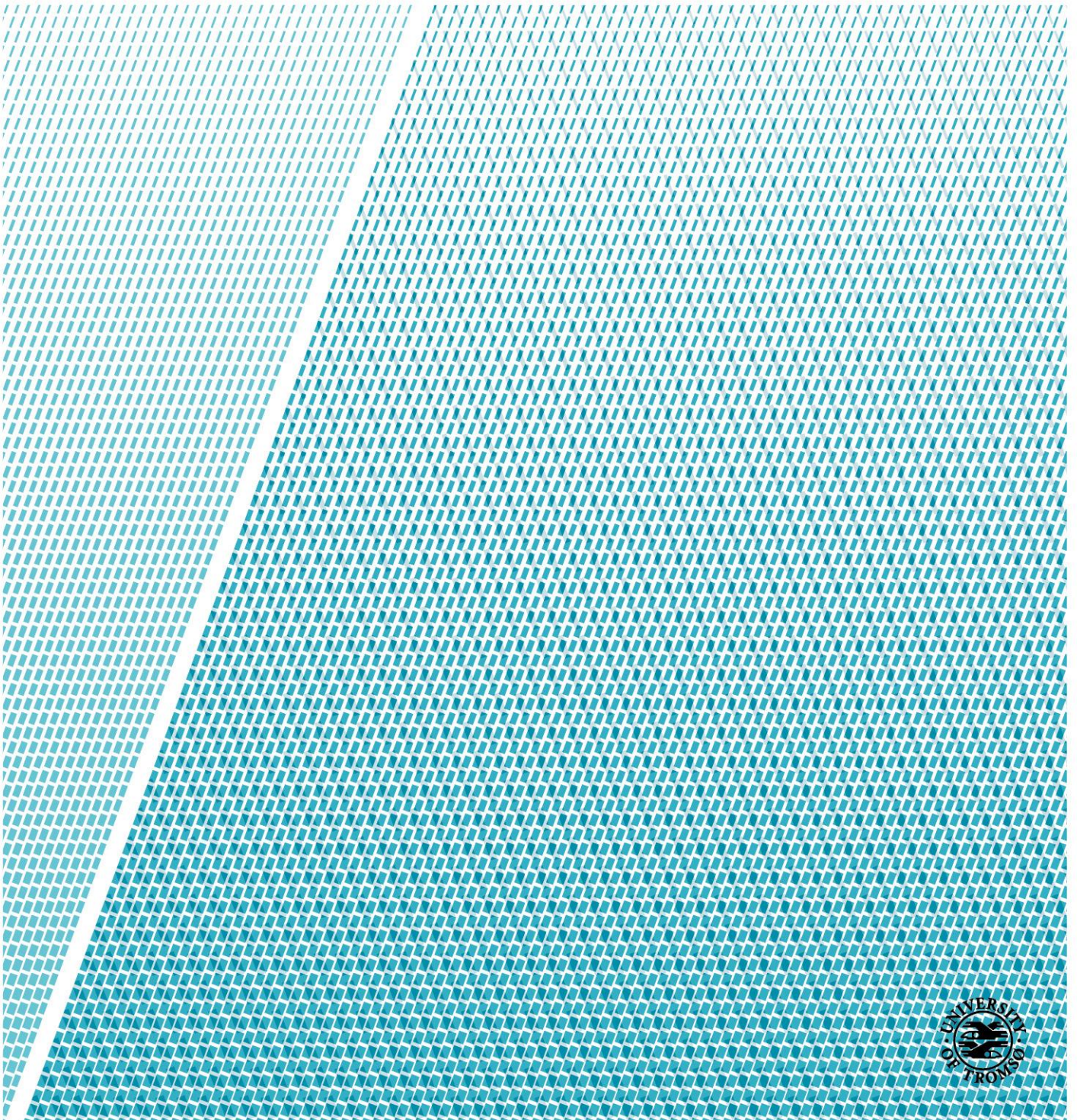


# **A Decade of National Infrastructure for Peace: Assessing the Role of The National Peace Council in Ghanaian Elections**

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*Master's thesis in Peace and Conflict Transformation ... May 2017*



## **DEDICATION**

To these wonderful women; Maame O. Boateng, Mama O. Timah, Mad. Faustina Kumi, and Patricia, Abigail, Emmanuella, Sandra.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

My profound thanks to the Almighty God for bringing me this far in life.

Thanks to my supervisor Dr Randolph Wallace Rhea for his knowledgeable directions to the study.

My appreciation to my family and friends for their support and inspiration.

I say thank you to all my research participants without whose help this study would not have been a reality.

Finally, I thank the staff of the Center for Peace Studies, University of Tromso for their significant contribution.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study focuses on national infrastructure for peace and elections. The study assesses the role played by the National Peace Council (NPC) in promoting peace during elections in Ghana. The main aim of the study is to research into how well the activities and mechanisms of the NPC promoted peace in the recent election. It also shows the challenges that affect the NPC's promotion of peace during elections. Moreover, the study highlights the specific activities which the NPC used to promote peace in the elections. To achieve its aims the study used the semi-structured interview methods to ascertain the perspectives of informants from three groups namely the NPC, the political parties in Ghana and public-students group. The concepts used in the study include peacebuilding, local or 'national' ownership and infrastructure for peace.

The findings of the study indicate that the activities and mechanisms of the NPC promoted peace during the elections. Also, the study discovered from informant's perspective that, the violence that characterises the elections in Ghana is attributed to factors related to the Ghanaian political culture and political policies that obstruct peace work during elections.

The study therefore suggests that, peacebuilding requires the collaboration and cooperation of all peace stakeholders from all levels of the society to develop mechanism that deals with conflict through non-violent means. Further, it shows the importance of building national infrastructures for peace that is tasked with structuring mechanisms which are known to the people to achieve democratic peace and stability.

**Master's Thesis, Title:**

**A DECADE OF NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR PEACE:  
ASSESSING THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL IN GHANAIAN  
ELECTIONS.**

**Kelvin Owusu.**

**List of abbreviations**

NPC- National Peace Council

NPP- New Patriotic Party

NDC-National Democratic Party

NRPAC- Northern Region Peace Advisory Committee

UNDP- United Nations development Programme

USAID-United States Agency for International Development

RPC-Regional Peace Council

DPC-District Peace Council

UN-United Nations

EU-European Union

CSO-Civil Society Organisations

IDEG- Institute for Democratic Governance

IEA- Institute of Economic Affairs

NCCE- National Commission for Civic Education

EC- Electoral Commission

I4Ps-Infrastructure for Peace

MUSIGA-Musicians Union of Ghana

WANEP - West Africa Network for Peacebuilding

BNI-Bureau of National Investigation

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# Chapter 1: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

## 1.1 Introduction and background

Elections in Africa have attained a reputation of violence and fraud. Most countries on the continent have experienced several uncertainties and violence in the episodes of elections which has resulted in the destruction of lives, livelihoods and properties. Elections in countries such as Nigeria in 2003, Kenya in 2007, Zimbabwe in 2000 and many others recorded violence leading to injuries and deaths (Atuobi, 2008). Amidst these uncertainties and violence, the international community has often used Ghana's image as an example of African peace for other less democratic African countries to emulate (Amankwaah, 2013). The country is often perceived by the international community as one which enjoys peace. This perception is perhaps attributed to the fact that, Ghana has never experienced a full-blown conflict on the national level after its independence; also since the reinsertion of elections in 1992, the country has not experience a major election standoff and violent conflict like her counterparts in the sub-Saharan Africa namely Togo, Ivory Coast, Kenya etc. Gyimah-Boadi affirms that, Ghana have been politically stable after recent elections and her success in the event has established her place as Africa's beacon of hope for democracy (2009, p. 138).

The country has already had eight consecutive elections since 1992 in its fourth republic<sup>1</sup>. These elections have succeeded in three successful transition of power between the two major political parties in the country. In the 2000 election, the incumbent political party, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) lost the presidential run-off election to the main opposition party, the New Patriotic Party (NPP). Against the fears of the international community and Ghanaians, the ruling party conceded defeat and submitted to the rule of the electorate. This act came at the back of having ruled for 19 years<sup>2</sup> as well as entrenched interest from beneficiaries of the government actively campaigning for the ruling party not to hand over power to the opposition candidate (Ojielo, 2007, p. 1). In the 2008 presidential run-off election, the then ruling NPP lost to the NDC this time around. Here again, even though tensions mounted in the final stages of the

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<sup>1</sup> The 4th Republic marks the era where military rule ended to reinstate election in 1992. It highlights the strides in the beginning of democracy-building, and examines the degree to which it foretells hope for sub-Saharan Africa (Gyimah-Boadi, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> The then ruling party was the National Democratic Party (NDC). It was an offshoot of the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), the military government which was headed by Ft. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings, which has been in power from 1981 to 1992. It won the first elections in the 4<sup>th</sup> republic and continued to rule until 2000. See (Morrison, 2004).

elections, there was a peaceful transition of power from the ruling party to the opposition. Again, the successes of the 2012 elections further deepened Ghana's democratic status. Upon the opposition party's reluctance in accepting the results of the presidential election, they resorted to court to contest the election outcome which they deemed "unfair" and "stolen"(Amankwaah, 2013). The opposition party's decision to take the matter to court abetted the avoidance of unrest in the aftermaths of the elections. Another peaceful power transition happened in the 2016 elections which the NDC transferred power to the NPP.

Due to these instances, scholars like Gyimah-Boadi (2008), Ojielo (2007) etc. have tended to agree with the international community<sup>3</sup> that; Ghana is peaceful and enjoys free and fair elections, and for that matter, it is in plainly contrast to many of its counterparts in Africa. But this assumption is not entirely the case when one critically examine the Ghanaian political culture as well as its electoral process. Like most of its counterparts on the continent, Ghana has experienced a series of coup d'état and military regimes in the past; it has also seen numerous ethnic and identity conflict especially in the northern part of the country; also, chieftaincy and violent land disputes as well as election violence have all been experienced in most of its communities. For these reasons, Ghana is also prone to the civil wars faced by other African countries. Also, Jockers, Kohnert, and Nugent (2010, p. 95) has warned that, Ghana's successful elections and transition of power should not be used to cover the existence of what appears to be a long history of election malpractices<sup>4</sup> in the country. In their opinion, the country's fraudulent voting record has amounted to a dangerous time bomb of unresolved conflicts that can detonate during elections in the future. Hence, the perception of peace and stability cannot be used as a guarantee for long term peace especially when there has been continues evidence of myriad conflicts at the community and local level resulting from civil and labor unrest, chieftaincy, land disputes, inter/intra political conflict and among others (Ojielo, 2007).<sup>5</sup> These types of conflict I have just indicated coupled with the pockets of violence which arises during elections in the country have the potential to produce violent conflict on a large scale. Hence to disregard the incidents that befall throughout elections in Ghana is also possibly to overlook the warning signs of potential explosion of violence on the national scale (Jockers et al., 2010). Elections in Ghana have continuously been characterized by some forms of electoral fraud resulting from over

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<sup>3</sup> Amankwaah states that, the international community has framed Ghana as a unique bastion of democracy and peace on the continent of Africa (2013, p. 5).

<sup>4</sup> Election malpractices in Ghana includes vote rigging, ballot box stuffing, and stealing of ballot boxes (Bob-Milliar, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> In some cases, these types of conflicts in Ghana are exacerbated during elections for political gains.

voting, stealing of ballot boxes by “macho men”<sup>6</sup>, and intimidations from opposing parties in the so-called strongholds of the main political parties. The country has a long history of fraudulent voting, block voting and rigging which has compounded in electoral malpractices. These electoral malpractices and the evidence of election violence often creates fear in the public and threatens the stability of the country (Amankwaah, 2013; Jockers et al., 2010).

To curb these tensions and threats of potential national level violence, several state and non-state actors in and outside the country have been involved in peace promotion during elections. The National Peace Council (NPC), which is the center of this study is the institution with the constitutional mandate to act as an umbrella body to promote stable peace in the country. Since its establishment in 2006, the NPC has been actively involved in promoting peace across the length and breadth of the country. Their activities have included promoting peace through a diplomatic mechanism on cases ranging from chieftaincy disputes, land, inter-tribal conflict etc. But as some scholars like C. Kumar (2011, p. 395) perceives elections to be a vital tool for a country’s stability if it is free, fair and peaceful, and the opposite as a sign for a failing government or a destabilizing country, Awinador-Kanyirige (2014) says that, the National Peace Council have been actively involved in dealing with the violence that comes with elections in Ghana. But the study asserts that, even though the NPC acknowledges election-related violence as a potential cause of a major violent conflict in Ghana, its’ work has not been able to eradicate the violence that occurs during elections. The reason for this could be that, the mechanisms and strategies used by the NPC are unable to provide enabling environment for peaceful elections or there may be other factors in the Ghanaian political system which are out of the jurisdiction of the Peace council obstructing the promotion of peaceful elections. The study therefore attempts to research into the reasons behind the continues violence in Ghanaian elections.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

The study is of the view that, since the reintroduction of elections in 1992 in Ghana, almost all elections conducted has been characterized with violence. We would have thought that the existence of the NPC since 2006 would improve or prevent this election-related violence. Despite the presence of the NPC, the Ghanaian society becomes polarized before, during and after elections. What then could be behind the occurrence of these violence? Does the NPC’s approach, strategy and mechanism promote peace (or have shortfalls)? Or are there other

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<sup>6</sup> “Macho men” is a general term in Ghana used to refer to men who have progressively built their bodies.

external factors which are out of the hands of the NPC affecting the promotion of peaceful elections?

These can be understood by critically assessing the activities or roles of the NPC in the presence of elections in Ghana. The research will seek to study the composition and some of the activities that the council performs before, during and after elections to promote peace. It will also focus on how the NPC's approaches have been successful in preventing elections-related violence as well as how it has been problematic.

### **1.2.1 Objective of the study**

The main objective of this study is to find out if the roles and the approaches of the NPC really promotes peace before, during and after elections in Ghana. The study also intends to research the factors that causes the continues violence in the Ghanaian election.

### **1.2.2 Research questions**

- a) What are the activities and mechanisms used by the NPC to promote peace during elections in Ghana? How well did these activities and mechanisms promote peace in the recent elections?
- b) What are the constraints and challenges that affect the NPC's promotion of peace during elections.

'Recent elections' is used here to represent the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2008, 2012, and 2016. The study's motive of using these elections as a point of discussion is that, the NPC was established in the year 2006 and it was very instrumental in these three elections. So, using these elections will help us to critically analyse and compare the roles they played in the elections.

## **1.3 Instances of Electoral Violence in Africa**

This section briefly outlines instances to support the argument that election violence indeed exist in Africa and Ghana is not insulated from it.

Following the end of the Cold War, the institutionalisation of multi-party democracy was considered indispensable for establishing peace and political stability in Africa. Odukoya (2007) asserts that, the fundamental notion behind this position undertaken by western democracies was to use liberal democracy and elections on the African continent as mechanisms for peace-building. Elections are therefore considered a crucial element of democracy. However, unlike

those in the developed world, elections in most African countries are characterised with violence, fraud and doubts of post-election peace. This is due to the likelihood of violence which may occur at different periods of the electoral process i.e. before, during or after elections. In Nigeria for instance, at least 100 people were killed and many more injured in the 2003 federal and state elections (Atuobi, 2008). Also reports indicates that, over 300 lives were lost by the end of the 2007 elections Nigerian election (Collier & Vicente, 2014, p. 331).<sup>7</sup>

In the Ivory Coast, two candidates claimed victory in the presidential elections in 2010. This was followed by a continues post-election standoff and chaos for about four month. Goldsmith (2015, p. 818) indicates that, over a thousand Ivoirians lost their lives with a million fleeing their country for safety. Togo, which also shares close borders with Ghana also experienced similar situation in its 2005 presidential election. The opposition group's position to reject the outcome of the election results resulted in several days of intense social unrest (Jones, 2009, p. 62). According to Aljazeera news, the UN reported that the death toll was between 400 to 500 as results of disputed election outcome in 2005.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, about 600 people were reported killed during the December 2007 elections following disputes and clashes over the results of the Kenyan presidential elections (Atuobi, 2008, p. 10).

The figures are just alarming. We can continue with the recent case of the Gambia elections in December 2016 which also resulted in a standoff for several months. Also the August 2007 run-off elections in Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe in 2000 and 2005, Uganda, Ethiopia, Chad, Zambia have all had their share of violence elections <sup>9</sup>. These examples attest to the fact that elections and its related malpractices and violence exist in almost all elections in the democratic developing countries of Africa. Unlike in consolidated democracies and the developed world where election processes are orderly coordinated, in third world countries, elections are frequently marred with uncertainties, rigging, intimidation of voters, electoral fraud, fear and panic, fleeing and displacement of citizens and even deaths from civil war. Ghana's election is not free from the features I have mentioned above. In most of the country's elections, there have been reported cases of electoral malpractices and violence. Like her African counterparts, such features are capable of erupting into a major violence or unrest especially when they have

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<sup>7</sup> Also reported by the Human Rights Watch; Online: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2011/05/16/nigeria-post-election-violence-killed-800> .

<sup>8</sup> Al Jazeera news (06 March 2010 20:55 GMT), Protests over Togo election results. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2010/03/201036203745963439.html>

<sup>9</sup> Atuobi (2008)

continuously and conveniently been roofed, yet the international community considers its elections as free, fair and peaceful.

The next section reveals some similar cases of election related violence which are even more dangerous because they have not been dealt with overtime and have the possibility of exploding to jeopardise the peace of the country.

### **1.3.1 Violence and electoral malpractices in Ghana's elections**

The occurrence of election-related violence on the African continent is so high that even an election which is thought to be free and fair in electoral process and outcome may not have been free of violence during its process. In Africa, elections are periods during which a country's stability and security are constantly in a precarious condition and this is as a result of the danger of violence which happens in relation to the elections (Atuobi, 2008, p. 11). The case of Ghana is not an exception to this fact but as Amankwaah (2013) has revealed, media reports in the event of violence in Ghanaian elections are often infrequent and a few studies prioritize the issue of violence.

In 1992, the NPP complained of massive irregularities in the presidential elections. They therefore rejected the results of the elections and refused to partake in the parliamentary elections that followed. Jeffries and Thomas (1993, p. 331) emphasizes that, due to this, the opposition NPP and other anti-(P)NDC groups organized demonstrations which at some point ended in public riots, curfews and bombings<sup>10</sup> in some parts of the country which included Kumasi, Tema, Accra and Tamale. Although these incidents were later calmed by traditional and religious leaders who convinced the opposition party and the public allow peace to reign, there were several reported injuries and destruction of state properties.

A research carried out by Bob-Milliar (2014, p. 136) also indicates that, there were reports of widespread stealing and padding<sup>11</sup> of ballot boxes in 1992, 1996, 2000 and the 2004 elections. In all these elections, there has also been reported cases of electoral fraud, the presence of "macho men" molestation and intimidations of voters by the two main opposing parties in the stronghold of each opponent, and dissatisfaction of results in some polling stations. These acts led to violence involving supporters of both the ruling party and the opposition (Amankwaah,

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<sup>10</sup> There were riots in Kumasi which led to the nuisance of a dusk-to-dawn curfew until 9 November. Also, three bombs were blasted in Tema and Accra which resulted in massive injuries (Jeffries & Thomas, 1993).

<sup>11</sup> Padding or stuffing of ballot boxes here refers to where pre-cast ballot papers are put into ballot boxes prior to the scheduled casting of votes (Bob-Milliar, 2014, p. 136).

2013; Bob-Milliar, 2014). Further, Ojielo (2007) indicates that in the aftermath of the 2000 presidential election which the NPP (John Agyekum Kuffour ) won, most supporters of the then ruling NDC actively campaigned and charged their president (Jerry John Rawlings ) who have been in power for 19 years not to hand over power to the winning opposition candidate heightening fear and panic in the country in that period.

The 2004 and 2008 presidential and parliamentary elections were not different from the cases I have indicated. Even though Bob-Milliar (2014) has stressed that, violence was less in the former because there was no obvious open seat for presidency, he highlights the increase of violence in the 2008 elections. He indicates that, the increased violence was caused by of the keen competition for power between the two main parties.

### **1.3.2 Elections reawaken chieftaincy disputes**

Another violence which occurs during elections is when long standing chieftaincy feuds are rekindled by the activities of the two main political parties in competition. The case of Yendi and Bawku in the northern part of Ghana is a typical example of this conflict. Amankwaah (2013) emphasizes that, people in these areas of Ghana are critical of elections since the possibility of gaining rights and support of the political party which wins the elections have the capability to influence chieftaincy disputes. The two Dagomba faction groups are directly tied to their preferred party in the hope that it wins the election. By this, the two-major political parties have managed to aggravate series of clashes between the Dagomba faction groups especially before elections to benefit from the divisions to gain votes.

### **1.3.3 The 2012 elections**

The 2012 election was characterized with provocative insults and verbal attacks on political figures of the opposite camps by the two main political parties (NPP and NDC). Also, Bob-Milliar (2014) indicates that, the activities of staunch supporters of political parties who are referred as “foot soldiers”<sup>12</sup> were created violence during the elections. Party foot soldiers activities include using illegal means to seize local control of income-generating community facilities (such as municipal parking lots and pay toilets) from appointed custodians, who are perpetually identified as supporters of the opposing party.<sup>13</sup> Further, they point out the “do-or-

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<sup>12</sup> “Foot soldiers” in the Ghanaian political system is the term or name given to activists who offer a kind of whole-heartedness support to their respective political party and its candidates during election period and, in turn, are rewarded with private pay-offs in return for their continued devotion and activities.

<sup>13</sup> Gyimah-Boadi and Prempeh (2012, pp. 101,102)



die” adventure by both parties during the election campaigns<sup>14</sup>. Amankwaah (2013) also indicates the series of accusations and counter- accusations by political parties concerning cheating and buying of votes. In highlighting some of the key challenges of the 2012 Ghana elections in their statement, WANEP (2012) also reported cases involving burning and attempted snatching of ballots boxes in some polling areas<sup>15</sup>. In the end the opposition NPP rejected the results of the presidential elections which the EC presented to Ghanaians. Fears were however calmed when the opposition NPP decided to go to court to contest the election results.<sup>16</sup>

### **1.3.4 The 2016 elections**

In the December 2016 elections, the violent features in the Ghanaian politics did not change. The country experienced several cases which increasingly doubts its touted democratic and peaceful election status. Prior to the election, the political atmosphere was not only filled with insults, provocative utterances and verbal attacks on political figures as seen in the previous elections, but also physical confrontations and intimidations between the ruling NDC and the opposition NPP which posed treat to the country’s peace and stability. Notably of these events is the killing of a top NPP politician who also happens to be a member of parliament for Abuakwa North, J.B. Danquah at his residence in February 2016. Police investigations could not prove the incident was an act of robbery leading to many believing his death was linked to the vehement political atmosphere (or a contract killing<sup>17</sup>).<sup>18</sup> In the following month, three South African nationals were arrested and deported by the Bureau of National Investigation (BNI); their charge was that, they have been involved in using weapons to train personal bodyguards for the flagbearer and running mate of the opposition party. The BNI and the Police suspected that, they were not only training bodyguards but also, men who could be used for other intended purposes.<sup>19</sup> This security and “government” intimidations did not stop. Rather it was followed in few days later by the National security and the Police who also raided a think tank group called the Danquah institute

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<sup>14</sup> Gyimah-Boadi and Prempeh (2012)

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.wanep.org/wanep/files/2012/pr\\_2012\\_dec\\_statement\\_on\\_elections\\_2012.pdf](http://www.wanep.org/wanep/files/2012/pr_2012_dec_statement_on_elections_2012.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> (Myjoyonline.com/Ghana) <http://politics.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201212/99246.php>

<sup>17</sup> “It should be obvious to everybody that this is contract killing. We trust that very soon, it will come to the fore as to who is responsible for this dastardly act of murder.” – lawyer Atta Akyea. (citifmonline.com/Ghana) <http://citifmonline.com/2016/02/09/jb-danquahs-death-was-contract-killing-atta-akyea/>

<sup>18</sup> (Myjoyonline.com/Ghana) <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2016/February-9th/breaking-abuakwa-north-mp-gunned-down.php>

<sup>19</sup> (Myjoyonline.com/Ghana) <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2016/march-22nd/terror-alert-bni-picks-up-3-sa-nationals-over-suspicious-conduct.php>

which is an affiliate of the opposition NPP.<sup>20</sup> The events triggered dozens of NPP supporters to gather at the Nima residence of the NPP flagbearer, Nana Akuffo Addo to protect him.

In the aftermaths of the 2016 elections, there were series of intimidations by supporters of the party that won the elections. They claim that they had faced a similar situation when the NDC won power in 2008. Right after the inauguration of the new president, there were several reported cases of attacks in some areas against supporter of the newly opposition NDC. Among these included some youth of the governing NPP who were on rampage locking and completely taking over some state institutions illegally in Tamale, Kumasi and Accra. The “invincible forces” as they were called claimed that, they were exacting vengeance for what they went through in the hands NDC when it won power in the 2008 elections. They besieged offices like the passport office in Accra, the National Health insurance offices, the Rattray Park in Kumasi, the Youth Employment Agency (YEA) and National Disaster Management Office (NADMO) in Sagnerigu district<sup>21</sup>. These by force office takeovers led to a series of violent clashes and tensions around the country between supporters of the ruling NPP and the opposition NDC. In Ejura in the Ashanti region for instance, at least four people were shot following a clash between members of the NPP and the opposition NDC over school feeding in one of the public schools<sup>22</sup>; Also, in Begoro of the Fanteakwa district of the Eastern region, tension erupted between the two groups of supporters in the wake of the sacking of all Municipal, Metropolitan and District Chief Executives by the new President<sup>23</sup>; also at Agbogbloshie in Accra, the timely intervention by Police and the Ghana Armed Forces prevented what could have been a bloody confrontation between supporters of NPP and NDC.

We continue to praise Ghana as a peaceful and democratic nation which other African counterparts should follow as example of peace and democracy, but we forget that the country’s election violence has the capacity to explode into a full conflict which can result in several people getting injured and some losing their lives.

We can consider the position of the NPP to resolve the 2012 presidential election in court to be democratically correct and a step forward in deepening democracy in Ghana, but what if it has

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<sup>20</sup> (Myjoyonline.com/Ghana) <http://www.myjoyonline.com/politics/2016/March-25th/danquah-institute-raid-npp-accuses-national-security-of-doing-bidding-of-govt-ndc.php>

<sup>21</sup> (Myjoyonline.com/Ghana) <http://www.myjoyonline.com/politics/2017/January-9th/irate-npp-youth-on-rampage-spree-locking-offices-driving-out-workers.php>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/4-shot-in-Ejura-as-NPP-NDC-supporters-clash-500438>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.ghanagrio.com/news/politics/313890-npp-ndc-supporters-clash-at-fanteakwa.html>

decided against a court procedure or even did not agree with the verdict of the court which they eventually lost. What could have happened then? Also, there seem to be an act of vengeance in the minds of supporters of the two major political parties and this has been left to continue without proper measures to curb it. Can African countries have elections like the western countries where not a single soul will be lost? The instances above clearly contradict the perceptions that the international community have about Ghana's elections. The cases therefore vindicate the intuitive questions I have earlier raised and quest for alternatives that can enhance election free violence.

In response to the violence however, several groups including the NPC have been working to promote peace and stability. Chapter two will discuss in detail the mandate, structure and work of the peace council. Now the next section will briefly outline other groups which also get involve in peace promotion in Ghana. Most of these groups often partner with the National Peace Council in undertaking its activities.

#### **1.4 Contribution by civil society organizations**

Several institutions, traditional leaders, non-state and state agencies have been actively being involved in managing or curbing the situations to prevent them from escalating into war. Some of these agencies includes Non-State Organizations such as the Ark Foundation, Musicians Union of Ghana (MUSIGA); also, chiefs, religious leaders, media groups and other influential personalities gets involve in the peace promotion process. Moreover, the work of some key state institutions like the National Security Council and security agencies like the Ghana police service and army, the National House of Chiefs, National Peace Council etc. cannot be left out. The MUSIGA for example composes peace songs to notify the youth of the importance of peace in the country (Tekpor, 2016). In churches pastors and leaders get involve to preach peace to the public. Also chiefs like the Otumfuo of the Ashanti kingdom occasionally call upon political leaders to allow peace to reign (Kotia & Aubyn, 2013a). Also, celebrities, footballers, the media groups organize peace walks and games during election period avoid violence. Moreover, international groups like West African Network for Peace (WANEP), UNDP, and the USAID also partner with the peace council to execute its peace activities. In all these, the National Peace Council is the constitutionally mandated group which is tasked with making sure that the country's peace is not disturbed not by elections alone but all occurrences that can potentially disturb the country's peace.

## 1.5 Related Literature

Several studies give credence to election-related violence among African countries. In these studies, the researchers have given much emphasis on issues which relate to the undemocratic and malpractices that mars the electoral process as well as the violence that come with them. In the case of Nigeria, Togo, Kenya, and the Ivory coast, cases which include intimidation of voters, electoral malpractices, and the many unruly strategies which politicians use to arrive at their goals. The literatures indicate that these and similar related issues are the consequences of state turmoil, persons' displacement, loss of lives and destruction of property (Atuobi, 2008; Collier & Vicente, 2014; Goldsmith, 2015; Jones, 2009; Rawlence & Albin-Lackey, 2007)

While researchers like Gyimah-Boadi (2008, 2009); Ojielo (2007) tend to commend Ghana for its continued democratic and urges other African countries to use her as an example, scholars like Amankwaah (2013); Bob-Milliar (2014); Jeffries and Thomas (1993) has however indicated that, violence occurs during elections in Ghana. Bob-Milliar (2014) for instance indicates how low-intensity electoral violence in Ghana poses a threat to the peace and security of the country. In his submissions, he justifies how the activities of foot soldiers of both the NPP and NDC have resulted in violence in bye elections, and both parliamentary and presidential elections in Ghana. In the work of Amankwaah (2013), factors like ethnicity, employment and chieftaincy are presented as key causes of violence. She indicates for example how the political parties are tied to the factions involved in the Yendi and Bawku chieftaincy disputes.

In the works of these scholars, not much was said about building national mechanisms to prevent this violence that comes with elections in African countries. I must acknowledge that, scholars like Paul Van Tongeren, Chetan Kumar and De la Haye have all done extensive work on building Infrastructure for Peace on some developing countries (which includes Ghana) around the world. However, in all their works, none of them extensively discuss the architecture in the presence of election related violence. Van Tongeren for instance offer a broad description on the formation and compositions of the national architectures for peace around the world. Also, C. Kumar (2011) outlines the UN assistance for internally created infrastructures that deals with the solutions to violent conflict in general. In his article, he compares these Infrastructures to the Traditional approaches to conflict prevention.

One area of research which has not been explored in relation to the case of Ghana is the in-depth study of the NPC and its task of preventing election-related violence in Ghana. The areas which scholarly articles have not yet explored include; the reasons why the council has not guaranteed a

violence free elections in the country; and how issues such as winner-takes-all, party foot soldiers etc. which might be out of grips of the Council continues to be the key causes of violence during elections. Even though scholars like Ojielo (2007) and Kotia and Aubyn (2013a) appears to have worked on the NPC, both focused on its general mandate. In the work of these scholars for example, they presented the role of the national infrastructure for peace extensively in the light of all types of causes of violence in Ghana. This then creates a vacuum for an extensive work to be done on the Council in the light of elections and its related violence. Van Tongeren (2011a, p. 53) in a closing remarks conceivably acknowledges that, there is the need for a rigorous assessment of the impact of peace structures to establish the best design or structures for solutions to conflict. One approach to this is to monitor election and the violence that comes with it with an existing peace structure like the National Peace Council of Ghana. This study therefore attempts to assess the role of the NPC in promoting peace during Ghanaian elections.

### **1.6 Edifice of the Thesis**

The study is arranged into six chapters. The opening chapter has provided the background and introduced the main issues that informs the study. It has indicated the research problem, the significance of the study the research questions and discussed some scholarly works which are related to the core issues of this study. The succeeding chapter will primarily focus on the profile of the NPC; it will outline its composition, structure, task and some peace work it has executed in relation to elections in Ghana. The third chapter will present in detail the method used in getting data for the study. It will also share light on methodological issues which the researcher encountered during data collection from the research field. In the fourth chapter, conceptual issues that forms the fundamental notion of the study will be discussed in details. Issues which includes the concept of peacebuilding and national ownership as well as the concept of infrastructure for peace and elections is presented and discussed in the chapter to us know what informs the work of the NPC. Data obtained from the researcher's fieldwork in Ghana will be presented and analysed in the fifth chapter. In this chapter, narratives of informants are outlines under topics that forms the basis of our discussion and analytical contribution in the final chapter. The analytical contributions in the final chapter focuses on key issues which the study believes that through them peaceful elections can be achieved in Ghana.

## Chapter 2: PROFILE OF THE NPC

### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present a detail profile of the National Peace Council of Ghana. The chapter will feature a brief background, history and a detail description of the structure, mandate and composition of the NPC. Also, the strategic mechanisms used by the NPC to tackle conflict issues will be outlined. The chapter make use of information from documents such as the National Peace Councils Act, the five-year strategic plan document which spans from 2013 to 2017, and other scholarly articles on the NPC.

### 2.2 Background of the NPC

The National Peace Council of Ghana is an example of a national level ‘Infrastructure for Peace (I4Ps)’ which Van Tongeren describes in his article *‘Increasing interest in Infrastructures for Peace’* as “ a development of institutional mechanisms, appropriate to each country’s culture, which promotes...a cooperative problem-solving approach to conflict based on dialogue and non-violence which includes all stakeholders” (2011a, p. 49). Such an establishment involves enacting statutory measures with appropriate budget to form peace councils at the national, district and local levels which comprises of highly respected and reliable persons. Their task is to bring together divisions created by politics and other factors and transform conflicts for a stable peace and democracy (Van Tongeren, 2011a, p. 49).

The NPC of Ghana is the country’s mandated infrastructure for peace at the national level enshrined in the constitution. It is an independent constitutional national peace institution established by the eight hundred and eighteenth (818) Act of the Parliament of the Republic of Ghana, called The National Peace Council Act, 2011. This means that, all activities undertaken by the Council are derived from the Act 818 of the parliament of Ghana. The main task of the Council is to facilitate and develop mechanisms to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict and to build sustainable peace. The Peace council enjoys the autonomy to establish its priorities and regulates the use of allocated resources. This is stated emphatically in the Act; “Except as provided in the Constitution, the Council is not subject to the direction, control of any person or authority in the performance of its functions”.<sup>24</sup> The Council does have and values this sought of independence provided by the Act. This enables the governing board the freedom of establishing

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<sup>24</sup> National Peace Council Act 818, 2011.

committees from members or non-members or both to perform to operate on certain issues. Members of the Council are precluded from participating in active party politics.<sup>25</sup> Although the Act 818 of the NPC was enacted in the year 2011, the council has been in existence and operational since 2006.

### **2.3 Brief history of the formation of the NPC**

The NPC came into being due to the successful works of the Northern Region Peace Advisory Committee (NRPAC) and another peace group which was established in 2005 in the Volta region of Ghana. The NRPAC was made up of representatives of Traditional Chiefs, Christians and Muslim bodies, Women and Youth groups as well as security agencies. The NRPAC was set up after the 2002 Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict<sup>26</sup> as an arbitration and conflict resolving mechanism to promote trust among the conflicting groups and bring back mutual belief and peaceful relations (Kotia & Aubyn, 2013a). The successes of the NRPAC and that of the Volta peace committee which was established by the Volta Regional Coordinating Council in 2005 to conciliate on the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict in the Volta region of Ghana prompted the government of Ghana to use the opportunity to create an akin group for the country (Awinador-Kanyirige, 2014; Van Tongeren, 2011b).

Through UNDP's technical and financial support and the assistance of relevant key national stakeholders such as the National Security Council (NSC), the Council was formed during a review workshop on the work of the NRPAC. The Ministry of Interior's proposal for the establishment of the NPC received a comprehensive consent of parliament as well as various political parties and other stakeholders<sup>27</sup>. The formation of the NPC was also in accordance with the outcome of the conference on stability, security and development in Africa which was held in Durban in 2002. Ghana's effort in implementing the resolution of the African Leaders during the meeting pushed for the creation of a National Architecture for Peace in the country, i.e. the NPC.<sup>28</sup> According to Van Tongeren (2011b, p. 407), the NPC of Ghana is the first official national level program on promoting peace on the continent of Africa.

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<sup>25</sup> National Peace Council Act 818, 2011.

<sup>26</sup> The Dagbon chieftaincy conflict involves members of two clans (the Abudu and Andani) both of whom are making claim of choosing the next Ya Na, the king of the people of Dagomba. (Tonah, 2012)

<sup>27</sup> (Kotia & Aubyn, 2013a)

<sup>28</sup> (Van Tongeren, 2011b)

## 2.4 Structure and Mandate

The governing body of the NPC as stipulated in Act 818 is a board which consist of thirteen distinguished members who are selected by Christian and Muslim bodies, Traditional groups and other identifiable groups. The president of the republic is also mandated to nominate two people to the governing board. The Act refers to ‘identifiable groups’ as groups that “includes institutions of higher learning and civil society organisations involved in conflict resolution and peace building;”. The council members are individuals who are highly respected across the country. They are also seen as people who are truthful and can be trusted. They possess professional integrity and have good moral standing. In Van Tongeren view, the calibre of the NPC’s members, which is the truthfulness and decency they hold (both individually and together as a group) makes the council a nonpartisan body enabling a platform for structuring collaborative problem solving mechanisms on possible conflict-ridden issues as well as promoting reconciliation nation-wide (2011a). The table below indicates how members of the governing board at the national level are selected to the council by their groups.

Table 1. Membership of the Governing Board of the National Peace Council

One representative from each of the following religious and traditional bodies who are nominated by the concerned bodies.			<b>Presidential nominees and nominations by identifiable groups.</b>
<b>Christian groups</b>	<b>Muslim groups</b>	<b>Traditional bodies</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Catholic Bishops Conference.</li> <li>➤ Christian Council</li> <li>➤ Ghana Pentecostal Council</li> <li>➤ National Council for Christians and Charismatic Churches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission</li> <li>➤ Al-Sunnah Muslims</li> <li>➤ Tijaaniya Muslim group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Practitioners of African Traditional Religions.</li> <li>➤ National House of Chiefs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Two persons nominated by the president of Ghana, one of whom must be a woman.</li> <li>➤ Two other persons nominated by identifiable groups.</li> </ul>

Source: **National Peace Council Act 818, 2011.**<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> National Peace Council Act 818, 2011.



It can be realised from the table that; the religious bodies and traditional groups nominate a member each from their ranks. The other four members are nominated by the president of the republic and identifiable groups which includes institutions of higher learning and civil society groups who are involved in conflict resolution and peace building. Among the two-presidential nominees, one must be a female. Although the tenure of office for members is four years, persons can be re-appointed by their groups. The governing board of the council meets at least once every month to deliberate on matters of concerned. However, they may also meet upon the request of not less than one third of the board in writing for extra ordinary meetings. In the event of deliberation, matters before the board are determined by consensus, but in a situation where it is not possible, a simple majority of the available members is used. The board can also co-opt a person for advices or assistance during meetings.<sup>30</sup>

From the table, we also realize that whiles the Christian bodies provide four individuals, the Muslim bodies and the traditional bodies provide three and two persons respectively. According to Kotia and Aubyn (2013a), the number of individuals representing each of the religious groupings reflects their percentage distribution of Ghana's population. They further assert that; the representation of the bodies mirrors the high level of respect Ghanaians give to religious leaders; often they are not partial and stay away from partisan politics. Also, they are people who possess the capability of resolving conflicting issues due to the social nature of their activities. Nomination of members to the council is done based on agreement by each of the religious groups.

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<sup>30</sup> National Peace Council Act 818, 2011.

In a phone interview with a staff of the NPC, she expressed that, the current members as at December 2016 of the national governing board. Below is table 2 which outlines the names of these members and the respective bodies they represent.

	<b>Names of Current Members</b>	<b>Bodies or Groups of Representation</b>
1	Most Rev. Vincent Sowah Boi Nai	Catholic Bishop's Conference
2	Rev. Dr. Ernest Adu Gyamfi	Christian Council
3	Apostle Prof. Opoku Onyinah	Ghana Pentecostal Council
4	Arch Bishop Nicholas Duncan Williams	National Council for Christian and charismatic Churches
5	Maulvi Mohammed Bin Salih	Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission
6	Shiekh Mahmoud Gedel	Al-Sunnah Muslim Mission
7	Imam Awal Shaibu	Tijaaniya Muslim Group
8	Osofo Kofi Atabuatsi	Practitioners of African Traditional Religion
9	Nana Susubribi Krobea Asante	National House of Chiefs
10	Mr. Shaibu Abubakar	Identifiable Group
11	Rev. Dr. Nii Amoo Darku	Identifiable Group
12	Most Rev. Prof. Emmanuel K. Asante	President's Nominee
13	Nana Agyakoma Difie II	President's Nominee

#### **2.4.1 Structure of The Council**

The National Peace Council, as recognised by law, has a structure of three distinct levels. These levels consist of the national governing body, the ten administrative regions and the 212 districts of Ghana. At all levels, membership consist of thirteen persons nominated as indicated in the table 1 above. The nature of the structure enhances the involvement of all stakeholders in the prevention, resolution and management of conflicts at all levels of the Ghanaian society. In one of my interviews, an informant from the council revealed that, nine regions out of ten (i.e. apart from the Greater Accra Regional Peace Council-RPC) regional peace councils had been established. It was also revealed in the same interview that only three<sup>31</sup> of the District Peace Councils (DPCs) have been established. The representative pattern of the RPCs and DPCs is not

<sup>31</sup> They included the Nadowli Kaleo, Asunafo North and the Winneba DPCs.

different from the national level. However, the appointment of authority follows a different system. The Act indicates that, in both the RPCs and DPCs, the governing board of the NPC in consultation with the regional co-ordinating councils and the district assemblies appoint the members after their nomination by the respective bodies to make up the council. The NPC Act 818 also make provisions for executive secretaries at all levels of the Peace Council. These secretaries are responsible for the day to day administration of the councils and they also act as technical advisors to the members of the council. Interestingly, each office of the council from the national to district level is administratively run by an executive secretary who is appointed by the president in accordance with the Article 195 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana.<sup>32</sup>

The NPC has created a Peace Building Support Unit (PBSU) as per the Act 818 within interior ministry. This unit serves as the link between the government and the NPC. It coordinates on behalf of the government to facilitate support from government institutions for the work of the NPC. In addition, it enables the operation of the council's recommendations addressed to the government or its agencies; and manages government's early warning and analysis.<sup>33</sup>

## **2.5 Strategic Mechanisms of work.**

In executing its mandate as enshrined in the Act, the NPC have adopted many strategies to address issues that creates instability in the country. It is through these strategies and mechanisms that enables the council to effectively carry out its activities to make sure that Ghana's peace is not disturbed. These mechanisms include skills to prevent, manage and resolve conflict. Also, strategic measures are used by the council in educating the public to become effective peace builders. For the sake of the focus of this study, emphasis will be placed on the issues concerned with elections. Most of the issues presented in this section were revealed by informants from the NPC during my field work in Ghana.

### **2.5.1 Networking, Partnership and collaboration**

During presidential and parliamentary elections in Ghana the council bring together partners and relevant stakeholders to ensure a tolerant and respectful civil discourse. They seek to engage in an all-inclusive process in undertaking this mandate. The Council recognizes that, since Ghana has numerous peace actors in operation especially at the community level, there is the need to collaborate with them for effective peace work across the country. They therefore use its

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<sup>32</sup> National Peace Council Act 818, 2011, Articles 18, 19, 25 and 25.

<sup>33</sup> National Peace Council Act 818, 2011.

partnership platform given them by the Act to harmonize and coordinate all peace efforts in Ghana during elections. Peace actors includes persons or groups working to promote peace in the country. They involve religious leaders, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), community groups, and the private sector. Also, all political parties, the Media, NCCE, Electoral Commission, Political Leaders, Parliamentarians, the Small Arms and Light Weapons Commission, Chiefs and Queen Mothers who have long played an important role in peace process and development in Ghana, women groups, political leaders, and youth groups<sup>34</sup>. Further, governance institutions like National Security Council, the Electoral Commission, National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) and some ministries are consulted during elections for an all-inclusive peace work. Through networking and collaborations, the NPC avoids excluding these peace actors. They also avoid counter-productive work and divisions that might affect national cooperation on executing peace activities. By this, they achieve a high rate of implementation and avoid duplication of peace work which is also a waste of financial resources.

### **2.5.2 Research and Public Peace Education**

When violent arises, the council conduct analysis of every conflicting issue to better understand the dynamics and offer the appropriate measures of response. The Council through its partners also undertake research that will improve their understanding and assessment of conflicts in Ghana. Example of such measures is the research that was carried out on behalf of the council by Kendie, Osei-Kuffour and Co. which is entitled '*Mapping Conflicts in Ghana*'. In this book, all the conflict hotspot in the country has been indicated which make it easier for the Council to know the location and dynamics of a conflict.

The council also admits that; peace education is an important life skill that must be attained by all persons because conflict is inevitable in societies. But since in most Ghanaian schools, peace topics are not well entrenched in curriculums now, the Council seek to embark on massive public peace education program especially before and during elections to bring about change in behaviour by promoting respect and tolerance throughout the election period. They however have plans to make Public Peace Education implemented nationwide by targeting children, the youth, and adults. In their Five-year strategic plan for example, they envisage that, "Peace Education will make use of technology to continue the dialogue on peace and reviewing of indicators that turn interactions into disagreements, the available responses to rising tensions, constructive and creative solutions to such problems. The Council will use the broadcast and

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<sup>34</sup> Five-year strategic plan document of the National Peace Council.

print media, as well as the internet using games and social media networks like Facebook and Twitter; and finally using the mobile telephone to disseminate key reminders about human values, ethics, morals, conflict indicators, and issues that inflame conflicts.”<sup>35</sup>

### **2.5.3 Conflict Prevention Strategies**

During presidential, parliamentary or by-elections in Ghana, tensions begin to increase especially where there is an obvious open seat to be won as indicated by Bob-Milliar (2014). Before these tensions breaks out, the Council prioritize facilitation and development of mechanisms to prevent conflicting issues from escalating into violence which will be costly to deal with. Such strategies and mechanisms have been presented and explained in the next four sub-sections.

#### **2.5.3.1 Conflict Indicators and Early Warning Systems.**

These are facilitated beginning from the national level through the regional to the district level. Through Early Warning System mechanisms, information about possible security threats are sent to peace actors who alleviate tensions as soon as they arise. During my fieldwork in Ghana, I was invited by the council to witness such program. The program was aimed at launching the National Election Early Warning and Response Group (NEEWARG) at the Best Western Hotel, Accra on Tuesday July 26, 2016. The meeting was attended by Members of the NPC, CDD-Ghana, Media foundation of W/Africa, EU representatives, WANEP, USAID Ghana representatives and many other stakeholders.

#### **2.5.3.2 Preventive Diplomacy**

Early warning programs are followed with Preventive diplomacy mechanisms where neutral prominent mediators are dispatched to participate in negotiation which builds trust and increase the certainty that conflicting parties will solve problems without physical encounters. Here the council normally collaborate with respected personalities like doctors, chiefs and church leaders. The main aim here is to reach an agreement concerning delicate issues and to mitigate on them. A typical example is the Peace Pact signed between the NPC together with IDEG and the Political Parties in Kumasi- for the political parties to pledge their commitment to peace and a violent free elections 2012 (Kotia & Aubyn, 2013a, p. 22).

#### **2.5.3.3 Confidence and trust building**

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<sup>35</sup> Five-Year Strategic Plan for The National Peace Council, page 21.

Measures are also undertaken by the council to build confidence and trust in local communities to limit issues that causes tensions. These measures seek to ensure predictability and create an enabling context for the peace process to be successful. Sometimes games, peace walks and songs are used to undertake these strategies. These activities enhance individuals and group behaviour and assure parties that their opponents can be trusted and reliable.

#### **2.5.4 Conflict Management Strategies**

In the case of conflict, the NPC adopt certain mechanisms to redefine the issues of tension to contain and curb the conflict from escalation further. The Council use what they call Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism to manage conflicts. Their motive for adopting ADR is to make sure that the conflict is managed without resorting to trial or violence. In an interview with an administrative member, he revealed that the council mostly do what they call “*shuttle diplomacy --that is where we go behind the scenes to work around the issue*”.

Other ADR methods used by the Peace Council includes; Conflict analysis- which is done to get deeper understanding of the conflict which will inform the mechanisms most appropriate and useful to manage the identified conflict; also, Consensus building- to get the disputants to bring issues underlying their stands; also negotiation- to bargain directly with the conflicting parties to reach a modus vivendi and lastly, the council uses mediation to assist conflicting parties to better recognise each other interest to perhaps reach an arrangement which addresses their interests and resolve their differences. The Peace Council also support and Strengthens mediation platforms during elections for religious and traditional leaders in areas where conflict is high. Example of such areas includes the Northern, Upper East and West and Volta regions. Also, they assist with creating Regional platforms for interaction between political parties and Chiefs, the media, security, women, youth leaders, and CSOs in conflict places like Bawku, Dagbon, Alavanyo/Nkonya, and Hohoe.

#### **2.5.5 Conflict Resolution Strategies**

In the case of violent conflict the Council first assess the situation using its Conflict Analysis strategy to identify the root causes and determine the procedure and approach to be employed. In an interview with administrative personnel of the council, she confirmed that the council is looking to establish Conflict Resolution Centres at the districts level to enable facilitators and mediators to help disputants resolve conflicts. The council also uses Standing Mediation Committees as well as Peace agreements to ensure that conflicting parties and stakeholders are

held accountable for implementing agreements in good faith. They also conduct a post-election analysis in all regions of Ghana to learn lessons for future use.

## **2.6 Summary**

This chapter presented a detailed profile of the National Peace Council that concerns the aim of this study. The chapter began with a brief history and background introduction of the NPC. It then outlined the structure, composition and mandate of the NPC which showed the levels of operation, groups and mode of nominating members to the council and current members of the council. The chapter also outlined the strategic mechanisms used by the NPC to undertake its peace operations during elections in Ghana. Here, we shed light on mechanisms that had to do with partnerships, peace research works and public peace education. The purpose of having this chapter helps us to understand the basic mode of work, compositional issues and history and reasons behind the Ghana National Peace council. Also, we will refer to it during our presentation and analyses data in chapter five and six.

## **Chapter 3: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This present chapter discusses methodological issues. It focuses on issues such as the study area, the choice of research methodology, informant selection, data collection techniques, field reflections and explanations for the utilization of the specific techniques. The chapter further highlights methodological issues which the researcher encountered while collecting data from the field of research. The issues are concerned with the choice of research method and the nature of informants selected for the study. In every issue, the researcher discusses decisions and mechanisms which were undertaken to enrich the research outcome.

### **3.2 Data Collection Techniques**

The primary data collection technique used was semi-structured interviews. However, some electronic media reports, documents from the NPC and telephone interviews were used as secondary sources of data.

#### **3.2.1 Qualitative interviews**

The study employed semi-structured interviews to collect data from the field in Ghana. Limb and Dwyer suggest that, the methodologies used in qualitative research “explore feelings, understandings and knowledge of others through various means. They also explore some of the complexities of everyday life to gain a deeper understanding into the processes that shape our social worlds” (2001, pp. 1, 3). This study seeks to understand how well the NPC promotes peace during elections in Ghana from their own perspectives. The study also intends to find out how the political parties and the public perceive the efforts of the NPC in preventing violence before, during and after elections. In view of this, and for the reasons outlined in the brief background of the study, I envisaged that, the qualitative approach will suit my research.

Jupp (2006) refers to interviews as a procedure for obtaining data, information and opinions that explicitly comprises asking some series of questions. It must be emphasized that the type of interview selected will depend on the type of research being carried out and the type of data that is needed. I opted to use the semi-structured interviewing strategy as my primary data collection tool because of its ability to assist the interviewer to get in-depth information through follow up questions. Also, since interviews in qualitative research allows people to realize things from their own viewing platform, it helped my informants to describe their situations from how they experienced it. Interviews in qualitative research uncovers the exclusive features of a case in



detail and permits people to talk about situations in their own words and from their points of view, which encompasses happenings from everyday life. It also makes the topic of discussion and interviewee the focus, and captures most of their insights (Bryman, 2015, p. 470).

The flexibility nature of qualitative interviews in data collection and the objective of the study informed my decision to use semi-structured interviews as my primary data collection tool.

### **3.2.1.1 Semi-Structured Interviews**

Bryman explains that, the semi-structured interview is structured around a set of questions that are open-ended, and determined ahead of the interview schedule. Unlike the unstructured interview which is used in concurrence with the gathering of observational data, semi-structured interview is frequently the single data source for a qualitative research work. Normally, in this qualitative method of interview, questions are planned around a set of prearranged open-ended questions, with other questions developing from the conversation between the interviewer and informant.(2015, pp. 471, 472). Semi-structured interviews are therefore programmed in advance at a preferred time and location outside of official events.

The semi-structured interviews for this study were conducted using three separate interview guides. One for each of the three categories of my informants. Apart from one case where I had to travel to Kumasi to interview an NPC member, all the interviews took place in Accra. Each interview lasted between forty-five minutes to one hour. These interviews were one-on-one conversations between myself and the informants. In some cases, the students interviewed in public places agreed to step aside to be interviewed individually. Most of my interviews were recorded with an audio device, however some informants would only agree to be interviewed if I wrote what they say.

### **3.2.2 Secondary sources of data**

As I have talked about earlier, the study made use of other means of data collection. One of them is media reports. The media in Ghana is very functional when it comes to political issues. As such during elections almost all media outlets try to find updated stories for their listeners. This means that one can get key information relating to violence in different parts of the country. To enrich my research findings, some information from radio and television stations were employed. However, I was very careful with such data because it can be deceptive. Some of these media houses are owned by politicians and can put out information that will enable certain politicians to get advantage over others. Another secondary source was documents from the NPC's office.

Such documents include the five-year strategic plan of the NPC, the NPC Act 818 of the constitution, the NPC Mapping Conflict in Ghana book and others. Lastly, I was in contact with the staffs of the NPC, who updated me on issues until the end of the study. Since the field research was done before the December 2016 elections, keeping in touch with them enabled me to get updates on the activities of the NPC.

### **3.3 Study area**

Although most of the fieldwork was conducted in Accra, the administrative and commercial capital of Ghana, I also met with one of my informants in Kumasi for a scheduled interview. Accra has an estimated urban population of about two million people (Asumadu-Sarkodie, Owusu, & Jayaweera, 2015). Being the main administrative city, Accra do not only host almost all the head offices of major public and private institutions in the country, but it also attracts many people from all walks of life. Hence, a lot of activities, including some of the NPC's and political parties' programs, take place in Accra. The city was chosen as the study area because of the easy access to informants.

### **3.4 Informants**

In this study, informants were categorized into three groups. The first group was made up of members and administrative staff of the NPC. The second group included informants from three political parties, and the third group consisted of students and informants from the public. Being a member of the NPC means that; - the person has been nominated to represent his or her societal body or the president as I have outlined extensively in section 2.4. It is worth mentioning here that, informants from the political parties were not selected for information based on their personal views, but from their respective party's perspective. As such, I had to go through a series of bureaucratic measures before getting data for the study.

#### **3.4.1 Informant Selection**

I depended on two main sampling method; -Purposive sampling and Random sampling methods in determining my informants for this study. I employed the former in choosing my informants from the members and staffs of the Peace Council and the political parties. The Random sampling was used to access informants from the public and students.

My decision to use Purposive sampling is that, I sought to interview informants who were suitable for my study using my research questions as a guide. Purposive sampling is not based on probability or possibility. Bryman indicates that, the method is grounded on a deliberate

selection of informants who are information rich and possess the capacity to provide answers to research questions intended for a specific study. He adds that, purposive sampling aims at selecting participants whose views or unit of analysis will benefit the goals of the research (2015, p. 418).

The reason for selecting members and staff of the NPC was to achieve first-hand information which could reveal in detail the activities of the NPC regarding election-related violence. I intended to use the purposive sampling method for this group because of their years of experience of working as members and staffs for the Peace Council. Also, since they represent the council, information coming from them will improve the authenticity of my study. My intention to use the same strategy to select informants from the political parties was because of their direct link to elections and its related violence. Their inclusion in the study is to find from them; their viewpoints on the work of the Peace council in promoting peace in the episode of elections. Their inclusion allowed for the gathering of data that confirms, rejects, recommends, evaluates or assesses the role played by the Peace Council in eradicating the violence that occurs during elections in Ghana. This way, the study can achieve the self-evaluation by the NPC as well as evaluation from the political parties. The approach was adopted to balance the debate and avoid the bias which could have characterized the study if only informants from the NPC were selected for the study. The mode of reaching specific informants for the two groups was that, I sent letters to the offices of these institutions to seek their permission to interview some members or personnel.

Random sampling was used to select informants from the public and students from the university. This selection technique was used to give informants from the public and students equal opportunities of being selected by chance. The involvement of this third group is based on the notion that they will be giving their observation on the work of the Peace Council in election. The study intends to find out from this group their understanding and perceptions on the work of the NPC. Since elections are fashioned around these people, they will be in a good position to provide information on how violence arises from the polling stations.

### **3.4.2. Sample Size**

In planning for my fieldwork, the total number of informants I decided to interview was between 12 and 16. I also planned to at least interview four (4) informants who are members and staff of the NPC. However, by the end of my fieldwork in Ghana, a total of thirteen (13) interviews were conducted. Two (2) males of which one was a member of the governing board and a female

administrator were interviewed from the NPC. Three (3) males were interviewed from the political parties and three (3) and four (4) males and females each from the public and students group. In chapter five, a table sample has been provided to summarize these categorizations and informant's socio-demographic background.

One may argue that thirteen informants from the peace council, political parties and public is a small number for such a study. But as discussed by Mason (2010), since the aim of my study is to get meaning and understanding on the topic it seeks to discuss, the few occurrence are sufficient for its intended purpose. During my interviews with members of the peace council especially, I realized that, my interviewees shared similar knowledge levels and experiences about my topic. I was therefore able to conclude that; subsequent informants would only repeat what I had already heard. Once I realized that the size of my gathered data have reach the point of saturation, it was enough to accomplish that the opinions of the informants were satisfactorily represented in the data collected (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007).

### **3.4.3 Gaining Access to NPC Members and Politicians**

Gaining access to interview people who are leaders of a large group in Ghana is not an easy task. One must pass through a lot of bureaucracy before such people can grant an interview. The biggest challenge had to do with the politicians, who because of the nearing 2016 elections were very busy and only interested in interviews to enhance their quest for votes and popularity. As Driessens (2015) has discussed in his study on people with fame, the motive behind this difficulty is that, such people are always giving away interviews to journalists and other media personnel which service or strengthen their status. In my case, since the period of my study was nearing elections, politicians were more interested in taking part in interviews which will improve their status and votes rather than academic research.

To gain access to politicians, employing gatekeepers was very instrumental. In my case, getting the political parties to grant me the permission to submit my letters and documents was even a challenge. I contacted six different political parties, and only three of them accepted to have a meeting. Throughout the process, I had to contact people who were ready to lobby on my behalf to get an informant. There are several reasons why trying to interview a politician in Ghana is difficult, and these will be discussed in detail in section 3.5. After my requests were granted, some of the parties wanted to look at some of my questions beforehand. I submitted my question to them, and they met as a party to discuss the issues before they will allow me to interview the

informant they give me. Even though the procedure was a hectic one, it allowed the study to achieve data from the official sources of the political parties.

On the other hand, gaining access to members of the NPC was not as difficult as the politicians. I contacted the head office of council to meet with the executive secretary who gave me access to member and staff contact details. Once I received these details, I scheduled appointments with them at their preferred venue and time. With the members of the NPC, interview location had to be their chosen place of comfort; mostly their homes while in the case of the politicians, I was given an office space to conduct my interviews.

### **3.5 Methodological issues and field reflections**

In using the semi-structured interview to collect data, several issues came up during my field research in Ghana. These issues have the potential to positively or negatively affect the output of my study. They are also key to establishing and assessing the quality that is presented by the research method selected for my study. The issues encountered are concerned with how my position as researcher influenced the study and how using gatekeepers affected my field work. Also, matters relating to my informants, which included interviewees being influenced by the research situation, interviewees confidentiality and anonymity as well as issues involved in interviewing political elites are discussed.

#### **3.5.1 Researcher's Position**

In preparing for qualitative interviews, the theoretical position, personal interests and political perspective of the researcher should be considered, because it can affect every stage of the research process as well as the research questions used. This issue is not only related to semi-structured interviews, but it is one of the key fundamental issues of criticism of the qualitative research process in general (Collins, 1992). The intellectual rigor, ideologies and philosophical position of the researcher have the potential to either negatively or positive affect, if not determine, the research questions that will be used to administer the study (Diefenbach, 2009, p. 876). There is no doubt of the massive influence a researcher has in qualitative interviews. Due to this influence, it is common that their subjective views, implicit assumptions, prejudices and in some cases, being one-sided can entirely bias the research outcome and hence reduce the validity of research. Unlike positivist theories and models, which are associated with quantitative research approaches where formulas and diagrams provide objectivity and truthfulness, the human factor within qualitative inquiry has the potential to impact the study findings (Diefenbach, 2009). This is because social science research deals with issues that are close to the

researcher's daily life experiences, and as such if critical awareness is not scrutinized, the possible downside of his/her subjectivity can invalidate the research outcome (Diefenbach, 2009, p. 877).

In selecting Semi-structured interviews as my primary data collection tool, I ought to have prearranged questions as a guide for my interviews. This means that I had the freedom given me by my choice of method to come up with questions which I assumed would help me to collect data. Since Semi-structured interview lack precise evaluative and investigative tools in research questions, I realized at some point that, some of my question were interested in finding out the shortfalls of the NPC's activities and even its members personal political positions. My initial assumption of these members was that they perform their duties to favor the government of the day and that they are not neutral. These initial assumptions stem from my ideological and political position, which, in turn, shaped my questions. Upon my visit to the office of the NPC in Ghana, I had to reshape some of my questions even before conducting my first interview, due to the prior discussions and meetings I had with administrators of the council.

To add to the above issue, my earlier encounter with the political parties proved to me that I needed to convince my informants that my study is for academic purpose only. Since the period of the field study was close to the 2016 elections, political parties were vigilant in all their dealings. One key issue I encountered with almost all the parties was that I may be a spy from another party. They also initially tagged me as someone coming from their opponent's party. Assuming I was not able to convince my informants of my background; I would have ended up with unreliable data or even no data. This issue was quickly solved by properly introducing myself with documents received from CPS.

Even though I was careful of my personal interest and political position in using Semi-structured interview, I cannot entirely say that it did not have an impact on the process of formulating my research question. Can one entirely omit the human factor of the qualitative method knowing well of its interpretivist paradigms? Besides, I am human and though I tried to be neutral, my personal convictions played a part in determining my research questions for the study. Nonetheless, Diefenbach (2009) argues that, the human factor is the great strength of the qualitative research method and analysis, because the subjectivity of the individual allows for creativity and invention. My prior ideas and assumptions equipped me with information which was useful throughout the study. And since the SSI allows for the reshaping of questions, I could go along with purposeful research questions. Its discursive nature revealed a detail of what data I

needed from my study area. However, since it is impossible to exclude the human factor in my study, I suppressed my own implicit supposition by acknowledging my philosophical, intellectual and political perspective.

### **3.5.2 Selection of interviewees**

The selection of interviewees did not happen systematically and objectively due to the nature of the research method I employed. As a qualitative researcher, one should try to obtain data that will enrich and validate the study outcome. In selecting my informants, I considered whose opinions, worldviews and experiences would effectively enhance the originality of my study. But as indicated by some scholars like Diefenbach (2009), using semi-structured interview can lead the researcher to gather data that might not entirely reflect the situation. Diefenbach (2009) for example indicates that, researchers who use the Semi-structured interview normally consider influential and powerful people in the social system. He argues that, researchers may pay more attention to interviewees whose information they believe will attract readers' or stakeholders' interest to their findings. But in most cases these people are aware of what is at stake and are therefore capable of misleading the researcher. This issue can hence limit the dependency of the research.

I realized from early interviews that my informants from the NPC were well equipped with the information I seek. They may have had experience from previous similar studies and hence can give me answers which might not be the case. To overcome this issue, I did my best to incorporate measures to make the debate fair. I made sure that none of my interviewee's voices were excluded. Even though I used purposive sampling to get my first group of respondents (key members of the NPC), in selecting my third group of respondents (students and the public), I used random sampling. To further enhance dependency, the second group of respondents (representatives from political parties) as well as the third group were included in the study to counter check information from the first group of respondents. Also, the ability of SSI to create avenues for researchers to use new topics that come up from the interviewees themselves during the discussion process also helped. With these new openings coming from respondents themselves, I could delve into issues and get clearer meanings and understanding from interviewees and to achieve greater overall quality and authenticity. Again, my application of the telephone interview has enabled me to cross-check some of the issues of which I was not entirely sure. Example of such issues includes the update on the number of the district level Peace Councils created and the activities of the NPC after the 2016 elections.

### **3.5.3 Interviewees influenced by the interview situation**

In Semi-structured interview, both the informant and the researcher can destroy the data due to unconscious bias, and this can make information unreliable. Diefenbach informs that, sometimes the interview situation can influence the informants (and probably the researcher too), who might not be conscious of the effects of the discussion process and his or her internal unconscious responses when questioned about certain subject matter (2009, p. 880). Such reactions may be related to traditional and societal norms about how one should normally conduct or express themselves on issues and even to certain group of people. It can be age difference between the interviewer and the participant, also gender difference, appearance, one's background and so on. In the case of a survey questionnaire, the absence of the researcher would have prevented issues of these nature.

When interviewing young ladies of my age, I realized that they were politer and sometimes too careful. This sometimes happen when the informant perceives the interview process as a sought of examination on their personal knowledge. Also, one informant wanted to know my age and education level so that he could give me the information he felt I would be able to consume and analyze. Indeed, there are individual norms and cultural scripts which are deeply embedded in us as persons, and these traits strongly influence our worldviews, perceptions, thoughts and social actions. Aware of these types of issues, my research questions were structured on purely academic research principles and designed. Interviewees private life experiences which do not have a case in my study were ignored. Also, I tried my best to stay formal when needed to avoid informal actions which might have distort the interview process.

### **3.5.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity Issues**

Issues of confidentiality and anonymity were important ethical guidelines for me because of the statuses of my first and second group of participants. Their concerns should do with issues likes who my sponsors are, transcribers of the recorded interviews, storage of their information and the purpose of the study. These issues did not come as a surprise to me knowing that the interviewing process and the topic of discussion will engage their personal reflections on some of the activities in which they or their parties (in the case of the politicians) may have being involved in. Even though participation is voluntary in social research Josselson (1996) points out that, interviewing is capable of intruding in the informant's personal and private views.

My primary informants, who are considered by the NPC and Ghanaians at large as eminent people, have a carefully built integrity and reputation which they seek to protect. Some of them



are well known pastors and Imams who are leaders of huge congregations. The politicians, on the other hand, seek to protect their image to please the people they represent in parliament for the incoming elections. Due to this, the two categories of my informants are very careful about how they are depicted in the media and the public. Due to this, it was vital for me to guarantee these them of confidentiality and the processes of anonymity. To get their full consent, I had to devote enough time to clarify the details and purpose of the research to them. I must also emphasize here that I did the same with the public and students. On the issue of recording, transcribing and storing of data, I assured my informants especially the politicians that, all the mechanisms will be done. I assured them that I have in possession my personal equipment like voice recorder and Laptop which have password. They feared that if their recorded voices got into the wrong hands, people could use the recordings for other unpleasant purposes. I also assured them that I will be responsible for the protecting their identity and that their names and details will be anonymised upon their request. My position as a student from abroad also persuaded my informants that they would not have any issues with media reports in Ghana. They perceive such researchers to have better data protection mechanisms and they are not permanently staying in Ghana. The public and students on the contrary did not show much concerns about anonymity and confidentiality, possibly because, they did not perceive their positions to be at risk.

Two participants from the public and a politician were concerned about the recording of their interviews. They insisted that hand written notes should be taken instead. This did not come as a surprise, as I went into the field anticipating that such an event might occur. The fact that a tape recording cannot be regressed and can be easily traced to the interviewee makes it unsafe for those being taped (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Having admitted that my informants are politicians who have a name to protect, I was ready to grant them with their preferences. I was always equipped with my field notebook which I used to take notes in such situations. These cases made the interviewing process slow and time consuming, but my informants were very patient and accommodating until I had exhausted all my interview questions. When I compared, the information recorded from other informants and the written ones, there was not much difference. All the answers given on questions which were deemed general tallied similarly. I was therefore convinced that writing of informant's information, even though tedious, did not have an impact on the data received.

### 3.5.5 Gatekeeping

As a student going to interview politicians, it was very necessary to employ gatekeepers to reach my informants. The mechanism at the end was very influential in the outcome of my data.

Gatekeepers are persons or institutes who are situated between a researcher and the prospective informants (Lavrakas, 2008). They provide 'permits' to researchers to have access to the prospective informant for the research interview (Miller & Bell, 2002). Due to their position in research, they can sometimes regulate a researcher's access to data and the informants a researcher seek to interview. Their position also allows them to have a fair idea or purpose of the interview. This means that even before a researcher reaches an informant, he or she might be aware of most if not all the questions to be asked. This may not be negative but it has the potential to reduce the originality of the study.

In the case of the members of the peace council, possible negatives of gatekeeping were not an issue, because the organization gave me the contact details of all the members. I was not in the position to reveal some of my questions to the NPC before allowing me to contact members. This means that even though I went through the organization to reach my informants, I had the liberty of making my own selection and scheduling with each specific informant.

However, reaching informants from the political parties did not turn out the same as the erstwhile. This is because politicians are public figures who frequently deal with strangers or journalists who come their way playacting to be researchers, but who secretly have ulterior motives (Driessens, 2015). As such, they depend much on their parties' consent before venturing into certain interviews. I therefore had to go through two forms of gatekeeping to reach my informants. First, i had to use gatekeepers would lobby for my letters and documents to reach the director or chairperson of the political party on time. My documents contained a brief proposal of my study and letters from the Center for Peace (CPS), University of Tromso. Without assistance from members of the administrative staff, my letters would have been delayed. Once documents were officially accepted, the parties also acted as institutional gatekeepers between me and my potential informants. The reason for this bureaucratic red taping was because of the impending elections. During this time, politicians and political parties are very careful with interviews; they feel that their opponents will take advantage of any unsecured or leaky information. The political parties want to regulate all information going out to the public. So, since my intention was to gather data from the perspectives of the political parties, they should provide me with their

preferred informant. They may therefore provide me with someone who's opinion on my study topic best suits the parties interest. This have the tendency to compromise the data I seek.

To avoid the compromise on data quality, I ensured that I asked my informants the interview questions in different categorizations and in different ways to check that their answers corresponded on all occasions. Where possible, I also revisited media reports that concerned the issues I discussed with my informants. This was to make sure that there was consistency in all that was discussed and to make sure that my informants were not giving me data just to project the image of their parties. This is also one reason why I have employed telephone interviews in my study. The mechanism has aided me to cross-check the data collected. Using this new data, I can detect inconsistency in previously collected data. I was also fortunate to talk to people from the political parties who only gave information from their personal experience. Most of these chats turned out to correspond to informants who I contacted through the political party's office. Although such people I approached randomly at the parties' offices provided me with information which were close to the ones I collected from the party's office, using the latter adds richness and authenticates the study.

Though some scholars have argued that, employing gatekeepers can affect the quality of data and sometimes limit access to data, Reeves (2010) insist that the strategy can be helpful in gaining access to prospective informants. I assume that, without using the parties as gatekeepers to get to politicians, I would not get any other means to interview them; especially when the information I sought was related to the perspective of their parties. In the end, I also discovered that, when I approached my informants through the consent of the parties, it was much easier for them to be receptive. This allowed me to build rapport quickly and gain their confidence to effectively discuss subjects which also had to do with their self-evaluation and self-reflection.

### **3.5.6 Interviewing Political elites**

Interviewing political elites requires a lot of skill and work from researchers. This is because, such people even those who have retired from their official duties, are busy and value their time (Peabody et al., 1990). Interviewers must therefore prepare carefully before the actual interview and use their interviewing time astutely. Political elites are mostly learned and experienced senior state members, former ministers who have control over their career field. In Ghana, most of them are lawyers by profession, medical doctors, university lectures, professors etc. who due to their political activities may know more about the subject of my study than me. Mindful of this, I prepared myself well to make use of the opportunity of meeting them. Peabody et al.

(1990, p. 452) have advised that, “Self-awareness and appreciation of the transactional nature of elite interviewing are crucial to success”. Unlike my experience in interviewing students and NPC staffs, in interviewing political elites there is a clear power difference. The power dynamics here includes the differences in age and status between the researcher and the informant (McEvoy, 2006). My concern about age was justified in two of my interviews; - where in one case an informant reacted to a follow up question with soft tone however by saying “*son, unlike you, I have been around for years and you should take what I am saying*”.(PP3) In another interview, one politician provided commentary of an issue I raised, but I was fortunate that he provided me with more time to complete my set of questions.

Another issue with elite interviewing was concerned with establishing proper Identity in the case of the interviewer. This involves how the researcher should present himself to the informant (Rivera, Kozyreva, & Sarovskii, 2002) as well as a thorough background description.<sup>36</sup> This was also the case during my encounter with informants from the Peace council and the politicians. I had to have my documents which proves that I am researching student at every point of contact in the case of political parties. This strictness probably must do with the increased vigilance on opposite parties because of the election period. Lastly, issues that had to do with ‘foot soldiers’ activities and intra-party violence were met with blames and counter arguments. This was the case in trying to get politicians’ views on certain election violence which had previously happened. Such situations however opened new subject matters which needed discussions.

### **3.6 Summary**

In this chapter I have emphasized the methodological framework of the study. Data for the study obtained from interviewing three categories of informants: NPC members and staff, political party representatives, and students and the public. Along with these interviews, I employed documents from the NPC, media reports, and telephone interviews as secondary data sources. Overall, thirteen interviews were conducted using the semi-structured interview format. Both purposive and random sampling techniques were used to identify informants for the study. Challenging issues ranging from my position as a researcher, interviewees selection and gatekeeping were also discussed. It is worth mentioning here that, notwithstanding all these issues, the overall data I got is rich enough to serve the purpose of my study.

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<sup>36</sup> A detail discussion of this issue is captured in the issues of anonymity and confidentiality.

## **Chapter 4: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter intends to discuss conceptual issues that informs the fundamental notion of the study. The chapter will begin with the concept of peacebuilding and discuss its nature and how it has evolved to embrace infrastructures for national peace. It will also reflect person or groups responsible for building peace in a society. This will take us to the idea and debate concerning the local or national ownership concept. The chapter will end with an extensive discussion on building national infrastructure for peace and elections. At the end of the chapter, we will understand the origin of national peace councils which is a relatively new phrase in peacebuilding.

### **4.2 Peacebuilding**

The term ‘Peacebuilding’ was first introduced in scholarly discipline in the 1970s through the works of the Norwegian professor Johan Galtung. In his work, he “called for the creation of peacebuilding structures to promote sustainable peace by addressing the "root causes" of violent conflict and supporting indigenous capacities for peace management and conflict resolution”<sup>37</sup>. Although the concept of peacebuilding is generally defined as interventions that are formulated to prevent the outbreak or relapse of violent conflict, there are divergent views among actors concerning its conceptualization and operationalization (Barnett, Kim, O'donnell, & Sitea, 2007). As cited by Hearn, Bujones, and Kugel (2014, p. 3) for instance, the UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in 1992 defined the concept of peacebuilding, as “action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict”. Barnett et al also indicates in their article a definition of post-conflict peacebuilding offered by the UNDPA<sup>38</sup> as “all external efforts to assist countries and regions in their transitions from war to peace, including all activities and programs designed to support and strengthen these transitions” (2007, p. 38).

While these definitions are more aligned to societies that have recovered from violent conflict, it is important to emphasize that, peacebuilding process is also necessary in societies that have not experienced major violent conflict. Such societies like the case of Ghana needs to establish mechanisms and structures to prevent wars and build sustainable peace. So, the Peacebuilding

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<sup>37</sup> UN Report, accessed online on 25-03-2017, <http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pbun.shtml>

<sup>38</sup> The United Nations Department of Political Affairs.

tool is not just a mechanism used in rebuilding devastated societies resulting from war, but as Lederach (1997, p. 20) clarifies, it is more concerned with “comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates and sustains the full array of processes, approaches and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships”. Lederach uses his multi-track peacebuilding approach to emphasize that, for such a peace to be successful, all levels of society must cooperate and work together (1997, p. 60). Galtung offers a more extensive explanation to the term in support of this assumption. He introduces the concepts positive and negative peace to further explain what peacebuilding should achieve. Negative peace is the absence of direct or armed violence; it is needed in a peacebuilding process which tends to rebuild post-conflict societies. Accordingly, his definition of peacebuilding which involves the process of “creating self-supporting structures that remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur” (Galtung, 1976, p. 298), clearly argues for societies efforts to create infrastructure for peace and stability. Such structures are to promote a non-violent resolution of conflicts; positive peace (Galtung, 1996). It is the kind of peace that goes further than just ending conflict; which according to Haugerudbraaten (1998, p. 18), is accepted generally as the aim of peacebuilding. *Positive* Peacebuilding structures should have conflict resolution mechanisms fashioned into them such that there is no need for other systems to support the structures. A self-supporting institution akin to a healthy body which produces its own antibodies. Galtung further argues that, such peace structures should serve as a reservoir for the system itself to draw upon (Galtung, 1976).

The peacebuilding definitions offered by Lederach and Galtung forms the theoretical basis of this study which is the concept of peace architectures or infrastructure for peace (I4Ps). To further apply the concept of Peacebuilding to respond to the case of building a national infrastructure for peace, the Canadian International Development Agency definition of peacebuilding also offers an analytical backing. It states that, Peacebuilding are “efforts to strengthen the prospects of internal peace and decrease the likelihood of violent conflict in order to enhance the indigenous capacity of a society to manage conflict without violence” (Barnett et al., 2007, p. 41). The definitions suggest that, peacebuilding can be implemented to prevent and manage violent conflict. It also emphasizes national ownership or local peace actor’s efforts of developing mechanisms for cooperation among all relevant stakeholders in peacebuilding in dealing with conflict through non-violent measures.

Having identified the distinctions in conceptualization and operationalization of peacebuilding among scholars and institutions, we can now focus our attention on who are the carriers of Peacebuilding mechanisms. This will help us to better understand the motive behind the introduction of the new phrase Infrastructure for Peace (I4Ps) which according to scholars like Van Tongeren (2011b) has great potential and necessary in peacebuilding but is barely known.

### **4.3 Actors; Who are the Peacebuilders?**

This dimensions of peacebuilding discussed in this section revolves around issues of actors who are the *rightful* carriers of the concept and how it should be coordinated. Over the years, the operationalization of the peacebuilding concept has been heavily being dominated by external actors which have led to criticisms over the past decade. Key among such criticisms is the consistent failure of international actors to engage locally based citizens and organisations of post-conflict and ( former authoritarian ) states as agents in their own recovery and rebuilding of their state (Donais & Knorr, 2013, p. 54). Also, referred as the top-down or liberal peacebuilding approach by some scholars, this form of peacebuilding process is characterized with donor-biased. The focus remains on the international actors which includes the UN and its agencies, "... national relief and development agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international financial institutions, and other regional and international actors-engaged in a broad range of activities, from disarming former belligerents to providing financial and humanitarian assistance, monitoring and conducting elections, repatriating refugees, rebuilding physical infrastructure, advising and training security personnel and judicial officials, and even temporarily taking over the administration of an entire country" (Paris, 1997, p. 55). The mode of operation here is that, the international community moves into the zone or country previously in conflict and launches itself as a mindful and determined peacebuilder by introducing a set of peacebuilding activities (Haugerudbraaten, 1998).. But according to scholars like Hearn et al. (2014), it has been widely agreed that this peacebuilding process adopted by international actors especially the UN has failed to live up to the high expectations it was intended for. Paris (1997, p. 56) for example mentions that, political liberalization contributed to the re-emergence of violent conflict in countries like Angola and Rwanda. Also, he indicates that, in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Mozambique economic liberalization risked rekindling conflicts.

Apart from the alienation of citizen<sup>39</sup> which has resulted in limitations of the peacebuilding undertaking by international actors, Paris (1997, p. 56) also indicates that international actors

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<sup>39</sup> And also the limited timeframe which is available for the international community (Haugerudbraaten, 1998).

often hold a single paradigm- liberal internationalism, which they undoubtedly believe that, peace within former conflict states and among states can be achieved through a liberal democratic polity and a market oriented economy i.e. market democratization. But as argued by Darby and Mac Ginty (2008), although some peacemaking efforts in one former conflict zone may encourage peacemaking in another, it is not certain that the exact or similar process can be used for a different location; this is because there exist a great disparity in conflicts;-which makes it impossible to carry a peace strategy used in one location like a template and apply to other locations.

There is an alternative view to the issue of actors in peacebuilding; one which aims to identify policies and interventions to promoting sustainable peace. As opposed to the former explanation, the major actors here is the indigenous or 'local' people which is widely referred to as local ownership or in this case national ownership, communitarianism, bottom up peacebuilding approach etc. The subsequent section will concentrate on this concept which has gradually become key to the politics of post conflict peacebuilding.

#### **4.3.1 Local or 'National' Ownership**

Donais and Knorr (2013) has argued that, the concept of local ownership has increasingly become central to the post-conflict peacebuilding process. In their view, the term refers to the degree to which local citizens control both the design and execution of peacebuilding and political processes in post-conflict settings (p. 3). The basic principle of this concept is that, peace cannot be imposed by external actors, military or otherwise, but must rather be nurtured through strategies which are common and known to the domestic political context of the former conflict society (Donais & Knorr, 2013). Local ownership therefore carries a simple thought, which is; - for any peace process to be stable, it must be embraced by those who will live with it, otherwise it risks failing. Some scholars like Donais and Knorr (2013) and Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013) have suggested that, local peace may however be influenced or resemble formal peace accord and international norms (making it to be considered Western); but they advise that, its actors must have the right to make their own choices and designs irrespective of the degree to which such choices matches international trends.

But if the local peace implications have the tendency to achieve peace in post-conflict societies, why have the international community frequently bypass it for a dictatorship style of peacebuilding? This is simply because it has also been met with obstacles. Donais and Knorr (2013) mentions some of these issues which includes the habit of framing post-conflict states as



ill, devastated, dysfunctional, lacking the institutions to deal with conflicting issues, thereby craving for therapeutic governance, whereby the international community comes in to assert their measures on a society or polity no longer capable of managing its own affairs. They continue that, due to post-conflict societies weakness and experience wartime they are unable to properly execute formal peace negotiations. In most cases, by the time local political elites and institutions can reorganize themselves, the fundamental parameters of peace negotiations have already been established and to reorient them may prove problematic.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, the perception of allowing citizens to adopt traditional and social mechanism which are common to them to determine the legitimacy and relevance of a political vision has given rise to local peace committees like in the case of South Africa, Nepal and national peace infrastructures in Ghana, Kenya, Timor Leste etc. Also, the UN has gradually come to the realization that, “Peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced, and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives<sup>40</sup>.” This and other above discussions indicates that, there has been a rise in building national Infrastructure or ‘architecture’ for peace especially after the Durban resolution in 2002<sup>41</sup> – which is discussed below.

#### **4.4 National “Infrastructure for peace” (I4Ps)**

Infrastructure for peace is a new phrase which has come into the fore of peacebuilding process; the concept was first introduced by the well-known scholar John Paul Lederach in his book *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* in 1997 (Van Tongeren, 2011b, p. 400). Kotia and Aubyn (2013a) has also indicated that, the concept has no universally accepted definition due to the diverse background and experience of scholars who have worked extremely on the concept in different countries. They argue that, since the component of an I4Ps is determine by a country’s unique socio-political context and nature of conflict, offering a single definition for it will be ambiguous. They therefore continue that; the concept’s lack of precise definition can also be seen from how several scholars have used different names to represent it. Example of such names includes *peace and dialogue structure*, *architecture for peace*, *peace*

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<sup>40</sup> Referring to the objective of peacebuilding which aims to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development.

<sup>41</sup> The first Standing Conference on Stability, Security and Development in Durban in 2002, made African leaders to sign a resolution committing them to uphold their full responsibility to set up national institutions to manage conflict and work in partnership with their civil societies (Van Tongeren, 2011b, p. 401).

*support structures* etc.(Kotia & Aubyn, 2013a) However, Kumar has asserted that, a group from 14 African countries met in Naivasha, Kenya and agreed on a definition of the concept. They defined infrastructure for peace as a “dynamic network of interdependent structures, mechanisms, resources, values, and skills which, through dialogue and consultation, contribute to conflict prevention and peace-building in a society.”(2011, p. 385). Also, as indicated in section 2.2, Van Tongeren described the concept of building I4Ps as a development of institutional mechanisms, appropriate to each country’s culture, which promotes...a cooperative problem-solving approach to conflict based on dialogue and non-violence which includes all stakeholders. We can explain from these definitions that, building an infrastructure for peace means developing mechanisms for collaboration among all relevant stakeholders in peacebuilding of a country to enhance an all-inclusive problem solving and prevention of conflicts. Such mechanism should embrace national, district and local peace councils as the cornerstone of building stable peace (Van Tongeren, 2011b).

Another dimension of infrastructure for peace is concerned with its nature. Being a peacebuilding instrument, the concept has a varied set of variables which describes it. They can be formal or informal, public or private, subject to popular endorsement or restricted to elite level agreement. Darby continues that infrastructure for peace can also be sponsored by international bodies like the UN, EU etc. or by local actors (Darby & Mac Ginty, 2008, p. 3). This study however prioritizes formally recognized national peace infrastructure, which Van Tongeren deem to have higher impact (2011b) as compared to local peace committees.

National infrastructure for peace also go beyond the traditional statist diplomacy. Van Tongeren suggest that it has a long-term commitment to establish and empower peace infrastructures across all levels of society. It is not rigid; its processes need to have structural transformative mechanisms that offers a platform for change. He argues that, forming such a functional network is one of the ultimate building blocks for supporting constructive social change over a course of time (2011b, p. 401). This is because, it encompasses all levels and divisions of society which enhances legitimacy and ideal collaboration among the citizens who are the main stakeholders. As cited by Van Tongeren, Kofi Annan in the 2006 Progress Report on the 2001 UN Report *Prevention of Armed Conflict*, specified that “essentially, the aim should be the creation of a sustainable, national infrastructure for peace that allows societies and their governments to resolve conflicts internally and with their own skills, institutions and resources.”(2011b, p. 401).

This perception clearly advocates for empowering citizens to build formal structures that aims at dealing with conflict issues through mechanisms which are not foreign but common to them.

Also, beyond this perception of the local ownership concept, Kumar believes that, external intervention possesses fundamental interruption of sovereignty on the part of former conflict countries. He also suggests that, even when external mediation are allowed to operate, it may not be sufficient to deal with certain situations (2011, p. 384) hence the need to build formal peace infrastructures which offers a responsive platform to deal with recurring day- to-day issues of conflict (Van Tongeren, 2011b). Such issues include;<sup>42</sup>

“1. Situations where the conflict is not limited to the primary protagonists alone, but extends through the different levels of society, from political and civic leaderships down through to communities; in these situations, which are especially correlated with interethnic tensions or exclusion based on identity, an external mediator, even if backed by a very large team, may not be able to reach to and resolve every level and type of conflict.

2. Situations where ongoing or potential violence is not a variable of a centralized conflict, but decentralized violence over land, natural resources, allocation of mining and other land use rights, and chieftaincy which nevertheless affects national stability; West Africa in particular has been plagued by this type of conflict.” (C. Kumar, 2011, pp. 384, 385).

These are not the only situations C. Kumar presented. We have selected the two situations because they relate to the case of Ghana.

#### **4.5 Infrastructure for Peace and Election violence**

Obviously, the key objective of elections in post conflict or former authoritarian countries is to transfer power to a democratic elected government that enjoys legitimacy of citizens and international community as well as getting the nod for rebuilding (K. Kumar, 1998, p. 6).

Elections are therefore a means to initiate and consolidate democratic process in a country. But while we cannot question its importance in building a peaceful democratic society, it remains a doubt whether elections can achieve its objectives. In developing countries, such as Ghana, elections are keenly contested which in most cases activate erstwhile tensions and root causes of conflict. It also have the potential to aggravate political fractures and tensions within a country

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<sup>42</sup> Since the focus of the study is on the case of the Ghana National Peace Council, I will limit myself to the issues that best describe the case of Ghana.

(C. Kumar, 2011, p. 395). The electoral system for instance can be a source of conflict. The majoritarian systems or the absolute majority which is used by Ghana typically places power and national resources in the hands of only the winning party making opposition parties feel that they have been denied of having access to resources. (Fjelde & Höglund, 2016, p. 300).

In an interview with an informant from the NPC, he emphasized that, the NPC intervene in *“violence related to communal violence, land and resource disputes, chieftaincy disputes, boundary disputes and others. However, elections have become a major source of conflict in most part of Africa. And as such the NPC do not take elections lightly at all. we therefore try to put in mechanisms so that tensions that builds up in the lead up to elections are contained to disallow such tensions to degenerate into violence on the large scale.”* (PC1). His view on elections clearly shows how the process have become a threat to peace in Africa.

To avoid the violence that comes with elections and ensure stable government transition, C. Kumar argues that, states are required to build infrastructure for peace to deal with potential conflict issues that may erupt before, during and after elections (2011, p. 395). He continues that, countries like Guyana in 2006, Ghana in 2004 and 2008, Sierra Leone in 2007, and others enjoyed peaceful elections through the creation and application of national capacities for conflict prevention and transformation which were backed by UN initiatives. He also noted three similar elements that were key to the electoral success across countries with formal peace structures. First, existing national platforms or mechanisms that aided political accords to be established before elections, or which enabled high-level tensions during the elections. Also, the availability of conflict management and conciliation capacities at the district and local levels, example in the shape of local peace committees or similar mechanisms. Lastly, he mentions the activities of civil society, particularly religious and traditional leaders, and mass membership civic groups, in executing organised advocacy for peace, and engaging especially youth in their activities (C. Kumar, 2011, p. 395).

These elements are constructive conflict prevention and management mechanisms. They encompasses the three principles of conflict prevention noted by Alihodžić which includes *“early reaction to signs of trouble; alleviation of the risk factors that trigger violent conflict; and an extended effort to resolve the underlying root causes of violence”* (2012, p. 64). These mechanisms are the features of building infrastructures for peace. Where these mechanisms are absent, keenly contested elections possess a threat to peace. The uncertainty behind elections in

developing countries calls for establishing viable internal mechanism which is committed to long term peace advocacy.

In Ivory Coast 2011, C. Kumar writes that, the collective failure on the part of the international community to prevent future conflict can be used as an example. After six years of international peacekeeping and diplomacy, not much was done to establish internal infrastructures for binding the north- south divide. The country at some point lacked a major political party or a mass-based civic organization to work on binding the north-south divide (2011, p. 395). If national infrastructure for peace had been established in the previous decade, it might have prevented the polarized situation. Also, he posits that, Gbagbo's refusal accept defeat could have been dealt with by an immense national upsurge to counter his rule, but for the lack internal peace infrastructures, the country and the political spectrum, were massively splintered and polarized (2011, p. 396).

#### **4.6 Summary**

In this chapter, we have discussed the conceptual issues that guides the study. We have also established how the concept of National infrastructure for peace have come into the peacebuilding concept. We discussed the fundamental theory of the concept of peacebuilding and narrowed down to the actors of the concept. This brought us to the debate of local ownership which have given birth to national peace councils. Due to the focus of the study, we discussed the national infrastructure for peace concept in relation to elections and election violence. The next chapter will be dedicated to the presentation and analysis of data from the research field.

## **Chapter 5: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter seeks to present and analyse the data I collected during fieldwork in Ghana. The chapter will begin with informants' background information which have the potential to affect their views on the subject matter of the study. Such background information includes informants' education level, positions at their respective work places and age. The chapter also attempts to delve into the individual and organisational reflections on violence and peace promoting in recent Ghanaian elections. Here informant's reflections will be used to assess the work of the NPC in relation to promoting peace in the episode of elections in Ghana. Also, the chapter will bring to light informant's views on Ghana's political culture which are the key factors that obstruct the promotion of peace during elections in Ghana.

The cases presented in this chapter are linked to the guiding concepts of this study. They aim to find answers to the research questions which are indicated in section 1.2.2. Findings are supported with quotations from the interviewees. The study will analyse and discuss informant's narrative to enhance our understanding of their viewpoints.

It is worth mentioning here that, informants from the NPC are denoted with the alphabet PC and a number. Also, PP and PS are used to represent informants from the Political parties and the public-student group respectively. So, for instance PS7 represent informant number 7 from the public-student group and in that order.

### **5.2 Background of informants**

#### **5.2.1 Age**

As indicated earlier, a total of 13 informants, including 9 males and 4 females, were interviewed for the study. In Ghana, every citizen who is eighteen years and above is eligible to register and take part in national elections.<sup>43</sup> In this study, the age range of informants was between 22 and 60years. Only one of my informants did not vote during the 2012 elections. However, all my informants had been in the country during the 2012 elections. When informants were asked if they will take part in the 2016 elections, only 2 were unsure of their position. Except for one, all informants from my first and second group i.e. the NPC and the political parties were above the

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<sup>43</sup> Electoral Commission of Ghana. See <http://www.ec.gov.gh/voting2/who-can-vote.html>

youth age as described by the African Youth Charter<sup>44</sup>, whereas informants from the student and public were mostly the youth. A breakdown of informant's socio-demographic background has been provided in a table form for easy understanding.

In this study, the age of informants is worthy of assessment due the fact that it has the potential to affect their reflections. It appeared that, while the political parties have found new ways of engaging the youth in their activities, the NPC have not taken the necessary steps to easily get into contact with the youth. Most of the youth I interviewed did not know much about the NPC. Those who had much to say about the council were those who had been directly involved in the activities of the council like peace walk.

*I only know that they are into peace and that is it, I don't know much about their other activities. But I was part of a peace walk from the University campus and I think I saw their name on one of the many banners. (PS5)*

*What I know is that, they intervene to bring peace when there is a disturbance or fight in some areas. They go to resolve issues and try to bring peace among the people fighting. Also, I hear often on radio that they have condemned certain things that these politicians do. (PS7)*

These answers indicate the lack of in-depth knowledge among the youth on the role of the national peace council. Young people prefer to use different ways and attitudes to participate in politics and national affairs to older people. They adopt new ways to express their political opinions rather than going by the conventional customs used by the older generation (Quintelier, 2007, pp. 171,176). In section 2.5.2, I emphasized that, the NPC want to use new forms of internet communication to enhance their capacity of reaching the younger generation with its education. But interviews with the youth did not turn out to correspond to these goals.

Meanwhile, we are aware of the youth's importance in election violence. Most research on elections and violence in Ghana submits that the youth are habitually manipulated by the political elites to engage in activities that causes violence during elections (Amankwaah, 2013).

*"Politicians target the youth, they convince them with money and job opportunities. So, the youth too because they have nothing to do they take the bait and go around to do unnecessary things that brings violence during elections. (PS4)*

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<sup>44</sup> The African Youth Charter of the African Union describe a youth or young people as every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. For this study's purpose, the age range for youth is considered 18 and 35.

As indicated by Bob-Milliar, party foot soldiers are recruited from the youth who are always available elites to work in the interest of the political parties in Ghana for future benefits (2014, p. 132). Even though the NPC is aware of this fact, it has not taking advantage of the internet tools like Facebook, twitter and blogs to reach the youth to counter this attitudes of the political parties.

*Me I use Facebook a lot, ...it is only recently that I have seen most of our media people using Facebook and twitter to broadcast their news. But for the Peace council you are talking about I don't see them on these social platforms. Maybe once a while when a blog shares their information. (PS4)*

This illustrates that, unlike its counterparts in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Kenya, the NPC of Ghana has not taking advantage of digital media to reach the youth. Even as at the time of conducting this study, the official website of the council had not been updated since 2013. How would they realize the need to reach the youth through the medium?

Recent studies have shown the growing Positive relationships between online communication or the internet use and political participation among young people. The Internet has become a natural medium for alternative ways of political participation. Bakker & De Vreese argues that, it is a stronger predictor for newer ways of participating in political activities than traditional forms. To these scholars, the medium offers a wide range of options to engage young people in political activities through political blogs, researching political information, following online news, participating in forums, discussing politics by e-mail and social media or organising electronic petitions (2011, p. 456). Perhaps, if the structures of the council had factored youth representation on its governing board, it could have in a way averted this issue.

Surprisingly enough, the political parties on the other hand have adopted the digital media as a way of engaging the youth in their activities. In recent Ghanaian elections (2008, 2012, and 2016) major political parties like the NPP, NDC and PPP and the Electoral commission had their Web sites, although some do not update them regularly (Bokor, 2015, p. 10).

*I follow the two parties on Facebook, so when I visit there, I get to know some of the things they do. I don't like to go to their rallies because of the massive crowd. (PS2)*



So, if the political parties can influence the youth through the digital media to intensify their political activism which includes propaganda measures and conflicting issues why is it that the NPC cannot use the same means to promote peace work? The lack of NPC's activities on digital media has affected the perspectives of the youth on the role of the NPC in Ghana. The older generation on the other hand listen to radio, read newspapers and attend political events and hence they are well abreast with the work of the NPC and the political parties as well.

### **5.2.2 Education background and employment status**

Informants for this study have all had formal secondary school education. Also, except for three (3), all have completed tertiary education. Two of these three were still in the university.

Kam & Palmer posits that, myriad scholarly literatures on political participation and education level agrees that the two positively correlates. In their view, People with higher level of education in most cases assess their political decisions critically before putting them into action (2008, pp. 612, 613). Education also determines people's ability to assess political information and to make sense of it. Informants level of education therefore have the tendency to influence their views concerning the topic matter of this study. Informants level of education and occupational status partly explain why informants from the political parties and the NPC had an in-depth knowledge of the role of the peace council and election related violence in Ghana. Whiles their work has handed them with personal experience of the subject of this study, their education level has equipped them with critical analysis and sound judgement on matters of concern. During my interviews with my first and second group of informants I realized that, almost all of them were equipped with detailed information to the questions I asked as compared to informants from the public and students. Whiles informants with education level and work position in no doubt enriched my data collected, they also had the tendency to distort data as I have indicated in section 3.5.6. Informants from the NPC and the political parties were cautious of some of their answers to some questions. In certain situations, they did not want to go far to explain the details of their opinions. This was due to their positions as members or staff of the NPC or as politicians.

*...I think Kuffour at that time played an important role in the peace council's efforts to brokered peace between the two candidates... Yes, I think I want to stop at that. (PC3)*

*I don't want to accusing but it's a fact, the media...they promote intemperate language, they insult, they tell lies and all sought of things. (PC3)*

Also, it was evident in my interviews that informants from the political parties share blames for violence which had previously occurred to other institutions rather than theirs. Where issues like that of the activities of the party foot soldiers come up, political party informants tend to find reasons to justify the actions of these groups.

*...education for which people? These people are hungry and they are without jobs and so they come to protect the ballot boxes. To stop anyone from destroying the election process. (PP3)*

*...but the problem is that in Africa the security agencies always work in favour of the of the government and we need to protect ourselves with these guys (referring to foot soldiers). (PP1)*

None of the youth I interviewed admitted to ever engaging in violent activities during elections. This is perhaps because of their education level and their employment status. But the same cannot be said of the politicians who by their nature of work have indirectly instigated conflict. The level of education and employment status of informants were therefore decisive factors which influenced their perspective of the work of the NPC and election related violence.

Table 3: Summary of The Socio-Demographic Background of Informants.

<b>Informant</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age range</b>	<b>Education level</b>	<b>Employment status</b>
<b>PC1</b>	Male	45-49	Masters level	Employed
<b>PC2</b>	female	30-34	First degree	Employed
<b>PC3</b>	Male	55-60	Masters level	Employed
<b>PP1</b>	Male	55-60	LLB	Employed
<b>PP2</b>	Male	40-44	Master level	Employed
<b>PP3</b>	Male	45-49	First degree	Employed
<b>PS1</b>	Male	20-24	Tertiary	Student
<b>PS2</b>	Female	25-29	First degree	Employed
<b>PS3</b>	Male	20-24	S.H.S.	Unemployed
<b>PS4</b>	Male	30-34	First degree	Employed
<b>PS5</b>	Female	30-34	S.H.S.	Employed
<b>PS6</b>	Female	35-39	First degree	Employed
<b>PS7</b>	Female	20-24	Tertiary	Student

Source: Fieldwork in Ghana 2016.

### **5.3 Assessing the NPC's activities and mechanisms for Peace**

The Peace council have several activities, strategies and mechanisms they use in promoting peace during elections in Ghana. In section 2.5, the study revealed the NPC's strategic mechanisms for promoting peace during elections. The mechanisms included, conflict prevention, management and resolution strategies and activities for cooperation and partnership. This section will make use of these activities and mechanisms to respond to the objectives of this study; which is to find out if the role and approaches of the Peace council promotes peace during elections in Ghana. In this respect, we will be able to react to our first research questions which are;

- What are the activities and mechanisms used by the NPC in promoting peace during elections in Ghana; and how well did these activities and mechanisms promote peace during recent elections (2008, 2012 and 2016 elections).

#### **5.3.1 Building Peace through Partnership and Collaboration**

The Peace Council works with many institution in their effort to promote peace before, during and after elections. We know from section 2.5.1 that, they work with local CSOs like IDEG and IEA, international organisations like the UNDP, private corporations, the political parties, the EC and among others. We also know from the structure of the Council in section 2.4.1 that, the NPC operates in three levels of the society i.e. the national, regional and district which allows it to maximise peace work in all the levels of the Ghanaian society.

In our discussion of the peacebuilding concept in chapter four, the study emphasized from Lederach view on infrastructure for peace that, the concept promotes a cooperative problem-solving approach to conflict based on dialogue that includes all peace stakeholders in all levels of the society. On this account, we can develop here that, a successful peacebuilding approach should feature the cooperation of all institutions that have peace at their heart and at all levels of the society. With this aim, this section will use informant's narratives to test how the NPC have being able to incorporate stakeholders in its operations.

*...I think that the EC of any country including ours has a very big part to play in promoting peace especially during elections. So, they must be fair, transparent, and credible beyond reasonable doubts to assure opposing parties and the people of peace in the country. We don't work with only the EC, but all other relevant institution you can think of; those who have peaceful elections at their heart, including the political parties as well. (PC1)*

*...for local peace organisations like MUSIGA, the Ark foundations and the likes we do collaborations with them a lot. the act says that the Council should coordinate with other peace actors. So yes, we do collaborations with other institutions...but we use guidelines to streamline these groups for proper activities and collaboration. (PC2)*

Interview with the political parties also adhered to this assertion. An informant acknowledged the capacity building programs organised by the council for political parties from time to time which aims to manage intra and inter party conflicting issues.

*I remember that, before the 2012 elections, the NPC together with IDEG for the first time brought together all our presidential candidates to sign a peace pact that would pledge their commitment to peace and violent free elections. Yes, the program was organised in collaboration with IDEG, the Manhyia Palace of the Asantehene in Kumasi to raise awareness on the importance of inter-party dialogue to deal with certain issues. (PP2)*

Informants narrative here suggest that, the NPC operations for peace during elections encompasses key stakeholders for peace and all levels and divisions of society. From the first narrative, we can realize that, the NPC's collaborations do not only encompass public institutions like the electoral commission (EC), but also other local Civil Society groups like the Ark foundation which is a women's group and youth groups who works directly with the citizens or local people. These groups are mostly located at the grassroots level of the society where the NPC have also established local and regional peace councils. Their activities include peace games and peace walks which they normally do to create awareness. Narratives from the political parties also suggest that, the NPC collaborated with political parties during the elections. The informant's narrative does not only show the peace pact signed during the elections but it also indicates the presence of local CSO i.e. IDEG and the Manhyia palace which represents the people, who are the main stakeholders of peace.

### **5.3.2 Assessing Peacebuilding Prevention Mechanism**

In section 4.2, we realised that, Peacebuilding tools are not just a mechanism used in rebuilding societies that have experienced wars. But they are also necessary in societies that have not experienced major violent conflict as Lederach (1997, p. 20) indicates. In the case of Ghana, the NPC which is a national infrastructure tool for peace should establish mechanisms and activities to prevent violent conflicts and build sustainable peace. Considering this, the Council uses preventive mechanisms like early warning activities about possible security threats to alleviate

tensions as they arise during elections. Activities like peace walks, games and songs are promoted to enhance individuals and group behaviour and relations. The execution of these preventive programs builds confidence and trust among the citizenry. Reflections from informants suggest that, the NPC have well established conflict prevention mechanisms.

*The NPC has a conflict map, so we look at the map and we know the hot spot and we try to normally put in strategies to offset any likelihood of a violent conflict. So, we are aware of the conflict hotspot and we put in the checks for people to stand by to report any issues that border peace. (PC1)*

Interviews with the public and students revealed that peace walks, football games which features the youth, students, and sometimes politicians and celebrities are organized to create awareness and foster confidence and trust building.

*I took part in a peace walk in May 2016 which I think was one of their activities. One banner had the peace council logo and name and we walked from campus to Lizzy's complex to play games. (PS1)*

### **5.3.3 Assessing Conflict management and resolution Mechanisms**

It is common in Africa to experience tensions and clashes in the episode of elections but as specified by Alihodžić (2012) large-scale election-related violence is overwhelming. The peacebuilding concept encompasses collective problem solving to violence that may arise. As such the NPC, has organized strategies and mechanisms to manage and resolve conflict situations that occurs during elections to avoid their escalation and spread. Field interviews revealed that, the Council do not consider all conflict as the same and that they enquire the appropriate measures for a conflict depending on their analysis of the conflict situation.

*...What we do is that, where there is conflict the army and the security forces go in to calm the situation which then paves the way for the Peace Council to work. We do the dialogue aspect. We do the diplomatic work. The security service represents the government to restore calm... In Tafo, Kumburugu, Bimbilla, Alavanyo-Nkonya and all other places of evident of violence, the 13-member board were there to work. (PC2)*

It appears that the public becomes worried when there is a conflict situation and it seems the Peace council is not doing anything to deal with the situation. An informant revealed that;

*Sometimes issues like that of the death of the MP of Abuakwa and the Tafo cemetery issue comes up but you don't hear much from the council probably because they might side with one of the opposing groups. This I think is a threat to our security because such issues always aggravate during elections. (PS4)*

Informants from the Peace Council reaction to such public concerns revealed that the council uses different types of conflict management and resolution strategies to resolve certain conflict depending on the nature and analysis of the conflict. Informants' submissions, revealed the varied strategies of managing and resolving conflict;

*Normally we expect that institutions created by the state play their role. These are criminal issues. To virtually threaten to kill a public official so the police should take it up. What the NPC however does in such situation is to call for calm to allow for the appropriate state intuition to deal with the issue. we don't need to be everywhere doing everything. ....so, for example we do what we call shuttle diplomacy- that is where we go behind the scenes to work around the issue. (PC1)*

The section below illustrates some of the key works of the NPC during recent elections in Ghana. The elections include the 2008, 2012 and 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections. While the narratives of the informant indicate the activities which the Peace Council performed to prevent what would have being a major violent conflict in Ghana, it also shows how the council managed and resolved the key conflicting situations in recent Ghanaian elections.

#### **5.3.4 Significant Peacebuilding activities in recent elections**

*When we saw that a lot of conflicts were coming in the 2008 elections, we were able to enter into the realm and we solved that problem.... the key one is when the election results came and Akuffo Addo thought he has won and Atta Mills also thought he had won and there was a kind of tensions growing.<sup>45</sup> So the Peace council had to enter into the frame and mediate. We were able to negotiate for peace and President J.A. Kuffour was very helpful. I think Kuffour at that time played an important role in the peace council's efforts to broker peace between the two candidates... Yes, I think I want to stop at that. (PC3)*

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<sup>45</sup> Akuffo Addo and Atta Mills were the presidential candidates for the NPP and NDC respectively during the 2008 elections.

The informant also shared his experience on the presidential election in 2012. He indicated said that;

*The problem at that time was that the NPP thought they had won the elections and they wanted to declare winning. So, the Peace Council had to step in and support the EC to make the announcement. You see, there were forces that were amassing between the NPP and the NDC, but when the Peace council stepped in they were averted. That could have resulted in civil war. The Peace pact also had an effect in the 2012 elections. Because they have had an agreement in the presence of Otumfuo and Ghanaians, and the world it committed them to accept the results and the peace talks. (PC3).*

*And on the 2016 elections, we are on course with our activities which we undertake before elections. Example is the one you witnessed at the hotel. PC3 (Indicated in section 2.5.3.1)*

The informants' reflections presented above have shown the activities and mechanisms which the NPC use to promote peace during elections. We can establish from informant's reflections that, the NPC has varied strategies for promoting peace as shown in section 2.5, but they employ a mechanism which best suits the conflict situation at hand. If we analyse the 2012 situation for example, we can identify the peace activities which it employed to promote peace. The peace pact signed between the Peace council and the political parties reveals some of its activities they perform before elections. Whiles the pact shows the cooperation and collaboration between a national infrastructure for peace and other institutions who are stakeholders of peace, it also shows the inclusion of the local people. Without a doubt, this is what the concept of national Peace infrastructure for peacebuilding entails; i.e. a "dynamic network of interdependent structures, mechanisms, resources, values, and skills which, through dialogue and consultation, contribute to conflict prevention and peace-building in a society."(C. Kumar, 2011, p. 385).

To answer the second part of our research question number one; which is how well these activities and mechanisms promoted peace during the election, we will look at the key conflict situations during the recent elections in Ghana and test to see if the Council's activities were able to eradicate any form of violent elections. We can see from the 2012 case again that, the intervention of the Peace council averted the forces that were amassing between the supporters of the two major political parties. In the view of the informant, the intervention of the NPC stopped the possibility of what could have being a civil war. He also revealed that, the mechanisms that were employed before the elections like the Peace pact influenced the dialogues the Peace had

with the party candidates to calm the 2012 elections tensions. For these reasons, we can establish that, the activities and mechanisms of the NPC impeded any form of a major violent conflict. We can further test this fact with the perspectives of the political parties and the public.

*Though the NPC's activities are partially influenced, they are able to calm tensions and alert us of the importance of peaceful environment during elections. But you will agree with me that there were a lot of violence in the country even before the 2012 election.... but it is better to have a deem light than total darkness. (PP1)*

*Sometimes, they can calm tensions to bring peace but my worry is the numerous violence that characterises our elections. Can't they do anything to stop them? I think if they are resourced enough, they can effective bring us an election which is fair and positively peaceful. One that really cements our peace and democratic credentials. (PS3)*

We can conclude from these informant's reflections that; the work of the Council has been able to prevent large scale violent conflict but it has not eradicated the election-related violence in Ghana. This is because, even though informants' viewpoints acknowledge that the NPC's activities have been able to bring 'peace', they do not entirely perceive the NPC as an institution which have delivered the peace the citizenry want to experience. Perhaps, it is because nobody has any monopoly on defining the concept of 'peace' (Galtung, 1969, p. 167). For this matter, realising peace depends on the social context and the connotation of the society in which peace processes are applied (Harris, 2004, p. 7). In the case of Ghana, informant's reflections on the peace they want to experience during elections is the positive peace which Galtung talks about in our introduction of the peacebuilding concept in section 4.2; which is "creating self-supporting structures that remove causes of wars and offer alternatives to war in situations where wars might occur" (Galtung, 1976, p. 298). This notion of peace is in line with the concept of building national infrastructures or mechanisms to prevent possible election violence that can lead to wars. This means that the NPC's should create activities and mechanisms that is capable of eradicating election-related violence in Ghana whether low tension or high to achieve peaceful elections. The reason being that, even if the violence that occur during election time in Ghana may be comparatively less severe than in other countries, to ignore them is also possibly to ignore the symptoms for potential explosions of future violent conflict (Amankwaah, 2013, p. 5).

This brings us to the second research question; i.e. What are the constraints and challenges that affect the NPC's promotion of peace during elections? To find answers to this question,



presentation of informants' data in the next sections will be used. The study will briefly discuss informants' narratives to maximise our understanding of the dynamics involved in the issues.

#### **5.4 Factors that challenge Election Peace promotion**

We have developed from the previous sections that the activities and mechanisms of the NPC can promote peace during. But we are also aware that, informants' narratives from the public and political parties confirms that, upon the Peace Councils efforts, election-related violence is evident in Ghana. So, what causes the violence? Informants response to this reveals two forms of challenges. The first group of challenges are concerned directly with the composition, mandate and structures of the NPC and the second is related directly to the political policies and political culture of Ghana. We will first present and analyse the first issues to find out if the hold.

##### **5.4.1 Peace Infrastructures and Authority**

Informants' interviews from the political parties revealed that, the Peace Council lacks authority to enforce its decisions on conflict disputes hence when they mediate for peace, conflicting parties choose to go by what the council have ruled and this do not help to solve the problem.

*When we talk of the Peace Council, some of us see it as an institution that can bark but cannot bite.... Yes, the peace council have issued a statement but what happens. ...It is just an advisory institution. (PP1)*

*We need to give them (referring to the NPC) the constitutional mandate that the decisions of the Peace council are final and binding and if you want to challenge it you should go to the supreme court. (PP2)*

What informants perceive here is that, because the NPC has no power to enforce its decisions, dialogue is sometimes ignored, but if they are given the authority that its decisions are binding, parties to conflict will be forced to agree to peace. The ACT 818 does not give the council the power to enforce its decisions. As such it only uses soft power to dialogue for peace. A typical case of example when the opposition NPP by pass the Peace Pact and the peace talks in the aftermaths of the 2012 and decided to go to court. What would have happened if it had not go to court if we consider the forces that were amassing at the time?

Informants' from the NPC reaction to the above was that;

*I don't think we could have done better, we did our best. The issue bores down to the voters register.... So, one can argue that the peace pact should have stopped the NPP from going to*

*court, but the fact is that elections are not delivered by the Peace council therefore we are not in a position to convince anybody to accept the results. The EC should do the convincing. So, if it fails or it does it and the parties do not agree then it goes to court. So, I think the NPP did the right thing then. (PC3).*

But should the NPC be given the mandate to enforce its verdicts? How well will the council function with such a capability? If the NPC is given this the authority to impose its decisions will it help to resolve root causes of conflict?

Johnson & Johnson argues that, when peace is imposed it may subdue the conflict but imposing peace neither resolves the underlying grievances of conflicts nor establishes a positive lasting relations among conflicting parties (2005, p. 281). The Peace council perceive itself to be mediators who negotiate for peace using ‘sweet and beautiful language’ to massage conflicting parties to let them understand the need to allow for peace. Calkins argument on peacemaker’s mediation assent to the NPC’s way of facilitating peace. He posits that, peacemakers should use conscious efforts to support parties to a conflict. He also argues that, through compassion and understanding, peacemakers can still the storm of tensions and anger and guide the conflicting parties to a meaningful resolution. His submissions asserts that, the nonbinding arbitration approach is the underpinning mechanism for peace and even healing (2005, p. 268). The NPC’s approach to peace is grounded on attaining a consensus between the parties. This approach is what Johnson & Johnson refers to as consensual peace; one which ends violence and disagreements and in addition, fosters a new relationship built on cooperation and understanding to achieve mutual goals (2005, p. 282). The NPC prefers to create an environment for creative thinking and resolution. One that all parties to a conflict will realised that peace is required, legitimate, and essential. As a Peacemaking institution, it does not enforce especially when they are aware of other national institutions like the courts and the security agencies who do the enforcement part. Notwithstanding what has just been said, the Peace council advices the government and the enforcement institutions in some situations.

*We recommend, we don’t enforce. We only advice. In simple terms, the NPC was intentionally created to do dialogue work.... Most of our decisions are sort of advice or early warning; Like the Alavanyo -Nkonya we advised the govt to take over the land in question for peace to prevail, it heeds to our advice at long last and there is peace now. Institutions like the National security are there to do the enforcement part. (PC2)*

*We have sweet languages, beautiful languages, advices and language of hope.... we massage people and let them understand their problems. We talk and facilitate the building of peace and this mostly works. (PC3)*

We can conclude on this matter that since there are enforcement institutions like the National security council, the court, the police and the rest, given the NPC the authority to enforce its decisions is not necessary. The act will also not help to resolve the root causes of conflict as shown as explained earlier.

#### **5.4.2 Peace infrastructures and Political control**

Informants narratives also emphasized that the NPC is not able to function well because it is controlled politically. Informants perceive that, the government of the day have a fraction of control and influence on the Peace council and its governing body and activities. The perceptions stem from the provisions in the NPC Act 818 of parliament. The Act 818 gives the president of the republic of Ghana the authority to decide on the salaries and allowances of members and staff, selects its executive secretary and nominates two people to the board. Moreover as indicated by Kotia and Aubyn, there are perceptions that, government periodic funds for the activities of the council have the possibility to compromise the neutrality of the and independence of the council (2013a).

*...you don't need the president to appoint the general secretary of the peace council....and for the independence of the council like I said conditions of service can even make them not to be independent. Assuming their positions are permanent and they are well paid and they select their executive secretary, don't you think they will be more independent? (PP1)*

*The Peace council is not strong because some of its members may want to show appreciation to whoever brought them to the institution or provided monetary assistance to their course. But this is traceable to the constitution which was created out of rush. Ghanaians wanted just to be ruled under a constitution rather than an authoritarian. So, we did not care about the shortcoming in the 1992 constitution which gave too much power to the president. (PP3)*

Here again, field interviews with members and staff of the Council do not entirely agree with perceptions and narratives from the political parties and the public. On the issue with funds and salaries, informants emphasized that, even though the council is funded through the consolidated

fund<sup>46</sup>, the government is not the sole funder of the council's activities. The council's major donors are international institutions which includes the UNDP, EU, USAID and other corporations. On salaries, it was revealed that, members are not paid but they are given allowances which comes from the council's available funds. Informants went on to say that, the members of the board of the Peace Council have an already paid jobs and that, the allowances or any money they receive from the council cannot in any way influence their decisions or neutrality. And in relation to the presidential nomination, informants posited that, among the thirteen members of the council at all levels, only two are nominated by the government and this cannot in anyway influence the independency of the other eleven who are well established people with a personality to protect. Below are informant's narratives which rejects the perception by the public and political parties that the NPC is politically controlled.

*No, I have never encountered in my so many years as a member of the council interference. No, not at all from an individual or groups. The peace council is such that the sort of people there are straight. People of integrity and none of them will bend for illegitimate tendencies. (PC3)*

The informant further stressed that, *board members have already established jobs, life and status looking at our backgrounds. We do not fear the term of the office position as we already have jobs or other things we are doing daily. Opoku Onyinah for instance is the chairman of the huge Pentecostal church and you can imagine his position considering the internationalization of the church of Pentecost. (PC3)*

*The Peace council is funded through the consolidated fund. Also, we get funds from donors and development partners. E.g. include the UNDP, EU, USAID and other corporations. They are not really paid but they are given sitting allowance which comes from our funds. Our salaries and allowances are determined by the fair wages and salaries commission because we are a state institution. (PC1)*

*...And you know the executive secretary has no power over the decisions of the board members. He is just in charge of the day to day running of the office. (PS2)*

Having analysed the issues presented above, it will be difficult establish that the NPC is politically controlled. If we analyse appointment of the executive secretary for instance, we will

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<sup>46</sup> Consolidated fund is the public funds of Ghana. See Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, chapter 13, article 175.

realise that, the issue does not come into play with the matter of neutrality and independence. This is because; first, the Act 818 does not task the executive secretary to report to the government, rather the governing board of the council. Secondly, the executive secretary is only responsible for managing and coordinating the day to day administration of the council. Kotia and Aubyn (2013a) in a parallel argument to this issue compares the composition of the NPC to that of other state institutions like the Electoral Commission (EC) and the Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) who's chairpersons are imposed on them but still manages to be independent. The EC for instance regardless of its chairperson has organised numerous elections which have resulted in four successive transfer of power between the two key political parties of Ghana.

The study can therefore establish from the narratives of informants from the peace council that the perception of political control does not hold. This is because the Act 818 of parliament of Ghana task members not to be political. Inwardly, a member might support party A or B but it does not mean that they can voice it out. Also, members are eminent people who would not want to do anything to disrupt their well-built image they have achieved over the years.

#### **5.4.3 Weak institution in Africa**

Some scholars are of the view that, in most African countries (including Ghana), public institution are usually weak (Bratton, 2007, p. 98) and hence they do not have the capability to carry out their work effectively. This is due to many reasons which cannot be discussed here due to the focus of this study. However, in this section we present informants' reflections that attest to this assumption in relation to the NPC. From the reflections of informants, we will see that, while informant from the NPC argues that the council is not weak like other institutions in Africa, informants from the public and political parties argues fort the opposite. First let us present the views from the parties and the public.

*I think they need to be financed well. Maybe not from the government but from private firms, individuals and the aid agencies around the world. That can make them do their own things without waiting for the government to release funds. ...with that they can operate all over the regions and communities without depending on any party's government. (PP2)*

The peace council do not perceive itself to be an institution that can be categorised into the weak institutions of Africa syndrome. As indicated in section 5.3 the Council believes that it has a proven record of activities in relation to promoting peace during election. But the narratives of

informants from the political parties and the public indicates otherwise. Their perceptions stem from the fact that the council do not have the human capacity and the financial capability to carry out its varied peace programmes to all levels of the Ghanaian society. The council itself admit to the insufficient funding, physical structures, limited number of staff which characterize it

*The challenge we have is very visible; our offices and office equipment's are few. Also, Funding- to do the work. Sometimes within the whole year you will get just one release from the government. ...Yes, we do worry with fund situation. we need to hit the ground running, we need to go to the field to work and if there is no money how do we do that. (PC2)*

During my field interviews with administrative staffs, they accepted that, the council has insufficient number of staff at the national, regional and districts levels. They also admitted that, the Council lacks physical accessibility and the lack of internal control systems and processes (few personnel, offices, limited operational logistics, procurement, and finance). They also complained of limited funds to carry out programmes. These issues are clearly challenges the promotion of peace during elections. If the council like other state institutions lacks funds, then we can say that they are weak. How can an institution function effectively if it is not well resourced?

Even though informants from the NPC acknowledged its visible challenges, they tend to assert that, the challenges are minor and they do not affect their work. In relation to the challenges faced in the office, they indicated that, it only increases the work load of staff and pressure on office equipment. Also, on the issue of insufficient funds, informants point out that the council have several donors who support their work.

*...but the UNDP have been very helpful to the Peace Council. They have always come to our aid. Has it not been them; I don't know but i think the NPC would have not being functioning. They are our major donors. They are the backbone of the Peace council. (PC2)*

Informants narratives also criticized the composition and structure of the National Peace council. The narratives show that the 13-member governing board do not fairly represent the key stakeholders of peace.

*For me I am only concerned with the type of people in the council, only pastors and imams. No young people and peace expects. And how can you make peace without women? They have ignored us and is a pity. If they include young people, more women and the security heads like*

*the Inspector General of the Police for example, they will be more strong. They can increase their number, right? (PS4)*

Kotia and Aubyn (2013b) has also indicated that, key groups like the youth, women, security service, trade unions and academicians are not represented on the council per the NPC Act 818. They emphasized that, unlike the Kenya and South Africa peace councils which encompasses the youth and trade unions due to their clear majority in the society, the Ghana NPC has ‘no seat for them’. To these scholars, such a deliberate or undeliberate exclusion of the groups can breed serious implication when a new or different type of conflict emerges in the Ghanaian society. If for example a religious conflict breaks out, how will the council deal with the issue considering its religious majority composition. The contrary view to this issue is that, the council members will appeal to their respective groups for the restoration of peace to such conflict (Kotia & Aubyn, 2013a). But how effective this mechanism will become remains another question. In response to this compositional issue however, the council in its five-year strategic plan have emphasized that, these groups (youth security service and Gender) will be included at the decision-making level of the peace council.<sup>47</sup> Here again, how such groups will be engaged in matters remains another issue.

*We engage the youth and peace experts. Sometimes we work with all the security institutions so for our composition I think is okay. Maybe the only issue is what people have been saying, the limited women on the board which with time something will be done about it. But at the end of the day achieving the peace is the most important. (PC3)*

Again, there is an ongoing concern about the gender imbalance of the council. It is obviously difficult for the representational groups to nominate a female to represent them considering their religious background. This according to Kotia and Aubyn (2013a) makes the composition of the council to disregard gender sensitivity. They emphasized that it is surprising that, women who make over 51 per cent of the Ghanaian population have over the years being given just one seat at the NPC. Even that, have she not been nominated by the president by the NPC Act, women would have been overlooked by the Peace Council. This is unconventional and needs to be revisited because it causes a disparage in women’s attempt to engage in peace and stability. In an interview with a member of the Peace Council, he expressed that, *we are aware of the situation and something will be done about it. (PC3).*

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<sup>47</sup> Five- strategic plan of the NPC, Page21.

Judging from the submissions presented above from informant's reflections on the NPC, the study infers that, it is inappropriate to perceive the Peace Council to be weak and politically controlled. This is because, the visible challenges of the NPC are not strong enough to weaken or affect the functions of the council. They are day to day problems which most institutions in Ghana experience and as such one would find it difficult to understand the challenges did not make the council to do its peace work. Secondly, with the reference to the structure, representation of members and the constitutional mandate possessed by the National Peace Council, the study argues that it has no excuse to be controlled politically.

Also on the debate that the Council should be given the authority to impose or enforce its decisions, the study advice that the act is needless as there are many public institutions that are supposed to be doing the enforcement work. "The peace council cannot be doing everything...as peacemakers we are always peacemakers"-PC3. In addition, we believe that, the directive can make the Peace Council judgemental, oppressive and uncompassionate which will not help to deal with the root causes of conflicts. Besides adversarial mediation will only leave parties to conflict and even peacemakers mentally bruised and disheartened, whereas non-adversarial mediation allows the disputants to achieve a sense of peace and understanding which fosters the healing of wounds (Calkins, 2005, p. 273). Additionally, Johnson & Johnson have warned that, if peacemakers act in an oppressive manner, they risk becoming part of the conflict and disputants may be violent towards them or attempt to obstruct the success of the peace resolutions (2005, p. 281).

Our next set of discussions focuses on the other factors which the study believes that, they are not directly linked to the role or mandate of the Peace Council but are very important factors to consider if election peace is to be achieved. These factors are largely concerned with the political setting of Ghana and the study intends to present and analyse them from the perspectives of informants. Unlike the challenging issues that are concerned with the role of the NPC, in the cases presented in the next sections almost all informants agreed that the issues have major constraints on the promotion of peace during elections.

### **5.5 Political culture and policies challenging peacebuilding in Ghana**

It is difficult and unfair to fault the NPC with the issues that would be raised in this section. This is because, most of the factors hindering the promotion of peaceful elections are because of some policies and nature of politics in the Ghanaian political system. What we mean here is that, the nature of some political activities and policies in the country do not help to promote peaceful



elections and it seems most of these factors are out of hand of the NPC. So, in dealing with these challenging factors, one cannot directly fault the NPC. However, what the study suggest is that, these issues should be openly brought up and addressed not only by the NPC but other key institutions like the parliament, courts, CSOs etc. as dealing with them involves a long way to review some part of the constitution of Ghana.

*You see, certain things in our politics raises unnecessary tensions. I listen to these so called political party's serial caller on radio and I become frightened. And the next thing you will hear is that foot soldiers or macho men of this party or that one have gone to protect ballot boxes of a polling station.....is it their duty at all? What give them the right to do that, our constitution?* (PS4)

### **5.5.1 Winner-takes-all syndrome**

Informants reflected on the winner take all syndrome. As I have mentioned above, the electoral system of Ghana uses a simple majority rule to transform election polls into parliamentary and presidential positions. It does not make provisions that allow losers of the elections to have a fraction of representation in government. Fjelde & Höglund argues that, the majoritarian systems or the absolute majority typically places power and national resources in the hands of only the winning party making opposition parties feel that they have been denied of having access to resources. (2016, p. 300). When this happens, it brings about keenly contested elections which results in electoral malpractices, rigging, voter intimidations, violence and disagreement over election results. Electoral systems therefore have a major part to play in promoting peace in countries that uses elections to select leaders to fill public offices. in this case, what the NPC or civil society organisations can do is to call on the state institutions I have mentioned above to make changes to such a policy.

*When one party wins, the other party know that they will stay in opposition for 8 years and you know politicians cannot survive that especially when they are kept from the national cake. And since they borrowed money for campaigns then they will do everything to win. If they don't then it means they will be left with nothing.* (PS1)

*We should do something about the winner takes all syndrome as proposed by the IEA. This can minimise because if party A wins and party B knows that it may get something then there will be no need to fight.* (PC3)

In Ghana alliances and cross-ethnic background support are necessary to win the presidency. Ethnic groups also expect returns of favour; being it development or positions in government for their members. As Mueller has described, the act means that, it is important for a political party and its alliances to win and not lose at all cost as political party's loss means being left out from access to state resources (2011, p. 105). This creates tensions and violence before and during elections. What PC3 meant above is that, if for instance a percentage of political position is given to the losing party, it will decrease the tensions that are created by the keenly competed elections.

### **5.5.2 Open seat elections**

Informants also pointed out that, violence and tensions increases in elections where there is an open seat for candidates to contest. Even though informants agreed that, around the world elections are done for candidates to fill public positions which are vacant or soon to be vacant, the case of Ghana is always characterized with intense competitions especially when candidates perceive their chances to be high. It does not matter the purpose of the election; whether by-elections, parliamentary or even internal party elections.

*if you look at the menace that occurred in the Atiwa and Asawase by-elections you will know that these politicians care about getting the nod first. Once they envisage that they have a good chance to grab a seat, they will use any means even if it is to kill people. Is the same with the general elections and even the internal party's elections. Look at what happened before the ... (the informant named a party as an example) primaries in 2015.<sup>48</sup> (PS4)*

*I think that you and I will do the same if we were politicians. If we know that we have a chance to win something that can help our purpose in life, we will fight for it. But I accept that it is bad when people must die or maimed all because someone want to serve a nation. (PS5)*

Bob-Milliar addressed the issue of open seat elections in his presentation on '*Patterns of Low-intensity Electoral Violence*'. He stressed that in open seat elections, intimidation of voters and physical violent clashes are very common. he established that, open seat elections accounted for a consistent pattern of physical attacks during presidential and parliamentary primary elections and party executive leadership competition in Ghana. (2014, pp. 139,140).

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<sup>48</sup> The informant named a political party who's some its process of electing party leaders was characterised with violence leading to injuries of some supporters.

### **5.5.3 The Electoral Commission factor**

During interviews, most of my informants asserted that, the EC of Ghana has a big part to play in promoting peaceful elections. Informants talked about the position of the EC stating that it is the most important player in promoting a violence free election.

*It is the referee like in football matches and it should be professional and not take sides. (PP1)*

*If the Electoral commission makes itself incredible, then we have a problem. the conflict will start right from there. So, you can see even before the 2016 elections, some people the EC is not fair in relation to the voters register. So, if we get the position of the EC right the rest is not too difficult. if we get the people and the political parties to have trust and confidence in the EC then we will experience peaceful elections. (PC3)*

Over the years, political parties have disagreed with the conduct and results of the EC. Complaints of registration irregularities, electoral fraud and over voting in some areas have been cited by political parties. In the 2012 elections for instance, the NPP claimed that, the elections were rigged in favor of President Mahama, but fortunately for Ghana the party decided to challenge the results presented by the EC at the Supreme Court.<sup>49</sup> The party's unprecedented decision to go to court at the back drop of its supporters calling for demonstration and disturbances spared the country of a looming violent conflict. Informants therefore perceive that, the proper conduct and effectiveness on the part of the EC in conducting a free and fairer election is key to eradicating fear and violence.

### **5.5.4 Intra-party violence and 'Party Foot Soldiers' Activities**

The Ghanaian political culture is characterized with the activities of 'party foot soldiers' who are employed before and during elections by political elites to maximise their chances of winning an election. As explained in section 1.3.3, 'foot soldiers' refers to the rank and file of party members who offer a kind of whole-heartedness support to their respective political party and candidates during election period and, in turn, are rewarded with private pay-offs for their continued devotion and activities (Gyimah-Boadi & Prempeh, 2012, p. 101). Party foot soldiers have evidently used violence over the years in their operations. Their activities in most cases also results in retaliations from opposing parties which leads to the clashes seen during elections in Ghana.

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<sup>49</sup> Also, captured in section 1.3.3

*I can strongly say that, the operation of foot soldiers, vigilante groups and those other groups we witness during elections is a key source of conflict. If we can force the parties to stop using them we can limit or stop the violence that happens. These people are aggressive, fearless and they have a backing from either of the two major parties so they just do what they want and get away with it most at times. (PS6)*

Bob-Milliar insist that, “foot soldiers claiming affiliation to the NDC and the NPP have clashed at party rallies and in crucial by-elections. By-elections held in Navrongo Central constituency (4 July 1995), Ablekuma Central constituency (26 March 1999), Wulensi constituency (4 March 2003), Asawase constituency (21 April 2005) and Odododiodoo constituency (30 August 2005) recorded high levels of violence.”(2014, p. 140).

*Their activities are simply the starting point of a major conflict. When one group start and the other response and the security agents are not able to control the situation what will happen? The next day you will hear of retaliations and it starts spreading into party regional blocs. And mind you these people are trained and they have guns...they also have some power backing them. (PS4)*

Foot soldiers are used as guards by politicians and for polling stations during elections. They are also involved in manipulating formal procedures, violent assault of rival groups, breach of peace and protests, vandalization of public, party and supporters assets, thieving or stuffing of ballot boxes and any sought of electoral fraud one can think of (Bob-Milliar, 2014, p. 126). After elections, they are seen seizing all kinds of state properties and business on behalf of party in power. As indicated by Gyimah-Boadi and Prempeh sometimes impatient foot soldiers of the ruling party have used illegal means to take control of income-generating public facilities from public officials , who are either tagged as supporters of the rival party or corrupt personnel (2012). Recent cases include the activities of vigilante groups affiliated to the governing NPP; the invisible forces who besieged the passport office in Accra and the Kintampo Waterfalls on January 2017 and the Delta forces who unlawful raided a Kumasi Circuit Court after they were charged for storming the premises of the Ashanti Regional Coordinating Council, demanding the removal of the Regional Security Coordinator.<sup>50</sup> In one of these cases, a leading member of the

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<sup>50</sup> See <http://citifmonline.com/2017/03/25/npps-delta-force-attack-ashanti-regional-security-coordinator/>  
<http://m.myjoyonline.com/marticles/news/npps-invincible-forces-takeover-passport-office>

NPP claimed that his company managed the Kintampo Waterfall in 2008 until hoodlums in the NDC who had then won the elections and had come to power forcibly took over the facility in 2009. He explained in an interview that "Those who want to probe further should find out what happened in 2009... NDC activists, NDC hoodlums, NDC sympathisers invaded the place, chased my workers out, beat them up, vandalised the place, broke into offices and they used the police. No police man was able to touch them,"<sup>51</sup> Accordingly, both leading parties in Ghana use foot soldiers in their activities during elections. Their activities are unlawful and there is no provision in the constitution of Ghana that says that political parties should employ such groups. Without a doubt, the employment of foot soldiers in Ghanaian politics and elections possess a threat to security and peace especially when there have been continues act of vengeance from both rivalry parties.

### **5.5.5 The Media**

The Media in Ghana has rapidly become a discursive space where issues of public concern are deliberated. They offer information to citizens who also participate meaningfully in public dialogue and make major decisions concerning political life and elections. While the media has aided in promoting democracy in Ghana over the years, it has sometimes contributed to violence in the country especially during elections. In Ghana Television stations and the Radio or FM stations are the key media outlet on which public discussions takes place. These media channels are largely owned by political elites and sometimes they roll out programs which aims as supporting or propagandizing a candidate or party. Their activities sometimes create fear and panic and even insurgence at some point. During my interviews, informants pointed out how the events that happens on the radio and TV stations also contribute to violence during elections.

*I don't want to be accusing but it is a fact; the media. It is necessary in executing democracy but the same media promote intemperate languages. They insult people, they tell lies and they end up raising tensions among competing parties and the electorate and before you realize people are fighting and attacking each other. So, we should find a way of dealing with the media. (PC3)*

*If you look at .... (informant mentions some names of radio stations) ... for instance all what they do is broadcasting news that will paint party A as good and party B as bad. And the other*

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<sup>51</sup> See <http://www.myjoyonline.com/politics/2017/March-21st/obiri-boahene-applauds-invisible-forces-tit-for-tat-takeover-of-kintampo-waterfall.php>

*stations do the same to counter. They also dramatize certain issues to intensify to bring unnecessary pressure. (PP2)*

### **5.5.6 The neutrality of the security agencies**

Informants also reflected on the role of the security agencies. The perception here is that, the government in power, represented by the ruling party, sometimes uses the security agents to intimidate opposition voters. In Ghana, there are evidence of party bloc voting<sup>52</sup> and informants perceive that the ruling party uses the security forces to their advantage by employing them in opposition strongholds to harass opposition voters and disrupt electoral processes. This is one of the reasons why political parties uses party foot soldiers to responds to intimidations from the security agencies.

*The problem is that in Africa the security agents work in favour of the of the government of the day. Boys of party A go to the poling centre to take ballot boxes and destroys it; they are arrested but never sent to court but boys of party B do the same thing and they are arrested sent to court and was convicted. This brings discomfort and tells us that we should not trust the security agencies. If these agencies and the court are fair, then political parties attempts to destabilize the country to their interest will be foiled. (PP1)*

Informants also talked about the insufficient security on the day of the elections. In their view, where security forces are few or not well equipped, party foot soldiers are able to disrupt the electoral process and this is a source of violent conflict.

*There is a perception among Ghanaians that soldiers don't spare law breakers. I suggest that during elections every polling station should get a soldier to scare away people who intentionally come to disturb the process. (PP1)*

When I asked if this measures will not intimidate people to the extent that they will not come to vote? He stressed that; *are you interested in getting a violence free elections or you are interested in putting the policewoman or the immigration officer there and the next you see is somebody snatching the ballot boxes? Why are we keeping the soldiers in the barracks during elections whiles they can bring law and order which eventually promote peaceful elections. (PP1)*

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<sup>52</sup> See (Jockers et al., 2010, p. 97)

### **5.5.7 Loyalty of the citizenry**

Informants stressed that instead of the people showing allegiance to their political parties, they should rather be loyal to the nation first. The issue here is that, People want their party to win the elections at all cost. Staunch party supporters think that losing the election is a catastrophe. So, they will do a whole lot of things to help their parties to win the elections without considering the peace at stake.

*When even the party is wrong their followers do not want to admit it and this is serious because we know that political parties want to use every means to win power in Ghana. Therefore, we need to educate and synthesize the citizens to be loyal to the nation. (PC3)*

As we have seen from our presentation and analysis of informants view in this present section, it will be difficult for one to directly associate the factors involved to the role of the NPC. Though the study believe that the NPC can take up the matters and deal with them, it will also need the assistance of not only the Civil Society Organisations but key organs of government such as the parliament to review the part of the Ghanaian constitution related to the electoral system and adopt policies the reduces political competitions. Also, changing the Ghanaian culture of politics will demand the cooperation and understanding of the major political parties and the sensitization of the citizenry. So, eradicating the constraints of peace promotion during elections is a daunting task which should not be directed to the NPC alone but as the concept of peacebuilding infers, it encompasses the full array of processes and stakeholder of peace to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships.

### **5.6 Summary**

In this chapter, I have presented and analysed the findings of the field research. The chapter presented in detail the views and opinions of informants in relation to the subject matter of the study. Key sociodemographic information of informants that have the potential to influence the worldviews of informants were first uncovered. Here we learnt that, while the political parties have enticed the youth to take active part in their activities through digital media, the NPC on the other hand have failed to use the internet medium to engage younger people who are considered the main group of society who are lured by politicians to carry out violent activities during elections. We also realised from the same section that, the level of education and the employment status of informants influenced their reflections, but more positively. The chapter also presented informants views that assesses the activities and mechanisms of the NPC. In addition, challenging factors which are related to the political culture and policies of Ghana were

indicated from informant's views. In the end, the chapter sets the pace and foundations for us to build our discussions and make analytical contributions on the subject matter of the issues in this chapter.



## **Chapter 6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter seeks to present a summary of the study and provide analytical contribution to some of the issues presented in chapter five. To begin, I will briefly reflect on the approaches and findings of the study to assist us in developing our analytical contributions.

### **6.2 Approaches**

The main objective of this study was to find out if the activities of the NPC really promotes peace before, during and after elections in Ghana. To achieve this, a research design was employed to assess the strategies and mechanism used by the NPC to promote peace during the elections. With that said, the study further researched into the reasons behind the continues violence in Ghanaian elections. Informants for the field research included the key stakeholders of election in Ghana i.e. the national peace council- who by their role are mandated to promote peace not only during elections but all types of issues that brings conflict; the political parties- who due to their competition for power violence occurs and the public or citizens. The study employed the qualitative interview method to achieve its objectives. The emphasizes was to get first-hand information form informant's and institution's experience with respect to election-related violence. The purposive and random sampling methods were therefore used to reach informants who were interviewed using the semi-structured interview method. The flexible nature of this method facilitated the accumulation of in-depth data from the experiences of a smaller sample size-allowing for a detailed presentation and analysis of participant's narratives.

Per the main of the study, which is to assess the role of the NPC in Ghanaian elections, the concept of I4Ps was adopted. In addition to this, I employed the concepts, peacebuilding and local or "national" ownership to enhance our understanding of the nature and fundamental philosophy of I4Ps.

### **6.3 Findings**

The analysis of data accumulated from the research field in Ghana revealed viewpoints which needs further clarification. The study discovered from informant's interviews that, the NPC have a well-established structure and mechanisms to deal with conflict and that it has been able to use them to work for peace before, during and after the elections. We can therefore suggest here that, the activities and mechanisms of the NPC promoted peace during elections in Ghana. But while we can accept this fact to be true, we can also realise from informant's reflections that, there are

evident of election-related violence in Ghana which the activities of the NPC could not eradicate. This does not mean that, the NPC's activities and mechanisms for peaceful elections are a failure. But as we realised from informant's perspective, there may be gaps in the council's activities but they are not the main problems that disrupt peace work. Rather, there are factors within the Ghanaian political culture and policies that challenges the promotion of peace during elections. What we mean here is that, the shortfalls of the NPC which were discovered from informant's narratives in section 5.4 including the 'visible challenges' such as inadequate number of staff, lack of office equipment and insufficient funds council's and the lack of authority and political control do not actually hold much strength to suggest the limitations in the promotion of peace during elections. But what the study realized from data collected is that, informant's reflections on issues like the winner-take-all syndrome, open seat of elections and the others are the main constraints to the execution of successful peace work during election in Ghana. These constraints and challenges are not directly concerned with the work of the council. Rather, they are parts of the Ghanaian political system, culture and policies that obstruct peace work during elections.

#### **6.4 Analytical contribution**

This section seeks to present analytical discussions and contribution to the issues in section 5.5. The section centres on issues such as empowering African institutions, sensitising the citizenry and adopting policies that limits political violence. These issues are concerned with the political culture and policies of Ghana and we believe that the contribution in the this sections seek to correct them.

##### **6.4.2 Empowering institutions in Africa**

In our data presentations, we discovered from informants in section 5.4.3 that, the weakness in African political institutions adds up to the negative effects on promoting peace during elections. This issue has been discussed by several academic literatures. Makinda for instance posits that, the attempts by African countries to introduce the West's style of democracy have exposed the weakness in the structures and performance of public institutions of many states in Africa (1996, p. 555). This is also the case in Ghana as Lindberg (2010) indicates. In this study, informants indicated that the lack of strength in Ghanaian political institutions has amounted to the violence we see during elections. During elections, citizens expects public like the security, the EC, courts, and civic educational institutions like the NCCE etc. to do their work without fear and interference. But we realised from the study, the security agents for instance work in favour of

the government. In some cases, security personnel are either not enough or are not well equipped to respond to violent situations. Also, culprits involved in election irregularities and disturbances are sometimes not prosecuted and sentenced to deter future perpetrators. This normally happens when perpetrators are acting as foot soldiers for the incumbent party.

#### **6.4.2.1 The Electoral commission**

The study also recognised the important role played by the EC of Ghana in promoting peaceful elections in section 5.5.3. The EC should be credible, well equipped and confident to conduct a free and fair elections. Its activities and conducts should be able to build trust and confidence among the citizenry, political parties and other stakeholders of the elections. Over the years, we have witnessed some shortcomings on the part of the EC of Ghana but not much have been done to change or correct them. It appears that in every election, political parties come out to complain about issues concerned with the voter register, duplication of voters and over voting in certain areas. The New Patriotic Party (NPP) for instance complained before the 2016 polls that, they have evidence that the electoral roll used for elections in 2012 was bloated with ineligible voters from Togo.<sup>53</sup> Upon the experience of the aftermaths of the 2012 election, which the NPP contested the EC's election results for months, we anticipate that election irregularity and malpractices would be attended to by the government. But when the political parties come to power they forget to provide the necessary assistance to the EC to tackle the issues for effective delivering of future elections. We can also talk of the NPC visible challenges. It is overwhelming to imagine such an institution with a very important task in elections to lack office equipment and be financially challenged. Mueller indicates that, a deliberate weakness of political institutions which were not capable of authority or check and balances led to the implosion of violence in the Kenya 2007 elections (2011, p. 102).

The solution lies within the government, CSO, citizens and all stakeholders of peace and democracy in Ghana and Africa to support and empower political institutions to make them vibrant and independent. Lancaster has said that if democracy is to succeed in sub Saharan Africa countries there is the need for an organized civil society and a strong public institution

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<sup>53</sup> See <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ghana-opposition-register-idUSKCN0QN1QO20150818>  
Also <http://citifmonline.com/2016/02/22/npp-man-sues-ec-over-bloated-voters-register/>

which are independent of one another. Consolidating public institutions reduces the probability that a country will be prone to civil war (1991, p. 157).

### **6.4.3 Adopting policies that reduce political competitions**

Informants reflection in section 5.5 revealed some natures policies in the Ghanaian political system which continuously poses a challenge in achieving peaceful elections. Issues such as the winner takes all syndrome, open seat elections, and party foot soldiers activities were mentioned. The winner take all for instance, simply excludes losers of the elections from having access to state resources. The choice of electoral laws has profound effect on the issue of winner-takes-all. Pure majoritarian rules practiced by many sub Saharan African countries including Ghana sometimes make minority parties to feel that they are underrepresented or even omitted from political power (Fjelde & Höglund, 2016, p. 300). To avoid this, it is important for political leaders and their followers to use any means to get their candidates to win power. This creates keen competition in the elections which sometimes leads to politically inspired clashes or violence (Mueller, 2011, p. 105). Changing a political setting like the winner-takes-all in Ghana is a huge task which requires constitutional reviews and alterations, but in an interview with an informant from the NPC, he revealed that the Institute of Economic Affairs(IEA), a leading think tank group in Ghana has proposed that the country should take measures to deal with it.

The study has discovered in section 5.5.2 that, violent intimidations and assaults are common in open seat elections. Bob-Milliar have disclosed in his study that, violence proliferated during the 2000 and 2008 open seat presidential elections (2014, p. 140). But how can one avoid open seat elections when they are means to fill vacant or yet to be vacant public positions? Conceivably, alternative ways might lead countries to an authoritarian style of government. But with the issue of by-elections, constitutional measures can be done to reduce unnecessary tension and violence that comes with it. Political parties can be made to appoint new candidates to replace their parliamentarians who may have died whiles serving or vacate a seat for special reasons. Violence in internal party elections can also be reduced with heavy fines, disapproval of candidates, or bans from the EC and other stakeholders to politicians involved in the act. This will deter candidates from employing foot soldiers in intra party and parliamentary elections as well. So, policies can be implemented to regulate the conduct of politicians and political parties.

Procedures and covenants can be implemented to stop parties from employing foot soldiers. But this also boils down to a strengthened and independent public institutions and agencies as discussed above. If the two major parties in Ghana have confidence and trust in the security

agencies for example, foot soldiers will not be needed for operations. Also, if politicians are made to scrap these vigilante groups or if the court can enforce parties to desist from the use of such groups tensions and violence that proliferate in elections can be reduced if not avoided.

The NPC and other stakeholders who aims to craft a Ghanaian political setting characterized with stable peace and democracy should research on policies which when implemented will reduce election-related violence. If politicians in Africa are to accept election results without violence, policies that decrease the dangers of political competition, diffuse the control of ‘national cake’ by the winning group should be researched and implemented. Also, procedures and rules that facilitate the involvement of various parties and factions within the government should be encouraged.<sup>54</sup>

#### **6.4.4 Citizenry education**

Harber posits that, as democratic values and manners are learned socially and not ascribed through hereditary, civic education is important to achieve greater democracy and peace (2002, p. 267). Civic education on elections, violence and public institutions therefore play an important role in the context of promoting peace and democracy. UNESCO make it clear that, for African countries to enhance value for democracy and peace, it is important for the continent to initiate comprehensive educative programmes that aims to tackle social crises and conflict (Harber, 2002, p. 274). The five-year strategic plan of the NPC makes provisions for peace education in schools and through digital media (section 2.5.2) but as it stands, much have not been done to achieve that. The NCCE is the authoritative public institution responsible for the citizenry education but its performance has also been hindered by the general weakness of institution in the country. The Peace Council believes that, the public has a poor recognition and understanding of the Council’s mandate and activities; and that was the case in some of my interviews with the public-student group. Some people I approach did not know much about the Peace council. Peacebuilding as known in section 4.2 should involve all stakeholders. This means that private and public educational institutions as well as CSO, the EC and the NPC itself should enhance their educational programmes to reach the people at the community, regional and national level. *‘If citizens are well informed about their duties, rights and responsibilities during*

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<sup>54</sup> See the Washington Post; retrieved on 01/05/17. Online [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/04/27/heres-one-way-to-prevent-election-violence-in-africa/?utm\\_term=.9d6ec37800ec&wpisrc=nl\\_cage&wpmm=1](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/04/27/heres-one-way-to-prevent-election-violence-in-africa/?utm_term=.9d6ec37800ec&wpisrc=nl_cage&wpmm=1)

*elections it becomes a big step in achieving a free environment where all people and organisations can operate freely without interference and violence’ (informant, PC3).*

## **6.5 Conclusion**

Elections has become an important instrument of democracy for government, civil society groups and the international community in recent decades. Achieving free, fair and peaceful elections is considered vital to the democratic stability and development of almost every country on globe. As such, countries have tendered to provide comprehensive technical assistance and security to ensure stable political transition through elections (C. Kumar, 2011, p. 395). Even so, elections have been characterized with political conflicts, standoffs and violence in many developing countries in Africa. This is especially the case when leaders adopt violence and irregularities to influence the electoral process or a group feels that the electoral results and the process have not turn out to be fair (Höglund, 2009, pp. 415, 419). In Africa, elections have contributed to violence which has claimed the lives of many in countries like Ivory Coast, Kenya, Nigeria and others.<sup>55</sup> To avoid the uncertainties that comes with elections therefore, C. Kumar states that, countries such as Ghana and Kenya has built national infrastructures for peace to do with the conflicting situations that are witnessed before, during and after elections (2011, p. 395).

The National Peace council of Ghana is a national level infrastructure established to prevent, manage and resolve conflict of any form. It has flagged election-related violence and tensions as capable of inflating into large-scale violence in the country if not well dealt with. Through its peace activities and mechanisms, the council have focused on promoting peace during elections at the community, regional and national levels. This study has revealed that, even though the NPC’s activities and mechanisms have fairly promoted peace during elections in Ghana, there is still more to be done to maximise election peace. This is because, upon the efforts of the Peace Council, there are evidence of election-related violence in the Ghanaian society. This study has shown that, to eradicate the violence that comes with elections and maximise peace, addressing the NPC’s ‘visible challenges’ is not the only solution but a lot measures should be adopted to address the political setting and policies in the country. The study also advices that, political institutions in Ghana should be resourced, empowered and independent to provide the citizenry

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<sup>55</sup> See section 1.3 for details of this fact.

and the nation with uninterrupted service expected of them to facilitate the prevention of election-related violence in Ghana.

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## **Appendix 1: Semi-structured interview guide for political parties.**

Position:

Sex:  
Age:  
Organization:  
Educational level:

### **Questions for current Member of the NPC**

1. What is the NPC about? (focus on the Formation or Creation, Composition, Mission, Vision and Meetings)
2. What does the NPC do?
3. How does the NPC explain or define election-related violence?
4. What are the Causes of Election-related violence in Ghana? In the view of the NPC, what are the major issues that fuels violence during elections?
5. In the case of any disturbances or hint of threat, how does the council react or create awareness?
6. How can election-related violence be better anticipated and conflict prevention programming put into place to mitigate its occurrence and stem its escalation?
7. Where there is no threat of violence or any form of disturbances, what are the types of activities undertaken by the NPC to maintain peace?
8. What type of peace process approaches and strategies does the council uses to promote peaceful elections?
9. Under what condition is the NPC very effective? Which type of problem (political, property, religious, ethnic, chieftaincy) is successfully resolved by the NPC?
10. What forms of activities does the NPC performance before elections to prevent violence?
11. What types of activities are performed during (and after) elections to restore or stabilize peace in the country?
12. How does the NPC perceive its roles and activities in relation to elections? How do the members of the NPC perceive their activities? How satisfied was the council with their activities to promote during the 2008 and 2012 elections?
13. Do you think that the NPC could have done more and better than the activities it executed during the 2012 and 2008 election?
14. How do you think Ghanaians perceive the efforts of the NPC in relation to elections?
15. Do you encounter any interference in your activities? if yes from which groups or institutions?
16. How is the NPC funded? Are members of the NPC given salary? If yes, who pays them?
17. Since the government determines member's salary and funding of the council's activities, do you think that member's neutrality and independence can somewhat be compromised?
18. Do you think that the government of the day might have some degree of control over the NPC due to its' provisions for the council? (instances if yes or no)
19. Does the government of the day have a say in some of your activities or decisions?
20. What are some of the external (and internal) factors that delimits the activities or functions of the council?
21. Do you think the powers or authority of the NPC are limited? Do you think they should be amended?
22. In the view of the council, what other capabilities /authority / ability/ should be granted to the NPC to make its decisions more binding?
23. Do you think the representation of a member of the NPC can be improved? (is the selection well represented?)
24. Are members given special peace training? How often are the members given capacity building?

25. Does the gender imbalance affect the activities and roles of the NPC?
26. What kinds of approaches to evaluations of previous activities of the NPC in promoting peace during elections in 2008 and 2012 will help with positive inputs into the upcoming 2016 elections?
27. How is the five-year strategic plan of the NPC (2013-2017) improving the work of the council in promoting peace in relation to elections?
28. What kinds of other interventions (outside the NPC) whether internal and outside can be implemented to totally mitigate electoral fraud and election-related violence in Ghana, thereby strengthening faith in electoral processes?
29. How well can the council function when the broader political or conflict environment becomes very polarized?
30. Does the council see internal political party violence as capable of leading to violence on the national scene during elections? Does the NPC intervene in such violence?
31. Does the NPC work with other institutions? What are some of them?
32. How often/ well does the NPC collaborate with other LPCs to promote peace during election?
33. How important is the support of individuals, NGOs, government and external actors if any?
34. Does the EC have a part to play to eradicate this violence? Does the NPC work or collaborate with the EC? If no, why? How?

**Additional question guide for political parties and the Public and students**

35. How satisfy is your party with the roles, activities and functions of the NPC? Or how does your political party Perceive the work of the NPC?
36. In the view of your party, how influential is the NPC in relation to promoting peaceful elections?
37. Do you perceive the council to be; credible, neutral, independent?
38. What do you think the NPC lacks to really promote peace during elections? Do their activities really promote peace or aggravate tensions?
39. Do you think that the government can one way or the other steer the affairs of the NPC?