

# Administrative and Democratic Development in Africa: A comparative analysis of Cameroon and Ghana

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## Abstract

This paper examines the nature of public administration characterizing Sub-Saharan Africa to reveal some of the lasting impacts it has had in the regions and probe into the constitutional architecture. It showcases the major and often ignored constitutional differences between the former colonies of Britain and France that have unavoidably led to the widening gap between these countries. This paper digs deep into these country's constitutions to expose the reservations behind semi-presidentialism, which was emulated by these countries, but over the years, has produced very unsimilar results. It then concludes that the complexities surrounding the various problems facing these countries are not far-fetched, but consecrated into the very foundations of these states in the form of patron-client relationships and rent-seeking attitudes.

**Keywords:** constitutionalism, public administration, centralization, decentralization, democracy, development

## Introduction

This paper's objective is to uncover the lasting effects and impacts of the most dominant systems of government that characterized sub-Saharan Africa during the colonial period spear-headed by the French and the British in the colonies. Many works exist to distinguish between the colonial strategies used by Britain and France in the colonies (Hailey, 1938; Mazrui, 2019; Davidson, 1989; Khapoya, 2015), but far little has been written to expose the implications of these colonial systems of government in the current affairs of African countries. Answers to this question were however attempted by Mazrui, who visualized a pattern tilting towards nationhood in French African former colonies forged by the concentration of power in the center which at this time was the "metropole/Paris" and statehood in British former colonies forged by decentralization to the local population, allowing them the possibility of managing their own affairs (Mazrui, 2019). General knowledge from all these previous works reveals that while the British system of administration was known for promoting decentralization, the French system idealized centralization. The paper also highlights as shall be seen below, that the culture of public administration in Sub-Saharan Africa in general is very complicated and same goes for the two cases examined here. A lot of challenges have

been recorded on the process of public administration especially in running these newly independent states, due to the lack of experience and capacity in the public service to effectively manage administrative organs. The realities in the French speaking and English-speaking countries post independent are dissimilar especially concerning managing the government. It has equally been remarked that the administrative architecture of present former French colonies in Africa remains entrenched in the French administrative system (Njoh, 2000, p. 166). Njoh establishes a comparative analysis of both systems and concludes on the basis of human development following the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index and the ability to translate economic expansions into better living conditions that the British system of "indirect rule" performed better in setting the ground for modern governance in Africa compared to the French system of "direct rule" (Njoh, 2000).

This paper in this regard thus evaluates administrative decentralization and democratic progress in Cameroon a country of the former French colonies and Ghana, a country from the former British colonies and makes use of empirical data from Freedom House, and Ibrahim Index of African Governance to establish a comparative analysis of the implications of the former systems of rule under which these countries were subdued to. This article resents from making colonialism the blame for Africa's present predicaments, but goal is to establish how successful democratic consolidation has been in these countries after the Third Wave, (Huntington, 1993) following the differences in the systems.

The colonial past of the African continent has left the continent with a lot of remarkable relics amongst which are public administration, which must not be left out. European models of administration were imposed by the colonial powers and have been adopted by almost all African countries upon achieving independence. Administrative models such as indirect rule and direct rule introduced during the colonial era and the subsequent political transformations witnessed in the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa continue to affect their current governance status'. Prior to independence, many African countries especially those colonized by France and Belgium were governed through a system called direct rule. With this system, power wielded was centralized by the "mother" country or the colonizer. These systems were imposed on these territories without any consideration of the local customs and traditions or how their administration was organized. As highlighted Kisangani (2010:223- 226), France administered its colonies directly through appointed governors from Paris. While in Africa, these governors and authorities appointed from France in turn appointed and used local chiefs who supported French rule to administer the rest of the population. Majority of the chiefs that were chosen by the French colonial authorities during the colonial period were not part of the native ruling family in the African politics and were often regarded as "puppet" chiefs by the local population as emphasized Peemans, 1975:173,174). Unlike the French and Belgian systems, the British delegated the power of authority to the local authorities in a system called "indirect rule".

According to Gerring et al. (2011:382), for the indirect system of rule to be realized, it was essential that the colonizer identifies an agent within the colonized who is capable for whom power and authority can be successfully delegated.

## **1. Data and Methods**

This paper makes use qualitative data and analytical method of research based on constitutional follow up. It makes use of information from Freedom House, which presents up to date empirical data on the degree and progress recorded in ensuring democratic consolidation and freedom of its citizens. It also relies on data from the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, which as of now is one of the few survey sources that present a fair and unbiased representation of the nature of governance in Africa based on the numerous variables it relies upon.

## **2. The Situation**

Significant transformation has been recorded in African countries following the Third Wave. A lot of institutional changes have taken place in almost every country and several results have been applauded. Also, many governments both military and civilian have fallen, giving rise to rule-of-law-based governments characterized by constitutionalism and constitutional government, which have come with several reforms such as presidential term limits. However, many African countries remain plagued with the problems of democratic institutionalisation and are unable to deal effectively and fully govern with impunity. Many of these countries are still struggling to govern with impunity due to severe abuse of executive power and human rights violations. The cases of Ghana and Cameroon picked out by this paper provide a comparative analysis of the effects of the legacies adopted by the colonial system of government, which has led to these countries adopting different patterns of government. These two cases though not exclusively similar to all countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, present a fair representation of the relics of the Anglo-Saxon and Francophone tradition and style of public administration and governance introduced in Africa. The constitutional make-up of these countries has been the basis of their present progress and predicaments.

To begin with, while it is of common knowledge that presidents in some countries especially those formerly colonized by Britain have abided by their new constitutions to keep to the specified term limits, which in the case of Ghana is two terms. The case in the French former colonies has been different and the tendency has been that the leaders make use of legislatures subservient to them to change their constitutions, allowing them to stay in power beyond the two-terms specified in most constitutions governing the former British colonies. In the case of Cameroon, the parliament in 2008 voted to amend the constitution, shading off all presidential term limits, LeBas, (2016). The 1961 Federal Constitution and the 1972 Unitary

Constitutions in Cameroon, without putting in place restraining mechanisms, set extensive powers to the president. These powers fortified presidential absolutism in Cameroon and the 1996 Constitution came as a bail-out to limit these powers. In this vein, under the 1996 Constitution the executive took the form of a semi-presidential system, meant to curtail the over-centralization of executive in the president. First used by Maurice Duverger, he referred to semi-presidentialism as 'a political regime bound by a constitution which combines three elements: (1) a president elected by universal suffrage; (2) a president who possesses quite considerable powers; (3) he has opposite him, however, a prime minister and ministers who possess executive and governmental powers and can stay in office only if the parliament does not show its opposition to them', Duverger, (1980: 166). Perfectly describing some major transformations in some countries, Duverger attempted to expose why similar constitutions have been applied differently in these countries. Though his thesis focuses on the content of these constitutions, their traditions and the circumstances surrounding them, he fell short of clarifying the nature of what he actually meant by 'quite considerable powers' vested upon the president in his definition. In regards to the Cameroon, the president holds the power to appoint and dismiss the prime minister and his cabinet. Though his article described what he had noticed going on around the world during his writing, the type of decentralization efforts in Cameroon through the 1996 Constitution failed to secure a semi-presidential system as devised by Duverger. The reality and practice of the semi-presidential system in Cameroon is that it did not display any honest separation of powers. The system is still made up of a popularly elected president who appoints and dismisses the prime minister and cabinet, and who has the powers to dissolve the parliament as stated in article 8(12) of Cameroon's 1996 constitution. This article fails to promote democracy as it does not specify the conditions under which the order from the presidency to dissolve parliament can be passed, thus further concentrating powers in the hands of a single individual with the yam and the knife to cut towards any direction which he or she pleases. Shugart and Carey describe such a regime as a 'president-parliamentary' (1992: 24).

Over the years, the situation in Cameroon has proven to be totally in control by the president and the ruling party, which has been declared winner of all presidential elections in the country since its first ever presidential elections were held in October 1992. The ruling party equally has occupied the highest number of seats in the national assembly following the country's first multi-party parliamentary elections in March 1992. As of January 2021, statistics from the Cameroon national assembly's website states that of the total 180 seats in parliament, the ruling party, Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) headed by the president occupies 152 seats<sup>3</sup>. It should be noted that since independence, the ruling party, the CPDM,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.assnat.cm/index.php/en/>

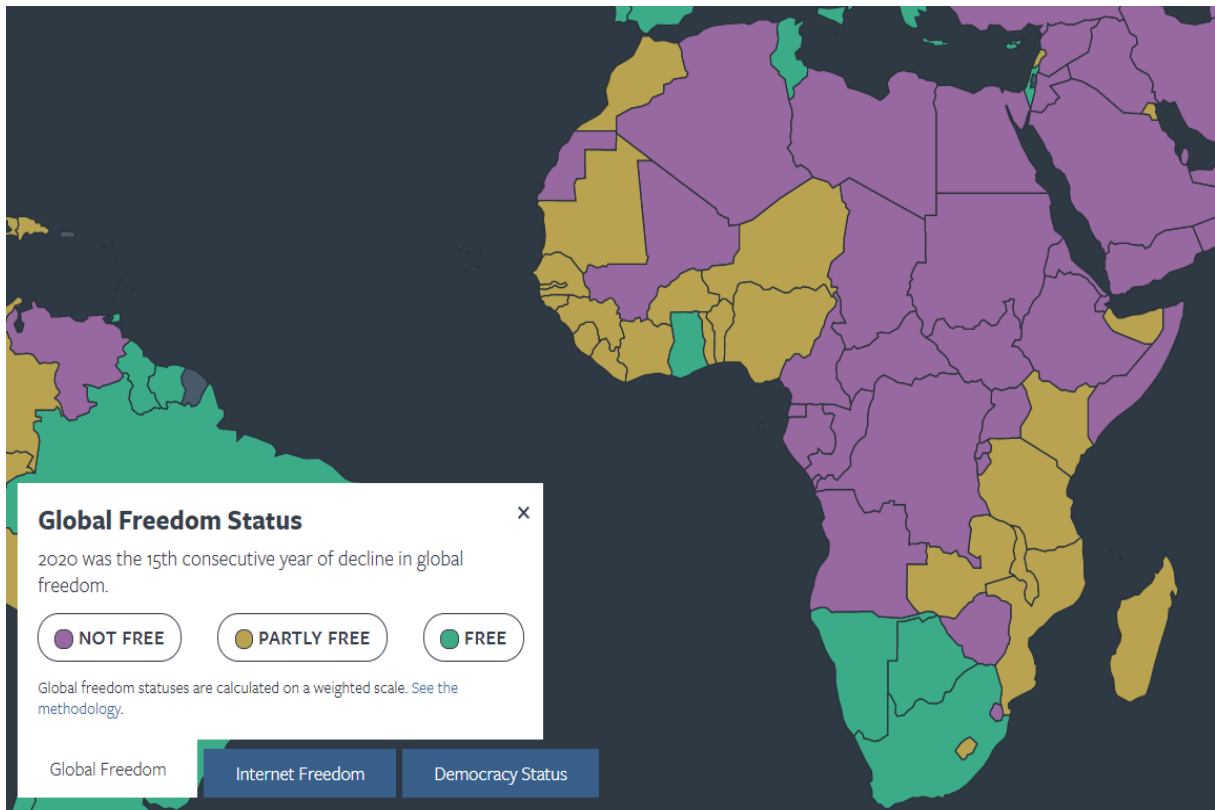
has dominated the political landscape. The party has maintained its power through patron-client relationships and has limited opportunities for opposition parties to participate in the political process. While it will be a situation similar in almost all Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries to have a parliament dominated by the government in power, some constitutions like that of Ghana however give the parliament some degree of insusceptibility to the will and control of the president. While the 1992 Constitution of Ghana places the powers of legislation in the hands of the parliament to exercise according to the constitution, Ghana Const. art. 93 (2). It also gives the parliament the powers to determine its own agenda, and precludes the executive from dissolving the legislature or even forcing it to vote on a bill. This new constitution was supposedly meant to fashion a more reasonable balance in the powers between the executive, legislative and judicial arms or government. These institutional and constitutional changes in most of the cases create conditions that make it very difficult for opposition candidates to take part in competitive elections.

Following this line of argument, this paper highlights the data presented by Freedom House, which classifies Cameroon in the 2020 Freedom in the World as “Not Free” with Cameroon having a score of 18/100<sup>4</sup>, while Ghana had a score of 82/100<sup>5</sup>. It should be noted that this report uses as variables, political rights and civil liberties. The classification of both states by Freedom house follows a long tradition of research into the implementation of the constitutions of these countries, which according to this article, stem from the differences in the constitutional provisions, which has left lapses that have translated into the day-to-day affairs of these countries.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/country/cameroon/freedom-world/2020>

<sup>5</sup> <https://freedomhouse.org/country/ghana/freedom-world/2020>



**Figure 1: Global Freedom Status**

Source: Freedom House

The act of changing the constitution to wipe off presidential term-limits is been considered by Mbaku as a “constitutional coup”, Mbaku, (2018). The highlights that the genesis of the relatively weak institutions, that led to the absence of a democratic culture got its roots from the elitist and undemocratic colonial administration which ruled over especially the French and Belgian colonies such as Cameroon, which led to the undemocratic handing down of power after independence, creating the elitist class system that dominates these societies.

### 2.1. Electoral democracy in Cameroon and Ghana

The role of elections in the process of democratization cannot be over emphasized. Elections contribute towards the building and effective sustaining of democratic institutions; serve as an effective legal instrument for the people to put pressure and prevent excessive governance and also limit impunity; and finally, elections also provide an opportunity to the people to carefully change their governments and bring into public service more efficient and competent leaders.

The role of elections however has been greatly minimized, and rendered almost unimportant especially as constitutional manipulations like the case in Cameroon, wherein

elections have proven to be a means for the government to sustain majoritarian power at the expense of the minority. Without any doubts, free and frequent elections serve as a means to consolidate, deepen and entrench democracy because they help coerce government oppression. The importance of free and frequent elections is visible in governments where successive elections have taken place like in Ghana, which has since independence had its presidency change hands 12 times, compared to the Cameroon, wherein power has changed hands just 2 times notably without an election. No doubt, democracy and freedom in Ghana has far advanced than the situation in Cameroon.

While the respect for the constitution has to some extent been practiced in some SSA countries such as Ghana, the situation has been almost lamentable in Cameroon where acts of parliament have been unjustly decided and enacted. A divisive constitutional amendment went through in Cameroon in 2008, which amended the article 6(2), which originally limited presidential term limits to two terms. This new and controversial amendment was adopted after a ruling party majoritarian vote with 157 pro-votes, 5 against and 12 abstentions<sup>6</sup>. As earlier mentioned, parliamentary immunity in decision making is not a practice known to the legislature in Cameroon. The very process of constitutional amendment to take off presidential terms limits was marked by intimidation as reported by one of the members of parliament, Paul Ayah Abine, who complained of the exaggerated presence of agents of security in an event which is supposed to be democratic, free and fair, (Oyono in Kamto et al, 2016: 49). This alone explains why the president who is also head of the ruling party has been able to sustain his stay in power since he became president in 1982. Just as it is the practice in Cameroon's former colonial master France, wherein the constitution according to article 16 grants the president with certain legislative and regulatory powers. However, this applies only during cases of national emergency. Article 8(8) of Cameroon's 1972 Constitution with all amendments through 2008 ironically alienates the role of the parliament as the sole legislative organ, thus limiting its efficiency. This article of the constitution gives the president of the republic some degree of legislative and also regulatory powers, permitting the president to make use of statutory authority to impede the authority of the parliament. The implications of this article in the case of Cameroon fails to state whether such powers can be used by the president only during cases of national emergency or not. Article 27 equally grants the president the powers to decide on certain rules and regulations which are out of the competence of the parliament, thus completely weakening a parliament that is almost entirely made-up members loyal to the president and the ruling party. This article particularly is very misleading as it fails to specify what aspects of legislation is not within the parliament's competence, which on the other hand

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.voanews.com/archive/cameroons-parliament-lifts-presidential-term-limit>

gives the president extensive and unlimited powers over the parliament to put in place unpopular policies such as scrapping off presidential term limits.

While these laws may be very similar to the situation in France as highlighted above, both cases cannot be compared because the cultural and historical background of France which can be considered an advanced democracy has forged a set of strong checks and balances. These checks and balances help to limit the powers of the president and ensure proper distribution of power between the various arms of government. These checks and balances however have continually been marred by neopatrimonialism and rent seeking politics in Africa.

While there have been several periods of political instability in Ghana before the Fourth Republican Constitution under which the country currently runs, it can be argued that since its initiation, the various arms of government have discharged their functions creditably following the law and ensuring a degree of fair representation. 5 presidents have ruled Ghana since the spark of democracy incepted by the Fourth Republican Constitution in 1992, while Cameroon has had no change in government since the amendments made through the 1996 constitution.

## **2.2. A comparative analysis of Overall governance in Cameroon and Ghana**

As already highlighted above, the governments that took over the running of Cameroon and Ghana respectively after independence played a very crucial role towards setting the future course in the way public administration turns out to be. The Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) has one of the most accurate data set about governance in Africa and according to its most recent results, the differences in the nature of public administration in Cameroon and Ghana are clearly specified. This data set uses variables such as security and rule of law, participation, rights and inclusion, foundations for economic opportunity, and human development to determine the overall governance status. According to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Cameroon has a score of 43.5 on 100 and is on a downward trend of -0.6 since 2010, and ranks Cameroon number 37 out of 54 African countries which it covers. As far as Ghana is concerned, the Ibrahim Index of African Governance scores Ghana 64.3 on 100, places it on an ascending trend of +0.1 since 2010, and ranks Ghana on number 8 out of 54 African countries. The following image illustrates these differences.



Overall Governance			
Cameroon		Ghana	
43.5 Out of 100.0 In overall Governance, scores lower than the African average (48.8)		64.3 Out of 100.0 In overall Governance, scores higher than the African average (48.8)	
Trend	Ranking	Trend	Ranking
-0.6 Absolute trend since 2010	37 Out of 54	+0.1 Absolute trend since 2010	8 Out of 54

**Figure 2: Table adapted from data from Ibrahim Index of African Governance**

Source: Ibrahim Index of African Governance

Taking a close look at the constitutional set up in Cameroon especially, it places the state almost entirely in the hands of the president of which he bends as will. The design of all state and para-public institutions is such that all decisions come from the presidency, and because of this, there is a high degree of inefficiency and efficacy. A study of both constitutions reveals that they reserve some powers to the president to appoint ministers and their cabinets. While the 1992 Constitution of Ghana under article 71 stipulates that from among the members of parliament, the president can appoint majority of the ministers, it also under article 103 stipulates that the parliament has the responsibility to monitor executive performance and also examine and provide parallel approval to the various ministerial appointments made by the president. Meanwhile in Cameroon, the president reserves the right to appoint the Prime Minister, all ministers and their cabinets, civil, military and other public institutions. This system creates a resounding foundation for the flourishing of a patronage structure build to reward the key figures that support the regime as highlighted in Takougang and Krieger (1998) and Bayart (1993), thereby helping to sustain the regime in power, while throttling on democracy.

While good governance is very important, public responses to it is immediately manifested. Citizens are the recipients of public leadership and governance, and while the assessment of governance needs to be rooted on results for the citizens, the IAG explores some categories to present the public perception data on government performance. In the case of Cameroon, the public perception score recorded shows 41.1 on 100, with a downward trend of -1.7 since 2010, indicating that the public or citizens are unsatisfied with overall governance in Cameroon. Comparatively, Ghana's public perception score of overall governance has been improving and it currently has a score of 59.2 on 100 and an upwards trend of +0.3 since 2010 as seen on the following figure.

Public Perception of Overall Governance			
Cameroon		Ghana	
41.1 Out of 100.0 In overall public perception of overall governance		59.2 Out of 100.0 In overall public perception of overall governance	
Trend	Ranking	Trend	Ranking
-1.7 Absolute trend since 2010	30 Out of 38	+0.3 Absolute trend since 2010	4 Out of 38

**Figure 3: Table adapted from data from Ibrahim Index of African Governance**

Source: Ibrahim Index of African Governance

Talking about the rule of law, government accountability is a significant feature towards securing administrative progress and democracy. The constitution of Cameroon through its 2008 amendments<sup>7</sup> stipulates that the president is immune from prosecution as per article 53(3). Considering the fact that immunity from prosecution for high level government officials especially the president is vital for the proper functioning of the state especially concerning decision making, this article as introduced in Cameroon by the 2008 constitutional amendment can be considered premeditated and inconsistent. The country's state of corruption has been deplorable and while the constitution should strive for the protection and the interest of the public, this very article 53(3) failed to outline the nature of immunity to be enjoyed by the president. It should be reiterated that the country has been ruled by a single president since its first ever presidential elections were held in 1992, thus enacting and adopting such a bill in parliament means selling out the country as the president is not subject to any form of prosecution or cannot stand trial at any court for his actions as a president. It should be recalled from the previous paragraphs that this very act of parliament which amended the constitution in 2008 took off presidential term limits as per article 6(2). Our assumptions of a premeditated act are fully confirmed here, since while still being a president and even out of office, the president cannot answer to any court of law for any decision it makes whether good or bad, Hatchard (2000). This constitutional act is typical of only dictatorship regimes, and in no way represents a government that is striving towards democracy. Fombad and Nwauche label them as 'Imperial presidents' (2012).

<sup>7</sup> Law No. 2008/001 of 14 April 2008 to amend and supplement some provisions of Law No. 96/6 of 18 January 1996 to amend the Constitution of 2 June 1972.

Comparatively, while the constitution of Ghana also for the purpose of ensuring the full capacities of the president to perform his functions in office without any fear of prosecution and delays or distractions, it stipulates as per article 57(6) some immunity for a sitting president. It allows any legal action against the president to be initiated within 3 years after when he or she is no longer president, and it should be for anything he or she did or omitted to do during his tenure as president or in his or her personal capacity before taking office, notwithstanding any period of limitation except where the proceedings had been legally barred before he or she assumed the office as president. This is to ensure that while struggling to govern, it should be remembered that “no one is above the law”, and in this case, apparent crimes committed during a tenure as president can be brought to a court of law the following 3 years once one ceases to be president. Also, while the constitution of France and that of Cameroon both seem to present the head of state to be inviolable, the constitution of France according to article 68 states that the president is liable to prosecution after the end of his or stay in power. Over the years, this resolution of the French constitution has been utilized to prosecute and even pass judgements against former French presidents such as Jacques Chirac in 2011 and most recently, Nicolas Sarkozy in 2021 for acts they committed while in power. This constitutional clause being used is a simple reminder that in a democracy, no one should be above the law, and also serves a deterrence to all forms of governance malpractice.

### **2.3. Patron-Client Relationships and Rent-Seeking Attitudes in Cameroon and Ghana**

After independence, the patron-client relationships that emerged in Cameroon and Ghana had a significant impact on governance and development. Politicians in both countries have relied on personal networks and ethnic or regional allegiances to gain and retain power. This has frequently resulted in a focus on short-term gains and rent-seeking rather than long-term development.

Patronage networks, according to Bratton and van de Walle (1997), are formed by the exchange of resources, typically between a patron who has access to resources and a client who seeks those resources. President Paul Biya of Cameroon, who succeeded Ahidjo in 1982, has been accused of maintaining a patronage system that benefits his own ethnic group, the Beti. As a result, widespread corruption and a lack of accountability became the order of the day. In Ghana, successive governments have been accused of abusing power to benefit their own ethnic or regional groups rather than the country as a whole.

These patron-client relationships have also aided in the practice of rent-seeking, in which politicians use their positions of power to extract resources from the state for personal gain. Rent-seeking behavior, according to Collier and Gunning (1999), results in resource misallocation, reduced investment, and slowed economic growth. As a result, both countries' development has been hampered by a lack of investment in infrastructure and social services.

Rent-seeking attitudes have been fostered in Cameroon as a result of the government's control over the economy and limited opportunities for private sector development. The government has distributed economic benefits to political allies through patron-client relationships, creating a culture of rent-seeking and corruption.

The government's commitment to private sector development and economic liberalization has reduced rent-seeking attitudes in Ghana. The government has put policies in place to encourage private sector growth and reduce the role of the state in the economy. This has increased entrepreneurship opportunities while decreasing the incentives for rent-seeking behavior.

In order to evaluate efforts at combating the ills of our societies, according to data from Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2021, Cameroon ranks 153rd out of 180 countries, with a score of 26 out of 100, indicating a high level of perceived corruption in the country. Ghana ranks 79th out of 180 countries, with a score of 41 out of 100, indicating that the country has a moderate level of perceived corruption (Transparency International, 2021).

In a similar way, the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) report for 2021 includes information on governance and corruption in Cameroon and Ghana. Cameroon received a score of 22.5 out of 100 in the Control of Corruption indicator, placing it 176th out of 202 countries, while Ghana received a score of 42.4 out of 100, placing it 89th out of 202 countries (World Bank, 2021).

Data about corruption in Cameroon and Ghana is also available from the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, which evaluates the effectiveness of government in African nations. Cameroon received a score of 41.7 out of 100 in the category for Accountability, which covers efforts to combat corruption, in the most recent index report, which was published in 2020. This placed Cameroon 42nd out of 54 countries. Ghana received a score of 64.5 out of 100 for the same indicator, placing it eighth out of 54 nations (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2020).

The complexity of corruption and embezzlement, which cannot be fully understood by data alone, must be kept in mind. These organizations' data only offer a snapshot of the situation; therefore, it should be used with caution.

As established by the analysis in the previous paragraphs, the culture of public administration in Africa especially sub-Saharan is very complex. The colonial legacies which cannot be ignored left every country with a culture of public administration almost unique to it, but the disparities between the former French and British colonies is clear and very noticeable. The colonial legacies continue to play a major role in influencing the way in which public administration takes place in these countries. Lukamba and Molokwane (2017: 240) have established that even with these countries being independent, progress in the development of public administration is recorded more with the former English-speaking colonies such as

Ghana than the French former colonies like Cameroon. Generally, it should be reiterated that there is growing need for grassroots institutions to be independent so as to produce lasting results to remedy the current democratic lapses currently facing these countries. Also, with the lack of independent and proper checks and balances to keep a watchful eye on the activities of the various arms of government, the existing political turmoil is prone to flourish, limiting the chances of flushing out this rent-seeking generation of despotic rulers that have ravaged the African continent.

## **Conclusion**

Administrative and democratic development in Africa especially Sub-Saharan Africa is surrounded by so many complexities, that must be uncovered from the foundations of the state creation laid during independence. Also, the comparative analysis of both administrative and democratic progress in Cameroon and Ghana underscores the nuanced consequences of constitutional similarities and differences which find their roots in their shared colonial past. Though no society can claim to be corrupt free, Sub-Saharan Africa has exhibited a relatively high degree of patronage and rent seeking relationships and this is a virus that is eating deep into health of public administration and democratic development in the continent. While both Cameroon and Ghana wrestle with several challenges related to these patron-client relations and rent-seeking attitudes, their divergent trajectories inform on the significance of contextual factors in shaping democratic outcomes. Cameroon's struggle underscores the need for targeted reforms to mitigate the adverse effects of patron-client relations, fostering a more inclusive and transparent democratic process in pursuit of sustained political stability and growth. Cameroon's challenges also emphasize the need for comprehensive reforms to strengthen democratic institutions. On the otherhand, Ghana's experience, though still a work in progress, reflects a more robust democratic development, suggesting that certain institutional choices and governance practices can foster resilience against negative influences. These cases bring much attention to the evolving nature of democratic development in Africa and the case of Ghana's inspiring progress indicates the potential for effective governance structures and a commitment to institutional integrity, fostering citizen engagement and political stability. In a general view, as sub-Sahara African nations navigate their unique trajectories towards progress, the analysis in this paper encourages a more profound exploration of the complex interplay between historical legacies, constitutional designs and current socio-political dynamics in moulding the democratic landscape that will project Africa positively.

Despite the fact that the historical ties between the former colonial powers and their former colonies have fashioned different governance structures, contrary to the situation in both Cameroon and Ghana, their former colonial masters, like much of the rest of Europe have

generally experienced more stable constitutional and democratic development. Their successes draw on centuries of political transformations, which have gained them more robust democratic institutions that pay a lot of emphasis to the rule of law and the culture of political pluralism. Just to mention a few, Sweden is characterized by a strong tradition of decentralization which sees that local and regional authorities have significant decision making powers, thereby promoting independent and responsive local governments to community needs. The effectiveness of Finland's anti-corruption measures has seen it consistently ranked high in global anti-corruption indicators, which has promoted trustworthiness in public administration. Germany's social system that encourages dialogue has led to the involvement of several stakeholders in decision-making, thus promoting social cohesion and inclusiveness. Netherlands' merit-based recruitment system, which is a system that focuses on skills and professional qualifications rather than political affiliation, has played a great role to wipe out patron-client and rent-seeking attitudes.

From the above, both Cameroon and Ghana must continue to pay attention to prioritize the strengthening of democratic institutions, guaranteeing their independence, transparency and effectiveness. Also, the roles of the judiciary, the electoral commission and anti-corruption agencies must be clearly spelled-out and made independent of other state organs. Both countries must equally consider learning from best democratic practices globally, adopting that which suit their country's unique context and making more constitutional reforms tailored towards fixing the loopholes currently faced and enhance the checks and balances for a vigorous democratic system. While patron-client relationships and rent-seeking attitudes continue to rage havoc to both countries, they should strengthen and enforce strict penalties for corruption and also enhance the autonomy of anti-corruption agencies to be able to effectively battle corruption.

On a social note, great investment is needed in both countries concerning civil engagement in political activities. Both governments must both invest in civic education and encourage their citizens, advocacy groups and Non-Governmental Organizations to serve as watchdogs in holding the government accountable. Great investments should equally be made in political education programs so as to increase citizens' mastery of what democratic principles entail, citizens' obligations and rights, and the importance of their active engagement in the entire process to ensure a thriving democracy. Media freedom should also be prioritized to ensure unbiased reporting and promote diverse opinions to enhance transparency and accountability. In all, the implementation of these recommendations demands a very holistic approach, with a combination of legal reforms and institutional capacity building coupled with sustained commitments from the political leaders, advocacy groups, civil society and the citizens.

This paper has in a few steps provided a comparative analysis of the present public administration cultures of two countries; Cameroon, a former French colony, where during colonialism, “direct rule” was the way; and Ghana, a former British colony, which was governed through “indirect rule”. Decades after the Third wave however, several reforms have been introduced to bolster and consolidate democracy as many would argue. However, records show that while countries like Ghana, from the English-speaking culture have been experiencing great advancement with the reforms made, other countries like Cameroon with heritage of the French colonial system regrettably have been lagging as far as democratic consolidation is concerned. This paper emphasizes that the type of leadership, their plans for the people, the type of institutions and how strong these institutions are in building a solid state that can stand the test of time are what determines the success of public administration. It also advises that it is important for these countries to adapt with special considerations to the examples of good administration practices in some European countries to suit the unique socio-economic and cultural contexts.

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