

LOCAL SOCIAL NETWORKS AND DECENTRALIZATION IN GHANA

BY

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Submitted to the Department of Political Science and the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Kansas

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master's of Arts

Chairperson

Committee members

Date defended _____

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That this is the approved Version of the following thesis:

LOCAL SOCIAL NETWORKS AND DECENTRALIZATION IN GHANA

Committee:

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Date approved: _____

Abstract

Developing countries have been undergoing decentralization on the premise that involving local people in the identification of their needs will bring them closer to participatory democracy. However, the effectiveness of decentralization may be contingent upon local social networks contributing to political participation, as shown by Ghana's efforts at decentralization. This thesis examines how local social networks determine the extent and quality of decentralization in different regions in Ghana. To test this connection, I ran ordered logit regressions on public opinion data from the 1999 and 2005 Afrobarometers. The findings and discussion of these findings suggest that while less decentralized societies are more likely to raise issues with their local government representatives, more decentralized societies may depend on political discussions and issue-raising. Local social interactions may have proved to be fundamental for adoption of decentralization values, but there is a need to examine the quality of these interactions for effective decentralization.

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I Introduction

For the past three decades developing countries have been instituting measures to promote good governance, particularly through decentralization. Decentralization is a corollary of good governance. The rationale for a decentralization approach is that involving local people in the identification of their needs, and using them as a tool for checking accountability, will bring people closer to participatory democracy. Fundamentally then, devolution of political and economic power to local governments, may help overcome the collective action problem of provision of equitable public goods and service delivery.

However, the effectiveness of decentralization may be contingent upon the prevalence of local social networks contributing to political participation. This assumption draws from salient concepts discussed at large in the literature, such as civil society and social capital (e.g. Putnam, 1993; Woolcock, 1998, Verba, Sidney, Norman and Kim, 1978; etc.), and social networks (e.g. Gibson, 2001). Ultimately, an understanding of the role of local social networks in facilitating and enhancing decentralization's effect can provide powerful policy lessons.

Ghana's efforts at decentralization suggest the important intervening role of social networks. The emerging picture is that decentralization appears to be functioning well in some places, but not in others (e.g. Ayee, 1996; Action Aid, 2002; Adjepong et al., 2003). In these studies, the presence of local willingness for participatory democracy is assumed, which may compromise the intended consequences. This thesis sets out to examine how local social networks determine the extent and quality of decentralization in different regions in Ghana. I hypothesize that societies with more prevalent or widespread local social networks are more likely to adopt the values central to decentralization. Such decentralized societies should feel empowered and exhibit a sense of ownership in terms of participation at the local level.

Findings from this thesis suggest that less decentralized societies are more likely to raise issues with their local government representatives. More decentralized societies may depend on political discussions, as well as issue-raising. However, these linkages are not clear-cut. Such civic duties overshadow trust in the District Assemblies (DAs), the third structure and the fulcrum of the decentralization program. This has implications for entrenching ‘voice’ and accountability in the decentralization process.

This thesis is organized as follows. Section 2 explores some relevant literature on decentralization to highlight the importance of social networks for effective service delivery. I will argue that we need to appreciate the place of local social interactions that accompany the process of decentralization. In Section 3, I will discuss a research design to measure the extent and quality of local social interactions using the Afrobarometer survey. The resulting findings and related discussion of these findings are found in Section 4. I will demonstrate that decentralization process may be enhanced with more prevalent local social interactions. I conclude by suggesting issues that constitute grounds for further research into the prerequisites of effective decentralization.

II Decentralization and the Role of Local Social Networks

There is growing evidence that decentralization promotes and improves both local and national governance (Rondinelli, 1981; Cheema and Rondinelli, 1983; Mawhood, 1983; Smith, 1985; all cited in Ayee, 1996). It is presumed that local officials are better informed about the preferences of local people, while local people can demand accountability from these officials. In the process, the diverse needs of the community are addressed. Helmsing (2001) has indicated that out of the 75 developing countries with population of more than five

million, 63 are intensively pursuing decentralization policies that devolve functions and responsibilities to local governments.

Decentralization is a multifaceted concept, and there remains a serious gap in our understanding of the various dimensions of decentralization. Generally it is believed that decentralization can be conceptualized in at least five forms – deconcentration, delegation, devolution, use of principal agency and privatization - but the latter two are sometimes subsumed in the first three and are less discussed in the literature¹. I identify with Ribot (2002) who perceives decentralization to be a wide political process in which resources and powers of the central state are devolved to local or private decision-making bodies. Devolution is considered to have the most direct link with democracy, popular participation, and empowerment.

Devolutionary or democratic decentralization aims at empowering the people by giving them greater opportunities for ‘voice’, self-governance, and resource mobilization. Democratic decentralization emphasizes the linkages between the state and the people, and consequently between decentralization and participation (Bergh, 2004). Participation and decentralization have a symbiotic relationship (Litvack and Seddon, 1999 in Bergh, 2004).

¹ Deconcentration is administrative in nature. It is the situation where central government functions are assigned to staff in regional and district branch offices of headquarters sector ministries and departments. The goal of deconcentration is administrative efficiency, which is promoted through proximity of those exercising assigned authority to the location of the action. In delegation, responsibilities and authority for specific public sector activity such as production, distribution and management of water and electrical power are assigned to a parastatal or other semi-autonomous central government organization. Devolution is where political structures below the centre such as regional, district and local government councils are empowered to make decisions (initiate, formulate, legislate and execute) with regard to specifically assigned public sector development functions, secure resources and make allocation decisions. In contrast, where local government units are permitted to perform specific public sector development functions at the local level on behalf of the central government or agency but under the latter’s supervision and direction, then we are operating a principal agency. Privatization is where certain public sector functions (i.e. provision and management of services and facilities such as markets and refuse collection and disposal) are transferred to private sector firms, resident communities of particular areas and/or Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs).

While successful decentralization requires some degree of local participation to ensure the responsiveness of local government to local needs, decentralization enhances the opportunities for participation by placing more power and resources at a level of government that is closer to the people.

In recent times, interest in decentralization has shifted more to the type/dimension, rather than on the form (Mehrotra, 2006). The three prevalent types are fiscal, political and administrative/institutional². All three dimensions are intricately inter-related. Depending on the way money, power, and authority are allocated across levels of government, corruption and inefficiency will be encouraged, or economic growth will be fostered.

Measurement of decentralization is in an undeveloped stage due to inability to develop a common standard for measurement as well as the diverse meanings assigned to decentralization (e.g. John and Chatukulam, 2003). Decentralization may also have negative effects and decentralization proponents must recognize this. Negative effects or myths about decentralization have been exposed by some researchers (e.g. Parker, 1995; Prud'homme, 1995; Smoke, 2003; Mehrotra, 2006). In brief, these effects range from too much or inappropriate decentralization undermining macroeconomic control and worsening interregional income disparities through to political immaturity and capacity problems, which are not adequately considered before embarking on decentralization programs. In essence then, outcomes of decentralization to impact public-service delivery are context and design specific (e.g. Bardham and Mookherjee, 2006; Smoke, 2003).

Differences in success make it difficult to infer a correlation between decentralization and the strengthening of democracy. Bardham and Mookherjee believe that we should just be

² In fiscal decentralization, revenue collection and expenditure are delegated to local authorities. It may include sectoral functions. Political decentralization means that local authorities are elected directly by the people, and not appointed. Deconcentration minus fiscal or political decentralization constitutes administrative decentralization.

focusing on the potential of decentralization to improve national government performance. On the other hand, Mehrotra has proposed a model of decentralization - deep democratic decentralization - based on a growing body of knowledge that where the centre acts to enable the articulation of voice by the local community, the functionaries of the state tend to respond positively to such local-level pressure. In the process, a three-way dynamic between central government (or provincial government in a federal country), local authority, and civil society is established to ensure effective service delivery. The model has three elements: 1) a functioning state (not a weak, and certainly not a 'failed' one), and effective state capacity, both at central and local levels; 2) empowered local authority to which functions, functionaries and finance have been devolved by the central authorities; and 3) 'voice' articulated on a collective basis by civil society, through institutions enabled by the state. Mehrotra uses four case studies to show that the model can work in improving *basic* social service provision in different regions, both in process and outcomes³. Ultimately, it is 'voice' alone that works to ensure effectiveness of service delivery.

Local Social Networks

Mehrotra's finding by situating 'voice' in informal local interactions that have the potential to generate the involvement of the community lends credence to examining the role of local social networks. The theoretical foundation derives from the principal-agency model where the central government can be thought of as the principal undertaking decentralization, while the local government officials/local citizenry are the agents, who must create environments conducive for effective public service delivery. In turn, the citizens can be the princi-

³ The four cases are the province of Madhya Pradesh (and Rajasthan) in India (schooling); Porto Alegre and other Brazilian cities (all basic services); the province of Ceara, Brazil (public health, and other services); and Guinea, Mali and Benin (public health). The criteria are outcomes in terms of education enrolment, literacy, infant and child mortality and access to water.

pals holding local government officials (agents) accountable on service provision and delivery. Local social networks, seen in terms of interactions among citizens, have their basis in the concepts of social capital and social networks.

The concept of social capital is also multi-dimensional, with definitions suggesting an amalgam of trust, norms of reciprocity and informational networks residing in societies (e.g. Putnam, 1993, 1995; Narayan, 2000; Woolcock 1998; Francis 2002; etc.). Some researchers believe these features of civil society are mere manifestations, and not constitutive of social capital (e.g. Fukuyama, 2001). Social capital is context specific, and it is vulnerable to elite capture; this is evidenced most in the cultural sphere (e.g. Platteau, 2004). Indeed, different societies have varying cultural capacities for institutional performance. Given the same level of social capital, the consequences of development using the same institution will vary. In the final analysis though, the function of social capital should be the creation of efficient and equitable exchange and service provision (Bebbington et al, 2004).

However, measurement of social capital is also problematic. These measures are related to the generation of social capital, but it must also be realized that social capital is not a discrete variable. Rather, it is interlocked with other “capitals” such as human and financial to facilitate economic development (Bebbington et al). As Fukuyama and Platteau have intimated, social capital is not only generated through the playing of iterated prisoner dilemma games as the economists would have us believe, it also emanates from cultural norms which include religion, tradition and shared historical experiences. Again, social capital has some negative features. For instance, the erosion of potential capital from enterprises as a result of obligations to kin and genocide incidences can be attributed to negative social capital.

In examining social capital, Woolcock posits that we should blend embeddedness and autonomy at both the micro and macro levels. At the micro level, issues to be considered border on integration (intra-community ties, i.e. embeddedness) and linkage (connections transcending the local group to the broader economy and society, i.e. autonomy). The two lead to a creation of social opportunity. At the macro level, state structures need to have organizational integrity (ensuring that procedures are predictable, fair and objective, i.e. autonomy) as well as synergy (state-society relations, i.e. embeddedness). These lead to a creation of embedded autonomy. Gibson's examination of the prevalence of social networks instead of the operations of formal organizations in his analysis of civil society keys in on what Woolcock refers to as "social opportunity" at the micro level (Gibson, 2001). Gibson draws from micro-level theories of social learning and practice, and surmises that developed social networks are very vital to diffuse innovative information and values in society. Similarly, other researchers have criticized Putnam's seminal work on the role of "social capital" in institutional performance (e.g. Booth and Richard, 1998; Tarrow, 1996; Foley and Edwards, 1996 – cited in Gibson, 2001). Yet the concept appears to be undergirding a lot of research that deals with local interactions.

In this thesis, I also make a shift, and examine the *local social networks* that must be prevalent for effective decentralization to be achieved. The value of the *local* component can be appreciated by the bottom-up approach in decentralization. Local social networks can be thought of as trust, communication flows, contacts with each other, human capital, finance and other resources, civic duties, etc. manifested in the community. However, I operationalize local social networks as the willingness of the citizenry (trust in symbols of local authority) and their civic duties. These are the independent variables. I surmise that how the community manipulates these variables will be seen in their interactions with the

representatives of local government; specifically, the ability of the community to make their representatives listen, and secondly their ability to contact their representatives at the local government level – Assembly members (AMs) and Members of Parliament (MPs). These are what I term decentralization values (i.e. participation in local governance), and will constitute the dependent variables.

It is worthwhile to note that the link between the exploratory and response variables may not be direct. For instance, Dufty (1980 – cited in Pope, 2004) has intimated that the urge to participate in governance differs with the level of trust present in an organization. This leads to political inactivity⁴ where trust is invested in the leadership with little community involvement, irrespective of high or low trust levels in the community; political alienation with low trust; and political opportunity with low trust but perceived potential to influence decision-making. Pope has proposed another perspective called political equilibrium where members want to be involved in decision-making irrespective of the high trust imposed in leadership.

Ghana's Decentralization

The importance of local social networks is suggested by Ghana's mixed success with decentralization. But before exploring this point, it will be appropriate to briefly narrate Ghana's political history and some related salient statistics. Ghana (See map in Appendix) is located on the west coast of Africa, about 750 km north of the equator between the latitudes of 4° 30' and 11° north and longitude 3° 15' west and 1° 12' east. It is bounded on the north by Burkina Faso, on the west by La Cote d'Ivoire, on the east by Togo and on the south by the Gulf of Guinea. Ghana adopted its name from Wagadugu Empire, one of the great inland

⁴ See also Van Deth (2000) where 'spectators' are people with high political interest but low saliency of politics in the context of Western Europe

trading empires that flourished in West Africa from the fourth to the eleventh centuries A.D. Ghana was the title of the kings who ruled the kingdom. Before independence, Ghana was known as the Gold Coast. Subsequently, the area was divided among several kingdoms, of which the most important were the Fante, who occupied the coastal region, and the Ashanti, whose territory was further inland.

The period between the 15th and 19th centuries witnessed a power struggle for the country amongst many European nations for fortunes in gold and ivory, following the advent of the Portuguese who discovered gold in 1471. The Portuguese finally lost control of the Gold Coast to Britain in 1874. Many years of fighting ensued with the Ashanti in the interior. However, the British gained control of present-day Ghana in 1901. The Convention People's Party (CPP), under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah, won legislative elections in 1951, signifying the first time that an African majority controlled the government. On March 6, 1957 Ghana became the first Black African colony to gain independence from Britain. Three years later, the country became a republic and Nkrumah was elected president. Nkrumah was deposed by a military coup in 1966. Elections were held in 1969, but the military took over the government again in 1972. A series of military interventions held sway between 1972 and 1992, when the fourth republic was finally established. Two kingdoms, Ashanti and Dagomba (in the north), coexist with the prevailing parliamentary democracy.

For historical reasons, human initiated development in Ghana concentrated on the better endowed regions to the disadvantage of the least endowed region, the Northern Savannah. Ghana is distinctly divided into four geo-ecological zones: Coastal Savannah, High Forest, Transition and Northern Savannah; each with unique features. These ecological regions have been endowed with natural resources at different levels with the High Forest zone being the most endowed and the Northern Savannah zone the least 'blessed.' With

increasing global environmental deterioration and local human activities, the geographical boundaries are becoming less clear, but the adverse impact is continuously worse off for the Northern Savannah zone⁵.

It was during the era of one military government, the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) that the decentralization idea was mooted. Ghana's decentralization program started with the launching of the "Blue Book" in July 1987 and the subsequent 1998 re-demarcation of the 110 District Assemblies (DAs)⁶ out of the 10 regions. The specific objectives of the decentralization program were to accelerate growth in the rural economies and the development of the rural communities; ensure that development is equitably spread throughout the country and is pursued in a cost effective manner; ensure that development reflects the aspirations of the people as expressed in the priorities and felt needs of the communities; and empower communities to be able to effectively participate in the decision making process that relate to the overall management and development of the districts (Republic of Ghana, 1993:108).

The DAs were considered as the pivot of the decentralization program, and located at the third level. To ensure decentralization achieves the set intentions, a five-tier public administration with central government at the top has been put in place. Next below the centre is the Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) at the second level, which performs a hybrid role as an extension of the centre and a coordinator of activities of the local government systems. Each DA must have a number of Area/Zonal Councils representing groups of villages/communities and Unit Committees at the lowest level representing communities. Similar to DAs, each Area Council and Unit Committee also has elected

⁵ Northern Savannah zone now politically demarcated into three regions; Upper East, Upper West and Northern

⁶ Currently, there are 138 DAs, 28 created in 2004

members as well as members nominated by the President. The structure ensures that theoretically, community issues would first be discussed at the Unit level, then the Area Council level before these are then submitted to the DA by the Assembly person.

Assembly persons therefore serve as the representatives of local government in the community. They are supposed to crystallize the local concerns to the Member of Parliament (MP), who represents the community at Parliament⁷. In principle then, MPs are also representatives of local government in the community. The foregoing structures are to ensure that the counselors at the lower levels are able to monitor projects being implemented in their areas of jurisdiction. There are clear lines of reporting and communication, which are expected to achieve high standards both in the delivery of development projects and accountability in the utilization of development funds. A tall list of legislative framework supports the decentralization process, but suffice it to say that they are all premised on The Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462).

The selection of Ghana as a case in this thesis is based on its leading role within the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) created by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD is an African development initiative approved by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and endorsed by the African Union (AU). It seeks to develop a new partnership among Africans and with the rest of the world so that the African continent will not be left behind in the march to progress in the new millennium. The APRM Base Document puts the purpose of the APRM as fostering the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated sub-regional and continental economic integration through sharing of experiences and reinforcement of successful and best practices, including identifying

⁷ MPs represent districts. A district may have more than one MP depending on the size of the district.

deficiencies and assessing the needs for capacity building. Each country is required to carefully develop a Program of Action with time bound objectives and linked to national budgets to guide all stakeholders in the actions required by all – government, private sector, civil society – to achieve the country’s vision. Decentralization has been identified as one of the major issues in the 2006 Country Review Report and Program of Action of the Republic of Ghana. The APRM appears to be modeling its success so far around Ghana; hence it will be interesting to see whether an independent study could complement its findings.

A good number of studies relating to the decentralization process in Ghana have focused on the DAs, since they are the fulcrum of the decentralization program. The majority of these studies (e.g. Ayee, 1996; Action Aid, 2002; Adjepong et al., 2003), indicate that all is not well with the DAs in terms of communication lines, performance, perceptions, management of resources, etc. It is to be noted that while the DA system in practice includes elements of the five forms of decentralization, it appears that devolution and principal agency approaches are more articulated. Olowu (2001, 2003) cites Ghana as one of five African countries that manifests deconcentration with minimal devolution. A closer analysis of Local Government Act 462 and its precursor Local Government Law, 1988 (PNDCL 207), Chapter Five of the Civil Service Law, 1993 (PNDCL 327) and others however, suggest that the intention of the Ghana Government is decentralization by devolution. In a PhD thesis titled *In search of good governance: decentralization and democracy in Ghana*, Vicki Clarke (2001) concluded that the DA structure in Ghana as a model of local governance, increased opportunities for local people to take part in their government. Further, the structure enabled local people more latitude to participate in choosing their representatives, as well as opportunities to raise their demands for infrastructure and services.

On civil society, a study I did with two colleagues of mine (Adjepong et al., 2003) showcases how decentralization is performing poorly in terms of limited participation in the development project cycle. Four deprived districts in the Central and Western regions were surveyed, with the objective of improving efficiency, transparency and accountability of governance and resource management at the community level through empowerment of civil society and civil society organizations in Ghana. People's participation in the development process were perceived to be mainly in provision of labor (about 50%) and to lesser extents, decision making, consultations on development planning and supervision of project committee or association. Further, citizens were denied responsibility in managing projects. Again, there was negligible beneficiary community support at some levels of the project cycle initiated by the DAs and its affiliates, which the beneficiaries claimed was largely at the consultation and implementation levels. This limited involvement of members of civil society compromises decentralization at the districts. Less than a tenth of the people had made any contacts with the DA to secure a service. Generally, the DAs are held in high disdain, and this again compromises the whole decentralization process. For instance, personalities associated with the DAs, such as AMs and MPs may equally not be contacted to any appreciable degree. The standard of living of people appeared to be stagnant, and public service delivery is nothing to write home about. Even though basic needs were important for survival, they were thought not to be as important as issues of participation and association for ensuring a good standard of living.

A second piece of evidence in variations in the outcomes of decentralization can be seen in the wide range of services across the country. Within the districts in the 10 regions, one can observe uneven service provision, which is manifested in school dropout rates, illiteracy, spending levels, community facilities, etc. (e.g. <http://www.ghanadistricts.com>; Ye

and Canagarajah, 2002). For instance, illiteracy in any language for 15 years and older people ranges from 31.6% in the Greater Accra region to 78.1% in the Upper East region.

Another study by Kunfaa, Lambongang and Mackay (1999) showed a narrow perception of seizure of social opportunities available to people. This prompted the researchers to suggest a further study to investigate how the ongoing decentralization has affected the generation of social capital. If we consider devolution of political and economic power to local governments as an innovation, then the need to determine differences in output becomes more pressing. The literature on local governance posits that the effects of decentralization cannot be separated from those of the local governments or civil society it seeks to empower. The variation in outputs of local governance could emanate from the interactions of the local economy, political dynamics and social structure of the districts. This thesis deemphasizes local economic endowments. On the contrary, I am interested in local social interactions generated in terms of the willingness of the citizenry (trust) and their civic duties. Consequently, I hypothesize that societies with more prevalent local social networks are more likely to adopt decentralization values.

The conceptual framework underpinning this research can be represented diagrammatically as in Figure 1.

III Research Design and Methods

In order to test this connection between local social networks and values central to decentralization, I used public opinion data from the 1999 and 2005 Afrobarometers. The survey focused on attitudes to democracy and markets. For the purposes of this research, three regions out of 10 were purposively selected as cases for the study. The regions were ranked according to a few selected indicators showing the availability of public services,

namely 1) illiteracy, 2) houses with access to potable water, and 3) houses with no toilet facilities. The rationale is that districts in each region were expected to maximize public service delivery as a result of being decentralized. One region was doing well in terms of good service delivery, one at the other end of the spectrum in poor service delivery, and the third in between. Three dependent variables were used: the ability of the community to 1) make their representatives listen, 2) contact their AMs, and 3) contact their MPs. These variables were matched against the indicators to examine any emerging patterns. In order to test my hypothesis, I ran ordered logit regressions on the three dependent variables for the two years 1999 and 2005, using selected predictor variables, including the discussion of politics, attendance at community meeting, joining others to raise issues and trust in local council/DAs⁸.

The Afrobarometer codebooks and data are silent on the description of the variables. To this end, it is difficult to extract for instance, the kind of issues raised and the form of political discussions, among others. That notwithstanding, the validity of the secondary data used can be said to be good. The Afrobarometer was developed in collaboration with the Michigan State University, and is now a recognized source of secondary data.

IV Findings and Discussions

Introduction

The expectations and aspirations of Ghanaians relating to the decentralization process in 1999 and 2005 are summarized below. These perceptions were gleaned from the Afrobarometer datasets. By 1999, a decade after the implementation of decentralization, Ghanaians were ambivalent in their perceptions about central and local government. Close to

⁸ The variables are: for 1999 – questions 6, 9, 34b, 67a, 67b, 68b and 68c; for 2005 – questions 25a, 25b, 25c, 28c, 29a, 29b and 43e. I recoded “Don’t know” as missing data.

two-thirds (62.3%) believed that a government elected by the people was the best. Almost half (45.5%) felt that the government was responsible for their own success, and indeed more than three-quarters (76.3%) of Ghanaians indicated that government should provide schools and clinics. One can infer that there may be a dependence on central government provision of public services. People were slightly more satisfied with performance of Assembly members (56%) than with that of Members of Parliament (46%).

By 2005, the view that governments should be elected was gaining grounds (87.1%), and so was the dependence on central government provision of services as can be observed in the ensuing statistics: a) improving basic health – 62.6%, b) addressing educational needs – 64.1%, and c) delivering household water – 55.8%. There had been virtually no change in the minds of people that government was responsible for their well-being and should provide services (47.4%). Performance of MPs was perceived to have slightly improved (57%), partially attributable to their knack of improving infrastructure made possible by the MP's Common Fund. More than two-thirds of the people approved the performance of District Chief Executives (DCEs).

However, an increasing majority of Ghanaians were coming to terms that citizens should be more active in questioning the actions of leaders. This issue of voice is difficult to infer. As alluded to earlier on, the absence of the description of variables poses a difficulty in interpretation of the data. When asked to choose between democracy for 'voice' and basic needs, about a third of respondents were undecided. Two-thirds of those who responded however preferred 'voice,' which goes to show that perhaps people, are gradually becoming aware of this objective of the decentralization process.

Indicators of Decentralization Outcomes

Table 1 shows characteristics of the study environment in terms of selected community facilities. The combination of the facilities assisted in the selection of three regions. Rankings were based first on levels of illiteracy, and then a combination of the other indicators as available. It can be observed that Greater Accra region ranks first, with the Northern region as last. There is a vast literature on Ghana which shows that the three northern regions, i.e. Northern, Upper West and Upper East are the most deprived regions in Ghana. Between Brong Ahafo and Volta regions, the former was randomly selected with a toss of coin. Greater Accra was not selected because the region is also the centre of political authority; selecting it may have biased the findings. The final three selected regions, viz. Eastern, Brong Ahafo and Northern, coincidentally reflect the three geographical zones preferred by most researchers in Ghana: the northern zone comprising Upper East, Upper West and Northern regions; middle belt made up of Brong Ahafo, Ashanti and Eastern regions; and coastal zone with Central, Western, Volta and Greater Accra regions. Thus a total of 54 (17 + 19 + 18) districts were selected for the study, representing almost two-fifths of the total districts of 138. Sample sizes for the regions in the two years are: Eastern = 224, Brong Ahafo = 212, Northern = 139 for 1999; and Eastern = 136, Brong Ahafo = 120, Northern = 112 for 2005.

Next, raw frequencies of the dependent variables in the three regions were examined for any emerging patterns, shown in Table 2. The ability to get the attention of representatives generally increased for all the three regions between 1999 and 2005. Contacts with MPs however, show a decline in the frequency of contacts with the exception of Eastern region. By 2005, it appears the focus on Assembly members had shifted to District Chief Executives. Similar to contacts with MPs, the percentages are generally low for DCEs. It

was only in Brong Ahafo region that the people were interacting with AMs to any appreciable level. How do these findings help us in this study? Well, it could be argued that the general increase in the three interaction indicators for Eastern region could explain its high indicators of decentralization outcomes as presented in Table 1. However, a similar line of reasoning cannot be extended to the other two regions. The significant increase in the ability to make representatives listen in the Northern region is not translated into positive outcomes. Again, the decline in contacts with representatives between 1999 and 2005 in the region was not as dramatic as the declines in the Brong Ahafo region.

The argument that these local government officials are not readily accessible to people in Ghana may not hold, as no empirical data exists to that effect. However, it is no secret that most MPs do not send any feedback to their constituencies when Parliament (which sits in the capital, Accra) is on recess. For those MPs that do, reports are rife in the media about their reluctance to interact with their constituents at community meetings. It is a legal requirement for MPs to convene feedback meetings and also receive inputs from the communities, but alas, this provision is blatantly flouted. Assembly members also bemoan the insufficient allowances paid to them, and would rather apply themselves to earn their living. District Chief Executives are appointed by the President, but they require two-thirds majority ratification from the AMs in the DAs. By virtue of the fact that a third of the AMs are appointed by the President, party patronage sways the vote, and this compromises the accountability of the DCEs to the people.

By and large, it is the contribution of some of these underlying extraneous variables that make it difficult to ascribe direct causation to decentralization outcomes. Consequently, there is a need to consider the factors that can contribute to decentralization values. The

foregoing leads us to examine the nexus between local social networks and values central to decentralization.

Local Social Networks and Decentralization Values

In order to examine the linkages, if any between local social networks and decentralization values, I computed ordered logit regressions for the dependent variables for 1999 and 2005. For each of the three dependent variables, the null hypothesis is that the independent variables do not affect the probability of predicting them. So, for instance in 1999, the ability to make political representatives listen to problems, the null hypothesis is that discussion of politics, trust in DAs, attendance at community meetings and issue-raising do not affect the probability of predicting the ability to make political representatives listen to problems. The alternative hypothesis consequently is that discussion of politics, trust in DAs, attendance at community meetings and issue-raising affect the probability of predicting the ability to make political representatives listen to problems.

The regressions are found in Tables 3 to 5. Thresholds or cut-points in the tables define the probability levels. For example in the second column of Table 3, a threshold at or below -2.05 defines a probability of a strong ability to make representatives listen in the Northern region. A threshold exceeding -2.05 but up to -0.51 defines a probability of a somewhat strong ability, more than -0.51 up to 0.64 defines a probability of somewhat strong inability and above 0.64 a strong inability. Significant thresholds point to the categories of the dependent variable that are brought into play, while significant predictors point to the relevant predictor variables. While the predictors are of interest in this study, it is important to observe from Tables 3 to 5 that majority of the thresholds are significant, and the model fit in almost all cases is certain and significant.

First for 1999, we see that the Northern region has significant thresholds in a strong ability to influence representatives, but none of the predictors were significant (Table 3). In the Brong Ahafo and Eastern regions however, trust in DAs significantly made it likely that representatives would be influenced to listen to problems. When we look at people contacting the AMs to have their problems solved, the emerging picture is slightly different in the three regions (Table 4). Discussion of politics significantly predisposed the community to contact their AMs in the Northern region. This trend also defined the citizens of Brong Ahafo region, but they combined discussions with issue-raising. In the Eastern region, no significant predictors are observed. In both Northern and Brong Ahafo regions, issue-raising had the tendency to make people contact their MPs (Table 5).

In 2005, 18 years after decentralization was launched and six years after 1999, what is the emerging pattern? Table 3 shows that it was only in the Brong Ahafo region that discussion of politics and attendance to community meetings could significantly predispose people to catch the attention of their representatives. To the contrary, there were no significant predictors for the Eastern region. Joining others to raise issues assisted the likelihood of contacting DCEs in Brong Ahafo and Eastern regions (Table 4), but none of the local interactions had any such inclination in the Northern region. This trend in the Northern region continued for contacting MPs as seen in Table 5. However, in Brong Ahafo region, trust in DAs could affect the likelihood of contacting MPs. For the Eastern region, discussions of politics had a similar effect.

The pattern summary for 1999 seems to depict that Brong Ahafo region manifested more interactions for predicting adoption of decentralized values than the Northern region, but this trend is not witnessed between Brong Ahafo and Eastern regions. Recall that the Northern region was the least decentralized in terms of decentralization outcomes, while the

Eastern region was the most decentralized. Community attendance appeared not to be influential, while the other local interactions were operating to various extents in the regions. Decentralization by 2005 has some very interesting patterns. Only Brong Ahafo region persisted in trust in local councils, while the Eastern region had dropped that predictor. It is difficult to infer that this is an indication for a general disregard for DAs noted in many of previous studies (e.g. Adjepong et al, 2003). The difficulty arises because local councils in the context of the survey may have referred to district assemblies, area councils or unit committees. That notwithstanding, there appears to be a growing distrust in the axis of decentralization at the district levels. The Northern region had no significant predictors. Discussion of politics and issue-raising were becoming more important predictors in the Eastern region. Brong Ahafo region again exhibited more local interactions, indeed all, as compared to none in the Northern region. Similar to 1999, Eastern region did not manifest more interactions than Brong Ahafo as expected. By 2005 then, no clear trend in the pattern of increasing the likelihood of decentralization values emerges.

Chieftaincy and Demonstrations as Control Variables

I now introduce two control variables to investigate the robustness of the findings. These are trust in chiefs/traditional leaders and attending demonstrations or protest marches. We need to appreciate that countries that achieve political independence in most of Africa may exhibit two parallel systems of government – Western-style political system of democracy and traditional institutions of chieftaincy. Chiefs are people responsible for the development of their areas of authority. Traditionally they are often consulted before most decisions are taken. Traditional authorities have been involved in local governance from time immemorial, taking on decentralized functions like local development under the Native Authori-

ty System. There have been arguments for and against the involvement of chiefs in local governance. For the protagonists, chiefs are intimately associated with the local people, know the culture, needs and aspiration of their subjects, are instrumental in mobilizing them for development-oriented projects, and are key to conflict resolution in their areas of jurisdiction. These potentials of chiefs tie in perfectly with the mechanisms that the structures for decentralization are meant to create.

It is interesting to note that successive governments since 1957 have not followed a consistent policy regarding the role of chiefs in local government. Currently under the 1992 Constitution and the Local Government Act (Act 462) 1993 (specifically, Article 242 (d) and Act 462 Section 5(d) respectively), while there is provision for two chiefs from the Regional House of Chiefs (elected by the chiefs at a meeting of the House) to serve on their respective RCCs, there is no provision for the automatic membership of chiefs on the DAs. They can only serve if they are included among at most 30 per cent of the total membership of the DAs, appointed by the President in consultation with the traditional authorities and other interest groups in the district. Similarly, under Legislative Instrument (LI) 1589 1994, chiefs have no automatic membership in the sub-district structures - the Urban, Zonal and Town Councils as well as Unit Committees.

During the many years of military repression in Ghana (22 out of 50 years), civilians used demonstrations and protest marches as tools to demand redress in various situations. One would have thought that these tools, which attracted brutal police and military actions against civilians, would have been less preferable in a democratic dispensation. However, vestiges of this preference may persist, and demonstrations have been used by the main parties in opposition since the stabilization of democracy in 1992. It is therefore vital that we in-

introduce demonstrations as a control variable at the local level, to see how it affects the decentralization values.

As can be observed in Table 3, in 1999 Brong Ahafo region's ability to make representatives listen is now defined by a smaller probability (threshold moves slightly to the left, from -2.02 to -2.30), but this is now contingent on demonstrations. The control variables have no effect on trust in District Assemblies in the Eastern region. Trust in the DAs, as well as trust in chiefs now appears to influence the likelihood of contacting Assembly members in the Brong Ahafo (Table 4). The Northern region now adds demonstrations to discussion of politics in their disposition to get in touch with their AMs. Turning our attention to contacts with members of parliament, there are no changes in the interactions that may significantly predict that likelihood with the introduction of the control variables. These findings may be a clear proof of the allegation that either MPs distance themselves from the people, or people just do not bother to address their concerns through MPs.

What story emerges from 2005? The Brong Ahafo region continued to use demonstrations in addition to political discussions and community meetings to attract the attention of their representatives, while the Northern region may have been inclined to use issue-raising to achieve the same effect. With the other two dependent variables, no changes in the model with regard to the predictors are observed.

When the control variables are introduced, there is cause to worry that demonstrations may still be resorted to in less decentralized societies to influence the likelihood of adoption of some decentralized values. That the Eastern region, which we declared to be the most decentralized is not susceptible to using demonstrations, may support this claim.

Summary

Comparing the three regions, it is very clear that all of them had pockets of local social interactions. The Northern region, which used discussion of politics and issue-raising in 1999 to affect the likelihood of adoption of decentralization values, manifested only issue-raising by 2005. All four predictors were being used in Brong Ahafo in 1999. Demonstrations as part of the armory of local tools were emerging by then, and still persisted by 2005. In 1999, trust in DAs, which was prominent in the Eastern region, had been replaced with political discussions and issue-raising. Consequently, there is no clear pattern.

Since issue-raising and political discussions were more prevalent in the three regions in both years, we can use predicted probabilities of the categories of these variables to examine whether the hypothesis of the study could be confirmed as at 2005⁹. The predicted probabilities¹⁰ are shown in Table 6. All three dependent variables are affected to some degree by the predictors. The selection of the likelihood of representatives listening is informed by the influence of the two predictors in two of the regions (Table 3). On issue-raising, predicting that people would agree to get representatives attention has higher probabilities than predicting the other levels in all three regions. This trend breaks down for the Northern region when the frequency of issue-raising increases. From the predictions, one can infer that there is a high prevalence of issue-raising in the Northern region, but this declines in the Brong Ahafo region. The decline is not very noticeable for the Eastern region when compared to Northern region. Instead, both in the Northern and Eastern regions, we can see a rising tendency to raise issues with representatives. The smaller probabilities in the Brong Ahafo region could be attributed to an uncertain likelihood to attract the attention of representatives through is-

⁹ Predicted probabilities come in handy here since there is not much over dispersion in the models. Almost all the residual deviances (not shown in the regression tables) are very close to the AICs.

¹⁰ For the predicted probabilities for each regressor, all variables including the controls were set constant at their modes.

sue-raising; note the relatively bigger probabilities. Recall that it is in this region that demonstration was becoming a significant predictor. Consequently, it is not very clear whether the Eastern region can be said to be better than Brong Ahafo in decentralization.

The inconsistency is further illustrated with the predicted probabilities in political discussions. There is an increasing prevalence in the use of political discussions that tends to make representatives listen, but this likelihood is greatest in the Northern region. This tendency declines for Brong Ahafo region, and furthermore in the Eastern region in comparison.

By and large then, the hypothesis that societies with more prevalent local social networks are more likely to adopt decentralization values is not unambiguously confirmed. Comparing Northern region on one hand to either Brong Ahafo or Eastern regions on the other negates the hypothesis. However, the hypothesis holds true when we compare Brong Ahafo to Eastern region.

V Conclusions

The foregoing findings and discussions point to the potential role of local interactions in determining the extent and quality of decentralization values. Participation in decentralization values at the local level in Ghana appears to kick off with issue-raising. Ultimately, a venture into local governance opens up avenues for intensive political discussions to demand accountability and service provision from the representatives of government at the local level. The premise of this line of thinking is rooted in the progressive levels of decentralization outcomes of the three regions, Northern, Brong Ahafo and Eastern. However, the propensity to see increasing levels of these interactions influencing values central to decentralization, is not clearly visible as one moves from less decentralized to more decentralized societies. The

Northern region presents an interesting case, where more local social interactions seem to be prevalent.

Being one of the least decentralized regions in Ghana, perhaps, the citizens of the Northern region are becoming increasingly aware of the need to take their destiny in their own hands. Recent chieftaincy issues particularly in this region over the past decade or so, which culminated in the death of the chief of the northern kingdom in 2002, may well constitute a rallying point for deeper interactions among citizens of the region. The Northern region case is one area to explore, in order to demystify the multidimensional nature of decentralization. The complexity of the decentralization process and determination of causality for decentralization values are exposed to some degree in this thesis. The dynamics of decentralization is very complicated, and as alluded to in the literature, we need to be cautious in assessing the process and outcomes of decentralization. If the outcomes of decentralization to impact public-service delivery are context and design specific, then it is important to probe into individual cases.

Generally, local interactions may impact decentralization values. Yet it remains to be seen whether the aspirations of the people are carried onward to be addressed in Parliament. This is an important issue to address if the 'voice' of the people is to be heard. There is substantive evidence to suggest that the ability to frequently contact Members of Parliament as well as Assembly members and District Chief Executives at the local level is fraught with inconsistencies. There must be a policy to enforce accountability of these representatives to the citizenry. For instance, MPs are voted for every four years, and besides death, there is no legal provision to cast a vote of no confidence in them during those four years. Citizens can then exercise 'voice' through voting in between elections.

The distrust observed in the District Assemblies by 2005 is also of concern. Recall that the DAs are the pivot of the decentralization process. If people hold such a high disdain for the DA structure, it follows that one avenue of making the AMs and MPs accountable is closed. Further, by virtue of the fact that DCEs are appointed by the President, such distrust in the DAs may have the effect of further distancing the DCEs and introducing conflicts that may undermine the decentralization process. In the study I did with my colleagues (Adjepong et al, 2003), we found that within the DAs, some DCEs do not cooperate with the MP or vice versa mainly because they owe allegiance to different political parties. This poor interaction relationship between these two key members of the DA affects quality of meetings, functions, and development issues in general. Conflicts also existed in Unit Committees due mainly to political differences and lack of transparency. Chiefs and Unit Committee members struggle over power supremacy leading to low consultation levels. It is vital that further studies are carried out to diagnose the declining trust in the DAs for a policy remedy. The current situation smacks of political inactivity on the part of citizens, which may be exacerbated by these conflicts. We should also be attentive to the key actors of the DA concept, with whom the people contact. The legal provision as it stands now has these key actors: Presiding member, DCE, Coordinating Director, Sub-committee Chairpersons and MP. Assembly members are relegated to the background, and being the first point of contact for the people at the DA, bodes no good for the decentralization process.

While local social interactions may have proved to be fundamental for adoption of decentralization values, the foregoing discussions point to a pressing need to examine the quality of these interactions for effective decentralization delivery. A survey to elicit direct responses from the people may be welcome, but this should accompany a content analysis of the decentralization policies to determine the type of decentralization that was actually in-

tended for Ghana. Field work would be pertinent here to supplement the findings from the secondary data. For instance, we need to clarify the surprise findings from the Northern region, and explore how the link between decentralization values and outcomes can be unambiguously made. Such field work would bring out the dynamics and kinds of issues raised, referents to political discussions and ‘forms’ of demonstrations employed among others. Quality of contacts with local government representatives may be exposed in analysis of transcripts of minutes and speeches at community meetings, district assembly proceedings and parliamentary sessions.

The prevalence of local interactions for now, seem to suggest that devolution is a far cry from being practiced in Ghana. Without explicit devolution, local social interactions may not thrive. The dependence on central government for public service delivery may well persist.

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Appendix

Map of Ghana showing the 10 Regions



Tables

Table 1: Regions and Selected Community Facilities

Region	Districts	Illiteracy	Houses with access to potable water	No toilet facilities	Rank
Ashanti	21	40.4	NA	NA	4
Brong Ahafo	19	48.5	50.0	NA	5
Central	13	42.9	50.0	18.0	3
Eastern	17	36.4	19.4	5.4	2
Greater Accra	6	31.6	80.9	18.3	1
Northern	18	88.0	39.4	75.9	10
Upper East	8	78.1	NA	NA	9
Upper West	8	73.4	NA	NA	8
Volta	15	41.7	16.0	20.0	6
Western	13	58.2	32.0	40.0	7
TOTAL	138	-	-	-	-
NATIONAL AVERAGE	-	42.1	NA	20.0	-

Source: <http://www.ghanadistricts.com>

Table 2: Decentralization Values in Percentages

Region	Representatives listen		Contact AM	Contact DCE	Contact MP	
	1999	2005	1999	2005	1999	2005
Eastern	53.6	69.2	20.1	20.6	9.8	16.9
Brong Ahafo	57.9	68.3	47.6	15.8	19.3	10.8
Northern	44.6	73.2	37.4	21.4	19.4	17.0

Source: 1999 and 2005 Afrobarometer datasets

Table 3: Political Representatives Listen Without and With Control Variables

Predictors	NR 99	BA 99	ER 99	NR 99	BA 99	ER 99	NR 05	BA 05	ER 05	NR 05	BA 05	ER 05
Discuss politics	.24 (.26)	-.09 (.19)	-.07 (.17)	.20 (.26)	-.05 (.19)	-.08 (.17)	-.31 (.19)	-.56*** (.17)	-.12 (.17)	-.30 (.19)	-.60** (.18)	-.13 (.17)
Trust DAs	-.24 (.26)	-.32** (.12)	-.36* (.14)	-.29 (.18)	-.22 (.13)	-.36* (.15)	.33 (.20)	-.14 (.21)	-.26 (.27)	.17 (.23)	-.04 (.23)	-.22 (.28)
Community meeting	.19 (.20)	.08 (.15)	-.09 (.12)	.19 (.21)	.12 (.16)	-.08 (.12)	-.12 (.19)	-.41** (.14)	.22 (.19)	-.17 (.20)	-.39** (.15)	.24 (.20)
Issue-raising	-.19 (.20)	-.20 (.16)	-.22 (.12)	-.18 (.21)	-.19 (.16)	-.23 (.12)	-.42 (.20)	.14 (.20)	-.26 (.18)	-.45* (.22)	.05 (.22)	-.27 (.19)
Trust Chiefs				.20 (.21)	-.23 (.13)	-.0 (.14)				.44 (.28)	-.25 (.21)	-.01 (.28)
Demonstration				.49 (.33)	-.72* (.32)	.16 (.44)				.37 (.31)	.77* (.31)	.11 (.29)
Cut-point #1	-2.05*** (.57)	-2.02*** (.44)	-2.74*** (.47)	-1.46 (.80)	-2.30*** (.47)	-2.74*** (.56)	-1.16* (.57)	-2.94*** (.57)	-2.40*** (.59)	-.64 (.72)	-3.31*** (.66)	-2.19** (.80)
Cut-point #2	-.51 (.54)	-.77 (.42)	-1.31** (.45)	.05 (.79)	-1.03* (.44)	-1.31* (.53)	.63 (.56)	-.36 (.47)	1.17* (.52)	1.18 (.72)	-.54 (.55)	1.24 (.77)
Cut-point #3	.64 (.54)	-.21 (.42)	-.32 (.44)	1.24 (.80)	-.45 (.44)	-.32 (.53)	.71 (.56)	.55 (.48)	1.50** (.54)	1.26 (.73)	.43 (.55)	1.50 (.78)
Cut-point #4	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.06 (.57)	1.66** (.56)	3.11*** (.73)	1.64* (.74)	1.62* (.64)	3.12*** (.92)
Model χ^2	3.67	10.18*	16.38**	5.97	16.35*	16.54*	23.43***	30.44***	4.59	26.1***	40.83***	4.25
No. of cases	121	201	212	120	199	212	89	110	97	86	109	89

The first entry in each cell is the maximum likelihood estimate from an ordered logit regression model. The parenthesized entry is the standard error of the coefficient.

*** p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05

NR = Northern region; BA = Brong Ahafo region; ER = Eastern region.

99 = Year 1999; 05 = Year 2005.

Blanks in columns show the model without control variables

Table 4: Contact Assembly Member (1999) or District Chief Executive (2005) Without and With Control Variables

Predictor	NR 99	BA 99	ER 99	NR 99	BA 99	ER 99	NR 05	BA 05	ER 05	NR 05	BA 05	ER 05
Discuss politics	1.15*** (.32)	.58** (.22)	.25 (.24)	1.11** (.33)	.62** (.22)	.27 (.24)	.09 (.23)	-.15 (.23)	.04 (.18)	-.04 (.24)	-.13 (.24)	.04 (.19)
Trust DAs	.01 (.19)	.24 (.13)	.13 (.20)	.17 (.22)	.43** (.15)	.06 (.21)	-.13 (.25)	.59 (.35)	.35 (.29)	-.10 (.27)	.50 (.38)	.39 (.30)
Community meeting	.21 (.26)	.24 (.17)	.27 (.18)	.35 (.28)	.31 (.18)	.26 (.18)	.40 (.29)	.38 (.23)	.14 (.20)	.38 (.30)	.39 (.23)	.06 (.23)
Issue-raising	.37 (.24)	.64*** (.18)	.08 (.16)	.33 (.25)	.67*** (.18)	.13 (.17)	.56 (.30)	.61* (.29)	.46* (.19)	.60 (.33)	.62* (.31)	.56** (.21)
Trust Chiefs				-.47 (.25)	-.39** (.14)	.18 (.20)				-.18 (.29)	.17 (.35)	.30 (.33)
Demonstration				1.14* (.46)	-.51 (.33)	-.95 (.94)				-.21 (.37)	.03 (.39)	-.16 (.36)
Cut-point #1	2.44*** (.70)	2.70*** (.55)	2.64*** (.67)	1.61 (.92)	2.36*** (.56)	3.02*** (.82)	3.45*** (.92)	4.36*** (.97)	2.82*** (.69)	3.04** (1.02)	4.65*** (1.09)	3.28*** (.91)
Cut-point #2	2.74*** (.71)	3.06*** (.56)	3.01*** (.68)	1.89* (.93)	2.71*** (.57)	3.39*** (.83)	3.70*** (.94)	4.92*** (1.01)	3.29*** (.71)	3.30** (1.04)	5.14*** (1.12)	3.71*** (.93)
Cut-point #3	4.20*** (.77)	4.63 (.62)	4.31*** (.73)	3.47*** (.97)	4.32*** (.62)	4.70*** (.87)	5.00*** (1.02)	7.75*** (1.45)	5.07*** (.86)	4.53*** (1.11)	7.96*** (1.53)	5.56*** (1.06)
Model χ^2	34.11***	61.27***	8.76	45.93***	69.38***	11.17	18.99***	18.83***	13.17*	17.84**	19.05**	16.79*
No. of cases	121	202	216	120	200	216	92	110	109	88	109	100

The first entry in each cell is the maximum likelihood estimate from an ordered logit regression model. The parenthesized entry is the standard error of the coefficient.

*** p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05

NR = Northern region; BA = Brong Ahafo region; ER = Eastern region.

99 = Year 1999; 05 = Year 2005.

Blanks in columns show the model without control variables

Table 5: Contact Member of Parliament Without and With Control Variables

Predictor	NR 99	BA 99	ER 99	NR 99	BA 99	ER 99+	NR 05	BA 05	ER 05	NR 05	BA 05	ER 05
Discuss politics	.33 (.36)	.40 (.28)	.38 (.33)	.26 (.37)	.38 (.28)	.39 (.33)	.19 (.24)	-.14 (.26)	.73** (.25)	.07 (.26)	-.20 (.29)	.87** (.31)
Trust DAs	-.03 (.23)	.11 (.17)	-.47 (.27)	.04 (.25)	.17 (.19)	-.47 (.27)	.17 (.27)	1.08* (.45)	.18 (.32)	.25 (.30)	.94* (.47)	.19 (.33)
Community meeting	.27 (.33)	.01 (.24)	.03 (.24)	.25 (.34)	-.0 (.24)	.01 (.24)	.02 (.27)	.51 (.27)	-.38 (.22)	.12 (.31)	.52 (.28)	-.52 (.27)
Issue-raising	.62* (.31)	.52* (.24)	.20 (.23)	.63* (.32)	.50* (.24)	.26 (.24)	.46 (.29)	.49 (.33)	.36 (.20)	.28 (.33)	.51 (.35)	.50 (.23)
Trust Chiefs				-.11 (.28)	-.08 (.17)	.03 (.25)				-.39 (.31)	.30 (.41)	.46 (.37)
Demonstration				.28 (.34)	.38 (.32)	-17.48 (7054)				.43 (.32)	-.40 (.62)	-.56 (.61)
Cut-point #1	2.97*** (.85)	3.08*** (.71)	1.86* (.79)	2.76* (1.08)	2.99*** (.73)	1.93 (.99)	3.07*** (.87)	5.84*** (1.32)	3.14*** (.82)	2.43* (.96)	6.05*** (1.44)	4.14*** (1.17)
Cut-point #2	3.24*** (.86)	3.35*** (.71)	2.52** (.82)	3.04** (1.08)	3.25*** (.74)	2.59* (1.01)	3.51*** (.90)	6.84*** (1.40)	3.62*** (.84)	2.92** (.98)	7.08*** (1.53)	4.63*** (1.20)
Cut-point #3	4.64*** (.93)	4.40*** (.75)	3.86*** (.95)	4.42*** (1.1)	4.34*** (.78)	3.95*** (1.12)	5.08*** (1.04)	-	5.41*** (1.00)	4.38*** (1.11)	-	6.83 (1.40)
Model χ^2	15.53**	16.09**	6.92	16.51*	17.54**	143***	7.47	17.11**	17.93***	8.72	18.23**	23.8***
No. of cases	121	202	216	120	200	216	93	111	108	89	110	99

The first entry in each cell is the maximum likelihood estimate from an ordered logit regression model. The parenthesized entry is the standard error of the coefficient.

*** p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05

NR = Northern region; BA = Brong Ahafo region; ER = Eastern region.

99 = Year 1999; 05 = Year 2005.

Blanks in columns show the model without control variables

+Validity of the model fit is uncertain, since the log-likelihood value is practically zero

Table 6: Predicted Probabilities by Issue-Raising and Political Discussions for Representatives Listening to Concerns

	Northern region				Brong Ahafo region				Eastern region						
	SA	A	U	D	SD	SA	A	U	D	SD	SA	A	U	D	SD
Issue-raising															
No	.203	.409	.020	.084	.284	.062	.453	.223	.165	.097	.064	.617	.054	.198	.067
Maybe	.288	.426	.017	.068	.201	.059	.442	.226	.171	.102	.082	.655	.047	.164	.052
Occasionally	.340	.408	.013	.052	.137	.056	.430	.228	.177	.108	.105	.681	.040	.133	.040
Several times	.502	.360	.010	.037	.091	.053	.419	.231	.183	.114	.134	.695	.034	.107	.030
Often	.615	.293	.007	.026	.059	.050	.408	.233	.190	.119	.169	.695	.028	.085	.023
Political Discussions															
No	.502	.360	.010	.037	.091	.062	.453	.222	.165	.097	.064	.616	.054	.199	.067
Maybe	.578	.316	.008	.029	.069	.107	.552	.177	.107	.056	.072	.637	.050	.181	.059
Occasionally	.650	.270	.006	.022	.051	.180	.599	.124	.065	.031	.082	.655	.047	.164	.052
Several times	.716	.223	.005	.017	.038	.286	.579	.079	.038	.017	.093	.670	.044	.148	.045
Often	.774	.181	.003	.013	.028	.423	.499	.047	.021	.009	.106	.681	.040	.133	.039

SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; U = Uncertain; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree.

Figure

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

