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# Public Corruption in Liberian Government

Stephen H. Gobewole  
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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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2015

Abstract

Public Corruption in Liberian Government

by

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MS, Rhode Island College, 1997

BS, Rhode Island College, 1993

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Public Policy and Administration

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## Abstract

There is a widespread public perception of corruption in Liberia's election process, yet there is little documentation on the characteristics of voters and their perceptions of electoral corruption. The purpose of this correlational study was to explore the relationship between gender, ethnicity, physical location, and perceptions about political activity during the 2005 national election. Roderick Chisolm's conceptualization of the internalist view of justification served as the theoretical construct. Data were acquired from the Afrobarometer survey ( $n = 1,200$ ), which used a representative cross-sectional sample design, and were subjected to cross-tabulation analysis, a chi-square test, and a correlation analysis. The results of the analysis indicated that elections were perceived as unfair and that gender was an important predictor of perception. The analysis revealed that 26.8% of women perceived the National Election Commission as untrustworthy and 79.0% reported that they did not feel completely free to choose their preferred candidate. A chi-square test of association confirmed that among males, the belief that elections are free and fair was statistically significant ( $p = .002$ ), though not for females ( $p = .151$ ). Gender was moderately correlated ( $r = .088$ ) with corruption of government officials. It was also found that the theoretical construct may explain the behavior of elected officials, but was not predictive of voter engagement. Recommendations to remedy this problem include widespread election reform that focuses on combating negative perceptions of voters, particularly among women, and correcting technical irregularities in Liberia's electoral processes.

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## Dedication

For Stephen, Frederick, and James, as always to Hawa, with love and respect.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Background**

The Liberian republic, since its independence in 1847, has never fulfilled its sovereign and legal obligations to provide public safety, civil rights, political protection, economic opportunities, and social welfare to its indigenous population or its full territory (Gros, 1996; Liebenow, 1987; Sawyer, 1992). In addition, the nation's government, which claims to represent a western-style democracy, is based on a discriminatory constitution and ethnic patrimonialism, indirect rule, and clan chieftainship. This creates difficulties in providing public goods and services (Clower, Dalton, Harwitz, & Walters, 1966; Pham, 2004; Sawyer, 1992) that are basic to a nation-state and critical for determining the degree of a state's efficiency, effectiveness, and viability (Fukuyama, 2004; Gros, 1996; Patrick, 2006). In order for the Liberian government and the international community to formulate policies concerning state building, human rights, and population resettlement, a state's governing authority must be determined (Gros, 1996; Patrick, 2006). The most respected system for evaluating and reporting states' stability is the Fund for Peace's "Failed State Index" performance report. The Fund's 2012 performance index ranked Liberia as the 25<sup>th</sup> most unstable state out of 177 countries (The Fund for Peace, 2012), indicating that the nation is now in a "warning status" of failure, in contrast to a fully dysfunctional state.

However, Liberia's political history reveals that it functions as a failed state principally because its administrative system (patriarchal) for discharging its responsibilities is inconsistent with its governing authority (legal-rational). The conflict

between the administrative structures in enforcing the legal mandates consistent with governing authority has existed in Liberia from its inception and continues today. Theoretically, a patriarchal administrative system is aligned with “traditional authority” while a bureaucratic administrative system is aligned with “legal-rational authority” as evidenced in constitutional governments (Weber, as cited in Tompkins, 2005). Even though Liberia was established as a democratic state, the Americo-Liberian governments (1847-1980) and the Doe administration (1980-1989) implemented both systems simultaneously, which allowed them to manipulate elections and maintain political control. The patriarchal administrative system that existed in Liberia is referred to as *patrimonialism* (Sawyer, 1992). In this form of administration, presidents (heads of state) view the administration of policies as a “personal affair,” give public officials authority on a need basis, and “treat officials arbitrarily,” while public officials treat citizens in a similar manner (Weber, as cited in Tompkins, 2005). Harris (2012) stated that “Even within the TWP and the politically important Masonic Lodges, real power rested firmly with a small, changing faction of a dozen or so families, and to a greater and greater extent, with the president” (p. 50). On the other hand, the legal-rational administration proposed by Liberia’s 1847 Constitution is referred to as a *bureaucracy*. In this system of administration, public officials’ positions, their relation with superiors and subordinates, their conduct, and their responsibilities are defined by rules and regulations (Weber, as cited in Tompkins, 2005). This governing authority is different from a traditional administration, which is designed to ensure rulers’ dominance of their subjects. Liebenow (1987) described a decline of Liberia’s constitutional government:

Like the U.S. Constitution, after which it was modeled, the Liberian Constitution of 1847 assumed that the legislative branch of the national government was to be superior to the executive, or at least that the separation of powers and the pattern of checks-and-balances would make them coequal branches of government, sharing power with the third branch, the judiciary. Liberia in the nineteenth century had witnessed, however, the gradual—albeit intermittent—eclipse of legislative power with a corresponding increase in the exercise of presidential authority. By the early decades of the present century, this tendency accelerated; during the Tubman era, the capitulation of the legislature was all but complete. (p. 126)

The use of patrimonialism was important for Americo-Liberians, who represented less than 5% of the population and would potentially lose an election that enforced a “one man one vote” rule. In other words, the façade of democracy and adherence to constitutional norms created an appearance that Liberia had democratically elected leaders (presidents, representatives, and senates), which was different from reality (Liebenow, 1987).

This inconsistency is exemplified by the malfunction of Liberia’s electoral system. In addition, a review of the literature reveals that this contradiction has enhanced and encouraged public corruption, also contributing to Liberia’s failure at governance (Hope, 2010; Pham, 2010). In other words, Liberia lacks “the essence of stateness,” which is a state’s ability to enforce public laws (Fukuyama, 2004). Although the impact of state failure is well documented, there is a need to identify strategies for addressing the

administrative enforcement deficiencies, especially related to the electoral process. Without this effort, Liberia can expect to continue as an authoritarian regime unable to deliver the promises required by its citizenry. Pastor (1999) suggested that “Scholars have sifted through dozens of variables to try to identify the causes and the consequences of democracy, but one variable that has been missing is electoral administration” (p. 2). Moreover, “state collapse or weakness” is responsible for “humanitarian and human rights disasters” in many countries, which makes it “a national and an international” problem (Fukuyama, 2004). This study’s thesis is that the Liberian government can enhance democratization by adopting an effective bureaucratic system of administration focused on the sovereign obligations of a constitutional democratic government.

### **Public Corruption**

The culture of corruption associated with the Liberian government has an adverse impact on its citizens’ political rights and economic standards. This system facilitates reduction in foreign investment, increases public resource mismanagement, and enhances abuse of power, thereby undermining rule of law (Hope, 2010). The lack of accountability and transparency in the Liberian government has created an insecure society for citizens (Oarhe & Aghedo, 2010; Rand Corporation, 2007). The Liberia Democracy Watch’s “Governance Monitoring Report II” indicates citizens’ impressions of the Liberian government’s efforts to investigate, prosecute, and mitigate corruption in public service. The study’s survey respondents overwhelmingly perceived the government as corrupt and not trustworthy. Respondents considered the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary branches as “not very trusted” with 75%, 81%, and 81%



respective ratings, reflecting the lack of confidence citizens have in public governance (Governance Monitoring Report II, 2010).

The international community (United Nations, European Union, United States, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank) instituted a 36-month anticorruption program, the “Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program,” at the end of Liberia’s civil war in 2003. This initiative was intended to assist the Liberian government in improving the management of public resources and enhancing the transparency of financial transactions (Boas, 2009; Heineman & Heimann, 2006; Hope, 2010). The program’s agreement limited Liberian government officials’ authority in granting concession contracts and gave international representatives (experts) countersigning authority in permitting spending in key administrative agencies, including the Central Bank, Government Accounting Office, and state-owned enterprises (Boas, 2009; Reno, 2008). However, these external efforts to improve governance consistently failed, because the programs were usually focused on revenue-generating agencies (National Port Authority, Forestry Development Agency, Customs, etc.) while ignoring political factors such as presidential powers of appointment and patronage relationships (Boas, 2009; Jahr, 2006; Liebenow, 1987). For example, the state’s transitional government had a budget of \$80 million in 2005 but experienced theft of \$100 million while being monitored by a United Nations mission (Ellis, 2006; Jahr, 2006). The problem of public resource management is visible when Liberia participates in international financial programs with effective record-keeping ability. Easterly (2006)

stated that “Liberia spent 77 percent of the period 1963-1985 in an IMF program, before finally collapsing into anarchy after 1985” (p. 218).

### **1847 Constitution**

The contradictions in democratic rule and governmental structure (governing authority and administrative system) and the creation of an autocratic regime in Liberia are rooted in its 1847 Constitution (which has been amended). This autocracy was fostered by policies and practices that denied indigenous people participation in the central government and resulted in the development of an ethnic class system dominated by an Americo-Liberian oligarchy, as well as a national symbol that does not represent the indigenous population. The process began with the 1847 Constitution denying citizenship to the tribal people in Liberia. The Americo-Liberian political parties thus conferred the authority to abuse the civil rights of the original Liberian people and keep them from exercising self-determination and equal participation in the electoral process (Boas, 2009; Liebenow, 1987; Pham, 2004). This provision in the constitution provided the basis for Liberia’s present political structure. However, the tenets of civil rights and self-determination are critical for sustaining a constitutional democracy. Put differently, the democratization of Liberia’s electoral process will be achieved only when all citizens have equal rights, freedom to promote their favorite candidate, and an equal vote in elections. Indeed, Liberia’s fragile democracy is also threatened by tension between ethnic groups. The Berkeley Human Rights Center surveyed adult Liberians in 2011 and found that “40% of the respondents identified ethnicity and ethnic divisions” among reasons for the civil war (Human Rights Center, 2011, p. 43). The study also indicated

that a lasting peace strategy should consider the “national identity and troubled relationship between the Americo-Liberian cultural elite and ‘native’ Liberians” (Human Rights Center, 2011, p. 14). An Innovation for Poverty Action study conducted on rural Liberians further reveals that ethnic bias is pervasive among respondents and that minority tribes are frequently discriminated against for leadership roles in their communities (Innovation for Poverty Action, 2010).

The Liberian president is required by law to appoint nonpartisan members of society to serve as commissioners to supervise elections. In practice, past and current administrations have usually circumvented this rule and ensured that their partisan candidate is named chairman of the Election Commission (Liebenow, 1969; Pham, 2004, Sawyer, 1992). This action compromises the commission because of the inherent conflict of interest, undermines its legitimacy, and weakens the government’s ability to foster democratic qualities in Liberia’s electoral process (Elklit, 1999). Such biased commissioners are prone to institute complex registration standards, enact extreme financial requirements for voting, and permit fraudulent ballot counting in favor of the president (incumbent) in recognition of their appointments. This was the situation in 1985 when President Samuel Doe rigged the election (Berkeley, 2001; Pham, 2004). Furthermore, the reelection of the appointing president gave commission members an opportunity to acquire positions in the new government at all levels, irrespective of qualifications or civil service merit criteria. These practices and an unfair campaign standard have made voters, independent candidates, and opposition parties lack confidence in the equity of the electoral process (Sawyer, 1992). For example, President

Samuel K. Doe hand-picked the Special Election Commission's chairman, Emmett Harmon, who stopped the vote-counting process in the 1985 Presidential Election when it appeared that Jackson F. Doe (the Liberian Action Party candidate) was ahead in 13 counties and winning there with about 60% (Harris, 2012). Mr. Harmon later appointed a committee with 50 members that pronounced President Samuel Doe elected by 50.9 % of the vote (Berkeley, 2001; Harris, 2012).

The Liberia Media Center conducted a study about election issues in 2011, which revealed that Liberia lacks “participatory democracy” because of state-controlled political elites. In addition, 53% of the study's participants indicated that it was difficult to access election information. This problem was due to media format, production language, and program presentation (LMC Summary Report—2011 Election Issues Mapping, 2011). Furthermore, the 2011 elections media monitoring report “Because Accountability Matters,” found that Liberia's ruling Unity Party received favorable media coverage about its activities, programs, and progress while its competitors (28 other parties) received negative or no coverage. For example, the Unity Party accounted for 88% of all political parties' advertising in newspapers during the campaign season (Because Accountability Matters, 2011). This gave the Unity Party leverage and other advantages over its opponents, thereby making the election uncompetitive.

### **Research Problem**

The corrupt behavior of Liberia's public officials has led to political disenfranchisement, social injustice, and economic distress for a majority of citizens, a problem existing since the inception of the nation (Boas, 2009; Pham, 2004; Sawyer,

1992). Corruption persists in the Liberian government today because Americo-Liberians, the nation's founders, proposed to establish a democratic nation but instead implemented nepotism, patriarchy, and indirect rule to maintain political supremacy (Clower et al., 1966; Liebenow, 1987). This deviation from the stated constitutional principles undermined basic and critical functions of governmental institutions in protecting self-determination, providing due process, and ensuring checks and balances in the branches of government (Crocker, 2003; Rotberg, 2002). Put differently, the disconnection between the Liberian governmental administrative system and its governing authority creates an opportunity for public officials to practice nepotism or patrimonialism. This system of public governance has allowed Liberian presidents to misuse resources, abuse power, and reward supporters with government jobs. Specifically, the use of presidential power to appoint partisans as election commissioners has had an adverse impact on the conduct of elections. This systemic and institutional failure is the underpinning to respondents' (voters) disenchantment and perception of corruption. An initial review of the literature reveals that this dichotomy has resulted in widespread distrust, especially in the electoral process, which is the pillar of a democracy. This factor has transformed Liberia into a near-failed state (Hope, 2010; Pham, 2010).

### **The Study**

This quantitative inquiry measured voters' perceptions of corruption based on their demographics and residential locations during Liberia's 2005 Presidential elections. It accomplished that objective by performing a statistical correlation and constructing a contingency table to determine associations among three variables—corruption, voter

demographics, and voter residential location—to explain corruption in Liberia’s electoral process.

### **Purpose**

This study explored the level of corruption in Liberia’s 2005 Presidential election based on demographics and locations of voters. Furthermore, an examination of opposition parties’ complaints about technical irregularities in the process (voter registration, vote count, precinct establishment, availability of election information, etc.) and nongovernmental organizations’ documented evidence of the ruling party’s corrupted practices (mismanagement of public resources, control of the media, and misuse of power) during the election was used to validate the perceptions of corruption expressed by respondents to the Afrobarometer Round 4 Survey. A correlation between respondents’ (voters’) perception of corruption and physical evidence about existing corruption gave authenticity to actual corruption in Liberia’s electoral process. This information is critical because voters’ perception of corruption in an election commission can have real consequences for the conduct of an election. Pastor (1999) stated that “Mexico’s EMB was traditionally viewed as an instrument of the PRI/government, and whether true or not, the perception was widespread and contributed to popular distrust with the process” (p. 13).

The level of corruption in Liberia’s 2005 election provides a baseline in the gap between Liberia’s stated goal of democracy and the autocracy that the majority of its citizens characterize as the aim of its government. This objective was accomplished by measuring the relationship between Afrobarometer survey respondents’ (voters’)

perceptions of corruption as it changed with their gender, ethnicity, and residential location during the 2005 presidential election. In other words, the hypothesis was that voters' (Afrobarometer survey respondents') perception of corruption varies according to their demographics and ethnicity.

A quantitative finding to test this hypothesis resulted from analyzing the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey that was conducted in 2008. This population-based survey involved interviews of voting-age Liberians to assess corruption in Liberia's National Election Commission, to rate the administration's performance in the electoral process, and to establish national priorities in administering future elections (Tokpa et al., 2008). The analysis of these data along with the electoral institution responsibilities (inadequate opposition media coverage [biased media]), incumbents' abused of public resources (vehicles, facilities, deployment of civil servants, etc.), harassment of opposition candidates and their supporters, manipulation of election results, fraudulent voting processes, and inaccessibility of precincts provided additional insights on the equality of voters' participation and parties' competition in Liberia's 2005 election. The Afrobarometer Round 4 survey offered the best data to analyze because its questionnaire focused on voters' participation in the 2005 election process. This information was critical to identify the existence of corruption in the electoral bureaucracy. In addition, the data gathered were analyzed to determine factors that influence the persistence of corruption in presidential elections. That influence appears to include the method of appointing election commissioners and dispensing positions and patronage in the new government.

**Positive Social Change**

A clearer understanding of the flaws in the election process will assist—or at least be available to—the Liberian government in enacting public policy to combat corruption and dishonest behavior. Instituting anticorruption programs (policies) will protect the nation from election fraud and allow authentic and qualified candidates to acquire public office. Therefore, this study encourages instituting a cleaner, fairer election system by understanding technical irregularities in Liberia’s electoral processes (voter registration, communication of election information, establishment of polling stations, etc.) and its impact on political parties, candidates, and voters, as well as how that association correlates with the goals of democracy and a fully functional country.

**Goal**

This study’s objective was to quantify voters’ perceptions of corruption in Liberia’s electoral process and how corruption impacted the 2005 Presidential election. The acquisition of this knowledge is essential to encourage Liberia to become a more fully democratic state.

**Hypotheses**

This study was designed to determine whether public corruption existed in Liberia’s election process in response to the research question: To what extent is perceived corruption in Liberia’s election processes affected by the demographics of voters? The assumption was that Liberia’s election processes are corrupted because of inconsistency between the nation’s administrative system (patriarchal) and its governing



authority (legal-rational), which led to ethnic and social inequities that manifest themselves in corruption. The research subquestions were as follows:

- How free are you to join any political organization you want?
- How free are you to say what you think?
- How free are you to choose whom to vote for without feeling pressured?
- How well do elections enable voters to remove from office leaders who do not do what the people want?

Null hypothesis (H0): Voters' (respondents') gender, resident, and ethnicity are not related to their perception of corruption in Liberia's political processes.

Research hypothesis (H1): Voters' (respondents') gender is related to their perception of corruption in Liberia's political processes, with rural women perceiving more corruption than urban men.

The study strived to obtain research findings that would provide support for or nullify these hypotheses.

### **Presidential Elections**

The incumbents and warlord who controlled Liberia's political and economic resources from 1985 to 2011 won 100% of the presidential elections (African Elections Database, 2010; National Elections Commission, 2010). This incumbency-tilted result can be attributed to the Liberian election institution's bias against opposition parties and independent candidates in national elections. This study analyzed the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey of 1,200 voting-age citizens to measure perception of corruption (dependent variable) in Liberia's Election Institution. The data acquired were presented

in a multivariate format indicating cases and variables under examination. A correlation analysis was performed to report the relationship among voters' perception of corruption, their demographics (education, ethnicity, employment, party affiliation, and gender), and their residential location (urban, suburban, and rural) during the 2005 Presidential election. In addition, a contingency table was constructed to give frequencies, values, and associations of the three variables (McNabb, 2008). These analyses measured the "strength of association," the "direction of relationship," and the "significance of connection" between the three variables (McNabb, 2008). In other words, the observed correlation was tested for a probability that the occurrence was valid or derived by chance.

### **Conclusion**

The Liberian government's failure to provide for the basic safety of all its inhabitants, civil rights for its citizens, and self-determination for its voters during the first republic (1847-1980) and with existing voters' disenfranchisement today contradicts Weber's (2004) definition of statehood. As indicated above, the inability to enforce public safety and protect citizens' rights makes Liberia a near-failed state. This dilemma is a result of the nation's constitution and its administrative practices, which together place the Liberian government in an authoritarian status. The unfairness of the 1847 Constitution against indigenous people made Liberia an "aborted" state that experienced its failure through the exclusive and discriminatory laws that established the nation (Gros, 1996). In other words, Liberia's founding documents contained legislation that is the source of its failure (Pham, 2004).

The study examined Liberia's electoral democratic status by analyzing voters' perceptions of the corruptness of the National Election Commission. This information was important because voters' participation, party competition, and fairness of elections were essential in determining Liberia's degree of democratization (Huntington, 1991; Soderstrom, 2011). Therefore, the authenticity of the Free House classification of Liberia as an "electoral democracy" was verified by voters who had experienced the Liberia National Election Commission's governance. This study analyzed a data set (from Afrobarometer Round 4) derived from a survey of the adult Liberian population about competitive elections and the electoral commission's administration of rules. This information helped to determine the level of democracy in Liberia's political system.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

The independence of Liberia took away the indigenous people's ethnic identity and citizenship rights in their homeland (Kieh, as cited in Saine, N'Diaye, & Hounnikpo, 2011). The 1847 Constitution instituted the official designation of indigenous people as "aborigines," thereby disenfranchising them through a clause, in Article V, section 13, that states that "none but Negroes or persons of Negro descent shall be eligible to citizenship in this Republic" (Constitution of Liberia, 1847). This law prevented indigenous people from owning property and participating in political activities in Liberia (Boas, 2009; Harris, 2012; Pham, 2004). The enforcement of this regulation, while instituting a superficially democratic voting apparatus, required that a patrimonial administration and a legal rational governing authority be instituted by the Americo-Liberians. This action creates a conflict, breaking pattern called for in Weber's theory that rulers depending on traditional governing authority should adopt patrimonial, feudal, or patriarchal systems of administration (Weber, as cited in Tompkins, 2005). In other words, a successful implementation of a government's policies (in this case, democracy) is based largely on its administrative and authority coordination. This policy is also responsible for the failure of Liberia's public institutions and the corruption of its electoral process. For example, despite the indigenous peoples' illegal status, the Liberian government requisitioned their labor freely, collected taxes on their huts, and provided them with no public service or internal security. The system remained in place until the

European incursion (into Kolahun District) in 1904 compelled President Arthur Barclay to extend citizenship to the tribal residents (Harris, 2012; Liebenow, 1987).

The denial of citizenship to indigenous Liberians based on ethnicity by the 1847 constitution was as cruel as colonization. This action gave the Americo-Liberian oligarchy absolute authority to institute a patronage government, control election results, and discriminate against the indigenous people (Clower et al., 1966; Kieh, as cited Saine, et al., 2011). This is a situation that continues today. This system of governance made public officials value “kinship connections” more than adherence to Liberia’s constitution (Clower et al., 1966). Despite their desire to establish a constitutional government, the Americo-Liberians also wanted to maintain political and economic control of Liberia (Harris, 2012). Therefore, they adopted a practice of indirect rule that worked effectively for their fellow colonialists in Africa (Berkeley, 2001; Clower et al., 1966; Easterly, 2006), a strategy critical in keeping the minority Americo-Liberians in domination of the majority indigenous people for 150 years (Berkeley, 2001; Easterly, 2006; Harris, 2012; Liebenow, 1969).

On the other hand, French and British colonialists in Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Ivory Coast established institutions to effectively occupy those nations and implemented broad policies to exploit their natural resources. However, they did not compose legislation to disinherit tribal people of their land. This is a crucial point because once independence was achieved, everyone became citizens. Even though authoritarian administrations in these countries caused other political problems, equal citizenship was not an issue. For example, the British colonialists in Sierra Leone extended limited

suffrage to a small number of property owners and male tax payers in the protectorate “the hinterland of Freetown” (Harris, 2012). This granted indigenous tribes in Sierra Leone the right to indirectly elect chiefs as representatives to protect their interest, which made them political equals to Krios, who were repatriated emancipated slaves and “free persons of colour” from Britain and the Americas (Harris, 2012).

The legal exclusion of indigenous people, who make up the majority of Liberia’s population, allowed Americo-Liberians, the founding fathers, to institute patrimonialism, divisive policies, nepotism, and indirect rule to maintain political and economic supremacy (Boas, 2009; Gros, 1996; Liebenow, 1987; Reno, 1995). These policies were implemented against indigenous people by taxing them without consent, compelling free contribution of their labor, contracting their labor arbitrarily to foreigners, and denying them education and economic opportunity (Gorlorwulu & Warner, 2011; Liebenow, 1987; Pham, 2004; Sawyer, 1992). These repressive policies were the “revealing signposts” that Liberia was headed for a failure in its first republic, which was the foundation for the current election process (Rotberg, 2002). The institution of these policies over a long period created a political and economic divide between the Americo-Liberians and indigenous people (Boas, 2009). In other words, the former monopolized national leadership, enhanced their wealth, and resided in modern facilities while the latter had minimal political participation and lived in abject poverty (Harris, 2012). This gap in providing indigenous people with adequate public service, economic opportunity, and political protection undermined governance and led to the collapse of the Liberian state (Patrick, 2006; Pham, 2004).

## **Ethnicity and Symbol**

This dichotomy between the groups posed a dilemma of “pure ethnic differentiation *without* territorial differentiation” that caused Liberia to collapse in the 1990s (Mazrui, 1994). Such an atmosphere of intense ethnic rivalry poses a challenge to initiating and consolidating democracy in Liberia. For example, elections (the first step to democratization) are adversely impacted by the electorate voting along tribal or ethnic lines (Zakaria, 1997), a kind of identity politics that compromises the secret ballot concept and the selection of competent leaders for public office (Harris, 2012). This ethnic division is the foundation for Liberia’s current election system (Kieh, as cited in Saine et al., 2011). A study on the 2011 elections conducted by International Crisis Group revealed that

Prince Johnson won his home county, Nimba, with 67.7 per cent; Liberty Party candidate Charles Brumskine took his native Grand Bassa with 37.6 per cent. Tubman won Montserrado, the CDC’s highly youth-populated stronghold, by 45.8 per cent to Johnson Sirleaf’s 44.4. He also won in his birthplace, Maryland, and in Grand Gedeh, which is loyal to his running mate, George Weah, the main challenger in 2005. (International Crisis Group, 2012, p. 3)

As indicated in Chapter 1, The Berkeley Human Rights Center surveyed adult Liberians in 2011 and found that “40% of the respondents identified ethnicity and ethnic divisions” among the reasons for the civil war (Human Rights Center, 2011). The study also indicated that a lasting peace strategy should consider the “national identity and troubled relationship between the Americo-Liberian cultural elite and ‘native’ Liberians”

(Human Rights Center, 2011). This finding is supported by the Innovation for Poverty Action's study conducted on rural Liberians, which revealed ethnic bias among respondents and frequent discrimination against minority tribes for leadership roles in their communities (Innovation for Poverty Action, 2010).

The indigenous Liberians' struggle for civil rights was made difficult by the 1847 Constitution. Similarly, the existence of a class system and ethnic discrimination has proven disastrous in Rwanda, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Liberia, leading to ethnic cleansing, genocide, and civil wars (Crocker, 2003; Mazrui, 1994). The exclusion of tribal groups from national identity is boldly expressed in Liberia's seal by a motto stating "The Love for Liberty Brought Us Here." This quotation symbolizes that Liberia is a nation solely for free American blacks with no place for indigenous people, even though they are the original inhabitants of the land and the largest in population, as well as paying taxes, providing labor, and otherwise supporting the nation. Harris (2012) stated that "If anything, the superior attitude of the Americo-Liberians towards their indigenous compatriots, although altering over time, surpassed that of the Krios and resembled that of the British colonisers" (p. 45).

Liberia's founding fathers, the Americo-Liberians, ignored the strong ethnic identity of the indigenous people and instead set out to create a history of their own. For example, the small island of Doukor was renamed Cape Mesurado. This was the historic spot where Lieutenant Robert Stockton, captain of the U.S.S. Alligator, put a pistol to the head of Zolu Duma (alias King Peter) for refusing to sign (scratch a mark) the Doukor Contract with Dr. Eli Ayres of the American Colonization Society (Clower et al., 1966;



Liebenow, 1987; Pham, 2004; Sawyer, 1992). The renaming practice continued in the republic Liberia, signifying liberty, and its capital Monrovia in honor of President James Monroe (Berkeley, 2001).

Governments foster patriotism and social bonds among their citizens by exhibiting repertoires of shared values such as national symbols, cultural artifacts, and established traditions (Smith, 1991). However, the Liberian national symbols and historical documents reflect only values of the Americo-Liberians and none held by the indigenous people. The declaration of independence states that “We, the people of the Republic of Liberia, were originally inhabitants of the United States of North America,” In addition, the national seal has a square-rigger sailing ship, a shovel, and a wheelbarrow depicting agricultural equipment imported from the United States. The Liberian flag also resembles the American banner. However, it has only 11 stripes of red and white that signify the 11 signers of the Declaration of Independence, instead of the 13 bars on the American flag. A dark blue canton is located in the upper left corner and has a single star to signify Africa’s sole independent republic in the 19th century. These ethnic identities misrepresent indigenous tribes such as Gola, Dei, Bassa, Loma, Kpelle, Kru, and Grebo that existed in Liberia (the Grain Coast). Even through the Americo-Liberians emigrated from the United States, they represent less than 5% of the population compared to their indigenous counterparts, who are approximately 95% (Boas, 2009; Liebenow, 1987). These symbols reflect inequality and eliminate indigenous peoples’ sense of national identity (Smith, 1991). These discriminatory acts established the basis for the future failure (dysfunction) of Liberia.

## **Indirect Rule**

Colonialists including the British and French instituted the practice of indirect rule using the rationale that all African tribes are governed through a chiefdom system (Easterly, 2006). This assumption is inaccurate because empirical evidence shows that Igboland in Nigeria was self-governed and had decentralized villages (Easterly, 2006). However, the theory was used to address the issue of colonial administrators' low ratio to tribal populations in Africa. For example, French West Africa in 1939 had 3,660 European officials to govern 15 million native people (Easterly, 2006). This human resource shortage led colonizers to appoint chiefs to perform administrative functions such as tax collection, labor requisition, and military recruitment for their tribes. These chiefs were unsupervised, creating an opportunity for abusive behavior and extortion of funds from their tribesmen (Berkeley, 2001; Easterly, 2006).

This dysfunctional system was adapted by Americo-Liberians and independent African governments in Liberia, fostering the domination of the indigenous majority by investing authority in the Americo-Liberian minority to maintain economic and political supremacy (Berkeley, 2001; Easterly, 2006; Liebenow, 1969). However, this system has created challenges for the Liberian administration in implementing successful economic policies because it does not function effectively with a constitutional government (Clower et al., 1966). This chapter reviews the literature, articles on failed states, books on corruption, and seminar papers on governance. In addition, the election process is examined to determine the effect of electoral competitiveness on opposition parties, independent candidates, and Liberia's political system.

### **Literature Search Approach**

I searched multiple databases including ProQuest, EBSCO, Thoreaurus, Failed States Index, Corruption Perceptive Index, Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), Annual Press Freedom Index, and Google Scholar. These databanks were critical for focusing on breadth and acquiring information on public governance. Thoreaurus and Google Scholar facilitated and ensured a broad search for peer-reviewed academic journals. The terms or words used to search included *corruption*, *institution*, *government*, *Liberia*, *competitive elections*, *democratization*, *failed state*, and *Sub-Saharan Africa*. The terms were used together and alone to access authentic scholarly materials. The search generated books, academic journals, a watchdog organization data set, surveys of voting-age Liberians, election documents, and Liberia's constitution.

### **Literature Review Concepts and Variables**

This section draws upon an in-depth review of existing scholarly knowledge about corruption in the Liberian government, exploring how Liberia's corrupt origin has led to its institutional failure, fostered dysfunctional electoral processes, and ensured uncompetitive national elections. A lack of a competitive election process risks accelerating Liberia's transition into autocracy.

### **Institutional Weakness**

The failure of Liberia's constitution plagues it with weak institutions that are incapable of providing adequate governance for its citizens. As indicated above, these institutions have challenges in administering national security (public order, public

safety, border control), managing public resources (natural resources, tax collection, compensation payment), and enforcing public policies (due process, self-determination, civil rights, electoral process) for maximum public good (Patrick, 2006). As a result, Liberia faces increased lawlessness and decreased public safety (Rand Corporation, 2007). This problem originates from a contradiction between the nation's governing authority and administrative system and a constitutional mandate that perpetuates corruption by concentrating power in Liberia's presidents. The presidents then use that authority to create institutions (including security agencies) and appoint public officials (notably election commissioners) that are loyal to their administrations. This practice has led to Liberia's security sector currently having "15 separate agencies and structures tasked with a variety of security functions, some discrete and some overlapping" (Rand Corporation, 2007). This large number of agencies performing multiple services, with no legislative oversight, and individually reporting directly to the president creates an environment for citizen abuse and public corruption (Rand Corporation, 2007).

The lack of management structure makes government agencies weak in providing effective oversight of public election commissioners, police officers, revenue agents, and military personnel when performing their responsibilities, often resulting in unethical behaviors. The weakness in government institutions' ability to properly supervise and monitor public officials' performance makes them susceptible to mismanaging resources, rigging elections, and demanding bribes to perform their duty (Fukuyama, 2004; Rand Corporation, 2007; Moyo, 2009). This culture of corruption prevents Liberia's government from enhancing entrepreneurship, increasing foreign investment,

consolidating democracy, and encouraging economic growth. The reduction or elimination of public corruption and lawlessness in the Liberian government requires administrative strategies that focus on institutional efficiency and effectiveness (Rand Corporation, 2007; Tompkins, 2005).

Corruption in the Liberian government is common knowledge to the international community, academic institutions, and watchdog groups. This behavior is deeply rooted in Liberian social culture and destructive to governmental functions, with the perpetrators individuals who hold high public offices (Hope, 2010; Rand Corporation, 2007). The United Nations, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, Economic Community of West African States, and European Commission auditor uncovered abundant evidence of public corruption at the conclusion of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP; Gorlorwulu & Warner, 2011; Reno, 2008). The international community has instituted more than 20 anticorruption programs to assist Liberia in resolving its debt and mismanagement issues over the years. These financial interventions began in the early 1900s when Great Britain took control of Liberian customs until a debt of \$300,000 (a total of British loans taken in 1871 and 1906) was discharged and Liberian finances were reorganized (Ellis, 1911; Jahr, 2006; Liebenow, 1987; Reno, 2008; Sawyer, 1992).

The consolidation of democracy in the Liberian government can only be accomplished by legitimate and coherent adherence by public agencies to their mandates and the government's improvement of public security and rule of law (Rand Corporation, 2007). Collaboratively, these institutions will create an environment that provides citizens

with a better living standard and allows them to exercise their political rights. The lack of proper roads, electricity, and communication networks prevents voters from getting election information, accessing precincts, and achieving economic growth (Gorlorwulu & Warner, 2011) and compromises internal security (The Advisory Board for Irish Aid, 2007; Gorlorwulu & Warner, 2011). These public deficiencies are intertwined and are partly responsible for Liberia's challenge in democratizing its election process (Rand Corporation, 2007).

### **Electoral Administration**

The culture of corruption that exists in the Liberian government is fostered by a constitutional mandate that concentrates power in the presidency (Kumar, 1998; Sawyer, 1992). This presidential power to make appointments in a nation with few elective positions—only president, vice president, senator, representative, city mayor, and paramount chief—no standard civil servant laws, and a government as the largest employer creates ethical and institutional issues (Ellis, 1911; Jahr, 2006; Liebenow, 1987; Pham, 2004). This system allows Liberian presidents to reward their supporters (friends, families, cronies, and ethnic groups) with political positions and punish their opponents (critics, competitors, and challengers) by denying them government employment. In addition, these individuals have exclusive rights to lucrative benefits such as iron ore stocks, land along new roads, government contracts, and compulsory farm labor (Clower et al., 1966; Harris, 2012; Liberia Media Center, 2011). In describing presidential power in Liberia's first and second republics (1847-1989), Sawyer (1992) asserted that "In all matters, the role of the president was more prominent than a rule of law" (p. 301).

A corrupt and unequal society was instituted from the beginnings of the Liberian nation. For example, the three hinterland provinces that are predominately indigenous people (95% of the population) had no representative in the legislature prior to 1944. The constitution was amended in 1944 to give those provinces only 6 out of 39 members of the House but no senators (Berkeley, 2001; Carrington, 2007; Clower et al., 1966; Liebenow, 1987). The patronage relationship between Liberian presidents and their henchmen gave Americo-Liberians political and economic control of the nation while undermining administrative structures in public institutions (Boas, 2009; Harris, 2012).

This corrupted and unequal practice continues today through the denial of election information, voter education, and access to voting machines precincts for rural voters (mostly indigenous people), which limits their ability to fully participate in elections (Elklit, 1999). The behavior is also perpetuated by police officers and tribal chiefs (public officials) who usually manipulate and intimidate rural citizens to cast their vote for candidates of the ruling party (Rand Corporation, 2007; Mvukiyehe and Samii, 2010). These administrative and political problems make it difficult for rural voters to support their preferred candidates, which skew's election results in favor of incumbent candidates. In other words, the corrupted presidential power of appointment (a constitutional mandate) impedes the conduct of elections (Pastor, 1999).

Pastor (1999) recognized that Liberia's election system is plagued with administrative (election commission) and political (coercive power) problems that exist simultaneously. However, the issue of focused here is electoral administrative failure that originates from public corruption. Specifically, the electoral administration's technical

irregularities were the main issue inhibiting the fairness of Liberia's 2005 Presidential election, even though voters, candidates, and opposition parties assumed it was the Election Commission's bias toward incumbents (Harris, 2012; Pastor, 1999). This occurred because during election voters are functioning in an intensely politicized atmosphere. For example, the lack of recent census data during the 2005 Presidential election was responsible for irregularities in the registering of voters, establishment of precincts, and notification of voters about election activities (Harris, 2012; Pastor, 1999).

The effective administration of elections is a prerequisite to transitioning Liberia into a democracy. Therefore, the legislature should enact a policy that places the Election Commission outside of government and establishes a professional civil servant system for recruiting bureaucrats (Pastor, 1999). Such a policy will ensure that Liberia's Election Commission is beyond the control of governmental regimes and help to hire competent individuals as commissioners. The appointment of qualified election officials will minimize corruption (bribery for votes) and technical irregularities in Liberia's electoral processes through ensuring voter registration, enforcement of campaign rules, qualification of parties, fair counting of votes, and legitimate establishment of precinct. A good start would be a policy that institutes Pastor's (1999) third model for electoral management bodies, which suggested that "An independent election commission manned by experts and directly accountable to the parliament" (p. 12) will be effective at conducting elections.

Legislation to place the Liberian Election Commission outside of government is a strategy that will eliminate presidential power of appointment, insulate corruption,



enhance election quality, and decrease voters' perception that the conduct of elections is manipulated (Pastor, 1999). For example, in 1990 the Mexicans wrote a new constitution that limited presidential succession to prevent election fraud (Pastor, 1999). A similar approach was also used in Costa Rica in 1948 where the Supreme Electoral Tribunal was made a fourth branch of government whose administrators (magistrates) are elected (Pastor, 1999).

The governmental system that exists in Liberia today (with a Krahn ethnic group replacing Americo-Liberians) makes it challenging for public administrators (ministers, directors, election commissioner, etc.) to assess their subordinates' performance, institute discipline, maintain accountability, and improve transparency in public agencies (Berkeley, 2001). These administrative functions have to be coordinated and work in collaboration to maximize public good. For instance, an agency's minister has to be perceived as the legitimate and authentic leader to function effectively. This can be achieved through a formalized administrative organization that has clear lines of authority, distinct division of labor among agencies, and delegation of power to department administrators (Fayol, Mooney, & Gulick, as cited in Tompkins, 2005). For example, if civil servants (ministers, directors, police officers, revenue collectors, procurement officers, etc.) are found guilty of corruption (bribery, embezzlement, kickbacks, etc.) in connection with their duty, they should be reprimanded.

The exercise of power is critical to public administration, and it needs to be used appropriately to achieve maximum public welfare (Shafritz, & Russell, 2003; Tompkins, 2005). However, such administrative effectiveness does not exist in the Liberian

government because civil servants have family ties or patron relationships with the president (Liebenow, 1987; Sawyer, 1992; Rand Corporation, 2007). Therefore, they can take governmental issues directly to the president, circumventing the chain of command in their agencies (Liebenow, 1987; Pham, 2004), and a direct access that makes their immediate supervisors insignificant. As a result, the enormous presidential power of appointment undermines the relationship between superior and subordinate in Liberian government, rendering it inefficient.

The corruption of Liberian and African officials is equivalent to a criminal act; indeed, their mismanagement of resources, embezzlement of funds, application of tyranny, abuse of power, and institution of wars has placed the continent in a deplorable condition. This has created economic hardship and denied civil rights for citizens than colonialism and Western imperialism (Ayittey, as cited in Powell, 2008). African and Liberian government officials usually rationalized their behavior by blaming the international aid structure or global economic conditions, a theoretical concept referred to as “internalist” (Ayittey, as cited in Powell, 2008). The internalist rationalization hold that “Africa’s condition has been made immeasurably worse by internal factors” such as systemic corruption and economic mismanagement, yet “African leaders refused to take responsibility for their failure,” but instead used external elements to concealed their incompetence (Ayittey, as cited in Powell, 2008). This was the situation in Liberia on April 12, 1979, when riot ensued due to President Tolbert raising the price of rice (Liberians’ staple food) to gain higher profit on his investment in the commodity. This behavior is also attributed to a “stationary bandit” by Tim Olson to describes African

officials who establish or occupy a government to continuously steal resources (taxes, aid funds, natural resources, etc.) and abuse citizens' rights while providing minimum public good (Olson, 1993). In order to expropriate maximum wealth, Americo-Liberians and contemporary administrations deny education, healthcare, adequate infrastructure, and economic opportunity to Liberian citizens. These officials understand that the more resources allocated to providing public welfare, the less they will pocket (Olson, 1993).

Public corruption in Liberia (and corrupt nations around the globe) is perpetrated by individuals at all hierarchies of government, including elected and appointed officials and civil servants. This is why corruption is a way of life for public servants and tolerated by government, making most Liberians (and Africans) believe that it is acceptable social behavior (Berkeley, 2001; Moyo, 2009; Reno, 2008). These public servants use their office or power to commit specific kinds of crimes or corruption. For example, police and military officers will commit street-level corruption, such as setting up road blocks to demand bribes from motorists (Harford, 2006). A survey conducted in rural Liberia (Lofa, Nimba, and Grand Gedeh Counties) by Innovation for Poverty Action found that 43% of respondents believe the Liberia National Police is corrupt (Innovation for Poverty Action, 2010). This finding is supported by the Berkeley Human Rights Center's survey of the entire adult Liberian population, which revealed that 63% of respondents believe that corruption was the primary reason for Liberia's civil war (Human Rights Center, 2011).

In addition, executive and legislative officials usually commit more serious corruption. For example, the Dunn Commission validated that senior government

officials were abusing their authority to promote private interests and recommended them for disciplinary action to the Liberian Anticorruption Commission, but no action was taken. Justice is constantly denied in all aspects (political, personal, and business) of ordinary Liberians' lives, because the judicial system lacks adequate public defenders and investigation resources, and is plagued with corrupt judges or public officials (Freedom House, 2010). This situation has led to cases being backlogged, prolonged pretrial detention, and prisons' being overcrowded (Berkeley, 2001; Clower et al., 1966; Freedom House, 2010; Innovation for Poverty Action, 2010). Moreover, the publisher of the *Plain Truth* newspaper was charged and imprisoned for a story about the National Security Agency, which is headed by President Johnson-Sirleaf's son-supplying ammunition to Guinean dissenters (Freedom House, 2010). Elite citizens receive efficient adjudication for their cases, while ordinary citizens cannot get judicial hearings (Freedom House, 2010).

These situations make corruption in the Liberian government both a management and a political issue; both need to be addressed simultaneously. The past anticorruption initiatives (GEMAP, etc.) focused on revenue and expenditure in specific agencies but did not address patronage and clan relationships among government officials (Boas, 2009; Reno, 2008). Therefore, the culture of corruption remains in the Liberian government. A governance survey conducted by Liberia Democracy Watch in 2010 revealed that 64% of respondents trust the Liberia Anticorruption Commission's effort in fighting resource mismanagement and abuses. However, the survey also uncovered that respondents "bear a high distrust" for the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary

branches' commitment to fight corruption by 75%, 81%, and 81% respectively. In addition, the survey revealed that respondents believed that Liberia's judiciary belongs to the "highest bidder," which means that ordinary citizens do not have access to a fair judicial process (Governance Monitoring Report II, 2010). This study is corroborated by international watchdog organizations on public governance that listed Liberia as either a corrupted or a failed state. For example, Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index for 2011 gave Liberia a score of 3.2 on a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 10 (very clean) among 183 countries and territories (Transparency International, 2011). This rating ranked Liberia as a highly corrupted nation; a dilemma that makes corruption in the Liberian government a primary challenge that requires resolution.

#### **National Election Commission**

A study of electoral processes suggests that assessing elections can be made comprehensive by factoring in relationships between citizens (political elites and regular citizens) and not judging elections based on polling day activity (Elklit & Reynolds, 2005). This method of assessment can provide insight about disenfranchisements citizens experience with political inequities that influence their perception of election process quality. Such a method also allows researchers to operationalize "political illegitimacy" and measure it to provide empirical evidence of electoral manipulation or fraud (Elklit & Reynolds, 2005). In assessing Liberia's electoral process quality, this approach is valuable in determining the effects of Americo-Liberians' (political elites) domination of the indigenous population (the majority of the citizen) for the past 133 years. In other words, a comprehensive assessment will identify previous or existing biases in "the

playing field of electoral competition” in favor of the political elites or the ruling parties (Elklit & Reynolds, 2005), a goal consistent with this study’s objective.

The elections conducted in Africa between 1989 and 1999 totaled 109, of which 45 were classified as flawed, 15 were boycotted, and eight were protested (Pastor, 1999). In all 62% of Africa’s elections in that decade were seriously compromised with its citizens’ rejection threatening democratic processes on the continent (Pastor, 1999). To resolve such problem, the effective administration including voter registration, elimination of multiple voting, and efficient counting of votes along with assessment of elections is critical to the success or failure of democracy. There is a higher probability of achieving this objective when a nation has an election commission that its citizens perceive as independent, impartial, and competent (Pastor, 1999). In addition, these factors increase the likelihood of avoiding flawed elections in fragile democracies in Africa (Pastor, 1999). On the other hand, an election commission is insignificant if it lacks the ability to provide crucial administrative functions. This was the situation in Nigeria’s December 1998 to February 1999 elections that brought Olusegun Obasanjo into power, re-establishing patronage rule, and re-instituting widespread corruption in government (Lewis, 2003).

### **Liberia’s Election Institution**

For much of Liberia’s history, the electoral process was a key strategy that Americo-Liberians used to maintain their supremacy in Liberia. They accomplished this goal by establishing a one-party state, disenfranchising indigenous citizens, appointing partisan election commissioners, banning opposition parties, and amending election laws

(Clower et al., 2001; Harris, 2012; Liebenow, 1987; Sawyer, 1992). These kinds of authoritarian practices allowed Americo-Liberians to monopolize Presidential and Legislative elections for 133 years (Berkeley, 2001). This single party system contradicts the selection of leaders through multi-party contests in which candidates freely compete for citizens' votes thereby recognizing voters as the source of authority for the Liberian government (Huntington, 1991). In other words, even though regular elections were held in Liberia since 1847, between 1884 and 1980 the True Whig Party (TWP) had no effective opponent (Harris, 2012). The TWP was the Americo-Liberians' political organization, which control power and govern the nation for ninety six years. However, this history of constitutional misrepresentation and disenfranchisement of the indigenous population has made Liberian citizens less confident and less interested in the electoral system (Harris, 2006; Sawyer, 1992).

For example, the three hinterland provinces with predominately indigenous people continued to have disparities in political representation after they were transformed into four interior counties in 1964. The provinces were later transformed into counties; four of those counties (54% of the population) were given 8 senators while the coastal counties (Americo-Liberians residents) were given 10 senators (Liebenow, 1987). In addition, the Tubman administration repealed the law imposing one term on Presidential incumbents, banned opposition parties, and instituted a police state to maintain single party rule (Liebenow, 1987; Pham, 2004). This strategy of doctoring election rules to disqualify principal rivals is still implemented by most African regimes (Bratton, 1998). The TWP (the state's single party) also used a patronage system to select

faithful members, nominate them at a convention, and elect them into office. In other words, the TWP candidates automatically won the election (Liebenow, 1969). Kieh (2011) stated that “Even if free and fair elections are held within an authoritarian state construct, they cannot have the desired effect of promoting democratization” (Kieh, as cited in Saine et al., 2011).

The TWP used various tactics for eliminating opposition parties that were determined to get their candidates on the ballot. Most opposition parties (disenchanted TWP members in the beginning) were confronted with multiple litigations for insignificant violations, subjected to unfair standards, and banned for false allegations which exhausted their minimal resources (Harris, 2011). The party that persevered until Election Day would experience fraudulent acts like ballots not being counted or victories not being recognized (Liebenow, 1969; Pham, 2004). These corrupt practices were adapted by the Doe, Taylor, and Johnson-Sirleaf administrations in the 1985, 1997, and 2005 elections (Berkeley, 2001; Kieh, as cited in Saine et al., 2011; Pham, 2004). For example, the Liberian President is required by law to appoint nonpartisan members of society to serve as commissioners to supervise elections. But past and current administrations usually circumvented this rule and ensured that their partisan was named as chairman of the Election Commission (Liebenow, 1969; Pham, 2004, Sawyer, 1992). In addition, the National Election Commission’s failure to penalize the ruling Unity Party for using state resources to run its 2011 election campaign reinforced opposition parties’ and voters’ belief that the commissioners and the electoral process were biased (Bratton, 1998; International Crisis Group, 2012). The institution’s inability to adhere to its



constitutional mandate can be attributed to its commissioners' loyalty to the incumbent party. These actions compromise the commission (conflict of interest), make it illegitimate, and weaken its ability to foster democratic qualities in Liberia's electoral process (Elklit, 1999). This was the situation, for instance in 1985 when President Samuel Doe rigged the election (Berkeley, 2001; Pham, 2004).

This practice and an unfair campaign standard have made voters, independent candidates, and opposition parties lack confidence in the equity of the electoral process (Sawyer, 1992). For example, the Liberia Media Center conducted a study about election issues in 2011 which revealed that Liberia lacks "participatory democracy" because of state controlled political elites. In addition, 53% of the study's participants indicated that it was difficult to access election information (Liberia Media Center, 2011) due to Liberia's underdeveloped media infrastructure which fails to publicize political activities and voting processes that are critical to making decision about candidates (Mvukiyehe & Samii, 2013). This situation gives the political elites an opportunity to manipulate uninformed citizens to acquire their votes. Since elites benefit, they have little incentive to improve the situation (Mvukiyehe & Samii, 2013). The 2011 elections media monitoring report "Because Accountability Matters" found that Liberia's ruling Unity Party received favorable media coverage about its activities, programs, and progress while its competitors (28 other parties) received negative or no coverage. For example, the Unity Party had 88% of all political parties' advertising in newspapers during the campaign season (Liberia Media Center, 2011). This gave the Unity Party leverage over its opponents, rendering the election uncompetitive.

Even though the Americo-Liberian government was an oligarchy, it wanted the international community to accept Liberia as a democratic state where citizens exercise self-determination in competitive elections. So the government hosted political activities like party conventions, nomination of candidates, and elections, using deceptive political tactics (Clower et al., 1966; Sawyer, 1992). In some cases, the TWP, specifically Tubman's administration, used token opposition candidates in the campaigns and elections of 1955, 1959, and 1963 (Liebenow, 1969). This strategy not only presented Liberia as a democratic state, it also helped Americo-Liberians and modern governments to legitimize their rule in Liberia. The International Crisis Group recommends that Liberia's election laws be revised to give the National Election Commission authority to effectively regulate campaign financing, party incorporation, party advertisement, and party use of government resources (International Crisis Group, 2012). This transformation will give the commission a responsibility for teaching election rules to competing parties, conducting voters' education, and administering disciplinary action to noncompliant political parties. In addition, the autonomy will make the National Election Commission independent of government manipulation and establish the institution's authenticity. This kind of accountability and transparency will enhance the commission's democratization.

There have been four competitive Presidential elections in Liberia since 1985. These elections resulted in an increasing number of political parties accompanied by allegations of corruption by opposition candidates. The number of parties and coalitions participating in these elections was as follows: (1) 1985-four parties; (2) 1997-13 parties;

(3) 2005-22 parties; and (4) 2011-26 parties (Africa Election Database, 2012; Liberia National Election Commission, 2012). This pattern reflects a surge in citizens exercising their franchise and participating in selecting national leaders, as well as competition among parties indicative of improved democratization (Soderstrom, 2012). However, holding multiparty elections within an authoritarian state structure does not guarantee a fair and equitable electoral process (Kieh, as cited in Saine et al., 2011). Despite multiple party elections, the president's authority to appoint election commissioners and the National Election Commission's dependence on the ruling regime for authenticity makes Liberia an authoritarian state.

This advancement towards democracy was also jeopardized by incumbents including Samuel K. Doe (a dictator), Charles Taylor (a warlord), and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, whose strategies resulted in manipulation of the National Election Commission. These nepotistic and patronage strategies were established and perfected by the Americo-Liberian oligarchy more than a hundred years earlier (Berkeley, 2001, Sawyer, 2008). For example, the Congress for Democratic Change Party alleged that the National Election Commission was biased in favor of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf during the 2011 elections (Soderstrom, 2012). This accusation was partly based on the commission approving President Johnson-Sirleaf's candidacy for the 2011 election, even though the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had barred her from holding public office for thirty years for responsibilities associated with Liberia's civil war (Harris, 2012). International Crisis Group (2012) stated that "Some Liberians told Crisis Group they feel uneasy, even unsafe, knowing that those responsible for extreme violence during the civil war re-main

free” (p. 1). In addition, Sawyer points out that in the 2005 elections the National Election Commission was free from manipulation because there was no incumbent candidate contesting for the office of president (Sawyer, 2008). These assertions put into question the extent of democracy reflected in Liberia’s electoral process.

### **Citizens’ Participation**

The existence of laws that provide suffrage for Liberian citizens and the implementation of multiparty elections do not ensure full voter participation, which is critical in establishing and maintaining democracy in a political system (Bollen, 2009; Moon, Bidsall, Ciesluk, Garlett, Hermias, Mendenhall, Schmid, & Wong, 2006). For example, the 2005 election record revealed that 90% of eligible voters registered to vote. However, only 74.1% participated in the first round of elections and 61% participated in the runoff presidential election (Liberia National Election Commission, 2005; Soderstorm, 2008). These low turnout rates can be attributed to barriers like inaccessible election information, patronage arrangements, and purchase of citizens votes (Berkeley, 2001; Elklit, 1999; Pham, 2004; Soderstorm, 2008), obstacles that make it difficult for opposition parties to campaign effectively and restrict citizens from exercising their civil rights. This situation had an adverse impact on voters’ participation and parties’ competition in the 2005 presidential elections. A low turnout of 74% (first round of election) in the 2005 election indicates disaffection with the process (Bollen, 2009). Therefore, Free House’s classification of Liberia as “partly free” is subject to question because the nation appears to have a minimum level of democracy.

The decline in participation measured by the differential between voter registration and voter turnout in the 2005 (first and second rounds) Presidential elections can be attributed to citizens' discontent with corruption in Liberia's electoral process. This argument is supported by a governance survey, which indicates that respondents "bear a high distrust" for the executive, legislative, and judiciary branches' commitment in confronting corruption by 75%, 81%, and 81% respectively ratings (Liberia Democracy Watch, 2010). Therefore, the classification of Liberia as an "Electoral Democracy" is inaccurate. Liberia's current governmental regime suggests that Liberia's political system is in transition and moving toward democracy because it holds regular, free, fair, and competitive elections. In addition, the elections are genuinely conducted with some democratic qualities (Freedom House, 2010; Howard & Roessler, 2006; Lindberg, 2007). Such a political condition will usually apply to nations with independent election commissions, which is lacking in Liberia. The independence of an election institution will allow it to promote "prodemocratic" ideas and mindset among citizens (Lindberg, 2007).

Furthermore, the consolidation of democracy in Liberia can be determined by observing electoral turnovers in presidential elections. The "two turnover test" requires three multiparty presidential contests resulting in opposition candidates' winning each election (Huntington, 1991). In this test, the winner of the first (founding) election is defeated in the second election and that election's winner is also defeated in the third election. More importantly, the defeated incumbents all relinquish power to the winning parties without conflict (Huntington, 1991). Such a smooth transition would indicate

respect for laws and democratic systems in Liberia. The legitimacy of this argument is supported by the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey of voting age Liberians. The study revealed that 83% of respondents believe in a constitutional limit of two presidential terms in office (Tokpa et. al., 2009). However, we know that is not the situation; Liberia's constitution gives the president (incumbent) authority to appoint election commissioners which can lead to conflict of interest, as indicated above. This is different than a smooth transition or a two term limit. Granting this power to the presidency makes it difficult to have checks and balances among governmental branches (executive, legislative, and judiciary) and thereby lessens democracy (Clague, Keefer, Knack & Olson,).

Diamond (2002) argued that some authoritarian regimes get classified as partial democracies because they participate in multiparty elections, permit opposition political organization, institute some political pluralism, and allow some freedom of expression. However, "partial democracies" like the Liberian government permit their opponents to engage in those activities to a limited amount in order to mask their political domination. They also acquire other benefits like minimizing "intra-regime conflict" and longevity in power. The institution of democracy is more than conducting national elections (Brownlee, 2009; Diamond, 2002; Geddes, 2006; Howard & Roessler, 2006). For example, the Liberian military ruler, Sergeant Samuel K. Doe, legitimized himself as a civilian ruler in a multi-party election in 1985. The election was praised by United States Assistant Secretary of State Chester A Crocker, despite the regime's institution of a mandate (Decree 88A) that outlawed criticism of its administration, banned opposition

parties, imprisoned political opponents, and committed election fraud (Berkeley, 2001; Pham, 2004). This behavior confirms that some autocratic or authoritarian regimes do not have elections to transform or democratize their current systems (Geddes, 2006).

Reviews of Liberia's transition toward full democracy are mixed, at best. Freedom House's weighting of political rights and civil liberty rates Liberia at 3.5 on a 7 point scale, meaning it is partly free. The organization also classified the nation's regime as an electoral democracy (Freedom House, 2012). However, the Center for Institutional Development and Conflict Management's "Peace and Conflict Instability Ledger" gave Liberia a risk score of 9.9 in its 2012 report. This rating indicates that Liberia had a moderate risk to experience instability between 2010 and 2012. The Ledger also classified Liberia's political institutions as imposing a partially autocratic regime (Center for Institutional Development and Conflict Management, 2012). A governmental system which reflects this pattern has few direct transitions to democracy (Center for Institutional Development and Conflict Management, 2012). The difference in characterization of Liberia's democratization status by Freedom House and the Center for Institutional Development and Conflict Management, plus the research findings above, makes it essential to acquire citizens' perception of the level of democracy in Liberia's election institution.

Therefore, although research finds that frequent elections in African nations are a sign of democratic advancement (Lindberg, 2007), this study analyzed datasets from the Afrobarometer Round 4 to address the questions: What level of electoral democracy exists in Liberia's election system for opposition parties or candidates, when

campaigning and soliciting votes, and during national elections? Furthermore, how does the election system affect public officials' corruptibility in government? The degree of democracy found in Liberia's political system was then used to rebut or substantiate the argument that autocratic regimes create a façade to satisfy international observers and constitutional standards. This information also helped to explain how an appointed election commissioner can impact an electoral democratic regime and affect corruption in governance.

### **Democratization**

In a discussion of the three main theories of democratization (modernization, institutional, and transitional), Bachelard argued that these theories say little about the importance of how a government conducts elections. This minimization of electoral conduct is a critical mistake, because the sustainability of stable democracies is dependent on such institutions' ability to restrain political elites from manipulating the electoral process (Bachelard, 2009). In addition, elections ensure orderly change in leadership, supply new methods of governance, and foster accountability of public officials. The frequent changes in leadership produced by elections make it possible to undermine nondemocratic systems before they take root (one-party rule, racial oligarchy, dictatorship). If administered effectively, elections function as an engine of democracy, which greatly reduces the possibility of authoritarianism (Huntington, 1991). In other words, an effective Liberia National Election Commission will foster a free and fair election for incumbents and opposition parties.



A Liberian scholar, Sawyer, stated that the repeated multiparty elections beginning in 1985 are a sign of Liberia's progress toward democracy. This trend was more profound in the 2005 elections, when the election commission was not controlled by the Americo-Liberian oligarchy, a dictator, or a warlord. Sawyer expressed optimism about Liberian progress because competitive elections create stability, legitimize governing regimes, develop democratic cultures, and mitigate ethnic conflicts (Sawyer, 2008).

However, Collier and Adcock's "bounded whole" strategy states that all attributes of democracy are interrelated and essential for consolidating democracy. Therefore, conducting multiparty elections alone does not constitute a democratic regime. The required attributes for sustaining democracy include due process of law, an independent press, civilian-controlled military, civil rights, self-determination, civil society, property rights, freedom of expression, and checks on executive power (Bratton, 1998; Collier & Adcock, 1999). These institutions and few noticeable electoral turnovers have to exist for a system to be democratic. This definition questions whether Liberia's government functions as an electoral democracy, because (as indicated above) there is evidence of lack of electoral turnover.

Further questioning Liberia's status as a functioning democracy, a study of ex-combatants revealed that they perceived the Liberia National Election Commission as biased in governance. For instance, the Congress for Democratic Change Party was widely seen as providing faulty tallies "at a polling centre in Fiamah (Monrovia)" of election results for their political party, which resulted in the commission's chairman's

resignation (International Crisis Group, 2012). The episode was critical in validating the commission's bias after a recount witnessed by civil organizations, participating party representatives, international observers, and election commissioners revealed that the Congress for Democratic Change Party had more votes than Unity Party. International Crisis Group (2012) stated that "While voting was peaceful, there were many invalid ballots: 82,074 (6.4 per cent of total) in the first round and 24,587 (3.5 per cent) in the run-off" (p. 3). In response to this fraudulent behavior the ex-combatants classified the electoral process as illegitimate and supported their party's call to boycott the second round of the 2011 Presidential election (International Crisis Group, 2012; Soderstrom, 2011). These individuals are former members of the rebel groups and are critical in sustaining democracy in Liberia's post-war political environment. The ex-combatants' concern about equitable electoral governance warrants attention, because they can pull the nation back into civil war. In addition, the ex-combatants number approximately 100,000, an important voting block out of a national population of 3.5 million Liberians (Soderstrom, 2011).

The history of elections held in "third wave" democracies revealed that opposition and ruling parties were "always disappointed" by unfavorable results (Huntington, 1991). Two elections exemplify a similar scenario in Liberian history. In the 1985 Presidential election Jackson Fiah Doe defeated the incumbent President Samuel K. Doe (no relation). This was a stunning surprise because the election (multiparty) was sponsoring Sergeant Samuel Doe's government to legitimize his presidency. Pham (2004) explained that "The elections, set for October 15, 1985, were never intended by the PRC to be anything other

than a *pro forma* ratification of the dictator's rule" (p. 85). Similarly, the 1997 Presidential election that was won by Charles Taylor (the warlord) came as a surprise to international observers and academicians, because Mr. Taylor was responsible for brutally massacring thousands of citizens during Liberia's civil conflict (Berkeley, 2001). These two elections were flawed and plagued with technical irregularities. For example, citizens' perception of fraud in 1985 election led immediately to an attempted coup and then a civil war four years later, while the 1997 election was fraught with logistical, administrative, and security issues (Harris, 2012).

The Liberia National Election Commission's fraudulent and biased practices toward the Congress for Democratic Change Party creates uncertainty about the existence of electoral democracy in Liberia. This point is important, because, the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey found that 61% of respondents do not trust the commission (Tokpa et al., 2009). Therefore, the authenticity of the Free House classification of Liberia as an "electoral democracy" needed verification by voters who had experience the Liberia National Election Commission's governance. This study analyzed datasets (from the Afrobarometer Round 4) that surveyed the adult Liberians population about competitive elections and the electoral commission's administration of rules. The information acquired helped to uncover the level of democracy in Liberia's political system.

### **Summary and Transition**

Sources which I have reviewed indicate that autocratic regimes conduct multi-party elections to create a façade that they are a democracy. This corrupt practice often causes opposition parties and citizens to be disenchanted with the electoral process. In-

depth research of Liberia's National Election Commission revealed that, due to its biased administration of multiparty elections, the ruling party's Presidential candidate wins frequently. In 2011, many opposition parties experience fraudulent ballot counting, lack of media coverage, and no use of public resource, in contrast to the ruling party (Liberia Media Center, 2011).

However, since 1985 Liberia's multiparty elections have been classified as free and fair by international observers such as the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the Carter Center, the European Union, the African Union, and the United States (Berkeley, 2001; Harris, 2006). The presumed success of those elections created a perception of democratization in Liberia's governmental institutions, despite the technical irregularities and a focus group with ex-combatants that revealed their doubts about the legitimacy of Liberia's electoral process (Rand Corporation, 2007; Soderstrom, 2008). The inconsistent (one step forward and two steps backward) process of "consolidating democracy" in Liberian government cannot be interpreted as progress or "electoral democracy." This assertion is critical because governments can have multiparty elections while abusing and disenfranchising their citizens (Bratton, 1998; Kieh, as cited in Saline et al., 2011).

This study filled the gap in current research by showing how corrupt electoral practices impact opposition parties' rights during multiparty elections and the level of democracy in Liberian government. My purpose is to enhance available knowledge in the discipline of public policy and administration, to foster a foundation for future studies, and to encourage positive social change in the Liberian government. A clear understanding of corruption in Liberia's electoral processes will assist legislatures to

enact policies that combat the behavior. For example, the effective enforcement of a mandate that requires public officials to adhere to anticorruption regulations will minimize fraudulent practices during elections.

This was accomplished by examining Liberian electoral institutions' administration of national elections, opposition parties' experience with electoral bureaucracy, and voters' response to the study's research question: What is the level of corruption in Liberia's election process that opposition parties and voters experience during national elections? This study's methodology determined levels of corruption in Liberia's National Election Commission by demonstrating a strong correlation between biased polices and the ruling party's winning of elections. A correlation analysis was performed to support the contention that Liberia's electoral process is corrupted.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

This study explored the level of corruption in Liberia's 2005 Presidential election based on demographics and location of voters. A correlation between respondents' (voters') perception of corruption and physical evidence about existing corruption gave authenticity to actual corruption in Liberia's electoral process. This information is critical because voters' perception of corruption in an election commission has real consequences for the conduct of an election (Pastor, 1999). A determination of the level of corruption in Liberia's 2005 election provided the baseline in measuring the gap between Liberia's stated goal of democracy and the autocracy that the majority of its citizens characterize as the actual working of its government. This objective was accomplished by measuring the relationship between Afrobarometer survey respondents' (voters') perceptions of corruption and their gender, ethnicity, and residential location during the 2005 Presidential election. The hypothesis was that voters' (Afrobarometer survey respondents') perception of corruption varies according to their demographics and ethnicity.

A quantitative finding to test this hypothesis resulted from analyzing the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey that was conducted in 2008. This population-based survey involved interviews of voting-age Liberians to assess corruption in Liberia's National Election Commission, to rate the administration's performance in the electoral process, and to establish national priorities in administering future elections (Tokpa et al., 2009). An examination of this data provided insight about respondents' (voters')

perception of the fairness or corruptness of Liberia's 2005 election. The Afrobarometer Round 4 survey contained the best data to analyze because its questionnaire focused on voters' participation in the 2005 election process, which was critical to identify the existence of corruption in the electoral bureaucracy. Furthermore, this population-based survey involved interviews of randomly selected citizens to assess their perception of corruption in Liberia's election system.

This study tested for relationships among respondents' (voters') perception of corruption in Liberia's electoral process, demographic subgroups (ethnicity and gender), trust in the National Election Commission, and residential location (urban and rural) by performing correlation and cross-tabulation analyses. The correlation measurement (1.0, 0.0, or -1.0) among these pairs of variables revealed direction (positive, neutral, or negative), strength (correlation coefficient and coefficient of determination), and statistical significance of their relationship. In addition, the examination validated that respondents' (voters') demographic characteristics (gender, residence, and ethnicity) could explain citizens' perception of corruption in Liberia's electoral process. Finally, the study involved a crosstabs analysis and a chi-square test to measure the significance of the relationship between the variables.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

This study examined the level of perceived corruption in Liberia's election process by demographically, ethnically, and regionally quantifying voters' dissatisfaction and participation in the 2005 Presidential elections. The quantitative method was effective in capturing the Afrobarometer survey participants' answers on the

questionnaire to determine their perception of corruption. These measurements were acquired by analyzing the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey conducted in Liberia in 2008. This population-based survey of voting-age Liberians involved interviewing respondents to determine corruption in Liberia's National Election Commission; rating the administration's performance; and raising important national issues based on research findings (Tokpa et al., 2009). This analysis determined that a relationship existed between voters' perception of corruption, demographic factors, and ethnic group affiliation. The results were then used to test the hypothesis that "voters perceive corruption based on their ethnic, residence, and gender status" for acceptance or rejection. This analysis was achieved by adopting a significance level of 5 out of 100, computing a degree of freedom, and acquiring a critical value from the frequency distribution. A statistical program was used to compute correlation values for the six variables and 1,200 cases (respondents). In addition, the study produced figures and tables to enhance readers' understanding and provide context for the study.

The nature of corruption and democracy requires agreement on determinants for their measurement. For the purpose of this study, voter dissatisfaction (perception of corruption) and voter participation were used to objectively quantify factors in the electoral process (Friedman, 2010). In turn, these determinants were evaluated through demographic indicators, including ethnicity (Kpelle-English speakers or English speakers), residence location (urban or rural), and gender (male or female). The Kpelle-English and English ethnic groups represent the majority of citizens residing in rural and urban areas, respectively. In addition, these indicators enhanced validity in assessing the



characteristics inherent in free and democratic elections, including enforcement of election rules; open promotion of candidates by voters; equal access to public resources by opposition parties; timely delivery of election results; and trust in the election process (Tokpa et al., 2008; Friedman, 2012). This approach demonstrated the extent to which Liberia's electoral process during the 2005 Presidential elections encouraged open campaign activities that encompassed debating, fundraising, and promoting candidates by parties and supporters. It also determined the extent of technical irregularities with voter registration, communication of election information, civil education, and establishment of precincts. These results revealed the extent to which eligible voters, candidates, and parties were engaged in the electoral process necessary for fair and just election results.

The variables that were used in the study were as follows:

### **Independent Variables**

1. Ethnicity (Kpelle-English speaker or English speaker)
2. Residence location (urban or rural)
3. Gender (male or female)

### **Dependent Variables**

1. Question 71—Election freeness and fairness
2. Question 49C—Trust National Election Commission
3. Question 15C—Freedom to choose preferred candidate
4. Question 50D—Corruption, government officials
5. Question 50E—Corruption, police officers
6. Question 50G—Corruption, judges and magistrates

The data (participants' responses) gathered from the analysis were used to compute a relationship between the six variables. The approach determined whether demographic subgroups (female, male, Kpelle-English speakers, and English speakers) of voters living in different residential areas (urban and rural) perceived corruption differently or similarly in Liberia's electoral process. In other words, the study examined a relationship among pairs of six unique variables. A statistical program was used to compute correlation values for the six variables obtained in a random sample of 1,200 respondents. In addition, the program was used to create a contingency table that allows readers to locate a correlation value for any pair of variables at their rows and intersections.

### **Research Question and Hypotheses**

This study was designed to determine whether public corruption existed in Liberia's election process in response to the primary research question: To what extent is perceived corruption in Liberia's election processes affected by the demographics of voters? The theory tested was that Liberia's election processes are corrupted because of inconsistency between the nation's administrative system (patriarchal) and its governing authority (legal-rational). The research subquestions (from Afrobarometer) were the following:

- How would you rate the freeness and fairness of the 2005 national election?
- How much do you trust the National Election Commission of Liberia?
- How free are you to choose whom to vote for without feeling pressured?
- How free are you to join any political organization you want?

- How likely do you think it is that powerful people can find out how you voted, even though there is supposed to be a secret ballot in this country?

Null hypothesis (H0): Voters' (respondents') residence is not related to their perception of corruption in Liberia's political processes.

Research hypothesis (H1): Voters (respondents') residence is related to their perception of corruption in Liberia's political processes, with rural residents perceiving more corruption than urban residents.

Null hypothesis (H0): Voters' (respondents') gender is not related to their perception of corruption in Liberia's national election commission.

Research hypothesis (H1): Voters' (respondents') gender is related to their perception of corruption in Liberia's National Election Commission, with rural women lacking trust more than urban men.

Null hypothesis (H0): Voters' (respondents') ethnicity is not related to their perception of corruption in Liberia's election processes.

Research hypothesis (H1): Voters' (respondents) ethnicity is related to their perception of corruption in Liberia's election processes, with the Kpelle-English speakers perceiving corruption more than the English speakers.

### **Methodology**

The study used data collected and compiled by Afrobarometer Round 4: The Quality of Democracy and Governance in Liberia, 2008, a population-based survey of voting-age Liberians conducted from December 9, 2008 to February 8, 2009. The Afrobarometer Round 4 survey, which was administered by a nongovernmental agency,

provided a means for measuring voters' perceptions about corruption in Liberia's electoral process. The survey respondents also answered operationalized interview questions about government inclusiveness, citizens' participation in national elections and community affairs, personal economic conditions, and inequities experience by war victims. In this dissertation, the participants' answers were analyzed to gather data about their perception of electoral administration in Liberia. This information was then measured to determine the level of corruption in Liberia's electoral process. In other words, the voters' (respondents') perception of corruption was operationalized by measuring their answers to the Afrobarometer survey questions.

This was accomplished by quantifying, rating, and correlating respondents' answers to questionnaires (on the Afrobarometer Survey) that reflect indicators of this study's independent variables. In addition, the result was used to perform statistical correlations among the variables. For example, the following survey questions—Q71 (election freeness and fairness), Q49C (trust National Election Commission), and Q15C (freedom to choose preferred candidate) provided valuable measures for determining respondents' experience with corruption in Liberia's electoral process. These indicators were created based on extensive review of multiparty elections and issues voters encountered in Liberian politics. This knowledge allowed the study to properly identify and correlate questions on the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey to accurately analyze quantitative data. This method was critical in reaching conclusions about indicators to retain for measuring patterns of respondents' perceptions of corruption in Liberia's

electoral process. The study produced tables and figures to further enhance readers' understanding and provide a broader context for the findings.

### **Indicators of Corruption**

The unit of analysis was respondents (voting age citizens) of the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey. Therefore, the study's indicators of corruption were public officials' perceived acceptance of bribes, mismanagement of resources (funds, government equipment, etc.), abuse of power or office, and illegitimate establishment of election commissions. These indicators were operationalized to quantify voters' (respondents') perception of quality or corruption of the electoral processes. More specifically, the aim was to assess voters' (respondents') perception of corruption of Liberia's 2005 election, their freedom to vote for their preferred candidate, and their trust in Liberia's National Election Commission. The assessment considered voters' (respondents') gender (male or female), ethnicity (Kpelle-English or English), and residence (urban and rural) to determine differences in perception and trust among the groups.

### **Sample Population**

The Afrobarometer study used a representative cross-sectional sample design "to give all adult citizens an equal and known chance of selection for interview" (Tokpa et al., 2009). The Afrobarometer study employed a randomly selected sample of 1,200 registered voter participants, proportionate to the Liberian population, to elicit Liberian citizens' perceptions concerning corruption. The level of statistical significance of research findings was set at "plus or minus 3 percent with a confidence level of 95 percent" (Tokpa et al., 2009). This would allow, under professional survey standards, for

generalizing findings to the Liberian public. In face-to-face interviews, respondents were exercising self-determination, implementing democratic governance, and public corruption in Liberian society. The substantive content of the Afrobarometer survey asked to rate the administration's performance, state important national issues, and indicate whether corruption existed in public institutions such as the National Election Commission. The participants also were asked questions associated with ethnic identity or division, economic inequality, civil liberties, education, health care, land disputes, war-related violence, and election processes. These questions focused on issues of questionnaire allowed the determination of the level of democracy in Liberia's electoral process through inference, which was the focus of this study. This method assumes a strong correlation between widespread perception and the reality of corruption and democratic functioning. Therefore, analyzing the Afrobarometer Round 4 data set provided valid context and clarity for determining corruption in Liberia's electoral process.

The analysis of primary data from the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey offered a useful method for extrapolating reliable information on how the electoral process impacts multiparty elections in Liberia for two main reasons: (a) This approach eliminated potential survey problems, including unavailable voter registration lists, communication errors (high rate of illiteracy), and lack of residential addresses that would have limited participants from responding efficiently; and (b) this approach did not require traveling to Liberia, selecting samples, collecting data, and developing new survey instruments, thus minimizing costs without compromising the validity and reliability of research findings.

### **Importance of Secondary Data**

A previous example showed that surveys of public perceptions can be used to reveal underlying social and political problems. The analysis of secondary data also was used successfully in the “Innovations of Poverty Action” study on conflict in Liberian society. The study developed a model that statistically analyzed quantitative survey data reliably, consistently, and accurately to “predict conflict over time” (Blair, Blattman, & Hartman, 2011). This model was used to test two rounds of Innovations of Poverty Action survey data gathered from 247 communities in Liberia in 2008 and 2010, which “accurately predicted up to 75% of all conflicts two years later” (Blair et al., 2011). In addition, the study reanalyzed the Berkeley Human Rights Center’s nationally representative dataset from a survey of Liberian citizens (Human Rights Center, 2011) to test the consistency of the model’s prediction (Vinck, Pham, & Kreutzer, 2011). The model’s high accuracy rate in predicting conflict in data from its own sample and out-of-sample data validates its effectiveness. Although the Innovations of Poverty Action study concentrated on the perception of tension and this study focused on perception of corruption, the analysis of secondary data was critical to both studies’ objectives. Therefore, this validates a likely strong correlation between perception and reality of corruption in Liberia’s electoral system.

### **Construct Validity-Voter Equality**

#### **Rural citizens**

Lack of access to election information, voter education, and basic economic necessities interfered with rural citizens’ ability to participate in Liberia’s 2005

presidential elections. These indigenous people, who represented 95% of the nation's population (Berkeley, 2001; Clower et al., 1966; Pham, 2004), were thus prevented from making independent voting decisions, registering efficiently, and exercising their voting rights as citizens (Elklit, 1999). Such limitations make it impossible to classify Liberia's 2005 election as free and fair. A successful democratic election involves voters' (urban and rural) engagement in electoral education and acquisition of information through access to open political campaigns that occur prior to polling day (Elklit, 1999). In addition, rural voters' satisfaction with the electoral process is crucial to consolidating and sustaining democracy (Elklit, 1999). Therefore, the Liberian government should have allocated resources for administering voter education programs to prepare its electorate for participating in the electoral process (Elklit, 1999; Mvukiyehe & Samii, 2013).

Liberia's rural citizens lack essential election information because of inadequate communication capability in the nation (Mvukiyehe & Samii, 2013). In most cases, these citizens were poor and illiterate, which precluded their owning radios or having interpreters to translate election publications and assist them in understanding the electoral process (Bratton, 2006; Soderstorm, 2008). This problem was highlighted during a focus group discussion about the 2005 election in rural Liberia when interpreters were needed to translate the conversation (Soderstorm, 2008). More importantly, these citizens were deprived of resources provided urban citizens to help them understand election materials, public service announcements, and election timetables. Bratton (2006) concluded that "Not only do poorer people lack certain key capabilities of democratic citizenship; they have yet to find ways to make the institutions of democracy work in



their favor” (p. 3). In addition, public officials (secret police, tribal chiefs, etc.) often intimidate, abuse, and manipulate rural citizens to cast their votes for the ruling party’s candidates (Rand Corporation, 2007; Mvukiyehe & Samii, 2010). This pressure is manifested by rewarding jobs or dispensing rice to citizens in exchange for their support or votes (Soderstorm, 2008). In other words, ruling regimes continue to use the need for basic necessities to buy citizens’ votes in Liberian elections (Berkeley, 2001; Soderstorm, 2008).

This situation leads to rural citizens not effectively voting during national elections. The lack of full participation prevents rural citizens from supporting and selecting candidates who could champion their causes such as building roads, constructing hydroelectric systems, and installing water supplies. For example, the lack of functioning roads prevents rural farmers from transporting their produce to market efficiently, thereby keeping them in poverty (Gorlorwulu & Warner, 2011; Rand Corporation, 2007). Conversely, these inequities allow urban citizens to elect candidates who are committed in promoting their interest.

### **Operationalization and Measurement**

A cross-tabulation was performed using the explanatory variables gender, residence, and ethnicity; and the response variables-Q71 (election freeness and fairness), Q49C (trust National Election Commission), and Q15C (freedom to choose preferred candidate) to demonstrate differences in the perception of corruption between rural females, rural males, urban females, urban males, Kpelle-English speakers, and English speakers. A Chi-Square test of the Null hypothesis was conducted to validate the nature

of that difference in relationship. There was also verification that assumptions such as random selection of participants (Afrobarometer survey), sample size of preferred cases (100), and cell count of preferred cases (5) are accurate. In other words, the study performed a cross-tabulation analysis and a Chi-Square test to measure the significance of the difference in relationship among the variables.

### **Data Analysis**

These objectives were accomplished by using gender, residence, ethnicity, Q71 (election freeness and fairness), Q49C (trust National Election Commission), and Q15C (freedom to choose preferred candidate) in a six by three cross-tabulation analysis to address the research question “To what extent is perceived corruption in Liberia’s election processes affected by the demographics of voters”? The question essentially is do factors such as gender, residence, and ethnicity affects respondents’ perception of the quality (corruptness) of electoral processes in Liberia. This analysis is based on the Afrobarometer survey data, which provided demographic information about participants (voters) and their responses to questions about the quality of Liberia’s 2005 election. The answers given by respondents (voters) were used for measuring the effects of their gender, residence, and ethnicity on their perception of corruption. The nature of these relationships was revealed by performing a chi-square test on the Null and the Alternate hypotheses:

H0: Voters’ (respondents’) gender is not related to their perception of corruption in Liberia’s election processes.

H1: Voters’ (respondents’) gender is related to their perception of corruption in

Liberia's election processes, with rural females perceiving more than urban males.

The variables were separated in rows (resident and ethnicity), columns (Q71, Q49C, and Q15C) and controlled layer (gender) and then compared in cross tabulation analysis. This analysis produced six subgroups (rural female, rural male, urban female, urban male, Kpelle-English speakers, and English speakers), the total number of each gender (female or male), and the total number of participants from each resident (rural or urban). A contingency table was constructed to reveal frequency and how values of the dependent variable depend on values of the independent variables. This analysis was accomplished by completing the following steps: (a) The data set (Afrobarometer Round 4) of 1,200 participants who either perceived "not at all," "just a little," "somewhat," "a lot," or "don't know" corruption will be listed; (b) the participants were separated into demographic subgroups (independent variables) in rural female, rural male, urban female, urban male, Kpelle-English speakers, and English speakers; (c) the demographic subgroups were then separated by those who perceived "not at all," "just a little," "somewhat," "a lot," or "don't know" corruption based on (dependent variables) Q71, Q49C, and Q15C; (d) a count of the numbers in each category (cell) was conducted; (e) the percentage of rural female, rural male, urban female, urban male, Kpelle-English speakers, and English speakers who "perceived" or "did not perceive" corruption was indicated; and (f) a conclusion and interpretation of the analysis will then be provided.

In other words, the output produced specific results (percentages and totals) about each subgroups and its perception of electoral quality (corruptness) in Liberia. The analysis also produced information about proportion of subgroups based on

measurements of their perception of questions-Q71, Q49C, and Q15C to compare with each other. For example, the percent of rural females perceiving less “Q71 (election freeness and fairness)” was compared with the percent of urban females on the same dimension. These measurements generated better results about the differences among the subgroups’ perception of the quality (corruptness) of Liberia’s electoral processes. The information was used to show how gender, residence, and ethnicity affect respondents’ (voters’) perception of corruption in the election process.

Even though this descriptive analysis was useful, the study’s objective was to validate or reject the null hypothesis “Voters’ (respondents’) gender, residence, and ethnicity is not related to their perception of corruption in Liberia’s election processes,” which was done by performing a Chi-square test and a (spearman’s and Pearson’s) correlation analysis. The Chi-square test produced Observed and Expected counts for similar subgroups like rural female and urban female, which were compared to determine differences in number of cases for each count. A standardized residual figure was also generated to determine differences that are greater than minus two or plus two between all the subgroups, which is significant. The chi-square test result verified that the cases were randomly selected, the preferred sample size was acquired, and the cell count is five cases or more.

The study’s Null hypothesis does not state that gender was related more or less to respondents’ (voters’) perception of corruption in Liberia’s election processes. Therefore, a two sided asymptomatic test was performed to verify if there was a relationship in general between both variables. The Pearson’s Chi-Square figure at one degree of

freedom and its significance figure determined acceptance or rejection of the Null hypothesis. For example, a Pearson's Chi-Square of .404 at one degree of freedom and a significant P-Value of .525 against a confidence level of .05, indicates a lack of sufficient evidence of relationship among the variables. As a result, the Null hypothesis would be accepted.

The Null hypothesis would also be disproven by performing a correlation analysis and comparing the result against the study's confidence level of 0.05. This level of confidence is selected because it is frequently used in most academic papers. The analysis generated correlation coefficients that reflect strength and direction of relationships among respondents' (voters) gender, ethnicity, resident, and their perception of corruption in Liberia's electoral processes. In addition, a significant "two tailed" test at 0.05 confidence level for the variables produced P-Values to compare against the study's confidence level. For example, if gender had a P-Value less than the study's "two tailed" confidence level of 0.05, then there would be a statistically significant relationship between gender and perception of corruption in Liberia's election process. In other words, the Null hypothesis would be rejected due to lack of sufficient evidence.

In conclusion, this quantitative design was used to statistically show the relationship between respondents' (voters') demographics (gender, resident, and ethnicity) and their perception of corruption (Q71, Q49C, and Q15C) about Liberia's 2005 election. This approach also showed specific effects of respondents' (voters') demographics on their perception of corruption. These differences were revealed by deriving subgroups from the variables, performing cross-tabulation analysis, and

comparing the subgroups to each other. A Chi-square test and a correlation analysis were then performed to validate the Null hypothesis.

## Chapter 4: Results

### **Introduction**

Following Liberia's 2005 presidential election, the election management institutions and their officials were perceived as untrusted and corrupt, according to the Afrobarometer survey respondents (Tokpa et al., 2009). The organizations deemed untrustworthy included the National Election Commission, the National Police Force, judges and magistrates, and government officials in general. These institutions are the key pillars for enforcing voters' rights, providing public safety, and upholding the rule of law during elections. However, Liberians consider them biased against opposition parties and incapable of administering a free and fair election (Harris, 2012). This political atmosphere makes it essential to perform an accurate analysis of the Afrobarometer Round 4 data set, which is in line with this study's objective to reveal voters' (respondents') actual perception of election process corruption. The level of perceived corruption in Liberia's 2005 election may validate the gap between democracy and autocracy in Liberian government.

This information was acquired through measuring the nature of the relationship between Afrobarometer survey respondents' (voters') perception of corruption and their gender, ethnicity, and residence during Liberia's 2005 election. Respondents' (voters') perception of corruption in an election process has a real consequence for the conduct of the election (Pastor, 1999). This made it necessary to validate the hypothesis that voters' (Afrobarometer survey respondents') perception varies according to their demographics and ethnicity, while addressing the primary research question: To what extent is

perceived corruption in Liberia's election processes affected by voter demographics? The assumption being tested was that Liberia's election processes are corrupted because of inconsistency between the nation's patrimonial administrative system and its constitutional governing authority. This approach lent credibility to the overall findings; therefore, the method of analysis needed to be efficient and effective.

The Afrobarometer survey reasoned that men and urban residents participate in politics, occupy public offices, and enjoy high political status more than women and rural residents in Liberia's male-dominated society. These women and interior residents (referred to as *country people* by Americo-Liberians) received their rights to vote by constitutional amendment in 1945 and 1946, respectively (Pham, 2004). The discrimination against citizens (indigenous or country people) of the hinterland (mostly rural) is widely discussed in academic literature (Clower et al., 1966; Liebenow, 1987; Sawyer, 1992). Though the situation is extremely unfair, this conclusion laid the basis for testing this study's null hypothesis. If the study hypothesized correctly, voters' (respondents') demographics should have been associated with their perception of corruption or fairness in Liberia's electoral processes. In this approach, the hypothesis suggests that voter (respondent) demographic attributes such as gender, residence, and ethnicity have cumulative effects on their perception of corruption in Liberia's electoral process and lack of trust in the National Election Commission.

The following results reveal deep skepticism: 78% of the 2008 Afrobarometer Round 4 survey respondents trusted the National Election Commission "somewhat," "just a little," or "not at all" (Tokpa et al., 2009). The 2008 Afrobarometer survey also



revealed that 92%, 91%, and 90% of its respondents perceived “some,” “most,” or “all” government officials, police officers, and judges and magistrates as being corrupt (Tokpa et al., 2009). This perception decreased to 88%, 88%, and 86%, respectively, in the 2012 survey, an encouraging trend (Afrobarometer Round 5, 2012). However, an average perception of corruption of 87% for officials responsible for managing a nation’s electoral process is unacceptable. This perceived failure to conduct a fair election has created an impediment to consolidating democracy in Liberia’s political system (Pastor, 1999), an issue displayed in the lack of electoral turnovers and difficulty in the smooth transition of power between defeated and victorious political parties.

Public corruption is responsible for the disenfranchisement citizens experience at all levels of Liberia’s electoral process, as perceived by both scholars and the general public. Sawyer (1992) stated that “There is no indication in the Liberian experience that the electoral machinery was ever meant to be an instrument for conducting free and fair elections” (p. 271). The injustices experienced by citizens begin with voters receiving minimal information about electoral time-tables and no instruction in civic education; the injustices continue with a weak voter registration system, a process that fosters fraudulent ballot counting, and a system that supports bias in election litigation (Harris, 2012; Sawyer, 1992). Such a dysfunctional process makes it difficult for the National Election Commission to implement a quality election and for voters to exercise their civil rights. In this dissertation, the voters’ (respondents’) view of this dysfunctional electoral process is exhibited through figures and tables showing a statistically significant relationship

between their demographics and perception of corruption or fairness in Liberia's election processes and institutions.

### **Data Collection**

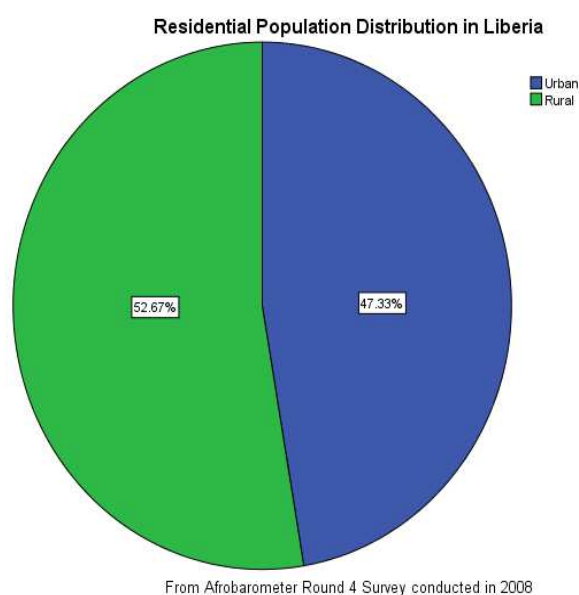
This study analyzed data collected and compiled by Afrobarometer Round 4: The Quality of Democracy and Governance in Liberia, 2008, a population-based survey of voting-age Liberians conducted between December 9, 2008 and February 8, 2009. The Afrobarometer study used a representative cross-sectional sample design "to give all adult citizens an equal and known chance of selection for interview" (Tokpa et al., 2009). The study also employed a randomly selected sample of 1,200 registered voter participants, proportionate to the Liberian population, to elicit Liberian citizens' perceptions concerning corruption. The level of statistical significance of research findings was set at "plus or minus 3 percent with a confidence level of 95 percent" (Tokpa et al., 2009). This would allow, under professional survey standards, generalizing the findings to the Liberian public, while providing a means for measuring voters' perceptions about corruption in Liberia's electoral process.

### **Figures**

The figures and tables below provide context and illustrate the degree to which each explanatory variable influences the response variable in respondents' perception of corruption or fairness in Liberia's election processes.

Figure 1 depicts a distribution of the Afrobarometer survey respondents. The figure reveals that rural respondents were 52.67% of the sample population. Rural areas are also the primary areas of residence for indigenous Liberians, who have been denied

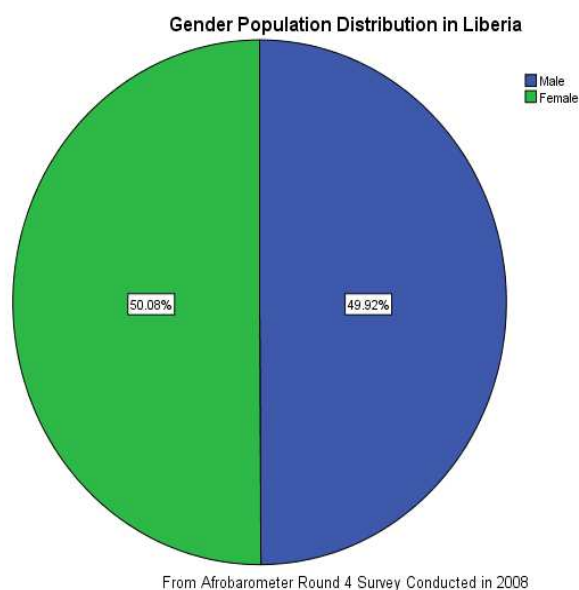
economic and political rights since the nation was founded. This residence and population distribution is a result of government policy to contain indigenous (tribal) people, restrict intertribal contact, and maintain Americo-Liberians' supremacy over the tribal (indigenous) majority (Liebenow, 1987). As indicated earlier, this is the population that did not acquire citizenship until 1904 and voting rights until 1946 (Liebenow, 1987; Pham, 2004). This experience is partly responsible for more rural citizens perceiving Liberia's electoral management institutions (government officials, police officers, and judges and magistrates) as corrupt.



*Figure 1.* Liberian residential population distribution.

The gender distribution of the Afrobarometer survey participants is depicted in Figure 2. The figure indicates that female respondents were 50.08% of the sample population. These citizens (women) have the least political and economic privilege due to Liberia's male-dominated social structure. They only acquired their right to vote in 1945,

by a constitutional amendment, because President Tubman intended to “create a personal constituency” (Liebenow, 1987; Pham, 2004).



*Figure 2.* Liberian gender distributions.

Figure 3 presents percentages corresponding to Afrobarometer survey participants' self-reported ethnicity, which show Kpelle (23.83%) as the largest and “don't know” (0.75%) as the smallest categories. However, Figure 3 is important for the information it does not present. The Americo-Liberians, who established Liberia, ruled it for 133 years, and currently have a descendent serving as president (Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf), are not depicted as an ethnic group in Figure 3 (Tokpa et al., 2009). In other words, none of the survey respondents indicated Americo-Liberian as their ethnicity. Possibly, the descendants of Americo-Liberians selected their mothers' tribal group (if she was indigenous) or selected the closest tribes to their ancestors' colony. In this case, President Johnson-Sirleaf would be a member of the Vai ethnic group (International

Crisis Group, 2012). This behavior can be partly attributed to Liberians' awareness of abuses and oppression imposed by Americo-Liberians and their governments in the nation's history.

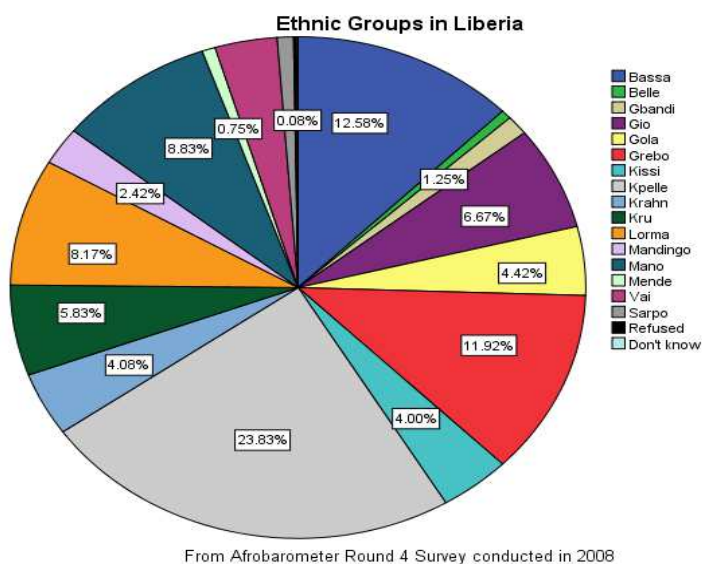


Figure 3. Liberian ethnic groups.

### Cluster Analysis

In this study, the 16 original ethnic tribes represented in Figure 3 are clustered into two dominant language groups referred to as *Kpelle-English* and *English speakers* that reside in rural and urban areas, respectively. Even though the cluster analysis was performed on the Afrobarometer data, Liberia's ethnic groups and their place of residence are best shown on Liebenow's maps in his book *Liberia: The Quest for Democracy*. He classified the 16 tribes into three groups, referred to as Mande (Mandingo, Belle, Vai, Gbandi, Kpelle, Loma, Mende, Gio, and Mano), Mel (Gola and Kissi), and Kruan (Bassa, Dei, Grebo, Kru, Krahn, and Gbee), based on linguistic factors,

historical homeland, traditional customs, and economic interest (Liebenow, 1987). However, this ethnic dynamic has changed substantially due to intermarriages, immigration, and global economic participation since Liebenow's work in 1987. The Global Security Organization (2014) stated that "Estimates of the number of ethnic categories adequate to the classification of Liberia's indigenous communities have ranged from 28 to the 16 officially recognized tribes" (p. 2).

In considering these factors, this study used categorical variables Q4—province/region, Q3—urban or rural, and Q88E—respondents' language, and the evaluation output variables Q71—election freeness and fairness, Q49C—trust National Election Commission, and Q15C—freedom to choose preferred candidate, from the Afrobarometer data, to cluster the 16 ethnic groups into Kpelle-English and English-speaking ethnic groups. The two clusters become components of the ethnicity variable, which was added to the resident and the gender variables to form the study's three independent variables. These independent and dependent (evaluation output above) variables were then used to perform a cross-tabulation and a correlation analysis, and to construct a contingency table.

The map in Figure 4 was adapted from the Global Security Organization website to show tribal groups' distribution, their geographic residence, and a transformation in ethnic dynamics (between 1969 and now) in Liberia. The map's linguistic depiction confirms the Afrobarometer report that Kpelle is Liberia's largest ethnic group and English is the smallest corresponding to the other tribal groups. These factors help to effectively compare and contrast the subgroups. In addition, this information may give

readers a better understanding of why the cluster analysis resulted in Kpelle-English and English speakers in rural and urban areas, respectively. Those factors also influenced respondents' perception of corruption or fairness in Liberia's electoral processes.

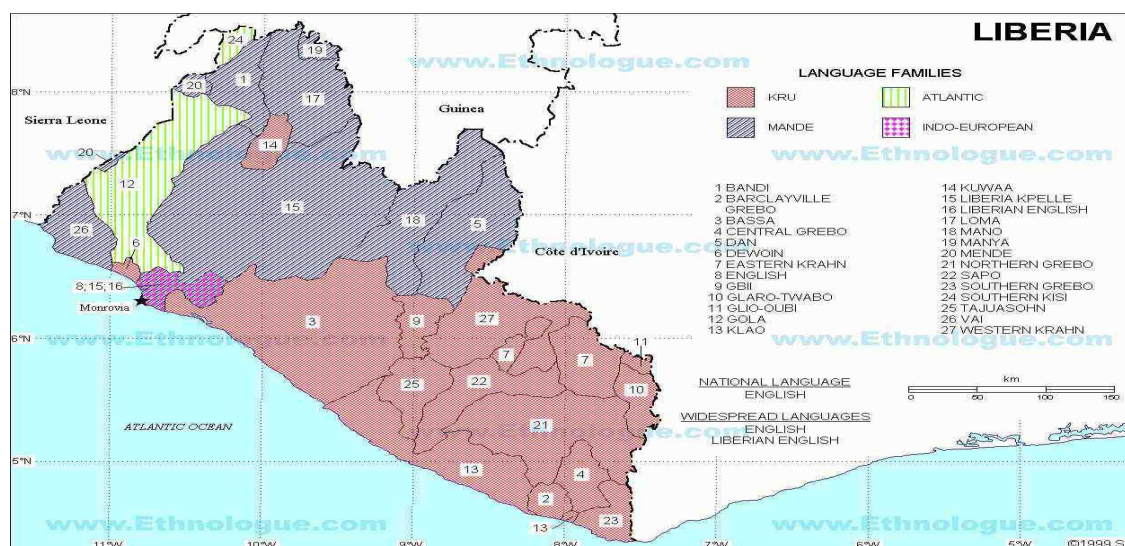


Figure 4. Liberian map and ethnic language groups.

Table 1, which contains data on “election freeness and fairness,” reveals that 29.2% of urban men, 38.1% of rural men, 23.5% of male English speakers, and 38.5% of male Kpelle-English speakers perceived the elections as “completely free and fair,” compared to 35.6% of urban women, 37.9% of rural women, 32.4% of female English speakers, and 38.7% of female Kpelle-English speakers. Furthermore, 15.1% of urban respondents and 18.2% of English speakers perceived the election as more “free and fair with major problems” compared to 10.0% of rural respondents and 9.9% of Kpelle-English speakers, respectively. In addition, more male English speakers (20.8%) and fewer female Kpelle-English speakers (8.4%) perceived the election as “free and fair with major problems,” while more male (38.5%) and female (38.7%) Kpelle-English speakers

and fewer male English speakers (23.5%) perceived the election as “completely free and fair.” Even though all the subgroups had a low perception of the election as “not free and fair,” those who perceived the least and most fairness were rural males (13.7%) and male English speakers (16.9%), respectively. Overall, urban residents and English speakers perceived the elections as less free and fair than did rural residents and nonnative English speakers. This contradicts the research hypothesis that “Voters’ (respondents’) ethnicity is related to their perception of corruption in Liberia’s election processes, with the Kpelle speakers perceiving corruption more than the English speakers.” Similarly, it contradicts the hypothesis that rural residents perceive more corruption than urban residents do.



Table 1

*Q71—Election Freeness and Fairness*

				Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit * Q71. Elections free and fair ^ Q101. Gender of respondent Crosstabulation <sup>a</sup>							
				Q71. Elections free and fair							
Q101. Gender of respondent				Missing	Not free and fair	Free and fair, with major problems	Free and fair, but with minor problems	Completely free and fair	Do not understand question	Don't know	Total
Male	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	Count	1	47	51	100	83		2	284
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.4%	16.5%	18.0%	35.2%	29.2%	0.7%	100.0%	
			% of Total	0.2%	7.8%	8.5%	16.7%	13.9%	0.3%	47.4%	
	Rural	Count	0	43	34	110	120		8	315	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.0%	13.7%	10.8%	34.9%	38.1%	2.5%	100.0%		
		% of Total	0.0%	7.2%	5.7%	18.4%	20.0%	1.3%	52.6%		
	Total	Count	1	90	85	210	203		10	599	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.2%	15.0%	14.2%	35.1%	33.9%	1.7%	100.0%		
		% of Total	0.2%	15.0%	14.2%	35.1%	33.9%	1.7%	100.0%		
Female	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	Count	1	41	35	98	101	1	7	284
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.4%	14.4%	12.3%	34.5%	35.6%	0.4%	2.5%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.2%	6.8%	5.8%	16.3%	16.8%	0.2%	1.2%	47.3%
	Rural	Count	2	49	29	96	120	1	20	317	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.6%	15.5%	9.1%	30.3%	37.9%	0.3%	6.3%	100.0%	
		% of Total	0.3%	8.2%	4.8%	16.0%	20.0%	0.2%	3.3%	52.7%	
	Total	Count	3	90	64	194	221	2	27	601	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.5%	15.0%	10.6%	32.3%	36.8%	0.3%	4.5%	100.0%	
		% of Total	0.5%	15.0%	10.6%	32.3%	36.8%	0.3%	4.5%	100.0%	
Total	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	Count	2	88	86	198	184	1	9	568
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.4%	15.5%	15.1%	34.9%	32.4%	0.2%	1.6%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.2%	7.3%	7.2%	16.5%	15.3%	0.1%	0.8%	47.3%
	Rural	Count	2	92	63	206	240	1	28	632	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.3%	14.6%	10.0%	32.6%	38.0%	0.2%	4.4%	100.0%	
		% of Total	0.2%	7.7%	5.3%	17.2%	20.0%	0.1%	2.3%	52.7%	
Total	Count	4	180	149	404	424	2	37	1200		
	% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.3%	15.0%	12.4%	33.7%	35.3%	0.2%	3.1%	100.0%		
	% of Total	0.3%	15.0%	12.4%	33.7%	35.3%	0.2%	3.1%	100.0%		

a. From Afrobarometer Round 4 Survey Conducted in 2008

Ethnicity of Respondent \* Q71. Elections free and fair \* Q101. Gender of respondent Crosstabulation<sup>a</sup>

				Q71. Elections free and fair							
				Missing	Not free and fair	Free and fair, with major problems	Free and fair, but with minor problems	Completely free and fair	Do not understand question	Don't know	Total
Male	Ethnicity of Respondent	English	Count	1	31	38	69	43		1	183
			% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.5%	16.9%	20.8%	37.7%	23.5%	0.5%	100.0%	
			% of Total	0.2%	5.2%	6.3%	11.5%	7.2%	0.2%	30.6%	
	Kpelle and English	Count	0	59	47	141	160		9	416	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.0%	14.2%	11.3%	33.9%	38.5%	2.2%	100.0%		
		% of Total	0.0%	9.8%	7.8%	23.5%	26.7%	1.5%	69.4%		
	Total	Count	1	90	85	210	203		10	599	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.2%	15.0%	14.2%	35.1%	33.9%	1.7%	100.0%		
		% of Total	0.2%	15.0%	14.2%	35.1%	33.9%	1.7%	100.0%		
Female	Ethnicity of Respondent	English	Count	1	28	29	63	60	0	4	185
			% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.5%	15.1%	15.7%	34.1%	32.4%	0.0%	2.2%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.2%	4.7%	4.8%	10.5%	10.0%	0.0%	0.7%	30.8%
	Kpelle and English	Count	2	62	35	131	161	2	23	416	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.5%	14.9%	8.4%	31.5%	38.7%	0.5%	5.5%	100.0%	
		% of Total	0.3%	10.3%	5.8%	21.8%	26.8%	0.3%	3.8%	69.2%	
	Total	Count	3	90	64	194	221	2	27	601	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.5%	15.0%	10.6%	32.3%	36.8%	0.3%	4.5%	100.0%	
		% of Total	0.5%	15.0%	10.6%	32.3%	36.8%	0.3%	4.5%	100.0%	
Total	Ethnicity of Respondent	English	Count	2	59	67	132	103	0	5	368
			% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.5%	16.0%	18.2%	35.9%	28.0%	0.0%	1.4%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.2%	4.9%	5.6%	11.0%	8.6%	0.0%	0.4%	30.7%
	Kpelle and English	Count	2	121	82	272	321	2	32	832	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.2%	14.5%	9.9%	32.7%	38.6%	0.2%	3.8%	100.0%	
		% of Total	0.2%	10.1%	6.8%	22.7%	26.8%	0.2%	2.7%	69.3%	
	Total	Count	4	180	149	404	424	2	37	1200	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.3%	15.0%	12.4%	33.7%	35.3%	0.2%	3.1%	100.0%	
		% of Total	0.3%	15.0%	12.4%	33.7%	35.3%	0.2%	3.1%	100.0%	

a. From Afrobarometer Round 4 Survey Conducted in 2008

It may be that urban residents and English speakers are more educated and aware of corruption, so this counteracts their self-interest. In any case, perceptions of corruption are high enough to leave intact this dissertation's primary hypothesis, that the gap between democracy in theory and autocracy in practice remains large in Liberia.

Table 2. for “trust National Election Commission” shows that 22.2% of urban males, 26.3% of rural males, 21.9% of male English speakers, and 25.5% of male Kpelle-English perceived that Liberia’s National Election Commission is trusted “not at all” compared to 27.5% of urban females, 26.2% of rural females, 28.6% of females English speaker, and 26.0% of female Kpelle-English speakers, showing that overall females mistrust the National Election Commission more than males. On the other hand, 20.8% of urban males, 27.6% of rural males, 15.3% of male English speakers, and 28.4% of male Kpelle-English speakers perceived that the commission is trusted “a lot” compared to 15.1% of urban females, 18.6% of rural females, 8.6% of female English speakers, and 20.7% of female Kpelle-English speakers. These measurements reveal that female respondents perceived the National Election Commission as “not at all” trusted by 26.8% and trusted “a lot” by 17.0% compared to male respondents by 24.4%t and 24.4% respectively. In other words, fewer female respondents perceived the commission as trusted “a lot” and more perceived it as “not at all” trusted compared to their male counterpart, validating this dissertation’s initial hypothesis.

Table 2

*Q49C—Trust National Election Commission*

**Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit \* Q49c. Trust national electoral commission \* Q101. Gender of respondent Crosstabulation<sup>a</sup>**

Q101. Gender of respondent				Q49c. Trust national electoral commission					
				Not at all	Just a little	Somewhat	A lot	Don't know	Total
Male	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	Count	63	107	54	59	1	284
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	22.2%	37.7%	19.0%	20.8%	0.4%	100.0%
			% of Total	10.5%	17.9%	9.0%	9.8%	0.2%	47.4%
	Rural	Count	83	98	43	87	4	315	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	26.3%	31.1%	13.7%	27.6%	1.3%	100.0%	
		% of Total	13.9%	16.4%	7.2%	14.5%	0.7%	52.6%	
	Total	Count	146	205	97	146	5	599	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	24.4%	34.2%	16.2%	24.4%	0.8%	100.0%	
		% of Total	24.4%	34.2%	16.2%	24.4%	0.8%	100.0%	
Female	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	Count	78	114	46	43	3	284
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	27.5%	40.1%	16.2%	15.1%	1.1%	100.0%
			% of Total	13.0%	19.0%	7.7%	7.2%	0.5%	47.3%
	Rural	Count	83	99	60	59	16	317	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	26.2%	31.2%	18.9%	18.6%	5.0%	100.0%	
		% of Total	13.8%	16.5%	10.0%	9.8%	2.7%	52.7%	
	Total	Count	161	213	106	102	19	601	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	26.8%	35.4%	17.6%	17.0%	3.2%	100.0%	
		% of Total	26.8%	35.4%	17.6%	17.0%	3.2%	100.0%	
Total	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	Count	141	221	100	102	4	568
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	24.8%	38.9%	17.6%	18.0%	0.7%	100.0%
			% of Total	11.8%	18.4%	8.3%	8.5%	0.3%	47.3%
	Rural	Count	166	197	103	146	20	632	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	26.3%	31.2%	16.3%	23.1%	3.2%	100.0%	
		% of Total	13.8%	16.4%	8.6%	12.2%	1.7%	52.7%	
	Total	Count	307	418	203	248	24	1200	
		% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	25.6%	34.8%	16.9%	20.7%	2.0%	100.0%	
		% of Total	25.6%	34.8%	16.9%	20.7%	2.0%	100.0%	

a. From Afrobarometer Round 4 Survey Conducted in 2008

Ethnicity of Respondent \* Q49c. Trust national electoral commission \* Q101. Gender of respondent Crosstabulation<sup>a</sup>

Q101. Gender of respondent				Q49c. Trust national electoral commission					Total
				Not at all	Just a little	Somewhat	A lot	Don't know	
Male	Ethnicity of Respondent	English	Count	40	73	42	28	0	183
			% within Ethnicity of Respondent	21.9%	39.9%	23.0%	15.3%	0.0%	100.0%
			% of Total	6.7%	12.2%	7.0%	4.7%	0.0%	30.6%
	Kpelle and English	Count	106	132	55	118	5	416	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	25.5%	31.7%	13.2%	28.4%	1.2%	100.0%	
		% of Total	17.7%	22.0%	9.2%	19.7%	0.8%	69.4%	
	Total	Count	146	205	97	146	5	599	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	24.4%	34.2%	16.2%	24.4%	0.8%	100.0%	
		% of Total	24.4%	34.2%	16.2%	24.4%	0.8%	100.0%	
Female	Ethnicity of Respondent	English	Count	53	80	35	16	1	185
			% within Ethnicity of Respondent	28.6%	43.2%	18.9%	8.6%	0.5%	100.0%
			% of Total	8.8%	13.3%	5.8%	2.7%	0.2%	30.8%
	Kpelle and English	Count	108	133	71	86	18	416	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	26.0%	32.0%	17.1%	20.7%	4.3%	100.0%	
		% of Total	18.0%	22.1%	11.8%	14.3%	3.0%	69.2%	
	Total	Count	161	213	106	102	19	601	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	26.8%	35.4%	17.6%	17.0%	3.2%	100.0%	
		% of Total	26.8%	35.4%	17.6%	17.0%	3.2%	100.0%	
Total	Ethnicity of Respondent	English	Count	93	153	77	44	1	368
			% within Ethnicity of Respondent	25.3%	41.6%	20.9%	12.0%	0.3%	100.0%
			% of Total	7.8%	12.8%	6.4%	3.7%	0.1%	30.7%
	Kpelle and English	Count	214	265	126	204	23	832	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	25.7%	31.9%	15.1%	24.5%	2.8%	100.0%	
		% of Total	17.8%	22.1%	10.5%	17.0%	1.9%	69.3%	
	Total	Count	307	418	203	248	24	1200	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	25.6%	34.8%	16.9%	20.7%	2.0%	100.0%	
		% of Total	25.6%	34.8%	16.9%	20.7%	2.0%	100.0%	

a. From Afrobarometer Round 4 Survey Conducted in 2008

Table 3 for “freedom to choose preferred candidate” reveals that 80.3% of urban males, 89.5% of rural males, 74.3% of male English speakers, and 89.9% of male Kpelle-English speakers perceived being “completely free” to choose their preferred candidate compared to 75.0% of urban females, 82.6% of rural females, 69.7% of female English speakers, and 83.2% of female Kpelle-English speakers. These measurements showed

that urban respondents (77.6%) and English speakers (72.0%) perceived being less “completely free” to choose their preferred candidate than rural respondents (86.1%) and Kpelle-English speakers (86.5%). However, female respondents (79.0%) perceived being less “completely free” to choose a preferred candidate than male respondents (85.1%). In addition, female English speakers (69.7%) perceived being the least, while rural males (89.5 percent) and male Kpelle-English Speakers (89.9%) perceived being the most “completely free” to choose a preferred candidate. Generally, all the subgroups have a low perception of being “not at all free” to choose a preferred candidate.

Table 3

*Q15C—Freedom to Choose Preferred Candidate*

**Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit \* Q15c. Freedom to choose who to vote for \* Q101. Gender of respondent Crosstabulation<sup>a</sup>**

Q101. Gender of respondent			Q15c. Freedom to choose who to vote for					Total	
			Not at all free	Not very free	Somewhat free	Completely free	Don't know		
Male	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	Count	2	17	34	228	3	284
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.7%	6.0%	12.0%	80.3%	1.1%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.3%	2.8%	5.7%	38.1%	0.5%	47.4%
	Rural	Count	3	5	24	282	1	315	
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	1.0%	1.6%	7.6%	89.5%	0.3%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.5%	0.8%	4.0%	47.1%	0.2%	52.6%
	Total	Count	5	22	58	510	4	599	
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	0.8%	3.7%	9.7%	85.1%	0.7%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.8%	3.7%	9.7%	85.1%	0.7%	100.0%
Female	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	Count	6	14	50	213	1	284
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	2.1%	4.9%	17.6%	75.0%	0.4%	100.0%
			% of Total	1.0%	2.3%	8.3%	35.4%	0.2%	47.3%
	Rural	Count	5	9	40	262	1	317	
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	1.6%	2.8%	12.6%	82.6%	0.3%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.8%	1.5%	6.7%	43.6%	0.2%	52.7%
	Total	Count	11	23	90	475	2	601	
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	1.8%	3.8%	15.0%	79.0%	0.3%	100.0%
			% of Total	1.8%	3.8%	15.0%	79.0%	0.3%	100.0%
Total	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Urban	Count	8	31	84	441	4	568
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	1.4%	5.5%	14.8%	77.6%	0.7%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.7%	2.6%	7.0%	36.8%	0.3%	47.3%
	Rural	Count	8	14	64	544	2	632	
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	1.3%	2.2%	10.1%	86.1%	0.3%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.7%	1.2%	5.3%	45.3%	0.2%	52.7%
	Total	Count	16	45	148	985	6	1200	
			% within Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	1.3%	3.8%	12.3%	82.1%	0.5%	100.0%
			% of Total	1.3%	3.8%	12.3%	82.1%	0.5%	100.0%

a. From Afrobarometer Round 4 Survey Conducted in 2008

Ethnicity of Respondent \* Q15c. Freedom to choose who to vote for \* Q101. Gender of respondent Crosstabulation<sup>a</sup>

Q101. Gender of respondent				Q15c. Freedom to choose who to vote for					
				Not at all free	Not very free	Somewhat free	Completely free	Don't know	Total
Male	Ethnicity of Respondent	English	Count	2	15	28	136	2	183
			% within Ethnicity of Respondent	1.1%	8.2%	15.3%	74.3%	1.1%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.3%	2.5%	4.7%	22.7%	0.3%	30.6%
	Kpelle and English	Count	3	7	30	374	2	416	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.7%	1.7%	7.2%	89.9%	0.5%	100.0%	
		% of Total	0.5%	1.2%	5.0%	62.4%	0.3%	69.4%	
	Total	Count	5	22	58	510	4	599	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	0.8%	3.7%	9.7%	85.1%	0.7%	100.0%	
		% of Total	0.8%	3.7%	9.7%	85.1%	0.7%	100.0%	
Female	Ethnicity of Respondent	English	Count	4	13	38	129	1	185
			% within Ethnicity of Respondent	2.2%	7.0%	20.5%	69.7%	0.5%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.7%	2.2%	6.3%	21.5%	0.2%	30.8%
	Kpelle and English	Count	7	10	52	346	1	416	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	1.7%	2.4%	12.5%	83.2%	0.2%	100.0%	
		% of Total	1.2%	1.7%	8.7%	57.6%	0.2%	69.2%	
	Total	Count	11	23	90	475	2	601	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	1.8%	3.8%	15.0%	79.0%	0.3%	100.0%	
		% of Total	1.8%	3.8%	15.0%	79.0%	0.3%	100.0%	
Total	Ethnicity of Respondent	English	Count	6	28	66	265	3	368
			% within Ethnicity of Respondent	1.6%	7.6%	17.9%	72.0%	0.8%	100.0%
			% of Total	0.5%	2.3%	5.5%	22.1%	0.3%	30.7%
	Kpelle and English	Count	10	17	82	720	3	832	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	1.2%	2.0%	9.9%	86.5%	0.4%	100.0%	
		% of Total	0.8%	1.4%	6.8%	60.0%	0.3%	69.3%	
	Total	Count	16	45	148	985	6	1200	
		% within Ethnicity of Respondent	1.3%	3.8%	12.3%	82.1%	0.5%	100.0%	
		% of Total	1.3%	3.8%	12.3%	82.1%	0.5%	100.0%	

a. From Afrobarometer Round 4 Survey Conducted in 2008

Overall, a comparison of the subgroups (urban males, urban females, rural males, rural females, male English speakers, female English speakers, male Kpelle-English speakers, and female Kpelle-English speakers) based on the dependent variables validates that respondents' (voters') demographics have an effect on their perception of corruption (fairness) in Liberia's 2005 national election. However, the study's



expectations about rural and female respondents were not fully accurate. For example, urban males and male English speakers rather than rural females and female Kpelle-English speakers were expected to perceived the election as more “completely free and fair” and being more “completely free” to choose a preferred candidate because they are the most privileged in Liberian society. However, the analyzed data produce an opposite result. On the other hand, females more frequently perceived the National Election Commission as “not at all” trusted and felt less “completely free” to choose a preferred candidate, which was anticipated because they are the least privileged. It seems likely that privilege is one factor in perception of corruption and freedom, but other factors are likely at play. The nature of these factors, however, is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

### **Cross Tabulation**

The cross-tabulation Processing Summary shows 1200 cases of data and zero missing cases. This means that all the participants answered the questionnaires. The Contingency Table shows that the 1200 cases are composed of 599 males and 601 females. These figures are further divided into 284 urban males, 315 rural males, 284 urban females, and 317 rural females, which breaks down into 568 (47.3%) urban participants and 632 (52.7%) rural participants. This information validates that Afrobarometer randomly selected its survey participants, which prevents skewing of the data toward a particular gender, residence, or ethnicity. In other words, comparison can be made among urban females, rural females, urban males, rural males, male English

speakers, males Kpelle-English speakers, female English speakers, and female Kpelle-English speakers without disadvantage to any subgroup.

### **Contingency Table**

The contingency table produced by a three-way crosstab analysis of resident (explanatory variable), election freeness and fairness (response variable), and gender (explanatory variable) are partial tables for males' and females' perception of fairness (corruption) in Liberia's 2005 national election. These tables provide a breakdown of how urban males, rural males, urban females, and rural females perceived quality of the election in answering the Afrobarometer question "On the whole, how would rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in 2005?" respondents selected "missing," "not free and fair," "free and fair with major problem," "completely free and fair," "don't understand question," and "don't know." The partial tables were then analyzed separately to determine urban and rural respondents' (voters) perception of fairness (corruption) in the election.

The measurements in section one revealed that "not free and fair" and "free and fair with major problems" were selected by 34.5 percent of urban males and 24.5 percent of rural males compared to 26.7 percent of urban females and 24.6 percent of rural females, respectively. This result indicates that urban respondents (voters) perceived the 2005 national election as more unfair (corrupted) than rural respondents (voters). In addition, urban males perceived the most unfairness (corruption) while rural males perceived the least unfairness (corruption) in the electoral process. Overall, 26.4 percent

of respondents (voters) perceived Liberia's 2005 national election as "not free and fair" and "free and fair with major problems."

### **Chi-Square Test**

The Chi-Square test result is used to confirm whether the relationship between respondents' (voters') gender, residence, and "election free and fair" are statistically significant. The Chi-Square value for male is 18.777 with a P-Value of 0.002, while the Chi-Square value for female is 9.422 with a P-Value of 0.151. This male P-Value (0.002) is less than the study's "two tailed" confidence level of 0.05. Therefore, this is strong evidence against the null hypothesis that among males, residence, and "election free and fair" are not associated within the sample population (respondents). However, the P-Value (0.151) for females indicates insufficient evidence against the null hypothesis that residence and "election free and fair" are associated within the sample population (respondents). In other words, at the study's 0.05 percent significance level it fails to reject the null hypothesis that residence and "election free and fair" are related among female respondents (voters), while among male respondents (voters) the null hypothesis can be confidently rejected.

The study's control for gender creates a partial association in which the relationship between residence and "election free and fair" is not significant overall. However, a partial association remains for male respondents (voters). In conclusion, respondents' (voters) gender does appear to have an impacted on their perception of fairness (corruption) in Liberia's 2005 national election. In other words, residence seems to affect male respondents.

## Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis of the Afrobarometer Round 4 survey data reveals that gender, residence, and ethnicity have a “two tailed” statistical significance at alpha level of “0.05” in association with respondents’ (voters’) perception of corruption of fairness of “Q71–election freeness and fairness,” “Q49C–trust National Election Commission,” and “Q15–freedom to choose preferred candidate.” These results satisfy the study’s confidence level of 95 degrees and contribute to the independent variables’ discrete nature.

Table 4

### First Correlation Matrix

		Correlations <sup>c</sup>						
		Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Q101. Gender of respondent	Ethnicity of Respondent	Q71. Elections free and fair	Q49c. Trust national electoral commission	Q15c. Freedom to choose who to vote for	
Spearman's rho	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.002	.702**	.091**	.052	.101**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.956	.000	.002	.071	.000
		N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Q101. Gender of respondent		Correlation Coefficient	.002	1.000	-.003	.061*	-.042	-.086**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.956	.	.931	.034	.142	.003
		N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Ethnicity of Respondent		Correlation Coefficient	.702**	-.003	1.000	.129**	.089**	.166**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.931	.	.000	.002	.000
		N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Q71. Elections free and fair		Correlation Coefficient	.091**	.061*	.129**	1.000	.322**	.104**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.034	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Q49c. Trust national electoral commission		Correlation Coefficient	.052	-.042	.089**	.322**	1.000	.114**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.071	.142	.002	.000	.	.000
		N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Q15c. Freedom to choose who to vote for		Correlation Coefficient	.101**	-.086**	.166**	.104**	.114**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.003	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

c. From Afrobarometer Round 4 Survey Conducted in 2008

The analysis is performed on independent variables that have an impact on categorical and dependent variables with multiple outcomes. In other words, gender, residence, and ethnicity have two subgroups each, and “Q71–election freeness and fairness,” “Q49C–trust National Election Commission,” and “Q15C–freedom to choose preferred candidate” have five to seven answers each. Therefore, the study will discuss the correlation coefficients of the variables, not their subgroups. The gender variable has a moderate positive relationship with respondents’ perception of “Q71–election freeness and fairness” and a moderate negative relationship with respondents’ perception of “Q15C–freedom to choose preferred candidate” at a correlation coefficient of 0.061 and -0.086 respectively. The variable residence has moderate positive relationships with respondents’ perception of “Q71–election freeness and fairness” and “Q15C–freedom to choose preferred candidate” at correlation coefficients of 0.091 and 0.101, respectively. The variable ethnicity has moderate positive relationships with respondents’ perception of “Q71–election freeness and fairness,” “Q49C–trust National Election Commission,” and “Q15C–freedom to choose preferred candidate” at coefficients of 0.129, 0.089, and 0.166, respectively. However, gender and residence do not have a statistically significant relationship with respondents’ perception of “Q49C–trust National Election Commission.”

A significant “two tailed” test at .05 confidence level for gender produced p-values of 0.034 for “Q71–election freeness and fairness” and 0.003 for “Q15C–freedom to choose preferred candidate,” and the same test for residence produced p-values of 0.002 and 0.000 respectively. In addition, ethnicity also produced p-values of 0.000 for

“Q71–election freeness and fairness,” 0.002 for “Q49C–trust National Election Commission,” and 0.000 for “Q15C–freedom to choose preferred candidate.” These p-values are all less than the study’s “two tailed” confidence level of 0.05. This means that there is statistically significant evidence of a relationship between respondents’ gender, residence, and ethnicity and their perception of corruption or fairness in Liberia’s 2005 electoral processes. Therefore, the study rejects its Null hypothesis that “Voters’ (respondents’) demographics are not related to their perception of corruption in Liberia’s election process” and accepts the alternate hypothesis that they are related.

Table 5

*Second Correlation Matrix*

		Correlations <sup>c</sup>						
		Q50d. Corruption: government officials	Q50e. Corruption: police	Q50g. Corruption: judges and magistrates	Q49c. Trust national electoral commission	Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Q101. Gender of respondent	Ethnicity of Respondent
Q50d. Corruption: government officials	Pearson Correlation	1	.765**	.733**	.185**	.089**	.088**	.061*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.002	.002	.035
	N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Q50e. Corruption: police	Pearson Correlation	.765**	1	.704**	.141**	.011	.111**	-.031
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.701	.000	.278
	N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Q50g. Corruption: judges and magistrates	Pearson Correlation	.733**	.704**	1	.198**	.068*	.064*	.042
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.018	.026	.143
	N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Q49c. Trust national electoral commission	Pearson Correlation	.185**	.141**	.198**	1	.090**	.009	.118**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.002	.746	.000
	N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit	Pearson Correlation	.089**	.011	.068*	.090**	1	.002	.702**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.701	.018	.002		.956	.000
	N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Q101. Gender of respondent	Pearson Correlation	.088**	.111**	.064*	.009	.002	1	-.003
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.026	.746	.956		.931
	N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200
Ethnicity of Respondent	Pearson Correlation	.061*	-.031	.042	.118**	.702**	-.003	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035	.278	.143	.000	.000	.931	
	N	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

c. From Afrobarometer Round 4 Survey Conducted in 2008

A second analysis for the election management institutions (with the same standards) also reveals that residence, gender, and ethnicity have statistical significance association with respondents' (voters') perception of corruption among "Q50D–government officials," "Q50E-police officers," "Q50G–judges and magistrates," and "Q49C–trust National Election Commission." The variable residence has a moderate positive (0.089) relationship with respondents' perception of "Q50D–corruption government officials," a moderate positive (0.068) relationship with respondents' perception of "Q50–corruption judges and magistrates," and a moderate positive (0.090) relationship with respondents' perception of "Q49C–trust National Election Commission." The variable gender has a moderate positive (0.088) relationship with respondents' perception of "Q50D–corruption government officials," a strong positive (0.111) relationship with respondents' perception of "Q50E–corruption police officers," and a moderate positive (0.064) relationship with respondents' perception of "Q50G–corruption judges and magistrates." Well as, the variable ethnicity has a moderate positive (0.061) relationship with respondents' perception of "Q50D–corruption government officials" and a strong positive (0.118) relationship with respondents' perception of "Q49C–trust National Election Commission." In addition, a significant "two tailed" test at 0.01 confidence level for gender produced p-values of 0.002 for government officials and 0.000 for police officers, residence produced a p-value of 0.002 for government officials and 0.002 for trust national election commission, and ethnicity produced a p-value of 0.000 for trust-national election commission. Well as, a significant "two tailed" test at 0.05 confidence level for gender produced a p-value of 0.026 for

judges and magistrates, residence produced a p-value of 0.018 for judges and magistrates, and ethnicity produced a p-value 0.035 for government officials.

These p-values are all less than the study's "two tailed" confidence level of 0.05. This means that, there is statistically significant evidence of a relationship between respondents' gender, residence, and ethnicity with their perception of corruption among government officials, police officers, judges and magistrates, and trust in the national election commission during Liberia's 2005 presidential election. Therefore, the study will reject its null hypothesis that "Voters' (respondents) demographics (gender and residence) are not related to their perception of corruption in Liberia's political process." and accept the alternate hypothesis that they are related.

Overall, the used of a chi-square test and a correlation analysis produces a validation of association among the variables in two ways. First, the chi-square test reveals how subgroups like urban females and rural males individually influenced respondents' perception of election quality and their level of significance. Second, the correlation analysis shows the nature and direction of relationships among all six variables and their statistical significance. These approaches produce evidence that supports a rejection of the study's Null hypothesis.



## Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### Introduction

An assessment of Afrobarometer survey respondents' (voters') perceptions of the corruption or fairness of Liberia's 2005 election was performed based on gender, residence, and ethnicity. This information was acquired by performing a cross-tabulation analysis, a chi-square test, and correlation analysis, which revealed how demographic characteristics (urban female, rural male, English speaker, etc.) impacted respondents' perception and showed existing relationships (nature and direction) among the variables. The Afrobarometer Round 4 survey contained the best data for this project because its questions focused on respondents' participation in the election. In addition, this quantitative approach provided validation for the existence of technical irregularities (voter registration, vote count, establishment of precincts, and dissemination of election information) in Liberia's election processes. The findings obtained from analyzing the data are as follows:

- On the dimension of "Q71—election free and fair," more urban respondents (30.6%) perceived the 2005 national election as "not free and fair" and "free and fair with major problems" than rural respondents (24.6%), while fewer urban respondents (67.3%) perceived the election as "free and fair with minor problems" and "completely free and fair" than rural respondents (70.6%). In addition, men (15.0%) and women (15.0%) perceived the election equally as "not free and fair," while fewer men (33.9%) perceived it as "completely free and fair" compared to women (36.8%). On the other hand, a large number of

male (38.5%) and female (38.7%) Kpelle-English speakers perceived the election as “completely free and fair,” while fewer male English speakers (23.5%) perceived it as “completely free and fair.” Overall, 27.4% of respondents (voters) perceived Liberia’s 2005 national election as “not free and fair” and “free and fair with major problems.”

- On the dimension of “Q49C—trust National Election Commission,” the fewest urban men (22.2%) and male English speakers (21.9%) perceived the commission as “not at all” trusted compared to urban women (27.5%) and female English speakers (28.6%), who most often perceived it as “not at all” trusted. On the other hand, fewer urban respondents (24.8%) perceived the commission as “not at all” trusted compared to rural respondents (26.3%). However, fewer male respondents (24.4%) perceived the commission as “not at all” trusted, and more male respondents (24.4%) trusted it “a lot” compared to female respondents, who more often perceived it as “not at all” trusted (26.8%) and less often trusted “a lot” (17.0%). This result validates the initial hypothesis. Overall, 60.4% of respondents perceived the National Election Commission as “not at all” and “just a little” trusted during Liberia’s 2005 election.
- On the dimension of “Q15C—freedom to choose preferred candidate,” rural respondents (10.1%) less often perceived being “somewhat free to choose” compared to urban respondents (14.8%), who more often perceived being “somewhat free to choose.” On the other hand, female English speakers

(69.7%) less often perceived being “completely free” to choose, compared to male Kpelle-English speakers (89.9%) and rural men (89.5%), who perceived themselves as being the most free to choose. However, more women perceived being “not at all free”/“not very free” (5.6%) and fewer perceived themselves as “somewhat free”/“completely free” (94%) compared to males who perceived being less free (4.5%) and more free (94.8%), respectively. However, these figures are not statistically significant.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

These findings provide sufficient evidence to prove that voters’ (respondents’) demographics are related to their perception of quality (corrupt or fair) in Liberia’s election processes. They are also validated by a chi-square test and a correlation analysis, which reveal respondents’ demographics’ (urban female, rural male, Kpelle-English speakers, etc.) influence on their perception of election quality and the relationships (nature and direction) among all six variables. Moreover, the findings confirm that voters (respondents) perceived Liberia’s electoral processes as corrupted.

The underlying cause for this problem is not political but administrative. In other words, the nation’s dysfunction stems from a lack of coordination between its administrative (patrimonialism) and governing (constitutional democracy) systems that has resulted in weak public institutions (Weber, as cited in Tompkins, 2005). The administrative institutions existed in the form of nepotism, patrimonialism, and indirect rule, which have fostered Americo-Liberians’ and contemporary regimes’ abuse of authority (Liebenow, 1987; Pham, 2004; Sawyer, 1992). Moreover, these autocratic

governments have used regular elections as a means of proving their democratization while evolving into a one-party state, disenfranchising voters, and banning political parties (Crowder et al., 1966; Harris, 2012; Liebenow, 1987; Sawyer, 1992). This has happened even though it is known that holding elections in an “authoritarian state construct” does not enhance democratization in a nation (Kieh, as cited in Saine et al., 2011). In addition, the administration of a constitutional government through patronage relationships has given Liberian presidents enormous power. This authority is then used to appoint relatives, supporters, and partisans as leaders of election management institutions such as the National Election Commission, the National Police Force, and the Supreme Court. The qualifications or competencies of such appointees are not important as long as they are the president’s favorites.

An autocratic state has long existed in Liberia because nepotistic or patriarchal institutions are incapable of providing effective oversight for election management organization (National Election Commission, police force, courts, etc.), thereby making public officials susceptible to mismanaging resources, rigging elections, and demanding bribes to perform their responsibility (Fukuyama, 2004; Rand Corporation, 2007; Moyo, 2009). These problems have made it difficult for Liberia’s electoral management institution to administer an equitable (free and fair) election. This situation has created citizens’ distrust in the National Election Commission and lack of confidence in the election process. The Afrobarometer survey of voting-age Liberians revealed that 78% of respondents trusted the National Election Commission “some,” “just a little,” or “not at all,” whereas 92%, 91%, and 90% of them perceived “some,” “most,” or “all”

government officials, police officers, and judges and magistrates, respectively, as being corrupt (Tokpa et al., 2009). As a result, the study concludes that Liberia's election process is corrupt because it lacks an independent and a competent electoral administration. This has made Liberia an autocratic state, despite being classified as an "electoral democracy," in a "warning status" of failure, or a "partly free" nation (Freedom House, 2012; The Fund for Peace, 2012).

The appropriate way to transform Liberia's corrupted political and economic systems is to enact new legislation that mitigates public corruption. The effective administration of elections is a prerequisite to transitioning Liberia into a democracy. Therefore, the legislature should enact a policy that establishes a professional civil servant system for recruiting bureaucrats and places the Election Commission outside of government (Pastor, 1999). Such a policy will ensure that Liberia's Election Commission is beyond the control of governmental regimes and help to appoint competent individuals as commissioners. Qualified election officials will then minimize technical irregularities and corruption (bribery for votes) in Liberia's electoral processes through ensuring voter registration, enforcement of campaign rules, qualification of parties, fair counting of votes, and legitimate establishment of precinct. A good start would be a policy that institutes Pastor's (1999) third model for electoral management bodies, which suggested that "an independent election commission manned by experts and directly accountable to the parliament" will be effective at conducting elections (p. 12). Legislation to place the Liberian Election Commission outside of government is a strategy that will eliminate presidential power of appointment, enhance election quality, insulate the commission

from corruption, and decrease voters' perception that the conduct of elections is manipulated (Pastor, 1999).

Such a structural reform initiative will revitalize the election management institutions (national election commission, police force, judicial system, and government officials) and foster effective governance (rule of law, due process, etc.) in Liberia's electoral processes (Crocker, 2003; Rotberg, 2002). In other words, this transformation will help Liberia's government to adhere to democratic principles, thereby allowing it to successfully implement policies through appropriate coordination between its bureaucracy and its constitutional government (Weber, as cited in Tompkins, 2005). The achievement of such a political system will resolve the inequities that indigenous people have long encountered and restored Liberia's ability to enforce laws that keep its citizens in compliance (Fukuyama, 2004).

The legislative issues that should be addressed promptly include presidential power of appointment, redesign of the national symbols (seal and flag), and a return of some communal land to indigenous communities. These actions will allow the nation to better acknowledge indigenous participation. Americo-Liberians abused of power through presidential appointments and their consistent grabbing of indigenous peoples' land was primary reasons for Liberia's civil war (Berkeley, 2001; Harris, 2012; Liebenow, 1987; Pham, 2004). Therefore, these public mandates will restore a sense of self-determination for both indigenous people and Liberians and confirm national identity. Such laws will also improve economic development in the hinterland, the area

that has been most adversely impacted by past and existing discriminatory policies (Clower et al., 1966; Gorlorwulu & Warner, 2011; Liebenow, 1987; Sawyer, 1992).

### **Conclusion**

The enormous power of appointment given to Liberia's presidents allows them to award government jobs to their supporters (family members, friends, etc.) and denied employment to their opponents (challengers, opposition party members, etc.) without adherence to civil servant guidelines. This abusive authority helps Liberian presidents and their supporters to consolidate political control and engage in accepting bribes, embezzling public resources, and rigging elections (Boas, 2009; Harris, 2012). However, this kind of patronage system interferes with the formal bureaucratic functions (superior and subordinate relationship, accountability procedures, disciplinarian system, transparency structure, and division of labor) of Liberia's electoral management institutions (police force, courts, and the national election commission) thereby making them ineffective at administering free and fair elections (Berkeley, 2001; Fayol, Mooney, & Gulick, as cited in Tompkins, 2005). A removal of the power of appointment, currently concentrated in the office of president, will allow citizens to elect key national and local government officials (election commissioners, superintendents, county attorney, etc.) and hold them accountable for corruption (abuse of power, bribery, and mismanagement of resources). This system will institute proper oversight of public officials and discipline them to behave ethically. The desire to get elected and reelected will motivate officials to change their corrupt behaviors. Such an incentive does not exist in the nepotistic or patronage system that is fostered by presidential appointment. The legislature passed a

resolution, in August 2010, calling for a constitutional amendment to elect all public officials by a plurality except the president and vice president, but a referendum has stayed pending for its approval by the voters (Freedom House, 2011).

The passage of this amendment will make plurality and majority necessary, thereby minimizing public corruption in Liberian government. In addition, such a law will make Liberia's electoral commission an independent agency, protect it from presidential influence, and transform it into an effective oversight for elections. For example, an independent electoral institution could not have permitted President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's candidacy in the 2011 election, because she is sanctioned and prohibited from holding public office, whether elected or appointed, for 30 years by the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Harris, 2012; TRC Final Report Released, 2009). A thorough reform of the corrupt electoral system is needed for Liberia to become a successful democratic state.



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