

Why can some West African countries afford stability? The case of Ghana and Guinea

BARRY AMADOU A

International Relations Major
Tokyo International University E-Track

Abstract

The current status of West Africa's instability is a major concern both within and beyond the region. The purpose of this study is to examine the reasons behind the failure of most West African states to secure political and institutional stability on one side, while identifying on the other side, how the success of the very few (Ghana, Senegal and Cape Verde) can be replicated in the entire region. Given that its strategic location implies great responsibility toward and from the international community, the solution for its stability must therefore be found and implemented in the interest of all. Using the Most Similar System Design (MSSD), that consists of comparing very similar cases which only differ in the outcome. This research compares West African countries to find the reason behind the stability of some of them by scrutinizing the evolution of their political institutions. As there is a strong correlation between strong institutions and stability within a country, the study analyzes the stimulus that triggers the effectiveness of political institutions in West Africa. This topic will contribute to answering the question regarding the correlation between the vitality of the political institutions and the stability of West African countries, while providing suggestions to consolidate them. However, given the extent of the subject, further studies are needed to strengthen the understanding of West Africa instability.

Keywords: Politics, Institutions, institutionalism, stability, West Africa, Africa.

CHAPTER I

Background & Overview

1.1 Introduction

Sixty years after their independence, most West African countries still face instability. The concern is particularly worrying because the threat is constantly increasing, according to the news. While based on many reports such as those of the GRIP (Peace and Security Research and Information Group), most of these countries are less prepared to cope with the various consequences of this vulnerability neither within, nor outside their borders.

Even for those who have been able to maintain relative stability, the burden to maintain this status remains huge as long as their neighbors are politically and institutionally unstable. Consequently, this situation makes West Africa as one of the world's most unstable regions, affected by all kinds of instability such as armed struggles and political crises carrying the seeds of war (Ayissi, 1994). While others attribute the repeated violence in Africans the result of states' inability to perform some of their basic tasks (Meagher, 2010; and Azam, 2001). Hence, the quest, for the different populations to meet their basic needs by all means, nourishes the instability.

In studying this outstanding challenge, many scholars point out corruption, as the main cause of instability in West Africa (Atuobi, 2007; Goto, 2014; and Nduku, 2014). While referring to the low level of education, the lack of financial and economic means, as secondary causes. Although these studies give relevant insights to understand the instability phenomena in West Africa and its different ramifications, they are insufficient.

Yet, few studies did consistently explore the quality of the political institutions in these countries and scrutinized their fundamental role on stability and development over the region (for instance, Alence, 2004; Marc and Verjee, 2014). While most of the publications on this topic, though still relevant today, are either old or from specific perspectives – historical or sociological – (see for instance, Wallerstein, 1960; Firmin-Sellers, 2000). Therefore is why in West Africa, some countries have stable institutions and others don't? But, first, let's take a close look at West Africa, and its instability

paradox. How these different countries came into existence and which among them are leading toward stability?

1.2 Overview of West Africa

West Africa political stability has always been a great concern. Especially since the 1960's when the colonies of France, Great Britain and Portugal disintegrated into several independent States.

Among them, Ghana was the first to win its independence in 1957 from Great Britain, followed by Guinea in 1958 from France and the year of 1960 was the jubilee for the remaining territories to achieve independence. However, Liberia was already formally independent since 1847 from the United States of America and, its case is particular in nature as the territory was designed to resettle freed American slaves in Africa, therefore wasn't strategically important back then for the US as the other territories were for Europeans empires.

Today, the region covers an area of 5 114 162 Km² (1 974 589 sq. mi) according to Wordometers (2019), with an estimated population of 400 million inhabitants, compared to 300 million just ten years ago, spread across eighteen countries that are Ghana, Cape Verde, Senegal, Gambia, Sierra- Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Togo. Among which only Mauritania is not actually a member of the regional economic community called ECOWA (in English: Economic Community of West African States) or CEDEAO (in French la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest). While all of these countries are home to many ethnic groups whose interests, cultures and aspirations differ significantly.

That makes not only the survival of these states a crucial aspect of preserving pace in the region, but also the obligation to these states to provide strong institutions in order to deliver for the large majority, if not all of their populations, fundamental services such as recognition, protection, education and healthcare, as *Meagher, (2010)*; and *Azam, (2001)* believe that these are the main reason of political violence in Africa and West Africa is not an exception to the case.

Many scholars have related the similarity of the past and actual challenges that these countries share together. In their early independence, they experienced in turn civil war, the single party

system, coup d'état and military regimes. Now, they still have similar challenges that affect their stability such as the border porosity, the lack of inclusive policies; natural resources, redistribution of resources, migration; regional imbalances; political institution weakness and power struggle (*Wallerstein, 1960; Firmin-Sellers, 2000; Alexander & Neelam, 2015*). Based on these observations, the assumption that these countries share a common destiny is widely accepted among scholars as a threat to one becomes matter for all of them.

Among these challenges that West African countries have in common, political instability appears to be the most important one as its achievement is crucial to all other challenges, but for which, unfortunately, few of them have been able to secure. Therefore, the question remains, why are institutions strong in some part of the region and not in others?

This study will look for the model country and determine the triggers of the success of its political institutions, in order to be vulgarized among those who are still trailing back, with the intention that they will emulate them, as the stability of the region depends on that of every single state of West Africa.

As the classifications done by reputed international organizations show, only three countries can compete to be the model of stability in West Africa. For instance, *In-&On Africa*, a research cabinet in South Africa, recently classified the top five countries in Africa, based on the political stability achievement, two West African countries, Cape Verde and Ghana ranked respectively third and fifth with respective scores of 60.45 and 58.28 on the *African Country Benchmark Report ACBR index*. When extended to the top 10, only Senegal joined them with a score of 53.02, completing the most stable countries to three.

Among these three countries Ghana fits most to be the model country of this research for three main reasons. First, because of its proximity and historical similarity with the majority of West African countries. In other words, Ghana shares with these countries diversified ethnic groups into their respective borders. Unlike Cape Verde, which is an archipelagic state in the Atlantic Ocean apart from the rest of the other countries and has typically a mixed history and population of African and European descents.

Second, because Ghana's stability is relatively recent and its experience toward achieving stability can be persuasive to others as it happened in the very eyes of those who are in the different phases that Ghana went through such, dictatorship, military regime, single party rule, and so on so far. Unlike Senegal with its monotone stability since its independence, and have almost always strong institutions. Ghana's success story through its multiple failures is susceptible to attempt. Finally, the third reason is because Ghana's political and institutional instability is built within, with almost no external intervention, in a rapid period of time. Exactly the kind of model this paper advocates to challenge the tendency in West Africa.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 What is needed?

Stability in West Africa depends crucially on viable political institutions. As former US President Barack Obama reminded Africans in 2009 before the Ghanaian Parliament that "Africa does not need strong men, but strong institutions". Although this message has echoed throughout the African continent as an antidote, West Africa needs it the most. Because the region is described as the most unstable in the world (Diaye, 2011). This instability affected both the national level as well as the regional level. At the national level, it brings countries such as the recent conflict in Cote d'Ivoire and the outstanding case of Mali, to the edge of collapsing. Or reviving violent conflicts between different interests groups within countries such as Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Liberia. While at the regional level, armed conflict between countries such as Mali and Burkina Faso, Senegal and Mauritania Nigeria and Cameroon showed the vulnerability of the region due to the lack of strong institutions to uphold peace and stability. Therefore a synergy between these two kinds of institutions, traditional and modern, is crucial for stability.

West Africa's instability has concerned many scholars and different views have been expressed. Few such as Kipré (2005), assumed that it is all about leaders' fear of internal opposition and the cult of personality reinforces this peculiarity of the institutions and

the exercise of state power. Thus, their willingness to remain in power prevails over their countries' stability.

In contrast, others think that it is something beyond which is more structural. For instance, Bafo-Arthur (2008), found that the recurrent coup d'état and the shift toward one political party system are the cause that prevented West African countries to have strong institutions. He argued that, since the first military coup in 1963 against the Togolese Prime Minister Sylvanus Olympio, the region had become the "hub of military forays into politics or military adventurism".

But these cannot satisfy alone the question of how the entire region accommodates with instability. Given the size of the area and its population, as Diaye (2011) stated, that West Africa is about more than 300 million inhabitants, almost 30 percent the population of the African continent, and is composed of sixteen countries which can be divided into three historical institutional cultures that were inherited from the French, the English and the Portuguese imperialists. Therefore the problem lies beyond the above causes.

For that, more perspectives such as the sociological and territorial aspects come into consideration. For instance, Gazibo (2010) argued that giving the arbitrary nature of borders in West African, the newly independent countries brought together different ethnic groups, which still hold strong allegiance to their community and in return receive more support than "meaningless citizenship allegiance to the national institutions". Therefore, the possibility to extend the sphere of these institutions was challenged since the beginning. Furthermore, the gap between the populations and the states became wider because of the crumbling of the letter's legitimacy and the lack of accountability with "*no organic link with the populations who, decades after political independence, continue to view it as an alien, awkward institution from which they should not expect anything, and in which they have no stakes*" (Diaye, 2011).

2.2 What causes instability in West Africa?

The causes of these instabilities are traced way back to the early independence and the very different institutions that were adopted to govern the countries across West Africa. For instance, Annan, (2008) and Berry (2011), attributed this dilemma to early independence when the euphoria of independence waned and the impoverishment of

national treasuries brought economic and social tensions that threatened the stability of the different regimes in the region. These regimes anticipated their downfall by eroding national institutions to preserve power (Berry, (2011). She later argued that in Ghana, governments in order to maintain their popularity distributed unilaterally jobs, contracts, and other favors extensively, undermining the supervisory role of other institutions. Also in Benin, Niger, and Senegal, various sectors such as customs and transport, justice, health, public procurement, and other branches of the administration were defective due to government intervention (Giorgio & Jean-Pierre, 2001).

Consequently, the situation became deleterious. As people become more inclined toward corruption to satisfy their needs, governments which are the root of that (Ong'ayo, 2008), sacrifice the more resource to hold on political power. While the other remaining institutions that were meant to regulate behavior and guarantee stability and development scrambled and aligned themselves to the desiderata of ruthless leaders (Blundo G. & Olivier de Sardan J. P, 2001). This process is known as a country going back from an “open access society” to “natural state or limited access society”, whereby the élites, the small percentage of the population, monopolized the political, social and economic institutions in order to preserve power their own interest (North, 2010). Over time, the relationship between institutions and elites themselves became suspicious and intriguing, therefore, instead of cooperating; they fought over resources and control of power by unconventional means (GRIP, 2019).

2.3 Why are institutions important?

Institutions are essential for countries to secure stability. Professor North (1991), one of the early founding fathers of institutionalism stated that:

Institutions are the humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction. They consist of both informal constraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct), and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property right). Throughout history, institutions have been devised by human beings to create order and reduce uncertainty in exchange. (Para 1)

In other words “Institutions provide mechanisms and norms that prevent political violence and militarized nations of state

stability (Hettne & Soderbaum, 2006)”. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on political institutions. They are referred to as strong when they depend on complex structures that enable only the application of the rule of law and are free of control from any particular group of persons, so that everyone in the society is treated equally (North, 2010). Otherwise they are referred to as weak.

Strong institutions are also those that survive political regimes and dynasties. Therefore, as Ndiaye (2013), mentioned that, to invoke the instability of an institution is paradoxical as “institution” postulates by definition, the permanence whereas the instability evokes the provisional one. That is why those West African governments with their political culture of changing institutions vaguely, have put their countries, and the region in general, into a dangerous path. Hence, the repetitive armed conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone Guinea Bissau and Cote D’Ivoire could be prevented if they had strong institutions and they wouldn’t need any intervention from regional and international organizations. Although the consequence of weak institutions doesn’t necessarily mean chaos, because even the few countries that are the model of stability in West Africa such as Senegal and Ghana went through succinct institutional troubles due to the suppression and resurrection of some institutions depending on the political situation (see for instance, Boafo-Arthur 2008 and Ndiaye, 2013), yet it affected beyond their borders.

But, to really understand the importance of institutions, the short video of Cowen (2016), is very illustrative. It demonstrates the tangible effects of how institutions create overtime, stability which in return generates development. He did it by comparing the institutional choice and outcomes between South and North Korea since the end of World War II, relatively the same time most West African countries got large autonomy from their colonial powers and soon became independent states. They attribute the bipolar paths in which South Korea becomes a stable and extremely developed country in a few decades, While North Korea is a closed and totalitarian country, in which people live in fear and starvation. They conclude that these opposites outcomes are all determined the institutional choice made by these countries, as “institutions define the incentives that affect all of our lives” South Korea adopted those who ensure stability and allow development, while North Korea went for the opposite that North (2010) defined as “limited access of society”. North

later argued that “Getting stability is a prerequisite for development. Therefore, West African countries have great interest to secure stability, before starting to talk about development.

If the Korean peninsula's example shows how huge the challenge of stability is. Then, what about when the scale is much bigger such as West Africa with its sixteen countries. Especially, when there are no clear policies in strategic areas such as land distribution and acquisition, while governments tend to neglect and marginalize their peripheral regions, which are often border areas (Diop, 2015). Evidently this makes the process of having stable institutions for each country is a major issue and having it alone doesn't assure much guarantee.

In research on West Africa's political instability, many areas have found common ground that broadens it. The answer therefore requires various other studies such as the influence of the colonial legacy, the impact of corruption, the extent of the diffusion of education and citizenship, abundance (or not) of natural resources, leadership, agricultural and land distribution, among others.

Even for this subject, which focuses on political institutions to understand instability in West Africa, requires deep analysis, mainly because of the existence of three major political and cultural landscapes. And unfortunately, documentation has been both general and rare. Reflecting this immaturity, this literature reviewed establishes the overall problem and proposes a regional approach to solving it. However, further research is needed to understand more clearly why some West African countries are politically unstable.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methods

The sections below will describe the means through which the research will be conducted to determine the reason why some countries in West Africa have stable political institutions which can be emulated at the regional level. Furthermore, the interpretative research method is the one selected due to the nature of the materials, which are previous publications in the field of political science. As Rowlands (2003), revealed that the interpretive research method is

the most appropriate when dealing with text-based materials. While the fact that this method is “conducted from an experience-near perspective in that the researcher does not start with concepts determined a priori, but rather seeks to allow these to emerge from encounters in *“the field”*” (The Institute of Public and International Affairs, 2009). With the aim to “produce an understanding of the social context of the phenomenon and the process whereby the phenomenon influences and is influenced by the social context” (Walsham, 1995), will be important for the pertinence of this research.

3.2 Primary sources/Materials:

This research, considering the limitations, relies only on scholarly publications and educational video materials. It will consist of collecting online-based articles on West Africa’s chronic instability. Moreover, all the materials will be extracted from well-established online academic journals, international organizations, namely the African Union, ECOWAS, the World Bank Open Knowledge Repository, the African Diaspora Policy Centre, the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University, the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, the Group for Research and Information on Peace and Security (GRIP), the Journal of economic perspectives, the International Journal of Security and Development, the European Journal of Development Research, the European Journal of Development Research, the Journal of the International African Institute, the University of Montreal journal and the Cairn.info. As well as from the world’s largest online library - Marginal Revolution University - at George Mason University and YouTube educational videos for audiovisual materials.

3.3 Procedures:

The procedure consisted of conducting online search for publications on West Africa instability. The keywords were limited to “West Africa political instability”, “West Africa political institutions”, and “West Africa institutional crisis”. Sometimes the word “West” is intentionally omitted to extend the scope to the entire African continent and then keep those only give more details about West Africa. This was introduced in the search engine in both language English and French. Then a preference will be given to local scholars

because of their first-hand experience. Finally, the most relevant studies will be collected and analyzed.

3.4 Method of analysis using MSSD Method:

The MSSD method stresses on comparing two or more cases that are very similar in many ways while differing in terms of one evident and identifiable dependent variable, it will be pertinent to highlight the differing dependent variable and the essential similarities in case of Ghana and Guinea.

Dependent Variable: Political and economic stability.

Common control factors: They all are West African countries sharing many similar control factors in the light of the given MSSD analysis that will be developed in the following analysis chapter.

The independent variable that counts for the absence/presence of the selected dependent variable that is stability in the case of Ghana and Guinea: Maintenance of traditional institutions.

CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS

4.1 Comparison between Ghana and Guinea using MSSD Method

At the outset, all these three countries were destined to have a stable and prosperous future with more or less success due to their respective specificities as they share the below mentioned similar control factors in the light of the given MSSD analysis:

- ★ Ghana was a former colony of one of the influential European colonial empires, the British, which gained independence in 1957. Similarly Guinea was also a constituent of what is historically called French West Africa which became independent in 1958. They both are the first colony to be independent European colonial empires respectively Great British and the France. Thereby, going by the fact supported by many studies that the colonial past of many of the African states did play a major role in the design of these countries modern day political institutions as well as the influence both Ghana and Guinea have a more or less similar colonial past.

- ★ The other political factor that is shared by both Ghana and Guinea is that both these West African countries did experience long periods marked by political challenges, military rule and pervasive political instability.
- ★ One more important political factor that is common to both of these West African countries that both are multiethnic countries populated by various ethnic groups. Moreover both Ghana and Guinea do have a past signified by ethnic conflict and tensions.
- ★ In an economic context both Ghana and Guinea to begin with were rural and agrarian economies that ventured into economic diversification and economic modernization at a very slow and wavering pace.

It is a fact that Ghana irrespective of facing many political challenges in a historical context has largely been able to secure its stability because the country did make an effort to maintain its traditional institutions. In contrast Guinea though shares many political and historical attributes with Ghana has been marred by much political and economic instability owing to its inability to retain a sense of continuity and persistence in its traditional institutions.

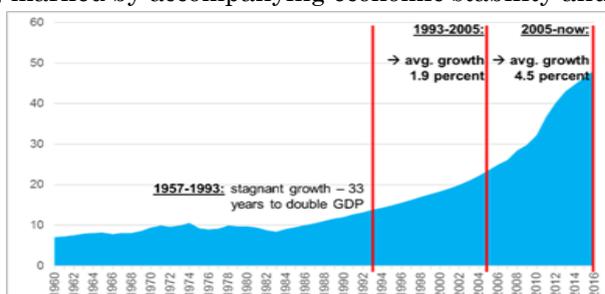
4.2 Political Aspect

In a political sense both of these West African countries did experience a long history marked by single party, totalitarian and military rule replete with much political unrest and armed struggles, coups and rebellions. However, in a very visible and conclusive sense the political situation in these two countries did evince a disparate trend in the year 1992, when a new constitution was approved by the people of Ghana giving way to multi-party democracy in Ghana (Gocking, 2005). This did lay the foundation of a political scenario in Ghana defined by the emergence of multiple traditional institutions like democracy, multi-party politics, independent executive, legislature and judiciary. Thereby, since the election of Rawlings as the president of Ghana in 1992, the nation has been able to stick to a path of persistent political stability, without being hindered by any sort of military coup or suspension of traditional institutions (Gocking, 2005). In contrast though in the past two decades Guinea has been trying hard to adhere to some sort of a veneer of parliamentary politics, the reality is that practically speaking it does

not have a political system founded on credible traditional institutions that are really functional and are able to create a scenario marked by a realistic division of powers as one finds in any stable political entity.

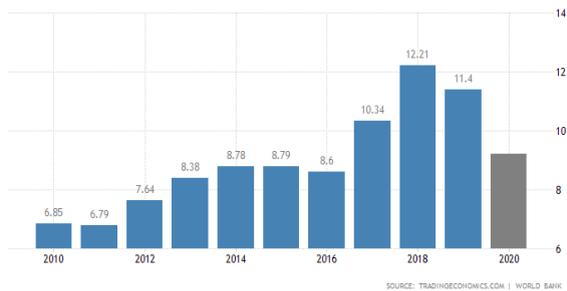
4.3 Economic Aspect

Since the introduction of multi-party system in Ghana in 1992, the economy of this West African country has shown a stable and steady growth. This progress towards economic growth and stability did register a marked improvement after the year 2000 as the traditional institutions in Ghana did begin to get even more stable and autonomous. The below graph does show that an evidently weak trend related to a rise in GDP in Ghana did evince a spurt beyond the year 2000, marked by accompanying economic stability and growth.



Ghana GDP (\$ Billion)
(World Bank, 2018)

In contrast Guinea over time has not been able to achieve a level of economic stability and growth as achieved by Ghana. This has much to do with the pervasive political instability existing in Guinea owing to weak or sometimes non-existent traditional institutions that did play a great role in ensuring overall and multifaceted stability in Ghana.



Guinea GDP, 1986-2019
(Trading Economics, 2020)

The above graph does show that in a comparative context, in terms of GDP growth, Guinea has not only failed to show a significant gain in the last ten years, but the scale of its economy in terms of GDP is significantly low as compared to Ghana.

1.3 Cogent and Rational Explanation

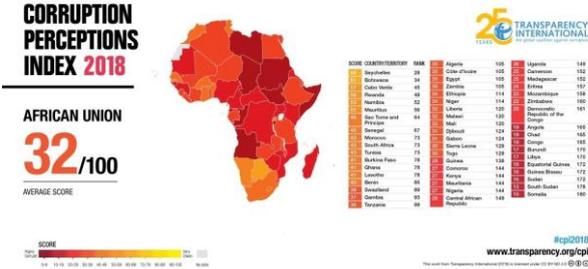
As is obvious in the above given political and economic overview, it is but clear that Ghana has been registering a marked and consistent stability hardly enjoyed by many other West African countries like Guinea. This does lead to the conclusion that Ghana has been able to achieve this stability because it did manage its traditional institutions like a multi-party democracy, rule of law, free judiciary, independent executive and legislature, etc in a proper and sincere manner.

1.3.1 How Traditional Institutions Assure Stability in Ghana

One way the traditional institutions did lead to a lasting stability in Ghana was because it did assure that the people of Ghana did have some sort of a direct say in the policy making and decision making resorted to by the government. This more or less made sure that the respective governments did feel that they are accountable to the people because the existence of division of power assured by the presence of traditional institutions did make them subservient to the will and opinion of the people of Ghana. This did signified a marked change in the prevailing political sentiment in Ghana in the sense that it took the political power away from the hands of a few military leaders or political autocrats, and did make political power more evenly distributed amongst varied political parties, political stakeholders and the people. The traditional institutions did bring in

checks and balances on any government attempt to centralize power or contrive policies that ignored the popular sentiment and aspirations.

The biggest attribute of traditional institutions is that they create a political infrastructure in a country that negates the scope for political or economic exploitation. In the decades immediately following the independence of Ghana, the political power was centered in the hands of individual political autocrats or military dictators. However, with the referendum in 1992 and the advent of a constitutional, multi-party system, the traditional political institutions not only marked their presence, but with the passage of time did takeover many powers that were exclusively vested in the hands of the executive and the military (Gocking, 2005).



(Transparency International, 2018)

As is evident in the above graph, in terms of corruption related scores provided by Transparency International, Ghana has 78th rank while Guinea is way below Ghana and ranks 138th. This does show that the traditional institutions in Ghana did manage to restrain corruption that is the bane of many African countries, which is not so in the case of Guinea. Thereby the transparency and accountability made possible by the relatively powerful and influential traditional institutions did go a long way in making sure that maximal number of people in the society did get access to the state provided resources and opportunity for growth, The betterment achieved in the human parameters like education, health care and consumer spending power made possible by this did enhance the stake of the people in the traditional power structures and lager political system.

As already established by many political thinkers, countries having strong traditional institutions are not only more likely to

emerge to be vibrant democracies, they also stand a better chance of achieving economic progress and growth. As is evident the GDP growth of Ghana is not only way too high as compared to Guinea, but Ghana is also economically more stable. This is because the strong traditional institutions in Ghana have given way to relevant laws and state structures that allow for maximal participation of the masses in country's economic life, while making sure that not merely the privileged few did monopolize the national resources and opportunities for growth.

This has thereby introduced a relatively high consistency quotient in the country's political and economic life. The strong and effective traditional institutions not only assure the rule of law, but also act as a stabilizing factor in Ghana's social, cultural and political life.

1.3.2 How Weak and Compromised Traditional Institutions did contribute to Instability in Guinea

It is a fact that in term of its colonial past, its post independence history marked by autocratic regimes and military rulers, its ethnically divided society and sectarian social problems, its primarily rural and agrarian economy and its corruption marred and economically and socially hierarchal society, Guinea was very much like Ghana. The only thing was that in the past three decades Ghana did make a tilt in favor of a more or less multi-party system with relatively more independent and autonomous traditional institutions. It was primarily only a lack of this specific factor that further worsened political and economic instability in Guinea.

The thing that needs to be understood is that in unstable societies marked by poverty and lawlessness, the autocratic and military claimants to political power have a higher capacity to manipulate people by playing on their fears and prejudices. Thereby, a lack of traditional institutions in Guinea did leave the autocratic political leaders and military dictators practically free to go on with their plans. Going by the concentration of power in a single party or a military ruler in the absence of the division of power spread across multiple traditional institutions, the instability that Guinea inherited from history got worse with time. The other thing is that the absence of traditional institutions made sure that the entire functions specific to the state like the executive, legislature, judiciary, military and exchequer did come into the hands of a single leader or a party. This

inhibited and discouraged the eventual development of Guinea into a complex political and economic system marked by multilayered division of power, ample checks and cross checks introduced by specific institutions and democratically elected legitimate central and provincial governments.

Thereby, it is but evident that the single most important factor that made Ghana a stable country and that enhanced instability in Guinea was the presence or absence of traditional institutions in these two West African countries.

5. CONCLUSION

Coming with an efficient model that can help West African countries to achieve stability will necessitate enabling multiple institutions to function effectively and impartially. Therefore for this research only a part of that will be focused on, which are the political institutions, because of their crucial function in any given state. With this perspective, the institutionalism approach of the renone Professor North will be the lens through which the materials will be analyzed. As he defines institutions as "humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interactions". Constraints are *"devised as formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights) and informal restraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, codes of conduct), which usually contribute to the perpetuation of order and safety within a market or society. The degree to which they are effective is subject to varying circumstances, such as a government's limited coercive force, a lack of organized state, or the presence of strong religious precepts"*(North, 1991).

Conclusively speaking it was just one salient attribute specific to Ghana that is the measures taken by the country to maintain its traditional institutions that made it a more stable society, political system and economy as compared to Guinea. In many ways, in a historical context both the nations had inherited almost very same social, political and economic variables. Yet, the initiative taken by Ghana to respond to the aspirations of the masses and opting to be a constitutional, multi-party system with the presence of effective traditional institutions is what made it a politically and economically more stable country as compared to unstable and economically stuck Guinea.

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