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Assessing Electoral Process Challenges Through Poll Workers' Performance in Sub-Saharan Africa- Togo

Kokouvi Momo Amegnran
Walden University

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Review Committee

Dr. Morris Bidjerano, Committee Chairperson,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Dr. Anthony Leisner, Committee Member,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Dr. Paul Rutledge, University Reviewer,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
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Abstract

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Saharan Africa-Togo

by

Amegnran Kokouvi Momo

MA, Strayer University, 2011

MA, University of Benin, 1985

BA, University of Benin, 1984

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

Contenders disputing electoral results in Sub-Saharan African countries often attribute defects in presidential electoral processes to the implementation of rules and procedures. Yet despite the considerable decision-making authority poll workers are entrusted with and the significance of the tasks performed by them, scholars have not closely investigated poll workers' contributions to elections' management in Sub-Saharan Africa. Using principal-agent theory as the foundation, the purpose of this case study was to examine the challenges encountered in the organization of the presidential election in Togo, held on April 25, 2015, with a particular emphasis on poll workers' job performance. Research questions focused on whether poll workers in Togo have the ability and the resources necessary to carry out quality elections and the perceived effects of poll workers' performance on the integrity of the presidential electoral process. Data were obtained from interviews with 11 purposely selected poll workers and review of social media audio and video records of the election. These data were inductively coded and subjected to thematic analysis. A key finding was that deficiencies in poll workers' performance reflect a complex interplay of ill-conceived legal framework, lack of infrastructure, poor training, personal ineptitude, underfunding, partisanship, and tribalism. Further findings indicated that poll workers performing poorly resulted in long lines of voters, voter suppression, inaccuracies in vote counts, and delay in results announcement. Implications for positive social change include election practitioners' increased awareness that improving the quality of service delivery to voters on election day may foster confidence in and legitimacy of election results, seen as prerequisite to peaceful presidential elections in this part of the world.

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Dedication

In memory of my beloved father Francois Toukoui Amegnan for his invaluable legacy.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background	1
Legal Framework of Electoral Rules in Togo.....	2
The Complexity of Poll Workers’ Activities in Togo	3
The Significance of Poll Workers’ Activities in Togo	5
Problem Statement	7
Purpose of the Study	8
Research Questions.....	8
Theoretical Framework.....	9
The Principal-Agent Model Theory.....	9
The State Capacity Theory.....	11
Nature of the Study	13
Definitions.....	14
Assumptions.....	15
Scope and Delimitations	17
Limitations	18
Addressing Limitations.....	20
Significance of the Study	21
Summary	23

Chapter 2: Literature Review	24
Introduction.....	24
Literature Search Strategy.....	27
Theoretical Foundation	28
The Principal-Agent Model Theory: Managing the Conflicting Objectives of Poll Workers and the Election Agency.....	29
The State Capacity Theory: Reconciling Poll Workers’ Performances with Institutional Resources	31
Rationale behind Poll Workers’ Demeanor	37
The Relationship between Poll Workers’ Performance and Electoral Integrity.....	40
Nature and Importance of Poll Workers’ Functions in the Electoral Process	44
Principle of the Right to Vote	45
Principle of Confidentiality.....	45
Principle of Equity	46
Principle of Security	46
Principle of Transparency	47
Principle of Fairness	48
Legal Provisions and Procedural Requirements as a Liability to Poll Workers’ Performance	49
Linking Poll Workers’ Performance with State Infrastructural Capacity.....	52
Observation Missions and Poll Workers’ Performance in Togo and Sub- Saharan Africa	57

Distinction between Poll Workers’ Administrative Errors and Intentional Practices	58
Administrative Errors.....	59
Intentional Practices.....	62
Poll Workers’ Performance, Public Trust, Voters’ Turnout, and Electoral Violence	64
Poll Workers’ Recruitment, Training, and Compensation.....	66
Summary and Conclusion.....	67
Chapter 3: Methodology	70
Introduction.....	70
Research Design.....	71
Case Study Approach.....	73
Rationale for the Research Design.....	74
Role of the Researcher	76
Methodology	78
Participants Identification and Selection	79
Sample Population	80
Sampling Size	81
Data Collection	83
Primary Sources	84
Secondary Sources	88
Data Analysis Plan.....	88
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	91

Ethical Considerations	92
Considering Participants’ Values and Beliefs.....	93
Preserving from Harm and Risks.....	93
Voluntary Participation.....	94
Notifying Informed Consent.....	94
Preserving Privacy, Confidentiality, and Anonymity.....	94
Archiving and Storing Files.....	95
Summary.....	95
Chapter 4: Research Findings.....	97
Introduction.....	97
Study Setting.....	98
Demographics of the Participants.....	101
Data Collection Process.....	103
Data Analysis Technique.....	107
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	111
Credibility.....	111
Transferability.....	112
Dependability.....	112
Confirmability.....	114
Negative Cases Analysis.....	115
Results.....	115
Research Subquestion 1: What Contextual Factors Prevent Poll Workers in Togo From Effectively Implementing Electoral Procedures?	117

Research Subquestion 2: What is the Perceived Effect of Poll Workers’ Performance on the Integrity of Elections in Togo?	127
Research Subquestion 3: What Corrective Measures and Innovative Approaches Could Improve Poll workers’ Job Performance in Togo?	133
Conclusion	138
Chapter 5: Discussions, Implications and Recommendations	139
Introduction.....	139
Understanding Key Findings in Light of Prior Research.....	140
Research Subquestion 1: What Contextual Factors Prevent Poll Workers in Togo from Effectively Implementing Electoral Procedures?	140
Research Subquestion 2: What is the Perceived Effect of Poll Workers’ Performance on the Integrity of Elections in Togo?.....	161
Research Subquestion 3: What Corrective Measures and Innovative Approaches Could Improve Poll Workers’ Job Performance in Togo?	170
Understanding Key Findings in Light of Theories	181
The Principal-Agent Theory or the Sustainability of the Presidential Electoral Process in Togo	182
The State Capacity Theory or the Affordability of the Organization of the Presidential Election in Togo.....	187
Limitations of the Study.....	193
Recommendations for Future Research	194

Implications.....	195
Positive Social Change	195
Theoretical Implications	195
Methodological Implications	197
Practical Implications.....	198
Conclusion of the Chapter	200
General Conclusion.....	202
References.....	205
Appendix A: Letter to Participant English/French	240
Appendix B: Interview Protocol English/French.....	242

List of Tables

Table 1. Intrinsic and Extrinsic Conflicting Objectives in Democracy Promotion	17
Table 2. The Three Levels of Electoral Governance	32
Table 3. Performance Standards for Returning Officers in the 2010 General Election, UK.....	37
Table 4. Matrix of Summarized Questions Captured in the EASI survey, by Dimension and Temporal Categories	42
Table 5. Demographic Profile of Participants.....	102
Table 6. Participants Qualification	102
Table 7. Case Study Documents	106
Table 8. Summary of Results.....	122
Table 9. Summary of Results.....	129
Table 10. Summary of Results.....	136
Table 11. Comparing Infrastructure Levels in Togo and Switzerland.....	144
Table 12. Internal Organization of a Voting Station.....	174

List of Figures

Figure 1. Major tasks of election administration at the local level	12
Figure 2. Sources of data	110
Figure 3. Voting station set up.....	175
Figure 4. A result sheet	251

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The voting rights of the citizens of Togo are being compromised and in some cases even denied because of flaws in the electoral process. The recurring controversies resulting from several elections held in the country suggest a link between the implementation of electoral rules and procedures in voting places and the personnel involved in the execution of electoral tasks.

Poll workers in Togo perform various complex and detailed functions under significant time constraints. They compile voter registration lists, determine voters' eligibility, screen voters' identification, count ballots, transmit vote results, and take on other responsibilities that require the exercise of a high level of discretion. Yet it is during these stages of the voting process that most issues have been recorded, including confusing voters' registration, omitting voters' names, allowing a shortage of ballots or mixing up candidates' ballots, padding ballot tallies, stuffing ballot boxes, transmitting inaccurate results, and so on (Birch, 2011; Norris, 2013). The ensuing controversies undermine the credibility of elections. It becomes necessary, therefore, to examine empirically poll workers' performance in order to identify factors that cause voting operations to derail.

Background

The 2015 presidential election in Togo offers an interesting empirical case of poll workers performing their jobs in an emerging democracy. Pastor (1999) emphasized that the implementation of electoral rules is as important as the establishment of electoral

legislations. Legal provisions contribute to instituting the framework in which poll workers fulfill their duties. The ability of poll workers to implement regulations and adhere to the code of conduct can be assessed in the light of the nature of the tasks required in working the polls whereas the legal foundation of the administration of elections in Togo forms the basis of poll workers' practice in the country.

Legal Framework of Electoral Rules in Togo

Two legal documents describe the electoral process in Togo. Articles 52, 59, and 141 of the Togolese Constitution of 1992 prescribe the nature of presidential, legislative, and local elections. Article 5 describes voter eligibility and voting criteria while article 104 appoints different courts to handle electoral litigation.

The second document is the electoral code 92-003, passed in July 1992 and modified time and again (2013-008 of February 2013, 2012-002 of May 2012, 2009-018 of August 2009, 07-012 of April 2007, 03-014 of October 2003, 00-007 of April 2000, and 99-001 of February 1999). The law assigns to the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) the responsibility of holding elections and sets out in detail the legal requirements that govern elections such as vote counting, electoral districts, number of precincts, and so on.

The way the electoral staff in charge of running the election implement the procedures can be traced to the institutional context in which poll workers in Togo fulfill their activities like in other emerging democracies (Pastor, 1999). Indeed, the administration of public service shapes the organization of elections in Togo and beyond is in line with the system of governance specific to the country. However, the underlying

factors affecting the completion of the electoral process cannot be understood without first understanding the nature of poll workers' tasks.

The Complexity of Poll Workers' Activities in Togo

Poll workers in Togo typically work on a seasonal basis depending on the timing of the presidential elections, which occur every 5 years. The latest presidential elections took place in April 25, 2015, during which poll workers performed a single day or a couple of days as required by the position held and its pertaining assignments. During this stretch of time, poll workers operate in a demanding environment. Contrary to public perception, poll workers' tasks do not consist of repetitive completion of a set of bureaucratic activities (Mozaffar & Schedler, 2002). Likewise, electoral regulations are not established orders that poll workers are assigned to execute mechanically. In reality, poll working consists of startup activities that take place in fast-paced conditions and require improvisation and flexibility. In their interactions with voters, poll workers constantly use independent discretion and judgment in executing their tasks. Maley (2000) wrote: "The simplest legislative election involves hundreds of interdependent tasks and a complex one involves thousands" (p. 7). The responsibility of poll workers is precisely to implement these tasks.

In Togo, poll workers have a range of responsibilities that run from the establishment of a voter census to the transmission of electoral results. Depending on the jurisdiction, poll workers' roles start before election day. They register citizens eligible to vote from on-site desks or go door to door. After reviewing the voter list according to

constituents' input, they organize and publish the definitive list at the correct voting place. They also deliver voter identification cards to appropriate voters.

On election day, poll workers set up electoral materials and provide all-purpose assistance throughout the day at the polling station. They assure that voting logistics run smoothly, process voters, and assist voters with casting their ballots. Poll workers direct voters to the sign-in desk, check their identification, ask voters to sign in, and hand out ballots. After the votes are cast, poll clerks impress voters' fingers with ink to prevent re-voting. They count the ballots, sign the tally sheets, and transmit the results to the national electoral commission.

The basic tasks that poll workers execute involve opening polling stations, welcoming voters, managing voters who are lining up, checking in voters, issuing ballots, assisting with provisional ballots, monitoring the polling station, operating voting equipment, processing results, and closing polling stations. Maley (2000) stated that four elements underpin the implementation of these tasks in a polling station: first, a mechanism to determine whether an individual is entitled to vote; second, a system to cast a confidential vote; third, a measure to prevent multiple votes by a single voter; and fourth, a method to ensure the accuracy of the total vote count.

Poll workers perform the majority of the tasks in a single election day or a couple of days that take place every couple of years (Montjoy, 2008). Because operations must be in compliance with specific standards and norms and concentrated in a short time frame, poll workers need to display organizational and logistical skills as well as individual aptitude. Training and practice provide poll workers with the proficiency

necessary to take on their jobs. Yet Pastor (1999) revealed that during elections in developing countries, electoral workers hardly complete their duties satisfactorily.

Poll workers' ability to complete their assignments has implications for the electoral process. Poll workers' work affects voters' waiting time in the polling station, the level of privacy during vote casting, the flow of operations, and the accuracy of vote counts. In all, the achievement of the tasks reflects the level of proficiency that poll workers demonstrate, but more importantly, it affects the level of confidence that voters have in the voting process (Claasen, Magleby, Monson, & Patterson, 2008). Accordingly, the election agency must establish effective methods of recruitment as well as effective training procedures in order to develop and support the proficiency of poll workers. These requirements demand various resources and entail additional financing from Togolese government, which recently introduced multiparty elections in 1992.

The Significance of Poll Workers' Activities in Togo

Poll workers in Togo take part in an electoral mission that is replete with pressing issues just like in other emerging democracies in Sub-Saharan African countries: a weak democratic commitment of political leaders, the pressure to adopt a democratic electoral system, the need to create an appropriate electoral regulatory framework, a restriction on electoral competition, and limited institutional development (Alence, 2004; Lindberg, 2006; Pastor, 1999; Schedler, 2002a; van de Walle, 2002).

Such pressing issues lead policy makers in Togo to attach to the organization of elections an importance that is understandable but often not supportable. Hill (2012) wrote that on-the-spot training sessions provided to poll workers and the limited money

set aside for the preparation—money often funded by international donors such as the European Union, the United Nations, the United States, and so on—are not in line with the significance that voters place on their constitutional right to vote, the respect due to voters' choices, and the consideration owed to the legitimacy of the elected candidate.

Working the poll requires knowledge, skill, and an attitude appropriate to meet the complexity and intensity inherent to the job. In established democracies, the professionalism of the electoral administration comes from a long history of nonpartisan public administration, a culture of civil servants' work ethic, career development for an electoral staff, and a substantial budget (Kelly, 2007; Pastor, 1999).

However, in Togo, poll workers operate in an emerging democracy that does not have a long standing of competitive elections. Additionally, as a developing country, the government in Togo may not be inclined to spend scarce resources on recruiting professional talent, training the talent, and requiring the new talent to execute the prescribed policies necessary for poll workers to deliver quality elections (Alvarez & Hall, 2006; Birch, 2011; Gerken, 2009; Pastor, 1999; Montjoy, 2010; Norris, 2013).

The governance quality in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries frames the operational context of elections. The prevailing institutional system preempts the value attached to the implementation of prescribed policies, leading scholars to emphasize rule setting and institutional reforms rather than poll workers involvement in electoral management. There is a clear paucity in the scholarly debate regarding the role of poll workers as electoral administrators in Sub-Saharan African emerging democracies.

Problem Statement

Researchers have examined institutional environments, such as the states' technical incapacity, which affects electoral governance (Fortin-Rittberger, 2014; Piccolino, 2015; Seeberg, 2014). However, there is no agreed upon explanation of possible causes of poll workers' inability to comply with electoral rules. There are indications that previous studies have overlooked subjective motivations that drive poll workers, such as partisanship or the casual nature of the job. In the end, little is known about the way in which poll workers in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries implement electoral activities that last at most a couple of days during elections.

Despite the complexity of tasks and the discretionary authority poll workers are entrusted with, scholars have not closely investigated the work of electoral staff in countries such as Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Togo, Zimbabwe, and so on (Collins & Burns, 2013). The importance of poll workers' contribution to election management is not well understood. Most importantly, the extent to which poll workers' performance alters election outcomes, thus igniting electoral litigation in transitional democracies, is a question that remains unanswered (Abuya, 2010; Beaulieu, 2014; Cederman, Gleditsch, & Hug, 2013; Collier & Vicente, 2012; Daxecker, 2012). An inquiry into the way poll workers discharge their duties needs to include the consideration of the operational context of elections.

Accordingly, in this study, I focused on the ways in which poll workers do their jobs in Togo, a Sub-Saharan African country where competitive elections are a nascent enterprise and elections carry high stakes. I studied the performance of poll workers in

depth in order to get a better understanding of the reasons why electoral results regularly raise controversies in Togo and subsequently for finding ways to deliver consensual elections in the country.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this qualitative study was to examine poll workers' ability to manage the electoral process in Togo and highlight any challenges they face in the process. In this study, I explored the motivations behind poll workers' accomplishments and identified factors that hamper poll workers in the execution of electoral procedures. The investigation provided useful insights into the organization of elections and determined the perceived effects of poll workers' performance on electoral management. Last, I propose remedial measures to help poll workers in Togo improve their performance so that elections truly reflect voters' choices and remain meaningful in this part of the world.

Research Questions

The study focused on the following main research question:

Do poll workers in Togo have the ability and the resources necessary to carry out quality electoral operations in the country?

The subquestions are as follows:

1. What contextual factors prevent poll workers in Togo from effectively implementing electoral procedures?
2. What is the perceived effect of poll workers' performance on the integrity of elections in Togo?

3. What corrective measures and innovative approaches could improve poll workers' job performance in Togo?

Theoretical Framework

Governments rely on individuals to deliver public services. Thus, the administration of elections requires the election agency to formulate the policies related to the organization of the elections, direct electoral operations, and recruit the appropriate staff. In turn, electoral personnel—including poll workers—are responsible for implementing electoral operations. Bringing the election agency and poll workers together creates a partnership that can be compared to the principal-agent relation. Generally under no direct supervision and with little reference to institutional policies, poll workers make decisions and take actions that can affect voters' rights and alter electoral outcomes. As for its part, the election agency participates in the partnership by providing accrued resources to achieve electoral goals. I built this study based on the model of principal-agent theory and the state capacity theory.

The Principal-Agent Model Theory

Organizing an election is a major undertaking for a government, yet government officials do not themselves perform some of the critical activities (Alvarez & Hall, 2006). Instead, these activities are given to people hired for the task. The entire electoral operation involves establishing numerous precincts that each need to be run by a staff. To achieve this goal, the government, represented by the election agency, enlists the services of individuals who agree to serve as poll workers. In reality, the activities required by the electoral operations are beyond the direct control of the election agency. Such a de facto

arrangement creates a situation in which poll workers act on behalf of the government that gives them the mandate to carry out electoral-related activities. That is the principal-agent model (Waterman & Maier, 1998).

From Waterman and Maier's (1998) perspective, the principal-agent model theory addresses the imbalanced relationship between staff and management in public service. While Alvarez and Hall (2006) first introduced the theory to model the relation existing between election authorities and electoral workers acting on their behalf, James (2013) later suggested that poll workers operate as election board representatives; therefore, administrative best practice standards could be usefully applied to assess their performance.

Although based on market structures, the principal-agent model theory is used by researchers to clarify the relation that runs from the highest level to the lowest level of an administrative bureaucracy. At the top is the citizenry that delegates powers to elected officials who in turn run government agencies. Kapucu (2007) argued that the dominant requirement for maintaining the relationship between the principal and the employee was to get employees with a knowledge advantage who could harness their own concerns to serve in the best interest of government. While the principal starts out lacking necessary information and expertise about the work to be done, the agent's skills and proficiency develop making it difficult for the principal to provide effective supervision. Accordingly, while poll workers are not free of mistakes, election authorities are not in a position to constantly supervise poll workers' performance (Alvarez & Hall, 2006). Here

is where institutions can usefully provide penalties to deter noncompliance or offer incentives to reward achievement (Nitta, 2007).

The State Capacity Theory

The successful implementation of electoral activities rests on the election agency's ability to direct electoral activities, recruit competent staff, and provide them with appropriate resources. Major components of electoral administration activities in Togo take place across a span of time, prior to and after election day. Prior to election day, these activities entail creating a voter register, acquiring and deploying voting equipment, designing ballots, locating and preparing voting places, anticipating alternative votes, and recruiting and training poll workers. On election day, activities involve conducting voting operations and securing electoral activities; after election day the activities include declaring results and ensuring the adjudication of vote contests (Montjoy, 2008). From beginning to end, poll workers are in charge of operations. In the context of the limited resources that characterize a developing country such as Togo, the logistically demanding organization of elections takes on a particular importance:

The technical elements of conducting an election are also of a magnitude of difficulty as to overwhelm most poor countries....In advanced democracies, those procedures are taken for granted. But in a poor, relatively uneducated developing country, the administration of an election is no simple matter....The capacity of such an administration to conduct complex bureaucratic tasks like elections is low. (Pastor, 1999, pp. 2-10)

The requirements for the organization of an election open the discussion about the way institutional factors may affect electoral governance. The ability of a government to provide a workforce capable of administering electoral operations, as well as its capacity to enforce institutional rules, indicate the level of “administrative effectiveness” of a country (Bratton & Chang, 2006). The concept of how effective is the administration is at the heart of a scholarly debate over the capacity of countries such as Togo to meet electoral challenges (Andersen, Moller, & Skaaning, 2014; Bratton & Chang, 2006; Piccolino, 2016, Seeberg, 2014).

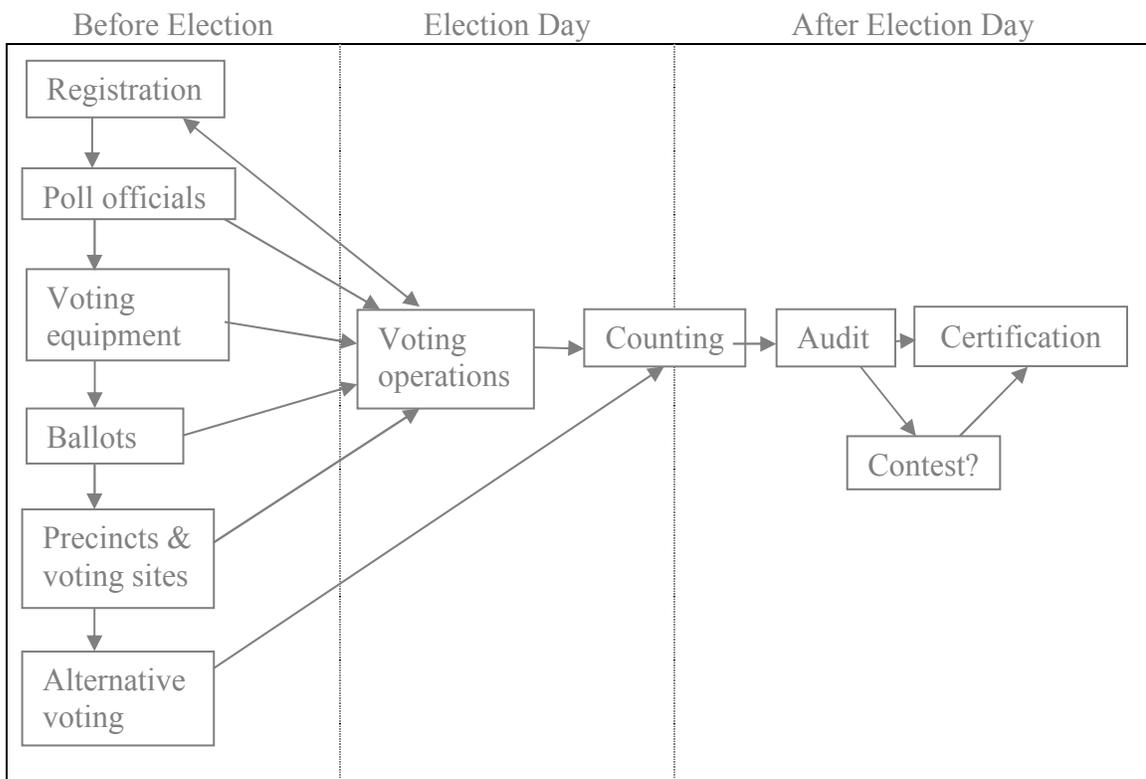


Figure 1. Major tasks of election administration at the local level. Adapted from "The public administration of elections" by R. S. Montjoy, 2008, *Public Administration Review*, 68(5), p. 789.

A representative system of democracy enables citizens to be watchdogs over the legislative branch of a government and the legislative branch to hold accountable the executive branch. In turn, the executive branch controls civil servants, including the electoral personnel (Manin, 1997). However, in a Sub-Saharan African emerging democracy like Togo, an informal line of authority featuring political patronage and ethnic affiliation emerges alongside the formal structure of public institutions (Bratton, as cited in Badie, Berg-Schlosser, & Morlino, 2011). As a result, a parallel hierarchy of political allegiance exists and sometimes conflicts with the administrative accountability system. This parallel hierarchy not only diverts the availability of resources but also affects the performance of poll workers and other civil servants.

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze issues associated with poll workers' job performance. In the study, I gave a detailed account of the activities conducted by poll workers and also explored the issues from the perspective of poll workers who are rarely given a voice in this matter.

To this end, I resorted to the method of inquiry applicable for a qualitative exploratory case study. In general, a qualitative study focuses on a phenomenon and strives to understand its nature by providing a meaningful interpretation of the occurrence (Creswell, 2013). The thinking process requires the researcher first to learn about the event and then to provide an in-depth account derived from the participants' viewpoints (Creswell, 2013). Researchers recommend a nonexperimental design approach

undertaken in a real world setting because it involves observation and interview techniques.

I reviewed audio and video records obtained from journalists who covered the presidential elections in Togo in order to observe how poll workers carry out their electoral duties. Then, I conducted interview sessions to disclose motivations behind poll workers' professional behavior. As a result, I was able to differentiate intentional and unintentional transgressions of electoral rules and analyze them. Moreover, audio and video records were valuable data sources because of the possibility of investigating electoral personnel's activities after the latest country's presidential elections held in April 25, 2015.

Definitions

For the purpose of this dissertation, I used the following terminology:

Ballot: A piece of paper printed with the picture and name of a candidate or candidates and the emblem of his or their political party. The voter indicates his preferred candidate by marking a place on the ballot. In principle, the ballot is secret, meaning that only the voter knows the choice he has made (OSCE, 2013).

Electoral administration: The wider set of activities that creates and maintains the broad institutional framework in which voting and electoral competitions take place (Mozaffar & Schedler, 2002).

Electoral fraud: Illegal efforts to shape election results through deception or other means, or deliberate violation of a set of electoral regulations (Lehoucq, 2003; Cavdar, in Alvarez, Hall, & Hyde, 2008)

Electoral malpractice: The manipulation of electoral processes and outcomes so as to substitute personal or partisan benefits for the public interest (Birch, 2011).

Electoral stakeholders: Voters, candidates, political parties, election workers, media, election monitors, courts, security forces, and so on (OSCE, 2013).

Infrastructure capacity: The ability of a state to regulate relationships in society, exploit natural resources, and commit resources to meet predetermined goals (Fortin-Rittberger, 2014).

Neo-patrimonialism: A system in which an informal political authority pervades the management of a state at political levels and diverts the distribution of public resources for individual gain (Bratton, as cited in Badie, Berg-Schlosser, & Morlino, 2011).

Sub-Saharan Africa: Countries located south of the Sahara desert. The area encompasses regional components including Central Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, and West Africa (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2003).

Voter register: A set of records of all the people eligible to vote in a given election (OSCE, 2013).

Voter list: A list of eligible voters assigned to a specific poll station (OSCE, 2013).

Assumptions

Leedy and Ormrod (2010) stated that “assumptions are so basic that, without them, the research problem itself could not exist” (p. 62). My two primary assumptions

were drawn from the reviewed literature about the electoral context in Togo in Sub-Saharan Africa.

My first assumption arose from the contractual arrangement inherent in the principal and the agent relationship. A patron and client network often grants favors and wealth to individuals to the detriment of the community. When applied to Togo in Sub-Saharan Africa, and particularly its elections, a perception of such an arrangement may affect the performances of poll workers to the point where the political background of the country must be analyzed. Above all, the patron and client arrangement helps frame the analysis of how public policies are designed and implemented in this part of the world.

Similar to other Sub-Saharan African countries, attributes of the political system of governance in Togo include weak political institutions, unstable political organization, and centralization of political power that result in appropriation of public resources, privatization of administrative structure, and poor delivery of public services (Bratton, 2011; Cheeseman, 2010; Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2003; van de Walle, 2002). The interaction of political institutions and their role in governance in Togo can predict the effect these institutions will have on the management of elections; furthermore, the influence the system exerts on public personnel in general and poll workers in particular can also be predicted (Debrah, 2011; Grimm & Leininger, 2012; Lindberg, 2003; Schedler, 2002a; van de Walle, 2003). The IDEA (2006) wrote: “Political institutions shape the rules of the game under which democracy is practiced, and it is often argued that the easiest political institution to be manipulated, for good or for bad, is the electoral system” (p.7).

Table 1

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Conflicting Objectives in Democracy Promotion

Conflict	Intrinsic conflicts of objectives	Extrinsic conflicts of objectives
Definition	Conflict of objectives that are inherent in democracy promotion	Conflicts of objectives of democracy promotion with other relevant policy goals
Examples	Free and fair elections vs. negotiated power-sharing Institution-building vs. empowerment Inclusion vs. exclusion Ownership vs. donor control	Democratization vs. peace-building (security, monopoly of force) Democratization vs. state-building (state authority, administrative capacity) Democratization vs. regime stability Democratization vs. socio-economic development

Note. Adapted from “Not All Good Things go Together: Conflicting Objectives in Democracy Promotion” S. Grimm & J. Leininger, 2012, *Democratization*, 19, p. 398.

Second, in this research I sought to understand electoral challenges from poll workers’ own perspective. Accordingly, my second assumption was that I assumed that individuals who agree to submit to interviews have appropriate experience in electoral matters and are open and truthful so that their responses to questions reflect their perceptions.

In the context of this research, these assumptions were necessary for framing the investigation regarding the room of maneuver of poll workers, determining poll workers’ responsibilities in the management of elections, and developing meaningful conclusions.

Scope and Delimitations

Electoral officials who contribute to the technical and organizational procedures that sustain electoral integrity include lawmakers, personnel of the election agency, security forces, and magistrates. These different actors intervene at different phases of the

process such as the formulation of the electoral rules, the safekeeping of electoral operations, and the adjudication of electoral disputes. Though these activities contribute to the organization of an election, they are not directly relevant to this research because this investigation involves the implementation of electoral rules, a task primarily assigned to poll workers where they interact with voters. Thus, the focus of the investigation was purposely confined to the service poll worker render on election day.

Observation missions and researchers have reported that most issues that undermine the integrity of an election occur at the basic level of the voting operations where poll workers intervene (Birch, 2011; European Union Election Observation Mission, 2011; Norris, 2013). Thus, improving the standards of management of electoral procedures rests on improving the effectiveness of poll workers. The purposeful sampling method depended on an opportunity to talk to individuals on hand and who have performed the past presidential election held in April 25, 2015. The collection of data took into account the availability of respondents to answer questions related to election matters as well as their willingness to converse on interferences with electoral rules. This case study offered a snapshot of electoral challenges that poll workers participating in the investigation encounter. Subsequent research may study upcoming elections to obtain consistent data on poll workers' behaviors.

Limitations

In developing the appropriate methodology to carry out this research, I counted the objectivity of the analysis as prime consideration. The most obvious limitations

resulted from the nature of a case study as this research relates to the integrity of electoral administration.

Ichino and Schundeln (2012) argued that individuals who engage in questionable behavior in electoral governance are reluctant to expose their activities. The authors noted that this is the principal difficulty in studying electoral integrity. In my research, respondents were selective in commenting on irregularities that compromise electoral integrity. A political consideration spans into the management of presidential elections in Togo generating a sensitivity that the research topic carries and which explains this inability of respondents to forth coming.

Additionally, poll workers displayed different attitudes depending on urban or rural locations. Researchers reported that evidence of electoral malpractices is less likely to occur in urban areas where mission observers are most often deployed. Rural areas are less accessible to mission observers because of the poor condition of communication, routes, and for security reasons. Thus, any research investigating poll workers' performance needs to take into account urban as well as rural areas.

The authoritative political system which long prevailed in Togo did not let Togolese society familiarize itself with data collection methods such as interviews or public surveys. The reintroduction of competitive elections in 1992 lifted the restriction on the freedom of expression. However, in practice expressing one's ideas and standing for one's opinions remain under close scrutiny from authorities. Not only surveys and polls are uncommon but traditional channels through which citizens speak their minds including mass media are embryonic.

A further challenge was that citizens by nature restrain themselves from discussing public policy, a restriction deriving from the leg of colonial rule. Now, indifference that citizens exhibit toward public policy results in a disinterest in scientific inquiries therefore a limited understanding of participants in data collection processes. The self-censorship reducing the list of appropriate participants the only other option was to recruit individuals readily available on the ground and willing to share their experiences. Since my ability to gain access to the exact type of recommended population sample was limited, the actual population sample is in reality a convenience sample. Thus participants in this study were advised in advance to disregard any question that makes them uncomfortable. Under these circumstances, the voluntary involvement indicates that participants engaged in this investigation with a clear difference in perspectives.

I anticipated that the participants will display strong opinions whether they are from the ruling party or the opposition party. Such polarization affected the objectivity of the statements that interviewees made. Further, the unwillingness of respondents to report their behavior and their limited understanding of data collection for a research interest led to a scarcity of information.

These limitations need to be considered and properly addressed in the interpretation of the findings and the conclusions drawn. Still, I took advantage of the conflicting positions as discussed in the next section addressing limitations.

Addressing Limitations

In order to deem results conclusive, scholars of qualitative research propose using various strategies to assure that the information obtained is objective and beneficial. I

used a variety of these strategies including being reflexive, richly describing occurrences, acknowledging alternatives explanations, reporting disconfirming evidence, and using multiples sources of information (Janesick, 2011; Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014; Rudestam & Newton, 2007).

Thus, I relied exclusively on information from institutions such as the OSCE, the EU, the OAS, the Carter Centre, the NDI, or the IFES which apply stricter evaluation standards in their election assessments (Donno, 2010; Kelley, 2009a). As previously mentioned, I documented the investigation process by journaling and writing memo regularly. Miles et al. (2014) hold that such strategy tracks the researcher's choices and conveys a transparency that offers the reader the opportunity to follow the analytical reasoning in a way that let him better understand the analysis. In the same vein, being reflexive and acutely aware of my personal predispositions were efforts to minimize subjectivity and maximize the objectivity of the analysis.

Interviewing poll workers from different political parties guaranteed that I heard opposing opinions; in turn, this let me initiate a cross-examination of statements that brought out facts. In this instance, the opposing views yielded a dynamic discourse and lent richness and diversity to the analysis.

Significance of the Study

Prior studies of electoral controversies in Sub-Saharan Africa have taken insufficient notice of the work of the electoral personnel performing at the lower level. Poll workers are an important part of a "free and fair" election so the story of electoral controversies cannot be adequately told without focusing on the actual jobs that poll

workers do. The study provided insights into poll workers' roles and functions as well as their conduct and motivations. By identifying characteristics of poll workers' completion of duties, the study drew attention to the typical difficulties encountered in the management of election in this part of the world. Given the prevalence of electoral disagreements between contenders in Togo, knowledge gained from the proposed study will be of prime importance to a variety of stakeholders involved in administering elections in Togo including voters, candidates, election officials, political parties, government, media, observation missions, international donors, and so on.

The study could potentially help practitioners responsible for running elections improve the credibility of the electoral process. The findings could empower poll workers by improving the services they render on election day to citizens who could be able to exercise and affirm their constitutional right. An improvement of electoral management depends on the effectiveness of those in charge of running the elections, especially poll workers. If an election agency is capable of detecting issues related to operating procedures, corrective actions can be taken appropriately, making electoral results unanimously accepted and supported by all stakeholders. Ultimately, a consensus about electoral results could raise voters' confidence, thus averting electoral clashes that give rise to violence and political instability in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries.

In a country like Togo, where democracy is a new and fragile concept, examining electoral practice was especially relevant for building institutional capacity. Any steps that can be taken to improve the jobs done by poll workers in Togo could help create stable institutions in the country. Honest elections could help international donors, such

as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United States, the European Union, and so on, see progress in the country and this recognition is a step towards granting more financial assistance.

Summary

The study addressed the critical issues surrounding the implementation of electoral operations in Togo with particular emphasis on the role that poll workers play.

This first chapter provides an overview of the institutional setting of election management in Togo and the influence that this context has on poll workers' practices. The interaction between the socio-political context and poll workers completion of their mission is significant as it helps understand the rationale that sustains the analytic process. Research questions suggest that a qualitative approach is appropriate to conduct this study. Indeed, a case study provides variety of resources necessary to collect data, flexibility to describe the experience of research participants, and hindsight to interpret and understand meaning of events.

Chapter two states the working theories guiding the analysis. The chapter outlines the procedures used to conduct the searches and discloses the sources investigated. More important, the chapter reviews previous and current literatures that inform the perspectives of this research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Accounts of electoral controversies in Sub-Saharan Africa suggest that poor management of elections permits electoral personnel to engage in less than satisfactory practices that affect the outcome of the elections (Beaulieu, 2014; Breunig & Goerres, 2011; Collier & Vicente, 2012; Murison, 2013).

My review of the literature of the last decade revealed that studies concerned with electoral challenges have shifted gradually from examining the institutional aspect of electoral governance to considering stakeholders' demeanors. The goal of honest elections is all the more important in emerging democracies where the organization of competitive elections has experienced resurgence in the last decades (Debrah, 2011; Guillermo, 2010; Kerr, 2013, Morris, 2012). Despite compelling instances of electoral drawbacks in Sub-Saharan Africa—mainly in Togo in 2005, Kenya in 2007, Zimbabwe in 2008, Cote d'Ivoire in 2010, with recent developments in Burundi in 2015, Chad, Congo, Gabon, and Zambia in 2016—few studies have paid attention to the role of electoral personnel.

The need to conceptualize electoral integrity first led scholars to evaluate the fairness of elections through the lens of institutional factors. Under this approach, scholars examining the pressing issue of the effectiveness of electoral management institutions focused on ways to separate the management of elections from the influence of the executive branch, political parties, and other stakeholders. Thus, early researchers were concerned with transparency, funding, and enfranchisement of electoral institutions

but overlooked the real issue of human resources (Gazibo, 2006; Guillermo, 2010; Kerr, 2013; Luqman, 2009; Rosas, 2010). Rarely have electoral personnel gained the attention of academics despite reports of election failures (Hall, Monson, & Patterson, 2009). The overarching goal of securing peaceful elections in countries without a tradition of competitive elections explains such an approach.

Ultimately, the need to ensure the integrity of electoral governance resulted in the expansion of the election business. An increase in electoral observation, electoral monitoring and electoral technical assistance took place, which in turn involved a proliferation of electoral stakeholders (Fox, 2012). As a result, a range of studies have been concentrated on ways to conduct an effective and non-partisan election monitoring (Daxecker, 2012; Hyde, & Marinov, 2014; Kelley, 2012). Other researchers have analyzed the value of observation missions to the promotion of credible and transparent elections (Borzyskowski, 2014; Hyde, 2011; Ichino & Schundeln, 2012; Little, 2012).

Even in established democracies, elections can be problematic. In 2000, the presidential race between Al Gore and George W. Bush in the United States caused academics to express an interest in the compliance efforts of the electoral personnel. The resulting enactment of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA, 2002) prompted scholars investigating effective ways to measure electoral integrity to shift attention to the human factor of electoral governance (Birch, 2011; Hall, Monson, & Patterson, 2009; Kearney, Parikh, & Sanders, 2014; Lopez-Pintor, 2010). A leading reason for scholars to study the “human dimension” is the increasing turnover that stems from a diminishing confidence

in the electoral process in established democracies and a pervasive postelectoral violence in emerging democracies.

Poll workers are involved in the organization and the management of election, which observers described as a complex task. The enterprise entails activities including registering voters, counting ballots, announcing the outcomes, and certifying these results. Poll workers perform these tasks with entrusted authority. For instance, a 2005 state law in Indiana required voters to show government-issued identification and gave poll workers the authority to ask the voters for their identification. Some citizens questioned the constitutionality of the regulation and challenged it in federal court. In *Crawford et al. v. Marion County Election Board*, the Supreme Court held that the law did not violate the federal constitution (553 US. 181, 2008). More to the point, the case brought poll workers' performance to the forefront of the academic literature where researchers seek to understand the way poll workers function. If a citizen is only allowed to vote after a poll worker certifies the citizen's identification, this confirms that poll workers play a major role in the electoral process.

In this study, I investigated the ability of poll workers to comply with electoral procedures during the presidential election held in April 25, 2015, in Togo. The review of literature on the subject generated four thematic areas:

1. Poll workers' ability to conduct different operations determines the overall quality of the elections and the public confidence in the electoral system.

2. Factors such as legal provisions, procedural requirements, and state structural capacity affect poll workers' performance.

3. Scholars make a distinction between administrative mistakes and intentional practices.

4. The variety of training programs across jurisdictions explains the differences in poll workers' performance.

Literature Search Strategy

I developed this literature review using a thematic approach. In an effort to obtain relevant research studies, I used major databases including Pro Quest Direct, Academic Search Premier, Business Search Premier (EBSCO), and Science Direct, using key words and alternate terms with similar meanings such as *poll workers*, *polling agents*, *electoral staffs*, *election personnel*, and *election officials* to access the databases. The selection of literature was confined to recent peer-reviewed studies ranging from 2010 to 2015.

Because the search was limited to these criteria, it yielded few relevant findings. It became necessary to add more keywords and to use variations of terms such as *electoral management bodies*, *electoral administration*, *election integrity*, *electoral malpractices*, *electoral frauds*, and *election observation* in order to obtain more substantive results.

The reference sections of related journal articles and the abstracts of theses and dissertations proved to be major sources of information. For further suggestions, I took advantage of websites of worldwide agencies and organizations assisting with elections in emerging democracies such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United States Department of State, the European Union, the Carter Center, the International Foundation for Electoral System (IFES), and the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). Since the objective of this study was to

examine poll workers' performance in Sub-Saharan Africa, my search of data was focused on that topic.

This study would benefit more from official records if countries in Sub-Saharan Africa had digitized and made available data from past elections. However, the search of the literature generated about 100 journal articles—published and unpublished—and scholarly books on electoral management that were browsed to get the most relevant information.

In this literature review, I examine how poll workers discharge their duties during elections, outline major methodological approaches, and discuss possible avenues for further research. Scholars agree that institutional organization and staff performance together entail a successful election management (Levitsky & Way, 2010). Under these circumstances, the contribution of poll workers is instrumental to a successful election. In seeking to identify challenges that electoral processes face in Togo, the central question to address in this literature review is whether electoral workers carry out electoral operations in compliance with standardized best practices. Therefore, in order to understand the role that poll workers play in the effectiveness of electoral processes in Togo, it is necessary to consider the preliminary issue of electoral integrity. The following theoretical foundation informs of the nature of the study and establishes a framework for relating the analysis to other studies.

Theoretical Foundation

In Togo, electoral governance faces major challenges and poll workers' practices reflect these challenges. For Maley (2000), these challenges amount to political

neutrality, logistics issues, accountability, decentralization, and project planning. Poll workers' failure to meet these challenges may result in a flawed election. "Ineffective electoral governance is an important cause of many flawed elections witnessed in transitional regimes over the past three decades" (Mozaffar & Schedler, 2002, p. 7).

A review of the related literature reveals that poll workers' behaviors can be understood in the light of broader theoretical themes. For example, how compliant are poll workers to prescribed guidelines in Togo? How accountable are poll workers for their achievements? In response to both questions, some scholars are tempted to ask whether a developing country like Togo, where democracy recently emerged, can even meet the conditions that are necessary for holding free and fair elections.

The principal-agent model theory offers a workable approach to apprehending the issue of responsiveness and accountability of poll workers performing as representatives of the election agency. Meanwhile the state capacity theory reflects information on the potential of Sub-Saharan African countries such as Togo for delivering public services and enforcing the rule of law.

The Principal-Agent Model Theory: Managing the Conflicting Objectives of Poll Workers and the Election Agency

The principal-agent model offers great usefulness for explaining the relationship between poll workers as employees and the election agency as employer. Alvarez and Hall (2012) are the leading contributors to the application of the principal-agent theory to the election model. For Alvarez and Hall, the relationship between poll workers and the

election agency is comparable to a pay-for-performance contract between an employer and his employee.

The reason for using this model emerges from the fact that poll workers in Togo engage in activities that ultimately involve the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) and the difficulty that the NIEC has in imposing compliance on poll workers. Poll workers apply rules, they interpret policies, they make decisions, and clearly, they exercise a discretion that affects the quality of elections (Atkeson et al., 2010; Claassen et al., 2008). But inevitably, problems arise.

First, poll workers carry out some of these activities with no immediate supervision, such as determining a voter's eligibility by processing his identification card. Second, poll workers' failure to adhere to prescribed procedures suggests that the workers' behavior conflicts with their employer's goals. And third, such departures from procedures require the principal—the election agency—to monitor the agent's—the poll worker's—activities in order to preserve the best interests of the public (Mcauliff, 2013).

Brehm and Gates (1994) formally examined the motives behind agents' choices and argued that three types of behavior drive their decisions. Agents “work” when they devote their efforts to accomplishing assigned goals. They “shirk” when they redirect their efforts to achieve purposes other than assigned goals and they “sabotage” when they pursue goals contrary to policy objectives. In all three instances, personal preferences dictate poll workers' behavior and supervisors have little ability to control their agents.

One way to merge employees' goals with an institution's goals is to implement a bureaucracy that exerts hierarchical control and let supervisors respond appropriately to

employees' misdeeds. But, in the absence of such a bureaucracy, poll workers who may be motivated by civic duty, but also by the immediate profit of associating with a patronage network, have the opportunity to show allegiance to their political party or their ethnic group, thus serving their own cause rather than their employer's (Basuchoudhary & Shughart, 2010). Such an outcome is common in the case of a politicized and ill-equipped administration and where state resources and resources of the ruling party are merged into one.

Under these circumstances, it is easier for poll workers to divert the electoral process to serve a particular interest as the cost of engaging in activities that compromise the electoral process is potentially small. As a result, it can be accurately stated that the resources allotted to the organization of the elections are a determining factor in influencing poll workers' performance.

The State Capacity Theory: Reconciling Poll Workers' Performances with Institutional Resources

The organization of elections is an elaborate process that tests the organizational capacity of an administration. "An election involves putting almost the whole adult population of a polity through a prescribed process in a short period, usually in the face of immutable deadline; it is one of the most complex logistical exercises that a country ever faces in peacetime" (Maley, 2000, p. 7). Above all, an election seeks to ensure universal suffrage and an equal participation of all citizens entitled to vote. Accordingly, the state must provide appropriate resources in a short period of time because in many countries election date is rarely determined far in advance.

Table 2

The Three Levels of Electoral Governance

Levels	Elements
1. Rule Making Choosing and defining the basic rules of the electoral game. (a) Rules of Electoral Competition: (b) Rules of Electoral Governance:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Formula – District magnitude – District boundaries – Assembly size–Electoral time table – Franchise
2. Rule Application Organizing the electoral game.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Voter registration – Party and candidate registration – Campaign financing and regulation – Election observation – Ballot design – Polling stations – Voting, counting, and tabulating – Election management bodies – Dispute settlement authorities
3. Rule Adjudication Certifying election results and resolving disputes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Registration of voters, candidates, parties – Registration of election observers – Voter education – Electoral organization – Voting, counting, and reporting – Admission of complaints – Processing of cases – Publication and implementation of rulings

Note. Adapted from “The Comparative Study of Electoral Governance-Introduction” by S. Mozaffar & A. Schedler, 2002, *International Political Science Review*, 23, p. 8.

Christensen and Gazley (2008) suggested that the ability of an organization to attract adequate resources is an important component in providing the autonomy necessary to advance defined goals. While the authors observed that the interaction

between the organization and the environment provides its dynamism, they stressed that it is the organization's leadership and the skills of its staff that determine if the organization will reach its optimal capacity. Applying this concept of effective organizational capacity to electoral governance in Togo is particularly relevant.

The quest for delivering an optimum public service involves achieving the three goals that an administration traditionally pursues: administrative efficiency, political neutrality, and public accountability (Gould, as cited in Mozaffar & Schedler, 2002). Maley (2003) wrote that in addition to these initial three goals, decentralization of responsibilities and project planning are particularly important in an electoral administration. Regarding decentralizing duties and conceiving project, the author argued that the challenge is to devolve operations to local election bodies and preserve accountability while also effectively designing a project that manages the numerous interdependent tasks involved in an election. These five factors—administrative efficiency, political neutrality, public accountability, decentralization of responsibilities, and project planning—determine the efficacy of an electoral administration. Indeed, the election agency is responsible for planning all logistics and conducting all activities associated with the election while poll workers are in charge of executing electoral operations.

In practice, the concern in Togo is whether poll workers follow prescribed procedures or if the election agency has failed to provide appropriate resources. Certainly, a poll worker who knowingly lets a voter cast a ballot without formally requiring his identification card or who did not duly apply indelible ink to the voter's finger, thereby exposing the process to multiple votes, has showed a kind of negligence

that deserves disciplinary actions (Vickery & Shein, 2012). When a poll worker permits a stuffed ballot box, destroys handouts from a candidate to create a shortage, or counterfeits the signature of other poll workers in order to transmit fictitious results, he has committed a prohibited act requiring prosecution (European Union Election Observation Mission, 2011). But is a poll worker to be blamed if voting materials did not arrive in the precinct within the allotted time? Should poll workers be responsible if not enough paper ballots are available forcing the voting station to close early? And what if poll workers miscount because they tally by candlelight or flashlight? (European Union Election Observation Mission, 2011). How about the indelible ink which washes out?

Drawing a distinction between the two types of wrongdoings is important to determine the separate responsibilities of poll workers and of the electoral institution and clarifies the discussion. Above all, it underlines how resources affect electoral governance and demonstrates the impact of contextual conditions on poll workers' performance.

The responsibility of a state to deliver quality elections to voters is akin to its obligation to provide quality education to students. The benefit in taking this approach is that it helps to frame the discussion of the potential of Togo to carry out its administrative functions. As Rose and Shin (2001) put it, "while free elections are necessary, they are not sufficient for democratization. In many third-wave democracies, something is missing, but what is it? The short answer is: the basic institutions of the modern state" (p. 332).

Indeed, researchers at the World Bank Institute (2004) determined that the quality of governance is measured by three indicators: economic policy coherence, public service effectiveness, and level of corruption. The second indicator—public service effectiveness—is assessed by considering “the quality of public service provision, the quality of the bureaucracy, the competence of civil servants, the independence of the civil service from political pressures, and the credibility of the government's commitment to policies” (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2003, p. 3).

More interesting, public service effectiveness measures an organization’s capacity on an internal level and its sensitivity to political interference on an external level. In this way, Bratton and Chang (2006) distinguished between the “scope of the state” and the “state capacity”. The scope of the state refers to the geographical territory of the state including economic infrastructure such as power, water, sewer, and communication lines; political infrastructure such as police stations, post offices, and army bases; and social infrastructure such as public schools and health care centers. According to Afrobarometer’s (2003) surveys, 78 % of geographical areas in Sub-Saharan Africa contain public schools that host voting centers. The same surveys indicated that three quarters of respondents to the survey have received a voter registration card.

By contrast, “state capacity” refers to the aptitude of the administration for executing its tasks. Both the scope of the state and the state capacity are at work on voting day since providing enough facilities to use as voting centers across the nation on a single day and managing electoral operations from the designing of electoral rules to the adjudication of electoral disputes are critical to a successful election.

Yet if establishing sustainable electoral governance requires a capable state, much depends on the ability of the state to enforce the rule of law. As to staff accountability, Anderson, Moller, and Skaaning (2014) wrote that “administrative effectiveness” requires a professionally competent workforce capable of implementing standardized rules on a case by case basis. Conversely, some researchers argued administrative effectiveness derives from the institutionalization of formal rules (Kerr, 2013). A major responsibility of the electoral management body in achieving its assigned goals is exerting control over its representatives. The election agency fulfills this objective through the enforcement of electoral rules and policies that establish standards of behaviors governing operational activities. For example, in the United Kingdom poll workers are civil servants selected on a non-partisan basis to run polling stations, count centers, and postal voting. The Electoral Commission in the United Kingdom has set out seven measurable standards clustered in three areas including planning and organization, integrity, and participation to assess the level of poll workers’ performance nationwide (The Electoral Commission, 2010). As shown in Table 3, such performance standards are a model for practices in Togo.

Kerr (2013) argued that in Sub-Saharan African countries, governments rarely implement and enforce institutional rules. In most of the cases, the author attributed the causes of the weak enforcement and lack of implementation of rules to insufficient resources. The absence of rules enforcement may also be the result of insufficient time available to execute the rules after reforms are adopted. But the author went on to argue that stakeholders sometimes deliberately undermine the implementation of institutional

rules. In the end, where there is no rule enforcement, poll workers have little reason to obey the rules in this part of the world.

Table 3

Performance Standards for Returning Officers in the 2010 General Election, U K

Subject	Performance standard
Planning & organization	1: Skills & knowledge of returning officer
	2: Planning processes in place for an election
	3: Training
Integrity	4: Maintaining the integrity of an election
Participation	5: Planning and delivering public awareness activity
	6: Accessibility of information to electors
	7: Communication of information to candidates & agents

Note. Adapted from “Performance Standards for Returning Officers in Great Britain”. By Electoral Commission, U K., *Report*, 2010, p. 2.

Researchers have acknowledged the effect of institutional deficiencies on poll workers’ performance. In addition, studies have noted a strong connection between poor management of poll stations and poll workers’ actions (Claasen et al., 2008). Yet much more needs to be known about the motives that drive poll workers’ behavior.

Rationale behind Poll Workers’ Demeanor

Similar to established democracies, poll workers in Togo are paid minimum wage for a job which lasts an entire day or more. The low pay for the job understandably gives rise to a debate over the reasons that spur individuals to serve as poll workers. McAuliffe (2009) argued that consenting for a low compensation confirms that poll workers are not

self-interested but are pursuing intrinsic rewards which may range from a civic duty to narrow partisan interests. A survey conducted by McAuliffe indicates that in the scale of motivations, the first three incentives are serving the community, supporting democracy process, and rendering a civic service. Yet beyond the direct pecuniary benefits, poll workers in Togo take a peculiar approach to the job which needs to be analyzed in the light of the way public service is administered in this country.

In Togo, poll workers are not neutral; instead, they are representatives of political parties and candidates in the voting places as a bipartisan management of poll stations requires (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 39). The reason for the direct affiliation of poll workers with candidates in an election is that election contests in Togo take place amid an intense political polarization prompting policymakers to seek common ground in the electoral management. However, resulting from a patrimonial conception of public office, the appropriation of national resources affects the course of electoral operations and determines electoral outcome. Under these circumstances, the stakes in an election are so high that they stimulate personal interests and influence the conduct of the electoral process (Abuya, 2010; Alidu, 2014).

Abuya (2010) argued that the opportunity to take over national resources—a highly attractive perspective—leads incumbents and challengers to resort to all means necessary to influence election outcome. “There are no concerns if electoral rules are followed” (p.123). Alidu (2014) confirmed that the quest for high office lead candidates to abuse and violate electoral rules. “The breaches of electoral laws are at times

perpetuated in collaboration with Electoral Commission officials and other relevant state authorities tasked to protect those laws” (p.1452-1460).

As a result, poll workers, like other civil servants in Togo, are ethnic-minded rather than civic-minded meaning that poll workers are more concerned with loyalty to ethnic identity or party membership than professional duty. In established democracies working the poll is generally an answer to a call for civic engagement where professional accountability and work ethic characterize the environment in which poll workers work (Kelley, 2012, Mcauliff, 2013). These moral values provide electoral personnel a sense of responsibility to shut down narrow considerations and comply with electoral procedures.

Conversely in Togo, poll workers perform in the context of a civil service shaped by a “patrimonial state” (Schacter, 2000). The author wrote that informal institutions ruled by familial, ethnic, and political leanings outweigh formal institutions such as elections, legislatures, and the civil service. The personal appropriation of public authority involves a low hierarchical control where supervisors have limited influence and, therefore, a lack of accountability of subordinates. Thus, electoral governance functions in a system that acknowledges opportunism, personal affinities, and allegiance to the ruling party instead of disinterested and committed service to the public (Baturu, 2010; Schacter, 2000). Therefore, poll agents primarily fulfill a partisan mission instead of a professional obligation.

Elections occur within a bureaucracy and poll workers’ behavior reflects the bureaucratic culture in force in the country. Employees behave correspondingly to the prevailing norms within an organization and the completion of electoral operations by

poll workers is an indicator of the values which the election agency carries. Thus, the institutional background meaningfully dictates poll workers' demeanors.

Successful elections involve the ability of a professional staff to deliver an exemplary process which warrants an equal participation of citizens and results in a universal suffrage. Therefore, the importance of detecting electoral misconducts has never been more essential in the quest for free and fair elections. Accordingly, an effective management of electoral operations by those in charge of running the elections is a preliminary to electoral integrity.

The Relationship between Poll Workers' Performance and Electoral Integrity

In order to give voters confidence in the outcome of an election, poll workers must adhere to prescribed procedures in ways that profess neutrality, advocate transparency, and ensure accuracy of votes count. Compliance with such principles enhances the integrity of elections while non-compliance compromises it.

A number of researchers have investigated the importance of poll workers' duties. The results suggest that poll workers' compliance with prescribed standards is a clear indication of the quality of the electoral process (Bland, Green, & Moore, 2012; Kearney, Parikh, & Sanders, 2014; Page & Pitts, 2009; Watts, 2014). For this reason, so as to appreciate the effectiveness of an electoral management it is important to start the analysis from the first moment when poll workers deliver basic services to voters in the polling stations.

In the reviewed literature, there are no set rules for evaluating election quality, but scholars and practitioners who studied the effectiveness of electoral governance have

primarily tracked poll workers' transgressions that occur during electoral operations. The forms of these transgressions are well established in the literature where researchers revealed that stakeholders, candidates, incumbents, challengers, electoral officials, militants, or citizens alike may seek to interfere in various ways with procedural management (Birch, 2011; Levin & Alvarez, 2013; Minnite, 2010; Norris, 2013). Accordingly, in the reviewed literature, there is a consensus among researchers that poll workers fall below expectations when performing their duties (Birch, 2011; Breunig & Goerres, 2011; Collier & Vicente, 2012; James, 2012; Norris, 2013). However, researchers appear to disagree in the proper ways to measure the scope of non-compliance with electoral procedures.

Researchers' attempts to identify poll workers' typical practices that undermine electoral procedures involve two major approaches. Some researchers using a stringent perspective sustain that poll workers purposely tampering with rules constitutes procedural lapses. Conversely, when breaches in electoral integrity are the results of poll workers' lack of proficiency, other researchers refer to this behavior as "malpractices" or "maladministration" (Birch, 2011; Norris, 2013).

Infractions of electoral integrity may take place at any stage in the course of the electoral process: during a campaign, on election day, or upon the publication of results. Researchers refer to the stage where the infraction occurred to differentiate between procedural infractions and ballot infractions. As examples of procedural infractions, a number of researchers identified fictitious voters' registration, delays in the procurement

of electoral materials, and failure to record information (Fox, 2012; Fujiwara & Wantchekon, 2013; Hicken, 2011; Kearney, Parikh, & Sanders, 2014).

Table 4

Matrix of Summarized Questions Captured in the EASI Survey, by Dimension and Temporal Categories

	Pre-voting	Act of voting	Post-voting
Participation	1. Voter registry accurate? 2. Voter registry discriminatory? 3. Clear authority for registry maintenance? 4. Polling places known, accessible?	5. Voter identity safeguards? 6. Polling places staffed, supplied? 7. Polling places maintain secrecy? 8. Voters physically secure? 9. Monitors observe ballot box sealing, ballot supply?	10. Voter appeals process enforced? 11. Monitors observe ballot box opening, counting?
Competition	12. Are party rules enforced? 13. Are candidate rules enforced? 14. Are ballot rules enforced? 15. Are financing rules enforced? 16. Are media rules enforced? 17. Boundary delimitation unbiased?	18. Party agents can challenge voter eligibility? 19. Are party agent challenges fair? 20. Party agents observe ballot box sealing, ballot supply?	21. Party agents observe ballot box opening, counting? 22. Party agents have ability to request recounts?
Integrity	23. Character of EMB membership? 24. Partisanship of EMB members? 25. EMB has budget authority? 26. EMB has budget control? 27. EMB has budget and administrative capacity? 28. Poll worker bias? 29. Poll worker training?	30. Quality of poll worker security? 31. Supplies secure prior to poll opening? 32. Supplies secure during voting?	33. Voting materials secure in transit and storage? 34. Independent monitors observe central tally? 35. Results posted in timely manner? 36. Certification authority clear?

Note. Adapted from “Measuring the Quality of Election Administration” by G. Bland, A. Green, & T. Moore, 2012, *Democratization*, 20, p. 368.

Other researchers focused on ballot infractions such as ballots stuffing and inaccurate tabulation of votes (Finan & Schechter, 2012; Gonzales-Ocantos, de Jonge, Melendez, Osorio, & Nickerson, 2012; Vicente, 2010).

The main idea arising from the scholarly debate is that during election in Togo, poll workers may be responsible for irregularities. “Maladministration also assigns primary responsibility for any problems with electoral officials rather than other actors, such as the leaders of political parties or community groups” (Norris, 2013, p. 569). Regarding this observation Weidmann and Callen (2013) stated the following: “The incumbent depends on appointed officials and election staff assigned to particular administrative units to perpetrate frauds” (p. 55). The inconsistency resulting from poll workers’ actions is the main concern of this study.

The connection between a much sought-after independence of electoral institutions, which underlines the satisfactory completion of electoral procedures, and the delivery of an infallible electoral outcome shows that poll workers’ performance may be a highly manipulative tool in the hands of politics in Togolese elections.

Recent studies suggested that “incumbency factor” is a major element that makes a difference in winning an election in Sub-Saharan Africa (Briggs, 2012; Collier & Vicente, 2012). Through incumbency, office holders use their position not only to access electoral materials but also to assert control over electoral personnel. Thus, poll workers are among the low level operatives that incumbents count on to win re-election (Ichino & Schundeln, 2012; Rundlett, 2016). Other operatives include public personnel, armed men, and militants in charge of carrying out the victory of their candidate by stuffing ballot

boxes, voting multiple times, or falsifying vote counts. Such scant consideration for voters' expression echoes Ibeanu's (2007) statement: "Votes are not counted because votes don't count" (p. 5). The control over electoral staffs is so complete that Anastasio Somoza, former head of state in Nicaragua, responded to allegations of ballots rigging by replying: "Indeed, you won the elections, but I won the count!" (as cited in Swainson, 2000, p. 888).

The argument is rather suggestive. The way the electoral system is staged, electoral operations administered, and electoral rules carried out is directed toward the victory of incumbents, and beyond them, to the interests of those in charge of delivering elections. The concept is in line with the patrimonial administration of public service in Sub-Saharan Africa described earlier.

Although researchers have traced poor electoral management to poll workers' misbehavior, the fact remains that researchers are unable to offer a model capable of detecting and deterring practices that undermine electoral procedures. Efforts to ensure clean elections as the result of the services that poll workers deliver on polling day are not promising. Hence, a further examination of poll workers' functions in the electoral process is particularly relevant for an effective management of elections in Togo.

Nature and Importance of Poll Workers' Functions in the Electoral Process

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (2007) considers a poll worker an employee who, at the opening of polls, sets up the polling site with election materials and equipment such as voting machines and ballots and also records voters on the voter registration list. When a voter arrives, the poll worker verifies the voter's identity, helps

him to sign the register, and assists him in casting the ballot as necessary. At the closing of polls, the poll worker tabulates the ballots and transmits the information to the central electoral institution. State law may require a poll worker to perform other related functions as needed. Besides those conventional assignments, poll workers exercise additional activities in Togo where voting technology is in an early stage of development. Thus, poll workers mark voters' fingers with indelible ink to signify that the voters have cast their ballots and cannot vote again elsewhere (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 92).

Compliance with the principles of the right to vote, confidentiality, security, transparency, and fairness in voting underpin the quality of an election throughout its different stages. Thus, the importance of poll workers' contribution to the electoral process is best understood through an analysis of these principles (Davis-Roberts & Carroll, 2010).

Principle of the Right to Vote

The right to vote is not guaranteed just because a citizen meets legal criteria and fulfills administrative requirements. The discretion of a poll worker determines whether a duly registered citizen can exercise his constitutional right to vote. For a voter to cast a ballot, the poll worker assists the voter by finding his name on the voter registration list on the basis of an identification document presented by the voter. Then, the poll worker directs the voter to the assigned polling station (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 86-92).

Principle of Confidentiality

In organizing polling sites, poll workers ensure secrecy of the ballots by providing voting booths and screens in the privacy of which the voter marks the ballot by himself.

In Togo, where the population has a high rate of illiteracy—between 25 % and 50 % according to a UNESCO’s study published in 2013—it is the responsibility of the poll worker to help the illiterate voter make sense of the paper ballot’s design without any form of inducement or coercion (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 86-92).

Principle of Equity

Equity involves the equal treatment of voters and candidates. There should be no impediments to the registration of voters and candidates, and the executive branch should be careful not to interfere in the proper functioning of electoral institutions and the performance of electoral personnel. In Togo, the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) ensures that public resources pertaining to elections such as financing, protection by security forces, adjudication by courts, and access to media are impartially allocated to all contenders (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 75 & 77). Likewise in polling places, poll workers are required to make ballots available in a quantity equivalent to the number of registered voters plus ten percent in order to avoid a shortage of candidates’ ballots (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 91).

Principle of Security

In contrast to established democracies, election security is of particular concern in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries. Because of the high stakes in elections, contenders are inclined to seek victory by all means necessary including violence and intimidation (Borzyskowski, 2014; Collier & Vicente, 2011). Thus, a credible election can only take place if the electoral organization meets the relevant conditions and if the proceedings occur in a secure environment that facilitates full participation of the

electorate on a single day. Effective safety measures allow poll workers, journalists, and observers to perform without pressure. Electors, candidates, and political parties' representatives are entitled to freely access polling stations, but, care must be taken to permit voters to cast ballots without intimidation. In Togo, security forces protect electoral staffs as well as voters and support the voting process in each polling station. Additionally, security forces ensure the effectiveness of the electoral logistics by transporting voting materials and equipment which they hand over to designated poll workers and store through a secured system of receipts (OSCE, 2013).

Principle of Transparency

Public access to voter registration lists, ballot counting, and announcement of the results ensures compliance with the principle of transparency (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 94). Constituents should be able to check and verify their names on the electoral list. In the counting stage, the first step is to determine the exact number of voters who actually cast their ballots. Poll workers figure out this number by determining the total number of electors who signed their names or were marked as having voted. Then poll workers compare this total with the number of ballots issued and the quantity of ballots retrieved from the ballot box (OSCE, 2013). Upon completion of the counting, detailed results are certified and posted in plain sight for the public (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 98). International and national observers particularly keep these operations under close scrutiny.

Principle of Fairness

In furtherance of universal suffrage, election authorities are required to conduct an election without any form of discrimination. For instance, the NIEC should ensure that minority groups and vulnerable populations, including women, senior citizens, illiterates, and the disabled are recorded on the national voter register list (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 44-46). Besides, the NIEC should make sure that all voting stations across the nation have enough ballots from opening to closing (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 78). The government makes certain that public buildings, such as schools, serve as polling sites and are accessible to voters. If needed, additional sites can be provided by private or business interests.

Poll workers are expected to adhere to these principles and to be accountable for their implementation. Thus, on election day poll workers must ensure that poll stations are opened on schedule, relevant materials and equipment are accounted for, paper ballots are blank, and empty ballot boxes are sealed (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 76 & 81). After the polls close, poll workers tabulate ballots, make the count verifiable according to established procedures, and transmit the results without delays.

Clearly, tasks associated with voting are demanding in scale and complexity. In a situation where a low adult literacy rate excludes part of constituents from contributing to public debates and participating in the conduct of the polls, difficulties associated with poll working are heightened (Maley, 2009). Thus, in administering elections poll workers are not beyond making mistakes. Still, observation missions reported that vote counting is the critical stage where most inaccuracies take place (OSCE, 2013). Some scholars

attribute the high level of errors in the implementation of rules to the great variety of legal provisions surrounding an election and the many layers of procedural requirements that poll workers must be aware of and conform to.

Legal Provisions and Procedural Requirements as a Liability to Poll Workers'

Performance

The legal foundation for elections in the United States rests on a decentralized administration which generates a variety of laws that includes constitutional laws, federal statutory laws, state laws, and local ordinances. While federal law grants the right to vote to citizens and describes the national electoral framework, state laws regulate the actual conduct of elections, and local jurisdictions implement elections by recruiting and training poll workers. The resulting lack of uniformity that the legal foundation carries along affects poll workers' performance (James, 2013; Watts, 2014).

The problems associated with many legal provisions and varied procedural requirements in established democracies are similar to those in Togo. In a unitary political system like Togo, the electoral framework stems from the Constitution of 1992 and the Electoral Code of 2012-002. But, the polarized politics prevailing in the country requires lawmakers to constantly change the statutory election law. Thus, Law 2013-004 and Law 2013-008 amended Togo's Electoral Code of 2012 by instituting irregular patterns in electoral governance. The implementation of multiple legal provisions creates a complex regulatory scheme which Watts (2014) argued burdens poll workers' ability to fulfill their assigned duties. Two lawsuits illustrate this point.

In *Hunter v. Hamilton County Board of Elections*, various laws of the State of Ohio and of Hamilton County established different policies for provisional ballots. For instance, it occasionally happens that certain voters are not able to cast a regular ballot in an election. Under Ohio law, voters whose names are not on the official voter registration list for a particular polling center may cast a provisional ballot. To cast a provisional ballot, the voter must execute an affirmation stating that he or she is registered to vote in the jurisdiction and is eligible to vote in the election. The Ohio Board of Elections then must determine whether a provisional ballot is valid, and therefore require being counted.

Hamilton County decided to have some public buildings serve as the polling center for nearby precincts. In such locations, voters must go to the correct precinct within the location to cast a valid ballot. To assist voters in finding the correct precinct, the county assigns an extra poll worker as a “precinct guide” at 16 of its 17 polling locations with four or more precincts. However, the 152 polling centers that have two or three precincts do not have an extra poll worker to serve as a precinct guide. To make matters worse, a vote cast at the right polling center but the wrong precinct will be invalidated. Often a voter showed up at the right polling center, but he was directed to the wrong precinct by a poll worker who was as confused as the voter. The Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit held that inconsistencies and contradictions between state and local electoral laws heightened the probability that poll workers would make errors.

Additionally, the court held that inconsistent approaches to vote-casting were a violation of the Constitution: “We instead affirm the likelihood that the intra-jurisdictional unequal treatment undertaken by the Hamilton County Board is

constitutionally impermissible” (*Hunter v. Hamilton County Board of Elections*, 2011, p. 33).

In a related case *North East Ohio Coalition for Homeless v. Husted*, the U. S. Court of Appeals, for the Sixth Circuit (2012) held that a complicated maze of electoral laws was the source of poll workers’ errors that allowed several illegal votes to be counted and several hundred legal votes to be discarded. As a result, the county threw out the electoral regulations and started over.

Situations of the kind presented in these two cases prompted Congress in 2002 to pass the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) which aimed to modernize federal electoral law. The most relevant aspect of the law is that Congress addressed the issue of voters’ disfranchisement. The law provided for situations where voters’ names are left off the registration list or voters fail to present proper identification. The law also resolved the cases of voters whose names do not conform to the names on the electoral list. Among other things, the HAVA attempted to solve the problem of ballots becoming illegal as a result of poll workers’ mistakes (Watts, 2014).

Procedural requirements and legal provisions hinder poll workers’ ability to properly execute electoral operations. However, other researchers sustained that resources allotted to the demanding task of organizing election are to blame for the mistakes that poll workers make. In the context of scarce resources particular to Togo, the observation takes on a particular importance.

Linking Poll Workers' Performance with State Infrastructural Capacity

The ways in which a state's infrastructural capacity shapes electoral governance in emerging democracies is the substance of a lively scholarly debate (Burden & Neiheisel, 2014; Fortin-Rittberger, 2014; Seeberg, 2014; Piccolino, 2016). The World Bank established aggregate indicators of governance that assess countries' performance in institutions building and public sector management and which reflect the electoral context in Togo. These countries are characterized by a restricted political system where a hegemonic ruling party controls levers of power, national resources are unfairly allocated and public goods scarcely delivered. The enforcement of the rule of law is weak and any political race is not fully competitive, so the electoral process is restricted (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2010).

Until recently, a line of research sought to explain electoral irregularities as the result of a lack of infrastructural and administrative capacities with ensuing political issues (Burden & Neiheisel, 2014; Creek & Karnes, 2010; Fortin-Rittberger, 2014; Piccolino, 2016). A thesis underlying this argument is that electoral mismanagement can be tied to a low level of economic and administrative development where a weak infrastructural capacity prevents governments from meeting the demands of an effectively organized election. Indeed, the rationale behind this thesis posits that procuring enough electoral equipment for the entire nation, training thousands of electoral personnel, developing a relevant civic education manual, designing comprehensive paper ballots, compiling an electorate census, establishing rules, and so on creates logistical challenges that defy the capability of a developing country such as

Togo. Among other things, the population in Sub-Saharan African countries is at the lowest level of education worldwide (Majgaard & Mingat, 2012). The adults' literacy rate is less than 50% and falls as low as 25 % in Guinea (UNESCO, 2013). The absence of a democratic culture induces constituents to shy away from public debates and hardly use available public services. As a result, the uneducated electorate is not familiar with basic electoral procedures and requirements starting with the deliverance of a birth certificate prerequisite to an identification card or a voter card (Maley, 2009; Piccolino, 2016).

As part of this thesis, some researchers sustained that the lack of a democratic culture links electoral deficiencies to authoritarian governments which easily assert coercion on the electoral administration and its personnel. Yet this argument does not command general agreement. Indeed, other researchers argued that past democratic experience minimizes voting errors.

Lago and Coma (2011) used a regression analysis to prove that previous experience serves as practice and supports better coordination of the electoral system. But, Fortin-Rittberger (2014) disagreed and used a series of logistic regressions to demonstrate the case in former communist countries.

First, Fortin-Rittberger (2014) argued that underdeveloped infrastructure keeps electoral operations from being deployed across an entire nation and leads to technical impediments. Then, the author stated that an authoritarian government uses public forces like military and police to coerce election officials and voters. For this quantitative study, the author posits a hypothesis that weak infrastructure and coercive capacity are correlated with electoral rigging. The hypothesis was tested on 26 former communist

countries. The author used a bivariate analysis to assess the impact of both infrastructural and coercive capacity in the targeted countries. Then, Fortin-Rittberger turned to a multivariate analysis to evaluate their effect on electoral transgressions. The author found that both dependent variables together influence electoral process. Further, she found that a number of other control variables interfere with electoral practices including socioeconomic factors, institutions, and competition.

In support of this argument, Stein and Vonnahme (2012) in their study discovered that the structural capacity of a state including its communication network, the mode of voting, the voting technology, the ballot design—whether paper, manual or optically scanned, punch card, mechanical lever device, or electronic machine—and even the voting places are conditions that affect the implementation of voting operations. Brady and McNulty (2011) made similar findings by demonstrating how the variety of voting sites, ranging from neighborhood schools to bus stations, stores, and supermarkets, as well as their accessibility reduce the efficiency of voting operations.

Such infrastructural conditions are exacerbated in Togo where private homes and outdoor sites have served as polling stations. International observers reported that basic operations like tabulations have been conducted by candle or flash lights in rural areas in Sub-Saharan African countries (EUEOM, 2011; NDI, 2011). Results from a Gallup survey on electric coverage in Sub-Saharan Africa shows that 92 % of workplaces in Mali and Niger have no access to the power grid (Tortora & Rheault, 2012).

Researchers agree that costs weigh on organizational operations; therefore, funds allocated to elections determine the quality of service delivered to voters in polling

stations (Clark, 2014a; Hill, 2012; James, 2014). The dependency on government is reflected in the restrictive budget allocated to electoral institutions which are subject to government's initial approval before any disbursement of funds can be made. Clark (2014a) suggested that organizing elections is a complex enterprise that requires sufficient resources to equip, train, and pay poll workers. Burden and Neiheisel (2014) argued that scarcity of resources, insufficient supplies, poorly maintained facilities, lack of training, and low compensation of electoral workers have a significant effect on voters' turnout during registration. They confirmed:

Municipal clerks representing communities with greater capacities—larger full-time staff, more abundant funds, better training, and other resources—will be better situated to educate the public in advance of the election and process new registration forms effectively, thus easing the transition from the era without registration to the era where it is required. In contrast, municipalities with lower levels of administrative capacity are less likely to engage in public information campaigns and to have the necessary equipment, expertise, personnel, and time to facilitate the new registration mandate. (p. 85)

In addition to Fortin-Rittberger's study (2014), the last decade saw continuing interest on the part of researchers in the coercive capacity of a government to influence the electoral process. Donno (2013) conducted a study in emerging democracies that suggests that there is a correlation between politics and the management of elections.

Lopez-Pintor (2010) supported these findings in writing that politics requires electoral officials to submit to the influence of the executive branch: incumbents strive to put electoral institutions under their control as demonstrated in former communist countries where the voting process offers a “built-in advantage” to the ruling parties. Along this same line of reasoning, Wahman (2014) noted that incumbents in African elections turn authoritarian institutions into electoral assets.

Continuing the inquiry that seeks to understand the connection between state capacity and election administration, a number of researchers took a practical approach to analyzing how social and political conditions lead to poor electoral management. Thus, Levitsky and Way (2010) argued that incumbents use a government’s power of coercion by deploying security forces to instill fear and control citizens. But incumbents also use organizational affiliation to maintain cohesion among members of the organization. Mapuva (2010) drew examples from Zimbabwe where military officers are appointed to run public institutions including the national election agency.

A range of researchers took the argument a step further to analyze the economic factor. Thus, Fox (2012) observed that interference in electoral procedures are more apparent in suburban than in urban areas whereas Fortin-Rittberger (2012) reported that countries that have a higher rate of GDP with a high urban population are less likely to experience electoral manipulations. Rueda (2014) confirmed that poverty can be a factor in electoral interference.

Clearly, lack of infrastructural capacity keeps countries like Togo from providing sufficient resources to electoral personnel. Additionally, lack of infrastructural capacity

subjects electoral personnel to state authority and is an important factor in understanding poll workers' inability to properly administer electoral operations. This state of affairs prompts practitioners and policymakers to deploy observation missions to lend technical assistance in electoral organization. Today, deploying observation missions during organization of elections in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries appears as an effective way to assess poll workers' performance.

Observation Missions and Poll Workers' Performance in Togo and Sub-Saharan Africa

Attempts to enhance the organization of elections in emerging democracies are the result of field activities conducted by observation missions. Researchers concerned with the significance of electoral observation missions examined primarily the impact of such missions on the completion of electoral operations (Borzyskowski, 2014). The central argument here is that in emerging democracies, governments have a stake in electoral outcomes. Considering that the principle of checks and balances is barely applied in emerging democracies, international observers serve as disinterested stakeholders who can assess the credibility of elections (Hyde & Marinov, 2014). In agreement with this thesis, Asunka, Brierley, Golden, Kramon, & Ofori (2014) examined the civil society efforts to monitor the December 2012 presidential elections in Ghana. Asunka et al. (2014) found that the presence of election monitors reduced malpractices in polling stations. The authors observed that poll clerks who are allied with candidates in an election refrain from misconducts when election observers are present inside the polling stations. But poll workers still perpetrate irregularities in polling stations where

observers are not deployed. While Asunka et al.'s work has limitations in that the population sampling was not extracted from the official voter registration list, its value lies in the design of a study which connects observers' bias with their causal effects.

Asunka et al.'s (2014) findings are consistent with Ichino and Schuendeln's (2012) studies. The authors conducted a two-level random experimental inquiry into various instances of voting interferences during the 2008 general elections in Ghana. They found that instead of a variety of misconducts during the electoral period, electoral actors engaged in manipulations at polling stations where there were no observers. However, the authors limited their study to national observers and the voter registration period raising concerns over the extension of the study to international observers and the entire electoral process. A notable criticism of this study is that the randomized study was limited to 304 areas where political parties have strongholds; as a result, significant constituencies in other areas were excluded from the study. Additional studies are needed to accurately assess poll workers' reactions when they are placed under observation.

Deficiencies in poll workers' performance in the polling stations turn out to be difficult to measure. These deficiencies fall into two categories—administrative errors and intentional practices—although the demarcation between the two is often difficult to determine.

Distinction between Poll Workers' Administrative Errors and Intentional Practices

Researchers who developed methods to track down improper execution of prescribed electoral duties fall into two different camps: one group looks at practices that result from deliberate actions and the other group looks at practices that derive from

administrative errors. Should a poll worker deliberately interfere with electoral rules and procedures, a number of scholars label this behavior as fraudulent (Norris, 2014; Simpser & Donno, 2014). In the opposite case, when departures from prescribed guidelines are the result of reasons beyond poll workers' control this behavior is referred to as malpractice (Vickery & Schein, 2012; OSCE, 2013).

Administrative Errors

Poll workers do not control procedural operations from beginning to end. Some errors arise from a lack of institutional capacity or from poll workers' inability. Abuya (2010) stated that unforeseen challenges that may come up during the voting process can interfere with poll workers' ability to meet prescribed guidelines. For example, after Indiana passed a law in 2005 requiring photo identification from voters before they vote, Page and Pitts (2009) examined how often poll workers involuntarily committed bias by demanding proof of identification based on racial profiling.

Page and Pitts (2009) found that the setting—a fast-paced election where poll workers must make quick decisions without the time to further check on the accuracy of the decision—often prompts poll workers to display unconscious discrimination toward racial minorities. Further, the researchers found that the Indiana practice of using provisional ballots which are intended to be used when a voter lacks photo identification is not efficient as only 20 percent of people who use provisional ballots have their ballots counted. The risk of potential voters' disenfranchisement prompted the authors to propose that poll workers take an oath to respect non-discrimination. More important, the

authors recommended as a way to avoid biased decision-making on the part of poll workers, more voters should use mail or Internet voting systems.

In the same vein, Rosenblatt, Thompson, and Tiberti (2012) examined the accuracy of voter registers in Great Britain. Based on a national survey, the researchers found an 82.3% level of completeness of voters entitled to vote in 2011. But, the authors also described factors which make compiling an accurate voter registration list difficult, such as people who thought they were registered when they were not. Likewise, James (2012) conducted a similar study in Ireland to evaluate the introduction of a new individual registration procedure in lieu of the traditional household registration with the goal of improving voter registration. From interviews with 74 electoral officers, the author concluded that the innovative registration still creates data and technology issues for electoral staff.

Although such issues may be attributed to a lack of technical capacity, a number of researchers suggested that improper execution of election rules is the result of poll workers' lack of relevant qualifications. In researching the source of issues experienced on election day in Britain's parliamentary election in 2010, Denver (2010) suggested that long lines of voters and shortages of ballots at polling sites were the fault of "incompetent" election officials.

After voters complained about having to stand in long lines in order to vote in previous elections, Spencer and Markovits (2010) studied operations at 30 polling stations during the 2008 presidential election in California to determine the source of the bottlenecks. The researchers argued that long lines at polling stations indicate poor

management. They conducted their study of the internal organization of polling stations by looking at poll workers' ability to master voting technology. Spencer and Markovits grounded their analysis on the premise that when the rate of the service offered is slower than the demand, there will be congestion in the polling station. Having analyzed the two basic tasks delivered in a polling station—identifying a voter and supervising the actual voting—the researchers concluded that, on the basis of voters' arrival rate at a polling station, poll workers displayed an inability to carry out applicable tasks.

Although Spencer and Markovits (2010) made a strong argument, they limited their study to the internal operations of polling stations, thus excluding external factors. Embedded in this observation is the idea that the electorate in certain areas is larger than in others. In focusing only on the service and demand rates inside certain polling stations, the researchers overlooked compelling circumstances such as the ratio of available voting places and voters' demography within a jurisdiction, the number of poll workers assigned to precincts, the number of available privacy booths, and rush hours.

There have been other attempts to find ways to reduce lengthy lines at poll stations. Levitt (2010) analyzed alternate strategies including early voting, extended voting hours, provisional voting, and mail-in absentee ballots. The author concluded that these initiatives indicate that electoral officials sometimes ask voters to use unproven methods to cast their ballots when, instead, the goal of electoral officials should be to make polling stations and traditional methods of voting more efficient.

Researchers replicated similar studies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Controversies surrounding the 2012 presidential race in Ghana offered the opportunity to Alidu (2014)

to critically examine allegations of infractions perpetrated by electoral officers. The author found that irregularities recorded across the country were imputable to “administrative errors” and “misguided decisions”. Piccolino (2015) confirmed this view by stating that “a large portion of electoral irregularities in developing countries stem from administrative deficiencies, rather than deliberate frauds” (p. 1).

Intentional Practices

Studies of poll workers who intentionally tamper with electoral procedures are grounded on circumstantial evidences that researchers collect during elections. Other observation missions relayed evidence of malfeasances from poll workers (Ferree & Long, 2011; Murison, 2013). For instance, after the Uganda general elections held in 2011, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the European Union Electoral Observation Mission (EUEOM) reported a poor execution of basic rules and instances where observers witnessed poll workers altering results at voting stations. The observers also mentioned that representatives of the opposition parties were expelled from precincts for refusing to certify fictitious results (EUEOM, 2011; NDI, 2011).

Beber and Scacco (2012) used a discrete distribution method to expose how poll workers altered vote counting while they were tabulating ballots during elections in Nigeria, Senegal, and Sweden. Using data from these three countries, the authors showed that the last digits in any of these election results come out in equal frequency if a large range of distributional assumption is applied. Whenever digit patterns diverged from the expected, the theoretical assumption is that a return sheet has been changed. An argument

that contradicts this finding is that the method could only detect intentional manipulations; therefore, its application is limited.

While studying the impact of election observers on the electoral process in Ghana, Asunka et al., (2014) discovered how candidates and political parties force poll workers to work towards their victory. The authors reported various instances where votes cast exceeded the number of registered voters in an area, a practice known as “overvoting” and situations where votes cast surpassed the number of available ballots, which is “ballot stuffing”.

Poll workers intentionally tampering with ballots is not limited to emerging democracies. After a confederate referendum held in 2011, electoral officials in various counties in Switzerland destroyed ballots in a bid to undermine a recount that a court has ordered. Leemann and Boschler (2013) conducted forensic tests that showed that electoral workers attempted to cover electoral transgressions. Breunig and Goerres (2011) conducted similar investigations in elections held in Germany and concluded that parties involved in the administration of elections engaged in illegal activities that aimed to change election results.

Poll workers’ practices that impair the electoral process are well-established in the reviewed literature and include multiple voters’ registration, late delivery of electoral materials, incorrect tabulation of votes, and so on. The scope of the irregularities underlines the need to further examine its consequences. Whether the practices are deliberate or unintentional, such irregularities cancel voters’ expression, thus reducing the

value of the right to vote which in turn erodes the electorate's faith in the political system and destabilizes national institutions.

Poll Workers' Performance, Public Trust, Voters' Turnout, and Electoral Violence

The enactment of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) in 2002 broke new ground which heightened scholars' interest in poll workers. This is particularly true following the introduction of electronic voting where reports over poll workers' inability to operate the technology tend to dominate the discussion (Pomares et al., 2014).

The service that poll workers offer on election day is a major determinant of the perception that voters have of the whole electoral process. In his interactions with electoral officials, a constituent expects a higher quality of service from poll workers than from other public administrators because in his mind, the constituent is fulfilling a civic duty of national importance (Claassen, Magleby, Monson, & Patterson, 2008). A voter who is confident that his vote has been counted has more reason to believe in the government's legitimacy. Consequently, researchers use voters' level of confidence as a measure of election quality (Kerr, 2013; Rosas, 2010; Wahman, 2014).

Because a voter's behavior has its seeds in the trust that the electorate has in the electoral process, researchers who focus on the level of public confidence take various approaches. Some researchers argue that non-compliance with procedures is an incentive to distrust among contenders and the confrontations that occur alter the quality of elections (Simpser, 2013; Watson, 2011). Other researchers analyze the credibility of the process on the basis of the service that voters experience at the poll stations on election day (Gallego, 2010; Kerr, 2013; Rosas, 2010). They also examined the correlation

between institutional organization and increasing voter demobilization. Thus, Carreras and Irepoglus (2014) discussed how the lack of confidence in an election causes voters' participation to diminish in about half countries around the world. Their findings are similar to those suggested by Birch (2011). The author found that procedural lapses result in delays of the process, frustration of voters, and public disturbances. Further, these lapses undermine government legitimacy, reduce political accountability, increase bureaucratic corruption, erode public resources, and unleash social unrest in emerging democracies.

Social unrest is a result of electoral mismanagement since most reported violence erupts on voting day (Goldsmith, 2014). A number of academics echoed this viewpoint. Daxecker (2012) argued that poorly managed elections, when uncovered by credible international observers lead to protests from opposition parties that ultimately turn into violent uprisings in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries. While von Borzyskowski (2011) researched the contributory factors of violence, Fafchamps and Vicente (2013) analyzed the relationship between social groups and patterns of electoral violence in Nigeria. Collier and Vicente (2011), using field experimental designs in Nigeria, investigated the impact of public campaigns as a method to counteract electoral violence in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Electoral workers capable of demonstrating professional demeanor and competence give voters a confidence in an election. Thus, the necessity of providing adequate training and compensation to poll workers is imposing.

Poll Workers' Recruitment, Training, and Compensation

The right to vote requires poll workers to offer an unbiased service to voters; in essence, poll workers involved in electoral activities are being entrusted with devolved authority. As mistakes by poll workers can cause turnout, litigations, and violence, scholars rightly analyzed the conditions of recruitment and training of poll workers. As a result, researchers have found that poll workers' status needs improvement (Watts, 2014). Scholars consider poll working to be a community or volunteer activity, at best a political activity. At most, poll working is a temporary job that is performed episodically and often lasts a day or, eventually a couple of days.

Recruiting, training, and paying poll workers fall on the competence of local jurisdictions, resulting in a great variation in poll workers' statutes. Consequently, poll workers demonstrate different levels of knowledge of electoral rules and procedures which Watts (2014) attributed to the difference in training programs across the nation. Burden and Neiheisel (2014) confirmed that "municipalities that spend less on administration tend to have clerks who work less, have fewer professional connections, are less likely to have formal job descriptions, and deploy fewer precincts and polling places per capita, thus leading to greater demands on poll workers" (p. 85).

Poll workers are only employed for a day or two every few years, so poll workers have no opportunity to acquire detailed knowledge of how the job is done or to learn from co-workers. Instead, poll workers learn to perform through classroom sessions for which they are paid small extra money (Hall, Monson, & Patterson, 2003). Thus, the complexity of the job, the requirements of the tasks, and the non-competitive wage are

disincentives that election agencies need to overcome when recruiting. As previously mentioned, finding thousands of qualified individuals capable of carrying out electoral tasks in a society with a low level of literacy is challenging in Togo.

Given the circumstances, it is not surprising that HAVA required a modernization of the electoral process. Subsequently, the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (2007), in recognizing the importance of poll workers' jobs, issued guidelines in order to maximize poll workers' performance. The report described specific requirements for poll workers' positions and the general conditions for recruiting, training, and managing poll workers.

However, the mandate of HAVA—strengthening electoral institutions—has had adverse consequences. Montjoy (2010) found that effective electoral administration creates staffing and training issues. The law increased poll workers' workload and creates staffing shortages in local jurisdictions where finding poll workers not only intellectually qualified, but also technologically savvy is a challenge.

Nonetheless, making polling sites geographically convenient, sufficiently staffing polling place with each poll worker assigned to specific tasks improve the voting operation (Brady & McNulty, 2011). Such measures enhance the confidence of voters and ultimately increase the probability that the voters will return in the next election.

Summary and Conclusion

The review of scholarly works places the debate surrounding poll workers' performance within the larger context of electoral integrity laying the foundation for the problem statement stirring this research. In assessing previous researches and discussing

current literature it became apparent that poll workers partaking in electoral management could be a measurable tool of the integrity of electoral process and a determinant in electoral outcome. “It does not matter who votes, it matters who counts the votes” Joseph Stalin the former Soviet head of state stated (as cited in Bajanov, 1930).

Thus far, researchers consistently found that infrastructural capacity and legal provisions compromise the ability of poll workers to comply with procedural norms especially in emerging democracies including Togo. Further, researchers discovered that poll workers’ actions often lead to electoral litigation that in turn causes voters’ diminished participation in elections and social unrest (Carreras & Irepoglus, 2014; Collier & Vicente, 2011; Goldsmith, 2014).

However, these accounts fail to identify the real sources of poll workers’ inefficiencies. These studies fall short when it comes to capture the extent to which practices associated with poll workers’ performance altered election outcome. Further, much remained to learn about the motivations that spur poll workers to engage in practices that undermine electoral procedures in Togo. These concerns reflect the enduring challenges surrounding electoral outcome in this part of the world and underline the need for a closer examination.

This study reviewed poll workers’ involvement in a presidential election management in Togo in order to identify characteristics of poll workers’ performances and brought up typical difficulties encountered including lack of confidentiality, counting issues, discrepancies in results, delays in reporting results, and so on.

Chapter three describes the methodological approach applied to address the problem stated including the rationale that sustains the line of inquiry, the techniques used to collect data, and the plan to conduct the analysis. Last, the chapter explains the specific procedures to recruit participants, identifies sources of data collected, and delineates the scope of the research.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I reviewed the literature and discussed the perspectives of various researchers regarding the ability of poll workers to complete their duties, emphasizing the factors associated with being a poll worker. What is not well known is how poll workers themselves perceive their own accomplishments in an emerging democracy like Togo, and what the motivations are behind their professional conduct.

In this investigation, I examined poll workers' ability to deliver successful electoral process in Togo and identify factors that impede poll workers in the performance of their duties. Also, I proposed measures capable to improve poll workers' professionalism. The research questions to achieve these purposes are restated as follow:

Do poll workers in Togo have the ability and the resources necessary to carry out quality electoral operations in the country?

The following are the subquestions:

1. What contextual factors prevent poll workers from effectively implementing electoral process assignments in Togo?
2. What is the perceived effect of poll workers' performance on the integrity of elections in Togo?
3. What corrective measures and innovative approaches could improve poll workers' job performance in Togo?

In this chapter, I describe the qualitative method that I used to understand participants' perceptions. The chapter is organized into eight sections: First, I describe the

research design (a), explain the case study approach (b), and discuss the rationale that supports the method of inquiry (c). Next, I acknowledge my background (d) and present the procedure that I used to identify and select the participants (e). Then, I introduce the techniques that I used collect data and outline the plan that I designed to analyze the data collected (f). Last, to support the credibility of the study, I pay particular attention to issues of trustworthiness (g) and discuss ethical concerns and the plan I implemented to address them (h).

Research Design

In this study, I examined poll workers' completion of their duties during the organization of a presidential election using an exploratory qualitative approach as defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2011): "Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p.3). Several factors point toward the use of this approach, including the nature of the subject matter, the research questions I answered, and the setting of the study.

Researchers recommend using the qualitative method whenever a study involves a topic where no established information exists so the researcher must learn directly from participants (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995). In this study, I sought to describe how people who help citizens cast their votes in Togo perceive their jobs as poll workers. I also explored the motivations propelling these individuals in the completion of their duties and I investigated the contextual conditions of their work.

With regard to the main research question, I primarily examined whether poll workers in Togo have the resources and ability necessary to carry out the duties that are the foundation for free and fair elections. As such, it was an open-ended research question (Creswell, 2013), meaning that it enabled me to use many available resources in order to understand the professional behavior of poll workers. Through this approach, I had the opportunity to ask poll workers to share their own experience and assessed whether their own accounts are consistent with practices reported by other researchers and observation missions (Beber & Scacco, 2012; Breunig & Goerres, 2011; Ferree & Long, 2011; Levitt, 2010; Murison, 2013).

In seeking to understand the meaning of an event, the natural context is an important component for the interpretation of data. In the case under study, working at a poll is an activity undertaken in everyday settings, but financial, institutional, and political factors determine the contextual conditions of the job and affect its delivery. Without first-hand information from the field, these factors are hard to determine and difficult to understand as variables. In accordance with Denzin and Lincoln (2003) and Merriam (1998), I presented an account of the topic using a descriptive technique which is part of the qualitative approach of this research.

Along this same line of inquiry, the goal to collect data that go beyond words, such as feelings and body language that capture participants' innermost thoughts, points to a qualitative approach. Electing to use a qualitative method of analysis entailed the search for a proper strategy of inquiry capable of generating the most productive data that answered the research questions.

Case Study Approach

Within the qualitative tradition, the use of a case study to develop the research appeared most promising. The reason is that a case study offers the possibility of understanding an election as a phenomenon independent of the researcher (Creswell, 2013). According to Yin (2009), a case study design includes the following five complementary elements: (a) the research questions, (b) the stated purpose, (c) the unit of analysis, (d) the rationale existing between the purpose and the data, and (e) the justification of the interpretation of results.

First, in examining a phenomenon, a research question looks at “how” and “why” the phenomenon occurs (Baxter & Jacks, 2008). In the present context, I investigated how poll workers function in Togo and why they operate as they do.

Second, the defined purpose of this research was to gain a better understanding of participants’ behavior when they perform in a specific situation. I looked at poll workers’ behavior in context; I looked at the specific places where poll workers carried out their duties, the training poll workers received, the resources poll workers were provided, and so on.

Third, a case study focuses on a single phenomenon evolving in a specific time and setting. A case study was warranted here because poll working is a seasonal activity which only happens on one day during election seasons; thus, poll working was investigated as a real life event that occurs in a clearly identified context. Additionally, the area of focus of the study was a main component representing the unit of analysis

(Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995). In this case, the unit of analysis was poll workers' service delivery during the presidential electoral process in Togo.

Fourth, connecting the study purpose to the data means validating the types of data and sources of data that would serve to carry out the investigation (Creswell, 2013). Thus, I sought to apply each data source to achieve a specific function and to complement each other's role.

Fifth, given that important information emanated from the responses of participants, the data were analyzed in two steps: first, reporting participants' accounts and second, presenting the researcher's interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2013). As a result, I needed to ascertain that participants' perspectives are faithfully represented and that the interpretation accurately reflects their significance.

As Stake (1995) put it, "uniqueness" and "commonality" are characteristics that make a case study attractive. Accordingly, a case study determines the framework of this qualitative research design.

Rationale for the Research Design

The purpose of this inquiry was to provide a detailed account of the activities that poll workers perform in order to determine what factors influence a poll worker's ability to discharge his or her duties in Togo. Therefore, understanding the natural setting of poll workers is essential to understanding the substantial problems that poll workers encounter in the country as suggested in the reviewed literature (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014; Patton, 2002). As a researcher, I have had no control over the events I was studying

and have had to rely on participants for data. The case study method was especially useful in providing valuable information that interviewees were able to disclose.

To address the issue regarding the appropriate design for a study, Creswell (2013) advised researchers to consider the type of data. Data that can fit the problem stated in the research should emanate from participants' own accounts and spring from the field work. The literature offered relevant ways to build a conceptual framework that served as a basis to connect to existing research, articulate new assumptions, and define the scope of possible generalizations (Swanson, 2013).

The research questions that guided the inquiry suggested that the appropriate data collection sources would be interviews, observation, and documentation. Usually, these collection methods yield narrative data. Also, their analysis generally results in discovering patterns, not in identifying relationships (Salkind, 2000). On those grounds, the nature of the study pointed to a qualitative approach.

Critics argue that a case study focuses on a typical event and that the data reflect only the views of participants who were part of that one event. Hence, such a method of investigation offers little ground for establishing generalized findings that are relevant for similar events (Yin, 2009). In this case, the truth is that poll workers experience comparable realities in elections held in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries. Moreover, the objective of the inquiry was to draw out the most significant information from the conversations, not to generalize the results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I interviewed poll workers ranging from civil servants to unemployed individuals with different political orientations who performed in a variety of precincts. Interview

questions expanded on the ways poll workers discharge their duties on an individual level but also the ways in which poll workers interpret the entire management of elections. Simmons (1996) noted that “by studying the uniqueness of the particular, we come to understand the universal” (p. 231). In investigating poll workers’ performance through this exploratory case study, the conclusions I drew laid the foundation of future studies which may be extended to a larger sample population.

Role of the Researcher

In conducting this research, I collected and interpreted data. I am quite familiar with the local context and its culture, which is both a benefit and a detriment. I knew enough about the local context and culture to understand the problems that poll workers face in Togo but I needed to be careful that my own biases did not affect my evaluation of the data, a common criticism in qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014; Patton, 2002). Disclosing my background was part of identifying the role I played in completing this research. Additionally, letting the reader know of my personal knowledge of Togo admits to the possibility of bias. In turn, these efforts are meant to enhance the credibility of the study.

The recurrent partisan battles following every cycle of election since the resurgence of competitive elections in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries in the 1990’s awakened policymakers and observers to the importance of electoral administration. But the focus of the debate on the structural features of electoral administration left electoral behaviors unexamined. Having experienced firsthand post-electoral conflicts in Togo, I was quite aware of the challenges encountered while

implementing electoral processes in a new democracy and considered the situation from a public administration perspective.

While living in Togo, I was a poll worker in national elections, directly taking part in the administration of the national electoral process. Years later in the United States, I worked my way up to become an election judge with the Montgomery County Board of Elections in Maryland. This position gave me the opportunity to compare the electoral processes in established democracies and emerging democracies. As a poll worker, I could observe the organization of elections from inside as a participant. Now, I conducted this research from the standpoint of an outsider.

My activities in the electoral sector were a determining factor in deciding to focus on the role of electoral workers. This personal awareness led me to formulate the research topic and develop the research questions. My professional background also dictated the way in which I carried out the inquiry. As a researcher, the challenge was in selecting a subject and producing work that was meaningful to me but that would have findings that would be comprehensive and convincing to a reader.

Scholars concur that a researcher is often not neutral (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Further, Merriam (2009) stated that being informed of the researcher's background establishes the transparency of a study, particularly regarding the steps taken in the research process. For this reason, I did not consider my past involvement as a poll worker to be a limitation. Yet I was liable to subjectivity that may creep into the study; so, the responsibility to promote its objectivity felt upon me. I took as my guide the

words of Glesne and Peshkin (1992): “Seen as virtuous, subjectivity is something to capitalize on rather than to exorcise” (p. 104).

Instead of embarking on this investigation with a preconceived set of ideas based on my own personal leanings, I was cognizant of the need to completely examine and have full knowledge of all the facts before forming any opinion. This is the “hermeneutical” approach according to Patton’s (2002) perspective. From my unique vantage point, I had the ability to perceive underlying meanings existing behind observable facts and understand their influence on Togo’s political, social, and cultural worlds. Thus, I was able to initiate and sustain conversations with respondents and engage them. As a result, my position enhanced the quality of data collected provided that I applied the appropriate validation strategies in implementing the methodology that I have designed to conduct the study.

Methodology

The collection of data was not possible without first identifying the target population. Consequently, collecting the right data depended on gaining access to the right sources of information in the election sector in Togo.

The primary concern was to find people who are qualified, available, and willing to share their experiences. A second concern was being aware that the study requires interviews with poll workers from urban and rural areas across the country, depending on the establishment of the administration representatives or the presence of electoral observation missions and media in the places.

A preliminary inquiry revealed that most poll workers residing in Lome the nation's capital are easily reached via their contact information. In the countryside, I had acquaintances in my natal village Amegnran named for my grand-father who was the founder. The village is a small community, so poll workers here were also physically accessible. This sampling strategy was based on Creswell's (2013) recommendation to use a small sample size of participants and focus on diversifying the sources of data.

Participants Identification and Selection

Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggested that an effective way to find relevant contributors is to mix various sampling techniques during different stages of the inquiry. Thus, I combined two sampling techniques to pick individuals who have significant experience as poll workers, and were able to provide useful information related to the research topic.

In the qualitative tradition, researchers use a purposeful sampling to identify people who have had experience with the topic under study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). The choice of participants for this study was determined by their position in the electoral process, their involvement in the organization of elections within a precinct, and their accessibility. Individuals who have worked during election day in precincts across the nation as poll workers and appear on the official list of the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) in Togo are easily identifiable. In order to select potential participants from the master roster of poll workers, I undertook the following steps:

First, I discussed the prospects of my research with two contacts of mine in Togo. In turn, these two were asked to approach some of their acquaintances who have performed as poll workers. If the acquaintances agree, I sent each of them an electronic mail inviting them to participate in the study.

Second, upon receipt of the responses, I asked my correspondents to refer other individuals to me. At this point, I resorted to a snowball sampling which Punch (2000) stated allows the researcher to identify “cases of interest from people who know people who know what cases are information rich” (p. 546). In other words, I asked people who have already agreed to be interviewed to recruit other interviewees, particularly those with a good story to tell about poll working. The goal was to select eligible individuals who had some understanding of the research topic and would make good study participants.

Sample Population

Poll workers listed on the official register, specifically those who worked in the presidential election of April 25, 2015, in Togo were the targeted population. But while the investigation was organized around poll workers, it was beneficial for validity purposes to include external experts. Thus, I approached national election officials and international technical experts from observation missions representing the United Nation Development Program, the European Union, the Carter Center, and the IFES. Also, I included journalists and members of the Togolese civil society who were part of the electoral process. Selected upon recommendation, their reputation and knowledge made their contribution necessary to the analysis (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

Sampling Size

In determining the sample size, I kept two considerations in mind: How many participants are enough to determine patterns consistent with the reality? Also, how many participants are needed to resemble the broad population under study? (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The organization of an election involves a large network of contributors among which poll workers are key players. Other contributors include representatives of renowned institutions such as the Human Right League of Togo and journalists. Such a broad perspective created the challenge of determining how big the sample of population should be. Embedded in this question was the idea that not all poll workers were accessible or had the potential to provide relevant information, thus the need to resort to contributors was necessary.

There is no predetermined notion about the correct number of participants (Sargeant, 2012). One school of thought believes that a large sample has the advantage of covering the population and widens the range of sources of information. These researchers add that a small number of participants could fail to include relevant individuals, making the collection of pertinent information unlikely. In conclusion, the researchers argue that responses from a limited number of participants do not reflect the views of a larger population (Marshall, 1996; Rudestam & Newton, 2007; Small, 2009).

However, in line with the framework drawn for this study, relying on a small population of participants was appropriate for gaining enough information to satisfy the research questions. The study seeks to understand the contextual factors that prevent poll

workers from effectively delivering successful electoral processes in Togo and the research questions for the study could be answered only by people who have direct experience with this phenomenon. In other words, it was the type of participants, not the number of participants that was important here.

The determination of the sample size ultimately called into question the value of the investigation. Research of this kind is contingent on factors such as time frame, available resources, and objectives that actually determine the sample size. In my research, I was looking for information necessary to enlighten my understanding of the topic. Therefore, finding informants not only capable but also willing to impart their knowledge was my concern.

An effective starting point was to select a number of people who were able to generate good information. But in the end, the sample size of this dissertation was based on Creswell's (2007), who recommended selecting a small sample size of participants and diversifying the sources of data. For this second school of thought, what is important is that the sample size should be large enough to represent diversity and provide a realistic view of the local electoral setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In this study, diversity refers in part to the partisanship of the participants, that is, the participants' adherence to the ruling party or to the opposition parties. Poll workers' motivations differ based on whether they represent incumbents or challengers (Alidu, 2014; Asunka, Brierley, Golden, Kramon, & Oforu, 2014; Ichino & Schuendeln, 2012). The Togolese electoral rule provides an equal representation of all contenders within each precinct (Electoral Code, 2002, Art. 9).

In this study, diversity also refers to the background of respondents and whether they have worked at polling sites in the cities or in the countryside. In the cities, officials, media, and observation missions are present in large numbers, altering poll workers' behaviors. Conversely, the countryside is less accessible to stakeholders because of the primitive conditions of accommodation, transportation, and communication technology, thus reducing the presence of observers and journalists who would be deployed to monitor the conduct of electoral operations.

Along these lines, I planned to select up to twenty poll workers who have participated in the latest national election held on April 25, 2015. I estimated this number based on the research questions I wanted to answer and the scope of the study. This size was appropriate to guarantee the quality of the study where time and financial constraints prevent choosing a larger size. However, a number of authors advised not determining a number of participants until the research questions are fully answered (Mason, 2010; Rudestam & Newton, 2007; Wertz, 2005). Thus, I did not settle on the actual number of participants until significant data emerged during fieldwork.

Data Collection

The credibility of the information used in this study depends on the reliability of the sources of data. So data were gathered through individual interviews with poll workers who have had first-hand experience with the problems that occur at polling places on election day. Other sources of information were testimonials of voters, logs, and personal journal entries made during the preparation for the election, on polling day,

and after election day. Secondary sources of information include research obtained from institutions and observation missions.

Because the case study was an analysis conducted in a natural setting, the investigation required extensive fieldwork. Individuals and documents produced substantial data that served the goals of the study. Collecting information in the ways described below generated qualitative data in many forms including transcripts, field notes, and audio and video recordings.

Primary Sources

Interviews. To gain a comprehensive understanding of poll workers' experiences, I chose to conduct individual semistructured interviews. Two requirements dictated the choice of this technique over unstructured and structured techniques.

The first requirement was the need to delve into poll workers' personal views and beliefs and to obtain their opinions on the effectiveness of the election management, sufficiency of resources, relevance of training sessions, and so on. The second requirement was to ask questions likely to elicit useful information. I needed to avoid questions whose answers will produce only insignificant data but I also did not want to overlook valuable information. Undoubtedly, the semistructured interview technique was time-consuming (Creswell, 2013). But the selected method was effective as I was able to probe interviewees' responses and decipher non-verbal cues through their body languages and voice inflections (Janesick, 2011; Yin, 2009). My intention in relying on this method was to establish a clearer linkage between what my respondents say and what they actually did.

I conducted the interview sessions in two phases. In the first phase, I sent e-mails explaining the purpose of the study in order to sound out poll workers from the national roster who my two correspondents have initially contacted. At this time, I formally requested their e-mail addresses and phone numbers. Those who responded to my e-mails with an indication that they were interested in participating in the study were approached for additional information.

Next, I sent eligible participants a second round of e-mails that included a consent form and open-ended questionnaire (Appendix B, p. 242). Respondents were instructed to read and sign the consent form before completing the questionnaire. In these initial responses, I asked the participants to record their overall experience as poll workers during the elections. Thereafter, participants sent the forms to me for review.

At this point, the investigation entered the second phase where arrangements for interviews necessitate that I travelled to Togo. I invited each participant to sit down for a face-to-face interview at a time and place convenient for the participant. Each session last approximately 90 minutes. The two-phase process provided an additional opportunity for me to gather significant information and at the same time offered respondents the occasion to further reflect on their own experiences.

Prospective participants were predominantly teachers and jobless who applied for poll worker job to make extra money. Since elections in Togo are generally held at local schools, I conducted interviews in the same locations assuming that I could obtain authorization from the schools' principals. The advantage to returning to the actual voting

site was that the environment helped respondents remember their experience more vividly, minimize external distractions, and make them comfortable (Moen, 2006).

The interviews were audio recorded and all necessary equipment including recording device, batteries, and note pads were accounted for. I started the sessions by introducing myself, reviewing the purpose of the study, and presenting the consent form. I ended the session by thanking the respondents and ask permission to follow up with them later on.

At the completion of this two-phase strategy I returned the transcripts to respondents so they could review specific points, correct errors, and provide additional information (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This technique of “member checks” enabled me to assess the accuracy of my interpretation and formulate elementary results.

I designed a protocol for the study: As Janesick (2010) suggested, the interview was comprised of several guiding questions and was organized from general to specific themes regarding the participant’ experience in working the polls. The general themes related to the training, compensation, voting materials, equipment, and internal organization of polling stations. The specific themes referred to the personal performance, motivations, procedural compliance, and confidence in the organization of election. The themes emanated from an analysis of the related literature as well as from discussions with practitioners in the electoral field. Additionally, these themes were the basis for developing the research questions that grounded this investigation. The interview guide is located in an appendix (Appendix B, p. 242).

Review of media audio and video records. I had access to audio and video records from journalists who have covered the presidential elections in Togo. Audio and video records were opportunities to capture nonverbal behavior and were effective tools to complement conversations with individuals and corroborate their assertions.

Field notes and reflective journals. Throughout the investigation, I kept a diary of my research activities as I experience them. Specifically, I regularly described what I saw and heard during interviews or observations that later informed the analysis of data. I included three elements in the reflective journals. First, in the left hand margin I jotted detailed notes, drew ideas, and sketch thoughts aside in a daily log. Second, I described individuals, documented significant actions, and recorded chronologically sequence of critical events as they unfold in their natural settings. Third, in the right hand margin I reflected on my immediate impressions of the participants and included thoughts for future questions.

This technique assisted me in synthesizing the factual data and interpreting the underlying meaning of occurrences. By using this method, I was able to develop a preliminary sense of the situation that helped identify patterns of behavior as they emerge. At the analysis stage, I relied on these direct observations and thoughts to develop an accurate account of the topic under study. Morrow and Smith (2000) maintain that keeping organized notes provides an audit trail that prevents the researcher from making assumptions and preventing assumptions ultimately adds rigor to the investigation process.

Secondary Sources

Documents. When analyzing, assessing, or interpreting data, I needed to consult technical materials that helped inform the analysis. Official reports were credible accounts of how electoral operations unfold in Togo and offered invaluable information about threats that undermine electoral processes; these reports were used to corroborate poll workers' self-reported statements. Secondary sources included official publications from renowned institutions such as the European Union, the World Bank, the United Nations, the United States State Department, and the U.S. Census Bureau; media accounts of the elections; reports from polling organizations such as Gallup; national electoral legislation in Togo; press releases of observation missions; and court decisions. These documents were collated and analyzed in accordance with other data gathered from interviews and audio and video records and were useful in drawing the fullest possible picture of the problems that poll workers face in Togo.

Richards (2009) wrote that if a researcher has invested substantial effort in collecting data or if data collected are valuable, it is revealed in the data analysis stage. Accordingly, I paid particular attention to the data analysis phase of the research process.

Data Analysis Plan

Since the purpose of this qualitative research was to find patterns among poll workers' performances, it was important to adopt a workable data analysis approach. The purpose of this approach was to ascertain that the data that were collected are processed thoroughly and that the conclusions that were drawn are effectively validated. Accordingly, the study adopted a deductive approach, meaning that the findings emerged

from the respondents' statements while conclusions stemmed from logical reasoning (Patton, 2002). The analytical process was developed based on the cyclical continuous model that Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) outlined. The authors recommended simultaneously carrying out the collection and the analysis of data in three steps that are interconnected: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

In practice, interviews and observation generated a certain amount of raw data that must be evaluated. Data yield their optimal value only after I organized and ordered them efficiently for the purpose of answering the research questions and addressing possible validity threats (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Maxwell, 2013; Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2009).

Throughout the three stages that Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) described, I used a categorizing method, beginning with identifying units of analysis and tracking relationships among them. Once all data from interviews, observations, documents, and reflective journals were aggregated, I transcribed the data into a word document and then translated them. The transcription was a first opportunity to immerse myself in the data (Miles et al., 2014). Then, I created a file for each source of data collected following a chronological order. Next, I set a code to protect each file and store the files on a desk computer as well as on a portable computer. For an efficient organization of data, textual, graphic, audio, and visual data were analyzed to generate themes or categories based on a topical association (Richards, 2009). I used any computer software program to complete this step.

Richards (2009) has recommended a number of guidelines for this part of the process that I followed. First, I reread the transcriptions of interviews line-by-line to get a broad sense of ideas. Next, I extracted important statements from each transcript and determined their meanings. I summarized the meanings to find specific themes that I regrouped into clusters and eventually arranged clusters into categories. I relied on a scheme of alphabetic letters to label themes and categories. Then, I described the occurrences and formulated working hypotheses.

At this stage, I needed to place the units of analysis in their contexts. This stage also revealed the importance of keeping a research journal since I referred to my field notes to determine the conditions under which the poll workers' experiences took place.

At this point, I identified trends, established relationships, and interpreted patterns in order to develop a coherent and meaningful perspective. Patterns that I discovered were assessed in light of the transcripts to ascertain that my interpretations were consistent with participants' perspectives before I used them as evidence to support the analysis. The logic behind the need to let the transcriptions constantly guide the inquiry was to ensure that findings were consistent with data collected, thus minimizing as much as possible personal influence.

During the collection and analysis of data, validity issues emerged especially regarding my interpretation of information which required that I seek to establish the quality of the research process.

Issues of Trustworthiness

In this research, the validity of findings was as strong as the sources of the information were credible and the process of analysis was objective. The research process required that I designed the research instrument, selected participants, compiled and interpreted data, and explained and reported results. Since critics of the qualitative study method question the accuracy of the process and the validity of the results, researchers have developed validation strategies to achieve the confirmability, the dependability, the credibility, and the transferability of findings (Guba, 1994; Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

Confirmability refers to the objectivity of the study where the researcher put aside his own biases or acknowledges them (Miles et al., 2014). Thus, I suspended any prior preconceptions and beliefs. But if it was not possible, I openly disclosed them. I explicitly acknowledged possible limitations and conceded other alternatives which can explain the same results.

Dependability involves the extent to which the results would be consistent, if they were replicated in comparable settings, with similar methods, and with the same participants (Miles et al., 2014). I addressed dependability by using various techniques designed to expel inconsistent material. First, I seek to validate data through iterative questioning by which I probed responses and rephrased questions during the interviews. By returning repeatedly to similar subjects, contradictions surfaced making it easier to identify falsehoods. Second, I considered using “member check” technique by involving participants in the interpretation of data. Thus I asked respondents to review my findings

in order to validate the accuracy of my interpretations. This procedure helped identify misunderstandings and rule out misinterpretations.

Credibility refers to the authenticity of findings which is best ascertained by the technique of triangulation (Miles et al., 2014). Thus, I diversified sources of information and research materials namely audio taping, video recording, and taking notes. Also, I varied participants according to their backgrounds and political affiliations. By expanding sources of information and research materials, I was able to identify conflicting information that I set aside whenever there is no supporting evidence.

Transferability is concerned with the ability to apply findings to other instances (Miles et al., 2014). It required that I used a careful process prior to making any kind of judgment. It also required that I interviewed enough participants who can represent the population and supply sufficient information.

In developing this research, particular attention was devoted to these characteristics so that I established a rigorous analysis process that produced well-founded conclusions. Additionally, I gave the strictest consideration to the rights of research participants which was meant to both ensure the quality of the study and protect the participants.

Ethical Considerations

An investigation which takes place in a natural setting and involves human beings may impact people's lives. This research primarily dealt with the particular issue of electoral governance in Togo, a highly sensitive issue regards to recurrent crisis that pervade elections in Sub-Saharan Africa. Statements and opinions that respondents

expressed carry deep connotation that involve their reputation. The study seeks foremost to enhance electoral governance but in doing so it should avoid any harmful effects on participants as well. Thus, I needed to ascertain that individuals involved in the data collection were not exposed to any physical, economic, or social harm (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). Respect and deference were achieved through the protection of their privacy and anonymity but also accurate adherence to the meaning of statements.

Considering Participants' Values and Beliefs

I owe to participants who volunteered to contribute to the study respect of their rights and interests as well as deference to their values and beliefs. Participants are members of different political parties, so in discussing the presidential electoral process, I was mindful that partisanship might shape each respondent's opinions and reactions.

Preserving from Harm and Risks

In approaching this investigation, I bore in mind the consideration that Togo is an emerging democracy in the same vein as other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. In these countries, the democratization process is in its transitional phase and features a dominant ruling party with extensive decision-making powers. Relative to the subject matter of the study, electoral governance is restricted in ways that allow only a minimum challenge, at best, to the ruling party's political hegemony. Such an unsupportive environment creates in citizens of these countries the apprehension that disclosing government-related information will expose them to intimidations or harassments.

Voluntary Participation

Prospective participants approached the investigation with a reservation that could lead them to filter their thoughts or hold back their opinions. Other than the stress that participants may be experiencing as a result of the perceived need to self-censure, the information they provide did not compromise their well-being. However, informants' decision to participate in the research and their willingness to discuss the topic at hand resulted from their own sound judgment.

Notifying Informed Consent

With these considerations in mind, I took several measures to ensure that the safety and the privacy of participants were protected. Accordingly, in the consent form that I gave to potential participants, I explicitly described the nature of the study, the expected outcomes, and the ways participants would contribute to the research. Further, I clearly presented the kind of questions that the participants would be asked and the type of information they would be asked to provide. Also, I stressed the principle of voluntary participation in this research and advised the respondents of their right to withdraw if they need to.

Preserving Privacy, Confidentiality, and Anonymity

To preserve the confidentiality of information, I used pseudonyms rather than actual names in the transcript so that identities of respondents would not be connected to the information that they provided. Equally, I requested respondents' approval before recording video or taking pictures.

Archiving and Storing Files

Aldridge and Medina (2008) suggested additional measures that I took to ensure respondents' privacy and security of data. I made minimal use of printed versions of the field notes by encrypting handwritten field notes digitally and then destroying print copies. I backed up digital data on other forms of transportable mediums such as USB. Then, I protected computer files by assigning passwords so that hard copies, including transcripts of interviews, in pictures, video, and audio tapes were locked in filing cabinets accessible to only me for the next five years.

The implementation of these protective measures aimed to effectively store, maintain, and secure data I have collected against eventual damages or leaks. Richards (2009) noted that the way data are managed indicates their overall quality thus preserving data appropriately is as important as gathering data.

From my preliminary contacts, it appeared that prospective participants were interested in contributing to a research topic that they believe would enhance national electoral governance and support citizens' right to vote. Additionally, the nature of the research did not present any intrusive concerns; therefore participants did not object to the questions asked.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate poll workers' performance in Togo. Based on a review of the related literature and the research agenda, a case study was the best method for conducting a comprehensive inquiry. Yin (1989) wrote that the study of a particular case is useful as long as it is "revelatory". When other cases share similar

contexts and experience common issues with the case under investigation, there is sufficient basis for applying the findings broadly and to other cases.

I used all possible efforts to mitigate potential threats that could jeopardize the quality of this research process. Various validation strategies available in qualitative research mainly researcher reflexivity, triangulation, member checking, and thick description helped achieve optimal credibility (Creswell, 2013; Miles, et al., 2014). The credibility of the findings was grounded in the participants' informed perceptions. Further, other factors such as research objectives, time constraints, availability of resources, and local political context were accommodated in the study.

Although conclusions drawn were primarily relevant to the individuals directly involved in this study, the difficulties faced by poll workers across the country of Togo are so similar to those in Sub-Saharan African countries that the findings have wider appeal. Accordingly, the results of the study were useful in laying out a path that can be followed at the national and regional levels. These results are the subject of Chapter four.

Chapter 4: Research Findings

Introduction

I designed this research to investigate poll workers' completion of duties during the presidential race which took place in April 25, 2015, in Togo. Poll workers' tasks involve managing the balloting, counting, and transferring the results of the election to the national election agency. The preceding chapters of this dissertation introduced the research problem related to poll workers' performance in Togo, reviewed the scholarly work regarding poll working, and presented the methodological design devised to conduct the study.

The analysis of data collected aims to address the following primary research question:

Do poll workers in Togo have the ability and the resources necessary to carry out quality electoral operations in the country?

The subquestions are as follows:

1. What contextual factors prevent poll workers in Togo from effectively implementing sound electoral procedures?
2. What is the perceived effect of poll workers' performance on the integrity of elections in Togo?
3. What corrective measures and innovative approaches could improve poll workers' job performance in Togo?

To answer the research questions, data have been generated and compiled through semistructured interviews, review of media, audio and video records, and documents. The

analysis of collected data yielded results, including major themes and subthemes which emerged throughout the conversations with participants that served as the organizing scheme for this chapter. Thus, the chapter is divided into the following six sections. The first section depicts the context in which the investigation took place. Section two develops participants' profiles and their specific characteristics relevant to the research. Section three describes the sources and processes through which data have emerged. Section four details the methodological process applied to analyze the data that was collected. Section five discusses measures taken to achieve trustworthiness and section six reports the perceptions and experiences of poll workers that were revealed during conversations with respondents.

Study Setting

For the April 25, 2015, presidential election in Togo, an estimated 3,509,258 voters were assigned to 4,112 polling centers that were divided into 8,994 polling stations. Six poll workers were assigned to each polling station for a total of approximately 54,000 poll workers (NIEC, 2015). In September 2016, I contacted two acquaintances via telephone to ask for recommendations of names of individuals among this population. The two acquaintances provided me with electronic mail addresses and within 2 weeks I was able to gain initial access to five poll workers. I sent to the five individuals an electronic mail explaining the purpose of my research and an invitation to participate in the study (Appendix A, p. 240). By October 2016, I had received positive responses from all five addressees indicating their interest in participating in the research.

On December 1, 2016, I arrived in Lome, the capital of Togo to search for more prospective participants and complete the field work.

The search tool to find potential participants was conducted by word of mouth. Upon my arrival in Lome, I called each of the five people to ask for an interview. During this first telephone call, I asked these five participants to refer me to other coworkers and later I asked coworkers to pass me on to other coworkers. Poll workers in tight-knit communities in places such as Lome, the nation's capital, and my hometown of Amegnran, are physically accessible through their publicly known contact information. Thus, any participant who referred a co-worker had information that could be used to locate the person, including a telephone contact, a work address, or a house location.

I chose to travel to Lome in Togo and conduct face-to-face semistructured interviews instead of staying in the United States and conducting interviews over the telephone or Internet because the topic of poll working requires respondents to comment on their personal world and social environment. Verbal conversations let respondents feel confident about disclosing their personal histories. In addition, my physical presence provided me the opportunity to monitor respondents' behavior and ensure that they responded to the best of their knowledge. As a result, it was possible to gain a depth of understanding about the issues involved in poll working. The quest for high-quality data also inspired me to select poll workers from two different locations of urban and rural areas. The merit of this approach lay in the opportunity to look into the ability of the government in Togo to reach out to the hinterland.

I conducted the first interview on December 3, 2016, at Be Gare Elementary School in Lome and the last interview took place in the village of Amegran on December 29, 2016, at the local public elementary school. The school sites where face-to-face interviews were conducted also served as the voting places where respondents performed their poll working duties. All school principals gracefully granted permission to conduct the interviews in the schools. Interview sessions took place in classrooms while schools were off allowing conversations to be recorded in a comfortable ambiance with no sources of coercion or intrusion.

Prior to the interview, I secured the necessary equipment, including a digital recorder with spare batteries and a note pad. The interview process followed the protocol that I established. I created a pseudonym in letters and numbers for each participant to prevent their identification. As such, pseudonyms for poll workers read PW1, PW2, and so on.

I started the conversation by introducing myself and stating the purpose of the study. Then, I showed the participant the consent form before assigning an anonymous code. In order to develop a participant profile and accurately assess the level of proficiency of poll workers, participants were requested to provide biographic information regarding gender, age, educational level, and job qualification (see Table 5). At the completion of each interview, I agreed with the respondent about the use of a telephone call or electronic mail for follow-up to clarify points and validate statements. The day following the interview, I called the interviewee by phone to thank him and to remind him about the potential need to get back to him for follow up.

Demographics of the Participants

Before engaging in the field work, I initially evaluated a sample size of 20 participants. But overtime, as financial and time constraints impinged on the investigation, I progressively reduced this number. In the end, a total of 11 men representing various backgrounds and diverse political sensibilities in Togo participated to this study. Characteristics regarding gender, age, and other personal characteristics were not taken into consideration in the design of the study. The inclusion criterion was any adult of working age who had experience working the polls and had tenure in the presidential election of April 25, 2015. I selected potential participants who demonstrated an interest in the research topic when, during initial contacts, they asked me questions about the study that I found insightful. Their interest indicated that they might be information-rich or were in position to tell a story relevant to the purpose at hand.

The educational level and professional qualifications of the participants indicated that the respondents were literate enough and qualified enough to perform basic assigned duties. None of the participants had a high school diploma. Two had General Certificate of Education O-level and the other six had completed 2 or 3 years in secondary school. The remaining three attended elementary school. Of the 11 participants, one declared that he is a retiree; six reported having regular job outside being a poll worker while other four informed that they have no jobs. As professional occupation, two are elementary teachers and the other four drive motorcycle-taxi (see Table 5). On average, all participants have been involved in at least one electoral cycle. One participant reported having served in three previous presidential elections.

Table 5

Demographic Profile of Participants

Participants	Electoral Position	Degree/Diploma	Occupation	Residence
1	Poll Worker	General Certificate of Education O level	Elementary School Teacher	Amegnran
2	Poll Worker	General Certificate of Education O level	Elementary School Teacher	Amegnran
3	Poll Worker	Some years of Secondary School	Retiree	Amegnran
4	Poll Worker	Some years of Secondary School	Moto-Taxi Driver	Lome
5	Poll Worker	Some years of Secondary School	Jobless	Lome
6	Poll Worker	Some years of Secondary School	Moto-Taxi Driver	Lome
7	Poll Worker	Some years of Secondary School	Moto-Taxi Driver	Amegnran
8	Poll Worker	Some years of Secondary School	Moto-Taxi Driver	Lome
9	Poll Worker	Elementary School	Jobless	Lome
10	Poll Worker	Elementary School	Jobless	Amegnran
11	Poll Worker	Elementary School	Jobless	Lome

Participants were all males ranging from 35 to 57 years old. The sample population experienced the same realities that all poll workers were exposed to across the nation; therefore it was appropriate to select them as prospective respondents in this study.

Table 6

Participants Qualification

Poll Workers	Degree / Diploma	Training	Training Length
2	General Certificate of Education O level	Yes	3 Hours
6	Some years of Secondary School	Yes	3 Hours
3	Elementary School	Yes	3 Hours

Data Collection Process

To get the most of my field work, I diversified my sources of data collection, relying on the qualitative methods most effective to address the research questions and achieve the research objectives. The primary sources of data collection were semistructured interviews supported by a review of audio and video records and an analysis of documents.

Patton (1987) advised constructing interviews of the type I crafted around six categories of questions including experience and behavior, opinion and belief, feeling, knowledge, sensory information, and background or demographic data. I developed a list of core questions that aimed to serve the perspective of the research questions I had come up with after reviewing the literature in the field and finding gaps in the study of poll workers. Accordingly, I designed questions related to respondents' motives and methods of recruitment in order to get insights into the poll workers' level of commitment to do this type of job. I asked questions referring to questionable activities in order to address the perceived lack of information on poll workers' involvement in practices that give rise to electoral disputes. Also, I used interview questions about working conditions in order to gather information on the capacity of the country to organize elections.

At the start of the interview sessions, respondents were not comfortable expressing their opinions and reluctant to talk openly about politics. However, as the interviews progressed, respondents felt more relaxed and were able to articulate their frustration with the perceived incapacity of the electoral agency to provide resources and their powerlessness in the face of ineffective electoral management. Conversations ended

with respondents' impressions on the electoral operations and the solutions they recommended. Structuring interview questions from general to specific issues facilitated the flow of the conversations and was useful for extracting information, especially on sensitive topics related to election irregularities. The full interview questions can be found in Appendix B (p. 242).

Prior to the beginning of each interview session, respondents were informed that they could withdrawal from the study should they feel uncomfortable at any point. Participants were also notified of the measures used to keep data confidential. I ensured that all participants were fully aware of the precautionary measures that I had taken to respect their privacy and secure their confidentiality and anonymity throughout the study as well as afterwards. Then, participants were asked to read and sign the consent form.

On November 3, 2016, approximately 3 weeks before the interviews, participants were given a prepared list of questions so that they would be aware of the purpose of the research, could familiarize themselves with the issues to be covered in the interviews, and reflect on the type of information that I need from them. On the day of interview, I let the set of standardized core questions guide the conversations because the list of questions enabled me to be consistent with all respondents. I could cover the same areas of discussions and avoid misinterpretations of the questions; additionally, each interviewee could freely elaborate on specific cases as necessary.

At that point, participants were asked for permission to record the conversations. I told respondents that they would only be identified by their pseudonyms and advised the respondents to avoid disclosing their real identities during conversations. It was

incumbent upon me to protect personal information from negligent disclosure starting with the participants themselves.

I carefully avoided leading questions that would induce participants to distort their views and alter their responses. The length of the conversations varied from 40 minutes to 90 minutes. Answers disclosed different levels of depth, reflecting the educational level of the respondents but also their degree of interest in the research.

Data I have collected from interviews were evaluated in light of information gathered from other sources. Thus, I mined social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, and so on to review audio and video recordings. Audio and video recordings proved to be useful to get a picture of poll workers' practices in order to capture subtle hints and gain deeper insight. I reviewed the same images repeatedly in order to put respondents' stories in the actual context that frames poll workers' performance. By using previously recorded images to illustrate the narratives, I was able to extract the real meaning of the stories that poll workers have told me and thus formulate an authentic interpretation of respondents' perspectives. The analysis of secondary sources of data was deemed pertinent to assess the validity of respondents' views. Secondary sources included the 2015 presidential election results provided in the official final report of the National Independent electoral Commission (NIEC, 2015).

Additionally, legal instruments governing elections in Togo and press releases were the sources that generated authoritative data (see Table 7). In addition, international and national observers, namely the European Union (EU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the International Organization of La

Francophonie (IOF), and the National Coordination of Civil Society-Togo (NCCST), sent observers and experts to review the presidential election. At the end of their missions, the institutions produced official reports which contained important information. I consulted all these documents and official reports to substantiate statements made by participants.

Table 7

Case Study Documents

Identification	Description
Document 1	Electoral Law 2013-008 of February 2013
Document 2	General Report on the April 25, 2015, Presidential Election in Togo. National Independent Electoral Commission (June 2015).
Document 3	Final Report European Union Experts Mission on Presidential Election April 25, 2015-Togo

Throughout the collection and analysis of data particularly during interviews, I took notes in a diary and closely observed respondents' demeanors. At first, respondents were careful about taking a stance. But as soon as they were convinced of the academic purpose of the study and the mutual interest of interviewer and interviewee in fair elections in Togo, the participants gradually opened up about their opinions.

Additionally, the interview setting in former polling places proved to be meaningful to the participants as returning to the scene of the election brought back the experience that they lived first-hand. Later on, during the analysis of data, I could refer back to a given context to depict the background that gave rise to the data and thus follow the trail created by the investigation process.

I also arranged casual encounters with election agency officials, journalists, magistrates, police officers, members of political parties, and representatives of

observation missions. These meetings, in addition to testimonials of voters, press clippings and photographs, proved to be useful sources from which I drew invaluable information. I also studied electoral law 2013-008 of February 2013 to assess the gap between electoral rules and their implementation. By verifying information across data sources, I was able to support the claims that respondents made, validate my own interpretations, and draw coherent conclusions.

Data Analysis Technique

Stake (1995) advised that there is no special starting point to begin analyzing data. Accordingly, I started the analysis of data at the completion of the first interview on December 03, 2016. Upon completion of each interview session, I transcribed the discussions by converting recorded conversations into texts on the same day. Then, since the conversations took place in French which is the language poll workers speak in Togo, I translated the texts from French to English. I transcribed simultaneously with the interview by first listening to the recording and then writing the text. The benefit of translating, transcribing, and analyzing each interview immediately after the session lays in the opportunity to quickly identify possible shortcomings regarding the researcher's bias, incomplete responses, or unasked questions (Miles, et al., 2014). Using this method, I could go back to the respondent soon after the conversation to make completions as necessary.

The transcript and translation generated a wealth of information with different levels of depth in which various themes were embedded. I realized that making a synthesis of the meaning of all information was necessary to extract themes. The use of

software was neither effective nor stimulating enough to perform such synthesis so I ended up performing the coding manually which turned out to be more thought-provoking and inspiring.

Manual coding offered me the opportunity to familiarize with the data and understand the data I had collected. While coding manually, I was able to search for nuances, locate subtle links, lay bare implicit concepts, and find commonalities and differences among themes that software might miss (Miles et al., 2014). This approach served as a basis for organizing the collection of fragmented data towards an integrated version of all the transcripts. With this integrated version, I could challenge assumptions expressed by respondents and understand the course of the analysis.

To carry out the manual coding, I started by printing out hard copies of the transcripts so that I could isolate excerpts and take notes in the margins. I reduced the raw information by reading each transcript using colored highlighters to mark passages. As I was perusing the transcripts, various themes began to unfold. The more I reviewed the transcript, the more the codes were surfacing. As explained by Miles et al., I conducted a thematic analysis, comparing themes to create codes following the three-stage technique of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

First, I completed data reduction by simplifying storylines, identifying trends, and extracting salient ideas. I carried out this task by exploiting all available sources of data. Second, in order to perform a data display, I summarized concepts and retrieved emergent trends which I could represent in a comprehensive matrix format (Yin, 2011). Last, I drew initial conclusions and verified with alternative sources before I deem them

conclusive (Miles et al., 2014). Illogical inferences were set apart for special consideration.

At the primary level of coding, I looked for concepts by sorting out recurring words that conveyed significance. Next, based on their similarities I clustered salient words to fit into themes. Whenever the majority of respondents reported similar responses they become themes.

At the second level of coding, I analyzed the relationship between the major themes that emerged from the primary level of coding. I removed duplications, combined related themes, and sorted the themes into subthemes. As I kept reading, subthemes generated patterns. In essence, each theme generated subthemes and subthemes gave rise to categories (see Tables 8, 9, & 10).

In the third and final review, I refined categories by eliminating overlapping concepts. Then, I merged prevailing ideas into existing subthemes to establish their relevance to the main research question. At this point, I consulted field notes and diaries in detail in order to put participants' assertions into their proper context before using passages from the interviews as direct quotes to support interpretations. Throughout the three stages, categories, themes, and subthemes were evaluated to yield a variety of concepts significant enough to offer a clear picture of participants' experience.

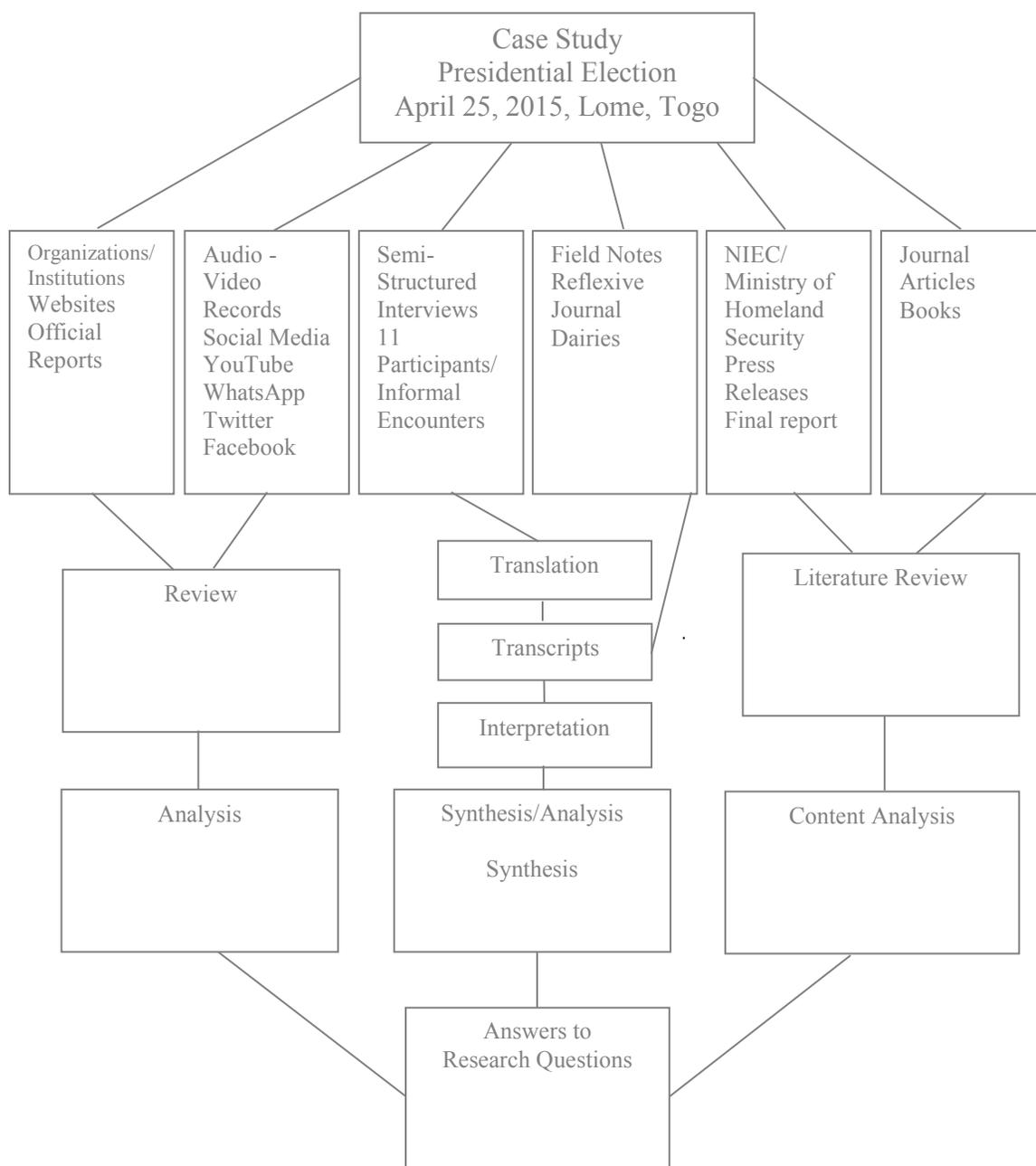


Figure 2. Sources of data.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

The implementation of the methodological design meant that the research and findings were constantly being subject to validation. Thus, from the beginning of the investigation, I was careful in assembling evidence. During the course of the research, I made certain that I was analyzing the actual data that had been collected. And at the end of the study, I ensured that logical inferences were justified. For this purpose and prior to engaging in the collection of data, I submitted the interview consent form to Walden University's Institutional Review Board which granted its approval in August 17, 2016, under number 08-17-16-0362000. Then, in order to achieve trustworthiness, the standards of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability became the proper criteria to verify conclusions.

Credibility

Throughout the field work, I was aware of the risks of misinformation getting into the study as a result of respondents' subjectivity—that is, respondents having different interpretations of election matters—depending on their partisan affiliation. Consequently, I relied on purposeful sampling, probing questions, and triangulation as tools to achieve credibility.

During my initial contacts with prospective participants, I selected participants who exhibited evidence of having had information-rich experiences (Yin, 2011). I hand-picked 11 participants who could provide pertinent and honest responses that would enable me to explore the topic in depth. During the course of the conversations, I quizzed respondents to confirm the soundness of my understanding and verify the accuracy of

inferences that I formed. After the conversations, I ensured that my inferences were supported by evidence in the form of quotations and corroborated by alternative sources through excerpts as suggested by Miles et al. (2014).

Transferability

I was concerned that the research process might need to be replicated. For this purpose, I kept a record of research activities and maintained a reflexive journal to writedown events that occurred and actions taken in a given circumstance. Thus, in the journal, I set datelines, registered each appointment that I scheduled for interviews and consultations, and described the general progress of the investigation. It was also helpful for me to jot down in the same journal my personal impressions. Informants' statements primarily provided substance for the narrative but it was my reflexive journal which offered sources of evidence to substantiate the analysis.

The merits of keeping a handwritten account of my activities were two-fold. First, the approach enabled me to record a vivid description of respondents' experiences. Second, the approach offered transparency in the analysis as I was able to describe in detail each step of the application of the research methodology.

Dependability

As I recorded participants' statements, interpreted their personal opinions, and analyzed transcripts, I realized that carelessness and laxness could threaten the research design. I recalled that Miles et al. (2014) cautioned researchers to be aware of these threats that are typical for this type of qualitative research. For this reason, I sought to achieve consistency by conducting the research process with considerable care. From

December 02, 2016, to January 26, 2017, I was in Lome where I was able to acquire sufficient resources and opportunities to carry out the research on-site. First, as recommended by Janesick (2011), I was able to deeply immerse myself in the local environment, developing direct contacts with different electoral stockholders, engaging them in conversations, and perusing official reports so that I could explore various perspectives, merge the data, and understand the case under study. Then, my presence in the field over a period of two months enabled me to build trust and facilitate my interaction with participants so that I could overcome any misconception that might slip into the procession of data. Telephone, postal service, or electronic communications with participants would not have afforded the same kind of conditions.

Upon my return from Lome, this physical investment was followed by an intellectual immersion. Transcribing the interviews and manually coding data required me to become quite familiar with the amount of material that I have accumulated in the field. After this step, I consulted with an independent reviewer experienced in qualitative methodology who was asked to critically appraise the consistency of the research process and the soundness of the analysis. The method of collecting and processing data, the technique of analyzing data, and the procedure of drawing conclusions were critically evaluated for their reliability regarding their relevance to the research questions.

I stored and archived all transcripts, translations, audio and video recordings, photographs, reflexive notes, and journal articles. Beyond the need to provide actual evidence of the sources where data were extracted and compiled, the archiving made sure that I did not overlook details and eventually reproduce the procedures used to process

data. In this way, data can be connected to their original sources and the inferences justified.

Confirmability

I sought confirmability through two techniques: member checking and reflectivity. I was fully aware that respondents were not familiar with data collection techniques such as interviews, surveys, polls, or questionnaires. Prior to starting each interview, I introduced a relaxing ambiance that permitted the participant and me to establish mutual trust with the unrevealed goal of mitigating biased responses and unearthing underlying points of interest (Creswell, 2013). Then, once interviews were completed, I offered respondents the opportunity to listen to themselves, read preliminary summaries of transcripts, and challenge my interpretations (Miles et al., 2014). During the first interview, I noticed that the respondent appreciated the opportunity to review the statements he made; in addition to establishing trust, this technique allowed me to gain the participant's full cooperation. Subsequently, I applied the same technique with other interviewees which lead them to more openness in their comments.

Additionally, I avoided subjectivity in the interpretation of data by portraying my active role in the inception of this study. The design of the research, the processing of data, the generation of findings, the carrying out of the analytical strategy, and the formulation of conclusions started and ended with me. The genesis of the study was my witnessing the post-electoral violence that followed the previous presidential election in Togo in 2005. Later, my professional experience as a poll worker both in Togo and in the United States focused my interest on the importance of poll workers' practices. I drew on

my personal experience and on my professional background that I discussed in a previous chapter to produce the research. But equally important, I used both personal experience and professional background as tools to get beyond any temptation of subjectivism.

Negative Cases Analysis

As findings came into view, there were instances where data collected diverged from the normal course of the investigation. Any concept that proved inconclusive after I tracked information through document review, audio and video recordings, and official reports was isolated. Such instances were afforded appropriate consideration and served to develop subsequent themes which I included in the analysis. These instances were useful for sticking solely to the perspectives drawn from the narratives and documents.

As the investigation unfolded and I referred to my research questions to inform the emerging results, I also sought constantly to relate the content of my analysis to previous works. I favored triangulation, member checking, rich and thick description, constant comparison, and negative case analysis to achieve trustworthiness because these are reasonably cost-effective methods and also generate good results (Creswell, 2013). The verification of data through these five different techniques in order to obtain an independent confirmation of my own perceptions made me confident that the answers that I reached were enlightening and the conclusions that I drew were insightful.

Results

The interview questions aimed primarily to collect the perceptions and attitudes of a sample of poll workers and highlight influential factors while participants were carrying out electoral operations during the presidential election in 2015 in Togo. In order to align

with the nature of interview questions and understand all concepts involved, the main research question was conveniently broken into more specific subquestions: What problems do poll workers commonly encounter when they execute their tasks on election day? What are the sources of the problems? Do problems result from the complexity of procedures? Do problems arise from the lack of resources? Do poll workers follow or ignore electoral procedures from opening to closing the polls? How can poll workers be more effective in Togo?

This approach enabled participants to effectively expound on their experiences; as a result, I was able to achieve more responsive conversations with the participants. The resulting analysis of the transcripts generated 17 themes useful for answering the first subquestion about the various contingencies—such as an ill-conceived legal framework or inconvenient facilities—that might have hampered the ability of poll workers to do their jobs. Nine themes were identified that were pertinent to the second subquestion including poor management of voting stations, long lines of voters, violation of the principles of secrecy, security, fairness and transparency. Eight themes that advocated institutional reforms and individual changes to address poll workers' low performance were relevant to the third subquestion. For contextual clarity and a good understanding of the phenomena under investigation, findings are reported in a narrative format. Whenever it is appropriate, respondents' comments are directly reported without editing.

Research Subquestion 1: What Contextual Factors Prevent Poll Workers in Togo From Effectively Implementing Electoral Procedures?

As interviewees shared their stories, various insights surfaced showing that participants have a clear conception of the challenges that the presidential electoral process encountered in Togo. Participants described layers of issues that play a significant role in poll workers' practices. Two broad categories—one encompassing intrinsic factors and one encompassing extrinsic factors—emerged in the primary level of coding. The intrinsic factors included the lack of qualifications to do the job of poll worker and the resulting incompetence. Extrinsic factors included the legal framework, the physical facilities, the voting equipment, and the communication materials.

Ill-conceived legal framework. Four respondents out of 11 considered that challenges to their work are farfetched. Respondents felt that the biggest predicament lies not so much in the lack of aptitude in poll workers but in the inception of the electoral legal framework in Togo. PW 5 noted that the conception and design of the legal framework carried negative implications: “I recall all resentments and acrimonies that surfaced during negotiations between the ruling party and opposition parties.” PW6 recounted that “laws and regulations are consistently changing to include or remove clauses at the ruling party’s convenience.” PW2 recalled that “one thing to keep in mind is the political cleavage between opposition parties who fought for reforms and the ruling party who did not want to concede.” Additionally, PW 3 pointed out that “to make things worse, every side, incumbents and challengers alike, has a different interpretation of the same law.” PW 6 also explained that the road to competitive elections is one of the

factors that affect poll workers' jobs: "each clause is subject to disagreement, either the composition or the roles assigned to the elections institutions. Between the NIEC and the Constitutional Court nobody accepts for sure who should announce election results."

PW9 went further to say that "the NIEC operates in a total blackout. Officials make decisions arbitrarily. Just look at closing times: they allow some voting stations to close late while others cannot." PW3 concluded that "it is compelling. The rules inherently promote contention around the voting system."

Inconvenient facilities. Poll workers' practices appear to be influenced by the inconvenience of voting sites which had an unforeseen impact on the ability of poll workers to provide service. As conversations dealing with various concerns about facilities continued, at first I found the concern unrelated to the topic until PW7 explained that the facilities were not fit to serve as voting sites. He described the facilities by saying: "Classrooms did not have amenities, no sanitation, no running water, and no power connection....I had to leave the voting station to use the restroom outside the classroom. Obviously the rules did not provide a break time for using the restroom and operations were not interrupted. Nobody knows what happened while I was out." More eloquent criticisms came from PW10 who recounted that: "I heard about voting stations in open air next door. Voting stations were made up of just a ballot set on a table under a tree with a piece of cloth hanging between two posts."

Inadequate voting materials and equipment. The quality of voting materials and equipment drew sharp discontentedness from respondents. PW3 was interested in the light available to conduct the count and he made his point this way: "Since there was no

power connection in the village, they provide a generator. The problem was the generator won't start until we found out, there was no gas in the tank." PW7 complained that "they provided flash lights but seriously how could you conduct accurately a vote count and fill out all these forms with flash lights? Coworkers and the public turned on their mobile phone flash light to increase visibility, but still." PW3 lamented that "office supplies such as staplers, rubber bands, and glue were missing and above all we were provided no calculators."

PW1 viewed the lack of materials and equipment as a challenge to their service: "They should provide crowd control chains to contain this entire crowd. And the ink was not indelible at all. It faded away when you use alcohol." PW 11 commented: "The ballot boxes were supposedly to be secured with padlocks. No padlocks were delivered; instead they provided two zip rubberbands to seal the boxes. Anybody can cut them off and replace them. You are not knowing that poll workers use private means of transportation to convey the urns and the ballots. It was just inappropriate." PW6 stressed that "at the opening we have enough supplies. But voters kept pouring in until we quickly ran out of paper ballots. After the president of the voting station called the voting center, we have been allowed to get supplements at the nearest voting station." "The top two supplies that expired fast are ballot papers and ink. Besides, one voting booth in each voting station is not enough" recalled PW 11.

Unpredictable voters' cases. One of the challenging aspects of the job that lead to participants' lower performance is the unpredictability of some situations.

Unpredictable cases have to do with a determination of a voter's eligibility or a voter

assignment to a specific voting station. PW7 recounted that “some voters required a particular process in order to vote and poll workers should ensure that the voter meets appropriate requirements such as proof of identity and address”. The words of PW8 reflected other interviewees’ feelings: “Think about a female voter who got married, changed her patronymic and moved out after her registration. I have to check that her name spells correctly on both the voter’s card and the voters’ list and the address must appear the same on both documents.” The unpredictable situations subject the decisions that poll workers made to uncertainties and required institutional instructions.

Lack of supervision. The unusual situations that poll workers were confronted with and were not accustomed to handling raised a question about the role of supervisors. But PW1 commented: “We experienced incidents, especially at the opening, that required supervisory opinions. But no officials were in sight when we needed them.”

Workload. The pace of activities, the resulting pressure from voters, and the length of the workday put a strain on poll workers. PW 11 recalled: “On election day, I worked a 15-hour shift. It easily worn you out, man. By the time of the vote counting, my coworkers and I felt so exhausted but we struggled to stick to the rules. The strain was just overwhelming.”

Safety of staff and materials. PW9 performed his poll worker duties in the village where he particularly experienced the absence of infrastructure: “Since there were no public offices, such as post offices or hospitals, to store the electoral materials, we turned to the chief of the village to store the materials in his living room.” PW7 felt worrisome about security forces and stated: “Police officers were roaming all over the

places. A show of force was pointless. That was just intimidation.”

Transportation and communication constraints. Unreliable transportation affects all electoral operations. Respondents commented about logistical failure at the origins of transportation and delivery issues. PW6 complained that “the road between Amegnran and Lome, the capital, was so execrable that it takes 3 hours to travel instead of 1.30 hour. In these conditions, the deployment of materials took time.” PW11 added that “supplying materials by air is out of question because there are no airports in the areas.”

Scarce technical capacity. About nine respondents found that a weak technical capacity was a major impediment. Voters were issued a permanent card that stored information such as fingerprint and photo. In other countries such as Ghana and Nigeria, the poll worker verifies the voter’s identity through a voter card reader. But in Togo “there was no such device and poll workers have to check the information with the voters’ register”, stated PW8. The telecommunication system was not fully operable and poll workers in remote areas were unable to access official information. PW6 said: “The telephone network works intermittently if not at all in certain areas. As for the Internet, there was no connection at all.”

Staff shortages. Staff shortages spurred a heated discussion over poll workers’ absenteeism. PW1 commented that “each voting station was staffed with six poll workers. In my voting station, only four coworkers showed up on election day. We reassigned the tasks among ourselves but, unfortunately the shortage caused back up. Of course, the process of each voter took much more time.”

Table 8

Summary of Results

Research Questions	Category	Themes	Subthemes
Research Subquestion 1: What contextual factors prevent poll workers in Togo from effectively implementing electoral procedures?	Extrinsic Factors	Ill-conceived Legal framework	Partisan cleavages
		Inconvenient Facilities	No sanitation No electricity No running water
		Supplies shortage	Few office supplies
		Recruitment	No screening No requirements
		Poor training	No written test
		Safety of Staff and Materials	Security officers Mobile voting stations No public services
		Transportation & Communication Constraints	No warehouses Poor road conditions Limited connection
	Intrinsic Factors	Scarce Technical Capacity	Internet outage
		Staff Shortages	Biometric technology
		Workload	Partisanship influences Tribalism influence
		Funding	Multiple procedures Dependency External assistance
		Misinformation	No transparency Unpredictability Confusion
		Incompetence	Blatant mistakes Inaccuracies Tabulation errors
		Compensation	Nominal wage Stipend
Incentives	Making extra money Financial gains		

The comments echoed a statement made by PW9 who reported that “the wife of my coworker was sick. He took her to the hospital. Later on, he called that he could not report to work.” The official from the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC) dismissed the idea that the election agency had any responsibility for staff shortage. Instead, he lamented that absenteeism seriously impaired operations: “In many cases poll workers failed to report for duty because they prospected for extra money. They got better opportunities to make more money somewhere else and I can understand that. The reality is those who did not show up were trained. Unless we allowed voting stations to operate understaffed, we resorted to untrained staff to fill in.”

Recruitment. Although a great majority of respondents admitted that not their qualification but their personal relationship helped them get the job, the recruitment policy appeared to be a cause for concern for participants. PW 9 stated: “There were no particular requirements other than be a party member and be 16 years old. I was designated by my political party. Party leaders made a job announcement and I volunteered. Since I was a vigilante during meetings and demonstrations, they picked me up. I was not asked if I could read, write, or count.” PW1 admitted: “I used to rally supporters up in the streets for the party. Party leaders appreciated my zeal and proposed my name.” The NIEC’s official countered the idea that the NIEC recruits poll workers: “The NIEC did not recruit. It’s right there in the electoral law. Political parties nominate their agents to work across the nation on election day. They send us the list of their agents. The NIEC trains them, deploys them on the ground, and pays them.”

Inadequate training. The theme regarding the training inquired into the way

respondents perceived the training as relevant to their assignment. While all 11 respondents have taken a strong stand against the quality of the training, PW3 stood out for his description of the training session: “The training lasts a couple of hours and I was given just a handbook. That’s all. The classroom was overcrowded and I was standing outside at the door. After an hour, I just left.” “I attended the training at the window standing with many others who could not find a sitting place because it was filled to capacity” according to PW8’s account.

PW5 continued: “My perception is that the training did not provide appropriate knowledge for poll workers to tackle these kinds of tasks.” PW8 echoed: “The training did not address the real problems encountered in the voting place. As a result, poll workers left the training without a thorough understanding of assigned duties. Look, there was no control to check on attendance. And there was no evaluation test.” An embittered official from the NIEC countered: “Three months before the training we send a reminder letter inviting each political party to prepare the names of their representatives to attend the training. Political parties did not respect the deadlines. By the time they send the names of their nominees, there was no time left to process the application, perform background checks, or even attend the training.”

Miscommunication. Three respondents worried about last-minute switches of rules and policies. Outdated information and conflicting instructions resulted in ambiguity and confusion that made applying regulations difficult. Evidence from respondents’ statements confirms this finding. In some polling stations, unexpected circumstances such as tardiness of opening or faulty equipment prompted the NIEC to

resort to last-minute changes of electoral rules. For instance an administrator from the NIEC reported that “in areas where there is no power grid the NIEC instructed to close the poll at 4:00 PM before darkness.” In other instance, the NIEC instructed to extend polling hours until 6:00 PM.

But several respondents were critical of the way the election board managed the contingencies. PW2 led the charge against the NIEC, stating: “different instructions came down to us without prior notification. In our precinct, we were instructed to stay open until the line is finished but few minutes later a supervisor came in to order the closing.”

Lack of qualification and incompetence. A major point to notice is that respondents were fully aware of their own deficiencies. PW7 remarked that fellow poll workers “were not up the jobs.” PW3 stated: “In my voting station, three of my coworkers did not have any kind of degree. As a matter of fact they drive motorcycle-taxi.... I doubt some of us understand their duties. A poll worker mistakenly told voters that they were at the wrong voting station and redirected them to the wrong place.” PW9 responded: “Poll workers did not show enough skills in reading and tabulating accurately.” PW11 noted: “One of my coworker was struggling to read the voters’ names. I said to myself how on earth is he going to carry on the rest of his duties. Co-workers in my precinct were totally clueless about procedural questions from voters and they could not direct them properly.”

PW3 expressed similar view: “I saw a poll worker who could not state the name of the political party that sent him here. Yes, he has no awareness about his presence there or who he was representing. I heard about another one who could not figure out the

abbreviations of his party and what the abbreviations stand for”. PW4 echoed similar view: “The voters’ register was designed on an alphabetical order. Still, co-workers were struggling to locate voters’ names on the list. Poll workers were as confused as voters”.

Compensation. The concern about compensation was stronger than any other concerns that interviewees expressed and the topic sparked excitement among respondents. A reason that raised the formulation of this interview question was to know if respondents felt poll worker’s job rewarding enough. Respondents’ views appeared to be a clear illustration of the value election officials reserved to election personnel. PW 9 stance: “I made approximately \$ 25 for a 15-hour shift. It ain’t right. I make more money when I drive my motorcycle-taxi.” PW3 stated: “The pay doesn’t even meet the minimum wage. I was paid a stipend.”

Incentives. This theme was developed in relation with the theme of low compensation. The topic aimed to assess poll workers’ interests in the job if any, and to disclose the underlying reasons that motivated poll workers to take the job. The desire for financial gain has a strong effect on poll workers and was a core reason given by a vast majority although the group admitted that poll working is not the most rewarding position. PW4 acknowledged: “To be honest, I did it to make extra money”. PW11 stated: “I took the job to make ends meet.” Only PW8 expressed a dissenting voice: he made it clear that he intended “to render a service to my party.”

Unethical Conduct. There was no unanimous perspective on the theme related to unethical conducts, answers varying depending on the partisan affiliation of the respondent. In general, respondents hedged on answers and were reluctant to give

specific examples of unethical conducts. It was apparent that respondents were eager to distance themselves from any irregularities. No respondents acknowledged personal malpractices or mistakes. All respondents positioned themselves as effective poll workers and maintained that they performed professionally. PW 11 gave me a puzzled look and replied: “I certainly did well.”

But respondents were not sparing in detecting other co-workers’ incompetence or unacceptable practices. PW10 even pointed out to voters’ malfeasance: “Voters used camera from their mobile phone to take picture of their mark on the paper ballot. After they voted, they went outside to bargain their vote and get paid.”

In line with the reviewed literature, findings highlighted the direct impact of organizational deficiencies on poll workers’ job performance.

Research Subquestion 2: What is the Perceived Effect of Poll Workers’ Performance on the Integrity of Elections in Togo?

This research sub-question intended to collect participants’ perceptions on how poll workers management affects the quality of the electoral process. Recurrent concepts that emerged from the transcripts of data were “delay”, “confusion”, and “frustration”. Overall, the themes were predictable results of a mismanagement that would be doing a disservice to the election quality.

Late opening. In responding to the question of what their job as poll workers has on the electoral process, all 11 respondents put great emphasize on the opening issues. Respondents expressed widespread criticism over the faulty distribution of materials and supplies at voting centers. PW 6, a poll worker in the village felt that “starting up was a

mess. The supervisor of the polling place arrived 30 minutes late because he went to retrieve the materials at the nearest branch of the NIEC located approximately ten miles from the voting place. PW6 explained that “there was no safe place to store materials in their villages and other supervisors of voting places preferred to have their materials delivered early in the morning, provoking a back-up at the distribution center.” An official from the NIEC conceded that “finding a safe place such as a public office to keep the materials is daunting. Facilities in rural areas, if they exist, are not secured.” PW 6 continued: “Even though all poll workers in my voting station reported on time, it took two hours to transform the classroom in voting station and set up the materials.” PW2 explained the delay in his voting station by saying: “In my voting station the supervisor lost his keys and we could not access the room housing the materials. It took 30 minutes to force our way in. On top of that, a coworker did not show up. His absence weighed down the operations. I was put in a position I was not trained for.”

Long Lines of Voters. The hassles from late opening only led to more delays and more confusion. As reported in press clippings, video recordings and photographs, the great majority of respondents admitted long lines of voters on election day. PW11 indicated that “lines of voters impatient to vote stretched out to the streets. Voters stand in line for two, three hours. Some people got frustrated and left without casting their ballots, especially the elderly. And so were the new comers. When they see the lines they just walk away.” PW8 directed me to the Internet and stated: “It is all on YouTube. You can see records of long line of voters.”

Table 9

Summary of Results

Research Questions	Category	Themes	Subthemes
Research Subquestion 2: What are the perceived effects of poll workers' performance on the integrity of elections in Togo?	Opening up	Late Opening	Election officials lateness
		Registration and Voters' List	Inaccuracies Omissions
		Long Lines of Voters	Long waiting time Missing names
		Poor Management of Voting Stations	Voting stations in disarray Paper ballots scattered on the floor Presence of unofficial people
	Voting Operations	Denial of Voting Votes Suppression	Vote invalidation Votes uncounted Voters' returns
		Overlooking Guidelines	No authentication of ballots No ink applied
		Lack of Secrecy Lack of Safety Lack of transparency	Paper ballot transparency Voting booth position
	Closing up	Vote Counting	Inaccuracies Result sheets' discrepancies
		Delay in Announcing Results	Prescribed procedures Physical transportation

Poor management of voting stations. Poor management of voting stations was one of the core incidents respondents cited as a result of poll workers actions. Six respondents reported that voting stations appeared in disarray and dysfunction. PW 9 commented: "Voters were standing at the door while we were frantic trying to set up. It was just chaotic." PW3 described how "spoiled paper ballots covered the floor in the

voting booths.” “The ballot boxes had been moved around in the voting station apparently for no good reason” stated PW2.

Denial of voting and voting suppression. Three out of 11 respondents acknowledged that challenges to poll workers’ practices come at the expenses of voters. Many voters waited in lines only to find out their names were not on the list or they were at the wrong place. PW3 stated: “A lot of voters came to me complaining about their names being absent from the list but I could not help.” PW8 concurred with PW3: “I turned away voters whose names did not show on the list. Having wait so long and not voting, I felt for them. It was not my fault. That’s the rule, I just applied the rules.” A review of the NIEC’s Final Report revealed a high number of invalid ballots or spoiled ballots on the tally sheet. PW 5 noted the risk of vote suppression: “Marking a ballot incorrectly was a major issue because it may be a cause of rejection of the ballot.”

Overlooking guidelines. Poll workers easily departed from the rules in rural areas where voters and poll workers were from the same community and know each other. PW 4 acknowledged that “instructions were to sign paper ballots on the back to authenticate the ballots. But I noticed not all voters have their ballot signed before heading to the booth.” PW2 expressed similar views: “The authentication has not been consistent. Coworkers did not systematically verify voters’ card or the ballot. In the beginning, they did. But later on, they just gave up. I don’t blame them. It was a long day and after all we knew each other, voters and poll workers. Most voters were acquaintances and relatives. Why do I need to verify somebody’ identity whom I live with every day?”

Lack of secrecy and safety. PW3 admitted the secrecy of the vote was not respected: “The cardboard used as a screen in the voting booth was not large enough to secure complete privacy. At one point, the cardboard was displaced and I could watch a voter inside the voting booth marking his ballot.” PW 11 found out that “the paper ballot was transparent. From my seat, I could read the mark on the back of the ballot.” PW5 added: “After waiting in vain the official vehicle that will transport the voting materials after the closing, the supervisor jumped behind a motorcycle-taxi holding the urns and documents in his hands to be delivered at the election headquarter.”

Vote counting. Half of respondents found vote counting to be a critical phase where they were subject to a lot of pressure. PW9 noted: “In many respects I think the count was the most stressful phase. There were blatant inaccuracies in tabulating and reporting the count. It was noticeable right there on the count sheet and, of course, it weakens confidence in the results.” An official from the NIEC confirmed “mistakes on the results sheets were so blatant. Some errors occurred when poll workers reported the numbers. The NIEC has to correct the errors and we made sure to produce a paper proving the NIEC corrected the errors.” PW 5 specified: “I figured out that the number of ballots delivered at the opening, the number of ballots issued to voters, the number of ballots effectively voted, and the number of ballots invalidated did not match.” “I cannot explain to myself the differences between the vote count that the NIEC announced and the vote count of other observers. I just cannot stand it!” stated PW11. PW5 added that “the determination of the voter’s intention was an issue especially when the mark overlaps the designated box. It was a matter of contention between poll workers

depending on the party's affiliation." PW 5 added: "I witnessed the count, I signed the result sheet. I even took a picture with my mobile phone. I observed the supervisor and the assistant leaving to deliver the materials back to the NIEC's branch. But in the end, the result that the NIEC announced differed from the results of my voting center."

Delay in announcing results. Respondents admitted that lengthy delays were an area of concern. PW1 reported: "I called the NIEC for transportation to drop off the results sheets. The vehicle never came in. A motorcycle-taxi gave me a ride."PW3 reinforced PW1's observations: "overwhelming the communication system with such amount of election data caused the slowdown."The NIEC official expressed a dissenting voice and cautioned: "It's much more important to get the results right than to get them fast. Our experts have to streamline all result sheets with accompanying reports. The results sheets that poll workers sent to us were plagued with blatant mistakes."

Registration and voters' list. Respondents cited issues on the voters' lists stemming from errors in the registration. PW8 was unequivocal when offering his thoughts: "Voters' lists were not updated and carried missing names or incomplete addresses. I also noticed the names of people who were deceased or who moved away from their district." PW9 confirmed: "Birthdates issues were quite worrisome. Birthdates on voters' cards were different from the registration list or were just incomplete. The documents just mentioned the year of the birth; the month and the day were unknown."

Research Subquestion 3: What Corrective Measures and Innovative Approaches Could Improve Poll workers' Job Performance in Togo?

All respondents clearly expressed their discontent with the management of the election and agreed that the dysfunctional electoral organization requires corrective actions. In discussing correctives measures to improve their provision of service, respondents mentioned that their practice would benefit from institutional reforms apart from personal endeavors.

Institutional reforms. A number of interviewees referred to the politicization of the election agency and advocated an organizational change that they considered necessary to cut down on poll workers deficiencies. PW9 professed the importance of an independent election agency: "Poll workers would fare better than they actually do if only the election agency could depart from government and political parties' influence." PW3 reinforced PW9's observations: "If this agency was a private business it would already went in bankruptcy." And PW7 emphasized: "They need to realize that the entire system needs a complete revamp."

Supervision. There was a general perception that a direct supervision is needed on election day particularly in rural areas where voting centers and public services are remote. PW11 stated: "Much more presence of election officials on the ground is required. It's a much needed first step." PW3 advised establishing mobile teams of supervisors and technicians who could roam among voting centers to offer instructions, advice, and materials: "When we ran out of ballot papers, we requested more from the nearest voting station. The intervention of supervisors unlocked the situation and created

improvements for the rest of the day.”

Effective recruitment. Raising the standards of recruitment has strong support among respondents. PW5 advocated that “political parties should not have the responsibility to nominate poll agents. It ain’t right.” PW11 proposed that “the NIEC should consider recruiting students. Students would be a good alternative because students are technological savvy and more adaptive to change. It is costeffective and it provides professional experience to youngsters. You can kill two birds with one stone.” PW 9 added: “The NIEC should retain the best poll workers to establish a pool of experienced poll workers to serve as needed or fill in for absentees. A permanent status will render electoral staff more professional.” The NIEC’s official expounded further: “The NIEC should have the latitude to recruit poll workers directly. We introduced the request to the government but so far there is a lot of resistance. It’s all about politics, you know.”

Poll working as a civil service. There was a strong perception that poll working should become a public service. PW1 complained that three hours of training is not enough for people who, at most, have little experience and are only searching extra money. Instead, he suggested “the election agency should spread the net wisely to recruit public personnel.” PW1 cited India as a good reference because the country is a place “where civil servants constitute a pool of poll workers who already have a service culture and attended an entire week of training.”

Effective training. All respondents recommended effective training as a key to improving poll workers’ performance. PW3 highlighted the importance of training to

compensate for the low level of qualifications in many poll workers: “There’s no doubt that everything goes back to training, mandatory training.” PW6 added that “the NIEC should administer a written test at the end of the training to evaluate recruits.”

PW4 has a unique perspective. He was in Ghana as election observer representing ECOWAS, a regional institution. He made a comparison to the status of the election agency in Ghana: “In Ghana the national agency runs every election in the country starting with the election of school representatives to union leaders and business chambers. With no certification by the national election agency no election result is invalid. That sounds good, doesn’t?”

Funding. Lack of funding is definitely a critical problem that respondents identified as the solution to delivering an electoral success. Relevant here is a comment by PW6 who proposed that “right now providing autonomy of funding to the NIEC would be a great start.” The proposition has support among many respondents. PW4 stressed that “the public treasury should release the funds directly to the NIEC, not through a government department.” PW7 had similar thoughts but proposed financial autonomy for the agency: “The government should not rely on financial assistance. Technical assistance is understandable... Election is to be funded by tax contribution. When tax payers contribute, the NIEC would have enough money to face all expenses.”

Compensation. To address the problem of staff shortage and attract qualified staff, respondents advocated increasing the pay rate. PW11, who always shares his thoughts by quotations, stated: “I asked the NIEC to raise the pay and offer incentives for the use of personal cars and mobile phones. It will attract skilled workers and definitely

address staff shortage. You catch more flies with honey than vinegar.” PW 10 argued: “It has been said this is a volunteer job, but not for me. I am here to make money. This is why I advocate more pay.”

Table 10

Summary of Results

Research Questions	Category	Themes	Subthemes
Research Subquestion 3: What corrective measures and innovative approaches could improve poll workers' job performance in Togo?	Priority Reforms	Institutional Reforms	Poll Workers as Civil Servants
			Effective Recruitment
			Effective Training Funding
	Long Term Reforms	Individual Reforms	Transparency
			Compensation
			Grassroots Elections
			Qualified Poll Workers
			Preparedness
			Internal Organization of Voting Stations

Transparency. The theme of transparency has a large support among respondents. PW2 also opted for more transparency: “I could not verify whether the results on the tally sheet that I signed match the official results because only results of voting centers were published. There was no trace of tally sheets in the final report of the NIEC. Why? The results need to be published voting station by voting station.”

Internal organization of voting stations. PW1 suggested an internal organization of voting stations as a way to improve poll workers' management: “Each

voting station should review its internal organization to get the most resources.”PW6 opined that poll workers need to anticipate and prepare voting stations in advance: “The place should be set up preferably by the eve of election day so poll workers can test equipment, inventory missing materials, and request additional ones,” he stated.

Negative cases analysis. In reporting results, a number of themes surfaced which did not fit in the rigorous interpretation of data. First, contrary to expectations, voting stations opened and closed early or later than scheduled. A possible justification for an early closing was the need for poll workers to count before dusk in areas without electricity in order to minimize errors. Still, the election agency reported flagrant mistakes on the result sheets that poll workers submitted. Instead, closing early and extending polling hours were applied inconsistently across the nation resulting in the suppression or convention of voters depending on incumbents’ stronghold or challengers’ foothold.

Second, while respondents did not admit having committed any cases of irregularities, it does not mean irregularities have not occurred. The introduction of technology in the election management intended to mitigate poll workers’ mistakes and warrant the announcement of indisputable results. Especially, the use of mobile phones by poll workers, media, and voters has been decisive in the election process. Mobile phones have made it possible for observation missions and political parties to conduct their own vote counting simultaneously to the official count. As interviewees reported, bystanders used their mobile phones to call journal and radio stations to call in the results. But at the same time, voters used camera of mobile phones to record their vote and get

paid. Besides, instances of election results forms different from the results transmitted by mobile phones have been reported. It is not clear from the data that the biometric voter' card and the mobile phones effectively contributed to prevent irregularities from poll workers and voters.

Conclusion

The focus of this study was to examine the delivery of service by poll workers during a presidential election in Togo. This chapter offered an overview of the techniques used to collect, manage, and validate information from poll workers participating in the study. The participants were selected deliberately based on their experience in election process. Data extracted from face-to-face interviews generated a wealth of information relevant to answer research questions. Various techniques to verify data have been used so the investigation would meet trustworthiness standards. Triangulation, member checking, rich and thick description, constant comparison, and negative case analysis were critical to validating findings. Answers to the first research question identified the main forces behind poll workers inefficiencies, such as the legal framework of elections, infrastructural weakness, and incompetence of poll workers. Responses to the second research question revealed that principles of transparency, confidentiality, and fairness are all influenced factors that need improvement. Answers to the third research question looked at corrective measures that will support and improve poll workers' practice. Chapter 5 provides an explanation of themes identified, discusses the findings in light of the reviewed literature, brings up the limitations inherent to the research design, and offers recommendations.

Chapter 5: Discussions, Implications and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that interfered with the ability of poll workers to perform their duties during a presidential election in Togo. Previous studies, based on an analysis of external observers, found that infrastructural capacity burdened poll workers' ability to provide service to voters. But this study considers the personal accounts of poll workers as the main source of information to determine further possible impediments to poll workers' practice and so this study should be read as providing a more inclusive perspective.

This chapter discusses findings in the light of the literature and the theories discussed in preceding chapters. The first section offers an interpretation of the findings related to the research questions, the second section discusses the meaning embedded within the findings, and the third section addresses the study's limitations that open pathways for further research. The fourth section closes with the theoretical, methodological, and practical implications of the study.

Findings in this study confirm the reviewed literature, which found that poll workers function in a debilitating environment. While findings revealed that the election workforce has significant responsibilities, the workforce is provided with limited resources.

Understanding Key Findings in Light of Prior Research

Research Subquestion 1: What Contextual Factors Prevent Poll Workers in Togo from Effectively Implementing Electoral Procedures?

According to the study findings, working conditions, including the opening, operations, and closing of the polls interfere with poll workers' practice. In some instances, poll workers have control over their working conditions. However, other contributing factors, such as the convenience of voting places or lack of training fall within the election agency's responsibility.

Ill-conceived legal framework. The legislation governing the overall management of the electoral process in Togo applies to all stakeholders. In order to deliver impartial elections, the legislation must be fair and impartial. But there is strong evidence from the analysis of data that electoral rules are not clearly defined and agreed upon by all parties. Indeed, several interviewees pointed to the election legal framework as having been crafted to restrict the voting rules and thereby reduce the probability of bringing change to the government.

This observation is relevant to the context in which elections take place, which I described in a previous chapter. Intent on restraining competitive party politics, electoral rules were designed on an exclusive basis and subjected to frequent and pointless amendments. For instance, controversial clauses were included during the writing of election laws regarding the length of the president's tenure in office and limit on the age of a presidential candidate. So, despite political parties' criticisms, the electoral law provided that the number of terms of office was unlimited and the age limit for a

candidate was reduced. Also, the former voting system with two rounds was replaced with a single round and the date of holding presidential elections adjusted.

Besides introducing controversial provisions, the electoral rules were full of ambiguities and omissions. The vagueness of the wording produced conflicting interpretations and the omissions in the provisions created a vacuum in the procedures (The Ace Project, 2012). Thus, the prerogatives of different national institutions in charge of elections, including the NIEC, the Constitutional Court, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs were intertwined and their functions overlapped.

For example, the institution which has the responsibility for announcing election results has not been clearly determined. As a result, many complaints about voting procedures which never received a fair settlement led to uncertainty in the outcome of the presidential election. Additionally, the legislation does not offer clear and uniform standards that poll workers can use to make informed decisions about implementing voting rules. The context is not appropriate to offer an institutional mechanism able to avert election irregularities and guard poll workers against the use of illegal means. From its inception, the controversial legal framework for the election created the potential for poll workers to deviate from the prescribed rules for voting. This finding is contrary to studies conducted in the United States where it has been observed that instead of exclusion, it is the lack of uniformity in legal provisions that affects poll workers' practices (James, 2013; Watts, 2014).

The lack of infrastructure. The findings suggested that the limited number of voting stations and the unsuitable facilities contributed to poll workers'

underachievement. On election day, a surge of voters overwhelmed voting precincts. In fact, the level of participation in the election was so high that the poor conditions of school facilities as well as the numbers and size of the voting stations did not meet the elections needs. The ratio of voting stations to voting population can be a determinant in citizens' access to voting. For instance, the district of Vo, which was dominated by a member of the opposition, had 102,008 voters assigned to 259 voting stations, whereas the district of Kozah, which is the ruling party stronghold, had 147,403 voters assigned to 385 voting stations (NIEC, 2015). Such a disproportionate allotment of voting stations does not follow the recommended assignment of poll workers based on the number of registered voters in each voting station.

Erecting voting stations in open air and operating voting stations in the shelter of rustic structures indicates the low level of voting facilities but also indicates the alarming lack of security surrounding the electoral process. Voting stations were sometimes set up in classrooms located in crumbling buildings that had holes in their roofs and many were without doors and windows. Not surprisingly, respondents complained keenly about the lack of amenities in the voting places. With no sanitation facilities for poll workers, no electricity to connect electronic materials, and no rooms with doors to store materials, classrooms hardly offered viable and secured premises for election operations.

In addition, the lack of accommodations restricted accessibility to the voting sites for able-bodied voters but also for disabled people, pregnant women, and the elderly. This finding supports the view of Brady and McNulty (2011) who argued that transportation and polling sites locations can affect election outcome by preventing or motivating voters

to turn out to vote. During the 2015 presidential election in Togo, poll workers had the option to move a voting station to the curb to accommodate this category of voters but poll workers generally failed to help voters with special needs by conducting a speedy voting process or providing chairs. The availability of parking spaces was not a matter of concern because the vast majority of voters have no transportation; however, reserving a few parking places for the few voters with transportation would indicate that poll workers were effectively managing the polling places.

Another theme pertaining to infrastructural impediment was logistical constraints deriving from the poor condition of roads and telecommunication networks. Voting centers in remote rural areas raise not only the issue of communication between voting stations and the election headquarter but also the transportation of election materials and equipment. The majority of roadways are unpaved, impairing a timely deployment and distribution of electoral materials to voting sites in remote areas. Traveling from Lome, the nation's capital, to the village of Amegnran requires 3hours driving instead of what would otherwise take 1.5 hours of driving because of deep potholes on the road (see Table 11). The poor condition of roads and telecommunication facilities also explains the lack of planning and preparation by the election agency and the tardiness in poll opening, which drastically increased the cost of the presidential election. This finding further supports the observations made in previous studies conducted in emerging democracies (Burden & Neiheisel, 2014; Fortin-Rittberger, 2014; Seeberg, 2014).

Table 11

Comparing Infrastructure Levels in Togo and Switzerland

Category	Togo	Switzerland
Surface	21,925 Square miles	15,942 Square miles
Road way	7,240 miles	44,156 miles
Paved roads	1,520 miles	44,156 miles
Telephone fixed lines	52,690	4.14 millions
Internet users	7.1 %	88 %
Health service access	23 % urban areas v. 12% rural areas	
Rural population	60 %	16 %
Labor force in agriculture	65 %	3.4 %
Population below poverty	59 %	7.6 %
Household electricity access	84% urban areas v. 10% rural areas	

Note. Adopted from “Country Reports No.14/225” (2014) International Monetary Fund.

Sowing miscommunication. Participants felt that miscommunication between the national election agency’s headquarters and the voting stations made voting operations more complex and added to the workload of poll workers. According to participants, the unpredictability and the lack of transparency of instructions that the election agency sent, posed challenges to poll workers. Although election regulations are in place, unusual occurrences, such as late delivery of materials, confusion about voter lists, or poor weather, may force the election agency to amend the electoral rules on the spur of the moment. The electoral agency may first send general guidance to poll stations across the

country. Then, confronted by contingencies, the election agency may send a separate memorandum which supersedes the first message. New instructions reach voting stations haphazardly and without uniformity, resulting in a significant gap in poll workers understanding. At best, miscommunication sows confusion among poll workers; at worse inconsistent instructions mislead poll workers. With no clear directives, poll workers are forced to improvise and manage voting stations as best they can under the circumstances.

In the intense environment of election day, the ever-changing rules are an impediment for poll workers. Especially for poll workers in the country-side, last-minute changes in instructions make operations even more complex. The difficulty for the election agency of communicating with voting sites located in remote areas because of defective communication networks resulted in poll workers using different interpretations of the election rules which just further undermined a situation the rules were meant to address. Additionally, such problems in communication give rise to the feeling that there is a lack of transparency in election management. Indeed, in line with the behavior of the central government, election officials are inclined to retain information rather than to relay information to voting stations across the country.

But poll workers themselves also failed to communicate with voters. With no official signage on the walls or gatekeepers at voting stations' entrances, poll workers could not offer a consistent explanation of the procedures and often failed to inform or direct voters, unwittingly sending prospective voters to other precincts.

Ineptitude: Limited literacy and numeracy of poll workers. According of the comments of respondents, the limited proficiency of poll workers was a source of their

underperformance. At least seven respondents agreed that poll workers lacked a basic understanding of electoral procedures, but incompetence was a theme on which respondents offered divergent opinions.

Not surprisingly, respondents tended to distance themselves from wrongdoing. In their opinions, respondents themselves were not inept as they carried out their assignments successfully. But participants perceived that other workers were not knowledgeable about voting rules and electoral policies. Some comments about the limited literacy of poll workers are predictable given the complexity of electoral procedures, the workload, and the evolving technology that election operations require. Also, poll workers need to know the rules in order to follow guidelines and apply proper electoral procedures.

Respondents described poll workers' incompetence by referring to specific procedures. A low level of proficiency was noticeable as poll workers struggled to fill in forms, tabulate votes, spell voters' names, check identification of voters, use equipment, report numbers, interact with voters, and recognize and report critical issues. As a result, there were discrepancies in filling out election forms, flagrant inaccuracies in tallying votes, omissions in reporting numbers, missing names on voters' lists, misleading of voters, and so on. Although some mistakes seemed to result from poll workers' unfamiliarity with these types of tasks, other errors appeared to result from mere negligence and lack of attention by poll workers.

The low level of qualification that respondents described merits further inquiry. If poll workers struggle to carry out operations, do they even know the electoral rules they

are tasked with implementing? Further, do they even understand the rules? A poll worker who takes an excessive amount of time to process a voter because of the poll worker's obvious ineptitude deters citizens from voting. Rejecting an eligible voter from casting a ballot because of an error of judgment suppresses voters. Further, allowing human errors in the vote count due to negligence compromises the validity of the final vote count. Any mistake made during voting operations will probably affect other functions and certainly have an effect on the election outcome.

One possible reason for the ineptitude of poll workers is that poll workers are rarely recruited among citizens who could be considered the best educated in the country. Poll workers are uninformed about electoral duties due in part from their limited academic knowledge. Most poll workers perform manual jobs, if any, and are unacquainted with the analytical skills required for poll working. This finding supports the view of Abuya's (2010) in the study that he conducted in Kenya and Zimbabwe and which confirmed the association between the qualification of election officials and their performances.

In the study case, other than being literate and being 16 years old, the election law in Togo does not provide any specific requirements for poll worker. However, being able to read, write, and count is not enough. Electoral operations require more than basic academic proficiency and involve analytical aptitude.

The lack of education commonly reported in previous researches does not apply only to the electorate but also to poll workers (Alvarez & Hall, 2006). The low illiteracy rate is detrimental to the recruitment of high-quality poll workers. A NIEC official

reported that it was difficult to find qualified poll workers in rural areas, particularly given the condition that poll workers must be affiliated with a political party. A shortage of poll workers causes political parties to lower the standard of recruitment of their representatives. A poll worker who ignores the political party with which he is affiliated might be said to lack a sense of duty, a possible warning sign that the person might be unfit for this type of work. In these circumstances, how would the poll worker be able to correctly spell the names of voters, count accurately, and tabulate correctly? How could a poll worker process an illiterate voter and properly assist him in casting a paper ballot? Carrying out election activities requires a certain level of proficiency, confirming that the implementation of prescribed election rules rests on intrinsic analytical thinking and the ability to discern the nuances and complexities of electoral operations.

Unreliable recruitment policy and poor training. One interesting finding was that the theme of unreliable recruitment policy overlaps with the theme of poor training. A major finding was that in Togo, the electoral law mandates a bipartisan management of polling stations, giving political parties sole authority to nominate their agents (Electoral Law 2013, Art. 39 & 83). The NIEC does not recruit poll workers and screen poll workers so the tasks incumbent upon political parties. Accordingly, political parties designate their representatives who will work in voting stations.

The mode of recruitment does not draw from a large pool of skilled man-power so the recruitment directly affects the level of qualification of poll workers. In a previous research, Alvarez and Hall (2006) have found that the small number of qualified applicants prevents the election agency to screen poll workers because the election

agency would not take the risk to dismiss a few number of prospective poll workers at hand. The NIEC official maintained that sending under-qualified people to work the polls is attributable to political parties that propose a list of agents recruited among their troops of supporters.

Another theme that emerged from conversations with participants was the training which participants perceived did not meet their expectations. All respondents indicated that poor performances are the result of the low quality of the training. Political parties nominate poll workers but the NIEC is responsible for their training (Electoral Law 2013, Art. 8). Even though poll workers are required to attend training, not all of them diligently attended the training course. The content of the training was modest and the duration of the training was not long enough to teach the substantial responsibilities of the job. The NIEC's failure to administer a written test to certify that applicants have received sufficient knowledge suggests that prospective poll workers will not be able to successfully complete the assigned tasks. In his study, Watts (2014) has described how a poor training can be linked to mistakes in vote count and a long waiting time of voters. The express need to expand the training reflects respondents' awareness of their professional ineptitude and their service deficiencies.

Technical failure. Low technical capacity and logistical failures were major themes that respondents identified and confirmed in the NIEC's final report and observation missions' official reports. In neighboring countries such as Ghana and Nigeria, a poll worker uses a card reader to scan fingerprints when processing voters. But in Togo, the use of technology has been limited to the registration phase. There was no

card reader device and poll workers verified the voters' identity with the roll. Other crucial operations that poll workers conducted such as voting and counting, remained manual.

The NIEC planned to use a new electronic system to collect and transmit results. But, according to the NIEC, the whole system collapsed on the eve of election day under the strain of processing a large amount of data. Touted as a solution to election frauds the use of a biometric card system aims to limit voters' registration issues, control multiple voters, and mitigate poll workers' mistakes. But the adoption of technology raises questions. In the absence of an electronic device that reads the voter's fingerprint, poll workers had to devote time to reading the roaster. Additionally, the election law provides that poll workers must physically carry the election results to the local branch of the NIEC for collection after transmission of results by a special phone provided to each voting station. Respondents said that they conveyed the materials to the nearest collection center by their own means, including riding a taxi or a motorcycle.

The NIEC did not explain whether cost prevented the use of the electronic reader to scan voters' card. But the adoption of the election technology was controversial. The ruling party was apprehensive that the use of new technology would remove the government grip on the electoral process whereas opposition parties were skeptical that the new technology has been tested enough to ensure reliable control of operations by the NIEC.

Beside special mobile phones that the NIEC distributed to poll workers for the transmission of results, other stakeholders used mobile phones to monitor electoral

operations, recorded operations, and reported violations to a hotline by taking pictures and sending text messages via WhatsApp and YouTube. The benefits were that the communication via mobile phones was fast, almost instantaneous, and cost-effective.

The use of technology had serious and unforeseen consequences. Some of the special mobile phones were not configured, and thus inoperable. More importantly, the Internet connection was subject to frequent outages or very low capacity to carry traffic. However, the small fraction of poll workers using mobile phones was able to report issues or address concerns directly and in real time. Other issues associated with the use of mobile phones involved recharging the mobile phones in a country where most areas are not connected to power grid.

Defective voting materials and equipment. High-quality voting materials ensure that voting procedures are conducted properly and that every single vote is recorded. Observers described multiple voting as one of the greatest threats and applying indelible ink to a voter's finger was supposed to prevent multiple voting. But the ink could be erased if the voter washes with soap, bleach, or alcohol (NCCST, 2015). Additionally, the paper ballots used in the presidential election were transparent and let visible the finger mark of the voter on the ballot which compromised the secrecy of the vote. Last, despite the biometric registration of voters, the presence of fictitious names on the voters' roll brought into question the reliability of the high-cost technology. Using technology means that poll workers must be proficient in handling the machines, but the ability to use technology is not part of the qualifications of poll workers. The technology is only as effective as the poll workers who are assigned to operate it.

Supplies shortage. Shortage of election supplies was an area of concern. In addition to be defective, election materials and equipment were inconsistently available and poorly distributed. For carrying out election tasks, the electoral code listed eleven items per voting station that the NIEC should supply. The materials include at least one voting booth made of card-board, jute bag to discard the unused ballots, blank ballots, one sealed transparent ballot box with two padlocks, two storm lamps, one ink pad, two voters' lists, polling statement and counting forms, indelible ink cartridge, signs, tally sheet, and a stack of ballot papers (Electoral Code, 2013, Art. 76).

Office essentials such as calculator, envelopes, glue, staplers, rubber bands, paper clips, pencils, pens were provided scantily. Some voting stations had the supplies in few quantities; others had not had at all. A critical device that was missing was a calculator designed for a manual count of ballots. Absence of calculators could explain mathematical mistakes in reporting numbers. Participants involved in this study stated that some poll workers had to use their mobile phones to complete vote tabulation which is not convenient for this type of operations. Supplies shortage was more complex because of election officials' unpreparedness: ballots boxes with broken security seals, lost padlocks, missing lids, or covered with the wrong lids, and generators delivered with empty tank demonstrated a negligent approach to providing adequate, high-quality supplies.

Staff shortages. Staff shortages stem from a dearth of qualified candidates, absenteeism, and the unattractiveness of the job. Qualified candidates familiar with professionalism do not find the job particularly worthwhile. Additionally, in a society

where people live day-to-day, prospective poll workers skip election work if they have a chance to make more money doing something else on election day. The theme supports the view of Steitzer (2002) who suggested that elections in the United States also suffer from a chronic poll workers shortage.

Findings indicated that poll workers not reporting to work affects the execution of operations. If a number of poll workers did not show up, poll workers who reported to duty resort to creative ways to run voting stations. A number of voting stations opted to operate with fewer poll workers than prescribed number of staff. In this situation, poll workers could be reassigned to electoral tasks for which they have received no prior training. The election agency might recruit untrained poll workers to work at polling stations. Obviously, poll workers who did not show up have an effect on the voting process as last-minute calls to fill for replacement workers does not allow the NIEC to screen applicants thoroughly for competence.

Workload. Voters expecting election results put pressure on poll workers. But greater demands come with poll workers' inability to conduct operations competently. The high number of voters and the large amount of paperwork required for processing voters are part of the workload burdening poll workers. The implementation of multiple layers of procedures generates an amount of paperwork that ranges from the paper ballots, inventory sheets, incidents logs, voting checklists, and tally sheets to the reconciliation forms. Sorting through this paperwork demands much time and attention from poll workers. Ill-designed forms make the operations more cumbersome for poll workers and possibly create opportunities for mistakes.

As the election ran its course poll workers felt the toll of workload and voting stations appeared disorganized. Since many poll stations opened late, the NIEC extended the time for voting by two hours, prompting poll workers to rush to complete the counting process. During reconciliation, which occurs at the end of election day, poll workers are exhausted after a 14 hour shift. The urgency of closing out the election process and the strain of delivering eagerly awaited results also make poll workers more vulnerable to mistakes. Added to the lack of resources in voting stations, poll workers were worn out and voting stations appear to lack professional controls for making sure the voting process was legitimate, increasing the likelihood of deviations in the implementation of rules. Respondents emphasized that the workload is a large part of what makes poll workers feel overburdened.

Lack of supervision. Respondents noted that supervisors needed to pay frequent visits to voting sites to detect problems and figure out solutions very early. Findings revealed that team of supervisors paid only a brief visit, if any, to voting sites and did not thoroughly check to see if poll workers were performing their jobs competently. This finding is consistent with Watts's (2014) who found that the number of poll workers is overwhelmingly superior to the number of election officials making difficult to supervisors to oversee each poll worker's activities. Supervisors did not follow up corrections to see if poll workers made corrections because staffs were unavailable to make these checks or because of time constraints. Supervisors' failure to streamline operations that poll workers performed reflected the NIEC's failure to understand that the mistakes poll workers made might continue throughout the entire election day and even

been carried over reported to the next election cycle. Additionally, the absence of supervision at voting stations led respondents to feel that they had been left on their own, suggesting in turn a perceived lack of managerial assistance. As a result of a managerial assistance failure, poll workers are left with the responsibility to make decisions in the place of supervisors, decisions which might affect the eligibility of voters or the validation of the votes cast (Atkeson, Kerevel, Alvarez, & Hall, 2014; Watts, 2014).

Unpredictable situations. Poll workers are trained to run voting stations in accordance with a standardized method. The process begins with verification: a poll worker greets a voter and asks his identity. The poll worker verifies the voter's name and address on a roster and hands a paper ballot to the voter. The poll worker directs the voter to a booth to make his choice. Then the voter returns to drop the ballot through the slot of a sealed transparent box. Last, the poll worker applies ink to the finger of a voter indicating that the voter has cast his ballot and may not cast another one (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 92). But contingencies can disrupt the process:

- An illiterate voter is trying to figure out how to mark his choice on a ballot presenting five different candidates with their corresponding symbols may need further assistance.
- A voter who is not listed on the register yet is registered to vote as shown on his voters' identity card may show up the poll.
- A voter's address or identity information on the roster is different from the address or identity information on the voter card.

- A voter cannot access the voting station or the voting booth because he has a physical disability and requires special assistance.
- A voter has mismarked the ballot paper.

Such instances divert poll workers from running the standardized operation laid out in the procedural requirements of the election law. Contingencies require poll workers to implement a particular procedure which is conducive to errors. In such circumstances, the poll worker has to devote time to finding the appropriate procedure and, if necessary, asking for instructions. Here is the point where the intervention of a supervisor is opportune. The findings indicate that the higher are the contingencies, the higher the mistakes at a voting place, so poll workers are under great pressure to handle the regular voters and the special voters without making mistakes.

Underfunding. A consistent theme running throughout respondents' statements is the perception of a underfunding that the national budget allocates to the election agency to carry out operations including recruitment and training of personnel, purchase of materials and equipment, transportation, and communication. This outcome confirms the lingering challenge that poses the funding of election in new democracies as depicted in the reviewed literature (IDEA, 2014; Laanela, 2009). But election underfunding was also of concern in the United States (Fisher & Coleman, 2007). In Togo, financing electoral operations rests with the government. Findings illustrated that funding affects election management in two ways: insufficiency of funding and the source of funding.

Organizing a presidential election is expensive and the higher are election requirements, the higher the expenses. For the 2015 presidential election, the NIEC had a

budget of \$ 20,650,000.00 dollars to procure materials and equipment and hire thousands of poll workers and other staff (NIEC, 2015). In Togo, even though the electoral budget was developed by the election agency, the funds are not directly released to the NIEC but to the Ministry of Finance. The electoral law requires the national government to procure election funds that the NIEC has autonomy to manage. But it is the Ministry of Finance that ultimately adopts the draft budget that the NIEC has proposed. The election budget is channeled to the NIEC through the Ministry of Finance which has sole authority to release the funds. The Ministry does not miss an opportunity to question the increasing cost of elections, regularly requesting a reduction of expenses. For the April 25, 2015, presidential election, the availability of fund was stalled for months until the Ministry of Finance released the funds so that the election agency could purchase vehicles. Unfortunately, as a result of the deferred release of the funds, the timetable for starting electoral operations across the country was delayed by a whole year.

A large portion of election budget comes from international financial assistance that provides funds to government in Togo to organize the presidential election. The most important international donors are namely the European Union, France, Germany, the USA, and Japan. But international donors release funds according to strict protocols often including a requirement that governments receiving funds to support an election adopt measures of transparency and fairness. These findings are consistent with the study conducted by Weidmann and Callen (2013) in Afghanistan. The authors found that financial assistance to organize elections are not disbursed in time because the government in Afghanistan was unwilling to meet the conditions of the financial

assistance. The Togolese government is often reluctant to adhere to these reforms and may seek to circumvent donors' requirements. However, if the required reforms are not implemented, only part of the funding is released and often at the last moment.

Deploying staff and materials across the country for a presidential election requires planning and preparation. Unfortunately, the government delayed release of funds left election officials to undertake a hasty organization to try to meet the required deadlines. It is under such unusual and often chaotic conditions that poll workers are recruited, trained, deployed, and tasked to administer the elections. The control from government and the reliance on international donors to fund the presidential election reinforce the dependence of the NIEC which lacks the ability to independently provide efficient working conditions to poll worker. The insufficiency of funding and the international source of the funding also make the election agency lacks the ability to assert authority over poll workers so that the electoral staff conforms to the rules and policies.

Compensation. While poll workers work an entire day, they are only paid a stipend. The low pay might dissuade more qualified people and probably explains why only unqualified and jobless people apply for the position. More qualified people find it not worthwhile to get a day off from their regular job to work on election day. Further, respondents admitted that the low level of compensation undermines poll workers' morale which explains the lack of commitment to the job by poll workers and the high level of absenteeism. Surprisingly, a previous study conducted by McAuliffe (2009), found that poll workers in the United States are paid the minimum wage. The low wage

may also indicate a lack of regard on the part of the government for poll workers. But this lack of regard is misplaced: citizens heading to the polls to choose a leader who will guide the nation to its future are participating in a process managed by a workforce that is paid a mere stipend. Finding thousands of qualified poll workers among a labor force that is estimated to send 65% of its members to work in agriculture is challenging (see Table 2). Attracting qualified people who will agree to be paid only a nominal wage is much more difficult.

Incentives. The theme of incentives for poll workers was part of the discussion of low compensation. Given the low salary poll workers are paid and the tenuous conditions in which poll workers perform their duties, it was logical to inquire about the respondents' motivation to become poll workers. The reasoning behind this line of questioning is that respondents' thoughts about their motivation provide clues to understanding their conduct inside voting stations. Indeed, incentives guide poll workers and possibly explain why poll workers in Togo engage in questionable activities.

While it was not surprising to see respondents' predilection for material gain as a prime motivator, it was rather more difficult to find any reference to the common good. Thus, the primary motivator that respondents cited was financial gain. Findings revealed that poll workers in Togo were generally not responding to a civic call or a desire to render a public service. Respondents' decision to work the polls for pecuniary benefit could explain the lack of professional dedication to the job, a condition peculiar to individuals without prior professional experience and in search of better opportunities.

More importantly, there was a strong perception that civic engagement or political participation were not interviewees' goals and that personal interests were paramount. From there, the direct impact of organizational culture is called into question. From there, the direct impact of organizational culture must be examined. Poll workers' inclination to subvert election procedures for payoffs could be traced to the national context where community service and public interest have not taken hold.

The search for pecuniary benefits and possible access to resources should a particular candidate win explains why the driving force behind an individual's decision to work the poll remains a partisan interest. Admittedly, poll workers aim primarily to advance the chance of their candidate when carrying out their duties. Only one respondent referred to poll working as a civic duty in support of democracy. But even in that particular case, pursuing the interests of respondent's own political party outweighed preserving public interests. It stands to reason that poll workers do not include public interest as a motivator in a patrimonial system of governance where the search for subjective interests is the norm. Predictably, the desire for material benefits, cited as the primary incentives from poll workers toiling at menial jobs or who are unemployed is in line with voters choosing a candidate based not on a political platform but on the chance to get close to a payoff in national resources.

In an emerging democracy like Togo, the drive for financial gain has a strong effect on the behavior of public officials. Public officials who are preoccupied with pursuing their own personal interests overlook safeguards which keep institutions from functioning properly. But overlooking rules is not just the business of high government

officials. Since public officials themselves have little regard for rules and regulations, they have no authority to enforce to the fullest extent the rules governing subordinates including poll workers. Placing material benefits ahead of everything else explains why poll workers fail to administer elections in a non-partisan manner and instead seek to root for their respective candidate.

This section has provided important information about the recruitment of poll workers and the obstacles they face, including scant resources, late release of funding, ill-timed procurement of electoral materials and equipment, shortage of electoral materials, early closure or late closure of voting stations, inaccuracies on the tally sheets, and invalid ballots. Adding to poor pay and poor training, understaffed voting stations can have a demoralizing effect on poll workers. Clearly, the insufficiencies are indicative of the incapacity of the government in Togo to provide appropriate resources for poll workers to comply with election rules and constitute, perhaps, an interference with the integrity of the presidential election.

Research Subquestion 2: What is the Perceived Effect of Poll Workers’

Performance on the Integrity of Elections in Togo?

Amid concerns regarding obstacles to poll workers service, respondents reported a range of issues that, in their opinion, affected the outcome of the election. Some serious issues included lack of secrecy and security of the vote, inaccuracy of vote count, discrepancies among results, and so on. Other issues such as long lines of voters or late opening of the polls are relatively trivial but have the potential to affect the integrity of the presidential electoral process.

Poor management. Poor management was a theme running through discussions with several participants. As an entirely predictable result of poll workers' ineptitude and lack of commitment, poor management of voting stations emerged as an explicit factor relating to the study's purpose. Although the focus was on the messy appearance of voting stations, it appeared that poll workers' disorderly conduct also signaled poor management of voting stations. Scattered documents on the tables, spoiled ballot papers spread all over the floor, long lines of voters, overcrowded voting stations, the presence of unauthorized personnel, complacency in serving voters, frustrated voters, and besieged poll workers made the voting stations appear disorganized. Substitution of voter lists among polling centers and omission and misspelling of names on the lists sowed confusion among prospective voters who found themselves wandering from voting station to voting station in an effort to locate the right polling place.

A possible explanation for the poor management might be that there was no coordination of activities or any assignment of tasks among poll workers at the beginning of the election day which confirmed again the lack of preparedness on the part of the government and the election agency to fulfill such a complex function. The poor management also suggests the absence of a strong leadership inside voting stations. Further, voting stations that appeared in disarray with poll workers ignoring rules, including not arranging screen boards, not consistently applying ink, and admitting unauthorized personnel could be a sign that poll workers lack professional values in general and a commitment to the job in particular. This theme may be linked to the low wage that poll workers are paid and to the motivation that propels people to become poll

workers, namely financial gains. But poll workers feeling undervalued by the election agency may also explain why poll workers dedicated less time, effort, and interest to poll working.

Long lines of voters. Voters lining up to cast a ballot have been a prevalent issue in emerging democracies as well as in established democracies. Voters, poll workers, and election officials alike are concerned with the congestion inside the voting station.

Voters' waiting time has been the focus of Spencer and Markovits' (2010) study which suggested that congestions in election day are not addressed in the United States. The finding is also related to a more recent conclusion of Herron and Smith (2016) which suggested that the formation of voters' lines is subject to the resources available to the precinct.

In Togo, election day is a highly anticipated event, one that voters look forward to for months. But on election day, long lines beset the presidential election in Togo. Video recordings and pictures show voters waiting in long lines. When election day starts poorly, voters get frustrated and poll workers become frantic and are more disposed to break the rules.

Respondents cited a confluence of reasons for the back-up in voters' lines: the location of the voting centers, the flow of voters, late opening of voting stations, the number of available voting booths assigned to each voting station, the ability of poll workers, the internal organization of voting stations, the failure to inform voters, and poll workers struggling to check voters.

The election law is silent about the number of voters assigned to each voting station. Consequently, scores of voters descended on voting stations, especially in rural areas. For instance, the administrative district of Vo has 102,008 voters assigned to 259 voting stations whereas the administrative district of Kozah has 147,403 voters assigned to 385 voting stations.

Late opening. Beside the closing stage, opening the poll is a critical moment where poll workers are under particular pressure. Possible reasons why voting stations opened late could include the inability of the NIEC to convey materials to the countryside in a timely manner because the poor condition of rural roads made driving difficult. Another justification of the lateness might be a late disbursement of fund to finance electoral activities. Administrative slackness might also explain polls opening late. Furthermore, it is more frequent that election officials arrive late to deliver election materials. Starting election day with election materials arriving late could easily have an effect on the rest of the day's operations. In this situation, a voter may plan to vote early in the morning before heading to work only to find that he has to spend hours casting his vote due to the late opening of the polls. Whatever reasons account for the late openings, the delay evidences a logistical failure and possibly a lack of preparedness.

Failure to protect the secrecy of the vote. During the April 25, 2015, presidential election, poll workers failed to respect the principle of vote secrecy in multiple ways. First voting booths were positioned so close to the voting counter that poll workers in the place could see a voter marking his choice. Second, the privacy screen was not arranged properly to give voters privacy. As hours passed, poll workers become more

and more indifferent to the need to arrange voting booths to maximize privacy. Last, the transparency of the printed paper ballot let poll workers and voters inside the voting station read from the back of the ballot. A transparent paper ballot is an example of the bad quality of election materials. The reality is that failure to protect the secrecy of the vote exposes voters to intimidation and possibly to vote buying.

Failure to protect the security of the vote. Because security is embedded in electoral operations at various levels, security breach can affect the reliability of electoral outcomes. Voters want to cast votes as they intend to and voters are concerned whether votes cast are effectively counted. Poll workers are preoccupied with their personal security but also the security of materials, especially during transportation and storage. In the United States now, election officials worry about cyber-attacks to the electoral process (Chisnell & Quesenbery, 2014). For this reason, security forces were deployed at voting stations during the presidential election in Togo but their presence and roles raised concerns: Poll workers found their presence disruptive and voters felt intimidated. Images on the Web showing Togolese security forces snatching ballots, beating voters, and destroying voting stations in the previous presidential election held in 2010 are still in people's mind (Bekoe, 2012; Ekoutiame, Kim, & Tyson, 2015; Tobolka, 2014).

Achieving security entails suitable facilities that are suitable for conducting voting operations but also to storing materials. Instances of poll workers improperly handling election activities pose a security threat to the process. In the hinterland, for instance, in the village of Amegnran, there were no reliable places to secure election materials. As discussed earlier, classrooms are open facilities with no closed doors and windows. There

was no electricity to light the areas. In the village, the only public office is a country infirmary which did not offer enough security. In desperation, poll workers turned to private houses, specifically the house of the chief of the village to store the materials. But private storage breaks the official chain of custody and eventually constitutes an illegal possession of election materials that affects the electoral process. Further, storing election materials in such conditions may expose the materials to insecurity including theft, criminal attacks, fire hazards, and flooding (The Ace Project, 2012).

Discrepancies in election results. Result sheets from the election disclosed that the number of ballots cast was higher than the number of voters registered, an obvious discrepancy. Multiple voting or ballots added to the ballot boxes, willingly or unwillingly, by poll workers allowed could explain such discrepancies. For the April 25, 2015, presidential election in Togo, the NIEC registered 1,300,000 more voters than the previous voter' list for the 2010 presidential election that was organized in 2010. The inconsistency arises from the fact that the number of registered voters is higher than the adult population, according to the National Coordination of Civil Society-Togo (NCCST, 2015).

Voter' lists showing a contradiction in the numbers of voters is an indicator that the counting of ballots will be similarly inaccurate. Inflated lists allow a voter to vote multiple times whereas omission of names, omission of pictures on voters' card, and misspelled names aim to purge potential voters. A high turnout in a given voting station, a turnout clearly different from the turnout at other voting stations, indicates that this voting station may have seen multiple voting, stuffing of ballot boxes, or people voting

without a voting card. Conversely, a high number of invalid votes in a voting station is a sign to lower votes in this area. Both cases—abnormally high turnout or unusually high number of invalid votes—suggest that the results might be engineered.

Such discrepancies were noticeable on the result sheets that poll workers have submitted in the districts of Mo, Tone, Dankpen, Tône, Cinkassé, Kozah, Bassar, Tchamba, Blitta, and Sotouboua (NIEC, 2015). While the election law mandated bipartisan management of voting stations, the bipartisan management did not prevent poll workers from creating discrepancies in election results.

Unequal access to voting. A direct consequence of the mismanagement of voting stations is restricted access to the polls. Poll workers turned away voters that they deemed ineligible to vote but poll workers' inability to handle long lines of voters prevented some people from voting. The prospect of having to wait for a long time in order to vote made voters leave the poll station and deterred new-comers. While no respondents reported evidence of widespread irregularities, further evidence of vote suppression can be discerned from official documents. For instance, in its final report, the NIEC stated that 65,000 voters in the district of Lome could not find their names on the roster (NCCST, 2015). Unequal access to voting violates the principle of equal participation that is central to the integrity of elections.

Overlooking operational guidelines. A closer look at the data revealed two points. Respondents admitted that coworkers were careless during their service. Instances of procedural lapses spawned possibly from negligence and lack of supervision. The election law stipulated that poll workers should authenticate each ballot by signing in the

back just before hand it over to the voter (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 78). But as seemingly trivial it is, poll workers overlooking operational guidelines is nevertheless significant. It can impact election outcome and compromise the integrity of the electoral process.

Vote count. In Togo, vote count is a critical phase in the entire electoral process. The process of vote counting is subject to a constant balance of transparency and accuracy (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 101). An accurate vote count depends on the administrative capacity of the election agency but also on the personal aptitude of poll workers. This finding is further substantiated with the study conducted by Klimek, Yegorov, Hanel, and Thurner (2012) who found that in order to represent the will of the citizens—not the will of the counters—each vote should count equal, that is, without any irregularities.

Among other thing, the count has to be performed swiftly and accurately. In 2015, disputes arose after the election because the official results were not consistent with results compiled by challengers. A civil society organization, the National Coordination of Civil Society in Togo (NCCST) conducted a parallel voting tabulation which differed from the NIEC's results by 5% points (NCCST, 2015). In a society made up of illiterate voters and where poll workers carry out the count manually, exactitude in tabulation and careful consideration of the voter's intent in marking the ballot are serious matters. If a voter mismarks a ballot and thus fails to clearly express his intention, a poll worker may seize the opportunity "determine" the voter's intent. Of course, poll workers who unduly

invalidate a ballot not only deny a voter the opportunity to vote but also unfairly affect the election results.

Under the election law, to ensure transparency the counting officer shows each ballot paper to other poll workers before tabulating. Other bystanders, observing outside the polling station, scrutinize the counting process. At the completion of the count, all poll workers sign the result sheet and are provided a copy. But a common characteristic of some result sheets that the NIEC published is that numbers do not add up (see Figure 4). The presence of conflicting numbers on the tally sheet raised questions where signs of erasure and deletion could not be explained. The reconciliation forms contained scratches and wipe out indicating that poll workers had difficulties completing the reconciliation forms. Discrepancies on the tally sheets were consistent with claims of inaccuracies disclosed in reviewed documents. For instance, in the district of Kara 60,000 voters were added while in the district of Vo 50,000 were subtracted (NIEC, 2015). A voter can only be certain that he exercised his constitutional right when the ballot that he cast has been counted.

Inordinate delay in announcing results. The electoral system in Togo which requires that every single vote has to be counted in the whole country to determine the winner of the presidential election is time-consuming. Prescribed procedures require poll workers to count manually, reconcile the numbers, authenticate results, and then close the voting station despite time pressure and geographical constraints. A source of great concern was a significant delay in announcing results. After manual counting is completed, transmitting results requires a reliable communication network to carry a

large volume of election data in a short span of time. Additionally, physically conveying election documents and equipment from remote areas back to election headquarters requires good roads conditions and sufficient means of transportation.

Unreasonable delays in reporting the election results make give rise to different interpretations which in turn cast suspicion on the electoral process. The longer poll workers take to announce results to the public and transmit results to the NIEC, the less confidence contenders and the public have in the results. Poll workers perform with makeshift resources in areas where basic materials, such as electricity, internet connection, or office supplies, often are not guaranteed.

Findings revealed that procedural lapses could result from poll workers' incompetence and negligence as well as weak infrastructure and lack of resources. Documents analyzed corroborated participants' perceptions that working in such conditions could undermine the election quality. The difficulty that poll workers have in complying with electoral standards calls for the need to take corrective actions.

Research Subquestion 3: What Corrective Measures and Innovative Approaches Could Improve Poll Workers' Job Performance in Togo?

Respondents maintained that the ways in which poll workers do their jobs must be improved. But poll working is made up of complex activities and a confluence of factors makes poll workers' services inadequate. Consequently, improving poll workers' performance must be part of efforts to address election service delivery generally. Isolated corrections will not suffice. In order for poll workers to properly administer election, the national election agency needs to initiate reforms that go much deeper than

poll workers' responsibilities. The reforms pertain to poll workers acquiring professional skills as much as cleaning up the electoral agency.

Priority actions. Making institutional reforms depends on the receptiveness of the government and the election agency to the idea of taking corrective measures. Any corrective action might run into eventual resistance from a bureaucratic culture. Given this uncertainty, poll workers must take steps on their own to improve their service.

There is a broad consensus among respondents that an effective way to enhance poll workers' performance is to introduce transparency into the electoral process and to make electoral personnel accountable. A creative approach to promoting transparency involves providing more independence to the NIEC. The finding supports the argument made by Rosas (2009) according to which autonomous electoral agencies in Latin America increase the level of public confidence in elections. In a polarized society where election management is expected to depart from the influence of the executive branch and political parties, the electoral agency could enhance its effectiveness if the institution becomes more technical rather than more political. The finding is similar to the view of Gazibo (2006) who found that the quest of autonomy for the electoral agency resulting from a power struggle between political actors can contribute to organize quality presidential elections in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The approach would have the NIEC bestow on poll workers the status of public servants and provide them with enough resources to follow the electoral rules. Poll workers will become more dedicated to conducting basic operational planning such as arranging voting sites and compiling, packing, and delivering materials, equipment, and

supplies across the nation. Through operational autonomy, the election agency could assert enough authority to enforce the rule of law, combat misconduct, and promote professionalism. Having enough authority to enforce rules, the NIEC could investigate allegations of poll workers who seek to interfere with the electoral process, prosecute offenders, and ban poll workers indicted for manipulating the electoral process.

Auditing voting stations. In order to identify compliance issues that poll workers encounter in their job, the NIEC should conduct a formal audit of polling stations after each election. The evaluation of poll workers' performance will come from election monitoring missions and public complaints. The NIEC could also administer an exit poll to collect overall impressions of the electoral operations. The NIEC could usefully start the process with a thorough review of the election of April 25, 2015, to reveal weaknesses and implement recommendations.

Transparency in the vote count and in the compilation of results. Back in 2003, a study conducted by Lehoucq concluded that the accuracy of the vote count is a prominent factor in convincing contenders and voters of the validity of the voting process and accepting election results. More recent studies came to the same conclusion (Klimek, Yegorov, Hanel, & Thurner, 2012). As a best practice, to maintain accuracy of the count, poll workers must act swiftly in counting ballots manually and aloud under the constant monitoring of party agents, journalists, mission observers, and voters. The tally sheet should include the total number of ballots delivered, the number of ballots effectively issued, the number of ballots voted, the number of ballots spoiled or unused, and the final results. In order to avoid tampering after the count, all poll workers should sign the tally

sheet and should be provided a copy that will be posted for public view. A better management of polling stations—having poll workers carry out good planning and preparedness in advance of election day—would help cut down on misdeeds.

Preparedness. A remedy for preventing poll workers' carelessness and departure from established policies is to carry out a more formal preparatory process. Findings identified that a large number of voters arrive early in the morning and later in the evening, making these time periods the most challenging on election day. Poll workers could anticipate these times period and set up two rotating shifts for opening and closing to break up the long day. A shift change also gives supervisors the chance to double check and reconciles previous operations.

Preparedness also entails having poll workers be proactive about setting up voting stations ahead of election day. In Togo, classrooms are open access without closed doors and windows; therefore classrooms are not secured and are not good place to store election materials. However, poll workers would benefit from arranging the furniture, setting up the voting booths, and hanging crowd control chains on the eve of election day, not on election day itself (The ACE Project, 2012). Transporting more sensitive materials—with the transportation details arranged in advance—could be left for early on election day.

Voters could be involved in preparedness by becoming better informed about the polling stations where they are assigned to vote, the type of identification documents to bring along, how to cast a ballot, and when the voting will open and close. For an

illiterate electorate, obtaining such information in advance will minimize hurdles and facilitate poll workers' responsibilities on election day.

Improving the internal organization of voting stations. The appearance of disarray and the dysfunction of assignments plaguing voting stations require sustained efforts that include checklists with step-by-step procedures for opening and closing polls and a commitment by poll workers to follow the checklists. Reclaiming ownership of the voting station involves poll workers learning to keep voting stations orderly, posting signs, setting up desks, tables and chairs, locating voting booths in an appropriate position, sorting out documents, streamlining the process of directing voters, designating entrances and exits, clearing tables to regain space, and maintaining a neat appearance in the voting station. The check-in of voters would be much easier for poll workers if alphabetical tabs were applied to each page of the voters' lists.

Table 12

Internal Organization of a Voting Station

Poll Workers Position	Shifts	Assignment	Training Length
Lead poll worker	2	Manage and lead voting station	One week
Clerk	2	Hand out ballot papers	One week
Clerk	2	Checking-in\ Signing-in voters	One week
Assistant Clerk	2	Special ballots\ Disabled\Seniors	One week
Gate Keeper	2	Inform\direct voters\ manage curbside voters	One week
Clerk	2	Apply ink	One week

Poll workers could prevent dysfunction in conducting operations if, prior to election day the voting station's supervisor clearly defines duties and responsibilities by

assigning each poll worker to specific tasks (see Table 12). For instance, one poll worker could be assigned to serve regular voters and another poll worker would be dedicated to handling unusual situations that require a special procedure. An experienced poll worker should be stationed at each voting station as a supervisor to be responsible for determining a voter qualification. One poll worker should help voters sign in, and another poll worker should direct voters to the appropriate voting station. A gatekeeper should welcome voters, manage the traffic flow at the curb, maintain order, and provide information (see Table 13). Poll workers could extend the preparedness by informing voters that they can locate and even visit their assigned voting station prior to election day.

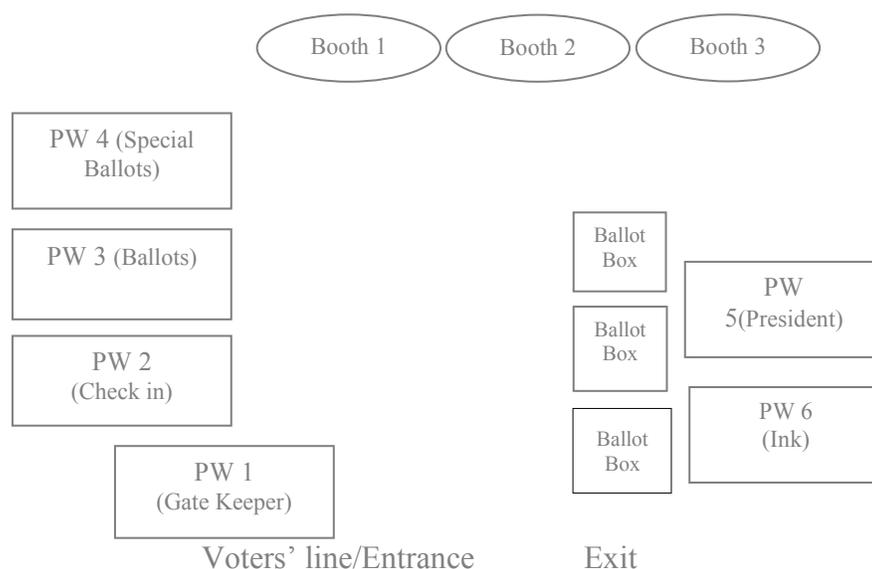


Figure 3. Voting station set up.

Long-Term efforts. Long-term efforts entail activities such as increasing the number of voting locations by inventorying public buildings, extending power grid, building roads, upgrading telecommunications, preparing additional permanent electoral

staff assigned to manage critical tasks and training temporary staff.

Grassroots elections. In Togo, contentious elections are a fact of life and happen in places with no concern with elected such as the Togolese Bar Association, the Chamber of Commerce, unions, and students' associations. The electoral process to select leaders of these institutions usually results in disputes and even a split of the institution. So a preliminary condition to improving poll workers' practice is to educate the population to the idea that contested elections are not and should not be the norm and that elections should be guided by the practices of pluralism, respect for electoral rules, and adherence to election results.

Political parties need to be aware of their responsibilities so that they can educate their supporters. Political leaders also need to understand that they must commit to accept the rules of the game from the moment they are candidates. Introducing a democratic culture to fair elections starts at the base: for instance, organizing local elections through a system of decentralization of administrations in counties, cities, and villages to elect mayors, executives, and so on.

Organizing elections at the base also includes selecting leaders of civil society and non-governmental institutions including professional associations, unions, political parties, student councils, parents associations, trade unions, and so on. Here, stakeholders will learn to participate in a fair election, establish regulations, and settle major issues. The goal is to let contenders learn to commit to a code of conduct and accept electoral rules.

As in Ghana, Togo's national election agency will have sole authority to organize all elections from professional leaders to political offices across the country. This approach will promote democratic culture and at the same time build a career path to being a poll worker. Last, it will be easier for contenders to accept election results that is issued and certified officially by a unique election agency in the nation.

Qualified poll workers. Respondents were unanimous about raising the low educational level of co-workers in the voting station. Poll workers compile voters' data, and document and generate reports relevant to the electoral process. More than literacy and numeracy skills, the tasks require an ability to analyze and synthesize. Further, the prospect of a disputed electoral process requires qualified poll workers capable of conducting electoral operations with accuracy, tracking irregularities, and responding to contingencies. The NIEC needs to initiate strategies designed to attract and retain high-quality poll workers. It is not enough for poll workers to be able to read, write, and count. Poll workers must be able to observe occurrences, identify problems, document issues, make reports, make suggestions to election officials, and report to a political party. Being able to communicate appropriately and being acquainted with civic education makes poll workers aware of their responsibilities and gives them an understanding of the national interest thereby helping poll workers to learn to engage in non-partisan behaviors. Without these skills, a poll worker is not skilled enough to fulfill poll workers' tasks.

Among a pool of limited literate applicants, the challenge is to find qualified applicants aware of the job requirements and able to execute regulatory tasks unique to the job. Enhancing poll workers' professionalism will be best achieved through effective

recruitment in following stricter procedures and administrating writing test in order to certify applicants' level of literacy and competence. The use of new technology makes the recruitment even more challenging since the electoral operations require poll workers who are technologically savvy.

Reliable registration list. Poll workers do not establish voter' lists but the lists are an important document which poll workers work with on election day. Compiling an accurate voter' list is an administratively complex operation. The observation is in accord with Burden and Neiheisels' recent study (2014) which indicated that the registration list affects voters' turnout in the United States. Indeed, the registration of voters can be an impediment to citizens' participation to election as revealed in the reviewed literature (Babeiya, 2013; Pastor, Santos, Prevost, & Stoilov, 2010). The voter' list allows officials to calculate the percentage of the population that voted, identify the number of eligible voters, control the number of ineligible voters, and allocate voters to voting stations. It comes as no surprise that the voter' list has become a highly charged, politically sensitive document which is subject to intense controversy among political parties. The government was determined to use a biometric technology to enlist voters in this presidential election but contentions still remain. Managing and updating the registration list throughout the year to add names of voters who meet eligibility requirements through attaining majority or obtaining citizenship, deleting names of deceased voters, and noting change of addresses would allow the list to be current, accurate, and complete.

Training and development. Participants overwhelmingly expressed the desire to be thoroughly trained. The finding is similar to the study of Favreau and Hanks (2016)

who proposed three areas for improving poll workers' training that are face-to-face training, electronic efficiency, and manual revision. After training, poll workers should be able to handle issues that are bound to arise when running a voting station. The training will provide poll workers with substantial knowledge and a skill set necessary to implement electoral rules, operate electoral equipment, and administer a voting station. The skills and knowledge are provided during training through the organization of mock voting stations and role playing with election assignments and sample election forms to complete. The government could call on the expertise of international organizations such as the International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) which have programs specially designed to recruit and train electoral officials in other countries.

The NIEC would benefit by introducing online training to accommodate the professional lives of qualified candidates. At the end of training sessions, applicants should take a test to assess their ability to perform the tasks required for the position. The goal of the examination is to eliminate applicants who have not demonstrated sufficient ability and retain only the qualified poll workers.

At the very least, effective training requires the NIEC to develop and revise training materials capable of providing poll workers with useful information. Instruction manuals and checklists should provide a step-by-step guide for poll workers that they will constantly refer to on election day. The user-friendly written manuals would present the best methods for operating a voting place.

Help desk and call center. A help desk designed exclusively to address contingencies on election day will assist with any administrative or technical issues while a call center will answer voters' inquiries, letting poll workers focus on the various in-the-moment tasks related to helping people vote.

On-site supervision. Electoral operations performed by poll workers have consequences for the outcome of the presidential election. Therefore, the presence of supervisors to oversee the unfolding of operations is as important as the presence of poll workers. A supervisory team would regularly visit polling stations on election day to oversee how poll workers implement rules and, if necessary, deal with any digressions from procedures. Restraint and close monitoring are the keys to ensuring a high level of compliance from poll workers in polling stations.

Adequate compensation. An acknowledged goal of poll workers participating in this study was the pursuit of extra income which might explain the lack of professional commitment to the job. But the election agency would demonstrate the importance of poll workers by paying poll workers at a rate significantly higher than the national minimum wage. Additionally, increasing the compensation would attract better qualified applicants. In determining poll workers' salary the NIEC should take into account expenses incurred in the position including training, overtime, meal, and travel (The Ace Project, 2012).

Enacting sanctions. A basic approach to enforcing compliance by poll workers is to establish rules, implement procedures for making sure that poll workers follow the rules, and introducing close hierarchical supervision. Such initiatives will only be fully useful if the process also includes sanctions. Therefore, the NIEC should first establish a

poll worker's code of conduct which will determine a standard of behavior and a set of principles and values expected from a poll worker. Then, the NIEC will lay out measures of performance and accountability and the consequences of violations. By investigating instances of electoral violations and prosecuting perpetrators, the election agency will let the public know that the institution enforces rules, a move that will require poll workers to adhere to the rules even when they are not under direct scrutiny.

Recognition of poll workers status. Poor wage, low standards in recruitment, and inadequate training might imply that the NIEC attaches a low status to poll working. In turn, poll workers themselves are not fully aware of the importance of their responsibilities therefore lack the commitment necessary to this type of assignment. Under reforms, the election agency would select and retain the best performers to establish a national database. Experienced poll workers have acquired on-the-job skills that training cannot provide to new recruits. Additionally, highly competent poll workers' will be recognized and saluted with incentives and rewards.

There are areas in which findings extend the discussion regarding the method of the recruitment policy and the internal organization of voting stations. However, findings in this study are generally compatible with the reviewed literature where a number of conclusions pertaining to the weak infrastructural capacity, supplies shortage, and material insufficiency can be drawn.

Understanding Key Findings in Light of Theories

As mistakes resulting from poll workers' performance are coming into view, so is the need to trace the sources of poll workers' inability back to their origins. With the

intent to let the study's results cohere with the existing research, findings are best understood in the context in which they have been generated. The two contributing theories provide a well-grounded foundation appropriate to supporting the following line of inquiry designed to fill the gap revealed in the reviewed literature.

The Principal-Agent Theory or the Sustainability of the Presidential Electoral Process in Togo

The principal-agent theory both enlightens and expands the discussion. The rationale for using the principal-agent theory was supported by a wealth of findings, namely the responsibility of the NIEC for providing sufficient resources and effective training to poll workers. The present findings complement the theory with additional information stressing the impact of poll workers' incentives on their performances. Poll workers in Togo are recruited through their respective political parties. The finding was a key input of this study. The national electoral law mandates bipartisan monitoring at each voting station which emphasizes contenders' responsibility. Indeed, a political referral to become poll worker makes poll workers vulnerable and receptive to candidates' wishes. Instead, pursuing civic duties would eventually make them more professional.

But a counter to the argument is that in a developing country like Togo, poverty and economic insecurity weakens social fabric and prompts citizens to seek a source of safety and stability. It is the place where political leaders seek primarily to assemble an electoral base and mobilize their supporters among whom poll workers are called upon to play a major part.

Thus, the discussion should consider some underlying concepts that participants raised including the weak institutional capacity of political parties, the importance of partisanship and ethnicity, and the socio-economic context which work together towards poll workers' underachievement.

Weak institutional capacity of political parties. How political parties run internally—that is, how their internal mechanisms function—could influence poll workers' performance in voting stations. In Togo, the multitude of political parties scattered across the country draw their support from tribes. Unable to finance activities across the nation, the parties are unsuccessful at enlisting enough representatives nationally. As discussed in a previous chapter, the concept reflects the findings reported in the reviewed literature (Briggs, 2012; Cheibub, Hays, & Savun, 2012; Gutierrez-Romero, 2014; Gutierrez-Romero, 2013; Jensen & Justesen, 2014).

Researchers found that ability of political parties to conduct activities is limited to their foothold where the great majority of their supporters are jobless. The International Monetary Fund estimates the unemployment rate in Togo at 32.9% of the active population (IMF, 2013). The unemployment which affects Togolese youth draws a pool of activists whom party leaders entice with the promise of jobs starting with poll working. The observation further supports the idea of Collier and Vicente (2012) who found that political parties do not educate supporters about public interest values. Instead, because supporters lack professional qualification and political awareness, they constitute a workforce able to serve as handyman, bodyguard, or instigators of violence.

In order to obtain a nomination to be a poll worker, a prospective candidate needs to exhibit devotion and fidelity to party leaders. Poll workers are picked from supporters and acquaintances of the parties' leaders creating a connection primarily based on allegiance (Bratton, Bhavnani, & Chen, 2012; Rundlett, 2016). The observation is consistent with Jensen and Justesen's (2014) conclusions that found that loyal supporters are prime targets of political parties seeking to position their agents in voting stations to assume the responsibilities of poll workers. The recruitment is based on a client relationship, increasing the propensity of poll workers to circumvent electoral rules by trading compliance with election rules for loyalty to the party (Hicken, 2011).

Political parties in Togo without a solid organizational structure lack a real ideological foundation and a strategy to persuade an electorate. Political parties do not educate supporters to become well-formed elites and possibly future poll workers. Indeed, the lack of internal democracy that governs a typical political party in Togo does not provide party leaders and party members with democratic norms and values to follow. In Togo, candidates for the presidential race are not selected through a transparent internal procedure run by political parties; the deficit of a democratic background deprives party leaders and supporters of the opportunity to acquire best practice standards. In fact, as Erdmann (2004) noted, political parties in Sub-Saharan African countries has yet to prove their real function.

With no ideology to follow and no program to propose to the electorate, it is difficult to see what the multitude of political parties want to pursue or seek to achieve. Instead, what is rather noticeable is the quest for material gains, leading to a propensity to

derail the electoral process through deceptive practices. As the stakes rise in the presidential election, political parties react more as interest groups, losing sight in the bipartisan management of voting stations, inducing poll workers to display interest-driven behaviors.

The importance of partisanship and ethnic divide. In Togo, poll workers, like other public personnel, give more consideration to ethnic membership than professional loyalty where ethnicity shapes poll workers' behavior. The reintroduction of competitive elections results from a confrontation between the ruling party and opposition parties that conducted demonstrations and strikes, leading to a partisan division along ethnic lines. As a compromise, the presidential election is governed through bipartisan management of elections using a check and balance electoral procedures.

Under the electoral law, political parties establish a list of their representatives who the NIEC deploys across the nation to perform as poll workers (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 39). To qualify for a poll worker job the prerequisite for an applicant is to be a member of a party. Demonstrating professional aptitude appears to be a lesser important qualification which affects the parameters of the electoral management. For political parties, the primary goal seems to fill voting stations with people who will witness operations on behalf of candidates not to recruit individuals capable of conducting voting operations.

Becoming a poll worker is based on alliance, relationship, or acquaintance with party leaders since the electoral base of political parties is rooted in the leaders' social origin or tribe. In such instance, party affiliation replicates clan membership. When asked

to submit a list of nominees to serve as representatives, political parties turn basically to their prime supporters who are also their clan members. Relevant literature revealed that the direct consequence of this arrangement is a built-in bias of poll workers (Bratton, Bhavnani, & Chen, 2012; Gutierrez-Romero, 2014). As reported in the NCCST's (2015) report, this singular method of recruitment particularly affects poll workers' practices because poll workers persuade themselves that they have no other mission but to uphold their political party's immediate interests inside the voting station. Baturo (2010) and Fjelde and Höglund (2016) did not say otherwise when they argued that putting political party in charge of national affairs put the relevant tribe or region closer to public resources and the highest public positions.

Given the method of their selection, poll workers display their perspectives in interpreting electoral rules and the standards for implementing rules depending on the stakes. In such circumstances, where poll workers' missions are reduced to personal gains, poll workers behave as if they follow instructions received from their parties, not from the NIEC. Aiming to work toward the victory of their parties, poll workers devise plans and commit misdeeds creating disagreement and friction inside voting stations. The argument echoes conclusions of Weidmann and Callen (2013) who stressed the role of social identity that encourages electoral officials to engineer the vote count. It cannot be otherwise when clientelism sustains politics and patron-client relationship motivates employees.

The socio-economic context. The sources of poll workers' ineptitude in Togo can be examined through a broader socio-economic context. Prior studies have noted the

importance of individual resources in political participation in African emerging democracies (Bratton et al., 2012; Isaksson, 2014; Jensen & Justesen, 2014). The living environment of poll workers is mostly rural, and public awareness of government action is limited. Here, an ordinary citizen performs unskilled work if any, and the work is mostly manual. According to the International Monetary Fund, 61.8% of households earn their income from farming (IMF, 2008). The individual is not part of public debate and has been raised in a culture with a single-party system (Fujiwara & Wantchekon, 2013; Justesen & Bjørnskov, 2012). Surviving with the lowest standards of living, the individual grew up, in the middle of nowhere with a limited exposure to media. It appears that the socio-economic milieu not only can shape poll workers' behavior, but can also impair a less informed poll worker's judgment, which probably explains poll workers' propensity for turning in a poor performance.

Effective election management entails the need to achieve administrative efficiency, political neutrality, and public accountability. However, findings drawn from the analysis of political parties' institutional capacity, ethnic and partisanship divides, and the socio-economic context provide evidence that the government in Togo struggles to administer a sustainable electoral process.

The State Capacity Theory or the Affordability of the Organization of the Presidential Election in Togo

A major concept associated with poll workers' performance is the state capacity theory that the present study found compatible with previous studies. Infrastructure carries important social and economic functions related to transport, electricity,

communications, health care, education, and so on. The state capacity was a major perceived impediment in offering public services in emerging countries like Togo despite the fact that few studies have examined it as contributor to poll workers' low achievement.

The infrastructural capacity. In its final report, the EU acknowledged poor working conditions for poll workers. Consistent with Norris' (2015) previous works the infrastructural capacity as an influential factor was identified in the analysis. The infrastructure in Togo needs rehabilitation: the total length of roads is estimated at 7, 240 miles, 1,520 miles of which are paved roads (UN, 2016). The International Monetary Fund estimates that the shortage of access roads results in remote areas being cut off from others, especially in rainy seasons. Furthermore, the lack of maintenance and the quality of the roads reduce the mobility of people and the ease of product distribution.

The weak level of economic development in Togo is confirmed by the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita: \$ 570 in 2014. The adult literacy rate is estimated at 66.54 % indicating that human resources are not developed and the impact on workforce qualification, including poll workers, is substantial (UNESCO, 2016). The results of a UNESCO's study were similar to the International Monetary Fund's statistics which showed that mobile telephone subscription is estimated at 62% while the percentage of Internet access is at 7.1% (see Table 11). A study conducted by Afrobarometer reported that 40 % of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa has no access to the power grid (Afrobarometer, 2016.). Worse the reality is that power grid is concentrated in urban areas and rural areas are left with less than 10% access.

Although previous studies explained the lack of infrastructure as an impediment to organizing elections in emerging democracies, the findings of this study show that the lack of structure can be refined to reflect the inability of poll workers to perform effectively. For the April 25, 2015, presidential election in Togo there was a total of 2,643,397 voters out of approximately 3,509,258 voters enrolled by simple testimony on the voters' register. That is more than 75% of voters registered without official documents including birth or citizenship certificate (NIEC, 2015). As a consequence, in processing voters, poll workers struggled to formally authenticate the identity, age, and nationality of potential voters.

In Togo, the voters' list is drawn from the civil registry so one must look at the organization of the civil registration service to understand poll workers' difficulties in processing voters. In order to be registered, a voter is required to prove his identity by presenting a national identity card which can be a passport, a civil or family booklet, or a pension booklet. The name, address, mother's name, and father's name are used to establish the voter's card. As Piccolino (2015) noted in analyzing the administrative capacity to conduct voters' registration in Cote-d'Ivoire and Ghana, few citizens in rural areas have access to a birth registration service. With no possibility of obtaining a birth certificate, a citizen could not establish a citizenship certificate and thus could not ultimately be issued an identity card.

The absence of a national birth registration office in remote areas and the difficulty of accessing of citizens to public services to be issued a form of identification document, correlated with the high number of votes and suggest a high rate of multiple

votes, voting impersonators, or ghost voting. Poll workers' inability to authenticate a voter's address is due to the fact that formal addresses are largely nonexistent. Only major streets are named and residential buildings and houses have no numbers resulting from the anarchical construction of houses without official authorization from the national construction agency. As a result, people's residences have no record in public archives forcing the electoral law to provide alternative options of voter registration through reference to family, clan, acquaintance, and physical residency.

With the difficulty of proving a birth place, comes the issue of the citizenship of a potential voter. With no effectively functioning national civil registry, the NIEC authorizes election officials to registering voters by testimony (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 64). The high level of registration on the basis of testimony calls into question the reliability of the voters' register.

The impact of the lack of civil registration service cannot be underestimated. The absence of a birth certificate prevents a reliable population census from being carried out. So a citizen could not only be denied a voter card and be prevented from exercising his voting right but he will also struggle to open a bank account, to register for the income tax process, or even use a global positioning system to map and retrieve routes. Given the failure of the government to offer a reliable civil registration service, the NIEC is left with the authority to decide the citizenship of voters in establishing the eligibility of voters. Since then, a voter card has become an accepted form of identification in Togo (EISA, 2010).

Themes pertaining to storage in private houses and transportation of election materials via motorcycles and public transportations because of a lack of public offices and official vehicles in villages are in line with conclusions from previous studies. Alvarez and Hall's (2008) noted that the chain of custody of ballots and voting machines as well as the use and handling of documents need to follow standard operational procedures. It can therefore be assumed that the election agency does not have the capacity to ensure the security, secrecy, and transparency of the election which require bureaucratic and organizational structures to deliver services to voters across the country.

Insubstantial financial resources. Findings offered a broad description of the financial impact on poll workers' poor performance. The electoral law provided that the NIEC is an independent institution (Electoral Code, 2012, Art. 3). In practice, the NIEC lacks decision-making authority and the financial autonomy to act on its own. The NIEC, as the highest institution in charge of election, has little room to maneuver because of the control of the Ministry of Finance over the allocation of funds and reliance on foreign donors for funding. This dependency forces the election agency to compete with other pressing needs that the government faces including health care, education, and security expense. The government, perceiving no immediate and palpable gain from financing the organization of high-quality election makes funding a significant constraint for the NIEC and its staff.

The financial dependency can also be a source of non-compliance. The election agency does not have enough funds to adequately pay and train poll workers. The low wage explains why poll workers skip election day when better opportunities arise. With

insubstantial financial resources the election agency is unable to buy high-quality materials as confirmed by the low quality of the ballot papers and shortage of supplies. The administrative capacity of Togo provides an understanding of the election agency's inability to design an effective legislation, undertake a reliable voter registration, recruit and train polling personnel, conduct voter education, convey electoral materials and equipment, secure the elections, count and tabulate votes, announce the results, and resolve electoral disputes.

While voters entrust poll workers with the responsibility to deliver a presidential election that will genuinely reflect voters' decision, the government in Togo does not demonstrate a proven capability to meet these expectations. In connection with the described impediments that are out of poll workers' control, the opportunity to put the vote for a national leader in the hands of poll workers operating in such tenuous conditions raises concerns.

Findings point to the conclusion that beyond the personal inability of poll workers, the electoral governance in which poll workers operate may limit the real assessment of poll workers' competence. With so much at stake in the presidential election, it is no wonder that the election agency, as well as the political parties, have become fertile ground for patronage and have transformed electoral governance in an area with high potential for improper behavior.

Granting statutory independence and financial autonomy to the election agency requires that the government in Togo be receptive to undertaking reforms. Right now, the statutory independence and financial autonomy necessary for poll workers to function

without undue interference, fundamental for an effective electoral process are missing, casting doubt on the integrity of the presidential election in the country.

Limitations of the Study

The techniques employed to collect data in this investigation were dictated by the phenomena under study. In this case, the unit of analysis which is poll workers' service delivery during the presidential electoral process in Togo occurred as a one-time event and does not lend itself to direct observation. Indeed, the date when the presidential election was held in Togo did not fit into the progress of the research. My initial plan to collect data during the course of the election while poll workers were conducting electoral operations turned out to be unworkable because of the timing issue.

Another concern regarding the quality of data collected that I did not perceive beforehand arose during field work. I divided the target population into poll workers urban areas and poll workers in rural areas. However, the urban/rural division was the wrong approach; it turns out that poll workers behave differently when they are in incumbent stronghold areas versus areas where challengers have the monopoly. Partisan affiliation influenced the responses of informants to interview questions in the same way that party membership affected their conduct while implementing electoral operations inside voting stations.

Finally, due to resource and time constraints linked to the academic purpose of the study, these findings were limited to drawing attention to the imperfections in poll workers' service and to stressing the sources of the deficiencies. The real extent of poll workers' non-compliance on a national scale remains to be determined through other

methods of investigation. The revealed limitations suggest possible avenues for future research that might usefully focus on complementary findings.

Recommendations for Future Research

Given the limitations inherent in the techniques used to collect data for this study, further investigations might examine the perception that other stakeholders have of poll workers' performances. After all, poll workers' efforts are directed toward providing service that satisfies voters' expectation. Having voters assess poll workers' performance during a presidential election in Togo has not yet been done. The timing of the next presidential election, scheduled for April 2020, makes it possible to prepare in advance to conduct a study that directly observes poll workers on election day. Besides, exit polls and surveys could collect voters' opinions on poll workers' contribution to the organization of the election. In addition to enhance the validity of these findings, such data collection techniques will enable voters to further engage with the presidential election process.

Next, findings revealed that ethnicity and partisanship are driving factors in poll workers' behavior on election day. This study did not collect data from poll workers who worked in the stronghold areas of the ruling party. Expanding the sample size to include poll workers from areas where all contenders have foothold might yield important insights that will confirm these findings.

Last, the introduction of biometric voting and mobile phones aimed to report votes count and minimize poll workers' mistakes. New research may study the benefits and limits of using a new technology in a country where internet connection has been

defective and electricity is subject to frequent outages. More extensive methods of data collection to generate substantial data are required to draw further conclusions regarding the contribution of poll workers to electoral integrity in Togo.

Implications

Positive Social Change

Before participating in this research, respondents were unfamiliar with techniques of data collection and were apprehensive about talking openly about politics. Initial observations suggested that the experience familiarized them with interviews and questionnaires techniques. For respondents who are excluded from national politics, the participation in this research was a meaningful way to engage in public policy on their own behalf.

At the end of each interview, respondents had a growing awareness of their own ability to express and sustain a dependable opinion. A promising note was respondents' recognition of their deficiencies and their inclination to adjust. Respondents persuaded themselves that a constructive way to conduct electoral operations was to introduce more transparency in the electoral management that will engender confidence in the electoral process and trust in the electoral results. Instead of being interest-driven, participants considered to become service-driven and agents of change who can cultivate a work ethic in a manner necessary to conduct fair and impartial electoral operations.

Theoretical Implications

The findings underscore the importance of organizational culture where the electoral governance lays the groundwork for poll workers' non-compliance and may

limit a real assessment of poll workers' contribution on election day. A number of conclusions pertaining to the three research sub-questions can be drawn.

Poll workers' performance on election day can usefully be evaluated from a more practical perspective, which is public service delivery. In order to achieve "administrative efficiency, political neutrality, and public accountability" in election management described earlier, lawmakers and election officials would gain in managing poll workers in the same way that private sector promotes employees' productivity. Although service to voters in voting stations is similar to service to customers in businesses, applying the same concept in election management to improve voters' satisfaction has yet to be adopted. Managing voting stations to regulate traffic flow, ensuring vote secrecy and fairness, and counting ballots with accuracy so that voters have a successful experience duplicate the management of a company where associates have to streamline clients flow at the cash register and account for turnover with accuracy.

The argument assumes that voters' satisfaction is a determinant in election integrity. Service quality is defined as "a measure of how well the service level delivered matches customer expectations" (Lewis & Booms, 1983). There is some evidence to suggest that service quality as implemented by companies would positively influence electoral operations which the reviewed literature ignored while seeking the causes of bottlenecks in voting stations and ways to minimize voters' lines (Ansolabehere & Shawb, 2016; Herron & Smith, 2016; Spencer & Markovits, 2010). The principal-agent model theory initiated the concept but fell short.

From the analysis of the transcripts, there is a general agreement that poll workers performing effectively is best appreciated when they meet the election agency's expectations. Stakeholders' perspective is also taken into account. As such, it is the individual ability of poll workers to overcome the difficulties they encounter and be more productive which is important. There is a connection between the theme of intrinsic factors and service quality which originated from the private sector. Casting a ballot is predicated on the principles of confidentiality, equity, security, transparency, and fairness, all principles that are captured in the statement "one person, one vote". Service organizations where employees are in direct contact with customers seem to consider employee's performance as a critical element to maintaining and increasing productivity.

Methodological Implications

Research on elections in Sub-Saharan Africa has surged in the last decade focusing on the political setting and on the institutional framework. Findings of the case at hand cast new light on the behaviors that poll workers exhibit. Although some of the conclusions from the present study support the reviewed literature, previous works revealed little information about the way a weak public service can impair poll workers' performance (Ichino & Schundeln, 2012; Piccolino, 2015). The commonalities also suggested that scanty resources may exert undue influence on poll workers' performance.

A major methodological implication of these findings is that the research design was not searching an organizational perspective but a personal perspective. Poll workers' performances have been rarely investigated in Togo and participants were able to offer their own perceptions based on their real-life experience. Also, findings departed from

other studies which explained electoral interferences mainly from outsiders' standpoints, including journalists and observers.

To the contrary, this research is distinctive in that data were obtained directly from poll workers even though they were possible perpetrators of wrongdoings. The presence of journalists, monitors, and observers might alter the demeanors of poll workers insofar as they have enough personnel to deploy across the nation (Ichino & Schundeln, 2012). Additionally, the subtlety and complexity of some electoral interference make them imperceptible, noticeable only by the electoral staff involved in the activities (Birch, 2011; Kelley, 2012; Simpser & Donno, 2012).

Last, the inputs of this research design formed alternative ways to extract first-hand data to improve the results. Therefore, the findings provide a platform from which future research will evaluate the consistency of findings and address further aspects of electoral challenges in Togo.

Practical Implications

Despite the pervasiveness of election contentions in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries, previous research has focused attention on national election management bodies and election observation missions. In contrast, this study raises awareness about electoral personnel, especially poll workers, and deepens the discussion among academics regarding the contribution poll workers make to free and fair presidential electoral processes.

Findings lend credence to the idea that a lack of resources and prejudicial electoral governance impedes the process of recruiting and training competent poll

workers; as a result, for the NIEC to improve poll workers' performance, the election agency needs to reform itself. There is an echo of the principal-agent model theory in that the method of recruitment, consisting of asking political parties to provide a list of representatives, did not ensure poll workers' compliance with election rules. From a political standpoint, the bipartisan supervision that aims to establish a check and balance on the election makes sense. But from a professional perspective, party leaders appointing supporters to perform as poll workers lead to an interest-driven management of election.

Therefore, corrective actions start with raising the standard of recruitment of poll workers and enhancing the content of the training to promote a public service mindset, nurture professional attitude, and stimulate poll workers' engagement. Borrowing from the service quality concept described above, poll workers' service quality will entail reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Reliability refers to the ability to perform dependably and accurately. Responsiveness refers to the ability of the employee to perform in a timely fashion. In this research, the expected waiting time for a voter to cast his vote is a major component. Assurance encompasses features such as competence, politeness, respect, and communication. Poll workers should exhibit knowledge in providing information. Empathy involves efforts to care, pay attention, and understand the voter's needs, especially the elderly, pregnant women, and disabled people. Most voters are illiterate and have difficulties understanding the procedures for casting a ballot. Such voters need

help with a ballot design that presents eight candidates with their corresponding symbols on a single sheet.

On an institutional level, as the next presidential election scheduled for 2020 comes closer, the NIEC should consider how best to embrace new election technology to enhance poll workers' performance and improve election quality.

Conclusion of the Chapter

These findings have shown that challenges to presidential electoral process in Togo are far more complex and diverse than usually understood. As depicted in the reviewed literature, weak state capacity, poor training, and low compensation are factors in poll workers' performance. But findings revealed that these factors are not the whole story. The study also suggests that in such an uncondusive environment, poll workers prove to be fallible. Certainly, poll workers have intrinsic deficiencies but poll workers' ineptitude is not the only issue.

Poll workers' underachievement appears to be a symptom of a more complex problem rooted in bad governance peculiar to Togo and other Sub-Saharan African emerging democracies. It appears that broader and more intricate factors including ill-conceived legal frameworks, ethnicity, and partisanship inherent to the bureaucratic culture and the socio-political context also have to be taken into account.

As contested presidential elections are becoming pervasive in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries, so is raising the expectation for poll workers' effectiveness. This depiction of electoral challenges in Togo through poll workers' experience provides an aggregate picture of electoral management in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Election outcomes lie in the hands of poll workers who appear to be one of the weakest links in the dysfunctional voting system in Sub-Saharan Africa. The truth is that poll workers endure ongoing stressful conditions that are easy to identify and worthy to address. Yet there appears to be a noticeable cultural resistance to correcting insufficiencies. Stalled corrective actions are at odd with the commitment of citizens to exercise their right to vote.

A positive point in this negative picture is that respondents have acknowledged their underachievement and showed disposition to addressing their mistakes. Organizing high-quality election is impossible unless the workforce is effective; otherwise, principles in the law remain mere words. Until enabling electoral governance permits, poll workers' performance will remain ineffective in Togo and Sub-Saharan African countries.

General Conclusion

The defined purpose of this research was to gain a better understanding of poll workers' behavior, explore the motivations behind poll workers' accomplishments, and identify factors that hamper poll workers in the execution of electoral procedures. Poll workers are a critical part of the organization of the presidential election in Togo. Who can vote, where a voter casts a ballot, whether a vote is counted, and the responsibility to help voters make a decision weighs on poll workers. It appears that poll working is not an easy job and it is not the most rewarding one, either.

The manner in which poll workers carry out their duties reflects the level of quality of the whole electoral process. As the understanding of poll workers' practices in Togo and Sub-Saharan Africa deepened, so has the understanding of the sources of contentious elections in the region become compelling. Voters entrust poll workers to administer the poll so that voters' choice can become authentic decisions. For this to happen, each vote needs to be properly recorded and counted. But poll workers' services suffer from broader issues that retain consideration in this research. Certainly, skimpy resources and a weak infrastructure make poll workers' performance more challenging. But national governance, ethnicity and partisanship count among influencing factors to consider. A deficit of democratic and civic culture is also relevant, making the service to voters on election day vulnerable to procedural breaches.

Issues that were highlighted revealed typical difficulties that a presidential election encounters in Togo and help explain why the electoral outcomes are controversial. The most important challenge for the presidential electoral process of April

25, 2015, in Togo was to guarantee electoral management that truly reflects voters' choice. The challenges are similar to other Sub-Saharan African countries, though at different levels depending on the specifics of each country's electoral process. Such challenges that undermine the implementation of voters' rights cannot be left unaddressed. But there is no simple answer to the challenges facing the presidential election.

Beyond poll workers' performance, there is much more at stake in Togo and other Sub-Saharan African countries. An eligible voter who has been turned away because a poll worker cannot find his name on the voters' list did not exercise his right to vote. A vote cast but not counted or invalidated is also a form of vote suppression. Togolese voters expecting to have their voice heard deserve their votes to be counted. The value attached to the right to vote makes it an obligation for policymakers to protect the exercise of the right to vote and a commitment for poll workers to conduct competently electoral operations. Poll workers management of election should enforce voters' exercise of the right of vote.

Even better, poll workers' service should become an asset to the electoral process rather than a source of election contention. Helping poll workers to become effective and accountable requires transparency in the voting system; in this way, an election becomes an instrument of good governance. The example of Nigeria, where a local organization of youth trained and prepared its members to dedicate themselves to poll working has impressed observers with their professionalism and commitment.

Will poll workers' practice become effective in Togo and Sub-Saharan African countries and will presidential electoral processes uphold international standards overtime? It is up to the national election agency to create an enabling environment. Institutional reforms pertaining to government willingness are harder to undertake than enhancing technical insufficiencies and curing individual ineptitudes. Whether the election agency will be able to assert its independence and promote a culture of professionalism that will enhance poll workers' performance remains to be seen.

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Appendix A: Letter to Participant English/French

Letter to Participant/ English

Name and Address of Participant

Date

Dear Mme\Sir,

My name is Kokouvi Momo Amegnran and I am a Ph. D. student at Walden University in the United States. I am writing to invite you to participate in my research study.

I was born and raised in Togo and have lived in Washington, DC, USA, for 15 years. I am currently working on my dissertation which is titled *Assessing electoral process challenges through poll workers' performance in Sub-Saharan Africa-Togo*.

As the title suggests, the study analyzes and evaluates the various challenges that poll workers contend with when organizing an election. If you agree to participate, I will provide you with an initial interview questionnaire and a consent form to be returned directly to me before.

Next, I will ask you to meet with me for an interview at a time of your convenience. In order to broaden the list of potential participants, I invite you to refer to me your co-workers who are interested in the study.

This study is conducted for academic purposes only and questions regarding your confidentiality, risks, and benefits are included in the consent form.

Regards,

Kokouvi M. Amegnran

Doctoral Candidate Walden University

Lettre d' Invitation à Participer/French

Nom et Adresse du Participant

Date

Chère Madame\Cher Monsieur,

Mon nom est Kokouvi Momo Améganran et je suis étudiant à Walden University aux Etats-Unis. Je vous invite à participer à ma recherche.

Je suis né au Togo mais je réside aux Etats-Unis depuis 15 ans. Je travaille sur un sujet de thèse intitulé *Une évaluation des challenges électoraux à travers les prestations des agents de bureaux de vote en Afrique Sub-Saharienne-Togo*.

Comme le suggère le titre, il s'agit d'analyser et d'évaluer les diverses challenges que les agents de bureaux de vote rencontrent lors de l'organisation d'une élection. Si vous agréez, je vous enverrai un questionnaire d'interview et un formulaire de consentement à me retourner. Puis, je vous prierai de me rencontrer pour une interview face à face en un lieu et temps commode pour vous.

Dans le but de recruter plus de participants, je vous serai gré de me référer à vos collègues qui seraient intéressés à participer à l'étude.

Le but de cette recherche est purement académique et toutes questions relatives à votre confidentialité, risques encourus, et avantages figurent dans le formulaire de consentement.

Mes considérations,

Kokouvi M. Améganran

Doctorant Walden University

Appendix B: Interview Protocol English/French

Interview Protocol/English

Date of Interview..... Time of Interview.....

Location.....

Name of Interviewee.....Pseudonym.....

Name of Interviewer.....

Introduction

- Introduce myself
- Discuss the purpose of the research
- Review informed consent
- Outline a roadmap for the interview session (duration, break, permission to videotape)
- Offer interviewee opportunity to ask any questions
- Test interview equipment and materials; have reflective journal on hand

Questions

1- Motivations

- How did you become a poll worker?
- What was your position in the last presidential election?
- Why did you serve as a poll worker in the last presidential elections?

What are your subjective reasons (personal interests) for working at the poll?

What are your objective reasons (external interests) for working at the poll?

2- Training

-Did you attend a training class for poll workers before the April 25, 2015 presidential election?

-How effective was the training in preparing you for your election job?

-Were you provided reference materials?

-How informative were the reference materials?

-How practical were the reference materials?

-Were the manuals and check lists relevant to your duties?

-What are your suggestions for improving the training class regarding timing, location, and contents, and so on.

3- Resources

-Did you have the right equipment and voting materials at the polling station?

-Did you have enough equipment and voting materials at the polling station? For instance, did you have enough ballots for all the voters expected in the polling station?

-Did the equipment and voting materials, including paper ballots, ink, and voters register arrived at the polling station where you worked in time for the opening of the polling place?

-Do you think you were provided the optimal working conditions regarding working time, lunch break, and compensation on election day?

4- Procedural Compliance

-In your opinion, were you able to follow written instructions contained in the training manuals?

-Did you fully comply with the prescribed administrative procedures during the voting process?

-Did you commit any mistakes while performing?

-What examples of irregularity stand out for you?

-Did the counting process meet procedural guidelines and administrative requirements at your polling station?

-Did the tabulation process meet procedural guidelines and administrative requirements at your polling station?

-Were the procedures too complex to follow?

-Do you think the complexity of the administrative requirements or their variety were sources of mistakes?

-Do you think the complexity of voting procedures is a factor in non-compliance by poll workers with prescribed guidelines?

5- Personal Performance in Last Presidential Election

-How would you evaluate your performance in the most recent presidential election?

-Can you recall instances where you felt that you were unable to apply rules and policies accurately?

How did you manage the situation?

Have you systematically applied indelible ink to each voter's finger?

-What are the main reasons which prevented you from following guidelines?

Inadequate training?

Complexity of procedures?

Insufficient supervision?

Pressures from your political affiliation?

Pressure from your ethnic group affiliation?

Pressure to deliver a particular outcome in the election?

-How satisfied were you with your own performance?

-Would you be a poll worker again?

6- Performance of Polling Station

-How satisfied were you with the organization in your voting station?

-In your opinion, did the NIEC provide the necessary materials and equipment to operate your precinct?

-How well did your station manage the voting procedures throughout the entire electoral process?

Was the ink indelible or was it fading?

Has any poll worker assigned to your voting station signed the tally sheet?

Have invalid and blank ballots been counted?

-Did any of your co-workers fail to follow administrative procedures or make a mistake during the electoral process?

Please describe the circumstances.

What did you do when you learned about these actions?

-Can you identify the factors that prevented your polling station from operating properly?

Competency of polling station staff?

Adequacy of resources, such as electoral equipment and facility?

Complexity of the counting and tabulation processes?

Limited presence of supervisors?

-Was a help team on hand to provide assistance?

7- Confidence in General Organization of Elections

-How much confidence do you have that poll workers follow rules and policies?

-Can you explain why you have this level of confidence?

-What changes do you think would help improve poll workers' level of compliance with procedures?

Review and lessen administrative procedures?

Assign civil servants as poll workers?

Recruit college students?

Remove candidates' representatives from the polling stations?

8- Conclusion Statement

-Would you share any thoughts that you think are important for me to know?

Thank Interviewee; ask if he would like to receive a copy of the transcript

Protocole de l'Interview\French

Date de l'InterviewHeure..... Lieu.....

Nom du Répondant..... Pseudonyme.....

Nom du Chercheur.....

Introduction

-Présentation

-Présenter le but de la recherche

-Présenter le formulaire de consentement

-Présenter la feuille de route (durée, temps morts, permission d'enregistrer)

-Offrir l'opportunité de poser des questions

-Tester les équipements; Préparer le journal de réflexion

Questions

1-Motivations

-Comment êtes-vous devenus agent de bureau de vote?

-Quel était votre poste lors des élections présidentielles?

-Pourquoi avez-vous décidé de servir comme agent de bureau de vote?

-Quelles sont vos raisons personnelles?

-Quelles sont les raisons externes?

2-Formation

-Avez-vous participé à une formation avant de travailler comme agent de bureau de vote?

-Est-ce-que la formation était efficace?

-Est-ce-que des manuels vous ont été fournis?

- Est-ce-que les manuels étaient bien documentés?
- Est-ce-que les manuels étaient pratiques?
- Est-ce-que le contenu des manuels était approprié aux tâches qui vous sont dévolues?
- Avez-vous des suggestions à faire concernant l'emploi du temps, le lieu, et le contenu de la formation?

3- Ressources

- Est-ce-que vous avez eu les équipements et le matériel appropriés?
- Est-ce-que vous avez eu du matériel en nombre suffisant? Par exemple est-ce-qu'il y a eu les bulletins de vote en nombre suffisant tout le long du vote?
- Est-ce-que les matériels sont arrivés avant l'heure d'ouverture?
- Pensez-vous avoir travaillé dans de bonnes conditions de travail? Par exemple les salaires et les temps de pause étaient adéquats?

4-Respect des Procédures

- Pensez-vous avoir fidèlement appliqué les instructions reçues lors de la formation?
- Avez-vous suivi fidèlement les procédures administratives?
- Avez-vous commis des erreurs?
- Quelles sortes d'erreurs? Citez un exemple particulier.
- Est-ce-que le comptage des voix a respecté les procédures dans votre bureau de vote?
- Est-ce-que les procédures n'étaient pas compliquées à suivre?
- Pensez-vous que la complexité des procédures pouvait vous induire en erreur?

5-Prestations personnelles

-Comment évaluez-vous votre prestation personnelle lors de la dernière élection présidentielle?

-Rappelez-vous d'exemples où vous vous êtes senti incapable d'appliquer les instructions?

-Comment avez-vous réglé le problème?

-Quelles sont les vraies raisons vous empêchant de suivre fidèlement les instructions?

-Formation inappropriée?

-Complexité des procédures?

-Manque de supervision?

-Pressions motivées de votre parti politique?

-Pressions motivées de votre région d'origine?

-Pressions pour produire des résultats téléguidés?

-Êtes-vous satisfait de votre propre prestation? Pourquoi?

-Est-ce que vous serez encore agent de bureau de vote si l'occasion se présentait? Pour quelles raisons?

-Raisons financières?

-Pour rendre un service communautaire?

6- Prestation du bureau de vote

-Êtes-vous satisfait de l'organisation du travail dans votre bureau de vote?

-Pensez-vous que la CENI a pourvu le matériel nécessaire à votre bureau de vote?

-Est-ce que vous avez été témoin d'un collègue qui n'a pas su respecter les instructions?

-Décrivez la situation

-Qu'avez-vous fait pour corriger la situation?

-Pouvez-vous identifier les raisons pour lesquelles votre bureau de vote n'a pas bien suivi les instructions?

-Incompétence du personnel?

-Matériel insuffisant et inapproprié

-Complexité de la procédure de comptage des voix?

-Absence des superviseurs?

7-Impression sur l'organisation générale

-Etes-vous satisfait que les agents de bureau de vote aient suivi les procédures?

-Expliquez-vous?

-Quelles solutions apporter pour améliorer la prestation des agents de bureau de vote?

-Diminuer les procédures administratives?

-Assigner les fonctionnaires comme agents de bureau de votes?

-Recruter des étudiants?

-Remplacer les représentants des partis politiques et des candidats des bureaux de vote?

8-Conclusion

Votre mot de fin?

Voulez-vous une copie de cette interview?

Remerciements

REPUBLIQUE TOGOLAISE
 TRAVAIL - LIBERTÉ - PATRIE

ELECTION PRESIDENTIELLE DE 2015
PROCES-VERBAL DE CENTRALISATION DES RESULTATS A LA CELI

 CELI de BINAH

L'an deux mil quinze et le Vingt six Avril s'est déroulée dans la salle de réunion de la CELI de BINAH, la centralisation des résultats de l'élection présidentielle du 25 Avril 2015.

La centralisation a consisté en la transcription des résultats des BV au fur et à mesure de leur réception par la CELI. L'opération a été effectuée par les membres de la CELI en présence des délégués des candidats et des observateurs.

A la fin de la centralisation, il a été constaté :

Nombre total de BV de la CELI :	151	(En chiffres)
Nombre total d'inscrits de la CELI :	49887	(En chiffres)
Nombre de votants sur la liste d'aménagement des BV :	40357	(En chiffres)
Nombre de votants par dérogation :	1101	(En chiffres)
Nombre de votants par anticipation :	119	(En chiffres)
Nombre total de votants :	41432	(En chiffres)
Nombre de bulletins nuls :	829	(En chiffres)
Suffrages exprimés :	39528	(En chiffres)

Les suffrages par candidat se répartissent de la façon suivante :

N°	Noms & Prénoms	En chiffres	En lettres
1	FABRE Jean-Pierre	2060	Deux mille soixante
2	TCHASSONAT Mouhamed	113	Cent treize
3	TAAMA Komandéga	368	Trois cent soixante-huit
4	GOGUE Tchaboure	226	Deux cent vingt six
5	Faure E. GNASSINGBE	36758	Trente six mille sept cent cinquante huit

Observations: _____

En foi de quoi, le présent PV a été dressé pour servir et valoir ce que de droit. Une copie du PV a été affichée au siège de la CELI et une autre transmise à la CENI.

Fait à Rayons le 26/04/15

Les membres de la CELI

N°	Noms et Prénoms	Qualité	Signature
1	ARBODJI Kossivi Edem	Président	
2	OUKREDJO Daya Massani	Vice-président	
3	KAGBARA Awende	Rapporteur	
4	BASSOTI Atani	Membre	
5	BADJAM PISSO	Membre	
6	MAGUETETE Essomoungh	Membre	
7	WAZABALO Massimlawé	Membre	

Les délégués de candidats :

N°	Noms et Prénoms	Candidat représenté	Signature
1	SINJALIM Mayaki	FAURE	
2	ESSODINA Hozou	NIE 7	
3	ATCHITA Esshana	CAP 2015	
4			
5			

Figure 4. A result sheet. From "Presidential Election General Report" by the NIEC, 2015.