

Flawed Democracy

The Bane of Ghana's Success in Curbing Corruption

KOFI NSIA-PEPRA, PHD*

Democracy is widely expected to restrain corruption.¹ Democratic institutions, politics, and commitments to rule of law and accountability facilitate the discovery, publicity and punishment of corrupt behaviors.² The ethic of corruption aversion emerges spontaneously as part of the democratization process. Indeed, global corruption rankings show a visible, if imperfect, tendency for democracies to cluster at the “less corrupt” end of rankings while undemocratic societies dominate the other extreme (See Table 1). Ghana has proven to be an exception to the rule. Despite being touted as a vibrant emerging democracy in Africa and rated as a full democracy by the Freedom House, corruption is endemic in Ghana. Ghana's exceptionalism is simply due to its mischaracterization by Freedom House as a full democracy rather than flawed democracy as appropriately characterized by the Economic Intelligence Unit (see table 1). The mischaracterization has masked the exploration of the correlation between Ghana's “democracy” and its endemic corruption despite the numerous scholarly works.

The paper fills this gap by diagnosing the inherent illiberal practices in Ghana's democracy that are incompatible with democratic principles of accountability and sustain corruption. It draws extensively on institutional theoretical arguments, existing literature and published data sets that build on authoritative in-depth studies such as relevant Transparency International (TI) reports and related seminal surveys. The study, in line with the theoretical arguments on democracy

*The author holds a doctorate in political science from Wayne State University. He is an associate professor of political science at Ohio Northern University. Dr. Nsia-Peptra's research and teaching interests include good governance, corruption, accountability for crimes against humanity, civilian protection, conflict analysis and resolution, international security, terrorism, human rights, US-Africa relations, and United Nations (UN) robust peacekeeping and governance. He served with the UN Assisted Mission in Rwanda and with the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group during the Sierra Leonean War. Dr. Nsia-Peptra published, “*UN Robust Peacekeeping: Civilian Protection in Violent Civil Wars*,” “Truth and Justice Establishing an Appropriate Accountability Mechanism for Crimes against Humanity and War Crimes in Africa,” and “Militarization of U.S. Foreign Policy in Africa: Strategic Gain or Backlash?”

and reduced corruption, spans between 1993–2016 when Ghana has experienced uninterrupted democratic elections and transfers of power to the winning party.

The paper finds that Ghana’s endemic corruption is embedded in its flawed democracy. Ghana’s democracy is flawed with illiberal practices such as monetized politics, winner take-all politics, vote buying, electoral frauds and violence, political vigilantism, judicial corruption and selective justice, and a lack of punishment of the politically connected corrupt persons. These illiberal practices are incompatible with democratic ideals of rule of law and accountability and perpetuate corruption. The recent revelations of corruption involving officials in governance, judiciary, bureaucracy and their cronies in the private sector are clear manifestations of Ghana’s failure in fighting corruption.³

The rest of the paper unfolds as follows: Section two discusses the theoretical framework underpinning the study, viz. democracy and corruption. Section three provides a brief literature review on corruption in Ghana. Section four provides an overview of corruption in Ghana. Section five discusses the illiberal practices of Ghana’s flawed democracy and corruption. The study in section six makes policy recommendations to curb corruption in Ghana and conclude.

Table. EUI Democracy Index and TI Corruption Index 2015

Countries	EIU (Dem)	CPI
Norway (Full Democracy)	9.93 (1)	87
Sweden (Full Democracy)	9.58 (2)	89
Switzerland (Full Democracy)	9.9(6)	86
Mauritius (Full Democracy)	8.28(18)	53
Ghana (Flawed Democracy)	6.86 (53)	47
Tanzania (Hybrid Democracy)	5.58 (91)	3
Central African Rep. (Authoritarian)	1.57(164)	24
Chad (Authoritarian)	1.50(165)	22
Syria (Authoritarian)	1.43(166)	18
North Korea (Authoritarian)	1.08(167)	8

Sources: A. The Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) Democracy Index 2015

The EIU index values are used to place countries within one of four types of regime:

1. Full democracies: scores of 8-10
2. Flawed democracies: score of 6 to 7.9
3. Hybrid regimes: scores of 4 to 5.9
4. Authoritarian regimes: scores below 4

The numbers in brackets are ranks among 167 states

B. Transparency International corruption index (CPI) 2015 <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2015>

The CPI currently ranks 177 countries “on a scale from 100 (very clean) to 0 (highly corrupt)”

Countries above 50 are less corrupt and those below 50 are corrupt.

Theoretical Framework: Democracy and Corruption

TI and Ghana's National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP-2012-2021) Report define corruption as the "misuse of entrusted power for private gain" to include both the public and private sectors. These include bribery, embezzlement, and misappropriation, abuse of power, patronage, nepotism, and conflict of interest. The definition and measurement of democracy has been extensively debated. The minimalists, such as the Freedom House, define democracy as a political system that holds relatively fair, contested multiparty elections on a regular basis, with universal adult suffrage. Electoral democracies meet the minimalist requirement but most elections in nascent democracies such as Ghana's are sometimes flawed with malpractices. Considerable percentage of states rated by Freedom House as electoral democracies are not consolidated democracies.⁴ Freedom House's electoral democracy measure is a thin concept. A more meaningful concept of democracy that goes beyond Freedom House's democratic electoralism uses western liberal democracy as the model for measuring a matured democracy. This model entails more than procedural elements such as elections and includes substantive elements such as the rule of law, and accountability.⁵ The EIU's Democracy Index includes some features of substantive democracy. Ghana, categorized by Freedom House as a free democracy, is categorized by the EIU as "flawed" democracy (See Table 1). This paper uses EIU's definition.

Democracy and Corruption

Most research captures a negative relationship between democracy and corruption, with more democracy leading to less corruption.⁶ Moreno argues that democratic institutions normally diminish the possibilities of corruption. Wayne Sandholtz and William Koetzle find that a nation's years under democracy have a negative relationship with perceived levels of corruption.⁷ In other words, the longer democratic norms and values have informed politics in a country, the more ingrained and potent those norms will be. Empirical surveys have found a striking correlation between more democracy and less corruption. Of the 20 least corrupt countries in the 2005 TI Corruption Perception Index, 18 are developed democracies, the exceptions being Hong Kong and Singapore. The most corrupt countries are flawed democracies and authoritarian regimes. Theoretically, democratic institutions, politics, and commitments to rule of law and accountability facilitate the discovery, publicity and punishment of corrupt behaviors.⁸ The ethic of corruption aversion emerges spontaneously as part of the democratization process. According to Sandholtz and Koetzle, institutional and normative components of democracies tend to suppress corruption.⁹ Matured democracies are open govern-

ments with deeply entrenched democratic norms that increase the propensity to expose and punish corrupt officials. Institutionalized democratic principles of checks and balances and rule of law constrain officials from corrupt behaviors. The institutional argument is premised on normative argument. Enforcement institutions punish corrupt behaviors only when there are shared norms that conceptualize corruption as antagonistic to basic democratic values. Corruption is fundamentally undemocratic and ethically unacceptable in matured liberal democracies because it violates democratic values of openness and equality, norms that are central to functional democracies.

Flawed or immature democracies, however, experience upsurges of corruption (because they lack the institutional requisites to yield higher administrative quality and capacity that are normally associated with consolidated democracies to deal with corruption.¹⁰ A flawed democracy is defective and is marked by impaired democratic attributes that sustain corruption despite having elections. EIU categorizes immature democracies into hybrid and flawed. Hybrid regimes are flawed with substantial electoral irregularities that often prevent elections from being both free and fair. The judiciary is not independent, and there is weak civil society and rule of law as well as widespread corruption that goes unpunished.¹¹ According to Fareed Zakaria, an illiberal or flawed democracy entails an elected polity where liberty and rule of law are secure in theory but violated in practice because of massive corruption, flawed electoral processes and disregard for the rule of law to punish corrupt officials.¹² They are democratic in word but not in substance. Flawed democracies are corrupt because they lack the established democratic norms, institutions and the political will to expose and punish corrupt officials. Institutions of accountability are limited in curbing corruption mainly because they are captured by the ruling elites who are beneficiaries of the status quo.

Brief Literature Review on Ghana's Corruption

Several studies on Ghana's corruption have examined the causes, effects, and anti-corruption agencies made various proposals. The section briefly discusses the most important of these works. Victor Levine attributes corruption to the perversion of traditional customs, emergence of new elite which neither the traditional nor the colonial systems socialized to accept responsibility, and increasingly fragmented post-independence bureaucratic structures.¹³ Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi finds low income, greed, legal and administrative laxities, corrupt criminal justice system and associated weak law enforcement and limited punishment to explain the prevalence of corruption.¹⁴ Alan Doig et al. identify unrealistic ambitions,

inconsistent funding, and political resistance to anti-corruption as reasons for agencies' ineffectiveness.¹⁵ Dr. Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai attributes corruption to the lack of political will by the political leadership.¹⁶ Fortune Agbele attributes corruption to low incumbent accountability, weak enforcement of anticorruption laws and low normative constraint among ordinary citizens who hardly mobilize themselves to demand for a more accountable and transparent governance.¹⁷

According to the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP) Report, the causes of corruption in Ghana include institutional weaknesses, poor ethical standards, including limited commitment to the values of integrity and self-discipline, skewed incentives structure, and insufficient enforcement of laws within a patrimonial social and political context. The NACAP (2015-2024) recommends public capacity building, institutional efficiency, accountability and transparency, effective investigations and prosecution of corrupt conduct as necessary measures to fight corruption in Ghana. The *lacunae* are that the literature does not particularly examine the correlation between Ghana's flawed democracy and corruption. This paper fills the gap.

Brief Survey of Corruption in Ghana

Since independence, Ghana has been blighted with pandemic corruption hindering its development.¹⁸ With democratization in 1993, anticorruption agencies, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice in 1993, the Serious Fraud Office in 1998, and the Economic and Organized Crime Office which replaced it in 2010, were established. The Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition of key public and nongovernmental bodies was also established on 13 March 2001. However, corruption remains a menace despite the fact that democracies reduce corruption. Ghana persistently scores below 50 on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean) on the annual Corruption Perceptions Index report.

Many theoretical reasoning explains Ghana's corruption. The poverty theory opines that public officials indulge in corruption for survival due to their meagre salaries¹⁹ but this does not morally and legally justify corruption. It is also inapplicable to highly paid corrupt public officials motivated purely by greed. The cultural relativists argue that the Ghanaian culture of appreciation and hospitality where gifts are given in return for favors is an established social norm.²⁰ The Ghanaian social system is largely nurtured and influenced by the principles of family connections, kinship or tribal ties and social reciprocity, which breed favoritism, cronyism and nepotism.²¹ Logong Raditlhokwa blames African corruption almost solely on unethical African leadership.²² Unethical leadership has festered moral decadence and dysfunctional institutions that facilitate the abuse of gov-

ernment power. Imitation theory argues that Ghanaians imitate the lifestyles of corrupt rich persons. Corruption also flourishes with institutional restraints and weak regulatory regimes. According to the rent-seeking theory, corruption results from excessive government intervention in the economy and its monopoly over supply of public services such as issuance of business licenses or permits.²³ The “grease the wheel” theory posits that corruption can be helpful for development in dysfunctional markets.²⁴ In a dysfunctional system, “short-cuts” through “facilitation payments” to expedite actions on routine services, such as issuing licenses to avoid costly delays are common.

Corruption has devastating developmental ramifications. Some scholars argue that corruption could positively impact states’ economic and political development.²⁵ Gunnar Myrdal points to corruption as a deliberate lubricant to a sluggish or dysfunctional economy.²⁶ Others show corruption deters investment²⁷ and diverts from the state’s much needed fund for productive endeavors and national development. “Facilitation moneys” paid to public officials are recoverable through either increased cost or low-quality projects such as roads or materials used.²⁸ Taxpayers become burdened with either costly or inferior quality projects that would require costly upkeep.²⁹ Corruption increases the prices of goods and services denying ordinary Ghanaians their basic needs. Corruption exploits the poor by diverting resources from them to rich Ghanaians. It, thus, exacerbates the existing exploitation and poverty of ordinary Ghanaians. Corruption stifles initiative and creativity, nourishes mediocrity, feeds unemployment and undermines meritocracy.³⁰ Nepotism and favoritism undermine meritocracy in organizational practices and yield poor work behaviors and productivity. Corruption lowers Ghana’s human development capacity. Corruption decimates democratic values and engenders institutional distrust, eroding citizens’ trust and confidence in state institutions.³¹ Judicial corruption results in perversion of justice, selective or “victors” justice, and weakened rule of law. Corruption has corroded Ghana’s moral fiber with an at times total loss of conscience. Altruistic civic values have become more corrupt and people tolerate corrupt behaviors because most corrupt officials go unpunished.³² Corruption humiliates, degrades and violates the human rights of the poor. The corrupt inherently consider the lives of the ordinary majority poor, meaningless and useless and therefore expendable. Vote buying violates the right of other candidates to equality and the right to participate in governance. It discriminates between the high-income earner and the low-income earner.

Women and children suffer the direct and indirect “poisonous” effects of corruption the most.³³ Sexual extortion dehumanizes and denigrates the human dignity of women. Discrimination against women who refuse sexual exploitation violates their rights to equal opportunities. Corruption also contributes to inter-

generational inequality as societies often fall into vicious circles of inequality and corruption.³⁴ Generations of the poor have suffered from posttraumatic poverty syndrome where there is intergenerational transmission of poverty trauma resulting from corruption. The phenomenon centers not only on trauma and multigenerational oppression, but also on unjust enrichment by corrupt officials and unjust impoverishment of the poor that have been passed on to the next generation. The legacy is the huge inequality existing between the descendants of the corrupt rich officials and descendants of the poor. Posttraumatic poverty syndrome among the poor includes psychological scars of internalized self-loathing, fear of diminished human dignity and family instability because sufferers lack the same life chances and life experiences compared to descendants of corrupt officials. The poor simply live on the periphery of mainstream Ghanaian society.

The Bane: Ghana's Flawed Democracy and Corruption

Despite being touted as a model democracy in Africa, Ghana has increasingly lapsed into flawed democracy. The EIU rates Ghana as a *flawed* democracy (See table 1), and Kwame Insaadoo calls it a “dysfunctional democracy.”³⁵ Ghana's democracy is fraught with “illiberal” practices that are incompatible with liberal democratic ideals and sustain corruption. Ghana's democracy is riddled with excessive executive power and related “institutional capture,” zero-sum game winner-take-all politics, monetized politics, deficient punishment, electoral malpractices, political vigilantism and violence, political patronage, and selective justice. The Constitution has concentrated excessive power in the presidency,³⁶ dwarfing other branches of government. The resulting “institutional capture” and concomitant institutional weaknesses has festered systemic corruption in Ghana because co-opted appointees lack the moral courage to hold the executive and party members who appointed them accountable for malpractices. Anticorruption agencies such as the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the Serious Fraud Office/Economic and Organised Crime Office, for example, have been criticized for lacking independence and being subject to political pressure; since their directors and board members are appointed by the executive.³⁷ These anticorruption agencies also lack investigational independence and prosecutorial powers. Nonstate actors, particularly the civil society, generally play significant roles in democratic consolidation and championing anticorruption reforms. The capture of the state and institutions by ruling elites has rendered the civil societies' efforts ineffectual. Patronage and favoritism have divided, along party lines, citizens and civil societies into beneficiaries and the marginalized.

The rule of law and punishment of violators are cardinal ideals of matured liberal democracies. Democratic commitments to rule of law and accountability facilitate the discovery, publicity and punishment of corrupt behaviors. Principal requirements of democratic governance such as accountability, punishment, transparency, responsiveness, and informational openness are often lacking. Effective combat of corruption requires that offenders, irrespective of their social status or political affiliation, be exposed and severely punished. That almost never happens in Ghana. Allegations of corruption involving high-level public officials and cohorts of the ruling party usually go unpunished.³⁸ In 2005, the CHRAJ charged Dr. Richard Anane, a minister of state in Ghana president John Kufuor's government, with corruption and conflict of interests and using state facilities for his personal gain. The Supreme Court dismissed the case ruling that the CHRAJ did not have jurisdiction to investigate.³⁹ Other notable corruption cases that have gone unpunished are the Mabey and Johnston case,⁴⁰ mysterious "Woyomegate"⁴¹ Savannah Accelerated Development Authority project, the Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency scandal, the AMERI Power deal and the Smarty bus rebranding deal. Ghana's political leadership has displayed relative indifference to the moral culpability of elected officials. The lack of punishment is partly due to judicial corruption. The judiciary is corrupt, and some magistrates receive bribes and set criminals free. In 2015, the celebrated undercover journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas exposed 34 judges involved in corruption by accepting and making demands for bribes to throw away cases including robbery, murder and corruption.⁴² Criminally motivated delays, manipulation of processes and dubious decisions have led to perversion of justice and selective justice that undermine the rule of law and deterrent punishment of corruption. Thus, corruption thrives because rewards are potentially greater than risks.

Ghana's democracy is also afflicted with a hyperaggressive, winner-take-all zero-sum political system in which the winning party packs political positions, the bureaucracy and courts with its cronies. The system entails a capture of political power and access to vast network of state resources. Ghana's political system is beset with deeply entrenched political patronage, nepotism and clientelism.⁴³ Contracts and official positions are awarded to party loyalists at all levels of the civil service and parastatal structure.⁴⁴ Political patronage pervades the culture and practice of public and state sector corporate governance.⁴⁵ The National Democratic Congress (NDC) Business Development Committee, chaired by the trade and industry minister, Dr Ekow Spio Garbrah, and tasked to create jobs for NDC members, has been condemned as unconstitutionally perpetuating cronyism, patronage and discrimination.⁴⁶ Ghana's flawed democracy is fraught with increasing clientelization, winner-take-all politics, and accompanying political

and ethnic polarization. Patronage politics has corroded Ghana's democratic institutions and ideals and has also encouraged corruption in all fabrics of Ghanaian society. The 2008 Afrobarometer Survey shows that citizens' corruption perception of the office of the presidency, Parliament, the police and the judiciary from 2003–2008 has greatly increased and is very high (See Figure 1) In the period 2002–2014, the proportion of Ghanaians who think that the members of the national executive (president and officials in his office) are involved in corruption has increased by 36 percent.⁴⁷

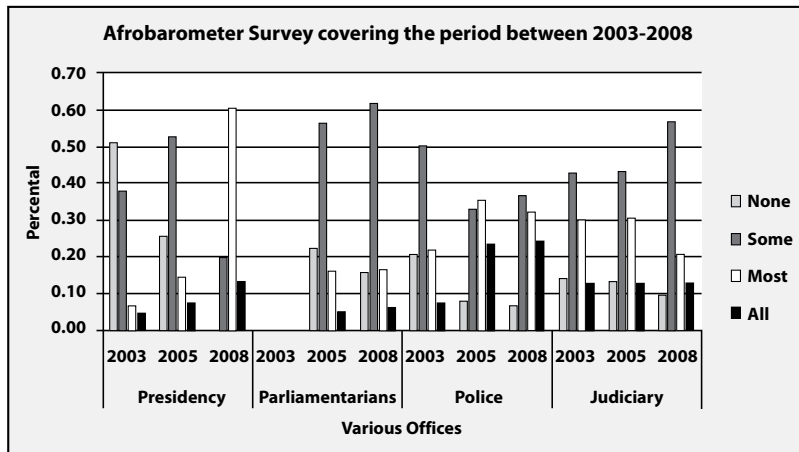


Figure 1. Survey Showing Citizens Corruption Perception with some parts of government in Ghana 2003–2008

**(Source: Afrobarometer, Ghana 2008, see <http://www.afrobarometer.org/countries/ghana-1>.)*

The electoral processes are flawed with manipulations, vote buying, bloated registers, multiple foreigners and underage voting, political violence, political vigilantism and intimidation of voters by rented muscle men to skew the electoral results. Thus, elections remain largely a case of “to the rigger, the victory.” Ghana's political system is monetized: electorates are swayed by monetary, material and particularistic gains and vote for the highest bidder. Monetized politics has skewed the democratic process in favor of those with access to money including illicit money.⁴⁸ Parliamentary and other political positions are auctioned and obtained by the highest bidder.⁴⁹ The Electoral Commission has failed to enforce campaign finance laws that require political parties to submit audited accounts as required by statute.⁵⁰ Political parties deploy “muscle” that includes violent or criminal groups that scare off opponents and intimidate others to influence the elections.⁵¹ Ghana's elections are fraught with interparty tension, organized thug-gery and violence between the supporters of the NDC and New Patriotic Party (NPP). Examples include electoral violence at Akwatia, Atiwa, Tain, Yendi, Bawku

Central, Tamale Central, Chereponi, and Odododiodio constituencies. The culprits went unpunished. There are also instances of intraparty violence and intimidation between supporters of different factions within the NPP and NDC. The rhetoric of official and unofficial party spokespersons has become more belligerent. Political discussions degenerate into deranging invectives and shouting matches to intimidate opponents. This can also increase ethnic tensions.⁵²

Ghana’s democracy is afflicted with moral decadence and culture of “unethical materialism.” Corruption is socially embedded in the “logics” of “unethical materialism,” a system of mindless material acquisition of riches, whether illicit or not, and glorified by Ghanaian society. It is a system where altruistic social capital and socially useful citizenship are subordinated to financial and material wealth. This has weakened social values, with broader public interests and social responsibility being subordinated to the enhancement of personal material gains.⁵³ Ghanaians have put inordinate value on wealth accumulation as personal success. Prestige is measured by wealth rather than an individual’s civic contributions to society. This has precipitated a culture of ethical deficiency lacking a sense of nationhood and a sense of “public duty.” The consequence is the exploitation of both public and private institutions for mindless corruption and primitive accumulation of wealth. The unethical and amoral behavior of corrupt elected and bureaucratic official has spilled over and simmered down into the fabric core of the Ghanaian society.

The Way Forward: Good Governance

Good governance that encapsulates political will, deterrent punishment, effective laws and agencies and efficient administration, is fundamental to Ghana’s extrication from its endemic corruption (see Figure 2)

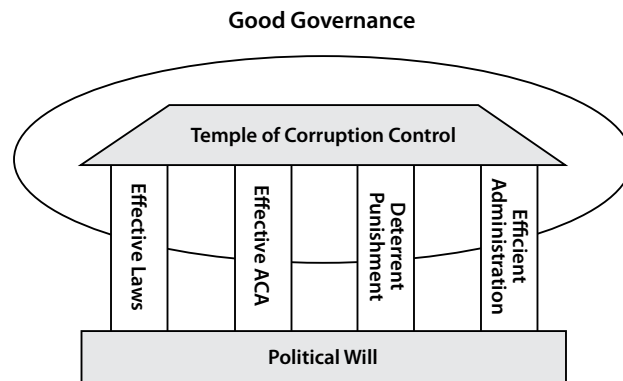


Figure 2. Framework of Corruption Control

Good governance is inherent in matured democracies that foster political will to fight and curb corruption. The World Bank finds crisis of governance as an underlying litany of Africa's developmental problems.⁵⁴ Good governance encompasses democratic ideals of participation, rule of law, separation of powers, checks and balances, transparency, equity and inclusiveness, and accountability. Together, these preclude the need, incentive and opportunity for corruption.⁵⁵ Good governance requires fair legal frameworks and impartial enforcement of the rule of law. This requires an independent, impartial and incorruptible judiciary and police force. It is a system of separation of powers and checks and balances whereby lawful government actions are checked by the division of power between mutually interdependent and autonomous legislative, executive and judicial bodies. No institution or individual can thwart an investigation into corruption and the punishment of corrupt persons. Good governance values equity and inclusiveness that treats citizens equally and guarantees them equal opportunities.

It requires effective laws that define corruption offenses, their concomitant punishment and the powers of the enforcement agencies. Having tough laws does not guarantee effective enforcement. An effective, autonomous and resourced anticorruption enforcement agency with investigational and prosecutorial powers is required. The agency's response to corruption must be prompt, resolute and justice oriented. Laws and anticorruption agencies, no matter how effective, must be complemented by deterrent punishment. Detection, prosecution and punishment stop offenders and deter would-be violators. Ghana needs a regime of deterrent punishment to signal to potential violators that the Ghanaian society does not brook corruption. Punishment must be swift and harsh to have the desired effect.

A vital component of good governance is efficient administration that values integrity, incorruptibility and accountability. A committed exemplary leadership is a major catalyst fostering efficient administration. Such administration is guided by a code of ethical behaviors and is responsive to the needs of the citizenry. The collective interests supersede familial, party and other parochial interests. It is void of nepotism, cronyism, favoritism, and discrimination in allocation of national resources and public positions. An efficient administration values meritocracy that ensures that the right persons with the right values and expertise are in the public service and political positions. It ensures the rule of law to demonstrate to the public the government's resolve to fight corruption.

Political will is pivotal to good governance and successful anticorruption reforms but it is worryingly absent in Ghana's anticorruption efforts. Political will simply refers to the sincerity of a government's pledge to control corruption both by words and deeds. Exemplary leadership nurtures political will among the citizens and requires the leadership to behave with integrity and honesty to impar-

tially enforce the rule of law and punish corrupt persons. If the leadership is corrupt or fails to investigate and punish corrupt officials, bureaucrats and civil servants may be spurred into indulging in corruption. This affects public support and political will in the fight against corruption. Building political will must involve a coalition of stakeholders including political parties, anticorruption agencies, grassroots and international partners. Political will can be championed by the “Lone Ranger,” a patriotic, bold and morally upright anticorruption champion who has requisite integrity and tenacity to lead a crusade against corruption. Vibrant civil society can be an active partner in shaping the reform agenda and monitoring the reform process, energizing the public to achieve the desired results. Ghana’s international partners, particularly the donor community, can also foster or build political will by identifying and protecting anticorruption “champions.” They need to strengthen their collaborative partnerships with Ghanaian civil society coalitions in monitoring governments’ commitments in the formulation and implementation of anticorruption reforms. They must make enforcement of anticorruption reforms a condition for financial or other assistance to nurture political will to fight corruption.

Good governance requires Ghana to make a paradigm shift from zero-sum game “winner-take-all” politics to the more inclusive “win-win game” political system. The paper recommends the enactment of a proportional representation appointment system where positions are allocated to ensure party, ethnic, gender and other relevant balances for the desired political inclusiveness and unity. The winner-take-all politics is primarily the result of the “winner-take-all economy” where the winners jealously prevent losers from enjoying the economic spoils. We need to remove the magnet-predatory monetary gains, to end corruption in politics through preventive and punitive measures.

Demonetization of Ghana’s democracy is fundamental to its good governance. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt stated, “We know now that Government by organized money is just as dangerous as Government by organized mob.”⁵⁶ A system of institutionalized enforcement of assets declaration and monitoring, along with criminalization of unethical behavior would disincentive public officials from corruption. Bribery of voters by candidates for political office and receipt of such bribes should be criminalized and punished. Ghana needs legislative limitations on money in politics. Campaign contributions must be well monitored and regulated to prevent corruption and provide a more politically equitable election landscape. An adequate cap on individual and corporate campaign contributions to candidates and political parties is highly recommended. Ghana can alternatively consider a public financed election model that is not reliant on private financing. The recommended threshold for political parties to

qualify for public funding is obtaining “5 %” of the popular votes in the last general election.⁵⁷

The constitutional review should revise the appointment powers of the president. As US president Woodrow Wilson said, “The history of liberty is a history of limitations of government power, not the increase of it.”⁵⁸ In line with this, it is recommended that the president’s appointment of ministerial positions should have a super majority parliamentary approval (two-thirds majority). The appointments of heads of key constitutional bodies and governance institutions must be transparent and done by a committee that has pluralistic representation of the social forces of civilian society, including non-government organizations, Parliament and political parties. The committee must vet candidates and recommend three candidates to the president to nominate one for parliamentary approval with a super majority. Security of tenure for senior officials is a constitutional necessity to end the pervasive reshuffling and replacement of public officers by party activists after elections.

Corruption is a moral sin and given our ‘addiction’ to corruption, Ghana needs a “collective moral detoxification crusade.” The acceptance of corruption and the general public’s despondency about curbing corruption need be tackled first. Ethical deficiency can be remedied by moral education involving all stakeholders. The moral education should inculcate in Ghanaians the African spirit of *Ubuntu*, which emphasizes the virtues of humanness in humility, compassion, communalism and African patriotism that provide the veritable starting point for the development of the moral fiber to fight corruption. We must awaken the spirit of civic duty and teach Ghanaians the responsibilities of citizenship and dedication for all to be socially useful. Material wealth must be presented to the youth as a value subsidiary to the wealth of citizenship. Social capital must overcome financial capital.⁵⁹ Moral crusade will raise capital trust-building and create an ethical environment, a system of mutual interdependency of restraint and watchdogs designed to check abuses of power by arms of government, and bureaucracies, agencies and the public. An ethical environment entails a system of “horizontal accountability that entails a ‘virtuous circle,’ in which each actor is both a watcher and is watched, is both a monitor and is monitored.”⁶⁰ This ethical system fosters an ethical public life where honesty is cherished. Within this system, corruption is easily and boldly exposed by patriotic Ghanaians and punished without fear or favor.

Finally, there can be no good governance and successful anticorruption reforms without the activism and vigilance of the people. Since most political officials are beneficiaries of corruption the people must persistently demand good governance and anticorruption reforms. According to President Wilson, “Liberty

has never come from the government. Liberty has always come from the subjects of it.”⁶¹ Successful anticorruption reforms do not depend on, but challenge, the decayed status quo.

Conclusion

Democracy is widely expected to restrain corruption. Yet in Ghana, despite being touted as a vibrant emerging democracy in Africa since 1993, the nation is blighted with cancerous corruption that has inflicted indelible ramifications on its development. Corruption is endemic in Ghana. The EIU rates Ghana as a “flawed democracy.” Despite many scholarly works on corruption in Ghana, there is limited work examining specifically the correlation between Ghana’s flawed democracy and its corruption. The paper fills this gap. The fundamental argument of the paper is that Ghana’s endemic corruptions is embedded in its flawed democracy that is fraught with illiberal practices incompatible with democratic ideals and sustain corruption. These include: deficient punishment; winner-take-all politics; monetized politics; dominant executive powers that create “institutional capture”; moral decadence and a “culture of ‘unethical materialism.’” The paper recommends good governance that encapsulates effective laws and agencies, administration and punishment as fundamental to fighting Ghana’s corruption. It further recommends ethical leadership with the political will to promote an ethical environment, demonetized politics, and inclusive politics. The vigilance and activism of the masses are salient to good governance and anticorruption reform success. Former Costa Rican president Oscar Arias Sanchez cautioned civil society and the poor of the Herculean task they face in the fight to rid society of corruption. He encourages civil society and the people to be tenacious, perseverant and determined despite the might of the opposition. He said, “we are in the majority and they are few. We must welcome the global tide of change. Somehow they (people) seem powerless ‘Davids’ fighting against the overwhelming ‘Goliaths.’ But, as have been shown recently in many countries, David’s spirit and will continue to triumph over Goliath’s intimidating might.”⁶²

Notes

1. Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour M. Lipset, *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Rienner, 1990), 1.

2. Yan Sun and Michael Johnston “Does Democracy Check Corruption?

Insights from China and India,” *Comparative Politics* 42, no. 1 (October 2009): 1.

3. Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) 2015 surveys shows the police, presidency, legislature and the bureaus to be highly corrupt.

4. Laza Kekic, “The Economist Intelligence Unit’s Index of Democracy,” *The Economist Intelligence Unit*, 2007, 2.

5. Fareed Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 6, 1997, 2.
6. Diamond et al, *Politics in Developing World*, 1.
7. Wayne Sandholtz and William Koetzle, "Accounting for Corruption: Economic Structure, Democracy, and Trade," *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (2000): 31–50.
8. Andres Scheller, Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, *The Self Restraining State: Power and Accountability in Democracies* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999), 2.
9. Sandholtz and Koetzle, "Accounting for Corruption," 31–50.
10. Sung, Hung-En, "Democracy and Political Corruption: A Cross-National Comparison," *Crime, Law and Social Change* 41, 2004, 179–94.
11. Kekic, "Index of Democracy," 3.
12. Zakaria, "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," 24.
13. Victor Levine, *Political Corruption: The Ghana Case* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1975), 3.
14. Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi, "Confronting Corruption in Ghana and Africa," *Ghana Center for Democratic Development Briefing Paper* 4, no. 2, 2002, 4.
15. Alan Doig, David Watt and Robert Williams, "Measuring 'Success' in Five African Anti-Corruption Commissions—The Cases of Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia," *U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre Reports*, 2005, 41.
16. Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai, "Political Will in Combating Corruption in Developing and Transition Economies: A Comparative Study of Singapore, Hong Kong, and Ghana," Institute for Democratic Governance, *Journal of Financial Crime* 16, no. 4, 2009, 387–417.
17. Fortune Agbele, "Political Economy Analysis of Corruption in Ghana," *European Research Centre for Anti-Corruption and State-Building Working Paper* 28, 2011.
18. IEA, "Purging the Nation Of Corruption—Demanding Accountability From Public Institutions," *Conference on Corruption*, 2015.
19. Abdul-Gafaru, "Political Will," 387.
20. Keba Sylla, "Defining Corruption in the Cultural Context of Sub-Saharan Africa" in eds. Gedeon M. Mudacumura and Göktuğ Morçöl's *Challenges to Democratic Governance in Developing Countries*, (Gewerbstrasse, Switzerland: Springer Publishers, 2013), 171.
21. A Ghana Integrity Initiatives survey in 2005 (Voice of the People Survey, July 2005), shows that a total of 66.2 percent of the 900 respondents believed that consideration of party faithfulness was a requirement for awarding contracts by the government, and 54 percent felt contracts were awarded through the backdoor with total disregard to procurement regulations. Such behavior undermines fair competition and transparency. In addition, this 2005 Voice of the People Survey shows the pervasiveness of nepotism in Ghanaian society: 53.9 percent of the respondents believe that nepotism largely informs the awarding of contracts apart from tender. The report indicates that nepotism has eaten very deeply into the fabric of the Ghanaian society to the extent that it has become an acceptable norm.
22. Logong Radithokwa, "Corruption in Africa: A function of the crisis of leadership," in eds Kwame Frimpong and Gloria Jacques' *Corruption, Democracy and Good Governance in Africa*, (Gaborne, Botswana: Lightbooks Publishing, 1999), 49–55.
23. Robert Klitgaard "Gifts and Bribes" in ed. Richard Zeckhauser's *Strategy and Choice*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 211.
24. Colin Leys, "What is the Problem About Corruption?" in eds. Arnold Heidenheimer and Michael Johnston, 3rd Edition (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 59.
25. Nurudeen Abu, Mohd Zaini Abd Karim, and Mukhriz Izraf Azman Aziz, "Corruption, Political Instability and Economic Development in the Economic Community of West African States: Is There a Causal Relationship?" *Contemporary Economics*, 9, no. 1, 2015, 45–60.
26. Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968), 7.
27. Christopher Thornley, Canadian High Commissioner to Ghana, "Corruption Impedes FDI—Canadian High Commissioner Expresses Worry," *Myjoyonline*, 5 May 2016, Canadian High Commissioner to Ghana, "Corruption Impedes FDI—Canadian High Commissioner Expresses Worry," *Myjoyonline*.
28. Vito Tanzi and Hamid Davoodi, *Roads to Nowhere: How Corruption in Public Investment Hurts Growth* (Washington: International Monetary Fund, 1998), 1.
29. Ronald Hope Kempe Sr., *Corruption and Development in Africa: Lessons from Country Case-Studies*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 1999), 20.
30. William Shelukindo and Ronald Baguma, "Ethical standards and behavior in African Public Services," in eds. S. Rasheed and D. Olowu's *Ethics and Accountability in African Public Services* (Nairobi: African Association for Public Administration and Management, 1993), 25–40.

31. Eric Chang, and Yun-han, Chu, "Corruption and Trust: Exceptionalism in Asian Democracies?," *Journal of Politics* 68, no. 2, 2006, 259-327.
32. IEA, "Purging the Nation."
33. Transparency International (TI), "Women Are Less Likely to Pay Bribes But Are More Disadvantaged in Corrupt Systems," 7 March 2000, http://www.transparency.org/news/pressrelease/gender_and_corruption_are_women_less_corrupt.
34. You Jong-sung and Sanjeev Khagram, "Comparative Study of Inequality and Corruption," *American Sociological Review* 70, 2005, 136-57.
35. Kwame Insaiddoo, *Ghana: An Incomplete Independence or a Dysfunctional Democracy?* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2012), 1.
36. Republic of Ghana, "Articles 70 and 144 Ghana Constitution," *Ghana Web*, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/republic/constitution.php?id=Gconst18.html>.
37. Marie Chene, Marie, "Overview of Corruption and Anti-corruption in Ghana," *TI*, 10 January 2014.
38. IEA, "Purging the Nation."
39. Ghana Web, "Anane Appears Before CHRAJ," 17 January 2006.
40. "Mabey and Johnson: Sipa Yankey, Seidu Amadu Resign," *Joy Online*, 10 August 2009, <http://politics.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/200910/36251.php>.
41. In the Woyome case the attorney general's failures to appear in court during hearings before an appeals court was presumed to be due to official influence and unwillingness to prosecute Woyome who was one of their own. The attorney general was also revealed by Woyome to have benefitted from the dubious payment.
42. "Corruption Scandal, 34 Judges, Others, Caught on Camera Taking Bribes," *MyjoyOnline*, 9 September 2015, <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2015/September-9th/anas-investigation-cites-34-judges-others-in-massive-bribery-scandal.php>.
43. Freedom House, 2010; The 2005 Voice of the People Survey shows the pervasiveness of nepotism in the Ghanaian society. In the survey, 53.9 percent of the respondents believe that nepotism largely informs the award of contracts apart from tender.
44. A Ghana Integrity Initiatives survey in 2005 (Voice of the People Survey, July 2005), shows that a total of 66.2 percent of the 900 respondents believed that consideration of party faithful was a means for awarding contracts by the government.
45. "Use Me While I'm in Office"—Segbefia Tells Voltarians," *Ghana News*, 12 April 2015, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Use-me-while-I-m-in-office-Segbefia-tells-Voltarians-354104>.
46. "NDC Sets Up Committee to Create Jobs for Members," 14 May 2015, <http://www.acra24.com/2015/05/ndc-sets-up-committee-to-create-jobs.html>.
47. Afrobarometer, Afrobarometer Survey 2014 Ghana, n.d., <http://www.afrobarometer.org/countries/ghana-1>.
48. Dr. Kwasi Aning, "Ghana's Democracy is Not Intact," *GhanaWeb*, 25 October 2012, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Ghana-s-democracy-is-not-intact-Kwasi-Aning-254291>.
49. Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition, "Name and Shame Vote buying Parliamentary Aspirants-GACC Tells NPP," *Ghana News*, 16 June 2015, <http://www.ghananews24.com/news/name-and-shame-votebuying-parliamentary-aspirants-gacc-tells-npp>; *Ghana Web*, "Ablakwa Bought North Tongu NDC Parliamentary Primaries," 25 December 2015, <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Ablakwa-bought-North-Tongu-NDC-primaries-403257>.
50. Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi and Victor Brobbey, "Countries at the Crossroads: Ghana," *Freedom House*, 20 September 2012, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/505c1732c.html>.
51. Heinz Jockers, Paul Nugent and Dirk Kohnert, "The Successful Ghana Election of 2008: A Convenient Myth?," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 48, no. 1, 2010, 95-116.
52. Linda Akraasi, "'All Die Be Die' is to Inspire Party Agents —Nana Addo," *Ghanaian Chronicle*, 29 April 2011, <http://thechronicle.com.gh/category/news/page/1185/>.
53. Jeremy Pope, *Confronting Corruption: The Elements of a National Integrity System*, TI, 2000, <http://www.transparency.org.nz/docs/2000/Elements-of-a-National-Integrity-System.pdf>, 2.
54. The World Bank, "World Bank Report on Africa," accessed 18 April 2017, <http://www.transparency.org.nz/docs/2000/Elements-of-a-National-Integrity-System.pdf>.
55. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, "What is Good Governance?," accessed 18 April 2017, <http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governance.pdf>.
56. Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Address at Madison Square Garden, New York City," 31 October 1936, published online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project, accessed 18 April 2017, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=15219>.
57. United States v Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs and Others, 1998, 1 LRC 614.

58. President Woodrow Wilson (speech, New York, 9 September 1912).
59. Oscar Aria Sanchez, president of Costa Rica (1986–90) in Jeremy Pope's *Confronting Corruption: The Elements of a National Integrity System*, ix.
60. Pope, *Confronting Corruption*, 33.
61. President Wilson, speech.
62. Pope, *Confronting Corruption*, x.