy. More often than not, democracy in the region has been defined in terms of elections and transitions of power, but we also have to include other accompanying variables like constitutionalism, the respect of human rights, freedom of association and assembly, which remain very much questionable in the region. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly clear

that institutional trust and economic justice are essential for democratic legitimacy to flourish. People's trust in democratic institutions is being undermined by the incapacity of many Central African regimes to deliver on democratic pledges in concrete socioeconomic outcomes, like jobs, public health, and education. In consequence, non-democratic inclinations are reinforced since people frequently return to seeing the state as a transactional institution rather than a representative one.

The literature on the connection between political legitimacy and democracy will be briefly reviewed in the parts that follow, which will also trace the development of political power in the chosen nations and examine the definition of political legitimacy. In order to present the current state of democracy within the current political apparatuses, another section will be devoted to discussing the evolution of political power, the prevalence of authoritarian rule or illiberal democracies, and the causes of the dominance of unresponsive multi-party states in today's politics in the Central African region. This will be accomplished by examining the relationship between political legitimacy and democracy over the long and short terms.

4.2 THEORIZING POLITICAL LEGITIMACY AND DEMOCRACY

This section identifies the debates on political legitimacy and democracy by highlighting the determinants of both terms and will go further to establish the nature of the relationship between both concepts. Diamond summarizes diverse views of the determinants of democracy amongst which economic performances, with indicators such as improvement in living standards which he emphasizes has become a truism; and political performances such as freedom and order, human rights, and political legitimacy (Diamond, 1997: 19, 20), which resonates from positive policies instituted by the leaders. With democratic consolidation being the main idea, Larry Diamond in his lecture 'What is Democracy?', set out four standards upon which a democracy can be characterized to be, which this study greatly relies on as standards for legitimacy:

1. A political system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections.
2. The active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and civic life.
3. Protection of the human rights of all citizens.
4. A rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens.

(Diamond, 2004)

Although these principles are universally applicable, their implementation in Central Africa is still wildly uneven because of the confusion surrounding civil society organizations, the absence of judicial independence, and the fact that many nations lack an impartial election body. For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the combination of the interests of the ruling party and the state apparatus consistently erodes the credibility of elections, even in the face of electoral reform initiatives. Therefore, even though there are nominal democratic institutions, they are frequently undermined, producing a facade of legitimacy rather than its actualization.

The study of democratic stability in Central Africa can be easily positioned within the broader body of research on political legitimacy, which is typically understood to mean approval. Levitov lists at least two starting points from which legitimacy could be established, including a normative path and a sociological approach (Levitov, 2016), the latter of which emphasizes the morality of the right to rule. Juan Linz highlighted that legitimacy should not be restricted to the abstract form of democracy but should be demonstrated through shared and normative behaviors in respect of the laws of the land. He demonstrated the connection between legitimacy and democracy in what he called "loyalty to the democratic regime" (Linz and Stepan, 1975:29-37). In his study of the factors that determine democracy, Lipset emphasizes social necessities including income, education, urbanization, and emerging industry in addition to political legitimacy (Lipset, 1959). Regarding political legitimacy, Merriam argued in *Systematic Politics* that nations were able to enjoy political legitimacy because of elements like freedom, justice, general state well-being, and internal and foreign security (Merriam, 1945: 31). Political legitimacy can be analyzed from a variety of perspectives. In general, I believe that democracy is somewhat legitimate because of the vote, or what we typically refer to as elections. This is due to the fact that, at the very least, all of these nations regularly hold elections in the name of democracy; yet, the issue we face when examining these elections is their level of freedom and fairness. Again, election results are not sufficient enough variables to be used to characterize political legitimacy, but also, the manner in which these electoral results are achieved is important; are they free and fair? are the wielders of political authority legitimate or not? Buchanan sets out three²⁹ (3) ground conditions for determining the legitimacy of political power. These conditions are:

1. The Consent Condition: Political power is legitimate only if those subject to it have consented to it, either explicitly or implicitly.

2. The Justice Condition: Political power must be exercised in ways that respect and promote justice, including protecting basic human rights and ensuring fair treatment of individuals.
3. The Common Good Condition: Political power is legitimate when it is exercised for the common good, meaning it should serve the interests of the society as a whole rather than just a select few (Buchanan, 2002: 703).

We may add the Transparency requirement, as a fourth, context-sensitive requirement, to these. Openness in governance, particularly budgetary transparency, judicial independence, and media freedom, becomes a crucial component of legitimacy in political contexts when mistrust, disinformation, and elite manipulation are rampant. Without it, the state's moral position is undermined because even consent is fabricated or ignorant.

Post-election contestations in sub-Saharan Africa are not new; in fact, some of them have even resulted in violent conflicts. The very fact that these events occur makes us wonder if the governments are genuine.

The works of Buchanan, who emphasizes the necessity of genuine democratic institutions as the foundation for determining political legitimacy (Buchanan, 2002: 718), are crucial for the development of a theory analyzing political legitimacy. Buchanan argues in favor of political legitimacy rather than political authority, leading to the theory of democratically authorized political power (Buchanan, 2002: 693). Christopher Wellman on the other hand, a legal theorist sees a state as legitimate if it enjoys the moral freedom to utilize and threaten force against the ruled (Wellman, 1996: 211, 212). This direction of analysis of legitimacy focuses more on the coercive nature of the state, which alludes to the state's monopoly on the legitimate utilization of physical force to coerce and enforce actions within its territorial delineation. Buchanan's ideas are thus more useful to the analysis of this article because even in a democracy, each state has with it some degree of entitlement to the use of coercion to enforce laws on some serious issues warranting force. The abuse of such entitlements and the use of coercion and other political sneaky attitudes on issues of state against the general health of the country in democracies triggers in the issue of political legitimacy in these states, thus highlighting the centrality of legitimacy in the analysis of democratic studies.

Democracy has always relied heavily on leadership, and the essence of democracy is defined by the differences between the ideas and acts of these leaders as well as the variety of their

aspirations. In order to illustrate how misinformed political science students have been thus far regarding political legitimacy in African regimes, Schatzberg quotes Decalo as saying that "there has been an unfortunate tendency to confuse longevity with legitimacy or the absence of coups with both stability and legitimacy" (Schatzberg, 1989: 445),³⁰ highlighting how misleading students of political sciences have been so far as the understanding of political legitimacy in African regimes is concerned. Schatzberg's emphasis on political culture, which has been the defining characteristic of leadership in sub-Saharan Africa, is intrinsic to his approach.

Inglehart significantly contributes to the debate on political culture by analyzing how societies exhibit different and enduring patterns of political cultural approaches, which are unchallengeable (Inglehart, 1988). His ideas prompt a line of reasoning toward understanding the type of political culture that characterizes the political sphere in the Central African Sub-Region, helping to elucidate events that are unique to the area and the cultural mechanisms of political legitimacy. Comparative assessments across sub-regions are also made possible by an understanding of political culture as a determinant of legitimacy. The idea that political legitimacy cannot be separated from historical experience, colonial trajectories, and levels of institutional development is further supported by the fact that Central Africa has lagged behind West African states like Ghana, which have seen greater advancements in civic engagement and electoral turnover due to more pluralistic political cultures.

Political culture in Central Africa is crucial in determining political legitimacy. Inglehart (1988) suggests that societies have unique and lasting political behavior patterns that shape the perception and maintenance of legitimacy. The political culture in this region, heavily influenced by colonial legacies, patronage systems, and hierarchical governance, has led to the persistence of authoritarian tendencies and the unclear legitimacy of many governments. Central Africa's political culture is rooted in both pre-colonial governance and colonial rule. Traditional governance often focused on hierarchy, centralized power, and collective decision-making through councils of elders or chiefs. Some scholars view these structures as inherently democratic due to consensus-building and communal participation, while others believe they encouraged deference to authority (Kunz, 1991). Colonial rule disrupted indigenous governance, replacing it with authoritarian bureaucratic systems aimed at resource extraction rather than democratic participation. Colonial administrations often used indirect governance, reinforcing authoritarian tendencies by using local chiefs as intermediaries. This led to a

political culture where legitimacy was linked to power and control rather than participatory governance. As a result, after gaining independence, many Central African leaders continued centralized, top-down authority structures that valued stability over democratic legitimacy.

A key aspect of Central Africa's political culture is clientelism, where political support is traded for material benefits, government jobs, or preferential treatment. Leaders maintain power through patronage networks, distributing resources to loyalists instead of upholding democratic principles. In Cameroon for example, Paul Biya's prolonged rule has been maintained through a vast patronage network that benefits regional elites, military leaders, and business figures. This situation results in political legitimacy being based more on elite loyalty and economic incentives than on democratic consent. The opposition remains weak, not due to a lack of support, but because the political culture favors entrenched power structures over democratic change. Taking Chad as another example, Idriss Déby ruled for thirty years by balancing coercion and patronage. His government's legitimacy was not based on democratic elections but on security concerns, particularly the fight against terrorism, which allowed him to justify authoritarian measures.

In these systems, legitimacy is frequently determined not by democratic ideals such as fair elections or the rule of law, but by the leader's capacity to ensure security, deliver economic advantages, or uphold stability. This creates a political environment where citizens do not necessarily anticipate democracy to operate as it does in Western liberal democracies. Instead, many perceive strong, even authoritarian, leadership as essential for maintaining order and ensuring national survival.

Another significant element of political culture in Central Africa is the prevalent political apathy and disengagement. After many years of unmet promises, electoral manipulation, and suppression of opposition voices, these conditions set-in. Over time, citizens have come to view political participation as pointless, resulting in decreased voter turnout and weakened civil society involvement. The consistent decline in voter turnout, as observed in Cameroon (from 68.28% in 2011 to 53.85% in 2018) and the Central African Republic (from 72.65% in 2005 to 59.01% in 2016), highlights this growing discontent with the electoral process. Many perceive elections as mere formalities intended to legitimize predetermined outcomes rather than opportunities for genuine political change. Also, opposition parties and civil society organizations are frequently fragmented, underfunded, and systematically suppressed. Many

opposition leaders risk being detained, exile, or assimilated into the ruling system. This deters people from getting involved in politics and fortifies the belief that legitimacy is in effect, dictated by those in power rather than earned through a genuine democratic race.

Legitimacy in the area is equally strongly influenced by political socialization, which is the process by which political following, support and practices are transmitted from one generation to the next. Strong leadership is associated with stability and national unity, according to narratives propagated by state-run media and education in many Central African nations.

State-controlled narratives represents another form of political socialization that influences political culture in this region. While ruling parties portray themselves as the only defenders of peace, government-run media frequently portray opposition leaders as threats to national stability. For example, the government of Cameroon has presented the Anglophone conflict as a security risk rather as a valid political grievance, which has strengthened the country's culture of servitude to the leadership rather than calls for change. In terms of education, civic involvement and democratic values are not prioritized in political education in many Central African nations. Rather, it frequently exalts current and former leaders, encouraging a culture that discourages challenging authority. Authoritarian authority is thus further cemented as a result of generations growing up supporting the existing quo.

However, this dissertation maintains that political legitimacy is the attitude that the nation's governing system believes is best, whether it is morally correct, reasonable, appropriate, and worthy of the loyalty of people in general. According to this theory, a legitimate government functions for the benefit of the vast majority of the population or the country as a whole, not for the interests of a select few or its leaders. This legitimacy grants the government a moral authority to rule and command obedience from the people, allowing it to tax without objection, draft, legislate, and enforce laws, and effectively practice a mixture of coercion and consent in line with the principles of democracy. Democracies however vary and are unique to every area. Therefore, this dissertation views democracy and political legitimacy as predicated on the consent of the governed. It does not argue that force should be avoided, but rather aims to establish the citizens' free approval as a necessary prerequisite for a functioning democracy. Political legitimacy explores the relationship between the leaders in power or those who control the state on the one hand and the powerless citizens who are being governed. Also, because of

the importance of this relationship, to democracy, the moral grounds of legitimate governance must be well established.

Given the deeply embedded political culture in the Central African region, a shift in the concept and application of legitimacy is necessary to attain true democratic legitimacy. Governments must encourage genuine participatory governance, strengthen civil society, and allow for genuine electoral competition instead of depending on force, patronage, or historical narratives. But changing political culture is a slow process that calls for both institutional improvements and shifts in public perceptions. Improving civic education to increase knowledge of democratic values could be one step toward this change. promoting youth political participation in order to counteract generational disengagement. preserving the media's autonomy to refute narratives dominated by the state. encouraging decentralization to increase the influence of local communities in the political process.

4.3 TRACING THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL POWER IN CENTRAL AFRICA

African politics prior to colonization was characterized by a system of governance argued by many as being authoritarian, with hierarchy composing the basis of traditional rule, while others see it as being democratic made up of societies of general consultations prior to decision making (Kunz, 1991). One of Central Africa's most developed pre-colonial republics, the Kingdom of Kongo, for instance, had a bureaucratic structure that constrained the king's power. In the meantime, hierarchical yet consensus-based government systems were implemented by the Luba and Lunda empires, which are located in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as it remains today (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002). The idea that African leadership was solely authoritarian prior to colonization is refuted by these governance forms. It would be misleading to discuss the current state of affairs by concentrating on these sparse and limited structures because these practices were not used across the continent because different societies had different forms of governance, and they were not all accepted as models of systems of governance as we currently define them. We cannot, however, deny that the tradition of constitutionality we have today was absent in the past. The pre-colonial modes of government had their own operational methods, which were not written in texts as we do today, but included laws and legislation unique to each environment, representing mutuality and accountability and proving the legitimacy of the governments that existed then, as Gluckman explained

(Gluckman, 1965). As an illustration, the Buganda Kingdom, in present-day Uganda, had a sophisticated legal system with Kabaka (king) advisory councils. This arrangement effectively balanced governance and authority, demonstrating early political legitimacy (Reid, 2017).

The current African governmental structures are residuals from the colonial era, which was put in place by colonial powers to serve their own objectives. Existing traditional political authorities were either ousted and replaced with more colonial-friendly ones or incorporated from the beginning based on collaboration, thus conserving their 'traditional status' and powers while integrating into the colonial governments. In order to incorporate local leaders in the colonial authority, the French colonial approach of "assimilation" and later "association" in Central Africa habitually chose individuals who would uphold French supremacy rather than those who would fairly represent the interests of their local communities (Betts, 2005). Similar to this, indirect governance was employed during Belgian administration in the Congo, but it was intended to erode traditional leadership in favor of a centralized colonial power (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002). The Western loyalist regimes that currently administer the Central African Sub-Region on a client-patron basis were established by this leadership style. The characteristic of the political elite is one with leaders of little regard for the local political culture who also have very fragile links with the larger masses.

As this dissertation seeks to determine, legitimacy has been identified in various ways. This dissertation will propose that government responsiveness is a key criterion for determining a legitimate government, as a responsive government is more likely to gain the support of the masses and limit the potential for political opposition and crises. The question of responsiveness however remains relative. In this context, relativism refers to either socio-political or economic responsiveness. According to conventional knowledge, some administrations in emerging democracies use their economic performance as a way to justify themselves. For instance, despite accusations of authoritarianism and corruption, the government of Equatorial Guinea has strengthened its legitimacy by using its oil riches to expand state control and improve infrastructure (McSherry, 2006). Similar to this, Paul Kagame's Rwanda has embraced a developmental authoritarian model that prioritizes stability and economic progress over political freedoms; this strategy has attracted both praise and criticism (Ansoms, 2011). Though recent events demonstrate that the tides have shifted in favor of securing fundamental political rights, examples of the miraculous economic achievements seen in some East Asian economic giants operating under authoritarian systems of governance allowed these governments to

legitimize their positions of power. A prolific writer in this field is Adam Przeworski who highlights how crucial economic delivery is to the consolidation of democracy by separating subjective expectations from actual economic experiences. The conclusion is that if citizens have seen and believe that democracy improves their personal economic circumstances, then public support for democracy will rise (Przeworski, 1991). Experience from the history of Europe has proven that their move towards democracy came with improvements in their national economies. Another group of scholars William Mishler, Christian Haerpfer and Richard Rose, however warn against this reductionist theories against which they argue, 'treat all political attitudes as if they were merely reliant on economic situations.' And further concluded that it is not just economics factors, but also political factors that define the levels of popular support for democracy, but political factors account even more. (Rose, Mishler and Haerpfer, 1998: 157, 174). Consider Chad, where the political system under President Idriss Déby's rule managed to maintain power by political and military repression despite the country's stagnating economy (International Crisis Group, 2017) and the reign continues under his son, after his assassination. Establishing the accuracy of this analysis depends on the country, area, and time period. Everywhere in the world, public support for governments has changed over time and under different conditions. Given that these governments continue to prosper in spite of multiple economic setbacks and difficulties, examining the legitimacy and support for governments in nations like Cameroon, Chad, the Central African Republic, and Gabon will emphasize the importance of political considerations. Electoral outcomes from the last two or three presidential elections have demonstrated that these governments remain unshaken and are perceived as legitimate in the eyes of the voters. President Paul Biya won 71.28% of the vote in Cameroon's 2018 presidential election, however the poll was tarnished with multiple accusations of fraud and subjugation of the opposition (Transparency International, 2019). Likewise, in Gabon, President Ali Bongo's disputed win in 2016 sparked post-election violence and allegations of vote manipulation, yet he continued to hold power till 30 August 2023, when a coup d'etat led by hi cousin, Brice Oligui Nguema after another disputed general election, ultimately overthrew him. Similar to the circumstances in nations like Rwanda, the effectiveness and responsiveness of economic policies have, at least for many, been the foundation for the legitimacy of the ruling administration.

This researcher contends that the legitimacy of governments in the Central African Sub-Region is linked to and closely affiliated to the ruling party and its surrounding history and more often than not, the people do not even have a chance to determine if the government is legitimate or

not, and it wouldn't matter if the government is democratic or authoritarian. The economic challenges faced by people often tend to obscure their judgments of legitimacy, drawing them further away from political participation and limiting the chances of ascertaining the legitimacy of a government. Furthermore, as demonstrated by President Denis Sassou Nguesso's rule in Congo-Brazzaville, the practice of political clientelism and the allocation of public funds to gain influence over elites and important ethnic groups have strengthened regimes' hold on power (Englebert, 2009). Additionally, some economic policy successes, along with outbreaks of civil disobedience and terrorist attacks, have been seized by governments as opportunities to advance their agenda of maintaining power over an increasingly apolitical population. This has been demonstrated by voter registration and election outcomes in a number of these nations, where the numbers are steadily declining. The opinions expressed in this dissertation will be illustrated using data from the International IDEA and the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG).

International IDEA report on the history of electoral processes shows a steady decline in voter turnout at least for the past two presidential elections in Cameroon to have declined from 68.28% in the 2011 presidential election to 53.85% in the 2018 presidential election.³¹ This same outcome happens to be exhibited with the case of Central African Republic which in its subsequent presidential elections recorded a steady decrease from 72.65% in the 2005 presidential elections to 59.01% as of the 2016 presidential elections.³² 'The justice-based theory of political legitimacy' proposed by Buchanan could be a rehab for further investigation of this situation (Buchanan, 2002: 23).

Nationalist movements that fought for independence were institutionalized as political parties to take on the responsibility of leading the states as the colonial masters packed up their affairs. This allowed the countries in this region to quickly embrace multi-party politics as a means of legitimizing their positions a few years after gaining independence.³³ The promising age had begun, the age of enlightenment, true promises of the future everyone dreamt of; living in a land of freedom of expression, of speech, and of association. This age ushered in constitutional reforms in so many countries. Cameroon's constitution, established in 1961 during the creation of the federal structure, authorized a multi-party system, with many political parties operating at that time, though short-lived. However, under the reign of Ahmadou Ahidjo, the country shifted towards a monolithic single mass party system aimed at centralizing power and eliminating all forms of opposition. The pledging reasoning of this system include; the

nonexistence of competitive political parties, multiple candidate elections, the absence of freely formed associations, and also the limitation of fundamental political and civil liberties, and the high monopolization of political decision-making.³⁴ Such measures were adopted then by the regime as a form of ensuring state conservation, to ensure that a country largely divided as Cameroon, remains united, which as of then had the formation of political parties based on regional and tribal lineages. Other sources such as the United States Department of commerce saw it as a means for the state to tie together its resources and improve its economic development³⁵ because multi-party politics would have been wastage of resources. Evidence of the popularity of the existing political parties in Cameroon were prove enough that this assertion was justifiable to a certain extent as the Union Camerounaise (UC), the party of President Ahidjo was popular mostly only in the region where he came from. John Ngu Foncha, who was vice president of the Federal Republic also had his own party; Kamerun National Democratic Party KNDP was mostly popular only in the Anglophone region where the leader originated from. Ahidjo's position was advanced under the agenda of the "Grand National Party" known by its French appellation "Parti Unifié" (Ngoh, 1996: 235) The mono-party system adopted in Cameroon fell into the trap of desire for political power as it gradually led to the centralization of state power, which enabled Ahidjo to consolidate his position in power. This system was however abandoned with the coming of Paul Biya to power in what was described as the '*New Deal*' (Aseh, 2006: 110) government in 1982. The goal of the early one-party system, as in many other nations, was to unite people and resources for shared development, which essentially gave the government legitimacy. A desire for liberty led to the introduction of multi-party politics, which ushered in a new age marked by the enactment of laws pertaining to liberty, such as those in Cameroon, as one-party states had allowed for the concentration of power (Jua, 2003: 85). Political parties began to form during this time, participated in elections, and gave regimes a feeling of legitimacy. However, political persecution and the repression of these liberty laws have been the norm, thus the excitement surrounding multi-party systems and legitimizing their leadership has been short-lived as seen in the case of Cameroon after the presidential elections,³⁶ and Gabon in 2016.³⁷ The figure below illustrates the region's poor public perception score of 35.3%, which indicates a downward trend of -2.8 on the rule of law in Central Africa, according to IIAG statistics. The respect for liberty laws thus are the determinants of political legitimacy alongside government responsiveness.

Central Africa

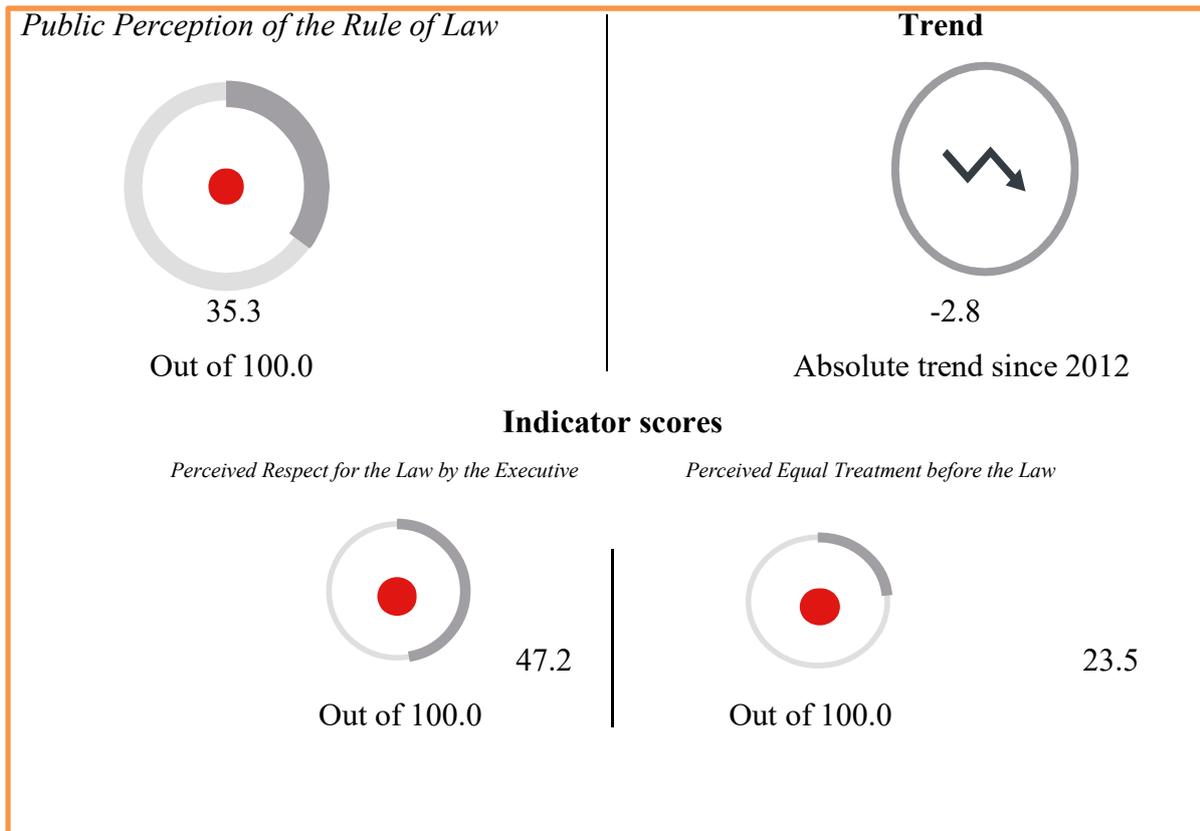


Figure 10. Public Perception of the Rule of Law in Central Africa, 2021

source: Adapted from data IIAG statistics on Public Perception of the Rule of Law for Central Africa(2021).

Clientelism, a phenomenon that cannot be regarded as nonaligned and whose very manifestation is accompanied by high levels of corruption, favoritism, nepotism, and patronage, all of which are the ills of governance and the fuel that burns down democracy, is another factor that determines political legitimacy and democracy but is largely ignored. Clientelism in its own, represents a social structure where individuals exchange favors for resources, either for direct gain, for favors, or for kinship selection. Clientelism is rooted within human behavior in reciprocal altruism, with a main concern being that one individual is surrounded by other individuals of its own kind, (which in the case here usually is tribesmen, or political party members), as well as other partnerships he or she has managed to develop throughout their lives, which they will prefer to benefit those people over someone else. The priority of the leaders in such societies derails from the original social contract and becomes; to serve him/herself, their interior and outer circles, with everyone serving only according to his/her circle and network benefits. This inevitably leads to patronage and nepotism, and impedes

broader national development endeavors, further concentrating power within a select, privileged elite. This translates into unfair distribution of state resources into rewards for loyalty within the circles, at the expense of the whole country, increasing inequality, and threatening the legitimacy of the state. Furthermore, it increases the public's sense of political alienation since the state is seen less as an unbiased organization working for the common good and more as a means of furthering the interests of particular groups. The history and pre-existing culture of the countries of Sub-Saharan African countries makes these practices very common, coupled with the weak democratic institutions they have. These clientelist societies are associated with inadequate levels of democratic accountability and personal responsibility. These institutions usually foster a climate of impunity, in which public officials are not held culpable for their deeds, which makes voters less optimistic about the possibility of real political change. Given that the ties are largely consensual, the paradoxical significance of clientelism³⁸ in African politics is still hard to understand. In the short term, clientelist relationships could appear to benefit both sides, but over time, they seriously jeopardize democracy. It is best described by Kitschelt as "relations that involve not only some form of voluntarism and reciprocity but also exploitation and domination" (Kitschelt, 2000: 849). It is important to understand that the way clientelism operates often stifles genuine political competition. By giving public funds to powerful supporters, leaders keep their support, creating a political environment that pushes opponents of the ruling party to the periphery. One would wonder why these relationships persist, but evidence from the Central African Sub-Region, proves that the clients are more accommodating because they could be better off if they severed the relationship. As many have noted, there are a number of reasons why these connections still persist, including the former colonial masters' wishes to preserve both their spheres of influence in their former colonies and their position as global powers. An excellent example to cling to would be France's actions in sub-Saharan Africa, which have been highly controversial due to criticism that they continue to function as a patron-client system where support is given in exchange for political fealty (French, 1996).

African leaders resulted to a form of 'rent seeking' engagement, whereby, public resources are appropriated by elites for personal benefits as described by Krueger (1974), and Tullock, (1967). This involves the disbursing of the so much scarce resources to capture support (often military and economic, which generally serves just the interests of the leaders in power) from external partners and the equilibrium results are often that the support benefits some interest group at the detriment of others. Because public funds are being diverted from profitable

ventures to networks of patronage, rent-seeking also leads to inefficiencies in the economy and governance. This activity is widely practiced by African leaders, who create monopolies and assign political and economic rights and privileges to influential groups and individuals in exchange for 'rent' to gain their support and prevent challenges to their authority. This can strengthen authoritarianism since governance hence becomes less about advancing the common good and more about gaining the allegiance of influential groups. This practice has led to various forms of inefficiencies in both the democratic consolidation process in Africa and its economic development. In addition to causing societal unrest, the resulting concentration of power and wealth in the grip of a small number of people also undermines the very institutions that are meant to uphold democratic principles and public accountability. For these dictators, gaining the support of these influential organizations and people might be seen as a crucial survival strategy. Mbaku analyses these fears as competitive and transactions cost constraints.³⁹ Therefore, even if it compromises the state's democratic foundation, leaders may choose to keep things as they are in order to strengthen their position. These relationships make the nature of political legitimacy in Cameroon, Chad, the Central African Republic, and Gabon extremely complicated because the support for these leaders is both internal and external, and monopoly on power positions keep shifting from one old to new rivalries with the coming of different leaders.

The most obvious result of rent-seeking, which has caused extreme misery in these nations and diverted national resources into private pockets, is institutionalized corruption within the government steered by the people in power. Corruption transforms into a systemic aspect of governance that obstructs significant reform and growth in addition to being a tool for political survival. Institutionalized corruption is a variable that affects political legitimacy and democracy in this region. Many crises of legitimacy in the continent have been linked to corruption, a continuous process of successive regimes operating with the same agenda under different alliances. People frequently lose faith in the state's capacity to act in their best interests when corrupt behaviors undermine public institutions. When governments fail to live up to public expectations and corruption increases, it severely undermines both democracy and government legitimacy. This is especially true when public discontent causes people to lose faith in the state's institutions, which are determined to take advantage of the remaining resources for their own personal gain. Furthermore, corruption makes it more difficult to deliver essential public amenities, which further alienates the public and fuels political disengagement. Government instituted anti-corruption mechanisms have more or less been very insignificant to

putting an end to this activity. As seen in the image below, public perception of government efforts to combat corruption is still at 33.2%, indicating a declining trend of -13.5 from 2014, according to IIAG data on the Central African area (IIAG, 2024). This data emphasizes how difficult it is to improve governance in the region, as political elites with a stake in preserving the status quo frequently obstruct formal institutions meant to fight corruption.

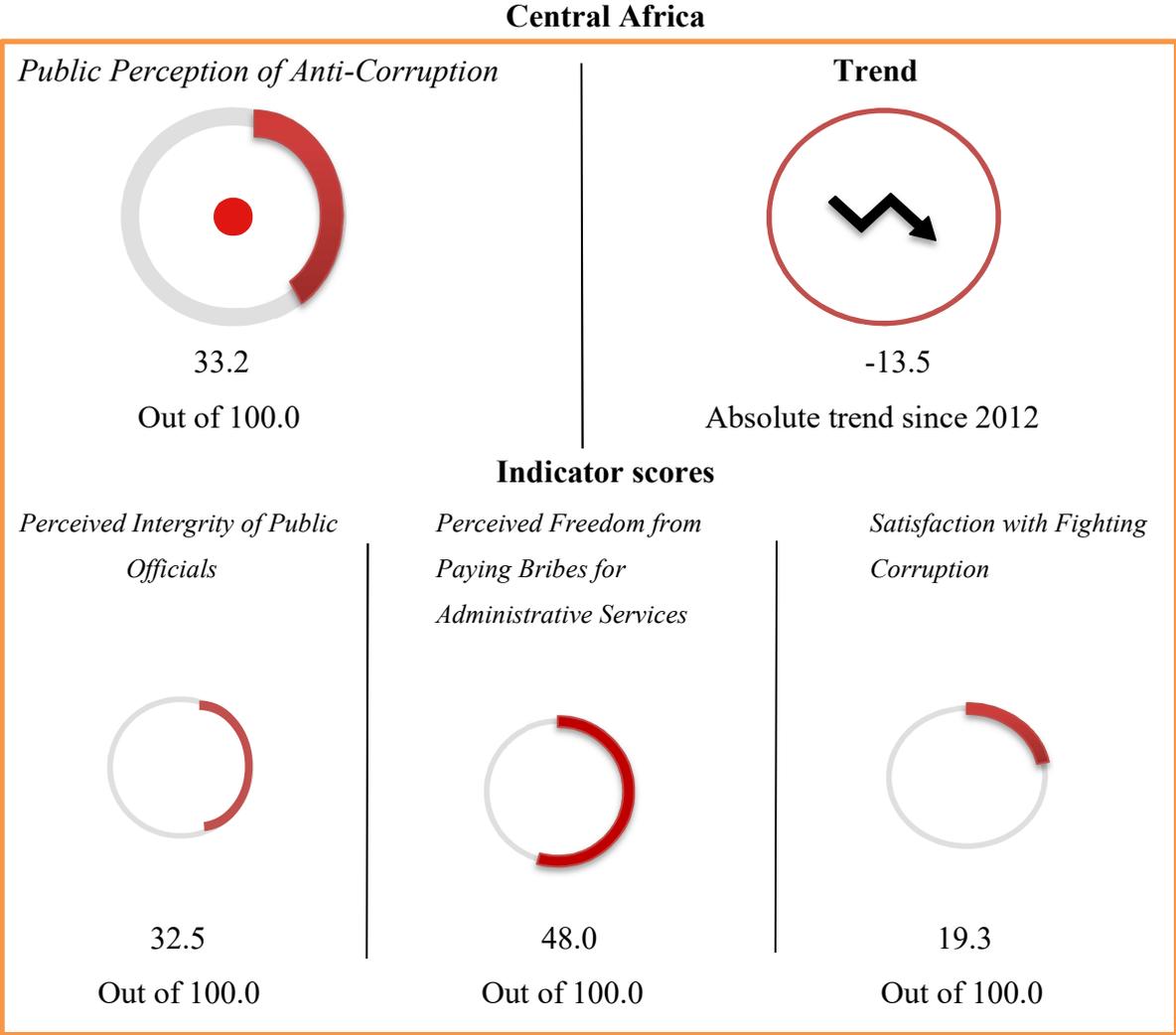


Figure 11. Public Perception of Anti-Corruption in Central Africa, 2024

Source: Adapted from data IIAG statistics on Public Perception of the Rule of Law for Central Africa(2024),

<https://iiag.online/data.html?meas=PubPercCorr&loc=g18&view=overview&subview=absoluteTrends>

Another very intriguing issue about governance in this region that triggers questions on legitimacy is the usurping of the judiciary arm of government, or rather the political dependence of the judiciary on the executive arm, a relationship which has been clearly formalized and

further triggering questions on the nature of the legitimacy of the regimes. By definition, the majority of the governments in the region are presidential republics, and each one has peculiar political development patterns and a number of anomalies related to its constitution. Many constitutional amendments have been drafted to give presidents the right to serve indefinitely, which weakens the rule of law and increases the authoritarian grip of those in power. President Paul Biya of Cameroon, for instance, manipulated constitutional amendments in 2008 to do away with term limitations, allowing him to hold office indefinitely (Konings, 2011: 182). In a similar vein, Idriss Déby of Chad strengthened his hold on power in 2005 by changing the constitution to eliminate term limitations (International Crisis Group, 2016). The very nature of the constitutions and make-up of the judiciary in most sub-Saharan Africa and particularly the Central African sub-region is closely reserved to the special entitlements of the head of state, which in most cases is also the head of arm forces. The judicial authority in the Central African sub-region, contrary to classical constitutional setups, has not aimed at limiting the power of the executive arm by ensuring the separation and balance of powers. Instead, as Kamdem explains, it serves as an instrument of administrative hegemony over the state machinery (Kamdem, 2019: 52). This problem is not exclusive to Central Africa; rather, it represents a broader movement in authoritarian countries across the continent. In order to ensure that the court serves their interests rather than serving as impartial law enforcers, African leaders have systematically eroded judicial independence through strategic nominations, pressure, and financial control, according to Posner and Young (2007). As a result, the judiciary frequently contributes to the legitimization of disputed election outcomes and the silencing of opposition opinions.

According to Ndifor, who highlights the concerning state of the various branches of government in Cameroon, "the judiciary system in Cameroon has been extremely intertwined in the political affairs of government such that it has lost its independence and is currently being run as an extension of the executive arm" (Ndifor, 2014: 29). The legislative arm of government in this region has been accused of several exploitations, allowing provisions that place the judiciary in a position to pass judgments and laws at the pleasure of the ruling government, which appoints them. Consequently, these judgments are final despite constitutional prescriptions that require their rulings to be in favor of the people, as seen in the case of Cameroon. The Constitutional Court's endorsement of President Ali Bongo's contested victory in Gabon's 2016 elections, in spite of obvious indications of electoral fraud and anomalies, was a glaring example of judicial complicity (Reuters, 2016). Similar to this, the judiciary in Chad has historically been used to

quell political dissent, and opposition leaders are frequently arrested or charged with dubious crimes (Human Rights Watch, 2017). By effectively denying citizens their access to fair judicial proceedings, the judiciary's dependence on the executive branch weakens democracy in these countries. A notable feature of this situation is the post-electoral round-up processes, which have been subject to numerous contestations, with results manipulated to ensure that the government in power secures the vote. For example, significant judicial and administrative meddling tarnished the 2018 presidential elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Independent sources indicated that opposition candidate Martin Fayulu had won the election, but the Constitutional Court upheld Félix Tshisekedi's victory (Kavanagh, 2019). This raises more questions about whether institutional manipulation or popular will is the source of legitimacy. This has become the only means for these governments to claim legitimacy (Thurston, 2013: 3) and to prove their capability to manage the affairs of their respective countries. A shift away from conventional sources of political legitimacy, such as public support or economic success, and toward institutional force is shown by the reliance on judicial cooperation for legitimacy. This is consistent with "competitive authoritarianism," as defined by Levitsky and Way (2020), in which democratic institutions exist but are manipulated to achieve authoritarian objectives. Using indicators like executive compliance with the constitution, executive compliance with judicial decisions, and constitutional changes of power, as depicted in the figure below, IIAG 2022 data confirms this claim once more by demonstrating that executive compliance with the rule of law in the region is on a +0.5 trend. When taking into account the general vulnerability of judicial institutions in the region, this increasing tendency is negligible, even though it may indicate slight improvements in governance. Transparency International's 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) shows that Central African nations continue to rank among the most corrupt in the world, which supports the idea that the judiciary in these countries serves more as an instrument of executive control than as an autonomous body of justice (Transparency International, 2023).

Central Africa

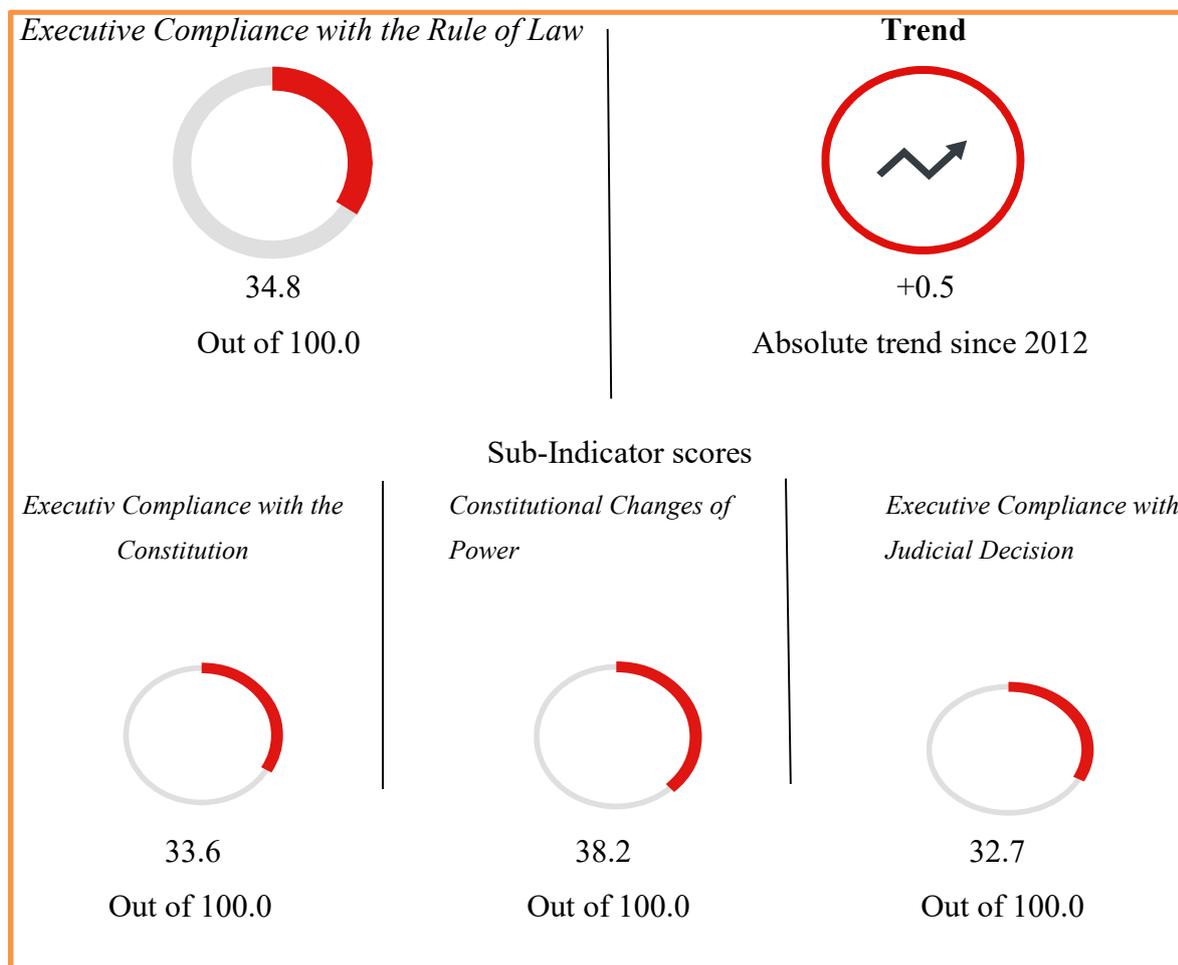


Figure 12. Executive Compliance with the Rule of Law in Central Africa, 2021

source: Adapted from IIAG data:

<https://iiag.online/data.html?meas=ExecCompRoL&loc=g18&view=overview&subview=absoluteTrends&search=Impartiality+of+the+judicial+system>

Political legitimacy concerns have been impeding the consolidation of democracy in this region because the legal system and judiciary in many of the countries are unable to control the power of the other parts of government, especially the executive or head of state. This is due to the fact that the constitution itself, which establishes their roles, gives the head of state statutory authority that supersedes all other duties. The president of Cameroon, for instance, is designated under the constitution as the country's main executive officer, leader of the military forces, and head of the Judicial Council. Similar trends have been noted in Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and

Chad, where the legislative and judicial branches have suffered as a result of the executive branch's significant authority consolidation. For over four decades, President Teodoro Obiang Nguema of Equatorial Guinea has exercised unbridled power, using the courts to suppress dissent and curtail civil liberties (Human Rights Watch, 2021). Similarly, constitutional amendments in Chad strengthened the president's authority, further undermining democratic checks and balances (Katz & Mwantuali, 2020: 94). Constitutional flaws that have guided the over-empowerment of the executive branch of government must be held accountable for the political crisis in Central Africa that has resulted in a crisis of legitimacy without any more uncertainties. The making up of recent constitutions in the region can be characterized as divisive and interest oriented, finally securing very less for the majority of the citizens, with very little progress made from the constitutions drawn during the pre- and post-independence periods. Constitutions, which were once meant to be blueprints for governing, have evolved into versatile instruments that the ruling class uses to further their own interests. African leaders have regularly changed constitutions to extend their rule by eliminating term limits, reducing legislative oversight, and altering electoral commissions to support party objectives, as observed by Posner and Young (2007). In nations like Cameroon, Chad, and Gabon, presidents have sought constitutional amendments to extend their tenure forever, so instituting an autocratic system within an ostensibly democratic framework (Nugent, 2018: 303).

Such weak constitutions have resulted in the establishment of institutional arrangements that have not been able to successfully pressure the state to provide the necessary mechanisms for meeting the requirements of the general population. These nations have frequently been forced into a series of constitutional amendments due to pressures for state productivity regarding the ambiguities surrounding the performance of state institutions resonating from the limited nature of their constitutions. This has further created confusion regarding which of the constitutions is ultimately in effect in governing these states. Since the initial constitution was created at the time of Cameroon's independence, it has undergone more than three amendments; the most recent and contentious of them being the 2008 constitution. This amendment eliminated presidential term restrictions and gave the president immunity from prosecution for any actions taken while in office, allowing him to seek for reelection as many times as he wants.⁴⁰ International organizations and civil society groups strongly opposed the 2008 constitutional amendment, arguing that it strengthened authoritarian rule and further weakened Cameroon's democratic establishments (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2019: 187). Similar cases have been recorded in Gabon (2003), where in the leaders manipulate either the parliament or senate to

circumvent presidential term limits to allow them stay in power (Tull, 2017: 87). Equatorial Guinea's 2011 constitutional reform eliminated all independent oversight of President Obiang's leadership and gave him the authority to nominate key judiciary and electoral officials, strengthening his entire control (Alava, 2019: 44). Similar circumstances are documented by Vandeginste in Senegal and Burundi, where the presidents exploited constitutional ambiguities and weaknesses to authorize additional terms through their control of porous constitutional courts in 2012 and 2015, respectively (Vandeginste, 2015, 2016).

A decent constitution lays the foundations for a sustainable democracy and paves the way for true leadership. Economic growth, performance, and meeting people's demands are all crucial components of democratic legitimacy and consolidation, but they shouldn't be enough on their own to give a government legitimacy under democratic constitutions. This study highlights that constitutional allegiance, which grants the other branches of government the opportunity to act independently, should be the main criterion for assessing democratic consolidation. Economic performance has been interpreted as democratic legitimacy on multiple occasions.

4.4 THE NEED FOR THE RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF POLITICAL LEGITIMACY AND DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

In a majority of the cases however, the strategy has changed to warrant that an election, which for many is the face of democracy must hold. Through this, the classical autocratic leadership ensures that his position in office is cemented through winning multiparty elections, thereby sustaining at all costs seemingly democratic parties, a legislature and judiciary (Versteeg et al, 2020: 13, citing Meng, 2018). Such elections are however just instructive and their fairness and independent status is regularly very questionable at the end due to the common protests from angry opposition parties. Election rigging has emerged as a defining characteristic of Central African governance. Autocrats use state resources, media control, and security forces to win elections while limiting genuine democratic competition, as demonstrated by research by Cheeseman and Klaas (2018). For example, violent crackdowns on opposition supporters and allegations of vote fraud clouded Gabon's 2016 presidential election (BBC, 2016). Empirical data from IIAG 2022 data scores democratic elections in the region on 25.0 out of 100.0 following variables such as integrity of elections and election monitoring bodies and agencies.

Central Africa

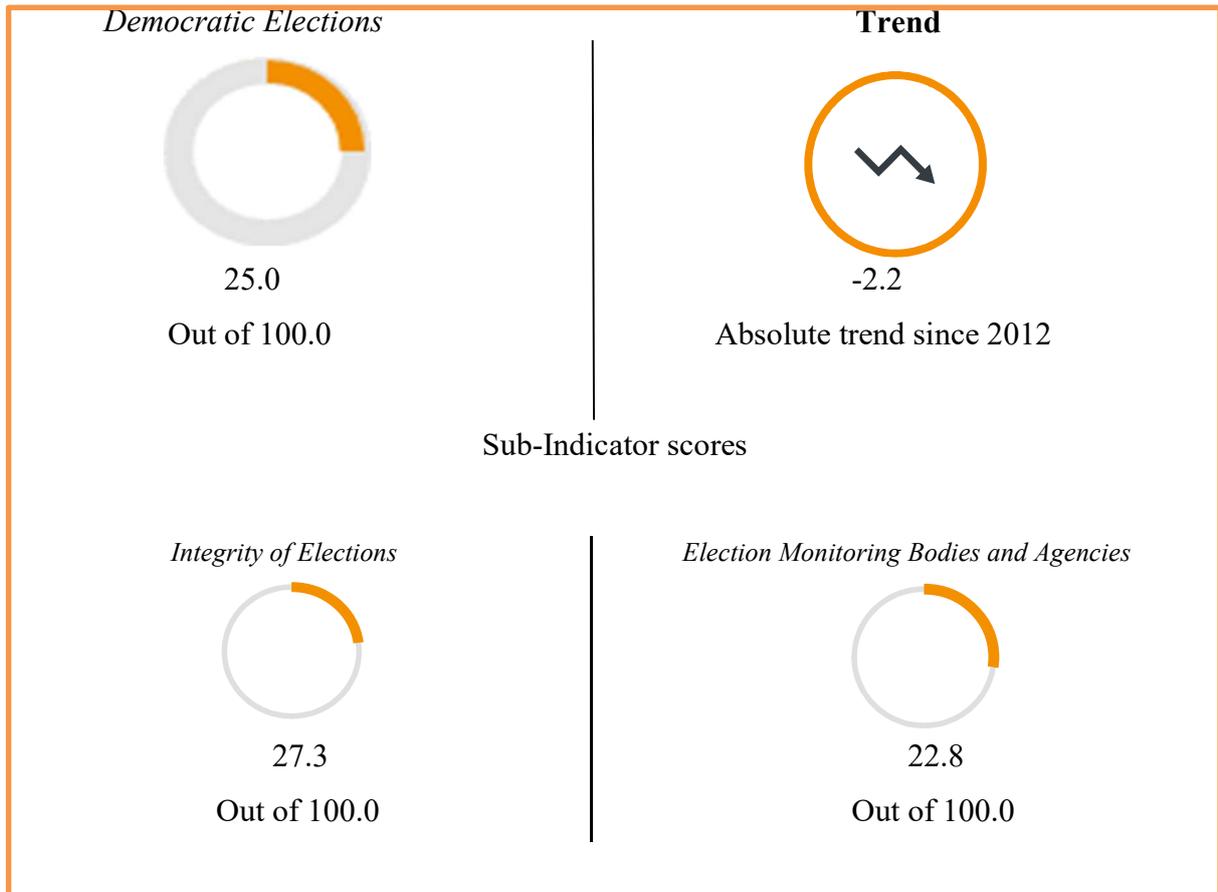


Figure 13. Democratic Elections score in Central Africa, 2021

source: Adapted from IIAG data:

<https://iiag.online/data.html?meas=DemElec&loc=g18&view=overview&subview=absoluteTrends>

According to Diamond's four previously mentioned points, it is reasonable enough to label these regimes as illegitimate because of the unusual methods these leaders employ to maintain their positions of authority, which has progressively made it harder to distinguish between democracy and totalitarianism. The nature of authoritarianism today, what has been severally described as “new authoritarianism” is very legitimizing once position or at least making the position lasting through the maneuvering of the state organs, to secure decades of presidential power in countries where democracy or at least moves for democracy once was thriving. The reality about democracy in this region is that the true nature of the governments is unknown and democracy continuous to be on a decline (Bermeo, 2016: 8). In the past we would have been

defining an illegitimate government as one which seizes power through authoritarian means such as in a military coup, as the case in Niger in 2010, Mali in 2012, Sudan in 2019, just to name a few. However, legitimacy crises have dissolved from military coup leaders to engulf elected leaders who continually maneuver in unethically defined ways their stay in power against the wishes of the people they rule.

Sustainable political legitimacy in Central Africa is a cause for concern, as the region is plagued with numerous problems, many of which have been aggravated by the very individuals responsible for governing these countries. There is growing need to put in line a true sense of political legitimacy, and moral authority which will represent the diverse communities making up these states. However, this is an issue with a far-fetched solution that will regrettably require decades of vigorous nation-building, particularly in a time of democratic collapse when donor organizations continue to work closely with state institutions. The region is seeing an increase in leaders who were elected by democratically elected parties using the ballots of the people rather than tankers and guns. These leaders have however upheld not only the holding of regular and constituted elections, but also assumed supposedly democratic organs and institutions to look as if their governance is legitimate. The institutions meant to protect citizens' interests, the constitution, legislature, and judiciary, have proven to be easily manipulated to serve the will of state leaders. This flexibility allows leaders to justify their actions, avoid international criticism as dictators, and prioritize individual and group interests over the welfare of the larger population. The fact that these nations still operate under constitutions is not surprising (Elkins et al., 2014: 141, 146), but they are merely ornaments that serve the strategic objectives of the ruling class. Numerous instances of opposition delegitimization and silencing can be found throughout the history of political events in Central Africa; most of these individuals go on to receive punishment and imprisonment.

4.5 CONCLUSION

A few significant topics are covered in this chapter's conclusion: hopes for democratization in Central Africa have not yet been abandoned. The history of western style democracy in the region is barely a few decades old, though growth seems to be slow and uneven; the future remains promising because at least talks of democracy remain the plea of majority of the people, giving hope for a better tomorrow (Levitsky & Way, 2020).

According to Diamond's four assertions, the region's democratic foundations face the formidable obstacles of constitutional flaws, which have haunted these nations since their independence and are the source of political legitimacy issues. From the empirical data presented above, it is clear that based on the criteria set by Diamond, the countries of the Central African region have fallen short of meeting the expectations of democracy, resulting to questionable governments. These nations must start implementing constitutional amendments that prioritize the independence of state institutions, protect the freedom of the judiciary, and promote genuine multiparty competition if they are to achieve long-term democratic stability. Without these adjustments, political legitimacy would remain a sensitive topic that can be readily influenced by people in authority rather than being based on democratic principles (Gyimah-Boadi, 2019: 18). In order to restore trust in state institutions that has been eroded by power concentration, which has left state authority in doubt, the Central African region's democratic consolidation efforts must pay special attention to the sources of state legitimacy, such as adherence to the constitution and the provision of basic necessities.

CHAPTER FIVE

A DEEPER LOOK AT DEMOCRACY, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Sub-Saharan Africa is a region that has struggled with political instability, conflict, and poverty for decades and continues to struggle as the continent is still far behind in terms of meeting international standards. Despite having abundant natural resources, the region remains among the world's poorest because of bad governance, corruption, and ingrained inequality (Collier, 2008). A heritage of colonial exploitation and poor leadership have made the region's problems worse, trapping many nations in cycles of unsustainable economic practices and dependence on foreign support (Moyo, 2009). The challenges facing the region are multifaceted, and there is a growing consensus that addressing these issues requires the effective interplay of peace, democracy, and development, which form the basis of this thesis. As Ndulo (2004) notes, "the promotion of peace, democracy, and development are inextricably linked, and their effective interplay is essential for the progress of sub-Saharan Africa." Many African countries' post-independence histories provide as examples of how weak institutional frameworks can crumble in the face of internal and external pressure if they are not effectively maintained and strengthened. Although implementation gaps still exist, regional organizations such as the African Union (AU) and sub-regional organizations like ECOWAS and SADC have increasingly recognized this triadic interconnectedness in their strategic policy agendas. These organizations need to transform from symbolic pledges to effective enforcement systems that uphold democratic principles, promote peacemaking, and maintain progress.

So far, democracy amongst all other forms of governance has been observed to be the best way to ensure fairness and prosperity. Research suggests that inclusive democratic institutions provide a more durable path to long-term economic and political stability, even though authoritarian regimes have occasionally resulted in economic breakthroughs, such as in China and Singapore (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). Democracy is thus a critical factor in achieving

the desired stability and development in sub-Saharan Africa. As noted by Olowu and Wunsch (2004), "democracy is a means of ensuring good governance, accountability, and transparency, which are essential for fostering sustainable development." However, the establishing and sustainability of democratic institutions in the region have been challenging due to weak institutions, corruption, political interference and so many other forces which have stifled the growth of democracy in the region despite the enthusiasm with which it began during the creation of these states. It is crucial to understand that democracy in Africa needs to be indigenously based rather than solely imported from Western models. Elections have frequently been reduced to ceremonial rituals that are managed by incumbents, despite being emblematic of democratic transitions. A free press, independent judicial systems, grassroots involvement, and civic education are all necessary for true democracy. Furthermore, Africa's swelling youth population is a risk as well as an opportunity. If properly harnessed through democratic participation, it can trigger innovation and transformation; if ignored, it can exacerbate unrest and disenchantment with democratic principles.

Peace is also crucial for the progress of sub-Saharan Africa. The African continent faces a rising amalgamation of threats to peace ranging from rising authoritarianism, hate speech, incessant military coups, great power competition and violent extremism, due to the escalating impacts of climate change, which have resulted in heightened desertification, food shortages, and conflicts over resources (Buhaug, 2015). As a result of this, the region has been plagued by conflicts, civil wars, and social unrest, which have hindered economic growth and development. As Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) argue, "peace is a prerequisite for development, and the absence of peace can derail economic progress and lead to the disintegration of democratic institutions." Persistent instability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has caused millions of people to be displaced and seriously damaged governance structures, impeding any meaningful development progress (Autesserre, 2010). There is increasing need to redesign and redefine peace processes, in order to ensure that more sustainable solutions to the numerous violent conflicts scattered over the continent are secured. Traditional peacebuilding strategies frequently overlooked the underlying structural inequities and collective grievances that fuel violence in favor of top-down talks and ceasefires. A more durable path is provided by a revitalized emphasis on "positive peace" that prioritizes socioeconomic justice, participatory government, and interethnic collaboration. Integrating women, civil society actors, and community leaders into peacebuilding frameworks is indispensable because their involvement guarantees comprehensive and culturally relevant solutions. Furthermore, peace must be

understood as the existence of institutions and mechanisms that ensure everyone is treated fairly and is protected, not simply the absence of conflict.

Development, the third factor in the triad, is essential for the prosperity of sub-Saharan Africa. According to Pope Paul VI, development is the novel appellation for peace. Talking about development, it is important to stress the need for inclusive development, which is often measured only in relation to GDP growth, to include social and political progress as well (Sen, 1999). This includes intangible features of human growth including political and social advancement, such as social privileges and empowerment. The idea here is to ensure that development is sustainable. As Moyo (2009) notes, "development is critical for addressing poverty, inequality, and social exclusion, which are major obstacles to achieving democracy and stability in the area." However, the SSA region has struggled with economic underdevelopment, deprivation of infrastructure, and inadequate access to essential services, in addition to the issue of the resource curse, where abundant natural resources have led to corruption and conflict instead of fostering development (Ross, 2012). Real development must affect the lives of common people and go beyond economic expansion. Access to high-quality healthcare, education, and work opportunities ought to be key markers of advancement. In order to react to climate change and draw in responsible investment, governments also need to make investments in sustainable technology and green infrastructure. Closing the development gap and creating cohesive societies that are resilient to shocks from the inside and the outside require inclusive policies that target marginalized groups like women, ethnic minorities, and rural populations.

Thus, the effective interplay of democracy, peace, and development is essential for the progress of sub-Saharan Africa. Without strong democratic institutions, economic expansion cannot be successfully transformed into widespread development, and without peace, neither democracy nor development can thrive (North, Wallis, & Weingast, 2009). These three are the solution to the vicious cycles of war, diseases, and poverty that currently plague the sub-Sahara African region and much of the continent as whole. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the intricacies of their interplay and the ways in which they must work with each other to achieve a desired degree of democracy in the area. By examining their unique characteristics and implications for sub-Saharan Africa, this chapter will give readers a comprehensive understanding of the connection between democracy, peace, and development as well as their significance for the region's advancement. Furthermore, a collaborative strategy that makes use

of technology advancement, regional collaboration, and international engagement may spark revolutionary transformation. For instance, regional trade agreements like the AfCFTA can encourage economic integration and interdependence that deters conflict, while digital governance tools can improve transparency and citizen participation. In a similar vein, the African diaspora must be strategically involved in the continent's democratic and developmental agenda because it has enormous potential for advocacy, investment, and knowledge transfer.

In summary, the promotion of democracy, peace, and development is crucial for achieving stability and progress in sub-Saharan Africa. As noted by Agbese and Adejumbi (2003), "the effective interplay of these factors is essential for tackling the challenges the region is experiencing and fostering sustainable development." Notwithstanding the difficulties, notable successes have been realized, such as Rwanda's developmental progress and Ghana's consistent democratic advancements, demonstrating that constructive change is achievable with the right leadership and policies (Gyimah-Boadi, 2015). Thus, understanding the intricacies of their interplay is critical for achieving democracy in sub-Saharan Africa. Through long-term strategic planning, evidence-based policymaking, strong monitoring and evaluation systems, SSA governments, their foreign partners, and civil society organizations must coordinate their efforts going forward. Although there is still a long way to go, Sub-Saharan Africa may steer toward a peaceful, democratic, and affluent future with tenacity, creativity, and inclusive government.

5.2 DEMOCRACY

Democracy is a system of governance where the people themselves, along with their chosen representatives, have the authority. Democracy's focus on the individual, self interest and the common good remains the ideal system for any society, wherein, if put into practice guarantees at least the common good for all. There are several key characteristics of democracy, including political equality, popular sovereignty, protection of individual liberties and freedoms, free and fair elections and the rule of law. According to Robert Dahl, a prominent political scientist, democracy requires "effective involvement, equal voting rights, enlightened understanding, agenda control, adult inclusion and respect for minority rights" (Dahl, 1971).

Beginning in ancient Athens and other early city-states, the concept of democracy has a protracted and intricate history. However, modern democracy emerged in the context of the Enlightenment and the rise of liberalism in Europe and North America. The French and American revolutions of the late 18th century marked significant milestones in the evolution of democratic doctrines and customs, including the ideas of popular sovereignty and individual rights. Through waves of democratization, which were often shaped by colonial history, independence movements, and international governance organizations, these democratic ideals were later expanded to several places around the world. Huntington (1991) calls these "waves of democracy," pointing out that the most noteworthy democratic transition in Africa occurred in the late 20th century soon after the Cold War ended. These ideas then spread across the Atlantic to Africa towards the end of colonialism.

Direct democracy, representative democracy, and hybrid or semi-direct democracy are among the different forms of democracy. In Africa, democracy has taken on a unique form due to its historical, cultural, and political context. Some scholars have argued that African democracy is distinguished by "informality, inclusiveness, flexibility, and cultural hybridity" (Mozaffar, 2003). This however varies from country to country according, but have great areas of similarities. Others have pointed to the challenges of democratization in Africa, including weak institutions, corruption, and authoritarian legacies (Bratton and van de Walle (1997). Countries like Sudan and Chad, for example, continue to experience democratic setbacks because of military coups and fragile institutions, but countries like Botswana and Ghana have managed to construct comparatively durable democratic frameworks (Freedom House, 2023).

Democracy is a crucial component of a healthy and functioning society, as it provides citizens with a voice in the political process and helps ensure accountability and transparency in government. Democracy is a universal principle founded on people's freely expressed desire to choose their political, economic, social and cultural institutions and to fully participate in all facets of their lives, according to the United Nations (UN, 2021). Additionally, research has shown that democratic societies usually exhibit higher levels of human development, economic growth and social welfare (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2006). This assertion too depends on the society. Evidence of exponential economic growth has been echoing from East Asia of what is to be the Authoritarian development model. The idea that democracy is necessary for growth is challenged by examples such as China and Singapore, which show that substantial economic development can occur under authoritarian regimes (Sen, 1999). However, critics argue that

these approaches frequently jeopardize political freedom, human rights, and long-term stability. While not diving into their ups and downs, this study believes that given the current situation in Africa, the unity of democratic practices if well practiced, stands a better chance of catapulting the continent to desired development levels.

However, democracy remains a challenge in many parts of the world, including Africa. Data from international organizations show that Africa still faces significant obstacles to democratic governance, including weak institutions, corruption, and political instability. For example, the African Union reports that only 24 out of 54 African countries are considered free and democratic, with the rest classified as partially free or not free (AU, 2021). According to the Mo Ibrahim Foundation's 2022 report, despite improvements in electoral procedures, governance issues and a shortage of economic possibilities continue to stand in the way of Africa's democratic development (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2022).

In conclusion, democracy is a vital aspect of a healthy and functioning society, providing citizens with a voice in the political process and ensuring accountability and transparency in government. Understanding the characteristics and types of democracy, as well as the challenges and opportunities of African democracy, can help stakeholders and policymakers create operational measures for promoting democratic governance in Africa and other regions.

5.3 PEACE

Peace is a complicated idea with many facets that can be defined in different ways depending on the context and perspective. The United Nations (UN) defines peace as "a situation where there is an absence of violence, war, and conflict, and people live in safety and security" (United Nations, 2021). Peace can also be assumed to be a state of political, social, and economic stability that allows individuals and communities to live in harmony and pursue their goals without fear of harm or oppression.

The quest for peace is as old as the history of humanity, and various efforts have been made over the centuries to achieve it. Some of the most significant milestones in the history of peace include the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, which ended the Thirty Years' War in Europe, the establishment of the League of Nations in 1920, and the creation of the UN in 1945, which was

primarily aimed at preventing future wars and promoting international cooperation and diplomacy.

There are various types of peace, dependent on the situation and the people involved. Some of the most common types of peace include positive peace, negative peace, and structural peace. The absence of violence and conflict is referred to as negative peace, while positive peace refers to the existence of equality, social justice, and human rights. Structural peace, on the other hand, involves tackling the underlying causes of conflict, such as inequality, poverty, and political oppression. It will not be selfish to say all these are the characteristics of peace needed in Africa as the continent, despite its abundance, suffers from issues deeper than these. Because of deep-rooted ethnic differences, resource-related conflicts, and fragile government structures, establishing structural peace in sub-Saharan Africa is extremely difficult. The African Union's Agenda 2063 emphasizes that building inclusive economic opportunities and strengthening institutions are essential to achieving lasting peace (African Union, 2015). Sub-Sahara Africa has for decades been at the forefront of interational headlines of wars, hungar, natural disasters, which for the greater part could have been prevented if the resources the region boasts of were properly managed, all of which have stifled peace in the region.

Peace is essential for the well-being and prosperity of individuals and communities, and it is closely linked to various indicators of social and economic development. As stated by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), "peaceful societies are more resilient, prosperous, and sustainable than those in conflict" (IEP, 2021). Moreover, peace is critical for promoting social cohesion, building trust among individuals and communities, and fostering economic growth and development. For instance, with proper implementation of reconciliation programs and the advantages of strong leadership, Rwanda has achieved peace and economic prosperity following the genocide (Galtung, 1996).

In conclusion, peace is a fundamental concept that is essential for promoting stability, security, and prosperity in society. Understanding the various types of peace and their importance can help policymakers and stakeholders develop effective strategies for promoting peace and preventing conflict.

5.4 DEVELOPMENT

Development is a broad and multidimensional concept that encompasses economic, social, cultural, and political processes aimed at improving the health and standards of living of both peoples and communities. It is frequently measured using metrics such as life expectancy, access to basic amenities, GDP per capita and literacy rates (World Bank, 2022). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) delineate development to be "the process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy" (UNDP, 2016). This includes access to healthcare, clean water, sanitation, education, and other basic needs, as well as opportunities for economic and social mobility.

Over time, the idea of development has changed, and various theories and simulations have been proposed to elucidate its nature and dynamics. Some of the most influential theories include modernization theory, which posits that development is a linear process of economic growth and technological advancement, and dependency theory, which argues that underdeveloped countries are caught in a vicious circle of exploitation and dependence on developed countries. Despite having an abundance of natural resources, Africa has struggled to develop because of incompetent governance, poor infrastructure, and dependence on foreign economies (Rodney, 1972). Adopting inclusive growth policies that prioritize industrialization, technical advancement, and human capital development is crucial to addressing these problems (UNCTAD, 2021).

There are various types of development, depending on the situation and the actors involved. Some of the most common types of development include economic development, social development, and human development. Economic development refers to the process of creating wealth and improving living standards through increased production, trade, and investment. Social development, on the other hand, focuses on improving social services and reducing poverty, inequality, and exclusion. Human development encompasses a wider variety of elements, such as gender equality, health, education, and environmental sustainability.

Development is crucial for promoting social and economic progress and improving the health and quality of life of people and their communities. According to the African Development Bank (AfDB), "development is essential for Africa's transformation and for unlocking the continent's potential" (AfDB, 2021). Over the years, it has been recognized that sustainable

development is a multifaceted process that incorporates economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental conservation (Sachs, 2015). Africa still faces significant challenges in achieving sustainable development, nevertheless, including poverty, inequality, conflict, and climate change. Economic dependency, which is exacerbated by insufficient industrialization and a strong reliance on raw material exports, further impedes the continent's advancement (Rodrik, 2018).

Data from international organizations show that Africa lags behind other regions in various development indicators. For example, Sub-Saharan Africa has the greatest rates of poverty in the world according to the World Bank, with at least 400 million people categorized under extreme poverty (World Bank, 2021). Similarly, the UNDP's Human Development Index ranks many African countries low in terms of access to healthcare, education, and other essential services (UNDP, 2020). Incompetent public service delivery systems, corruption, and poor governance all worsen the effects of poverty (Moyo, 2009). The African Union estimates that inadequate infrastructure lowers productivity by approximately 40% and slows GDP growth by 2% annually, making the continent's infrastructure deficit a significant obstacle (AfDB, 2018).

In conclusion, development is a complex and multifaceted theory that is essential for promoting social and economic progress and improving the health and well-being and quality of life of individuals and their communities. Understanding the different types of development and their importance can help stakeholders and policymakers come up with steadfast strategies for promoting sustainable development in Africa and other regions. To foster inclusive development in Africa, it is indispensable to evolve towards policies that prioritize the development of human capital, the expansion of industrialization, and the enhancement of trade within the continent (UNECA, 2019). Different development strategies have proven effective in various parts of the world and Africa is yet to situate the model that best suits its needs and environment.

5.6 INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOCRACY, PEACE, AND DEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARA AFRICA

5.6.1 HOW DEMOCRACY LEADS TO PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

Democracy is a system of governance in which power is held by the people and exercised through a system of representation. It is a system that allows citizens to take part in the governance process, holding elected officials accountable and making informed decisions that impact their lives. Studies have shown that democracy leads to both peace and development. The democratic peace theory holds that nations with democratic systems are less inclined to wage war on one another because they often resolve conflicts through institutional frameworks and dialogue (Doyle, 1986).

As earlier mentioned, democratic countries are more likely to have advanced levels of peace than autocratic countries. The absence of conflict and the rule of law in democracies provide a more unwavering atmosphere for economic growth and development. Acemoglu and Robinson (2012), assert that democratic regimes defend property rights, reduce corruption, and encourage investment, all of which contribute to economic growth. Democracy also promotes social and economic advancement by investing in human capital and facilitating the distribution of resources. Democracy also promotes economic and social expansion, as it allows for the distribution of resources and investment in human capital. Countries like Ghana and Botswana in Sub-Saharan Africa serve as examples of how comparatively stable democratic institutions have increased investor confidence, raised literacy rates, and sparked sustainable economic strategies. Compared to their autocratic counterparts, these countries have seen more steady growth paths, suggesting that the advantages of democracy are not just theoretical but also evident in real-world situations.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) notes that "democracy and development are mutually reinforcing." In countries with democratic systems, there are greater prospects for citizens to participate in the political process, which leads to better governance, increased accountability, and greater transparency in decision-making. This, in turn, leads to economic expansion and development. Additionally, thanks to participatory policies that empower marginalized groups like women and youth, democratic governance promotes inclusivity. Long-term peace is based on societal cohesion, which is strengthened by this inclusivity.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to understand that democracy alone does not give assurance for development because weak governance and inefficient institutions (Collier, 2009) can compromise its advantages.

5.6.2 HOW PEACE LEADS TO DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

Peace is a prerequisite for democracy and development. Countries that are afflicted by war and instability are unlikely to achieve democracy and development. Peace provides a stable environment for economic growth and development, allowing governments to invest in social and economic infrastructure. In the absence of peace, public finances are frequently diverted to conflict resolution and military spending, leaving less money for development, health, and education initiatives. For example, protracted conflict has hampered attempts to implement significant development agendas or create sustainable democratic governance in nations like South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

In addition, peace allows for the establishment of democratic institutions. Democratic systems are built on the ideologies of rule of law and accountability, which require a stable environment to thrive. Whenever peace is nonexistent, these institutions cannot function effectively. Furthermore, a key component of democratic legitimacy is trust, which is fostered by peace between the people and the government. Peacebuilding initiatives have been essential to the reconstruction of legal systems, civil society groups, and electoral processes in post-conflict environments like Sierra Leone and Liberia. During these transitions, the international community also plays a crucial role by supplying peacekeeping forces and technical assistance to preserve vulnerable democratic gains.

5.6.3 HOW DEVELOPMENT LEADS TO DEMOCRACY AND PEACE

Development is an essential factor in stimulating democracy and peace. Economic growth and development provide citizens with greater access to health care, education, and other basic amenities. This, in turn, leads to greater participation in the political process, as citizens become more informed and engaged in the governance of their countries. The desire for civil freedoms, accountability, and openness rises when fundamental requirements are satisfied. As is evident in nations like Kenya and Nigeria that are going through economic change, the rise of a robust middle class is frequently linked to heightened support for democratic reforms.

The UNDP notes that "economic expansion and political development complement one another." Economic growth provides the resources needed to build democratic institutions and support democratic processes. In addition, economic development reduces the risk of conflict, as it makes available opportunities for citizens to play a part in the formal economy and access basic services. Additionally, social gaps that frequently feed political resentment and violent conflict are addressed through equitable development. Political turmoil and violent insurrection are less likely to occur in environments where economic advantages are dispersed equitably. Through mutual economic interests, development also promotes interethnic cooperation, which is essential in Sub-Saharan African ethnically diverse cultures. Therefore, development fosters the social and economic circumstances required for democracy and peace to endure in addition to supporting their logistical requirements.

5.7 CASE STUDIES OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHERE THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOCRACY, PEACE, AND DEVELOPMENT HAS WORKED EFFECTIVELY

There are several examples of countries where the interconnection between democracy, peace, and development has worked effectively. Botswana, for example, is a country in sub-Saharan Africa that has achieved significant economic growth and development since its independence in 1966. The country has a stable democracy, with a multi-party system and regular elections. Botswana is among the least corrupt countries in Africa, according to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International, 2021). The nation's economic successes can be credited in large part to this reputation, which has amplified investor trust.

Ghana is another example of a country where the interrelationship between democracy, peace, and development has worked effectively. Since the early 1990s, Ghana has witnessed significantly increased economic growth and development, while also establishing a stable democracy with a multi-party system and regular elections. All this has been possible despite the several years of political instabilities the country faced, but as the situation in Ghana proved, good leadership set the foundation for a progressive democracy in Ghana, serving as a model for democratic development in Africa (Gyimah-Boadi, 2019).

Rwanda is another example of a country where the interrelationship between democracy, peace, and development has worked effectively. Despite the country's history of conflict and instability, Rwanda has significantly advanced in economic development and poverty reduction. Barely three decades ago, Rwanda was topping headlines with one of the world's worst genocides of all time. National reconciliation efforts that followed the conflict brought peace and national unity and this has greatly benefited the country in terms of development. The country now prides itself in Africa as a leader in so many spheres. The country has also established a stable democracy, with regular elections and a multi-party system. Rwanda's Vision 2050 development strategy places a strong emphasis on enhancing infrastructure and transforming the economy through knowledge, positioning the country as one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa (World Economic Forum, 2020).

In conclusion, the interrelationship between democracy, peace, and development is crucial for the sustainable development of sub-Saharan Africa. Countries that prioritize these factors tend to experience greater economic growth and development, while also providing a stable atmosphere in which citizens can participate in the political process. These factors are mutually reinforcing, and their interrelationship must be understood in order to encourage the sub-Saharan African region's sustainable development.

5.8 THE CHALLENGES TO ACHIEVING DEMOCRACY, PEACE, AND DEVELOPMENT

Achieving democracy, peace and development in SSA involves addressing a variety of complex and interrelated challenges. SSA region countries comprise of unique circumstances and with these, several overarching issues can be indentified, which are both internal and external.

5.8.1 INTERNAL FACTORS THAT HINDER DEMOCRACY, PEACE, AND DEVELOPMENT

Achieving democracy, peace, and development in a society is a complex process that involves overcoming numerous internal factors that hinder progress. One of the main internal factors that hinder democracy, peace, and development is political instability. Political instability can arise from a lack of legitimacy, corruption, or poor governance, both of which fostering an

environment of mistrust that hinders international investment. For example, weak institutions and corrupt governance have been acknowledged as main challenges to development in sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2018).

Additionally, conflict and violence within societies can also hinder progress towards democracy, peace, and development. Prolonged conflicts have caused interruptions in governments, economic development setbacks, millions of people displaced, in countries such as South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (International Crisis Group, 2022). This includes indigenous and religious conflicts, in addition to political violence. Several Sub-Saharan African countries are marked by ethnic and religious variety, which can often lead to tensions and war. These contradictions can stymie efforts to attain democratic governance while also impeding economic development and producing an insecure environment that discourages foreign investment. In many cases, these conflicts are fueled by social, economic, and political inequalities within a society.

In addition to these factors, poverty, inequality, and lack of education can also hinder progress towards democracy, peace, and development. Poverty and inequality can result in social unrest, while insufficient education can result to a lack of civic engagement and participation in democratic processes. Many regions of SSA have underfunded educational systems that are also not very compatible with democratic ideals. Human rights, critical thinking, and civic education are frequently overlooked in curriculum. Citizens are therefore less able to hold their leaders responsible and democratic standards are unable to endure across generations.

Many African countries lack essential infrastructure such as roads, power, and water supply systems. This makes attracting foreign investment difficult, as well as stifling economic progress and making it harder to provide basic services to the populace. Additionally, poor infrastructure impedes intra-African trade and regional integration, which reduces prospects for mutual development and collective resilience. The impact is especially seen in rural areas, which exacerbates geographic inequality and makes it harder for governments to provide services fairly.

Climate change is equally a growing concern in Sub-Saharan Africa, with rising temperatures and erratic weather patterns causing crop failures, food poverty, and other social and economic issues. This has the potential to intensify current political and social problems while also posing

new difficulties for governments and civil society establishments in the continent. The African Development Bank estimates that by 2050, climate change may reduce Africa's GDP by as much as 15% if nothing is done now (AfDB, 2021).

5.8.2 EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT HINDER DEMOCRACY, PEACE, AND DEVELOPMENT

In addition to internal factors, external factors can also hinder progress towards democracy, peace, and development. One of the main external factors that hinder progress is economic dependence on foreign aid. While aid can be essential for development, it may also result in a lack of accountability and perpetuate corruption.

Furthermore, trade imbalances and unequal power relations between countries can also hinder progress towards democracy, peace, and development. For example, multinational corporations and foreign investors might put their personal interests ahead of the local community's, which could result in exploitation and further poverty and inequality.

5.9 WAYS TO OVERCOME THESE CHALLENGES

Addressing these difficulties will necessitate a collaborative effort from both the governments in the first place, civil society organizations, and the international community. This includes building strong institutions and encouraging good governance, addressing poverty and inequality, investing in education, and promoting civic engagement and participation in democratic processes. Furthermore, combating corruption and fostering openness and accountability are critical for attaining sustainable development and ensuring Sub-Saharan Africa's peaceful and prosperous future. According to Stiglitz (2012), addressing inequality and funding inclusive economic policies can promote social cohesion and reduce the tensions that give rise to violence. In a similar way, bolstering democratic frameworks and upholding the rule of law are crucial for maintaining political stability and ensuring accountability (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018).

Moreso, addressing external factors requires creating more equitable trade relations and addressing the root causes of economic dependence on foreign aid. This includes promoting

domestic resource mobilization and enhancing transparency and accountability in the use of aid and other forms of external financing.

Overall, solving these countries' difficulties necessitates a holistic approach that includes strengthening democratic government, reducing inequality and poverty, investing in infrastructure and economic development, and confronting the core foundations of conflict and violence.

In conclusion, achieving democracy, peace, and development requires overcoming numerous internal and external factors that hinder progress. Tackling these challenges necessitates a comprehensive system that encompasses building strong institutions, addressing poverty and inequality, promoting education, and creating more equitable trade relations.

CHAPTER SIX

THE DECLINE OF DEMOCRACY AND ITS IMPACT ON POLITICAL STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN CAMEROON AND CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The interaction between democracy, political stability, and development has been a subject of interest to scholars and development practitioners. Debates are still fueled by this intricate relationship, especially in the context of fragile countries and newly formed democracies, when the advantages of democratic government are frequently compared to authoritarian models that promise rapid economic gains. Most scholars are of belief that a favorable relationship exists between democracy, and political stability (Olofsgård, 2012; Africa Renewal & Djinnit, 2010; Weingast, 1997); as well as democracy and development (Khatun, 2022; Elbahnasawy, 2020; Dahl, 2000; Kariş, 2000; Campos, 1994). According to Przeworski et al. (2000), the connection is predicated on the notion that democratic institutions facilitate efficient governance, create checks and balances, and make it easier for citizens to take part in decision-making processes. These factors all contribute to long-term stability and sustainable development. All of these elements support sustainable growth and long-term stability. Additionally, democratic institutions typically foster a culture of accommodation and negotiation, which lessens political polarization and increases institutional resilience to outside shocks (Diamond, 1999) This suggest that democratic governance can lay a foundation for economic development and political stability in a country since democratic institutions provide principles such as transparency, and accountability, good governance, rule of law. Political and economic structures are frequently more inclusive in democracies, which fosters social cohesion and decreases the likelihood of conflict and a return to authoritarianism (North et al., 2009). By giving marginalized populations a voice, inclusive governance promotes equitable growth and lessens complaints, which frequently lead to instability (Sen, 1999). This creates a supportive atmosphere for the aforementioned (economic development and political stability) to thrive. Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson eloquently demonstrate this paradigm in their

masterpiece entitled *Why Nations Fail* in which they underscore the role of institutions to either undermine or enhance development (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). They contend that extractive institutions, which are frequently present in authoritarian regimes, hinder development by confining economic opportunities to a privileged few. On the other hand, inclusive institutions, typically found in democracies, promote innovation and foster economic growth (Ibid.). Furthermore, Acemoglu and Robinson stress that extractive regimes make sustainable development nearly impossible since they are designed to put short-term profits and elite preservation ahead of the future prosperity of society. Conversely, this implies a decline in the democratic governance would frustrate both political stability and economic expansion. According to recent research, political instability, rising corruption, and economic stagnation are all contributors to democratic backsliding, which is the slow deterioration of democratic institutions and practices (Bermeo, 2016; Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018). This section looks at the decline of democracy in Cameroon and Central African Republic and the consequences it has on political stability and economic development in these countries.

Given the aforementioned, it is imperative to comprehend the distinct expressions of democratic deterioration in African nations, especially in post-colonial settings such as Cameroon and the Central African Republic (CAR). These countries offer case studies of how entrenched elites, external geopolitical forces, institutional fragility, and linguistic and ethnic divisions come together to impede the development of democracy. Fragile democracies in Africa frequently lack the legal, civil, and normative framework necessary to withstand executive excesses or defend civil rights during emergencies, in contrast to developed democracies where institutional safeguards are in place to protect the democratic process. Additionally, the militarization of politics, along with the marginalization of civil society actors and opposition voices, has made both Cameroon and the CAR unfriendly to responsive policymaking and participatory governance. As a result, the projected developmental dividend from democratization has not materialized, leading to economic mismanagement, cycles of instability, and a growing public mistrust of democratic institutions.

6.2 THE DECLINE OF DEMOCRACY IN CAMEROON

Since independence, the political landscape in Cameroon has witnessed two phases of democratization. At the dawn of independence, Cameroon witnessed what could be termed as the first wave of democratization characterized by multiparty politics (Ngolle, 1996) within the

framework of the federal system of government the country adopted. Political parties that flourished during the colonial era, and participated actively during the quest for independence in both constituent communities of the Federal Republic of Cameroon (British Southern Cameroons, and French Cameroon) continued their political activities at state and Federal levels. Hopes for inclusive administration and strong political mobilization dominated this early post-independence era. However, this wave of democratization was short-lived as less than a decade after independence, Cameroon became a one-party state with the disbandment of every political party and the creation of the Cameroon National Union (CNU) on 1 September 1966 (Takougang, 2003). The CNU was replaced by the Cameroon Peoples' Democratic Movement (CPDM) in 1985, which remained Cameroon's single political party till the return of multiparty politics in 1990 (Fonchingong, 1998). Through tactics including media control, elite coercion, and opposition repression, the CNU and later CPDM eras solidified authoritarian governance (Konings, 2002).

The second wave of democratization began in 1990 when Cameroon's National Assembly passed a law to permit once more other political parties to be formed. The reintroduction of multiparty politics in Cameroon began in earnest on 26 May 1990 with the launch of Cameroon's first opposition party called Social Democratic Front (SDF) in Bamenda (Nyinchiah, 2019). The climax of this second wave was the holding of Cameroon's first post-independent multiparty presidential elections on 11 October 1992 during which the incumbent president Paul Biya is said to have defeated SDF leader John Fru Ndi by 40% to 36% respectively (Gros, 1995). Nevertheless, the following era witnessed an upsurge in democratic regression, characterized by election manipulation, the silencing of opposition voices, and amendments to the constitution geared at perpetuating Biya's leadership indefinitely (Pommerolle, 2010). Furthermore, during this time, there was a crackdown on independent media, a rise in the persecution of civil society organizations, and frequent electoral fraud that eroded public confidence in democratic processes (Fombad, 2011). Since then, the country is said to have entered into a state of democratic decline which would be analysed below under the following domains: governance; the rule of law; civic space; free and fair elections; human rights; minority rights; and performance in composite indices measuring democracy. A thorough examination of these areas shows how democratic reversals have strengthened authoritarian policies and undermined opportunities for significant political and economic change.

More so, democratic institutions like the judiciary, parliament, and regional governments have been unintentionally weakened by the concentration of power around the presidency, which is frequently justified in the name of stability and national unity. As a result, there is now a stark imbalance in the separation of powers, with executive authority checks becoming mainly ceremonial. Despite constitutional guarantees, the nation has not completely implemented decentralization measures, depriving local governments of the authority and resources necessary to resolve issues at the community level, particularly in unstable areas like the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest.

In addition, the present Anglophone issue serves as a vivid reminder of the consequences associated with the weakening of democracy. The government's oppressive approach and lack of inclusive discussion caused what started out as nonviolent demonstrations calling for linguistic and legal recognition to swiftly turn into violent armed conflict. The regime's disrespect for democratic values and human rights is demonstrated by the militarization of the conflict, arbitrary detentions, and internet shutdowns in Anglophone regions. This crisis has worsened economic stagnation and regional inequality by weakening national unity, eroding public trust in state institutions, and redirecting public funding from development to security.

6.2.1 GOVERNANCE

Cameroon's governance has faced challenges in maintaining democratic principles since the re-establishment of multiparty politics in the 1990s. The dominance of the party in government, the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), has often led to a concentration of power. Although efforts have been made to devolve power—especially with the introduction of decentralization in the 1996 revised constitution and its implementation laws adopted by parliament (Law No. 2004/17 and Law No. 2004/18) (Tani et al., 2012)—Cameroon has largely maintained a centralized system of governance. The president and the ruling CPDM party continue to hold a disproportionate amount of power. The 2022 BTI Transformation Index report on Cameroon describes the country as a "deeply centralized state" (BTI, 2022). It also adds that "Cameroon is an electoral autocracy that is highly personalized and demonstrates little dedication to democratic institutions. Because of his concentrated grasp of power, the president can use institutions to penalize critics and elevate loyalists." (Ibid.).

Quirk and Montemarano (2020) who identify the “persistent centralization of power” as one of Cameroon’s democratic deficits corroborate the aforementioned assessment. While acknowledging constitutional and legislative efforts to institute decentralization, they point out that political interference, and administrative bureaucracy undermines the ability of Cameroon's 360 municipal councils to fulfil their developmental responsibilities in sectors like education, social welfare, and the provision of healthcare (Ibid.).

The centralization of authority in the country also limits the effectiveness of mechanisms put in place to prevent the abuse of power within the political system, contributing to governance issues. One of the most challenging governance issues that has accrued so far from the centralization is corruption. There has been unbridled corruption in Cameroon's governance system since the rebirth of multiparty politics with Cameroon earning twice the title of the world’s most corrupt nation (1998 and 1999) according to Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) (Bechem, 2018). Corruption in Cameroon mostly takes the forms of bribery, embezzlement of state funds, fraud, and influence peddling (Gbetnkom, 2012). Furthermore, weak institutions and a lack of judicial independence have made the problem worse by enabling corrupt authorities to act without worrying about the repercussions (Mbaku, 2020). Political intervention and the selective targeting of political opponents rather than enacting comprehensive changes have hindered actions taken to combat corruption, such as the formation of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (CONAC) (Nkoum-Me-Ntseny, 2016).

6.2.2 RULE OF LAW

The rule of law in Cameroon has been compromised by instances of political interference in the judiciary. Instead of serving as an unbiased arbiter of legal disputes, the judiciary has become improperly influenced by the executive branch, jeopardizing the separation of powers (Fombad, 2018). Concerns regarding the independence of the judiciary are raised by reports that the administration, particularly the presidency, heavily controls judicial nominations, promotions, and disciplinary actions (Ebobrah, 2017). The executive branch's influence on the legal system has raised concerns about the independence of the judiciary. Kanga (2019) posits that the influence political interest has on judicial office is a hallmark of the connection between the government and the judiciary in Cameroon. Ndifor goes on to state categorically that "the Cameroon judicial system has been deeply entangled in the political affairs of government such

that it has lost its independence and is currently being run as an extension of the executive branch" (2004: p. 27). According to Nyingchia and Leno, "courts operate like deconcentrated services of the Ministry of Justice without any financial autonomy, while the Higher Judicial Council which manages careers and promotion of judges is headed by the President of Republic" (2021: p. 182). This further supports the idea that the executive branch meddles politically in the judiciary. Judges are less likely to decide against government interests as a result of the consolidation of power, which erodes public trust in the court and contributes to the pervasive perception of impunity (Transparency International, 2021).

Another major challenge in the respect of the rule of law in Cameroon is arbitrary arrests and detentions. Nguindip (2022) underscore that arbitrary arrests and detentions exist on a large scale in Cameroon. This is confirmed by the 2022 US Department of State country reports on human rights practices in the country, which identified arbitrary arrests and detention among several human rights issues plaguing the country (US Department of State, 2023). According to claims by Amnesty International (2020), security forces have routinely targeted activists and journalists as well as those seen as political adversaries.

A prominent case in point is the arbitrary arrest and detention of more than a hundred militants of the Mouvement pour la Renaissance du Cameroun (MRC) party by Cameroonian security forces following a protest march in September 2020 (Amnesty International, 2020). Numerous people who were detained experienced prolonged pre-trial incarceration in overcrowded, cruel facilities, and reports suggest that these arrests were undertaken without following due process (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

6.2.3 CIVIC SPACE

The advent of multipartyism in Cameroon was accompanied by efforts to promote freedom of association. In this light, the President Paul Biya's administration enacted a legislation reintroducing freedom of association (law No. 90/053) which caused the civic space in Cameroon to flourish (Kewir et al, 2021). The aforementioned legislation led to the establishment of more than 3000 associations in Cameroon including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), common initiative groups (CIGs), development associations, student associations, and professional associations (Ibid). This euphoria was short-lived, nevertheless, as the government responded very swiftly and imposed restrictions on civil society

organizations' (CSOs) operations. The civic space became restricted as the government undertook military crackdowns on protests that emerged across the country's length and width from March to August 1991 (Annan et al, 2021).

Over the years, the civic space in Cameroon has been constrained due to restrictions on liberty of assembly and expression. The administration has been criticized for suppressing dissent, limiting the actions of civil society organizations, and cracking down on peaceful protests. These actions undermine the vibrancy of civic engagement and public discourse. Prominent civil society activists in the country have attested to this through their assessments. According to Maximillienne Ngo Mbe (Cameroonian activists and head of the Central African Human Rights Defenders Network), the "Civic space is closed" in Cameroon (Amaize, 2022). Another Cameroonian civil society activist Barrister Felix Nkongho who believes that tensions concerning Cameroon's political future and political rivalries has caused the civic space in the country to shrink (Ibid) shares the above sentiments.

The Anglophone crisis has aggravated the situation, adversely affecting the activities of CSOs in the English-speaking regions of the country (South West and North West). According to findings from a 2023 field research, CSOs have made significant contributions to resolving the conflict, ranging from organizing peace education to providing humanitarian assistance to victims. However, their efforts have been impeded by government restrictions, violence, and intimidation from the belligerent parties, leading to the shrinking of the civic space in these regions (Annan et al., 2023).

6.2.4 FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

Although Cameroon reintroduced multiparty politics in the early 1990s, concerns persist about the fairness of elections. Allegations of irregularities, including voter suppression and result manipulation, have marred the electoral process. Since multiparty politics returned, the majority of elections have been marred by claims of fraud and irregularities. 1992 saw the first-ever multiparty elections conducted under the Biya administration. The elections were reported to have been marred by election malpractices. Gros (1995: p.112) pointed out that incumbent President Paul Biya owed his victory in the 1992 Presidential elections partly to "widespread election fraud". The US Department of State had the following damning assessment of Cameroon's electoral following the nation's return to multiparty politics: "Since Biya won the

highly flawed 1992 presidential election, elections have been tainted by an electoral process that is controlled by the Government's Ministry of Territorial Administration. International and local observers generally view the process as not free and fair." (United States, Department of State, 1998).

Opposition parties raised allegations of massive fraud and irregularities in both the 2011 and 2018 Cameroon presidential elections (Reuters, 2018; Kiven et al., 2018; Reuters, 2011; BBC, 2011). More recently, similar allegations from opposition parties were noted concerning the conduct and outcome of the 2020 legislative and municipal elections (Kindzeka, 2020). The dominance of the ruling party and the lack of independent electoral authorities has raised questions about the competitiveness and fairness of the electoral environment (Nwajiaku-Dahou, 2022).

6.2.5 HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights concerns in Cameroon include reports of extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests, and torture. Dicklitch presents the following bleak assessment of the human rights situation in Cameroon:

“The human rights record of the Cameroonian government from a civil/political rights standpoint has been miserable at best. Complaints of military and police brutality are widespread. Torture and illegal detention are frequent, while extra-judicial executions are still evident, especially in the Far North Province. Since March 1998, some 700 people have been extra-judicially executed by the brigade anti-gang, a joint unit of the army and gendarmerie in the Far North Province. The security forces have continued to brutalize the public with the brandishing of automatic weapons, bribery and the resurgence of *kale kale*, especially in the Anglophone provinces” (2002: p. 156).

Cameroon's human rights situation has been worsened by the ongoing Anglophone conflict, which has been characterized by flagrant human rights violations from both sides in the conflict (government forces and 'Ambazonia' separatists). Human rights violations in the Cameroon have been steadily condemned by the international community, with entities like Human Rights

Watch, the United Nations and Amnesty International, recording these systematic abuses (Human Rights Watch, 2022; Amnesty International, 2022b). According to a report submitted to the United Kingdom (UK) Parliament, by a team of independent researchers from the Faculty of Law, University of Oxford, both parties involved in the Anglophone conflict have committed human rights abuses ranging from inhumane detention condition to torture, and extra-judiciary killings (Willis et al, 2019). These reports have been corroborated by other entities, such as the US Department of State, which highlighted killings and abductions by belligerents in the conflict (US Department of State, 2023). Amnesty International also cited the denial of humanitarian access to Doctors Without Borders (DWB) in the North West and South West regions (Amnesty International, 2022b), while Human Rights Watch reported violations of the right to education due to the separatist-enforced school boycott in the Anglophone regions since 2017 (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

6.2.6 MINORITY RIGHTS

The protection of minority rights in Cameroon has been a persistent issue, particularly in regions with diverse ethnic and linguistic communities. Cameroon's colonial history, which was made distinct by its split between British and French rule, created the foundation for long-lasting linguistic and cultural divisions that still have an impact on contemporary politics and governance (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 2003). The Anglophone crisis, which escalated in the 2010s, has highlighted tensions around linguistic and cultural differences. Critics have condemned the government's response to these issues for failing to adequately addressing the concerns of minority populations. Concerns regarding the systematic repression of minority voices in Cameroon have been raised by organizations such as Human Rights Watch (2022) and Amnesty International (2021), which have maintained records of extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detentions, and restrictions on the right to free speech and assembly in the Anglophone regions.

Many scholars and human rights organizations are of the assessment that the Anglophone crisis draws its origins from the marginalization and violation of the rights of the minority Anglophone in Cameroon. The Anglophone minority in Cameroon has "since independence continuously complained of marginalization and neo-colonialism," according to Chiatoh (2019: p. 675). He further stated that "These complaints have been to the effect that severe violations of the rights of some Anglophone Cameroonians have occurred." (Ibid.). According to scholars,

this marginalization extends beyond politics to include economic and social aspects, as Anglophone areas have traditionally received less government investment in infrastructure, healthcare, and education compared to Francophone regions (Njesuh, 2020). Anye (2008) argues that it was the policies of the Cameroonian government from 1990 - 2000 that triggered the emergence of Anglophone nationalism. The political power of Anglophones at the national level was diminished during this time due to a number of constitutional and legal amendments that further centralized power within the Francophone-led administration. Many have argued that the 1972 termination of the federal system and the subsequent decades of further centralization undermined the original commitments made at the time of independence (Ngoh, 1996). O'Grady (2019) establishes the nexus between Anglophone marginalization and the Anglophone conflict by stating the following concerning the root cause of the conflict: "The current conflict has its origins in the nonviolent protests that English-speaking teachers and lawyers started in late 2016. Their discontent with the government's choice to assign French-speaking judges and educators to English-speaking courts and educational institutions gave rise to this movement. Anglophones contended that Yaoundé officials were successfully pressuring the minority English-speaking population to conform to the Francophone legal and educational frameworks." In addition to ignoring the Anglophone regions' historical independence, this imposition of the French framework fueled widespread discontent and bolstered calls for federalism or total independence (International Crisis Group, 2017).

The dispute of today began in late 2016, when English-speaking teachers and attorneys staged nonviolent demonstrations in protest of the government's decision to place French-speaking judges and educators in English-speaking courts and educational institutions. Yaounde officials, according to English speakers, were effectively pressuring the minority Anglophones to integrate into Francophone legal and educational systems.

Reacting to the violent crackdown on a demonstration against marginalization in the Anglophone regions, Rita Rita Izsak-Ndiaye and Maina Kiai, UN Special Rapporteurs acknowledged the issues the protesters were clamouring (bilingual public services and greater inclusion of the Anglophones in the public governance), and called on the government to have conversations that are inclusive with them (UN HRC, 2016). Mr. Kiai went further to point out that "In democratic societies, demonstrations and protests are key to raising awareness about human rights, and political and social concerns, including those regarding minority issues." (Ibid.). Despite these appeals, the Cameroonian government's activities in response to these

requests have remained primarily military-focused, which has made the situation worse and escalated the violence between government soldiers and separatist groups (Amnesty International, 2021).

Human rights entities such as International Crisis Group and the Centre for Human Rights (CHR) of the Faculty of Law in the University of Pretoria have also acknowledged the causal link between the marginalization of the Anglophone minority in Cameroon and the outbreak of the Anglophone conflict (Khumalo, 2023; International Crisis Group, 2017). More so, the Cameroonian government has been repeatedly urged by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) to respect the linguistic and cultural rights of its citizens and to adopt inclusive governance practices. Promoting national unity and preventing additional conflict are the goals of this strategy (ACHPR, 2019).

6.2.7 CAMEROON'S PERFORMANCES IN COMPOSITE INDICES MEASURING DEMOCRACY

The decline of democracy in Cameroon can also be seen in the nation's performance in various international composite indices measuring democracy. Mbaku (2021) asserts that a major contributing element to Cameroon's democratic decline is the disproportionate amount of power retained by President Paul Biya, who has ruled the country since 1982. Here, we shall look at Cameroon's performance in the following composite indices: Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)'s Democracy Index; Freedom House's Freedom in the world index; World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI); Mo Ibrahim Foundation's Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG).

6.2.7.1 Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)'S Democracy Index Ranking For Cameroon

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)'s Democracy Index provides a comprehensive review of the status of democracy across the globe, which covers 165 sovereign countries and territories. It focuses on five key indicators: electoral process and pluralism, political participation, civil liberties, and functioning of government, each of which has its own ranking (EIU, 2022). There is an aggregate ranking on 10 upon which countries are classified under the

following four categories of regime type: full democracy (at the top), flawed democracy, hybrid regime, and authoritarian regime (at the bottom) (Ibid).

Cameroon performs poorly in domains such as civil freedoms, political culture, and the election process. The 2023 assessment put the nation among the lowest in Africa, emphasizing the absence of free and fair elections, the government's tight hold on political opposition, and restrictions on press freedom (EIU, 2023). For the past decade (2013 - 2023), Cameroon has remained in the Authoritarian category with an average score of 3.16/10 (See Table 1).

Table 2. Cameroon's scores and category in EIU Democracy Index 2013-2022

2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
2.56/10	2.56/10	2.77/10	2.85/10	3.28/10	3.61/10	3.46/10	3.66/10	3.41/10	3.41/10
Average score 2013-2023: 3.16/10									
Classification category: Authoritarian regime									
Classification index									
1. Full democracies: scores greater than 8									
2. Flawed democracies: scores greater than 6, and less than or equal to 8									
3. Hybrid regimes: scores greater than 4, and less than or equal to 6									
4. Authoritarian regimes: scores less than or equal to 4									

Source: compiled by author from EIU Democracy Index Reports from 2013 – 2022

6.2.7.2 Freedom House's Freedom In The World Report Ranking For Cameroon

The Freedom House 'Freedom in the World' Report is an international evaluation of the condition of civil liberties and political rights worldwide. The political rights component has three sub-sections: Political Participation and Pluralism, Electoral Process, and Functioning of Government while the civil liberties component covers four sub-sections: Rule of law, freedom of expression and belief, associational and organizational rights, and personal autonomy and individual rights (Freedom House, 2021). It is a composite index that contains a statistical measurement with rankings that shows the level of freedom in the various states covered according to three classifications: Free, Partly Free, and Not Free (Ibid.). According to the report, major obstacles to Cameroon's democracy include arbitrary detentions, restrictions on opposition parties, internet blackouts, and the repression of journalists (Freedom House, 2023).

For the past decade (2013-2022), Cameroon has remained in the 'Not Free' category (See Table 2).

Table 3. Cameroon’s scores and category in Freedom House ‘Freedom in the World Report 2013-2022

2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
19/100*	18/100	16/100	15/100	22/100	24/100	24/100	12/14*	12/14	12/14
Classification category: Not Free									
Classification index									
1. All ‘Freedom in the World’ scores from 2017 upward is summed over an aggregate score of 100 with 60 for civil liberties and 40 for political rights. Higher scores indicate high freedom meanwhile lower scores indicate low freedom.									
2. All ‘Freedom in the World’ scores from 2015 and below is summed over an aggregate score of 14 with 7 for each component (political rights and civil liberties). Higher scores indicate low freedom and lower scores indicate high freedom.									

Source: compiled by author from Freedom House’s ‘Freedom in the World’ annual report from 2013 – 2022.

Also, the six main components of governance, including political stability, voice and accountability, and corruption control, are evaluated by the World Bank's WGI. Driven in significant part by widespread corruption and a lack of accountability, Cameroon has consistently performed below the regional average in each of these categories, with predominantly low scores in transparency and government effectiveness (World Bank, 2022).

6.2.7.3 Mo Ibrahim Foundation's Ibrahim Index Of African Governance (IIAG) Ranking For Cameroon

The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) is the only composite index that focuses on the measuring overall governance performance in all 54 African countries based on four key governance components: Security and Rule of Law; Participation, Rights, and Inclusion; Foundations for Economic Opportunity; and Human Development (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2023). The 'Participation, Rights, and Inclusion' component has indicators like democratic elections, civil society space, freedom of association and assembly, personal liberties, freedom of expression and belief, equal political representation, and equal rights and civil liberties (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2024), for women which all combine to provides a clear insight to the state

of democracy in African countries. Cameroon's security, rule of law, human rights, and participation metrics have all been deteriorating. State repression, a lack of political inclusion, and the government's incapacity to settle long-standing conflicts, including the Anglophone crisis, are among the concerns brought up in the report (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2023). Cameroon's performance in the aforementioned category has moved from bad to worse from 2014 - 2023 (See Figure 14).



Figure 14. Cameroon’s performance in the ‘Participation, Rights, and Inclusion’ component of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation’s Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) from 2014-2023

Source:
<https://iiag.online/data.html?meas=PRI&loc=CM&view=graph&subview=score&option=line&range1from=2014&range1to=2023&range2from=2019&range2to=2023&showFullContext=false>

In summary, these indices point to a pattern of democratic retreat, signifying that Cameroon is still dealing with serious governance challenges. In addition to weakening democracy, the lack of political liberties, persecution by the government, and fragile institutional frameworks exacerbate grievances among marginalized groups and intensify conflicts like the Anglophone crisis. The Anglophone crisis serves as a stark reminder of Cameroon's long-standing governance and human rights issues, making minority rights protection in Cameroon an issue of utmost importance. A comprehensive approach is required to address these issues, one that includes increasing international pressure for democratic accountability, genuine engagement between the administration and minority groups, and constitutional reforms for equal representation. The importance of these reforms is further highlighted by Cameroon's poor performance on democratic indicators. The nation risks the possibility of more instability and firmly established authoritarianism if meaningful reforms are not made.

6.2.8 IMPACT OF THE DECLINE OF DEMOCRACY ON POLITICAL STABILITY IN CAMEROON

The decline of democracy in Cameroon over the past decades has had undesirable consequences on the political stability of the country. The fading of democratic values such as political diversity, respect for the rule of law, as well as the safeguard of basic freedoms, has led to governance breakdowns that have triggered instability. Currently Cameroon is going through an internal conflict involving government forces and separatists in its English-speaking (Anglophone) regions (North West, and South West). As mentioned in the above analysis, some scholars (Chiatoh, 2019; Anye 2009) have linked the outbreak of the Anglophone conflict to the marginalization of the minority Anglophones in the nation of Cameroon, which in itself is a reflection of the decline of democracy. These conflicts have only become worse due to the government's harsh tactics, which include illegal killings, extensive detentions and internet bans. This has further destabilized the political environment (Amnesty International, 2018; International Crisis Group, 2019).

Another area where Cameroon's democratic decline has affected its political stability is that of social unrest that follows a fall in public trust in institutions, which has only worsened in the past decades. When democratic systems fail to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability, people often turn to other ways to voice their complaints, which can result in political unrest. Generally, a decline in democracy can lead to social unrest as citizens may

engage in protests, demonstrations, and civil disobedience, when they feel disenfranchised and frustrated with the political system. Cameroon has experienced two major social upheavals that threatened its stability as a state. The first, 'Operation Ghost Town' (or 'Operation Villes Mortes' in French), was a non-violent civil disobedience movement involving lockdowns in the cities of Douala, Bamenda, and Bafoussam throughout the latter half of 1991 (Pommerolle & Heungoup, 2017; Konde, 2015; Krieger, 1994). This movement emerged as a direct response to the unsuccessful democratic reforms and the perceived manipulation during the shift to a multi-party political system. The second was the February 2008 hunger riots, sparked by the rising cost of food but carrying political undertones (Dongmo, 2022; Sneyd, 2017; Amin, 2013). The relationship between political instability and democratic regression has been demonstrated by the government's authoritarian measures, like the application of oppressive laws to quell opposition and the violent suppression of protestors (Mbaku, 2019; Achankeng, 2015). Additionally, political unrest has also been aggravated by the continuous extension of presidential terms made possible by constitutional alterations and electoral manipulations. Many Cameroonians are frustrated with President Paul Biya's extended tenure, which has lasted more than 40 years, and they think that democratic ways of bringing about political change are unattainable (Kum, 2020; Nganje, 2021). Instability has been exacerbated by the lack of political competition and the persecution of opposition leaders, which have prevented genuine democratic involvement.

Statistically, Cameroon has witnessed a decline political stability in recent years, which correlates with the democratic decline illustrated in the above analysis. The countries performance in the 'Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism category of the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicator (WGI) has been on a steady decline in the last decade (See Figure 14), and has remained below average over the past 27 years (see Figure 15). In a similar vein,, Cameroon was one of the nations with the worst performance in the 2023 edition of the Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) Democracy Index, scoring poorly in categories like political engagement, civil rights and the electoral process (EIU, 2023). Cameroon's governance score also declined, according to the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), particularly in the areas of inclusion, rights, and participation (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2022).

Moreover, Cameroon has been under increasing international criticism for its democratic shortcomings, which have sometimes escalated diplomatic tensions and had an adverse

economic impact. The United States and the European Union have enacted visa restrictions and sanctions, while a number of human rights groups have also placed limits on those linked to election fraud and human rights abuses (U.S. State Department, 2021; European Parliament, 2020). Despite the fact that these measures are meant to compel the government into reform, they have inadvertently caused economic difficulties because investors perceive Cameroon as politically unpredictable.

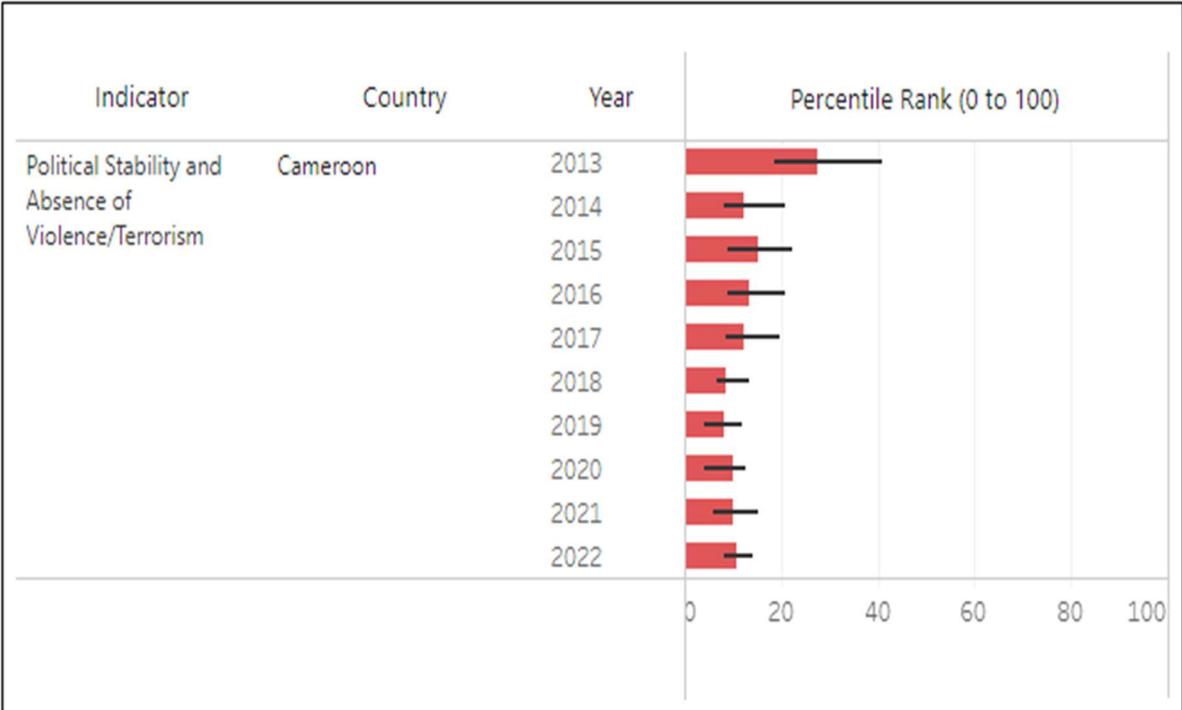


Figure 15. Cameroon’s performance in the World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Indicator (WGI) ‘Political Stability Absence of Violence/Terrorism’ indicator 2013 – 2022

Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators:
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators/interactive-data-access>

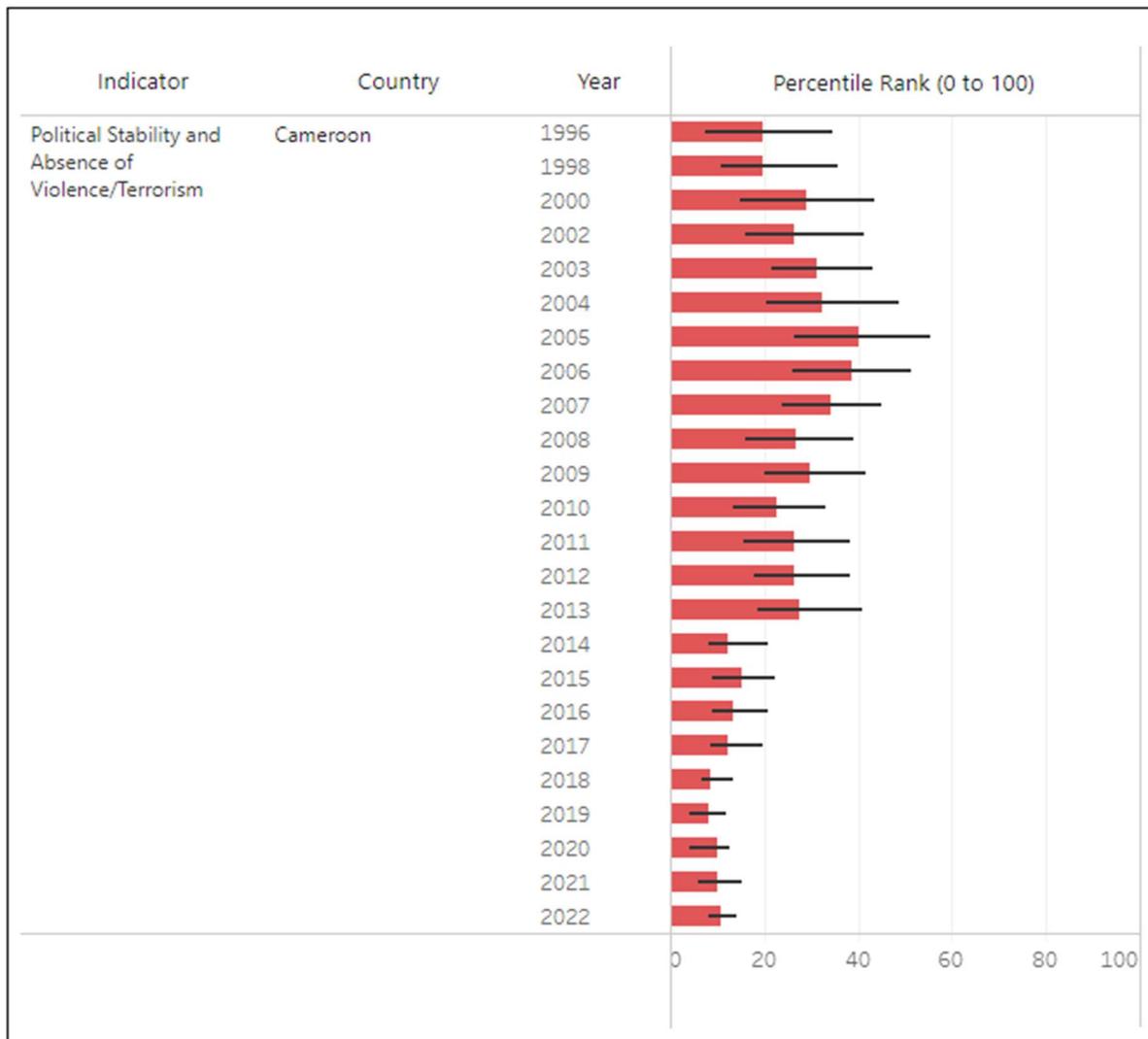


Figure 16. Cameroon's performance in the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicator (WGI) 'Political Stability Absence of Violence/Terrorism' indicator 1996 – 2022

Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators/interactive-data-access>

In a nutshell, Cameroon's democratic decline fueled social unrest, economic instability, and violent conflict in addition to undermining efficient governance. Political stability will remain elusive without substantial adjustments to democracy, for instance respect for human rights political pluralism, and electoral integrity. Tackling the root causes of democratic backsliding and creating an atmosphere where all citizens, irrespective of their ethnic identity, language or

party affiliation, feel represented and protected by the state are essential to the nation's future stability.

6.2.9 IMPACT OF DECLINE OF DEMOCRACY ON DEVELOPMENT IN CAMEROON

Cameroon's democratic decline has also had a negative effect on its economic development. This can be seen in three areas. The first, is centralization of power. The centralization of power has been a fundamental impediment to local development in the country. Quirk and Montemarano (2020) argue that the state has failed to implement effectively decentralization. The 1996 constitutional amendment adopted decentralization, and the 2004 law on the orientation of decentralization further enhanced it. Still, even with these legislative frameworks in place, the government has been reluctant to relinquish control over decision-making and resources, which has caused local financial independence to suffer (Fombad, 2018). Local governments continue to depend on the central government for financial support, which greatly restricts their capacity to carry out autonomous development ventures. This over-centralization has resulted in inefficiencies in service delivery, with rural areas experiencing disproportionately high rates of infrastructure project delays and sometimes of very poor quality after delivery, such as poor healthcare, roads, and inadequate educational facilities (Tatah, 2021). This failure, attributed to political interference and excessive bureaucracy, has prevented Cameroon's municipal councils from fulfilling their developmental responsibilities in areas like social welfare, healthcare, and education.

Secondly, democratic decline can generally lead to an unfavourable environment for doing business, which is a categorical imperative for economic development. Democratic decline in Cameroon has led to political instability and weaken institutions in charge of maintaining law and order, delivering public services, and safeguarding the rule of law. All of these have combined to create an unfavourable environment for business which could have attracted foreign investors and increase the flow of foreign direct investment (FDI) into the country. Research shows that political unpredictability and weak institutions are two of the biggest obstacles to investment in sub-Saharan Africa (Asiedu, 2006). Businesses frequently encounter arbitrary taxation, sudden regulatory changes, and legal instability in Cameroon, which is made worse by the lack of judicial independence (Transparency International, 2021). Cameroon was ranked 186 out of 190 in the World Bank's Doing Business report for 2020 (BTI, 2022).

Additionally, the rampant practice of nepotism and favoritism in the distribution of government contracts has stifled competition and resulted in economic inefficiencies (Mbaku, 2020).

Another area where democratic decline has adversely affected development in Cameroon is that of governance. Cameroon's democratic decline has come with the challenge of corruption, and a lack of transparency and accountability in the governance system. The country was ranked twice consecutively (1998 and 1999) by Transparency International as the most corrupt country in the world (Bechem, 2018). Corruption takes funds away from infrastructure projects and vital public services, thereby hindering overall development efforts. The inadequate handling of public funds meant for essential services like healthcare and education has been brought to light in recent years by scandals involving corruption among high-ranking government officials (Nfor, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed the well structures system of corruption, as millions of dollars in relief funds were misappropriated, resulting in significant shortages of medical supplies and an inadequate response effort (Cameroon Tribune, 2021). Findings from a study undertaken on the effect of corruption on Cameroon's social and economic advancement revealed that, "High-level illicit financial flows and improper utilization of state funds have a statistically significant negative impact on the economic and social development of Cameroon." (Grimbald et al, 2020; p. 164). Similarly, a study on the impact on enterprise growth of the payment of bribes by small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) to public officials reveals that such payments have a unfavorable effect on the growth in output of the firms (Gbetnkom, 2012). In addition to discouraging entrepreneurial endeavors, these unethical practices worsen socioeconomic inequality by enabling the elites to redirect government funding intended for programs aimed at alleviating poverty (Ndikumana & Boyce, 2011).

Besides corruption, the sluggish nature of democratic governance and economic advancement has been worsened by limitations on civil liberties and press freedom. Independent journalists and civil society activists face censorship, arbitrary detentions, and intimidation, according to groups as Reporters Without Borders (2022). This repression of free speech reduces accountability and public monitoring of government operations, allowing corruption and inefficiency to flourish unchecked. Social growth has also been impacted by the decay of democratic institutions. For instance, government policies that do not place a high priority on inclusive and high-quality education have had a negative impact on the education system. Due to resource misallocation, rural schools are lack adequate funding, have substandard

instructional materials, and have teachers that are not well trained (Tchombe, 2019). Insufficient medical supplies, deteriorating healthcare facilities, and excessive patient out-of-pocket expenses for patients are all results of the healthcare sector's inefficient health budget allocation (World Health Organization, 2020). All things considered, social disparity, economic stagnation, and poor governance have been exacerbated by Cameroon's declining democracy.

The economic and social development of Cameroon will continue to encounter significant obstacles in the absence of fundamental reforms that fortify democratic institutions, decentralize governance, combat corruption, and improve the business environment. Only a governance framework that emphasizes transparency, accountability, and inclusivity can achieve long-term development (UNDP, 2023).

6.3 THE DECLINE OF DEMOCRACY IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Following its 1960 declaration of independence from France, the Central African Republic (CAR) has faced numerous challenges in its democratization process. These challenges include: coups, rebellions, and governance issues. National unity, economic growth and human rights have all been ruthlessly impacted by the enduring pattern of instability brought on by the failure to establish durable democratic institutions (Carayannis & Lombard, 2015). As is the case with Cameroon, the decline of democracy in the Central African Republic will analyse from the following key indicators of the state of democracy: governance, rule of law, civic space, free and fair elections, human rights, minority rights, and CAR's performance in composite indices measuring democracy.

An almost cyclical decline into political instability has characterized the Central African Republic's post-independence trajectory, with periods of democratic experimentation swiftly giving way to military takeovers and authoritarian government. Jean-Bédél Bokassa's 1966 revolution established a dangerous precedent by normalizing the use of force as a valid means of gaining power. The bizarre personalization of state power, which has persisted among the nation's political elite, was exemplified by Bokassa's eventual self-declaration as emperor in 1976. Later leaders have found it difficult to depart from this authoritarian style, frequently claiming democratic principles while governing through repression, clientelism, and judicial manipulation.

The inadequacy of governmental institutions, which frequently serve more as tools of individual power than of public service, severely limits governance in the CAR. Warlords and political elites often embezzle public resources, and corruption is still rampant. In many regions of the nation, particularly in rural and conflict-affected areas where the state is almost nonexistent, this has resulted in a governance vacuum.

This institutional gap has been exploited by non-state armed actors, such as foreign mercenaries and rebel groups, to impose harsh rule over local communities, collect illicit taxes, and establish control. In many areas, there is virtually no rule of law, and the judiciary lacks both independence and capacity. Consolidation of democracy is nevertheless severely constrained by impunity for political violence and war crimes. Sexual violence, extrajudicial killings, and the deployment of child soldiers are examples of high-profile atrocities that frequently go unpunished. Public trust is damaged and civic engagement is further discouraged by the absence of a fair and reputable legal system.

6.3.1 GOVERNANCE

Since gaining independence from France in 1960, the Central African Republic has faced persistent challenges in establishing stable and operational democratic administration. Political instability, coups, and changes in leadership have been recurring issues. Marchal (2013) argues that the country has seen at least five successful coups and several other failed attempts, revealing serious underlying problems with its government. The public's trust in democratic institutions has been damaged by these persistent power struggles, which have also impeded the growth of a robust civil society. Multiple coups and changes in government have disrupted the democratic process, undermining efforts to establish consistent governance. Since independence, the country has witnessed the reign of three military officers who entered power through a coup and have reign for a combine 36 years: Jean-Bédél Bokassa from 1965-1979; Andre Kolingba from 1981-1993; and François Bozizé from 2003 - 2013 (Stapleton, 2019). All of these regimes were dictatorial and engendered a decline of democracy in the country. The most notorious of them was that of Bokassa who siezed power from CAR's first president David Dako through a coup in 1965 and subsequently proclaimed himself as president for life, assuming the title of Emperor changing his country into an empire in 1976 (Britannica, 2023; Toure, 2010; Human Rights Watch, 2007).

Though the country witnessed what has been seen as successful democratic transition in 1993, it was short-lived and shaky as eloquently described by Mehler:

“From that period to 2002, democracy survived (barely) in an environment punctuated by high levels of instability, engendered by outbreaks of political violence and extralegal efforts to take power. In October of that same year, the formal experiment with democracy appeared to have collapse as "politics" degenerated into open and bloody confrontations between forces loyal to the president and those of his former chief of staff. When the rebels took the capital Bangui in March 2003, they were greeted by joyous inhabitants but the prospects for civil peace, let alone democracy, remained bleak.” Mehler (2005: p. 126)

In terms of global governance criteria, the CAR has unfailingly been among the lowest-ranked nations. As stated by the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), the country faces grave issues in areas including rights, participation, security, and upholding the law (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2022). The lack of institutional capability and the pervasive culture of impunity exacerbate the governance challenges. The results of the frequent military coups and succeeding dictatorships has been an enduring environment of political instability characterized by the disintegration of central authority and the virtual collapse of the rule of law (Niang, 2019). The aforementioned situation has made some scholars to ascribe to CAR the label of a "failed state" (Lizak, 2016; Kłosowicz, 2016; Kah, 2014; Deiros, 2014).

6.3.2 RULE OF LAW

The rule of law in CAR has been compromised by political instability and conflict. The lack of a stable and effective judicial system has contributed to impunity for human rights abuses and corruption. Weak institutions and a history of political interference in the judiciary have hampered the establishment of a robust rule of law. One of the unfortunate legacies of decades of political instability in CAR has been impunity, which is a glaring sign of the failure of state institutions to uphold the rule of law in the country. In July 2014, the United Nations Committee on Sanctions against the Central African Republic released a report highlighting a critical issue. It emphasized "The main stumbling block on the road of the political transition remains the total impunity that allows individuals to engage in or provide support for acts that undermine the peace, security, and territorial integrity of the Central African Republic," (ABA, 2023).

Caus (2021), who noted that the failure of the rule of law in CAR has been exacerbated by the violence the country experienced from 2013 to 2014, support this assessment. This period of conflict led to the destruction of court buildings, including criminal records and prisons, and restricted law enforcement forces (such as the police and gendarmerie) to the capital city, Bangui. According to Caus, this has further increased the level of impunity by providing a context under which authors of human rights infringements and international crimes went unpunished (Ibid). Among the greatest obstacles to the preservation of the rule of law is still corruption. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index concludes that; with insufficient supervision measures that fail to stop the embezzlement of public funds, has repeatedly ranked the Central African Republic (CAR) as one of the most corrupt countries (Transparency International, 2023). Government officials' lack of accountability has fostered corruption and eroded public confidence in democratic governance.

6.3.3 CIVIC SPACE

There is very little civic space in the CAR, especially when political tension or violence is at its worst. Opposition leaders, journalists, and human rights advocates are routinely subjected to intimidation, arbitrary arrest, or even murder. Despite their existence, civil society organizations are constantly in danger and frequently lack the funding and political backing necessary to effectively monitor the situation or spur democratic action. Public discourse is dominated by fear and misinformation in such an atmosphere, and citizen voices are suppressed. In April 2023, Human Rights Watch published a report in which it accused the government of CAR of undertaking a crackdown on the civil society, opposition political parties, and the media as the country prepare for local elections scheduled for July that year (Human Rights Watch, 2023). This accusation was also highlighted by the international civil society platform dubbed CIVICUS which revealed two specific cases of civic space restriction (CIVICUS Monitor, 2023). Attacks on journalists have brought even more attention to the repression of civic space. Reporters Without Borders (RSF) documented multiple instances of violence and threats against journalists covering human rights violations and corruption in the government in 2021 (RSF, 2021). These risks undermine the transparency necessary for democratic accountability and jeopardize the media's function as a watchdog. The first was the banning of Radio Ndéké Luka journalist, Igor Djeskin Sénapaye from access and coverage of the CAR National Assembly by the institution's vice-president, Evariste Ngamana; and the arrest and detainment of three trade union leaders (Innocent Kéréguélé, Guillaume Sessé Brassy, and Kevin Wikon)

after they took part in a 21-day strike action in public schools (Ibid.). CAR was categorized as 'REPRESSED' in terms of the state of civic space according to the 2023 "PEOPLE POWER UNDER ATTACK" report published by CIVICUS (CIVICUS Monitor, 2023b).

6.3.4 FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

Elections in the CAR have been marred by irregularities, insecurity, and political manipulation. Vote buying, voter intimidation and ballot stuffing, and are only a few of the problems that the European Union and the African Union have repeatedly raised regarding the integrity of the elections in the Central African Republic (EU Election Observation Mission, 2020). Democratic legitimacy has been further eroded by these issues, which have led to a growing lack of confidence in the voting process. Systemic flaws in election organization are exemplified by the December 2015 legislative elections, which were declared illegitimate due to extensive rigging (France 24, 2016). These issues have expressed doubts over the legitimacy and equity of the electoral process, undermining the democratic foundation of the country. A good example is the December 2015 legislative elections in the country that was cancelled by its Constitutional Court because of irregularities (France 24, 2016). The president of CAR Constitutional Court in his declaration of annulment revealed that the court registered 414 complaints of election malpractices (Ibid.). Furthermore, the 2020 Presidential elections in the country took place in an atmosphere of distrust of CAR election management body by opposition parties which accused it of being at the beck and call of the government (International Crisis Group, 2020). Election observation, which is an important tool to enhance transparency and credibility, in the country is bedevilled by the risk arising from insecurity, violence, and political instability (Maphunye, 2023).

The election system's persistent problems have sparked urgent concerns regarding the impartiality of the organizations in charge of monitoring the democratic process as well as the independence of the election commission. If these institutions are not reformed, there is a chance that authoritarian inclinations may get stronger and civic involvement would decline. Informed election participation is further hampered in rural and conflict-affected areas by a lack of civic education and restricted access to voter information. Furthermore, international observers have observed that although foreign donors frequently offer technical assistance, there is insufficient political commitment at the national level to carry out structural electoral reforms. Because of this, elections are still seen as formalities rather than as true representations

of the will of the people. Prioritizing a multidimensional strategy that includes independent media, civic education, institutional reform, and security sector reform is necessary to support really free and fair elections.

6.3.5 HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights abuses have been a longstanding concern in the Central African Republic. Conflict, violence, and political instability have contributed to violations of basic human rights, including gender-based violence, displacement, extrajudicial killings, abductions and forced disappearances. According to a report by Amnesty International on the human rights situation of CAR in 2022, "Women and girls were subjected to conflict-related sexual violence." (Amnesty International, 2023). This is further corroborated by the statistics given by the UN independent expert on CAR Yao Agetse who revealed 483 violations and abuses of human rights and humanitarian law affecting 1300 civilians were verified and documented by the Human Rights Division of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) (OHCHR, 2023).

On a general note, the protection and promotion of human rights have been compromised amid the broader challenges to democratic governance. In many areas, corruption and a weak judicial system have made it nearly impossible to hold anyone accountable for violations of human rights. In areas outside of government control, armed organizations frequently function as de facto authorities, imposing arbitrary laws and carrying out severe violations without fear of reprisal. Due to financial constraints and security threats, civil society organizations, which have the potential to be significant in monitoring and promoting human rights, are limited. Furthermore, processes for transitional justice have either stagnated or been applied unevenly, failing to promote reconciliation or offer victims' compensation. Despite their presence, international players have frequently come under fire for their transient activities that are unsustainable or do not effectively interact with local populations. A culture of impunity has been made possible by these structural flaws.

6.3.6 MINORITY RIGHTS

Protection of minority rights in the Central African Republic has been a complex issue, aggravated by indigenous and religious tensions. Political instability and conflict have often led

to violence targeting minority communities. Human Rights Watch reported that in 2014, a Christian militia group known as the 'anti-balaka' undertook a relentless and coordinated wave of violent attacks against the minority Muslim population whom they accused of being responsible for the emergence of the largely Muslim 'Seleka' rebel group which seized power in CAR in March 2013 (Human Rights Watch, 2014). Entire communities were forced to flee from the country because of these attacks (Ibid.). The lack of effective governance has hindered the establishment of policies and mechanisms to safeguard the rights of minority groups.

Indigenous ethnic groups, including the Ba'Aka and other forest peoples, have long been marginalized and have had restricted access to political representation, healthcare, and education, in addition to the Muslim-Christian divide. Minority populations frequently experience systemic discrimination in public service access, employment, and land ownership, even though constitutional protections promise equal rights for all the citizens. Government initiatives to encourage inclusivity have not resulted in significant policy changes and are still primarily symbolic. Furthermore, minority groups have been excluded from national discussion and reconciliation processes since peacebuilding programs have rarely included their voices. Prospects for a unified and inclusive national identity are still being hampered by a lack of political will, long-standing prejudices, and old grudges. The nation runs the risk of continuing if intentional measures are not made to incorporate minority concerns into national development goals.

6.3.7 CAR'S PERFORMANCE IN COMPOSITE INDICES MEASURING DEMOCRACY

The decline of democracy in CAR can also be illustrated by its abysmal performance in some of the renowned international composite indices measuring democracy. In this section, we shall look at the performance of CAR in the following composite indices measuring democracy and its components: Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)'s Democracy; Freedom House's Freedom in the World Report Ranking for CAR; and the Mo Ibrahim Foundation's Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG).

6.3.7.1 Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)'S Democracy Index Ranking For CAR

CAR has had a dismal performance in the EIU's Democracy Index for the past decade with an extremely low score that puts it in the category of 'Authoritarian regime' (See Table 3).

Table 4. CAR's scores and category in EIU Democracy Index 2013-2022

2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
1.35/10	1.43/10	1.32/10	1.32/10	1.52/10	1.52/10	1.61/10	1.57/10	1.49/10	1.49/10
Average score 2013-2023: 1.46/10									
Classification category: Authoritarian regime									
Classification index									
1. Full democracies: scores greater than 8									
2. Flawed democracies: scores greater than 6, and less than or equal to 8									
3. Hybrid regimes: scores greater than 4, and less than or equal to 6									
4. Authoritarian regimes: scores less than or equal to 4									

Source: compiled by author from EIU Democracy Index Reports from 2013 – 2022

6.3.7.2 Freedom House's Freedom In The World Report Ranking For Car

CAR's performance in Freedom House's Freedom in the World Index for the past decade has been terrible. Apart from 2013, when it was placed in the 'Partly Free' category, CAR has mostly remained in the 'Not Free' category (See Table 4).

Table 5. CAR's scores and category in Freedom House 'Freedom in the World Report 2013-2022

2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
7/100*	9/100	10/100	9/100	9/100	10/100	7/100	14/14*	14/14	10/14*
Classification category: Not Free except for 2013 when it was placed in the 'Partly Free' category									
Classification index									
1. All 'Freedom in the World' scores from 2017 upward is summed over an aggregate score of 100 with 60 for civil liberties and 40 for political rights. Higher scores indicate high freedom meanwhile lower scores indicate low freedom.									
2. All 'Freedom in the World' scores from 2015 and below is summed over an aggregate score of 14 with 7 for each component (political rights and civil liberties). Higher scores indicate low freedom and lower scores indicate high freedom.									

Source: compiled by author from Freedom House’s ‘Freedom in the World’ annual report from 2013 – 2022

6.3.7.3 Mo Ibrahim Foundation's Ibrahim Index Of African Governance (IIAG) Ranking For CAR

At the regional level, CAR has also performed poorly in the lone composite index measuring African governance—IIAG. The country performance in the 'Participation, Rights, and Inclusion' component of the IIAG from 2014-2023 has consistently been below average (See Figure 17).

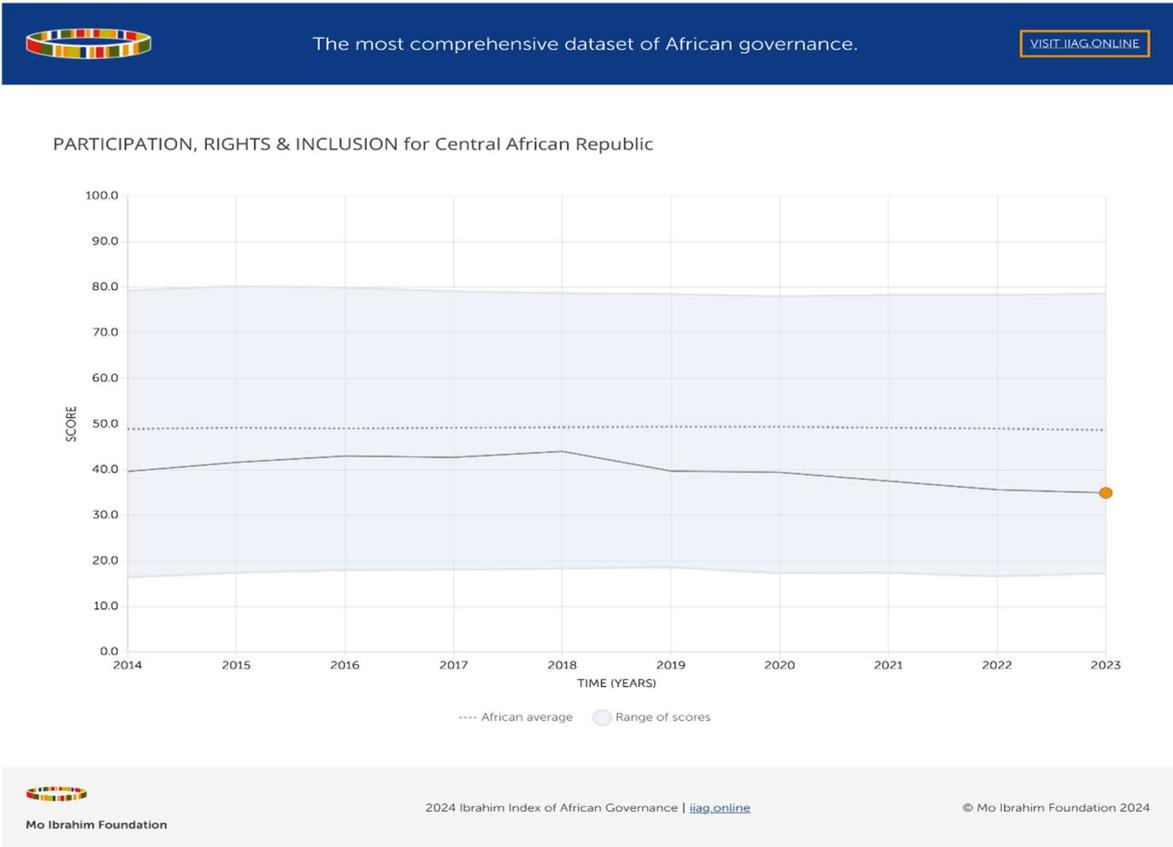


Figure 17. CAR’s performance in the ‘Participation, Rights, and Inclusion’ component of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation’s Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) from 2014-2023

Source:
<https://iiag.online/data.html?meas=PRI&loc=CF&view=graph&subview=score&option=line&range1from=2014&range1to=2023&range2from=2019&range2to=2023&showFullContext=false>

6.3.8 IMPACT OF THE DECLINE OF DEMOCRACY ON POLITICAL STABILITY IN CAR

The decline of democracy in the CAR has had a significant impact on political stability in the country. The inability of democratic governance to be established in the country after independence has led to a protracted state of political instability marked by recurrent coups (as seen in the analysis above), and authoritarianism. After independence in 1960, CAR's first president David Dacko soon transformed his country into a one-party state (Ghura & Mercereau, 2004), thereby consolidating power in his hands. Though the one-party system seems to have been the order of the day among African countries early on after gaining independence, it served to undermine the nascent democracy in these newly independent states. Building on the precedence set by Dacko, succeeding presidents of CAR have continued the authoritarian tradition that has provided a fertile ground for recurrent forceful seizure of power.

Despite attempts to interruption with the country's past, including the establishment of a democratic government in 2016, deep-seated patterns of governance have continued to perpetuate violence (Glawion & Vries, 2018). This suggests that the impact of the weakening of democracy on political stability in the Central African Republic is complex and multifaceted.

The adverse effect of the decline of democracy on political stability in CAR can also be seen in the country's very poor performance in the 'Political Stability Absence of Violence/Terrorism' indicator of the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicator (WGI). CAR percentile rank has remained in single digits for the past two decades (See Figure 18).

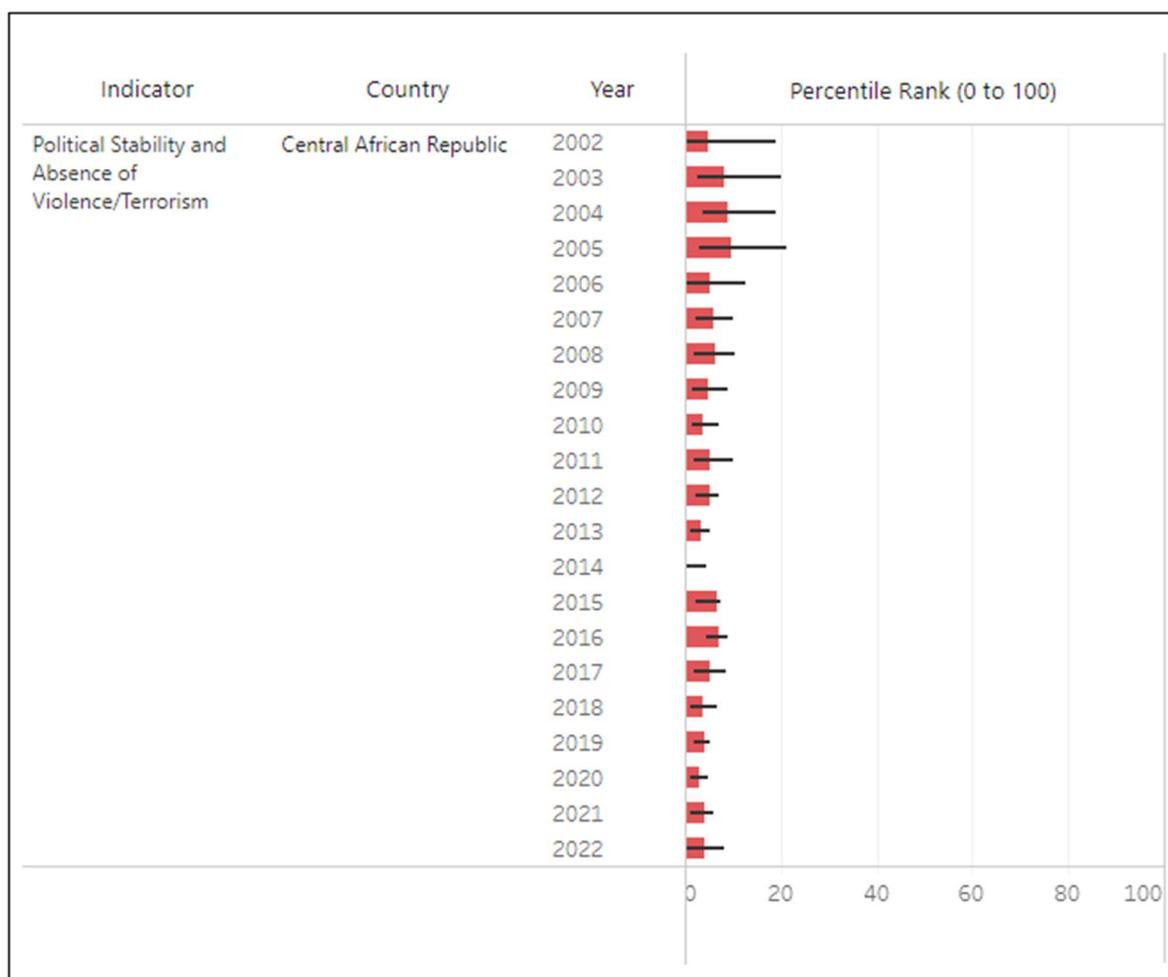


Figure 18. CAR's performance in the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicator (WGI) 'Political Stability Absence of Violence/Terrorism' indicator 2013 – 2022

Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators:

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators/interactive-data-access>

6.3.9 IMPACT OF DECLINE OF DEMOCRACY ON DEVELOPMENT IN CAR

Zack-Williams (2001), underscores that the decline of democracy in CAR has had a severe consequences on the level of development in the country. This can be seen in the correlation of three main factors: democratic decline, political instability, and development stagnation. This can be seen both in the lens of human development and economic development as explained below.

The first challenge is undoubtedly that of human development. The decline in democracy, and the political instability that ensued over the years has plunged CAR into a severe humanitarian crisis: The civil wars and sporadic outbreaks of violence has led to a significant number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. Recent (2023) statistics from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Office in CAR puts the total number of persons in need of philanthropic assistance in the country at 3.4 million (from a total population of 6.1 million). The total number of refugees at 750,500; and the total number of internally displaced people at 489,000 (UNOCHA, 2023). These numbers highlight the scope of the problem and how political unrest directly affects the indicators of human development.

Indicators of how the protracted crisis has exacerbated the state of human development include the loss of productive human capital, the degradation of healthcare facilities, and insufficient access to education. Like a decrease is frequently reflected in human development indices, like as the Human Development Index (HDI), where the CAR has continuously placed poorly when compared to its regional competitors (UNDP, 2022). Furthermore, the state's ability to deliver fundamental amenities is weakened by the ongoing conflict and insecurity, which compounds poverty, hunger, and infant mortality (World Bank, 2022).

Economically, political instability and conflict occasioned by democratic decline often result in economic downturns. The CAR has faced challenges in maintaining economic stability, attracting investments, and fostering economic development due to the prevailing insecurity. Many academics have maintained that the decline of democracy in CAR has had a conflicting effects on the country's economic development as political instability (which is a consequence of this decline) has acted as an obstacle to economic growth in the country (Traore et al, 2020; Ghura & Mercereau, 2004). Political instability obstructs the construction of essential infrastructure, discourages both local and international investment, and restricts the government's ability to carry out sensible economic policies. As seen by a slowdown in GDP growth during times of increased violence, this has resulted in a drop in national income (World Bank, 2020). Besides, the absence of a stable political framework exacerbates the nation's natural resource depletion, especially in the mining industry. The economy suffers from the resource curse, in which wealth produced from natural resources does not translate into wider national prosperity, if democratic institutions are not in place to ensure openness and accountability (Auty, 1993).

In a nutshell, both human and economic progress have been handicapped by the CAR's democracy's continuous collapse, which is characterized by political instability and bad governance. To overcome these obstacles, a determined effort must be made to restore democratic principles, improve political stability, and create an atmosphere that supports sustainable development.

CHAPTER SEVEN

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN THE EFFECT OF THE LEVEL OF DEMOCRACY ON POLITICAL STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN SSA (CAMEROON AND CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC VS GHANA AND KENYA)

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter examined the decline of democracy its impact on political stability and development in our two case-study countries (Cameroon and the Central African Republic). Having analyzed the situation in these two former French colonies in SSA, this chapter would provide a comparison with the situation in two other countries in SSA that have had a different path in the evolution of democracy in the region, Ghana and Kenya. The choice of Ghana and Kenya stems from the fact that as former British colonies, and 'emerging democracies' on the continent, they provide sufficient contrast on which a good comparison can be made on the differential impact the level of democracy bears on the two dependent variables in this thesis-- political stability or peace and development. Further, adding Ghana and Kenya to the study increases its geographical diversity and adds perceptions from English speakers to the French-speaking case studies. Before delving into the comparison, this chapter will begin with an overview of the evolution of democracy in Ghana and Kenya as well as the impact it has had on their level of political stability and development. For a clearer and more concise comparative analysis, this chapter shall make use of tables and figures in its comparisons.

The chapter also seeks to investigate whether the administrative legacies of colonial rule; British indirect rule versus French assimilationist, have left lasting institutional imprints that continue to influence these governments' democratic experiences and development paths. French colonies like Cameroon and the Central African Republic were frequently left with centralized, bureaucratic governance structures that stifled pluralism, whereas British colonies like Ghana and Kenya inherited somewhat pluralistic institutional frameworks. One could argue that this difference influences the character of post-colonial state-building initiatives and,

consequently, the standard of democracy and progress in each instance. The comparative framework will also take into consideration how the international donor environment, civil society, and geopolitical factors either support or undermine democratic advancement.

7.2 THE EVOLUTION OF DEMOCRACY IN GHANA SINCE INDEPENDENCE

On March 6, 1957, Ghana declared its independence from British colonial domination. The evolution of democracy in Ghana since independence has been marked by a transition from authoritarianism to multi-party rule (Yayoh, 2006). The democratic process in the country so far has gone through four distinctive phases: First Republic; Military Rule; Transition to Multi-Party Democracy; and the Fourth Republic. Every phase symbolizes Ghana's evolving political landscape and the endeavor to impose democratic values. This cyclical democratic evolution has not happened in a vacuum; it is closely related to both external factors, such as donor conditionalities, economic structural adjustment programs, and Cold War alignments, as well as internal dynamics, such as elite bargaining, civil-military relations, and social mobilization. Each stage shows how these forces come together, with local initiative interacting with external factors to mold Ghana's democratic path.

The first republic began at the dawn of independence in 1957 and lasted till the advent of military rule in 1966. Ghana's initiation into democratic governance began immediately after independence in 1957, when it adopted a parliamentary form of governance (De Smith, 1957). The leader of Ghanaian struggle for independence and head of the Conventional People's Party (CPP) became Ghana's first Prime Minister. Ghana transitioned from parliamentary into a presidential system in 1960 when an act of the country's parliament replaced the Westminster system to a presidential republic (Brierley, 2012). Through a military coup in 1966, Ghana's democratic experiment came to an end. In addition to changing the framework of democratic responsibility, the transition from parliamentary to presidential government consolidated power in the executive branch and set the stage for future authoritarian inclinations. Under the pretense of Pan-Africanism and state-led development, Nkrumah's support for one-party control marked an early departure from liberal democratic ideals.

Military rule in Ghana began in February 1966 when soldiers ousted the CPP from power and installed the National Liberation Council (NLC) (Austin & Luckham, 2014). Following the

coup, Ghana experienced a series of military governments. The country went through periods of military rule characterized by coups and changes in leadership. During this time, Ghana had military leaders such as General Ignatius Kutu Acheampong and General Jerry John Rawlings. According to Oquaye (2004), military regimes used problems like corruption, bad economic management, and the need for national discipline to vindicate themselves from takeovers. The latter guided the nation back to democratic administration by 1992 after seizing power in 1981. The paradox that authoritarian rulers still had to appeal to democratic aspirations is because, even in military regimes, the legitimacy of power frequently rested on populist rhetoric and reform pledges. The ability of military commanders like Rawlings to eventually reposition themselves as democratic leaders can be partially explained by this dynamic.

The third phase in in Ghana's democratic evolution was the transition to democracy that took place from 1981 - 1992 under the leadership of General Rawlings. In 1981, Jerry John Rawlings staged a coup and took power. In 1992, he transitioned Ghana back to multi-party democracy and oversaw the drafting of a new constitution (Adedeji, 2001). This marked the beginning of the Fourth Republic. Pressure from international donors and development partners, particularly the World Bank and IMF, who associated financial assistance to governance reforms, as well as internal demands for reforms, made the transition easier (Whitfield, 2009).

The fourth phase of the evolution of democracy in Ghana is the advent of the Fourth Republic from the transition back to democracy in 1992 till date. Since 1992, Ghana has been operating as a multi-party democracy. The Fourth Republic has observed a stable political climate with frequent elections and orderly handovers of power. This is not to say that everything has been smooth. This transition has been fraught with challenges, including a struggle to uphold the rule of law and democratic governance (Frimpong, 2018). However, Ghana's path to democracy is repeatedly acclaimed in scholarly works as a "model for African democratization" (Gyimah-Boadi, 2009), especially due to its history of conducting six peaceful presidential elections since 1992. Despite these challenges, the restoration of multi-party democracy has led to improved economic policy management and steady economic growth, which has in turn facilitated progress in poverty reduction and human development (Awal, 2012). Additionally, democratic governance has fostered the involvement of civil society and a relatively dynamic media environment, which has led to increased accountability and citizen participation (Boafo-Arthur, 2008). The strength of Ghana's institutions, such as an independent court, an active election commission, and a somewhat strong opposition, is largely responsible for the democracy's

relative success. Despite their flaws, these institutions serve as vital checkpoints that keep democracy from regressing. Furthermore, the public's acceptance of democratic standards has been strengthened by the culture of civic involvement, which is supported by the free press, prominent scholars, and powerful religious organizations.

7.2.1 IMPACT OF DEMOCRACY ON POLITICAL STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA

The road has been long and challenging but Ghana stands out today as a good example of democratization in Africa with frequent seamless democratic transition from one elected administration to the other. So, what has been the impact of the level of democracy in Ghana on political stability and development in the country? The causal relationships between democratic governance and political and developmental results are examined in this section. It takes into account not just official democratic institutions but also the unofficial political culture that either supports or challenges them. By doing this, it aims to present a comprehensive picture of how peace and prosperity for common Ghanaians have (or have not) resulted from democratic consolidation.

7.2.2 IMPACT OF DEMOCRACY ON POLITICAL STABILITY IN GHANA

The democratization process in Ghana has led to different types of impact on the stability of the country since independence. A period of political instability characterized by periodic military coups was brought about by the democratic collapse that started with Nkrumah's authoritarianism and continued with subsequent military administrations (Biney, 2008; Mazrui, 1966).

Meanwhile, the democratic resurgence from 1992 until date has brought in a sustained period of political stability manifested by consecutive democratic elections and seamless transfer of power from one government to another. Svanikier (2007) and Yayoh (2006) both highlight the positive influence of democracy on political stability, with Svanikier noting that the increase in unity among political elites has contributed to this stability. For instance, trust in electoral procedures and institutions has amplified, following the New Patriotic Party's (NPP) and the

National Democratic Congress' (NDC) smooth transfer of power over a number of election cycles (Gyimah-Boadi & Prempeh, 2012). Furthermore, the public's confidence in the democratic process has grown as a result of the enactment of inclusive election legislation and the competent operations of electoral commissions. In order to resolve electoral disputes and avoid the post-election violence that has plagued other African democracies, organizations like the Peace Council and inter-party dialogue forums were established.

It is important to acknowledge that Ghanaian democracy is not fully consolidated and is confronted with challenges like neo-patrimonial governance, weak national institutions, excessive authority of the executive/president, marginalization of women and the failure to fully entrench the rule of law, which all constitute potential threats to political stability (Frimpong & Agyeman-Budu, 2018; Abdulai & Crawford, 2010; Maxwell, 2008). Moreover, in some places, electoral violence, particularly during closely fought elections, continues to uncover deep-seated ethnic and regional conflicts (Frempong, 2012). Despite these challenges, the transition to multi-party democracy in 1992 opened a new door for a significant departure from the country's history of military rule and dictatorship (Yayoh, 2006).

7.2.3 IMPACT OF DEMOCRACY ON DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA

As the case with political stability, the level of development in Ghana has also been significantly impacted by the level of democratization. In this light, Boafo-Arthur (2008) underscore that protracted military dictatorships and the environment of political stability it creates has impeded development in Ghana and other counties in the West African subregion that went through military coups. According to Gyimah-Boadi (2001), these types of regimes frequently lacked transparency, restricted public participation, and directed state resources towards sustaining the regime itself rather than focusing on long-term developmental objectives.

Conversely, the transition to democracy in Ghana has had a progressive implications on the nation's economic growth and development (Awal, 2012). This transition, marked by the Fourth Republic, has marked a substantial shift from the nation's past of military control. and dictatorship (Yayoh, 2006). Ghana's GDP per capita has more than twofold since the 1990s, according to the World Bank (2020), a growth that is compatible with the bolstering of democratic institutions and ideals. Increased macroeconomic stability and foreign investor trust are often associated with a country's political transparency and legal dependability under

democratic governance (OECD, 2019). The strengthening of democracy in Ghana has been supported by the state institutions, civil society, and media, contributing to the country's democratic process and culture (Arthur, 2010). Importantly, institutions such as Ghana's Electoral Commission have won praise from around the world for their professionalism and independence (IDEA, 2016). Furthermore, civil society organizations like the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana) have played a critical role in encouraging citizen participation and guaranteeing government accountability. The introduction of participatory decision-making in a democratic environment has also played a role in Ghana's economic development, with improvements in competitiveness and poverty reduction (Harnack, 2000). For instance, Ghana's policy of decentralization has enabled local governments to more effectively address the specific development needs of their communities, especially in fields like education, health, and infrastructure (Crawford, 2009). Despite its drawbacks, this participatory approach has improved local responsibility and created chances for inclusive development planning.

7.2.4 THE EVOLUTION OF DEMOCRACY IN KENYA SINCE INDEPENDENCE

On December 12, 1963, Kenya declared its independence from British colonial rule. The evolution of democracy in Kenya since independence has been influenced by an intricate interaction of domestic and international factors (Nyinguro, 2007). This encompasses the ongoing impact of colonial authoritarian structures, geopolitical interests from the Cold War period, regional unrest, and the changing needs for reforms in internal governance. The evolution from an authoritarian regime to a multi-party system in the 1990s marked a critical phase in this evolution (Steeves, 1999). However, the African character of Kenyan democracy, characterized by the influence of ethnicity and leadership, has posed challenges to its consolidation (Steeves, 2006). Ethnic favoritism, tribal ties, and zero-sum politics continue to influence electoral behavior and the formation of political parties, which hinders the development of democratic principles (Branch, 2011). The historical background of colonial Kenya, particularly the struggle for electoral processes, has also played a significant role in shaping the country's democratic trajectory (Gathogo, 2020). A fragile sense of national unity at independence was caused by the colonial government's attempts to quiet indigenous political voices and use divide-and-rule tactics, which later affected the growth of democracy in the

postcolonial era (Anderson, 2005). Even if legislative reforms appear to have addressed this legacy of polarizing colonial governance, it is nevertheless ingrained in the unwritten rules of elite behavior and political competitiveness, showing up as patronage networks and geographically divided voting blocs. The evolution of democracy in Kenya can be subdivided into five major phases: independence and the nascent years; shift to multipartyism; political turmoil and constitutional reforms; new constitution; elections and recent political developments. Each of these stages reflects changing societal aspirations for responsibility, inclusivity, and political participation in addition to institutional changes. Therefore, the history of Kenyan democracy involves more than just elections and constitutionalism; it also involves a reworking of the social contract between the government and its diverse populace.

The first phase was the period of independence and years immediately after (nascent years) of the Kenyan nation, which ran from 1963-1978. Kenya gained independence in 1963, with Jomo Kenyatta becoming the country's first president. The early years were marked by a dominant one-party system under the Kenya African National Union (KANU) led by Kenyatta (Widner, 2023; Throup, 1987; Savage, 1970). Both legal and illicit methods were used to suppress opposition during this period, including as trial-free imprisonments and political killings like the 1969 assassination of Tom Mboya, which further curbed democratic liberties (Hornsby, 2012). A nationalist language that placed an emphasis on unity and frequently equated criticism with treason to the nation-state masked this authoritarian consolidation. Political space was strictly regulated despite economic advancements in certain areas, establishing the groundwork for a state-centric, personality-driven political culture that still exists to varied degrees today.

The second phase of Kenya's democratization process after independence was the shift to multipartyism. In 1991, pressure from civil society and international actors led to the repeal of the one-party system, and multi-party politics was reintroduced. The first multiparty elections were held in 1992, with KANU winning amid allegations of irregularities (Bienen, 2015). This time marked a crucial point in the political transformation of Kenya, as civil society organizations, religious leaders, and student groups played a substantial role in pushing for political restructuring (Murunga & Nasong'o, 2006). These organizations ushered in a new age in which non-state players played a crucial role in democratization efforts by filling the democratic void left by state-aligned institutions and ineffective opposition parties. However, the extent of these democratic victories was limited by the persistence of elite manipulation of ethnic identity and official persecution.

The third phase of Kenya's march towards democracy was the political turmoil as well as the 2000s constitutional amendments. The early 2000s witnessed political unrest, culminating in the post-election violence throughout 2007 to 2008. More than 1,100 people were killed and hundreds of thousands were displaced as a result of the turmoil, which highlighted Kenya's democratic systems' weakness and the country's long-standing ethnic tensions (Klopp & Kamungi, 2008). A coalition government between incumbent Moi Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga was formed as a result of international mediation efforts, after which a push for constitutional reforms began (Human Rights Watch, 2008). The legitimacy of the entire political system was questioned at this time, which represented an evaluation for the Kenyan state. The violence acted as a warning that democracy was fundamentally vulnerable if it lacked social justice, electoral integrity, and inclusive governance. It also opened the door for widespread constitutional consultations by promoting a national conversation on institutional reform.

The fourth phase of Kenya's democracy evolution was the constitutional restructuring that took place in 2010. A new constitution was promulgated in 2010, addressing issues of governance, land reform, and devolution of power. The constitution brought in a more decentralized system of governance, devolving power to 47 counties (Commission for the Implementation of the Constitution, 2020). Intended to reduce executive power, promote a system of checks and balances, and enable citizen participation through decentralization, this legal reform was one of the most progressive in Africa (Bosire & Gikonyo, 2013). Crucially, the new constitution also established female quotas in political representation, protected fundamental rights and freedoms, and attempted to improve impartiality and transparency by restructuring the election commissions and judiciary. Even though democratic institutions were reinforced, it was nevertheless difficult to operationalize these changes because of powerful elite interests.

The fifth phase of Kenya's democratization process had to do with elections and political developments through the period 2013-2022. Kenya held general elections in 2013 and 2017, with Uhuru Kenyatta winning both terms as the country's president. However, it is significant to recall that the 2017 elections faced controversy, with the Supreme Court annulling the results, and ordering a rerun (Cheeseman, 2008). This order to cancel the elections was a remarkable moment, with praises pouring down from the international community as this was evidence of judicial independence and a demonstration of democratic maturity (Kramon & Posner, 2021).

Despite this, Kenya's democratic accomplishments are nonetheless eclipsed by claims of electoral fraud, disputed results, and voter apathy.

Generally, the evolution of democracy in Kenya has been characterized by both advancements and difficulties. Ongoing efforts to address issues like corruption, strengthen institutions, and enhance electoral processes will define the future trajectory of democracy in the country. Civil society establishments continue to play a fundamental part in advocating for democratic reforms and accountability (Gyimah-Boadi, 2004). Additionally, young engagement on social media and digital activism have a growing impact on public accountability and election transparency (Mbote, 2020). To lessen electoral fraud and increase civic engagement, new technologies are also being investigated, such as digital ID systems and digital voting. However, transparent implementation and strong cybersecurity frameworks are essential to their success. Therefore, both institutional changes and the development of civic culture, especially among young people and marginalized groups are essential to Kenya's democracy's survival.

7.3 IMPACT OF DEMOCRACY ON POLITICAL STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA

The evolution of democracy has also had varying consequences on political stability and development in Kenya. How does democracy affect the aforementioned dependent variables in this East African nation?

7.3.1 IMPACT OF DEMOCRACY ON POLITICAL STABILITY IN KENYA

The impact of democracy on political stability in Kenya after independence has been a complex and multifaceted issue. Southall and Wood (1996) highlight the potential for local government to contribute to political pluralism, while Tamarkin (1978) attributes Kenya's political stability to the charismatic leadership of Jomo Kenyatta. Cheeseman et al (2014) argues that a combination of political realignment, a peace narrative, democratic reforms, and a new constitution helped to prevent ethnic violence during the 2013 elections. Kenya's progressive establishment of democratic principles is further supported by the peaceful handover of power in later elections, especially in 2013 and 2022 (Cheeseman, Lynch & Willis, 2016).

Furthermore, the judiciary's increasing independence and power, a pillar of democratic consolidation, was demonstrated by the Supreme Court's landmark decision of invalidation of the 2017 presidential election results due to procedural violations (Mueller, 2018).

Additionally, the participation of civil society watchdogs and international observers has been increasing significantly, which has strengthened public confidence in election results and served as an a deterrent to political manipulation and government misconduct. In addition to keeping an eye on elections, these players support voter participation, civic education, and act as early warning systems against potential conflicts. Their increasing importance in Kenya's democratic processes has contributed to political space stabilization both during and after election cycles.

Furthermore, Kenya's acceptance of regional diplomacy, exemplified by its mediation efforts and peacekeeping missions within the East African Community (EAC), highlights the growing reflection of democratic norms at home in its foreign policy. The perception of Kenya as a comparatively stable democratic anchor is influenced by the reciprocal effect of promoting stability overseas and strengthening it domestically.

Despite the move towards multiparty democracy, and the general atmosphere of stability it has engendered in the Kenyan political sphere, it is important to note that Kenya has experienced periodic election-related tensions, particularly in the 2007 presidential election. The disputed results led to post-election violence, raising concerns about the role of democracy in managing political transitions. The result was more than 600,000 displaced people and more than 1,100 fatalities (Human Rights Watch, 2008). This tragedy highlighted the need for strong electoral reforms and reconciliation measures while exposing the deep ethnic divisions that frequently become politicized during elections. There has definitely been enormous achievements in the area of political stability in Kenya. These include the development of government agencies like the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI), and the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). However, it would be better to describe the democracy-political stability connection in Kenya as a work in progress rather than a consolidated achievement.

Kenya has to address the structural flaws in its political parties, many of which are personality-driven and lack ideological consistency, in order to further solidify political stability. Long-

term political planning becomes difficult and democratic culture is weakened by party switching, coalition instability, and opportunistic alliances. To create a stable, inclusive political environment, it is imperative to fortify political institutions and uphold intra-party democracy.

Furthermore, problems like police brutality, the use of state security forces as weapons during demonstrations, and the reduction of public space for opposition voices continue to pose a threat to Kenya's democratic stability. These threats have the potential to undermine public confidence in democratic institutions if left unchecked, particularly among young people and underrepresented groups who frequently suffer the most from political upheaval.

7.3.2 IMPACT OF DEMOCRACY ON DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA

Advancement in democracy in Kenya after independence has generally had a positive results on development in the country. The introduction of devolved governance, as a form of democratic decentralization, has been a significant step in this direction (Khaunya & Wawire, 2015). This devolution under the 2010 Constitution provided county governments a significant amount of authority and resources. As a result, they currently oversee more than 30% of the national budget, improving local service delivery in areas including infrastructure, agriculture, and health (World Bank, 2020). However, the decentralization process has been met with challenges such as political interference and corruption (Cornell & D'Arcy, 2016). These challenges grow from concerns regarding the efficacy of local governance and its consequences for sustainable development have been raised by the misappropriation of devolved funds and weak oversight procedures in several of counties (Transparency International Kenya, 2021). In many areas, the developmental potential of decentralization has been weakened by clientelism, nepotism, and the politics of county office appointments. Additionally, insufficient technical proficiency among local officials has occasionally resulted in substandard project execution, excessive expenses, and unfinished infrastructure advancements. Building institutional capacity is still a top issue if decentralized democracy is to reach its full developmental potential. The role of education in promoting democracy and development was also pursued by the Kenyan government with a focus on curriculum support materials that encourage active participation of primary school students in the development of their local communities (Osler, 1993). In addition, education policies outlined in Kenya's Vision 2030 placed a strong emphasis on civic engagement and innovation, fostering the knowledge-based economy that is necessary for

sustained growth (Government of Kenya, 2007). Although quality and equality are still issues, the spread of free primary and secondary education has also made education more accessible (UNESCO, 2021).

Government-led digital literacy initiatives and the incorporation of digital learning platforms have started to transform the way education is delivered in recent years, giving the Kenyan population the technological know-how that is essential to modern economic systems. By increasing information availability and enabling people to make knowledgeable political and economic decisions, these programs help improve democratic participation.

Furthermore, through lobbying, service provision, and monitoring roles, democratic governance has made it possible for civil society and non-governmental organizations to directly support development initiatives. As a result of a developing participatory democracy that extends development advantages beyond the voting booth, organizations specializing in health, youth empowerment, and climate resilience are increasingly collaborating with county governments.

7.4 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN SAMPLE FORMER FRENCH COLONIES (CAMEROON AND CAR), AND SAMPLE FORMER BRITISH COLONIES (GHANA AND KENYA)

To better illustrate the democratic decline in the two case study countries (Cameroon and CAR) and the impact it has on development and political stability, it would be good to compare them with the two former British colonies with whom independence was achieved in a similar era (Ghana and Kenya). This comparison will be done both statistically (based

7.4.1 STATISTICAL COMPARISON ON THE STATE OF DEMOCRACY IN CAMEROON AND CAR VS GHANA AND KENYA

A comparison of the state of democracy between countries in SSA can be effectively done by making use of composite indices measuring various indicators or aspects of democracy. In this section, I will be using the same composite indices used in analyzing the state of democracy in Cameroon and CAR in the previous chapter: EIU's Democracy Index; Freedom House's

Freedom in the World Report; and IAG's 'Participation, Rights, and Inclusion' component. Former British colonies like Ghana and Kenya have shown more consistent democratic governance over the years, whereas former French colonies like Cameroon and the Central African Republic typically display a legacy of centralized governance and authoritarian practices (Zolberg, 1966). These nations' post-independence political paths were influenced by the various colonial systems that left unique marks on their political cultures, democratic institutions, and governance frameworks (Lonsdale, 1992; Gowan, 1997). This comparison is crucial as it sheds light on the differences between Ghana's and Kenya's democratic progress and Cameroon's and the CAR's democratic deterioration. Notably, protracted authoritarianism, substandard institutional frameworks and military takeovers, are common features of Cameroon's and the CAR's political histories (Schraeder, 1994). Ghana and Kenya, on the other hand, have maintained very stable democratic systems, notwithstanding certain difficulties (Chazan, 1992; Brown, 2018).

7.4.1.1 Cameroon And CAR Vs Ghana And Kenya In The EIU Democracy Index

Both Cameroon and CAR have perform poorly as compared to Ghana and Kenya on the EIU Democracy Index over the years 2013-2022. In this indicator, Ghana and Kenya have continuously outperformed Cameroon and CAR, especially in categories like political engagement and election integrity (EIU, 2022). Cameroon has had an average performance of 3.15 on 10 over the aforementioned decade and was placed in the 'Authoritarian' category for each of the years in the time frame (see Table 5). CAR's performance is even worse as it scored an average of 1.46 on 10 over the same period also earning it a place in the 'Authoritarian' category in each year of the time frame like Cameroon (see Table 5).

Table 6. Comparative table on the performance of Cameroon, CAR, Ghana, and Kenya on EIU's Democracy Index

Cameroon	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Score	2.56	2.56	2.77	2.85	3.28	3.61	3.46	3.66	3.41	3.41
Overall Category	Authoritarian									
CAR	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Score	1.35	1.43	1.32	1.32	1.52	1.52	1.61	1.57	1.49	1.49

Overall Category	Authoritarian									
Ghana	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Score	6.43	6.5	6.5	6.63	6.63	6.69	6.75	6.86	6.33	6.33
Overall Category	Flawed democracy									
Kenya	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Score	5.05	5.05	5.05	5.18	5.11	5.11	5.33	5.33	5.13	5.13
Overall Category	Hybrid regime									
Classification index										
1. Full democracies: scores greater than 8										
2. Flawed democracies: scores greater than 6, and less than or equal to 8										
3. Hybrid regimes: scores greater than 4, and less than or equal to 6										
4. Authoritarian regimes: scores less than or equal to 4										

Source: compiled by author from EIU Democracy Index Reports from 2013 – 2022

By contrast, both Ghana and Kenya have performed well in the EIU Democracy index over the decade 2013-2012. Ghana had an average score of 6.56, placing her in the 'Flawed Democracy' category (see Table 5). Kenya on it part had an average score of 5.14 and was ranked as a 'Hybrid regime' (see Table 5). Though both democracies (Ghana and Kenya) can still be viewed as a work in progress, they are far ahead of their Cameroonian and Central African Republic counterparts.

7.4.1.2 Cameroon and CAR vs Ghana and Kenya on Freedom House's Freedom in the World Report

Cameroon and CAR also trail Ghana and Kenya when it comes to their respective performances on the Freedom House Freedom in the World Report for the 2013-2022 decade. Both Cameroon and CAR have been classified in the 'Not Free' category for almost all of the respective years in the time frame (but for 2013 when CAR was classified as partly free) (see Table 6). Meanwhile, Ghana and Kenya have consistently remained in the 'Free' and 'Partly Free'

categories respectively with performances which far surpasses that of their Cameroonian and Central African Republic counterparts (see Table 6).

Table 7. Comparative table on the performance of Cameroon, CAR, Ghana, and Kenya on Freedom House’s Freedom in the World Index

Cameroon	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Score	19*	18	16	15	22	24	24	12*	12	12
Overall Category	Not Free									
<hr/>										
CAR	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Score	7	9	10	9	9	10	7	14	14	10
Overall Category	Not Free except for 2013 when it was placed in the ‘Partly Free’ category									
<hr/>										
Ghana	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Score	80	82	82	83	83	83	83	3	3	3
Overall Category	Free									
<hr/>										
Kenya	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Score	48	48	48	48	48	51	51	8	8	8
Overall Category	Partly Free									
Classification index										
1. All ‘Freedom in the World’ scores from 2017 upward is summed over an aggregate score of 100 with 60 for civil liberties and 40 for political rights. Higher scores indicate high freedom meanwhile lower scores indicate low freedom.										
2. All ‘Freedom in the World’ scores from 2015 and below is summed over an aggregate score of 14 with 7 for each component (political rights and civil liberties). Higher scores indicate low freedom and lower scores indicate high freedom.										

Source: compiled by author from Freedom House’s ‘Freedom in the World’ annual report from 2013 – 2022

7.4.1.3 Cameroon And CAR Vs Ghana And Kenya On IIAG's 'Participation, Rights, And Inclusion' Component

The peculiarity of IIAG is its continental focus that analysis the governance performances of all African countries based on certain key indicators. One of the indicators that captures democratic values the most is 'Participation, Rights, and Inclusion'. Here too, Cameroon and CAR are underperforming Ghana and Kenya. Cameroon's highest performance in from 2014-2023 is 42.7/100 (which is below average) and its lowest performance is 38.6/100 (see Figure 19). CAR's case is even worse with 44.0/100 as its highest performance and 34.9/100 as its lowest performance (see Figure 19).

By contrast, both Ghana and Kenya have scored above average with Ghana having the highest performance among all four countries. Ghana's highest score was 74.6/100 and its lowest was 72.0/100 (see Figure 19). Kenya's highest performance was 64.5/100 and its lowest performance was 58.5/100 (see Figure 19).

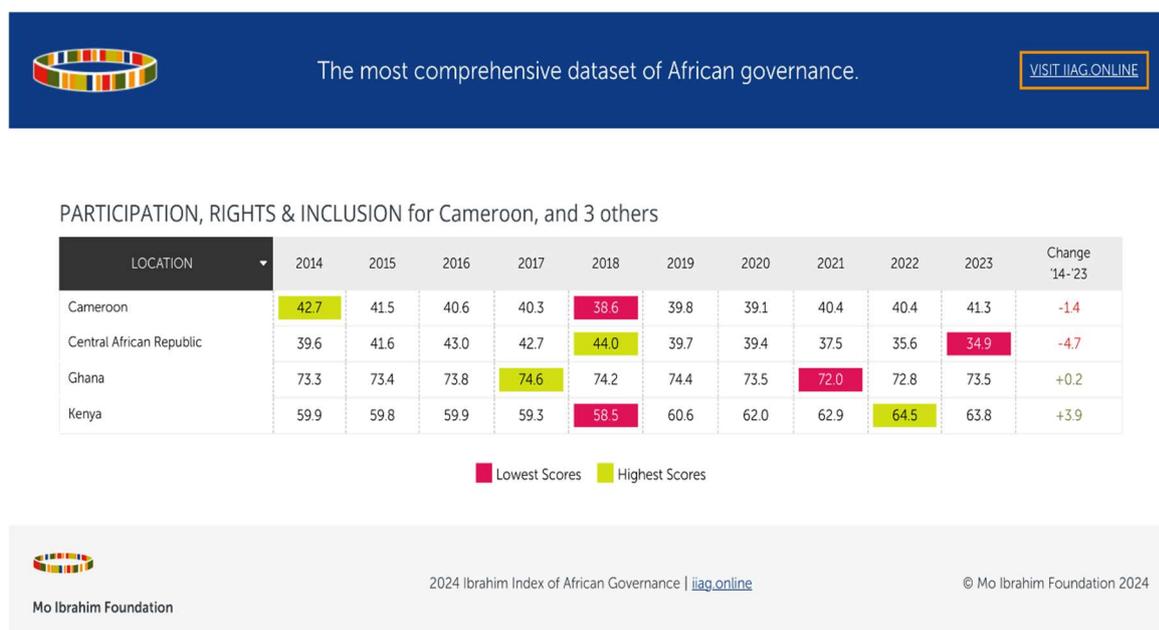


Figure 19. Comparison on Cameroon, and CAR vs Ghana and Kenya's performances in the 'Participation, Rights, and Inclusion' component of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation's Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) from 2014-2023

Source: <https://iiag.online/data.html?meas=PRI&loc=CF-CM-GH-KE&view=table&subview=score&range1from=2014&range1to=2023&range2from=2019&range2to=2023&showAAT=false&showEstimated=true&showFullContext=false&showHighes>

t=true&showHighlights=true&showLowest=true&showTrimmed=true&showTrimmedEstimated=true

7.4.2 EMPIRICAL COMPARISON ON THE IMPACT OF DEMOCRACY ON POLITICAL STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT: CAMEROON AND CAR VS GHANA AND KENYA

Haven established in the aforementioned analysis that Ghana and Kenya have a better record in their democratic process than Cameroon and CAR, it would be good to look at the differential impact the variation in their level of democracy has on their level of political stability/peace and development. I will use tables to better illustrate the difference in the impact of democracy on the aforementioned dependent variables.

7.4.2.1 Impact Of Democracy On Political Stability: Cameroon And CAR Vs Ghana And Kenya

Ghana and Kenya have had a better record on the practice of democracy after independence than Cameroon and CAR. This has had differential impact on the degree of political stability in the respective set of countries. From the below table, it is obvious that the strides made by Ghana and Kenya have had enhanced political stability meanwhile the democratic decline witnessed by Cameroon and CAR has engendered political instability.

Table 8. The impact of the state of democracy on political stability: Cameroon and CAR vs Ghana and CAR

	Cameroon and CAR	Ghana and Kenya
1.	Democratic decline has led to a centralized power structure, hindering local development (Cameroon).	Democratization since 1992 has brought sustained political stability and democratic elections (Ghana).
2.	Governance challenges, including corruption, lack of transparency, and accountability, hinder stability (Cameroon).	Challenges such as neopatrimonial governance and weak institutions persist but are not destabilizing (Ghana).

3.	Historical authoritarian traditions and recurrent coups contribute to political instability (CAR).	The evolution of democracy has contributed to political stability, but periodic tensions exist (Kenya).
4	Challenges in the implementation of democracy has led to poor performance in political stability indicators (Cameroon and CAR).	Strides made in the implementation of democracy had ushered in a sustained period of political stability (Ghana and Kenya).

Compiled by author from analysis in chapters six and seven.

7.4.2.2 Impact Of Democracy On Development: Cameroon And CAR Vs Ghana And Kenya

As the case is with the impact of the state of democracy on political stability, there has been a differential impact of democracy on development in the compared countries with Ghana and Kenya again performing better than Cameroon and CAR (see Table 8).

Table 9. The impact of the state of democracy on political development: Cameroon and CAR vs Ghana and CAR

	Cameroon and CAR	Ghana and Kenya
1.	Centralization of power obstructs local councils from fulfilling developmental responsibilities (Cameroon).	Transition to democracy positively impacts economic growth and development (Ghana).
2.	Corruption diverts resources, hindering essential public services and infrastructure projects (Cameroon).	Democratic consolidation supported by media, civil society, and participatory decision-making has created a stable and sustainable environment for development (Ghana).
3.	Democratic decline correlates with humanitarian crises, internally displaced persons, and refugees (CAR and Cameroon).	Advancements in democracy have a generally positive impact on development (Kenya).
4	Economic downturns result from political instability and conflict,	Devolved governance, despite challenges, is a significant step forward in enhancing local development (Kenya).

	hindering economic development (CAR).	
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Compiled by author from analysis in chapters six and seven.

On a general note, here are the major takeaways on the comparison between Cameroon and CAR on the one hand and Ghana and Kenya concerning the impact of democracy on political stability and human development.

A. Democracy and Stability

- Ghana stands out with sustained stability since democratization in 1992.
- Kenya has achieved stability but faces periodic challenges, especially during elections.
- Cameroon and CAR experience political instability due to democratic decline, with CAR facing historical authoritarianism.

B. Democracy and Development

- Ghana and Kenya show positive correlations between democracy and development, helping to achieve better social and economic results.
- Cameroon experiences obstacles in local development and economic growth due to centralized power and corruption.
- CAR faces severe humanitarian crises and economic downturns due to political instability resulting from democratic decline.

CHAPTER EIGHT

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The state of democracy in the Central African sub-region has become a subject of a subject of huge attention with recent happenings across states in the region, like the post-election coup in Gabon in December 2023, and the intractable insurgency in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. It is against this backdrop that this thesis embarked on an investigation of the implications of the level of democracy on political stability and development in the Central African sub-region. Using two former French colonies in the region (Cameroon and Central African Republic) as primary case-study and comparing their experience with those of two former British colonies (Ghana and Kenya), this thesis examined the correlation between the level of democracy being practiced and the level of political stability and development experienced. In my analysis therefore, democracy served as an independent variable, while political stability and development served as dependent variables.

After providing a general introduction and putting in place the methodological foundations of the thesis, Chapter 3 presented a comparative analysis on the nature of politics in SSA. It compared the case of Cameroon and CAR to that of Ghana and Kenya. In terms of findings, this chapter identified the major characteristics of politics in SSA states, which include frequent regime change; openness to Western values; high potential for ethnic conflicts; lack of accountability; patrimonialism; ineffective policy delivery; deficits in governance; and heavy dependence on foreign aid and loans. In terms of general performance in democracy, it was discovered that SSA harbours a high degree of fluctuations with simultaneous progress and regression in democratic standards.

An overview was also presented on the political evolution and democratic progress in Ghana, Kenya, Cameroon, CAR with more progress for Ghana and Kenya than Cameroon and CAR. This comparison highlights a larger regional trend in which former British colonies typically exhibit greater resilience in their democratic transitions when compared to their Francophone counterparts. This is due in part to variations in colonial administrative legacies and post-independence political trajectories (Posner & Young, 2007; Hyden, 2013).

Chapter Four probed into the issue of political legitimacy and democracy in the politics of SSA states. It was discovered that the issue of political legitimacy still poses a great challenge given the fact that most countries in the region are still struggling to make progress in their march towards democracy. The central argument in this chapter is that the legitimacy of governments in Central Africa is more linked to the ruling party and its history than the approval and support of the masses. Often called "party-state fusion," this dynamic has eroded the autonomy and independence of political institutions and democratic accountability (Bayart, 1989).

Chapter Five examined the intricacies of democracy, peace, and development in SSA. Here the mutually enhancing relationship between the aforementioned variables was established. The role of democracy in creating a peaceful environment which is conducive for development in SSA was revisited. Unfortunately, it was noticed that the state of democratic governance in SSA is weak evidenced by weak institution, corruption, political interference, and other challenges, which have combined to foster an environment of political instability which inhibits development. State legitimacy and public confidence in governance continue to be undermined by persistent structural issues, including judicial independence, electoral malpractices and the politicization of security forces (Diamond, 2008; Bratton & van de Walle, 1997). The solution to SSA's development plight therefore lies in addressing the pitfalls in its democratic governance, which would in turn create an enabling environment for sustainable peace and development. Strengthening defences against democratic backsliding and fostering equitable growth can be achieved by strategic investment in democratic institutions, such as autonomous election commissions, anti-corruption agencies, and parliamentary supervision mechanisms (Mkandawire, 2001).

Chapter Six explored the decline of democracy in Cameroon and CAR, as well as the impact that such decline has had on political stability and development in both countries. Here the major findings are that there has been a steady decline in the democratization process in both countries. This is evidenced majorly by their poor performance in democratic indicators such as the rule of law, respect for human rights, health civic space, as well as their poor performances in composite indices measuring democracy like EIU's Democracy Index, Freedom Houses' annual Freedom in the World Report and the 'Participation, Rights, and Inclusion' category of Mo Ibrahim Foundation's IIAG. According to the 2023 EIU Democracy Index for example Cameroon was ranked as a 'authoritarian regime' with a score of 2.23/10,

while the CAR received a similarly low score, highlighting the vulnerability of their democratic standards (EIU, 2023).

Chapter seven made a comparison between two Francophone countries (Cameroon and CAR) and two Anglophone countries (Ghana and Kenya) on the level of democracy and its impact on political stability and development in SSA. Here, it was revealed that both Cameroon and CAR have a poor level of democratic governance which has an adverse effect on their level of political stability and development. By contrast, Ghana and Kenya are doing far better in democratic governance with consequent better performance in political stability and development. This variation emphasizes how civil society strength, constitutional reforms, and the relative openness of political competition determine democratic outcomes.

The two hypotheses set forth at the beginning of this thesis are:

- i. The democratic deficit in the Central African Region can be associated to the decline in political stability and the level of development in the region as evidence in the case-study countries (Cameroon and Central African Republic).
- ii. Inversely, advances in democracy in Ghana and Kenya can be associated to the increase in their levels of political stability and development.

The analysis carried out in this thesis provides evidences and facts that leans more to the validation of the aforementioned presuppositional statements.

A correlation was established between the democratic decline witnessed in Cameroon and CAR and the level of political stability and development in both countries. Their weak democratic performance seen in both factual evidence like shrinking civic space, numerous human rights violations, political interference in the justice system, and corruption, has contributed to periods of political instability ranging from long riots for Cameroon to frequent coups in CAR. In both countries, the concentration of political power by entrenched regimes and the lack of efficient checks and balances have severely impeded democratic accountability. Both nations are notable examples of democratic consolidation in SSA since they have also shown commendable progress in governance metrics including media freedom, anti-corruption reforms, and judiciary independence (Afrobarometer, 2022).

The aforementioned situation has frustrated developmental efforts in both countries in areas like infrastructural development, and economic growth. Conversely, there is also a correlation between the significant strides made in democratic governance in Ghana and Kenya and progress in political stability and development. Ghana has never relapsed into military rule and authoritarianism since the advent of the fourth republic in the 1990s. This has created a sustained atmosphere of political stability, which has been conducive for development. Kenya shares the same experience. However, there has been some post-electoral violence; Kenya has made significant progress in the pursuit of democracy, which in turn has served as a catalyst to the country's development.

8.1 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Addressing the intricacies of peace, democracy and development in the Central African sub-region necessitates a comprehensive, inclusive and locally grounded approach that prioritizes both community-level engagement and regional cooperation. Policies should focus on enhancing legitimacy of state institutions, empowering local governance structures, fostering inclusive economic growth, and addressing the socio-political factors driving conflict. Furthermore, it is essential for these policies to be tailored to the specific realities and also consider the complex interplay of identity, ethnicity, and historical factors in addressing governance challenges (Lemarchand, 2020). Only through confronting these problems holistically and over the long term can the region hope to achieve sustainable peace, democracy and development. Governments and international partners must actively participate in this, but so must youth organizations, religious institutions, traditional authorities, and civil society organizations, all of whom have special perspectives and transformative potential. To guarantee that democratic dividends are distributed to all facets of society, a cross-sectoral, intersectional approach that takes into consideration gender equity, generational inclusion, and ecological sustainability is essential. Some thought should be given to the following suggestions:

8.1.1. ADDRESS STATE FRAGILITY AND GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

State fragility is a central issue of peace, democracy and development in the Central African sub-region. This study therefore recommends that state institutions be strengthened at all levels,

ensuring that governance is accountable, effective, and transparent. The OECD (2018) highlights the importance of "inclusive institutions" in addressing fragility, emphasizing the necessity of participatory decision-making and public accountability. Steps such as decentralization of the government, implementing and scrutinizing anti-corruption reforms, and also, ensuring support for capacity building of local governments should be instituted. Initiatives that focus on training government employees, digitizing public services, and enhancing fiscal transparency like those funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB) can play a crucial role in reducing incompetence and clientelism (AfDB, 2021). Establishing independent regulatory bodies to act as checks and balances on executive power, such as judicial arbitrators and anti-corruption commissions, is equally crucial. Furthermore, robust judicial institutions free from political meddling are necessary to uphold the rule of law. To enable citizens to hold leaders accountable and take an active role in government processes, these initiatives need to be backed by a consistent investment in civic education.

8.1.2. THE ROLE OF LOCAL, TRADITIONAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

There exist a plethora of a form of local governance in this region such as *chefferies* (chiefdoms), *fons* (fondoms), elders' councils, and local peacebuilders, who play a significant role in maintaining peace, mediating conflicts, and shaping governance. However, the importance of these organizations that precede the modern history of the governing institutions of the states we know today are often underestimated in favor of Western-style democratic frameworks. Research indicates that in rural regions, traditional leaders often hold significant legitimacy and frequently act as the main authorities in resolving disputes and distributing resources (Logan, 2009). This is as a result of their great knowledge of their areas of jurisdiction and the people.

Many peacebuilding initiatives in the region tend to focus on formal state institutions and neglect the hybrid forms of governance that exist in parallel. These systems are critical in maintaining stability and social cohesion in communities, especially in the face of weak state institutions or state fragility. Formally integrating traditional leaders into national frameworks of local administration is crucial for ensuring sustainable governance, as is giving them legal clarity and supervision to prevent the misuse of power (Olowu & Wunsch, 2004). Therefore, the legitimacy of governing structures can be reinforced while guaranteeing conformity with

human rights principles through the constitutional recognition of conventional institutions, along with explicit frameworks that specify their authority, duties, and constraints. Additionally, collaborative structures that unite elected officials and traditional leaders at the district and municipal levels can improve local development planning, service delivery, and dispute resolution coordination.

8.1.3. ADDRESS YOUTH MARGINALIZATION AND RADICALIZATION

The Central African sub-region has a large, youthful population, and many countries in the region face high levels of youth unemployment, political disenfranchisement, and lack of opportunities for civic engagement. The experiences of youth, their participation in conflict-prone areas, are often ignored in favor of focusing on political elites or security concerns. UNDP reports show that majority of youths who become members of violent groups cite unemployment and the lack of political voice for their actions (UNDP,2017). There is insufficient focus on how youth excursion contributes to political instability, the spread of radical ideologies, and the recruitment of young people into armed groups, particularly in contexts of weak governance and economic deprivation. This research therefore recommends that youth marginalization should be addressed through policies focused on education, economic inclusion, and political engagement, creating opportunities that prevent youth radicalization and encourage positive civic participation. In countries like Rwanda and Ghana, youth-focused initiatives including civic education programs, entrepreneurship funding, and vocational training have been successful in decreasing political apathy and promoting national unity (African Union, 2022).

Local and national youth councils can also provide formalized platforms for young people to express themselves and have an impact on policy. Initiatives for digital inclusion, media literacy, and peace education aimed at young people can also act as deterrents against false information and online radicalization. To encourage youth community cohesion and peacebuilding, governments must also fund cultural, artistic, and recreational initiatives.

8.1.4. ADDRESS CROSS-BOARDER DYNAMICS AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

Conflicts in one Central African country often spill over into neighboring countries, affecting regional stability. This leads to the proliferation of weapons, incursion of refugees and insurgent groups. It is thus highly recommended that fostering stronger regional integration to address cross-border conflicts, displacement, and trade, ensuring that countries in the region cooperate to resolve shared challenges through strengthening the role of ECCAS (Economic Community of Central African States), and enhance regional military cooperation. For example, with assistance from the African Union and UN agencies, ECCAS's efforts to coordinate joint border security projects and refugee surveillance should be enhanced (ISS, 2021).

Conflicts in the CAR and Lake Chad Basin has become a regional issue, illustrating how unstable borders and disjointed security measures threaten stability. Supported by the Lake Chad Basin Commission and ECCAS, a unified border control strategy may curb the movement of militants and arms trafficking (UNHCR, 2022).

Cooperation can also be strengthened by integrating legal and judicial systems across national boundaries, particularly with regard to extradition treaties, refugee rights, and counterterrorism measures. Cross-border trade agreements, transnational infrastructure initiatives, and cooperative economic corridors can all work together to promote regional development and minimize the incentives for violent conflict. In order to foresee and proactively address new crises, ECCAS should also investigate more reliable conflict early warning systems that are connected with civil society networks and indigenous observers.

8.1.5. ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE GOVERNANCE

The Central African sub-region is very rich in natural resources, but the region's environmental security is often ignored in peace and development analyses. Resources conflicts driven by the exploitation of minerals, timber, oil, and other natural resources, contribute to instability. The Fragility of states like the CAR and DRC makes prone to the "resource curse," a phenomenon in which the abundance of natural resources leads to war and corruption instead of fostering

development (Ross, 2004). The environmental deprivation resulting from illegal mining, deforestation, and climate change exacerbates social tensions and undermines sustainable development. This study thus recommends that a regional framework for resource governance should be developed that tackles both the environmental and socio-economic impacts of natural resource extraction and promotes sustainable practices that minimize conflict over resources. According to the Africa Mining Vision (AU, 2009), this includes implementing transparent licensing procedures, distributing benefits to local communities, and implementing sustainable extraction techniques.

National development plans should also incorporate climate resilience and adaptation strategies, with a focus on water conservation, afforestation, and the transition to renewable energy. Agreements on transboundary natural resource management are crucial for reducing international tensions and guaranteeing fair access to resources, especially when it comes to river basins like the Congo River. Frameworks for sustainable development should also take into account indigenous ecological knowledge systems that have been used for a long time in Central African communities.

8.1.6. EMPHASIS ON HISTORICAL AND COLONIAL LEGACIES

Colonialism has had enduring influences in shaping contemporary governance structures, political culture and social divisions in the SSA. This has often been insufficiently analyzed in its long-term impact on peace, democracy and development in the Central African sub-region especially. Both France and Britain's colonial legacies produced different institutional structures, with French-speaking countries typically retaining more centralized and authoritarian administrative structures (Englebert, 2000). The regions borders were arbitrarily drawn like in almost the rest of the continent, creating ethnic and cultural fractures that have contributed to persistent instability and conflicts. For instance, transnational insurgency is made easier by the borders between the CAR, Chad, and Sudan, which ignore ethnic ties (Clapham, 2001). This study recommends that state building efforts should focus on local practices, values, or traditional governance systems by tracing their origins and learning from it to be able to strengthen state legitimacy. State institutions and community objectives can be reunited by exploring and revisiting precolonial governance philosophies like Ubuntu or consensus-based chieftaincies (Nhema & Zeleza, 2008).

Additionally, public history programs and educational curriculum must take a more critical look at colonial legacies in order to help future generations comprehend the causes of today's problems. National healing and identity consolidation may be aided by truth-telling, reparations, and symbolic acts of historical restitution, such as renaming colonial structures and honoring indigenous governance heroes. In order to detached from Eurocentric development models and validate African epistemologies, regional research institutes should work together to document, preserve, and promote indigenous political thought.

8.2 NEW SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS

According to the most recent scholarly research and information available, several scientific findings and analyses have reiterated and stretched on the opinions upheld in this dissertation regarding the state of democracy, political stability, and development in the SSA sub-region, particularly in the perspective of evaluations between former French and British colonies. Recent research has persistently utilized metrics such as the Democracy Index published by the Economist Intelligence Unit, the Freedom in the World reports provided by Freedom House, and the Index of African Governance from the Mo Ibrahim Foundation. Research from these indices consistently indicates that nations scoring higher in democratic principles, exemplified by countries like Ghana and Kenya, often exhibit enhanced economic growth and heightened political stability.

Below is a table of the summary of the 2023 Freedom in the World report as observed by Freedom, highlighting the performance of the case-study countries in relation to political rights and civil liberties. From the results, Ghana is the only one of the four nations to receive a Free rating, which is indicative of its respect for civil freedoms and comparatively robust democratic institutions. Kenya on the other hand, is categorized as Partly Free, which means that while there are some democratic systems in place, problems like corruption and limitations on liberties still exist. The Central African Republic and Cameroon are both classified as Not Free, underscoring serious problems with civil freedoms, political rights, and general governance. With former British colonies like Ghana and Kenya generally outperforming former French colonies like Cameroon and the Central African Republic, these findings highlight the disparities in freedom and democratic government among these nations.

Table 10. Table 1. Freedom in the World Report for Central Africa, 2023

Country	Freedom Status	Overall Score	Political Rights	Civil Liberties
Ghana	Free	80/100	33/40	47/60
Kenya	Partly Free	52/100	22/40	30/60
Cameroon	Not Free	15/100	6/40	9/60
Central African Republic	Not Free	7/100	3/40	4/60

In line with the arguments of this thesis, the Democracy Index also concluded that the case of democracies being more peaceful compared to non-democracies seems convincing. It also doesn't limit the story there, but goes further to insist on bearing in mind other factors such as socio-economic development, history and geography (Democracy Index, 2023; 27). A closer look at the cases of Cameroon and Central African Republic, where there is ongoing political instability for some years now, further proves the assertions of this these recent findings, correlating with the hypothesis raised in this thesis. According to the UN, the Central African Republic has faced numerous military interventions and foreign peacekeeping missions, yet armed groups still control more than 60% of the area as of 2024 (United Nations, 2024). In contrast, Cameroon is grappling with the Anglophone crisis and extensive political persecution, leading to a persistent cycle of instability and poor governance (ICG, 2023).

The connection between development and democracy is now viewed as not just a mere coincidence, but a driving force, as democratic governance contributes to better management of resources, thus economic and social growth. The recent rise in military coups in SSA has partly been vindicated by growing public dissatisfaction with the political arrangements in place and prevalent poverty due to failed policies. The majority of the region's political incumbents do not promote democratic principles, provide sound governance, or advance the economy, which has rendered electoral democracy very unpopular for many Africans. Though the Democracy Index classifies Ghana as per 2023 as a "flawed democracy" and Kenya as a "hybrid democracy", it classifies both Cameroon and Central African Republic as

”authoritarian”. Kenya and Ghana's higher rankings reflect their combined performance in areas like political involvement, electoral accountability and pluralism, functional administration, and civil liberties, wherein, they continue to outperform their regional counterparts such as Cameroon and Central African Republic through sustaining political environments that are more conducive for stable and progressive governance.

With a score of 80 out of 100, Ghana is a free nation according to Freedom House's 2024 Freedom in the World Report, which links freedom scores to degrees of political stability and growth. It labels Kenya as partly free with a score of 52 out of 100, while Cameroon with a score of 15 and Central African Republic with a score of 5 out of 100 are considered as not free (Freedom House, 2024). The differences in the scores registered for these countries underscores the hypothesis assertion that democratic discrepancies in Cameroon and Central African Republic adversely affect their political stability and also their developmental capabilities. Also, the BTI Transformation index describes Ghana in one statement as “Ghana has strategically positioned itself as an economic hub and a political torchbearer in the region.”⁴¹

The tentacles of Mo Ibrahim Foundation’s Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) spread to contain assessments of governance performance across Africa, evaluating the rule of law, political participation, civil rights and inclusion, safety and human development and foundations for economic opportunity. The latest index reports for 2023 show improved governance standards for both Ghana and Kenya. However, Cameroon and the Central African Republic remain on a lower scoring especially in terms of political participation, civil rights and inclusion, which reflects their levels of underdevelopment and the continuous struggles with political instability. The results are consistent with the Human Development Index rankings, which show that Ghana and Kenya routinely surpass Cameroon and CAR in metrics such as life expectancy, education, and gross national income (UNDP, 2023).

These recent scientific findings and indices collectively corroborates the thesis hypothesis by illuminating that improvements in democratic governance as reflected in Ghana and Kenya are associated with their advanced levels of political stability, peace and development. Equally, the democratic deficits in Cameroon and Central African Republic are closely linked to their ongoing political instability and developmental challenges. The theoretical and comparative

analyses carried out in this thesis gain international acceptance and statistical consistency from the empirical data incorporated in these indices. This quantitative backing deepens the thesis narrative by providing a knowledgeable portrait of the implications of governance on societal outcomes, thus, emphasizing the close intricacies between democracy, peace and development in the SSA. It also supports the case for consolidation democratic institutions as the pathway for a sustainable, stable and developed future in the region.

Concerning the research questions, the analysis in the various chapter delved into the issues of interrogation raised with the following results:

The first research question was: To what extent has the lack of economic sovereignty and democratization affected peace and development in the Central African Region? Here, the critical comparison of the interplay between democracy, peace, and development, as well as the influence of democracy on political stability and development between former French colonial SSA states like Cameroon and the Central African Republic and former British colonies like Ghana and Kenya (covered in Chapters Three to Seven), has proven the following: Political stability and development are more effective in countries with strong democratic systems like Ghana and Kenya, while they are less effective in countries still struggling to implement democratic principles like Cameroon and the Central African Republic.

The second research question dwelled on the issue: Does the holding of regular elections guarantee the process of democratic consolidation as enshrined during the ‘third wave’? Here, there some nuance to be added to better interpret how analysis in this thesis answers this questions. The issue at stake is not just the conduct of regular elections but those that are free, fair, and transparent. It is an electoral process, which leads to a peaceful transition of power. From the analytical chapters of this thesis (three - seven) is evident that Ghana and Kenya have made considerable strides in their democratic consolidation through the organization of regular free, fair, and transparent elections which ushered in a peaceful transition in these countries (albeit some episodes of post-electoral violence in Kenya). Cameroon has held regular elections but most of them has been criticized as not being free, fair, and transparent. The result has been the consolidation of a dictatorship rather than democracy with the incumbent Paul Biya tightening his grip on power for over four decades.

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¹⁰ Available at <https://www.hrw.org/report/2008/03/16/ballots-bullets/organized-political-violence-and-kenyas-crisis-governance> Page consulted on November 10, 2021.

¹¹ Available at [http://kenyalaw.org/kl/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/bills/2008/Constitution_of_Kenya_\(Amendnt\)_Bill_2008.pdf](http://kenyalaw.org/kl/fileadmin/pdfdownloads/bills/2008/Constitution_of_Kenya_(Amendnt)_Bill_2008.pdf) Page consulted on November 10, 2021.

¹² Available at <https://rsf.org/en/kenya> Page consulted on November 11, 2021.

¹³ Available at <https://www.cuk.ac.ke/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Access-to-Information-ActNo31.pdf> Page consulted on November 11, 2021.

¹⁴ Available at <https://www.dw.com/en/kenyan-doctors-strike-leaders-jailed/a-37535462> Page consulted on November 12, 2021.

¹⁵ Available at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/kenya/freedom-world/2024> Page consulted on November 21, 2024.

¹⁶ Available at <https://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/press-release/Kenya/ken-r8-pr-kenyans-support-presidential-term-limits-age-restrictions.pdf> Page consulted on November 12, 2021.

¹⁷ United Nations, 16 October 1959 Paragraph 5.

¹⁸ Available at <https://rsf.org/en/cameroon> (Page consulted on 03 November 2021).

¹⁹ Available at <https://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20200605-cameroon-military-admits-journalist-wazizi-died-10-months-ago> (Page consulted on 03 November 2021).

²⁰ 1996 Constitution of Cameroon.

²¹ Available at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/cameroon/freedom-world/2024> (Page consulted on 21 November 2024).

²² Available online at <https://www.africanews.com/2018/10/09/we-have-no-observers-in-cameroon-transparency-international/> (Page consulted on November 03 2021).

²³ Refer to Law No. 2012/001 of April relating to the Electoral Code, Section 24 (1).

²⁴ Available at <https://news.un.org/en/story/2014/04/465792> Page consulted on November 20, 2021.

²⁵ UNSC Resolution 2149, April 10, 2014, <http://www.un.org/press/en/2014/sc11349.doc.htm> Page consulted on November 20, 2021.

²⁶ UNSC, 2014, Available at https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2014_452.pdf Page consulted on November 20, 2021.

²⁷ Available at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/central-african-republic> Page consulted on November 27, 2024.

²⁸ Central African Republic, 2016. Available at https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Central_African_Republic_2016.pdf?lang=en Page consulted on November 21, 2021.

²⁹ See “The central idea is this: a wielder of political power (the monopolistic making, application, and enforcement of laws in a territory) is legitimate (i.e., is morally justified in wielding political power) if and only if it (a) does a credible job of protecting at least the most basic human rights of all those over whom it wields power, (b) provides this protection through processes, policies, and actions that themselves respect the most basic human rights, and (c) is not a usurper (i.e., does not come to wield political power by wrongly deposing a legitimate wielder of political power).” In Buchanan, Allen. "Political legitimacy and democracy." *Ethics* 112, no. 4 (2002): 689-719.

³⁰ See Schatzberg, Michael G. "Power, legitimacy and 'democratisation' in Africa." *Africa* (1993): 445-461. Page 445, quoting Decalo, Samuel. "Modalities of civil-military stability in Africa." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 27, no. 4 (1989): 547-578.

³¹ International IDEA, <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/country-view/80/40> Cameroon

³² Ibid, <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/country-view/75/40> Central African Republic [09/22/2020]

³³ See Healey, John Michael, and Mark Robinson. *Democracy, governance and economic policy: sub-Saharan Africa in comparative perspective*. Overseas Development Institute, 1994. Citing Post, 1968, and Collier 1982

³⁴ See Ngolle Ngolle, Elvis. "Democratization and multipartism in Cameroon: challenges and prospects." *Beiträge/Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, Forschungsstelle für Internationale Beziehungen* 3 (1996).

³⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce, *Country Reports*, US Department of Commerce, Washington D.C.

³⁶ Human Rights Watch, 2019 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/01/30/cameroon-opposition-leaders-arrested>

³⁷ The World Street Journal, 2019 <https://www.wsj.com/articles/gabon-presidential-guard-attack-opposition-headquarters-1472721343>

³⁸The Oxford Dictionary of English defines it as a social order which depends on relations of patronage. This concept, variedly used tends to be suffering from a lack of consensus as to what it truly means. It could be used to describe the relationship between the native African ruler and the colonial masters during the time of colonization, or to allude to the current relationship between the African governments and the external partners including former colonial masters, or even to the most visible form, the relationship between the political leaders and the voters whom they represent

³⁹ See MBAKU, JOHN MUKUM. "The Economic Origins of Political Dictatorship in Africa." *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 53, no. 4 (1992): 446-477. Pages 469-471 Analyzing the events in Uganda, Central African Republic and Equatorial Guinea, Mbaku carefully exposes the motives and the survival tactics of Amin, Bokassa and Nguema (Macias) respectively. These three held their countries with the iron fist and are known today as the true faces of Dictatorship in Africa, leaders of competitive interest groups who seized advantage of the state apparatus to control the state economy and make personal wealth.

⁴⁰ See Ibid, art. 6(2) <http://africaagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Const.ofCameroon2008.pdf>

⁴¹ BTI Transformation Index, accessed on April 15, 2024. <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-dashboard/GHA>