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Editorial

Journal of Social and Development Sciences (JSDS) is a scholarly journal that deals with the disciplines of social and development sciences. JSDS publishes research work that meaningfully contributes towards theoretical bases of contemporary developments in society, business and related disciplines. The work submitted for publication consideration in JSDS should address empirical and theoretical contributions in the subjects related to the scope of the journal in particular and allied theories and practices in general. Scope of JSDS includes: sociology, psychology, anthropology, economics, political science, international relations, linguistics, history, public relations, hospitality & tourism and project management. Author(s) should declare that work submitted to the journal is original, not under consideration for publication by another journal and that all listed authors approve its submission to JSDS. It is JSDS policy to welcome submissions for consideration, which are original, and not under consideration for publication by another journal at the same time. Author (s) can submit: Research Paper, Conceptual Paper, Case Studies and Book Review. The current issue of JSDS consists of papers of scholars from Ghana, Australia and USA. Effect of Interest Rate on Stock Prices, Unlocking the Challenging Pathways of Youth Participation in Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development, Pandemic Elections and the Covid-Safe Effect, Assessing the Effects of Regimented Administrative Structure of Education on Pupils Academic Performance and Populism: Utility of its Approaches and the Prospects of the Phenomenon's Resurgence are some of the major practices and concepts examined in these studies. Journal received research submission related to all aspects of major themes and tracks. All the submitted papers were first assessed, by the editorial team for relevance and originality of the work and blindly peer-reviewed by the external reviewers depending on the subject matter of the paper. After the rigorous peer-review process, the submitted papers were selected based on originality, significance, and clarity of the purpose. The current issue will therefore be a unique offer, where scholars will be able to appreciate the latest results in their field of expertise and to acquire additional knowledge in other relevant fields.

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PAPERS

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Effect of Interest Rate on Stock Prices in Ghana

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Abstract: The paper assesses the effect of interest rate on stock prices, with emphases on Ghana Stock Exchange; using monthly time series data from July 2007 to December 2019. The Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test was employed to establish the stationarity properties of the data or otherwise. Using the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimation technique of Multiple Regression, the results ($\beta = -0.891$, $p < 0.05$) revealed an indirect association between interest rates and stock prices in the Ghanaian context; which is consistent with the theoretical conclusion that an increase in interest rate results in a decrease in stock prices. Thus, in the light of this finding, it was recommended that policymakers should consider the stock market dynamics due to the significant relationship that exists between the two macroeconomic variables.

Keywords: *Interest Rates, Stock Prices, Ordinary Least Squares, Augmented Dickey-Fuller Test, Ghana.*

1. Introduction

Interest rates and stock prices nexus has been the subject of several empirical and theoretical research works among academics, policymakers, economists and investment analysts in recent years. Economic theory postulates a negative correlation between these two macroeconomic variables (interest rates and stock prices); which implies that a rise in interest rate results in a fall in stock prices and vice versa. Higher interest rates as a contractionary monetary policy instrument, negatively affect stock prices owing to the fact that it brings about a fall in the value of stocks, making fixed-income assets more lucrative than keeping alternative stocks. This, therefore, reduces the likelihood for investors to take loans and invest in stocks and thereby decreasing demand for stocks (Teitey, 2019). In addition, a negative relationship has been hypothesized, in economic theory because interest rates affect the operations of business firms and companies. All other things being equal, a rise in interest rate brings about a rise in capital cost. As a result, a firm must put in extra effort to acquire higher earnings if interest rates are high; otherwise, the extra expenses on the additional interest will absorb a higher proportion of the profit.

The lower the profit, therefore, the lower the cash flow and hence, the larger the required rate of return for people which invariably affects the company's stock price. Furthermore, in a situation where interest rates increase to a level that a company might find it hard to honor its financial obligations, the survival of the company would certainly be threatened and for that matter, higher risk premiums would be demanded by investors. This will cause the company's stock price to decrease further (Stowe et al., 2007). Moreover, the inverse relationship between stock prices and interest rates is explained from the viewpoint that a rise in interest rates raises the interest expenditures of highly geared firms and companies. This reduces cash flows that can be distributed as dividends to shareholders in the future period. Changes in interest rates ultimately influence the extent to which financial assets and liabilities of non-financial firms are estimated on the market. In other words, a higher rate of interest affects the opportunity cost of investing in shares, which makes bonds more attractive. Hence, investors are motivated to substitute share investments with bonds and consequently, causing stock prices to fall (Mwaanga, 2017).

Furthermore, the negative association between interest rates and stock prices is explained from the perspective either through the rate of discount or the effect of inflation. According to Choi and Jen (1991), the expected returns on stocks are sturdily linked to the interest rate risk, as well as the market risk. Their findings indicated that the risk of the interest rate for smaller businesses is one of the main sources of portfolio risk for investors; the risk of the interest rate for bigger companies is negative or inverse. Also, the findings indicate that the risk premium of interest rate explains a significant proportion of the difference in projected earnings between the topmost five and the bottom five companies of the New York Stock Exchange. The above notwithstanding, the results of Humpe and Macmillan (2007) also revealed that Japan and United States stock prices are equally related to interest rates indirectly in the long run. Irrespective of the fact that

several academicians, policymakers and financial economists have attempted to establish the dynamic interactions between interest rates and stock prices, it appears only a few studies have been undertaken in the Ghanaian context. In addition, there have been mixed results in terms of the strength and nature of the relationship (Teitey, 2019).

Thus, undertaking a study to verify the linkage between the two macroeconomic variables in Ghana becomes imperative. In short, this study aims at contributing to the literature on interest rate and stock price nexus, by employing the OLS estimation technique of multiple regression. In the light of the objective, the study is guided by the question: What is the degree of strength of the association between interest rate and stock prices in Ghana, as well as the direction? To answer this question, the following hypothesis was formulated:
H_0: There is no degree of association between interest rate and stock price in Ghana (H_0: $\beta_1 = 0$).

The null hypothesis was tested against the alternative hypothesis:
H1: There is an inverse association between interest rates and stock prices in Ghana (H_1: $\beta_1 < 0$).

2. Related Literature

In literature, several researchers have reported that there is an inverse relationship between interest rates and prices of stocks (Kandir, 2008; Somoye et al., 2009; 2017; Teitey, 2019; Flannery & James, 1984; Gan et al., 2006; Madura & Schnusenberg, 2000). In addition, the results of Abugri (2008) indicated an inverse association between stock prices and interest rate; and significant in both Chile and Argentina as well as Brazil. However, the results indicated an insignificant relationship between the two variables in Mexico. Muradoglu and Metin (2001) also found that a rise in interest rates impacts stock prices in Turkey. Yildirtan (2007) also reported a negative connection between interest rates and stock prices. However, the results revealed that the degree of association was very weak. Employing monthly time series data from January 2007 to December 2013 from Colombo Stock Exchange, the results of Amarasinghe (2015) showed a negative relationship between interest rate and stock prices in Sri Lanka. Using the heteroscedastic cointegration technique, Liu and Shrestha (2008) investigated the short-run relationships between interest rates and stock prices in China. Their results indicated that interest rates are negatively related to stock prices in the short run. To conclude, analysis of interest rate and stock price nexus by various researchers has revealed mixed results.

Using stock portfolios rather than individual stocks, Kandir (2008) indicated that interest rates appear to impact negatively on the prices of stocks. On the other hand, the regression analysis of Tursoy et al. (2008) on interest rate and stock price nexus revealed no significant degree of association between interest rates and stock prices. It is important to emphasize that almost all the results obtained from the various research works undertaken on both emerging and developed stock markets showed a negative relationship between the two macroeconomic variables under consideration. Kganyago and Gumbo (2015) assessed the interest rate and stock price relationship in Zimbabwe for the period; April 2009 to December 2013 by employing the Johansen cointegration techniques. Their results revealed a strong and statistically significant negative association between the two variables. Osamwonyi and Evbayiro-Osagie (2012), attempted to establish the strength and direction of the relationship between these two macroeconomic variables in Nigeria. Employing annual time series data on both the explained and explanatory variables from 1975 to 2005; the results indicated that interest rates, exchange rates inflation impact significantly on stock prices in Nigeria. This result is consistent with the results obtained by Nkoro Uko (2013).

Studies on interest rate and stock price nexus have been undertaken on emerging stock markets as well. Studies were undertaken by Al-Sharkas (2004) in Jordan on one hand, and Adam and Tweneboah (2008) in Ghana, on the other hand, indicated an indirect association between interest rates and stock prices; and statistically significant at five percent error level. Furthermore, the results obtained from the study undertaken by Maysami et al. (2004) showed that both short-term and long-term rates of interest have a strong negative relationship with stock prices in Singapore. In contrast, some authors have reported a direct or positive relationship between stock prices and interest rates. Some of these authors and researchers include: Premawardane (1997) and Geske & Roll (1983). These researchers explain that the positive relationship between stock prices and interest rates could be attributed to the fact that a change in interest

rate can positively influence the investment decisions of potential stockholders about future changes in dividends. In addition, Alam and Uddin (2009) examined the link between interest rates and stock market returns and found a direct correlation between interest rates and stock prices although the results were only significant at a 10 percent error level. This could be attributed to differences in analytical tools and research methodologies employed.

3. Data and Methodology

In literature, interest rate money supply, inflation and exchange rate the key determinants of stock prices. Thus, to establish the strength and direction of the relationship between interest rates and stock prices in Ghana, we develop a model in which stock price is a function of interest rate (monetary policy rate), money supply, nominal exchange rate and inflation rate as follows: GSE = f (MPR, MS, NER, INF); where GSE = Stock Price of Ghana Exchange; MPR = Monetary Policy Rate (Official Interest Rate or Bank Rate); MS = Money Supply; NER = Nominal Exchange Rate; INF = Inflation Rate. Average monthly time-series data from the period July 2007 to December 2019 were employed to establish the relationship. The data for the study were therefore obtained primarily from secondary sources: The Ghana Stock Exchange, Bank of Ghana and Ghana Statistical Service. Data on inflation rate were specifically accessed from Ghana Statistical Service while data on money supply, interest rate and exchange rate were obtained from the Bank of Ghana. Nonetheless, the data on the All-share index (Proxy for the explained variable, i.e., stock prices) of the Ghana Stock Exchange have been obtained from the Ghana Stock Exchange website. The Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimation technique of multiple regression was employed to estimate all the regression coefficients using Views statistical software. In order to avoid spurious regressions, various statistical diagnostic tests were conducted vis-à-vis the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) assumptions.

Thus, all the relevant residual and specification tests were rigorously conducted to ascertain the robustness of the model. Firstly, since the presence of serial correlation between the residuals limits the efficiency and predictive powers of the regression coefficients of OLS-based estimates, the Durbin-Watson (DW) test for first-order serial correlation between the residuals was conducted to ensure that there was no autocorrelation between the error terms. The Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) test for determining the extent of multicollinearity between the independent variables was conducted to ascertain that the extent of collinearity between the independent variable is not a serious problem. This is because, if the correlation between the independent variables is high, the estimates are indeterminate and the standard errors of these estimates become extremely large (Koutsoyiansnis, 1973). Moreover, White's test for determining the existence of heteroscedasticity was also carried out. This test was motivated by the fact that in several economic time series, the variances of the residuals appear to correlate with each other. The presence of heteroscedasticity itself does not invalidate standards least squares. Nevertheless, ignoring it may result in a loss of efficiency in the estimated parameters. The null hypothesis is that heteroscedasticity is not present. In short, the addition of a non-stationary variable can nullify the tests for statistical significance.

The Ramsey RESET test is a general test for model specification errors resulting from the omitted variables, incorrect functional form and correlation between the independent variables and the residuals, which sometimes occur due to measurement errors, simultaneity bias and serially correlated disturbances. Under such specification errors, the estimates of least squares regression tend to be biased and inconsistent, and therefore, conventional inference procedures become invalidated. Thus, the model is correctly specified when the F-statistic is not significant at a 5 percent error level. Also, The Jarque-Bera statistic for establishing whether the residuals are normally distributed or not was performed. In this case, if the residuals are normally distributed, the Jarque-Bera statistic, which has a chi-square distribution under the null hypothesis of normally distributed errors, should be insignificant. In order to establish the time series properties or stationarity properties of the data, a unit root test was conducted. Stationarity simply implies that the mean and covariance of the distribution do not change over time. Thus, the concept of stationarity implies that the future will be the same as the past, at least in probability terms. Regression estimates involving non-stationary data; lead to spurious results and hence, render the t and F statistics invalid. The Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) and Phillips-Perron Tests were conducted to establish the stationarity or non-stationarity properties of the data set.

4. Results and Discussion

In order to avoid spurious regressions, a unit root test was conducted on all the variables to establish the stationarity properties of the data or otherwise. Two different methods namely; Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) and Phillips-Perron (PP) Tests were conducted to establish the stationary of the series. Both Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) and Phillips-Perron (PP) tests specify the null hypothesis (H_0) that the time series has a unit root and hence, the times series is non-stationary. This is tested against the alternative hypothesis (H_1) that the time series has no unit root and hence, the time series is a stationary time one. The decision rule as to whether to accept or reject the null is as follows:
(i) Reject the Null Hypothesis if the absolute ADF / PP test statistic < critical value.
(ii) Do not reject the Null Hypothesis if the absolute ADF / PP test statistic > critical value. In this study, the researcher carried out unit root tests using the log of the various variables and first difference levels to establish their stationarity properties. Table 1 presents the results.

Table 1: ADF and PP Unit Root Results for All Variables (GSE, MPR, MS, NER, INF)

Test Type	Deterministic Trend	Test Statistic	Critical Values		
			1%	5%	10%
ADF	None	-0.543955	-2.591204	-1.944487	-1.614367
	Intercept	-1.249565	-3.505595	-2.894332	-2.58435
	Intercept and trend	-1.534887	-4.064453	-3.461094	-3.156776
PP	None	-0.543955	-2.591204	-1.944487	-1.614367
	Intercept	-1.274675	-3.505595	-2.894332	-2.584325
	Intercept and trend	-1.617713	-4.064453	-3.461094	-3.156776

*Stationarity of series at 1% level. **Source:** Views Output, 2020.

The results indicate that none of the series were significant at a 1% significance level for all the tests (Both ADF and PP). The results further indicate that none of the series were significant at 5% and 10% in all cases. Thus, in order to ensure stationarity, the researchers took the first difference of the data. Table 2 presents the first difference results.

Table 2: ADF and PP Unit Root Results after First Difference (GSE, MPR, MS, NER, INF)

Test Type	Deterministic Trend	Test Statistic	Critical Values		
			1%	5%	10%
ADF	None	-9.019844	-2.591505*	-1.944530**	-1.614341***
	Intercept	-8.986600	-3.506484*	-2.894716**	-2.584529***
	Intercept and trend	-8.942510	-4.065702*	-3.461686**	-3.157121***
PP	None	-9.019844	-2.591505*	-1.944530**	-1.614341***
	Intercept	-8.986600	-3.506484*	-2.894716**	-2.584529***
	Intercept and trend	-8.942510	-4.065702*	-3.461686**	-3.157121***

Note: The asterisks (*), (**), (***) indicate how significant the coefficients are, at 1%, 5% and 10% levels of significance respectively. *stationarity of series at 1% level, **stationarity of series at 5% level ***stationarity of series at 10% level.
Source: Views Output, 2020.

From Table 2, the ADF and PP unit root test for the first difference of the log of the variables (GSE, MPR, MS, NER, INF) indicated that all the series were significant at 1%, 5% and 10% significance level for all the tests since in all cases the value for the absolute value of the test statistic was greater than the critical level. The results, therefore, provide evidence for the stationarity of the series. The results of the stock price equation estimated with OLS at first difference are presented in Table 3. The results of all the diagnostic tests performed are very satisfactory. The results of the F- test indicate that the F-statistic (89.249) is statistically significant at a 1% error level. The R^2 of 0.831 indicates that about 83 percent of the variations in stock prices are caused by the inflation rate, interest rate, money supply and stock prices. The high R^2 value implies that the explanatory variables correctly explain the dependent variable and hence the model is correctly specified.

Table 3: OLS Regression Estimates at First Difference

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	1.801	1.705	4.315	0.000
DLINF	0.762	0.489	1.685	0.029
DLMPR	-0.891	0.973	0.923	0.037
DLMS	-1.351	0.364	-4.247	0.000
DLNER	-1.104	0.667	1.943	0.048
R-squared	0.831	Mean dependent var		3.824
Adjusted R-squared	0.782	S.D. dependent var		0.376
S.E. of regression	0.157	Akaike info criterion		-0.625
Sum squared resid	2.291	Schwarz criterion		-0.524
Log-likelihood	35.652	Hannan-Quinn criteria.		-0.617
F-statistic	89.249	Durbin-Watson stat		0.358
Prob (F-statistic)	0.000			

Source: Views Output, 2020.

It can be deduced from Table 3 that the R-square value was 0.831 which indicates that 83.1% of the variation in the dependent variable LGSE has been explained by the independent variables LINF, LMPR, LMS, and LNER. The correlation coefficient between the dependent and independent variables was 0.9112 which implies that there is a strong positive correlation between the independent variables and dependent variables. That is to say, about 91 percent of the variations in stock prices can be explained by the inflation rate, interest rate, money supply and exchange rate. This high value of the R^2 shows that the overall model is statistically significant. The adjusted R-squared compares the explanatory power of the regression model that contains a different number of predictors. It accurately gives you the actual and unadulterated percentage of variability in the dependent variable that is accounted for by the four (4) independent variables.

In this case, it is 0.782 which implies that exactly 78.2% of the variability in the dependent variable is accounted for by the independent variables. The negative coefficient of interest rate ($\beta = -0.891$, $p < 0.05$) indicates a significant negative correlation between interest rates and stock prices in Ghana. This result confirms the theoretical conclusion of an inverse correlation between interest rates and stock prices. This is because a rise in interest rates, caused by a fall in money supply (holding demand for money constant), raises the opportunity cost of holding cash and stocks. To this effect, people will be attracted by the higher interest earnings and hence, change their stock holdings and cash into interest-earning securities and assets which invariably results in a decrease in stock prices. In specific terms, the coefficient of – 0.891 for the interest rate variable implies that a one percent rise in the interest rate will influence stock prices to decrease by 89 percent on average.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The results revealed that interest rates are negatively related to stock prices in Ghana. The inverse relationship can be explicated by the positive relationship between money supply and inflation as elucidated by Sellin (2001). Moreover, the negative coefficient of interest rate indicates that an increase in the 91-day treasury, bill rate will lead to a fall in stock prices. It will therefore be reasonable to expect a negative change in the attitude of Ghanaians towards investment in stocks when interest rates go up. This finding is consistent with both theory and evidence from other studies as a negative relation between the 91-day treasury bill rates and stock prices were expected (Somoye et al., 2009), Adam and Tweneboah (2008), Sellin (2001). However, this finding is in conflict with several studies on the correlation between monetary policy and stock prices (Sellin, 2001, Ioannidis & Kontonikas, 2008). It is also evident from the results that changes in interest rate as an aspect of monetary policy exerts a significant indirect effect on stock prices in Ghana while money supply reports a weak negative relationship with stock prices. Thus, all things being equal, any expansionary monetary policy that will aim at increasing interest rates would bring about a significant increase in stock prices in Ghana.

Thus, a surge in the 91-day Treasury bill rate would cause an appreciable decrease in stock prices. In the light of this finding, it is recommended that the dynamics of the stock market should be taken into consideration

by the monetary authorities when adjusting monetary policy or interest rates in view of the fact that variations in monetary policy rates impact significantly on stock prices. A decrease in interest rates, for instance, can lead to a rise in the prices of stocks and consequently increase the wealth of households (consumers), and thus, influence households to increase their expenditures – a phenomenon termed as the wealth effect. Also, higher stock prices in effect, lower the capital cost for firms which results in increased capital investments. Surges in both consumer and business spending have a propensity of stimulating the economy. To this effect, it becomes necessary for monetary authorities to take the stock market into account when adjusting monetary policies. Further work needs to be done to establish whether fiscal policies influence stock prices or not. This study can zoom in on which government expenditure has the highest impact on stock prices. The effect of diaspora remittances on stock prices is also an interesting area to be explored in Ghana.

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Unlocking the Challenging Pathways of Youth Participation in Ghana's Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency

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Abstract: Youth participation in public policies such as the employment policy process has gained prominence in academic and policy literature. Despite this, research on youth participation in the employment policy process has received little attention in Ghana. This paper draws on documentary analysis to unlock the challenging pathways of youth participation in Ghana's youth employment and entrepreneurial development agency. The paper finds that a web of challenges such as insufficient access to information, over-politicization of GYEEDA, poor level of coordination of stakeholders, and prevalence of diversity and social exclusion are embedded in obstructing the youth participation in GYEEDA. The study recommends that policymakers such as the government and other stakeholders should provide adequate measures to ensure that beneficiaries such as the youths are engaged in the design, formulation, and execution of the youth employment policy process in Ghana.

Keywords: *Youth, participation, employment, policy formulation, and policy implementation.*

1. Introduction

Generally, an interest in youth participation in public policy-making processes, as a field of study and a policy instrument has increased in the contemporary period (Bessant, 2018; Dalton, 2017). Existing literature defines youth participation as a change process and proactive learning by doing exercise, with youths at the center of the development programs and processes. Arguably, youth participation in the public policy process is conceived as the strongest predictor that aids in strengthening the existing capacities of the youth, and the formation of social networks in the society (Sloam, 2016; Tsekoura, 2016). Typically, scholarly literature on youth participation in the public policy process is replete with competing perspectives. Each of these strands repeatedly sheds light on the question of youth participation in the public policy process (Hart & Henn, 2017; Chamisa & Shava, 2016). For instance, according to the realists, young people in the contemporary era are determined and overly ambitious to participate in the public policy process so that they can discharge their civic duties and obligations toward society (O'Toole, 2015; Sloam, 2016). Along these lines, Côté (2014) also posited that youth participation in public policies and initiatives is crucial because youth are energetic, exhibit more curiosity, creativity, concern, and enthusiasm, thus, involving young people in the public policy process upholds their rights as citizens. These observations are aptly supported by Busse, Hashem-Wangler, & Tholen, (2015) study which argued that youth participation in public policy processes such as employment policy has an intrinsic normative value.

Which therefore prepares and engages them to renew their civic responsibilities in the society? This shift has been particularly noticeable among many countries in Africa, where collective action via youth involvement in policymaking processes such as employment policy has become common practice (Busse, Hashem-Wangler, & Tholen, 2015). Conversely, another stream of thought argues that youths are less potent than adults since they are in the process of becoming mature, consequently, they are regarded as citizens under training, thus, they are likely to exhibit some forms of immaturity leading to biases and heuristics in their decision making, when given a platform to participate in the public policy process (Mycock & Tonge, 2012). Also, it is claimed that the engagement of citizens or groups (such as youths) in every public policy process and its execution ordinarily delay the quick decision-making process on policies, because they do not have the required experience and knowledge on the subject matter of the policy process (Mycock & Tonge, 2012). Despite these caveats, scholarly explanation contends that the drive for youth participation in the public policy process is in accordance with the advocacy of international organizations (Checkoway, 1998). First, Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children advocates for youth to participate in policies and programs that unswervingly affect their lives (United Nations, 2003). Second, priority 10 of the World Programme of Action for Youth from the Year 2000 and beyond argues that 'greater engagement of

youth in public policy process facilitate in building their capacity to promote the socio-economic development of their society (United Nations , 2007).

As consequence, across the African continent, numerous steps have also been taken to hasten youth engagements in the public policy process. For example, in 2006, the African Youth Charter was officially approved in Banjul, the Gambia by Heads of States to resolve concerns related to youth policies (Economic Commission for Africa, 2011). Besides, the Assembly of the African Union conference held in February 2009 in Addis Ababa declared the period of 2009-2018 as Decade of Youth Development in Africa. Similarly, in 2010, African Ministers responsible for youth policies officially approved the projected proposal of action for the Decade (2009-2018) for Youth Development. This declaration markedly supports the African Union's demand for member states to sanction the execution of the African Youth Charter. Nonetheless, some governments in African countries failed to fully implement national youth policies (African Union , 2011). In response to the preceding paradoxes, during the 17th Ordinary Summit held from 23rd June to 1st July 2011 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, African governments were required to hasten the execution of the Youth Decade Plan of Action (2009-2018) and the African Youth Charter. Again, African governments were further tasked to assiduously resolve youth unemployment in line with the Ouagadougou 2004 Plan of Action on Employment and Poverty Alleviation. Furthermore, during the 8th Session of the African Union Labour and Social Affairs Commission in 2011, African ministers promised to help reduced youth unemployment by 2% per annum through the development, financing, and execution of Youth Employment Action Plans (African Union , 2011).

In the context of Ghana, the implementation of the African Youth Charter in 2010 documented that every young person in the country has the right to be involved in all domains of society (Article 11). Typically, the Charter (Article 12) concluded that consultations and active participation of the youth should be made during decision-making on issues concerning the youth in the state. In the search for support from the youth, most manifestos of political parties premised around the engagement of the youth which forms the majority of the population (Gyampo & Debrah, 2012). Linked with the preceding provisions, in the year 2012, Ghana witnessed a rise in the participation of youth (within the ages of 21 and 40 years) in both public and political offices. For example, the fifth parliament of the Fourth Republic recorded forty-four (44) youths elected as parliamentary members (Gyampo, 2015). Taken together, as Gyampo (2015) bemoans, while there were a sizable number of youths as members of parliaments represented in national decision making at Ghana's fifth parliament, they scarcely articulate their views to promote accountable and responsible government in that regime. This observation aptly resonates in Grauenkaer & Tufte (2018) seminal study that, even though in most of the Africa countries, many youths have the opportunity to represent their constituents in national policymaking processes, their level of influence is very unreliable because they are more responsive to their interests and the interest of wealthier individuals who supported them to secure the position than to average citizens (Gyampo & Obeng-Odoom, 2013). Also, issues concerning youths are deliberated and executed by policymakers who do not have sufficient and technical knowledge of youth activities. Therefore, adults are better positioned to participate in decision-making than youth.

Because they believe that youths are inexperienced to decide on policies for themselves (Gyampo & Obeng-Odoom, 2013). Technically, although there is growing interest in youth participation in the public policy process in Ghana, there are few empirical studies that are conducted in this subject area, with scholars such as Gyampo (2015), Gyampo & Obeng-Odoom (2013), Gyampo & Debrah (2012), and Gutmann & Thompson (2004) as seminal contributors. Thus, this current paper attempts to explore the challenging pathways of youth participation in Ghana's youth employment and entrepreneurial development agency. Ghana is an ideal arena to use as a case study because, she is among few countries in sub-Saharan Africa that implemented youth policy in the 1970s, and consequently, Ghana has numerous experiences and paradoxes on youth engagement in the public policies process. This paper makes a relevant contribution to the extant literature in public administration and political science. In terms of methodological contribution, this study combines data from national and district levels for analysis of youth participation in the public policy process. Thus, the findings are likely to help the government and policymakers to appreciate the web of economic and socio-cultural conditions that impede youth participation in the public policy process so that they can design realistic and extensive policies to resolve them. This development will, therefore, facilitate maximizing the utility and harnessing productive assets of the youth to contribute towards state development. The rest of the

paper is categorized as follows; this introduction is followed by an appraisal of Ghana's youth employment and entrepreneurial development agency (GYEEDA), conceptual and theoretical frameworks, methodological approach, followed by findings and discussion. The paper ends with a conclusion and implications for policy.

Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency: The successive and current government's desire to resolve youth unemployment issues inclusively began in 1999 when the draft national youth policy was formulated by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Ghana (NDPC , 2010). One such policy was the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) launched by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) to empower young people to contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic and sustainable development of the society (NDPC, 2010). The NYEP launched by the NPP government headed by John Agyekum Kuffour and implemented at the national, regional, and district levels was originally begun with nine modules. New modules were periodically created and added to the program (Ghana Statistical Service , 2014). The program aimed at creating half a million self-employment jobs, wage-earning jobs, and voluntary service activities in 3 years from 2006-2009 to help ameliorate the mass drift of the youth, especially basic and secondary school graduates as well as others who have lost interest in agriculture and rural life in general to urban centers in Ghana in search of jobs. Furthermore, the program was also focused on the provision of essential social services that promote good governance, access to good education, and health services to citizens in Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service , 2014). The program was funded by District Assembly Common Fund (DACF), Ghana Education Trust Fund (GET Fund), National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Road Fund, Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) and the Millennium Development Accounts (Republic of Ghana, 2006).

Also, further funding of five (5) million Euros was provided by DANIDA to support Phase One of the initiative aimed at supporting persons with disabilities (PWDs) in implementing the Aso-Kente factory in the Volta Region, and the chalk facility in the Greater Accra Region. An additional ten (10) million Euros was released by DANIDA under Phase Two to support other beneficiaries throughout the country (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2013). Following the election in 2008, National Democratic Congress (NDC), which formed a new government, restructured the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) of the erstwhile government headed by John Agyekum Kuffour. In the first phase, the government decoupled the youth programs from the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment and attached them to Sports, and consequently created a new Ministry of Youth and Sports. The second phase was the development of a new draft National Youth Policy to replace the previous youth policy. The new National Youth Policy was inaugurated on August 13, 2009, at Elmina in the Central Region. The National Youth Council (National Youth Authority [NYA]) was assigned the responsibility of implementing, monitoring, and evaluating Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (GYEEDA) of government headed by President John Mahama (Ghana Statistical Service , 2014). The youth policy stands out as key important public interventions targeting youth development in Ghana. Technically, in terms of employment, in 2006, there were 78,195 youths employed in the program nationwide. Similarly, in May 2007, there were 95,000 youths employed in the program. Also, there were 108,000 youths recruited, trained, and employed in February 2011 in the program (NDPC , 2010).

2. Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks

Youth Participation in Employment Policy: The concept of youth is defined in diverse ways, but it is commonly conceptualized based on chronology, and life transitions. Chronologically, the concept of youth is conceived as people aged between 15 and 24 years. In terms of transitions in life, youth are mostly categorized between childhood and adulthood (Gough, Langevang, & Owusu, 2013). Accordingly, the transitions approach to defining youth mostly focuses on the transitions to education, the world of work, and family formation. Nonetheless, these three standards could differ from one geographical region, country, or culture to the other due to quick socio-economic transformations caused by globalization, formal education, and migration (Langevang, 2008). According to the Africa Union, youth is defined as people aged between 15 to 34 years. This definition is espoused in this paper because it resonates with that of the National Youth Policy of Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). In essence, the academic literature has made large strides towards the understanding of youth participation in the public policy process (Checkoway, 1998). One such influential study on this topic was conducted by (Gaiser, ve, & Spannring, 2010). They argue that a country's level of development has a positive correlation with the active participation of youth in decision-making. At its core, Gaiser, ve, & Spannring (2010) contend that, across the countries in Africa continent, most of the

young people have less or no education and hence are not better equipped for job opportunities than adults. Akin to the preceding views, the analysis of the existing literature also highlights that in many Africa societies, cultural factors hinder most youth groups in society from participating in the public policy processes (Greetje, 2009).

For example, according to Greetje (2009), the influence of patriarchy is among the cultural philosophical factors that affect youth participation in the decision-making process. Patriarchy describes man as one that manages and leads decision-making in the family and society. Thus, this philosophy entrusts power and control of resources into the adults, making youth incapacitated in contributing to the policy-making process. In addition, Molloy, White, & Hosfield (2002) in an analysis of youth participation in employment policy indicate the practice demonstrates that the rise of institutions, whether cultural or the outcome of a policy, from time to time involves some types of social organizations that have an enduring and somewhat deciding factor on the behavior of institutions today. As espoused by scholars, in the colonial era, institutions and the political system were built around men in most African countries. Men were invariably in charge of all key and important positions. At the initiation and implementation of a policy even at the central and local level, long-standing traditions favored men over every other group in society by making them the key decision-makers in the society. These have consequently affected institutions today by giving men more opportunities over young people in the decision-making process. This assertion suggests that men in society are better experience and knowledgeable in appreciating issues that focusing on youth than the youth themselves in society (Molloy, White, & Hosfield, 2002). Scholarly explanation further reveals that in many countries in Africa.

Youth are side-lined at the local and central level of the decision-making process (Malley, 2005) because they are largely considered second class citizen that cannot compete with the male adult who is regarded as the first-class citizen in society. Consequently, the second-class citizens serve as aids to the male adults and not necessarily to spearhead the decision-making process and implementation. This institutional arrangement creates an impetus for society to prejudice against youth participation in the public policy process. Building on preceding perspectives, influential literature also shows that poverty is one of the key determinants that impede youth participation in the policy-making process (Percy-Smith & Thomas, 2009). At its core, the scholars underscored that many youths are out of jobs and therefore see themselves as not fit to be involved in the decision-making process. This is imperative because most community members have the impression that youth involvement in employment interventions and policies entails some costs in terms of their time, labor, and resources. As a consequence, some of them may fail to involve themselves in such employment interventions and policies especially when these activities require cash contributions. Congruently, Dowding (1996) also argues that youth engagement in the policy process is a key aspect of good governance, but in Africa, politics is made an integral part of the policy-making process since the policy is not made in a controlled environment with neutral policymakers. This phenomenon, therefore, creates an impetus for society to prejudice against youth participation in the public policy process.

The Theory of Social Interdependence: The theory of social interdependence which is associated with Deutsch (1962) is commonly used in political science and sociology discourse. The review of theory focuses on providing a foundation to help analyze the dynamics of youth participation in the Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency. In their seminal study, Johnson & Johnson (2010) argue that the social interdependence theory is premised on the basic idea that the structured goals which are pursued by individuals in a situation regulate how stakeholders co-operate and interact to achieve these goals. Furthermore, the writers bemoaned that the nature and type of interdependence determine the nature of the interaction among stakeholders. Embedded in this interaction are the prospects of promoting and facilitating goal attainment, or thwarting the attainment of the goals. As espoused by Johnson & Johnson (2010), social interdependence can occur in positive or negative ways.

Also, in other instances, there may be no social interdependence (Johnson & Johnson, 2010). Positive interdependence denotes the situation where each stakeholder in the policymaking process is dependent on the contributions of other stakeholders and that all members have a common goal attainable only by working together (Falls et al., 2014) which brings out the best in each member and enhances goal achievement at a superior level than as individuals (Tarricone & Luca, 2010). Negative interdependence results in conflicting

interactions such as stakeholders thwarting each other's determinations in realizing their goals, whilst no interdependence tends to result in the absence of interactions. Technically, several studies on social interdependence investigate the nuances of collaboration, where active cooperation is dependent on individual accountability, positive interdependence, and the procedures leading to the effectiveness of stakeholder activities in the policymaking process (Johnson & Johnson, 2010). Inspired by the work of Johnson & Johnson (2010), some scholars such as Tarricone & Luca (2010) well admitted that there exists a strong connection.

Between teamwork and social interdependence because successful stakeholder interactions are largely contributed by various factors such as positive interdependence which bothers on team members relying on each other to succeed; one which bothers on face-to-face primitive interaction; teamwork skills that promote, communication, conflict management, and trust-building; as well as problem-solving and team decision-making for policy completion. In contrast, some scholars also echoed that other forces including emotional disturbances, social insensitivity, and ineffectual teamwork among stakeholders, interpersonal skills, and learning to trust each other in the team tend to reduce the level of interdependence among stakeholders to accomplish the goals of a policy, and thus could lead to failure of the policymaking process (Brown & Paulus, 2002). The social interdependence theory was adopted to guide this study because the theory presents an impeccable opportunity to evaluate the success or failure of youth participation in the public policy process in a theoretically plausible way. According to the theory, the success of youth participation in the public policy process lies in the collaboration between stakeholders as a team in developing and implementing youth policies. Also, the theory contends that ineffectual teamwork among stakeholders can lead to their isolation from the groups, which can lead to vindictive relationships among the youth, leading to the ultimate failure of the policymaking process (Brown & Paulus, 2002).

3. Methodological Approach

Study Design and Approach: The researchers adopted the desk review method by relying on current secondary literature on youth participation in the public policy process. Secondary data were sourced from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Technology Library and also journal articles from Google Scholar and Google. These key online databases were utilized because they are broad-based data that cut across various disciplines. Data was collected in two months, which began on 14th April 2019 and completed on 15th June 2019 based on the research questions outlined for the study. The literature search yielded about sixty -two (62) secondary documents. These documents were derived from three sources such as books, policy documents, and peer-review journal articles. These documents were analyzed to ensure that pertinent materials that focused on youth participation in public policy processes were only selected for critical review for the study.

Data Extraction and Analysis: The analysis of data for the study was fully manual. The analytical method was primarily thematic and coding was mainly inductive (Patton, 2002). For analytical triangulation, data extraction from qualitative studies was conducted by synthesizing similar themes that touched on youth participation in the public policy process. As part of the analysis, inconsistencies were reconciled by referring to the original text. The codes (themes) agreed upon by researchers' analysts were characterized into key themes and sub-themes for the analysis of the study.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the results and discussion of the study. Key findings that emerged from the analysis of data are described under the following themes: insufficient access to information, over-politicization of the policy process, level of coordination of stakeholders, and prevalence of diversity and social exclusion.

Insufficient Access to Information on GYEEDA: Data revealed that the youth did not have sufficient access to information to dialogue about the existence of GYEEDA, and the benefits they could gain from participation in such a policy. Data showed that youths' inability to access sufficient information on GYEEDA was mainly caused by the poor level of education on the GYEEDA by the policymakers and other stakeholders, poor access to the use of the internet to access the programs and activities of GYEEDA that were displayed on the

Agency's website, and cost involved in accessing this information from the internet. Besides, the internet network system is very poor in many parts, especially the rural communities of the country, therefore, if programs and activities of GYEEDA were displayed on its website, there is a likelihood that, only a few youths, who are educated could access them, consequently, the educated elites are better positioned to access and subsequently participate in GYEEDA programs and activities. This finding is consistent with Gaiser, ve, & Spannring (2010), conclusion that many of the young people in Africa countries have less or no education, as a result, they are not better equipped for job opportunities than adults, consequently, adults are better positioned to participate in employment process than the youth in the society.

Over-Politicisation of the Policy Process: Over-pollicisation of GYEEDA was also identified in the study. Data documented that as authorized by the National Youth Act 1974, a prerequisite for the engagement in the employment public policy process is that youth organizations have to register with the National Youth Authority. Data further documented that per the National Youth Act 1974, the youth authority is mandated to use the registration lists to invite youth groups for their engagement in the youth policies and activities. However, available evidence from the field showed that policymakers did not create favorable conditions to enable them to participate in the design of the GYEEDA program and activities by the National Youth Authority. For example, a report from the field revealed that throughout its life, GYEEDA was poorly managed by the dishonest policymakers and elites' in the then ruling National Democratic Party government to perpetuate their political patronage for the national elections in 2016. A report from the field established that Ministers of state openly come out on air to propagate the ruling government's agenda on GYEEDA. It was established from the study that national coordinators of GYEEDA used the scheme to reward the card-bearing members and sympathizers who canvassed for votes for the National Democratic Congress to win the 2008 national election to the neglect of the youth, who are the beneficiaries of the program. This finding confirms Dowding's (1996) conclusion that politics is an integral part of policy-making since the policy is not made in a controlled environment with neutral policymakers. This phenomenon, therefore, creates an impetus for society to prejudice against youth participation in the public policy process.

Level of Coordination of Stakeholders: Data further showed that there was a poor level of coordination of stakeholders of GYEEDA. For example, according to the data from the field, officials of GYEEDA did not coordinate with the youth who ought to be the primary stakeholders of the program. The policymaking process was dominated by members of the youth wing of the National Democratic Congress. Consequently, GYEEDA lacked any semblance of credible coordination since there is a clear absence of coherence of the way the program was handled in the various institutions and ministries because there was no law backing the establishment of GYEEDA. For example, a report from the field established that NYEP/ GYEEDA was managed by the Youth Ministry with representation from a variety of other agencies such as Ghana Education Service, Ghana Health Service, National Youth Authority, and the other private sector organizations, without the involvement of the beneficiaries of the program. These agencies and organizations managed the GYEEDA differently without coordinating with other agencies and organizations in charge of the administration of the same program. The developments resulted in huge duplication, with some service providers overlapping training services in the same localities. Available evidence from the field revealed that some of the modules were exclusively remitted for youth development while several others had initiatives and products that were not ostensibly youth-oriented. This situation made it difficult for the youth to benefit from the program which was initiated for them. This finding confirms the argument of social interdependence theory that the success of youth participation in the public policy process lies in the collaboration between stakeholders as a team in developing and implementing youth policies (Brown & Paulus, 2002).

Prevalence of Diversity and Social Exclusion: Data from the field identified prevalence of diversity and social exclusion as a key issue that impinged on youth participation in GYEEDA, because they were considered as deficient in terms of knowledge, skills, and experience to engage in the decision-making process such as designing, planning, and implementation of the program although they were the beneficiaries of GYEEDA. The argument is that in Ghana, many of the youths have little or no level of education and hence are not better equipped to access information from the internet. Thus, the policymakers rather engaged the political functionaries from the top echelons of the National Democratic Congress Party in the decision-making process in respect of the preparation, approval, and implementation of the modules under the GYEEDA initiative. Nonetheless, as indicated by UNESCO (2004) for national youth policy to function

effectively to meet the needs, wants and culture of the youth, it is imperative to engage local and regional agencies in the development initiatives in the action plan. This practice was commonly experienced by the youth because the GYEEDA initiative did not have any law guiding its operation in Ghana. This finding corroborates Greetje's (2009) submission that in African societies, patriarchy considers adults as people who manage and lead decision-making in the family and society. In this way, adults continue to maintain power and have control of resources, making youths dependent and subordinate to adults. This situation tends to contribute to the inferiority complex that hinders youth from participating in the decision-making process in society.

5. Conclusion and Policy Implications

This paper sought to unlock the challenging pathways of youth participation in GYEEDA in the Fourth Republic of Ghana. The study established that the meaningful spaces which are provided for the youth to participate in GYEEDA were very limited, due to a web of challenges such as insufficient access to information, over-politicization of youth policy, poor level of coordination of stakeholders of youth programs, and prevalence of diversity and social exclusion even though Ghana was signatories to numerous United Nations and Africa Youth Protocols and Charters, which required Africa governments to hasten the execution of youth participation in public policies process. A classic example is the Youth Decade Plan of Action (2009-2018) and African Youth Charter signed during the 17th Ordinary Summit held from 23rd June to 1st July 2011 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. Consistent with the foregoing discussion, it is argued that the provision of efficient and holistic guidelines for youth participation in public policies is a crucial step in Ghana. This is imperative because youth are the most marginalized during policymaking because policymakers repeatedly believe that they are inexperienced and immature to be engaged in such a process. Such impressions are erroneous and archaic, especially, due to the import of life transitions that take place exactly in youth.

Thus, if the policymakers anticipate a healthy, coherent and connected society for individuals to live happily and productively, youth are required to be provided with proper space in the public policy process. To accomplish this august goal, the National Youth Authority in collaboration with all the agencies and institutions in the sub-sector must strive to develop a long-term and coherent policy, which is consistent with the needs of youth in the society. Second, it is also crucial for policymakers to discontinue the over-politicization of the policy process, and rather support youth to build their individual capacities. Important strategies in this respect include support for youth-led initiatives but also creating opportunities for intergenerational partnerships based on equality and trust. Third, there is an urgent need to put in place mechanisms to help promote efficient coordination of the institutions mandated to handle youth programs. This, in turn, will facilitate proper coordination by the institutions leading to the effective administration of youth initiatives for policy development. Finally, the issue of diversity and social exclusion must also be resolved by the policymakers to ensure that youth are brought on board to contribute their quota towards efficient designing, planning, and implementation of youth programs.

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Pandemic Elections and the Covid-Safe Effect: Incumbents Re-elected in Six Covid-19 Safe Havens

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Abstract: The Antipodes have been amongst the safest places on the planet during the Covid-19 pandemic. The governments of Australia and New Zealand (national, state, and territory governments) have acted promptly, decisively, and cohesively in closing borders, quarantining incoming returnees, instigating rigorous contact tracing and extensive testing, social distancing, hand washing, masks, and occasional lockdowns. Antipodean governments and populations have long experience of awareness and compliance with biosecurity issues. Isolation and distance have long served to keep Australia and New Zealand free of many pests and diseases. Each Antipodean election held during the Covid-19 pandemic has returned the incumbent. During the first 14 months of the pandemic, six out of six incumbent governments facing elections during the Covid pandemic have been returned. Five returned incumbents were center-left while the sixth was center-right. Four of the elections have rewarded the incumbent government with an increased majority, the Northern Territory election returned a reduced majority, and the Tasmanian election returned the status quo with the narrowest of majorities maintained. The New Zealand election returned the Labor government to power in their own right and released them from the coalition. The Western Australian election saw Labor returned with a landslide result with an unprecedented, win of 53 out of 59 seats (90% of seats). The object of the present paper is to report the outcomes of the six antipodean elections conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic (to date) and to reflect on the Covid-safe effect on them if any.

Keywords: *Covid-19, Coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, Covid-safe, politics, Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory, Queensland, Tasmania, Western Australia.*

1. Introduction

Australia and New Zealand have been the safest, or among the safest, places in the world during the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic was declared by the World Health Organization on 11 March 2020 (Ghebreyesus, 2020). As of the end of March 2021, Australia has accounted for a total of 909 Covid-19 deaths through the course of the pandemic, with no Covid deaths in 2021 (to the end of March 2021) (DoH, 2021). New Zealand has accounted for 26 Covid deaths, with a single death in 2021 (Worldometer, 2021a). These statistics are in stark contrast to a world total exceeding 2.7 million Covid deaths (Worldometer, 2021b). In the fourteen months since the pandemic was declared, there have been six elections in the Antipodes. The object of the present paper is to report the outcomes of those elections and reflect on the effect of Covid-19 on them if any. In an election, the advantage is to the incumbent; this is a result widely reported, in Australia, the USA, Ireland, Spain and elsewhere (Aiton & Lane, 2000; Ramos & Sanz, 2019; Redmond & Regan, 2015). The incumbency advantage reportedly delivers a candidate an 18% advantage of winning a seat in Ireland in "the next election" (Redmond & Regan, 2015, p.244). Voting is compulsory in Australia (Farrell & McAllister, 2006; Fowler, 2013). Citizens who do not vote are at risk of being fined. The outcome of this policy is high participation rates.

The participation rate was 92% and 91% respectively in the last two federal elections in Australia (AEC, 2019). Voting is not compulsory in New Zealand, nevertheless, voter turnout is high, from a low, over the past three decades, of 74% in 2011 to a high of 94% in 1984, with a turnout of 82% in 2020 (Electoral Commission, 2020). Australia and New Zealand were two of the earliest countries to grant women the right to vote (in 1902 and 1893 respectively) (Adams, 2014; Aiton & Lane, 2000). Despite the 'incumbency advantage' electorates can vote incumbents out, even in times of crisis. During World War I, the Australian Labor Party lost the 1916 election to the Nationalist Party of Billy Hughes. The incumbent Nationalist government was returned during the Spanish Flu pandemic in the 1919 election (Aiton & Lane, 2000; Barber, 2017). During World War II, the incumbent United Australia Party under Prime Minister Robert Menzies (1939-1941) lost favor with voters and the Australian Labor Party took government under Prime Minister John Curtin in October 1941 (Aiton & Lane, 2000; Farrell & McAllister, 2006; JCPML, 2006). Election results are aggregations of myriad, diverse and multifactorial voter sentiments. In the 2013 Federal election in Australia, 46% of

voters reported that they "Always voted for the same party", 33% stated that they "Took 'a good deal' of interest in the election campaign overall", and 68% "Cared 'a good deal' which party won" (Bean & McAllister, 2015).

In the 2019 Federal election in Australia, 66% of voters voted based on policy issues, while 7% voted based on party leader (Cameron & McAllister, 2019). Voter choices in Australia are about policies, parties and leaders. Sometimes one or several issues dominate political campaigns and debates, but Australian elections are not single-issue elections. The pandemic election results reported in the present paper are no exception; the social, economic and health context of these elections held during the Covid-19 pandemic is expected to play into the election results, but not be the sole determinant.

2. Methods

There have been six elections in the Antipodes during the first 14 months of the Covid pandemic (in the period March 2020 through May 2021). Elections (national, state and territory) are managed by the respective electoral commissions of the six jurisdictions. The results data of the various elections were sourced from the respective electoral commissions:

- Australian Capital Territory Electoral Commission (www.elections.act.gov.au);
- Electoral Commission of New Zealand (www.electionresults.govt.nz);
- Electoral Commission of Queensland (www.ecq.qld.gov.au);
- Northern Territory Electoral Commission (ntec.nt.gov.au);
- Tasmanian Electoral Commission (www.tec.tas.gov.au); and the
- Western Australian Electoral Commission (www.elections.wa.gov.au).

Parliaments in the Antipodes are either unicameral (with a single chamber of parliament) or bicameral (with a lower house of representatives responsible for initiating legislation and wielding the power of government, along with an upper house of review). Of the six electoral jurisdictions reported in the present paper, four are unicameral (viz. Australian Capital Territory; New Zealand; Northern Territory; and Queensland). Where there is a bicameral parliament (viz. Tasmania and Western Australia), the lower house results determine who governs the state, and these are the results that are reported here.

3. Results

During the first fourteen months of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Antipodes has been a safe haven (Table 1) and this has enabled a more 'normal' social and business environment for the populations compared to other jurisdictions where the pandemic has reaped more lives lost and greater economic costs.

Table 1: Total Covid-19 Cases and Deaths (as at 31 March 2021) (data sources: DoH, 2021; Worldometer, 2021a, 2021b)

Jurisdiction	Covid Cases	Covid Deaths
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	123	3
New South Wales (NSW)	5,288	54
Northern Territory (NT)	108	0
Queensland (QLD)	1,466	6
South Australia (SA)	655	4
Tasmania (TAS)	234	13
Victoria	20,484	820
Western Australia (WA)	938	9

AUSTRALIA	29,296	909
NEW ZEALAND	2,495	26
WORLD	128,773,247	2,814,771

The results of the six Covid-19 pandemic elections are presented in Table 2. Incumbent governments were returned in all six cases. Five of the elected governments are center-left governments: 'Labor' in Australia (Australian Labor Party, ALP) and 'Labor' in New Zealand (New Zealand Labor Party, NZLP); note the two homophonic spelling variations, 'Labor' in Australia, and 'Labor' in New Zealand). The election in Tasmania returned the incumbent center-right Liberal Party government.

Table 2: Election Outcomes for the 6 Antipodean Pandemic Elections

Jurisdiction	Election Date	Seats Before	Government Before Election	Seats After	Government After Election	Seats Total
Northern Territory (NT)	22-8-2020	16	Labor	14	Labor	25
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	28-9-2020 to 17-10-2020	14 (12+2)	Labor/Green	16 (10+6)	Labor/Green	25
New Zealand (NZ)	17-10-2020	63 (46+9+8)	Labour/NZ First/Green	65	Labour	120
Queensland (QLD)	31-10-2020	48	Labor	52	Labor	93
Western Australia (WA)	13-3-2021	41	Labor	53	Labor	59
Tasmania (TAS)	1-5-2021	13	Liberal	13	Liberal	25

The Covid pandemic election results have been progressively more favorable to the incumbent government as the pandemic has progressed (Table 2) with the exception of Tasmania where the incumbent government 'scraped in' with the narrowest of margins. The first Antipodean Covid-19 election saw the incumbent Labor (ALP) government (with Chief Minister of the Northern Territory Michael Gunner) returned for a second term, albeit with a reduced majority. Each subsequent Covid election has seen the incumbent government returned with an increased number of seats, with the exception of Tasmania where the status quo prevailed. The second Covid pandemic election saw the Labor/Green coalition returned in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) (Chief Minister of the ACT Andrew Barr) with an increased majority (Table 2). It was the sixth consecutive term for Labor, although in this election Labor seats were reduced from 12 to 10, while Green seats increased from two to six. The result was a net increase of seats for the Labor/Green coalition, up from 14 to 16 seats. The third Covid pandemic election saw NZ Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern lead Labor into a majority government. It was the first majority government for NZ Labor since 1946.

Prior to the 2020 pandemic election, Labor (with 46 seats) had been in coalition with the New Zealand First party (9 seats) and the Greens (8 seats). In the 2020 pandemic election, Labor won 65 seats in their own right (an increase of 19), New Zealand First slipped to zero seats, and the Greens won 10 seats (an increase of 2). The fourth Covid pandemic election was in Queensland. Labor was returned for a third term with an increased majority. For Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk, it was a historic win with Labor achieving an increased majority in three consecutive elections, and Palaszczuk becoming the first woman party leader in Australia to win three terms of government. The fifth Covid pandemic election, the WA election, took place a year after the WHO declared Covid-19 as a pandemic. The WA election result was an unprecedented win. The Labor government of Premier Mark McGowan won 53 seats (90%) out of a total of 59 seats for the WA House of Representatives, with just two seats retained by the Liberal Party (down from 13) and four seats retained by the National Party (down from 5) (Figs. 1&3). Labor attracted 60% of the

popular vote, the Liberals 21%, and the Nationals 4% (Fig.2).

Figure 1: Percentage of Seats Won in the WA 2021 Election - A Big Win for the Incumbent Labor Government

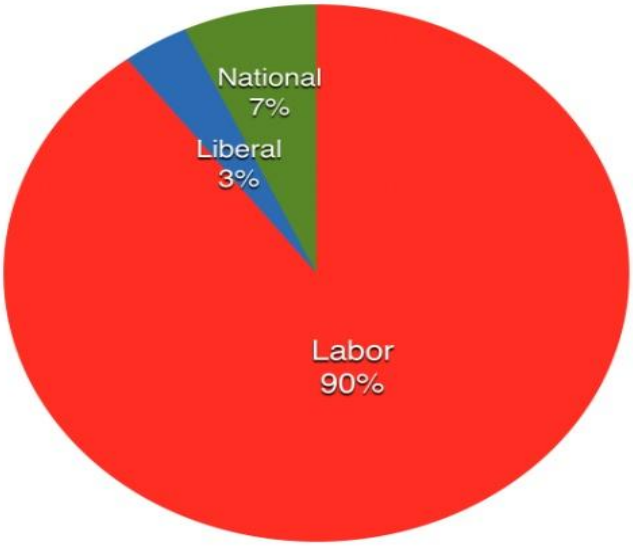


Figure 2: Percentage of the Primary Vote Won by Parties (N=20) in the WA 2021 Election

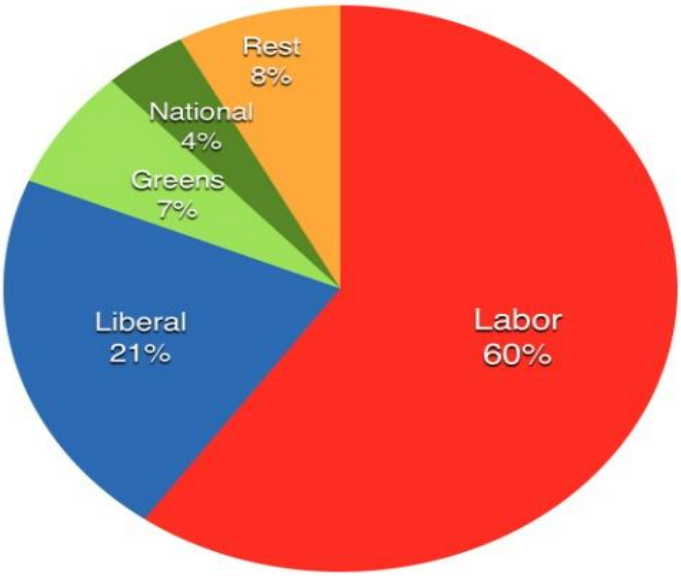
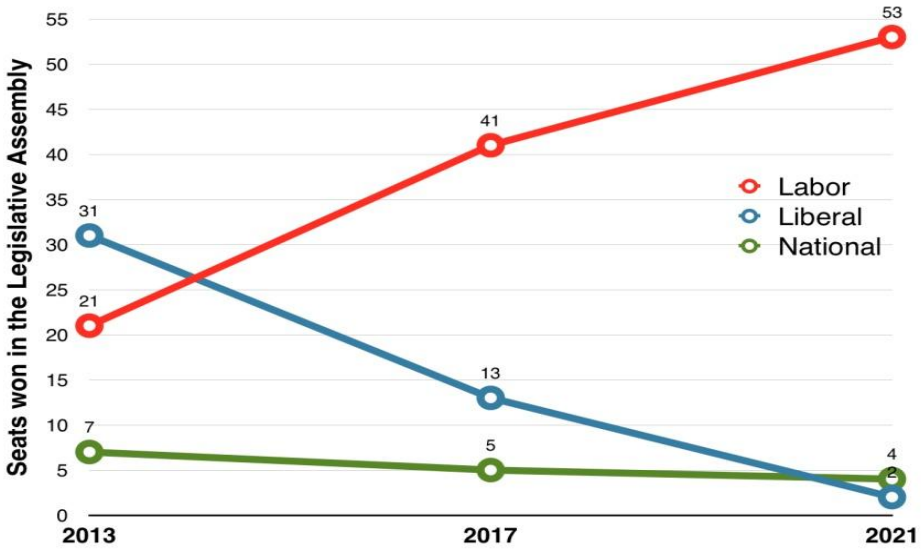


Figure 3: Seats Won by Parties in WA across 3 Elections, Showing the Rise of Labor and the Decline of Liberal and National Seats



The sixth Covid pandemic election was held in Tasmania where the incumbent government was center-right (in contrast to the other five elections where center-left governments were incumbent). So, the Tasmania election was destined to break the pattern set by the previous 5 Covid elections - with either the incumbent government returned or a center-left party elected to govern. The incumbent won, going into the election with 13 (of the 25 seats) and coming out of the election with 13 seats (a minimum of 13 seats are required to form the government). The pattern of re-electing Antipodean, incumbent governments during the Covid-19 pandemic was continued. Unlike the other five elections which were called in a timely way, the Tasmanian election was brought forward by one year. The electorate was in a mood for rewarding the maintenance of a Covid-safe state but conflicted with also a mood for punishing what was perceived by many as cynical opportunism in sending voters to the ballot box a full year before an election was due but just weeks after the WA election delivered a landslide vote for the WA incumbent government. In any event, there was no landslide in Tasmania where the incumbent government did manage to maintain the status quo of a government with the slimmest of majorities despite underperforming in non-Covid matters including infrastructure and ethics (Killick, 2021; McCormack, 2021).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The results reported are good news for incumbent governments which have handled the pandemic well and kept their populations safe. In the six cases reported in the present paper, incumbent governments appear to have been rewarded at the ballot box for their management of the pandemic. There is no pretense that Covid-19 has been the sole contributing factor in these electoral wins, nevertheless, the pandemic has been the dominant news story and the dominant event impacting social, business and employment throughout the pandemic. In an analysis of the New Zealand election, The Guardian observed that: Prime Minister Jacinda "Ardern's deft handling of the Covid-19 outbreak and resolute belief in science and experts was credited with earning the trust of New Zealanders, who cast early votes in record numbers, giving her party more votes than at any other election in the past five decades" (Roy & Graham-McLay, 2020). Bloomberg reported: "For so many voters it comes down to Ardern … Her leadership during this crisis has led to what we're seeing, which is a landslide for Labor" (Brockett, 2020). In an analysis of the WA election, The Sydney Morning Herald stated that: "Labor's Mark McGowan has romped it in on the back of extraordinary popularity in the state mostly due to his tough stance on COVID-19 control" (Cross, Rimrod, Juanola, Hastie, & de Kruijff, 2021). The former leader of the WA Liberals, Liza Harvey, who lost her seat in the election, stated that: "I think this is very much about the people wanting to reward the premier" for his handling of the pandemic (Hopkin, 2021).

WA has been a safe haven throughout the pandemic (Table 1). There has been a total of 9 Covid deaths in WA (compared to 909 in Australia), with a total of 938 Covid cases in WA (cf. 29,296 in Australia), and a total of 941,359 Covid tests administered in WA (cf. 15,528,444 in Australia), with a WA rate of 0.1% testing positive (cf. 0.2% in Australia) (DoH, 2021). Premier McGowan achieved this success by a closed border policy along with other precautions. The WA border closure was maintained despite Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison's urging against state border closures (Hondros, 2020). A Queensland-based mining magnate, Clive Palmer, sued the WA state along with the WA Premier in the High Court over WA border closures. The Australian Federal government ('Canberra') joined Clive Palmer in this action (Bell & Hamlyn, 2020) before later withdrawing (Carmody, 2020). The actions were lost (Byrne, Shine, & Al Jrood, 2020). Mark McGowan stood firm during this siege by the Corona virus, as well as by Clive Palmer and Scott Morrison, he kept the state safe, and this earned the respect of West Australians. Bullying by 'Canberra' is a sure-fire way to raise the hackles of West Australians, and this clumsy effort was no exception. At his victory speech, on the night of the election, Mark McGowan stated: "I also thank the people who voted Labor for the first time in their lives across Western Australia".

The remarkable election victory was enabled by this influx of fresh support. "Can I also acknowledge those Western Australians who didn't vote for us and I promise to work for everyone across Western Australia over these coming four years … I promise we won't let Western Australia down" (9News, 2021). Two weeks before the election, the leader of the WA Liberals, Zac Kirkup, embarked on "the remarkable campaign tactic of admitting that the Liberal Party "cannot win the election" (Green, 2021, p.2). On election night, Kirkup described the result as a "gutting loss" for the Liberals (Hastie, 2021). Kirkuk lost his own seat with a 14.3% swing against him (ABC News, 2021). The result was summed up: "What we are seeing is the worst election result for a party in state history in any state in Australia at any time" (Rimrod, 2021) The state-wide WA swing to Labor was 17.7%. WA's Premier, Mark McGowan, declared on election night that: "our democracy should always be based on decency, civility, respect for one another and acknowledging each other" (West Australian, 2021). McGowan presents as a 'decent bloke' (in the Australian parlance) and he has presided over a trusted government without serious scandals or missteps over the past four years. In easing Covid restrictions, Mark McGowan frankly and honestly, acknowledged: "Hard work of Western Australians, which has enabled the virus to be controlled and ensured there is no community spread in WA" (McGowan, 2021).

The first five pandemic elections saw incumbent governments, all center-left governments, enjoying electoral wins as reported here (Table 2). In the light of the remarkable WA election result (Labor won 53 of 59 seats), the incumbent Liberal Tasmanian government opted to bring their election forward by a year (to 1 May 2021) (Langenberg, 2021). The Tasmanian Premier, Peter Gutwein, has undoubtedly earned the respect of Tasmanians for keeping the state safe (Table 1) with border closures and other Covid-safe measures (Baker, 2020). The self-serving early election gambit of the Tasmania Liberal government could have been expected to pay off, given that state government pandemic strategies have kept the state safe (Table 1) and given that the Labor opposition in Tasmania has widely been regarded as 'missing in action' during the more than 12 months of the pandemic, and despite that the Liberals have sought to reignite the forestry wars (Ajani, 2007), have favored secrecy over transparency (Baker, 2020), have disappointed the electorate with missed infrastructure opportunities (Killick, 2020), and generally have little to brag about other than keeping the state Covid-safe. As one commentator observed: "This generation will die waiting for the Libs to get the [recovery] plan shovel-ready.

They're notorious for failing to follow up on announcements with swift action" (Prismall, 2021). The Tasmanian electoral result, of returning the status quo (Table 2), reflected the unidimensional successful track record of the Tasmanian Liberals (center-right) of keeping Tasmania Covid-safe while failing to deliver on past promises and failing to take up visionary opportunities (such as light rail for Hobart northern suburbs, multi-port ferry service for the Derwent River, and a fast ferry service to the mainland using world-leading technical prowess pioneered, developed and proven by Tasmania's Incat shipbuilder). There is an upcoming federal election for Australia due in 2022. The Liberal incumbent government in Canberra, under Prime Minister Scott Morrison, has kept Australia Covid-safe during the pandemic (Table 1). However, Morrison has handled other issues, including, China relations (Hurst, 2021), bushfire responses (Feik, 2020), women's issues and misconduct scandals (Sackville, 2021), with noteworthy ineptitude. These multiple missteps by the Morrison government suggest that a federal election in Australia, is not imminent, despite the

temptation to call an early election to take advantage of the currently prevailing dual opportunities of a Covid-safe effect and the enduring lame federal opposition presented by federal Labor (Stratton, 2021).

A reviewer asked, are there policy implications of these election results? Incumbents start with the advantage of incumbency. If they perform well they may be rewarded at the ballot box, even massively (e.g. WA). If they perform well on one dimension (Covid-safety), but otherwise fail to deliver on prior election promises (e.g. transparency in the declaration of political donations), and behave cynically by calling an election prematurely for their own self-interest, the reward may be seriously diluted (e.g. Tasmania). The Tasmania election result returned the status quo; pre and post-election, the chamber recorded: 13 Liberals, 9 Labor, 2 Greens, and 1 Independent. The Covid effect identified in this paper, favoring incumbents in Covid-safe jurisdictions may be diluted for future elections as Covid fades and local issues return to the fore. The elections reported in the present paper were held in the midst of the pandemic and within the context of overwhelming attention and relentless media reportage of the Covid-19 pandemic. As and when the currently ubiquitous Covid pandemic issues recede into the past, local issues can be expected to come once again into clear view, and incumbent governments can once again expect punishment at the ballot box for real or perceived incompetence, ineptitude, corruption, and scandal (and perhaps reward for the contrary).

At the time of writing, just when the Corona virus pandemic will recede into the past remains unclear, and, in the meantime, incumbent governments that have kept their constituents safe can expect to reap some electoral reward as a Covid effect for that safety. Six elections in six Covid-safe electorates returned six incumbents. Rather than policy implications, there are performance implications. Keep the population safe is an implicit and foundational policy position for the government even a government's foundational raison d'être. In Australia and New Zealand, the governments were 'feeling their way' through the pandemic, developing policy on the fly, and it was the performance outcomes rather than the policy positions that were rewarded at the ballot box. Islands bear an intrinsic biosecurity advantage of geography. Antipodean governments and their constituents have a long history of biosecurity awareness and this may account in some measure for the general compliance of the populations with Covid-safe government impositions and restrictions, and the success thereof. For incumbent governments that have failed their constituents during the Corona virus pandemic, the Covid-safe effect reported in the present paper may act in reverse with such governments, and lead to punishment at the ballot box - but that is another story, an opportunity for aspirational oppositions to reap their own Covid effect, and an opportunity for further research.

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Assessing the Effects of Regimented Administrative Structure of Education on Pupils Academic Performance of Basic Schools in Military Barracks, Ghana

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Abstract: Over the last five years, there has been a downward trend in the BECE performance by pupils in the Basic schools of military barracks in Ghana. The military high command has been concerned about the current performance of pupils in the BECE, and the responsibility lies with the Directorate of Education of the Ghana Armed forces to undertake all efforts at reversing the tide. The study is predicated upon the need to explore all possible causes of a consistent downward trend of BECE performance over the past five years. It is speculated that in the case of the Armed Forces schools, the quality of education could either be significantly enhanced or diminished by the peculiarity of the administration. Thus, the study quantitatively examined the place of military culture as a part of the administration and how the phenomenon impacts academic performance. The findings revealed that not only does military culture impact teacher work output, but the coercive nature of the relationship between the Educational Officers and civilian teaching staff is detrimental to the academic environment. Therefore, this paper recommends that the coercive administrative approach be modified to allow for a much more cooperative and social approach, which would create a conducive and free environment for academic work and consequently improve academic performances.

Keywords: *Academic performances, Regimented Administrative Structures, Administrative Approach, Civil-military relations.*

1. Introduction

The need for prudent management of the education system is emphasized in many circles because education is considered as the bedrock of sustainable development (Anamuah-Mensah, 2010). As such, some scholarly explanation has posited that the role of pupils, parents, teachers, government and the larger society is crucial in shaping the quality of education (Anamuah-Mensah, 2010). For instance, analysis of results has shown that there has been a cumulative decline in pupils' performance at the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) over the past five (5) years (Anamuah-Mensah, 2010). In view of these worrying trends, recently, there has been a surge of empirical research seeking to understand pupils' performance in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in Shama Sub-Metro of the Shama Ahanta East Metropolitan Assembly (SEAMA) identified poor teaching and learning environment, teacher absenteeism, poor attitude of pupils towards learning, absence of conducive learning conditions at home, low self-esteem and motivation, poor family structure, and the use of children by parents to support their family business during instruction session are the causes militating.

The academic performance of pupils in basic schools (Etsey, Amedahe, & Edjah, 2005). In Ghana, the poor academic performance of pupils is typically found in most public schools. As a consequence, personnel in Ghana Armed Forces Basic schools have advocated a meticulous review of the influences of regimented administrative structure on pupils' academic performance because it is generally argued among many scholars and practitioners in educational administration and management that the regimented administrative style of education has a strong influence on pupils' academic performance (Soeters, 2018). In general, though there are numerous works on pupils' academic performance in basic education in Ghana, there are only a few studies that exist on this subject matter. The situation thus necessitates an investigation into the effects of the regimented administrative structure of education on pupils' academic performance in Basic Education in Ghana to help make policy recommendations. The rest of the paper is categorized as follows; literature review, materials and methods, results and discussion, conclusions, and policy implications.

2. Literature Review

Home Environmental Factors that Affect Pupils Academic Performance: Poor academic performance in basic schools has become one of the most topical issues in Ghana in contemporary times. The scholarly

explanation has argued that the economically marginalized regions of the country have continued to show poorer and poorer performance in the BECE. For example, in 2018, the national pass rate was 50%. This means that, if about 30 pupils from a school with a total candidate population of 50 get less than 50%, then that school could be said to have performed poorly. In practice, practitioners in education have categorized the causes of poor academic performance into the home and school environments (MacNeil & Maclin, 2005). Home conditions have also been postulated as factors that could hinder or promote the learner's academic performance as indicated above. Critical to the present consideration is the family structure. For example, studies by Abudu & Fuseini (2013) and Chukwuka, (2018) assert that the family structure is an important variable influencing the academic performance of pupils at home. As posited by scholars, pupils raised in single-parent homes are at risk for a number of less desirable outcomes. For instance, children in single-parent families are more likely to receive less parental monitoring and involvement at school. This practice affects the pupils learning experiences at school, which in turn, exposes them to inferior education leading to poor academic performances in school. Similarly, scholars such as Ushie, Emeka, Ononga, and Owolabi (2012), and Munje and Mncube (2018) argued that the higher the level of interest of the parents in the children's education, the better the level of children learning success.

For instance, parents' involvement in their children's academic activities including homework, classwork performance and Parent-Teacher Association meetings invariably motivate them to improve their learning experiences, which enhances their academic outcomes in schools. Additionally, Muodumogu (2014) in his related study claimed that the income level of the family plays a crucial role in children's academic performance in schools. According to him, parents who have regular income are able to provide their children's academic needs for them, and also they are able to control, supervise and chart a useful academic path for the pupils to follow in the academic ladder, which, in turn, has great influence in promoting the academic performance. According to Asikhia (2010), street hawking and other school-unfriendly activities have an impact on children's academic experiences. As noted by the scholar, many children who come from poor economic backgrounds are often used by parents to support the family business during an instructional session. This practice helps to bring additional income to the family, nevertheless, it has a negative influence on pupils' academic performance because, many of these children become truant to schooling, as a result, they find it very difficult to follow the lessons taught by teachers during their absence. Such development mostly disrupts their learning experiences in schools, leading to poor academic performance.

School Environmental Factors that Affect Pupils Academic Performance: School environment factors are the elements within the physical and immaterial structure of the school that may impact suitably or unsuitably on the quality of teaching and learning experiences. In his study titled: *The Effects of Individual and School Factors on University Students' Academic Performance,* Win and Miller (2010) indicated that the level of qualification of the teacher, both in terms of the level of training and the ability to impart knowledge, remains crucial for the academic performance of pupils. Explaining the point, the scholars noted that when a teacher is not trained or lacks the professional skill to teach, that teacher is most likely to produce underperforming pupils. According to Win and Miller (2010), this institutional development has a negative impact on children's academic processes, leading to poor academic achievement of the pupils in basic schools. Following from the preceding standpoint, a large body of literature indicates that the academic environment and the learning resources also contribute to the good academic performance of the pupils in schools.

According to Kober (2001) pupils can enjoy the quality of learning experiences and stimulation in the early years of life if the pupils' have access to good school environmental conditions and learning resources such as efficient teaching and learning materials, efficient classroom facilities and serene school environments. Supporting his view, Kober (2001) posited that school managers and administrators in the pre-schools ought to ensure that academic environment and other learning resources including library facilities, computer laboratory, and spacious classrooms are provided to enable the children to enjoy good and enabling academic environmental conditions to learn in schools. Other scholarly explanations also claimed that the quality of school administration is crucial to influence the academic performance of pupils. The quality of school administration can be achieved if there are effective rules, regulations and policies that govern the school system such as frequent staff meetings to discuss issues of the school, checking teachers' schemes of work, and lessons observations by the various head of departments of the school. In contrast, where there is poor school administration, teachers and pupils begin to relax in doing the academic work.

Military Culture and Basic Schools at Barracks: Military culture is distinctively bedded on values. Which, in turn, may affect pupils' learning experiences, leading to poor pupils' performance in schools (Donkor, 2010; Asikhia, 2010; Muodumogu, 2014)? The military culture is characterized by rigidity, a strong and almost inflexible interpretation of what the attitude ought to be to duty as it is assigned or implied, (Gordon, 1985; Hofstede et al., 1990). The concept has become interesting from the human resource management and performance perspective in view of the perception that the concept was offering a far-from-mechanistic, imaginative and flexible approach to understanding organizations. Military culture could be looked at from several perspectives. In the quest to come to a fair understanding of military culture, an appeal is made to the Organizational Culture Profile (OCP) (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991), which has proven to be useful in characterizing true cultures across organizations or industries. The military is a social institution, which is characterized by a set of belief systems and values, nurtured over time (Snider, 1999; Soeters, 2018).

Sense of duty is one critical value dimension of the military, and this distinguishes it from many others, institutions. In the Ghana Armed Forces, as part of the training of Officer Cadets (Ghana Military Academy and Recruits (Army Recruit Training Centre), military culture is taught in all aspects. Soldiers are obligated to strive for values of right and good (Breslin, 2000). Sense of Duty is based on the preservation of life and society and is ranked high among the list of military ethos (Riccio et al., 2004; Riccio, 2010). It raises the stakes for honor, commitment to duty, unconditional service, and allegiance to the nation, and achievement of the greater good to the sacrifice of self, and unqualified authority to those in command (Breslin, 2000). The soldier does not do what is expected of him because he feels it is good but because he is commanded to do it. In the administration of Military Barracks Basic schools, these values such as truthfulness, hard work, collaboration, cohesiveness and people-orientation, where the execution of tasks is seen as teamwork rather than individual effort are unconsciously inculcated into the civilian pupils in their Basic Schools.

3. Methods and Procedures

A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was employed. Respondents were recruited based on their availability and readiness to participate. This study attempted to assess the effects of the regimented administrative structure of education on pupils' academic performance of Basic Schools in Military Barracks. As such, the study intended to make the sample as representative as possible through obtaining a target group consisting of all teachers in the selected schools who have at least one full year of working experience in the selected schools. The researchers utilized a non-probability convenience sampling procedure to select 98 out of 200 teachers in the selected Basic Schools of Military Barracks Education Unit in Ghana. This technique was useful because it helped to select participants from a target population based on the researcher's convenience and access to participants. Moreover, it aided in selecting participants who are readily available to the researchers at the time of data collection. Data collection was done through the use of a questionnaire. The second and fourth statement for assessment shows median t-value.

Which express not so close or far value from the test value the questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section focused on the demographic and biographical information, and the second section used the 7 value dimensions of O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldman (991) as variables of military organizational culture to assess their impact on the academic performance of the pupils. The choice of the questionnaire was to safeguard the identity of respondents and also, to make them more willing to avail themselves for the exercise. Altogether, a total of 98 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents (teachers) to generate data for the study. Ninety-five (95) questionnaires were retrieved from the 98 questionnaires, representing 93.1 percent. In addition, all necessary steps in line with ethical considerations were taken to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents. Data analysis was carried out using SPSS version 22. To analyze the data from the responses in the questionnaires, descriptive statistics and ANOVA analysis were done. Finally, the findings of the study were discussed in the context of existing literature and the theory.

4. Findings and Discussion

Socio-Demographic Data of Respondents: This part focuses on the description of the socio-demographic data of respondents. These include age, gender, academic education, length of stay in school, and taught outside this school. A detailed summary of the results is indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics

SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHICS		
AGE	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENTAGE**
20-30 years	15	16%
31-40 years	21	22%
41-50 years	39	41%
51 years and above	20	21%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**
GENDER	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENTAGE**
Male	38	40%
Female	57	60%
Other	Nil	Nil
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**
ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENTAGE**
PhD	1	1%
Masters	17	18%
Bachelor's	73	77%
Dip/HND	4	4%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**
LENGTH OF STAY IN SCHOOL	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENTAGE**
Less than 5 years	36	38%
5 years and above	59	62%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**
TAUGHT OUTSIDE THIS SCHOOL	**FREQUENCY**	**PERCENTAGE**
Yes	67	71%
No	28	29%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**

Source: Field Data, 2020

From Table 1, it was found that the majority of respondents were within the age bracket of 41-50 years constitutes 41%, while 16% were within 20-30 years. A cursory look at the percentages reveals that there is a fair distribution of the age groups within the respondents. In terms of academic qualification, 1% had a Ph.D., while the 77% of respondents had a Bachelor's degree. Again, 18% of respondents had their Master's degree. With regards to the duration of teaching experience in the Military Barracks schools, 62% said they had been there for more than 5 years. In addition, 71% of respondents indicated that they had teaching experience outside the Military Barracks School system. This leaves 29%, who were posted directly to Military Barracks Education Unit without prior teaching experience.

Military Organizational Culture Value Dimensions and Impact on the Academic Environment: This section analyses how the military organizational value dimensions impact the work output of teachers in the Military Barracks schools. Table 2 presents a summary of the results of the study.

Table 2: Impact of the Military Value Dimensions on Teachers' Work Output
One-Sample Test

Military Value Dimensions	Test Value = 0 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Rankings
Innovation	16.135	94	.000	1.705	3
Stability	17.736	94	.000	2.021	6
Respect for People	16.441	94	.000	1.789	4
Team Orientation	23.203	94	.000	2.305	8
Result Orientation	16.771	94	.000	2.368	5
Attention to Detail	20.815	94	.000	1.926	7
Aggressiveness	16.083	94	.000	1.726	2
Sense of Duty	14.165	94	.000	1.526	1

Source: Field data, 2020

From Table 2, the respondents were asked which Military Value Dimensions affect teaching outputs. The results showed that "Sense of Duty" had (t=14.2, M=1.5, p=.000) which ranked first, this was followed by, "Aggressiveness" had (t=16.1, M=1.7, p=.000), "Innovation" had (t=16.1, M=1.7, p=.000). "Respect for People" had (t=16.4, M=1.8, p=.000), "Result Orientation" had (t=16.8, M=2.4, p=.000), "Stability" had (t=17.7, M=2, p=.000). Also, "Attention to detail" had (1=20.8, M=1.9, p=.000), and "Team Orientation" had (t=23.2, M=1.7, p=.000). The results show that is Team Orientation is the military dimension that has the most impact on the teaching output. That notwithstanding, it was noted that all the military value dimensions have a significant impact on the teaching outputs of the respondent since the t-values of the corresponding values show no huge differences. From the findings, it was revealed that the military value dimensions have had an impact on their output as teachers of the schools. This finding confirms that earlier of Breslin, (2000) and Riccio et al. (2004) that sense of duty is based on the preservation of life and society and is ranked as significant among the list of military ethos.

Trend of the Impact of the Value Dimensions: The value dimensions could, for instance, impact negatively teachers' output when we use pupil performance at the BECE as a standard appraisal of teacher output. The converse could also hold true for the same phenomenon. A determination as to whether or not teachers observe a drop or rise in the impact of the value dimensions on their output is critical to the determination of whether or not the values play a consequential role in pupil performance at the BECE. If the trend is ascending, then there is a strong probability that the value dimensions are either inimical to academic performance or are simply of no positive impact on the academic performance of pupils. This is because the rise in the impact of the values would be coterminous with the dipping academic fortunes of pupils as seen in the BECE results. A descending trend could however point to either a possible lapse in the enforcement regime which ought to receive administrative attention or a mere fact that, imposing military value dimensions on the school environment is retrogressive. Table 3 presents a summary of the results of the study.

Table 3: Trend of Value Dimensions

TREND	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Ascending	43	41%
Descending	39	45%
Not Sure	13	14%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**

Source: Field data, 2020

As indicated in Table 3, 41% of respondents feel that the military value dimensions have been in the ascending trend, while 45% hold that the impact has been diminishing, and 14% of respondents were not sure of the exact trend. Based on the finding, it can conclude that the majority of respondents believe the military value dimensions have to experience a descending trend, thus, the impact of these dimensions on the teaching and learning experiences have rather been waning leading to poor performance of pupils in the schools.

Nature of the Relationship between Military Administrative Staff and Civilian Teaching Staff: The nature of the relationship between Military Administrative Staff and Civilian Teaching Staff was also examined. Table 4 provides the summary results.

Table 4: Military-Civil Relationship in Military Barracks Education Unit

Relationship	Frequency	Percentage
Coercive	63	66%
Cooperative and Social	32	34%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**

Source: Field data, 2020

As Table 4 depicted, 66% of teachers feel that their relationship with the Military Barracks Education office has been of a coercive nature, whilst 32% indicated that the military-civil relationship in Military Barracks Education Unit was very cooperative and social. From the findings, it can be interpreted that the military-civil relationship in Military Barracks Education Unit is coercive, which implies that there is generally unhealthy relationship exists among them. In practice, this phenomenon tends to influence the performance of teachers in the Military Barracks Education Unit.

Usefulness of the Regimented Administrative Structure: This section assesses the impact of the regimented administrative structure on the overall efficiency of the Military Barracks Educational system. The EO is the Officer-In-Charge (OIC) of the Unit and has wide administrative and punitive powers. Their actions, thus stipulated within the administrative framework has far-reaching consequences on the general well-being of the teachers, and with a resultant effect on their output, which itself is determined by the performance of pupils in the BECE. Being key actors within the administrative system, the respondents have an input in the eventual determination of whether or not the organization of the Military Barracks Educational system as it stands is useful for their pedagogical output. The table below presents the findings on the regimented administrative structure.

Table 5: Usefulness of the Regimented Administrative Structure

Value Judgement	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	46	48%
Negative	34	36%
Neutral	15	16%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**

Source: Field data, 2020

Table 5 presents the results of the respondent's perception of the usefulness of the regimented administrative structure of the Military Barracks Education Unit. Averagely, the majority of respondents, (48%) saw the regimented administrative structure to be positive. Alternatively, 36% saw the structure to be

negative while 16% were simply indifferent. These categories of people constitute the majority dissenters if the 'neutral' category is to be taken as a 'non-positive. Opinions are sharply divided as to the positive image of the administrative system run by the Military Barracks Education Unit.

Impact of the Value of Sense of Duty on School Factors for Academic Performance: This section draws a critical link between sense of duty on the part of respondents and the impact it has on identifiable school factors for academic performance: lateness, absenteeism, lesson notes preparation and ensuring discipline of pupils. The further focus on the sense of duty is based on the assertion in our earlier discussions on the military value dimensions that, the former almost entirely encapsulates all other value dimensions. Table 6 presents the results of the sense of duty - school factors for academic performance permutation.

Table 6: Extent to which Sense of Duty Impacts School Factors for Academic Performance

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Lateness	Between Groups	3.576	4	.894	.614	.653
	Within Groups	130.950	90	1.455		
	Total	134.526	94			
Absenteeism	Between Groups	2.022	4	.506	.308	.872
	Within Groups	147.810	90	1.642		
	Total	149.832	94			
Preparation of Lesson Notes	Between Groups1	10.962	4	2.741	4.088	.004
	Within Groups	60.343	90	.670		
	Total	71.305	94			
Ensuring Discipline of Pupils	Between Groups	14.057	4	3.514	2.228	.072
	Within Groups	141.943	90	1.577		
	Total	156.000	94			

Source: Field data, 2020

In Table 6, it was observed that the majority of respondents identified a sense of duty as the military value that impacted their work output the most. In this section, Tables 4 and 5 reveal concurrent trends wherein the survey, the majority of respondents hold that sense of duty has impacted either 'strongly' or 'very strongly' the school factors for academic performance. Thus, lateness, absenteeism, lesson notes preparation and ensuring a disciplined pupil attitude all on the part of teachers have been positively impacted by a sense of duty. For a better appreciation, we see that the figures in terms of p-value read 0.65, 0.87, 0.004 and 0.072 for lateness, absenteeism, lesson notes preparation and ensuring pupil discipline respectively. These values depict higher levels of agreement on the extent to which sense of duty impacts the school factors of academic performance. Here again, we find that the views of Augustine (1983) on the overarching influence of sense of duty on the generality of staff are echoed.

Assessing the Attributes of the Military Barracks Education Officer: In the present section, the attributes of the EO, as an embodiment of the entire administrative architecture of the Unit are assessed. This has become even so important given the individual differences that characterize the choice of administrative style by each EO. Respondents were therefore invited to proffer their guided opinions on the person and office of

the EO basing their opinion on a set of statements to which they were to indicate their agreement or otherwise.

Table 7: Assessing the Educational Officer and Administrative Practices
One-Sample Test, Test Value = 0, 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference

	T	DF	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
The Garrison Education Officer is authoritarian.	13.221	94	.000	1.65263
The administrative style of the GEO is generally commendable	18.900	94	.000	2.93684
The GEO is responsive to the teaching and learning material requirements of teachers?	26.566	94	.000	2.71579
The administration seeks the welfare of teachers.	20.686	94	.000	2.45263
The administrative structure, which puts the military in charge of the administration of the Schools, is useful.	31.331	94	.000	3.61053
Garrison Education Officers are mostly similar in their administrative styles.	15.810	94	.000	1.54737

Source: Field data, 2020

Table 7 displays the results when respondents were asked their opinions on the Garrison Educational officer and administrative practices. The results show that most of the respondents held in affirmative that "The Garrison Education Officer is authoritarian" as indicated by the t=13.2 as the closest value to the test value=0. Also, the table depicts the closeness of "T" on the statements "Garrison Education Officers are mostly similar in their administrative styles" indicating the affirmation of the respondents to the statement under assessment. The second and fourth statement for assessment shows median t-value which express not so close or far value from the test value. This indicates an indifferent opinion on the statements. Finally, the respondents indicated strong disagreement with the statement that "The administrative structure, which puts the military in charge of the administration of the Schools is useful" as the t=31.3 denotes a huge deviation from the 0. The same is shown for the third statement.

Measures Aimed at Propping up Academic Performance: This section examines the various measures that could be put in place to prop up the academic performance of pupils, especially in the BECE. Special emphasis was on the administrative structure and its attendant military organizational culture. The findings are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Measures Aimed at Propping up Academic Performance

A: The Military Barracks Education Officer should be Cooperative and Social in his Administrative Approach		
Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Strongly Agree	61	65%
Agree	15	16%
Indifferent	9	9%
Disagree	6	6%
Strongly disagree	4	4%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**
B: *The* Military Barracks *Education Officer should be coercive in his administrative approach*.		
Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Strongly Agree	2	2%
Agree	3	3%
Indifferent	5	5%
Disagree	2	2%

Strongly disagree	83	88%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**

C*: The* Military Barracks *Education Officer should provide adequate teaching and learning material requirements for lessons*.

Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Strongly Agree	62	65%
Agree	2	2%
Indifferent	28	30%
Disagree	2	2%
Strongly disagree	1	1%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**

D*: The* Military Barracks *Education Officer should seek the welfare of teachers.*

Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Strongly Agree	81	86%
Agree	3	3%
Indifferent	4	4%
Disagree	3	3%
Strongly disagree	4	4%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**

E*: The administrative structure of the* Military Barracks *Education system should be reviewed to accommodate civilians as* Military Barracks *Education Officers.*

Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Strongly Agree	75	78%
Agree	9	9%
Indifferent	3	3%
Disagree	5	5%
Strongly disagree	3	3%
TOTAL	**95**	**100%**

Source: Field data, 2020

Table 8 generally indicates that respondents have been very much influenced by their welfare considerations and what, in their view relates to creating an optimal environment for academic work to thrive. 6% and 4% do 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' as presented in Table A. Thus, 65% 'strongly agree' that the EO should be cooperative and social in its administrative dealings. Additionally, 16% 'agree' to the statement. Reflective of the mood in the earlier statement, only 2% of respondents 'strongly agree' that the EO should be coercive. Still in the coercive proposal, as many as 88% 'strongly disagree'. The third statement suggested that the EO ought to provide adequate teaching and learning materials for lessons, to which 65% 'strongly agree'. However, 30% were indifferent, while 1% 'strongly disagree'. The fourth statement was about the welfare of teachers, and 86% of teachers 'strongly agree' that the EO ought to seek the welfare of staff. In this regard, 4% were 'indifferent' while the same proportion 'strongly disagree'. In the fifth statement, 78% of respondents 'strongly agree' that the administrative structure of the Military Barracks Education system should be reviewed to accommodate civilians as EOs. While 3% were indifferent and the same proportion 'strongly disagree'.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has made a modest attempt at demonstrating that the regimented administrative structure of Military Barracks Education Units is borne out of the characteristic military organizational culture, which itself, is at the core of the system that either creates a favorable or an unfavorable academic environment. A lot has changed in terms of the social dynamics of the average Ghanaian now and times past when the military was so dreaded and could cause things to occur by appeal to force and not reason-based diplomacy or persuasion. Today, the average Ghanaian is imbued with an awareness of democratic and civil rights and would not easily surrender these assets. This is a fertile ground for conflict or at best some form of 'cold war. Indeed, emerging military doctrine vogue in most armed forces across the world is no more characterized by the 'attritionist approach', which is characterized by brute force and unquestioned obedience to command.

The tendency lately is in favor of 'mission command' by which commanders are obligated to tell subordinates "what to do and why", not how. This is to guarantee freedom of action and the use of good initiative. There is ample evidence to show that the purely coercive approach to administering even the military does not work anymore. It is not surprising that such a module does not seem to be working for the military administration of civilian institutions. The Ghana Armed Forces are not in the position to train teachers to fill teaching vacancies in the Armed Forces schools.

The teachers in Military Barracks Schools should therefore be seen as worthy partners in the administration of the schools. Their views would have to be taken into consideration by various EOs in major administrative decisions. That is the way to create an inclusive system, where they do not feel alienated. The responses to the questionnaires do give rise to a suspicion that the coercive style has led to the muffling of otherwise good suggestions from these teachers over a considerable period. Their apathy and indifference to their work environment were mistakenly viewed by the military administrative body to mean conformism. As a compromise between the civilian wish for a cooperative administrative culture and the military preference for a coercive relationship, a delicate balance could be struck, where the administrators sustain the strict disciplinarian approach without creating animosity with the teaching staff. This could be enhanced by regular durbars with management, and visits to the schools. When teachers feel their needs are being attended to by management, and that they are also given some attention regarding their welfare needs and personal development, they will naturally be ready to give off their best. Such an environment ought to be further matched with proper monitoring and supervision. This potentially creates the paradigm shift required for breaking off from the currently observed academic under-performance of pupils at the BECE.

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Populism: Utility of its Approaches and the Prospects of the Phenomenon's Resurgence in America

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Abstract: Populism in the 21st century became prominent in scholarly circles following Brexit and the 2016 electoral victory of Donald Trump. As democracy and globalization enthusiasts least anticipated these two monumental events in modern history, much emphasis came to be placed on the nature of populism and what conditions led to its manifestation in contemporary times. Working within this background, this study aims to review the ideational, political strategy and discursive approaches to the populism phenomenon and unpack the relative utility of each approach. I offer a thoughtful perspective that while the ideational approach's "thin-centered" strand has the tendency to blur the boundaries of populism and lead scholars to accept "anything" as populism; it nevertheless enables us to comprehensively capture populism usage in multiple contexts. Further, I advance the notion that the 2020 electoral defeat of Donald Trump should not be misconstrued as the end or weakening of right-wing populism; the present state of American politics makes it ripe for populism resurgence.

Keywords*: Populism, ideational approach, democracy, elections, policy***.**

1. Introduction

The political successes of Donald Trump, Viktor Orbán, and Boris Johnson rekindled much scholarly and journalistic attention to populism. Scholars then proceeded to propose the conceptual elements upon which we can use to identify ideologies, practices and political systems as populist. Brubaker (2017) for example prioritized the "claim to act in the name of the people" as an essential element of populism. The people in this sense may be politically and economically distinct from elites and culturally different from immigrant and refugee populations (Brubaker, 2017, p. 364). Müller (2017) in his account of populism asserts that it is not a sufficient condition to label as populist any political actor who is critical of elites. Because many politicians have historically run against Washington and elites, they could have easily been called populist but for him, claims and rhetoric bothering on antipluralism are essential for one to be considered a populist and not only the anti-elitist rhetoric. Goodhart (2017) pins populism in Britain on issues dividing the "anywhere" and "somewheres". As anywhere are embracive of European integration, immigration and more fluid gender roles, "somewheres" who are mostly socially conservative abhor them due to understandings that the three stand to threaten national identity, citizenship and traditional family values. These 'somewheres' for Goodhart were most critical in the Brexit and Donald Trump's 2016 victory by virtue of their observation that established parties and party structures have consistently ignored their concerns and grievances. Not only were the 'somewheres' peeved by immigration's tendency to challenge the demographic dominance of Whites, but they also harbor cultural and economic anxiety over the increasing pace of globalization.

According to Mouzelis (1985), political populism involves the process of drawing into the political space groups hitherto excluded or marginalized by employing anti-elite and pro-people ideology. This definition differentiates populism from simple revolutionary movements (China in 1949 and Cuba in 1953). Also critical to his argument is the need to exclude circumstances where political actors mobilize the common "people" to achieve temporary goals like the replacement of one leader by another and putting the people back to where they were after that goal has been accomplished. Political populism should in a sense bring about a significant broadening of political participation and a "permanent restructuring of the way in which the dominant and dominated groups are related to each other" (p. 344). Populism can also be seen as a "rhetorical style of communications" which border on two core dimensions (Norris & Inglehart, 2019a). While the first dimension illuminates that the "people" are the only true and legitimate democratic authority and not elected representatives, the second is geared towards the claim that "established power-holders are deeply corrupt, and self-interested, betraying public trust" (Ibid, p. 66). This article reviews the different approaches to the study of populism, assesses the relative utility of each approach and finally unpacks why writing off populism in the wake of Joe Biden's election could be a significant error.

It contributes to the populism literature by expanding the knowledge base on the ideational approach to the study of populism. I offer a thoughtful perspective in this article that while the ideational approach's 'thin-centered" strand has the tendency to blur the boundaries of populism and lead scholars to accept "anything" as populism; it nevertheless enables us to comprehensively capture populism usage in multiple contexts. The first section of the paper will focus on fleshing out the different approaches employed in the study of populism. In discussing the core assumptions of each of the approaches, I will also aim to situate in them how each approach compares with others in terms of relative strengths and shortfalls. The second section will unpack why I believe populism is an important topic within the field particularly in the contexts of democratic degeneration and political participation, and further zoom into discussions about the possibility of populism resurgence in post-Biden America.

2. Approaches to the Study of Populism

Ideational Approach to Populism: Scholars working with the ideational approach to populism take seriously the beliefs and ideologies of populists. They consider populism essentially as a set of ideas that exists in the mind of politicians and voters (Mudde, 2017; Hawkins, 2018; Hawkins & Kaltwasser, 2018). The ideational approach to populism in its basic understanding advances the notion that the common discourse of populist parties and personalities reveals a way of looking at the political arena as a struggle between the will and aspirations of the common people (homogenous and moral community (Müller, 2017)) and an enemy elite (corrupt and self-serving). Essentially, this worldview tends to have an impact on a populist politician's mode of conduct in office and the resultant policies (Hawkins & Kaltwasser, 2018). Populism as an ideology tends to also have an implication on research and the methodological approach needed to study it. Scholars who go by the ideology approach focus their attention on the "programmatic statements made by political actors, treating the latter as the primary units of analysis" (Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013, p.7) which exist in the form of party literature like internal party memos, publications and official manifestos; to then aid in classifying political actors behind that literature as populists or otherwise.

Inquiry and research into these partisan texts are often conducted through qualitative content analysis focusing on small-sample cross-national comparisons (Mudde, 2007; Arter, 2010; Pankowski, 2010 as cited in Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013). A broad definition of the ideational approach runs the risk of conflating critical differences within it. Among the ideational approach proponents who define populism as a set of ideas, there are scholars who conceptualize populism as a discourse and those who see it as an ideology. While the first is embedded in the form of claims or rhetoric premised on the dichotomy between the "elite" and the "people" (Bonikowski & Gidron, 2016; Aslanidis, 2016), the second alternative as advanced by Mudde (2004) sees populism as a 'thin-centered ideology' that not only views society as divided into two; the 'pure people' and 'the corrupt elite' but essentially sees it as easily attached to other ideas. The thin-centered nature of populism sometimes comes down to the societal cleavages and grievances that are rendered politically salient by populists who essentially provide the framing of who belongs to the "people" and the "elite" (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 21-22). Depending on the context of its emergence, populism as a set of ideas can adopt to diverse ideological shapes or appear in combination with other worldviews (Hawkins & Kaltwasser, 2018; Taggart, 2000; Finchelstein, 2019).

This is primarily why given the context and the type of societal cleavage, we may at certain times have the right-wing variant of populism and other times, the left-wing variant (Rodrik, 2018). The "thin-centered" ideology as discussed by Mudde (2004, p. 19-20) elucidates the malleability of the concept of populism in terms of how it is easily attached or assimilated into other partial and full ideologies such as liberalism, socialism, nationalism and neoliberalism. Circumstances accounting for the manifestation of populism in Africa as evinced by scholars greatly lend credence to populism as a "thin-centered ideology". In the context of Zimbabwe, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) has interrogated 'Mugabeism' as a populist phenomenon but one characterized by left-nationalism, anti-imperialism, nativism and patriarchy. Mugabe combined populist rhetoric and claims to advance both black nationalism and anti-imperialism which are ideologies on their own. The leaders who championed the emergence of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) of South Africa have been labeled in the literature as populists (Posel, 2014) while being black nationalists and anti-imperialists.

The EFF do champion the pro-people agenda (Black South Africans) against culturally and economically distinct White elites who are conceived as having ripped native Black South Africans of their properties. The party came fully against the country's neoliberal economic policies that were rolled out after 1994. To the EFF, these policies have facilitated the worsening conditions and inequalities among the poor in South African society (EFF, 2013). Like Bernie Sanders' populist challenge to the American capitalist class by reason that it is partly responsible for the suffering and inequalities in the United States, Malema, leader of the EFF has taken upon himself to champion a cause where the country's wealth is not concentrated in the hands of only a few in society. Looking at populism as a 'thin-centered ideology' enables us to account for the mix of ideologies that are embedded in Malema's claims and the EFF manifesto. He advances not only left-wing populism in the form of anti-capitalism and anti-neoliberalism but quite significantly, his claims and intended policies are laced with right-wing populism in the form of advancing the cultural 'struggle' between the "real black South African people" and White minority 'outsiders'. In her analysis of populism in Africa, Resnick (2017) points out that it can prove challenging to use a Western populism lens to examine African political systems. This is because, in the African context, there is the absence of "well-institutionalized political parties" which facilitates immense concentration of power in the executive.

In this regard, even when there is a strong personalistic rule and attack on liberal democratic institutions, it may be seen more as a norm rather than a deviation. The ascension to the presidency by Museveni of Uganda, Sankara of Burkina Faso (Skinner, 1988) and Sata of Zambia illustrates that although these leaders are tagged as populists in the literature (Rothchild and Gyimah Boadi, 1989: as cited in Resnick, 2017; Harsch, 2014; Larmer & Fraser, 2007; Sishuwa, 2017; Cheeseman & Larmer, 2015) by virtue of their self-characterization as pro-people and outsiders against the corrupt political establishment, their pursuance of unmediated connection between themselves and the people through undermining institutions was seen as a norm rather than a deviation from the general understandings in Western democracies. Applying a thin-centered approach to these populists as tagged by scholars, enables us to observe that populism as employed in different jurisdictions may react to existing institutions in a different way than observed in Western democracies. This is because the traditional assault of populists on institutions in the West seems to be non-existent in the Ugandan and broader Sub-Saharan African context since there are usually never strong democratic institutions to attack anyway. In other respects, as the majority of politicians in Africa tend to capitalize and draw popular support by playing the ethnicity card, scholars have found that ethnic politics in the region often have a populist component to it herein known as 'ethnopopulism' (Sishuwa, 2017). Although historically understood as two mutually exclusive phenomena (ethnic politics and populism), Sishuwa (2017), Cheeseman & Larmer (2015) show that political actors like Raila Odinga of Kenya and Michael Sata of Zambia appealed to voters by tactfully combining populism with ethnic politics. For the case of Zambia's Sata, it was shown that across the three historical epochs of his political life, he combined ethnic politics, populism and clientelism (Ibid).

To limit ourselves to a thick and boundary-specific conceptualization of populism may deny us the opportunity to account for populism as it played out in the South African, Zambian, Kenyan, and Zimbabwean contexts by clouding how populism can be combined with other ideologies as tools for seeking political change. Nonetheless, a downside to populism as a 'thin-centered' ideology is that it may open the floodgates to regard "anything" and all manner of ideologies to be regarded as populism as long as it has an 'us against them' dimension to it. Consequently, and from a methodological perspective, using the ideational approach's 'thin-centered notion' may decrease the precision in case selection for qualitative or quantitative analysis. In terms of the utility of the ideational approach, Mudde (2004) believes that the ideational approach's proposition of the three key concepts (people, elite and general will) helps us in spotting what parties and actors can be considered as populists. For example, going by the ideational approach enables us to easily contrast populism with elitism and pluralism. Going by this approach, therefore, if radical right parties do not share all the three constitutive elements of populism, then they fail to be called such. Further to Mudde (2017), the potency of the ideological approach in distinguishing populism from non-populism meets one of the core rules and conditions for conceptualization as evinced in Sartori (1970). As a critique of the discursive approach, Mudde (2007) asserts that populism can easily be termed 'demagogy' if only what it has to do is use the 'common' language and symbols that the 'people' can relate to and want to hear.

Political Strategy Approach: The political strategy approach considers populism "as a means of building and/or maintaining political power based on the mass mobilization of supporters" (Barr, 2018, p. 44, 47). According to Gidron & Bonikowski (2013), this approach entails variants that touch upon different aspects of political strategy as employed by parties and movements; namely *policy choices* and *forms of mobilization* and *political organization* (p. 10). The policy choices variant revolves around the policy positions that populists are oriented to take, be it on the economic or social dimension. For instance, policies bordering on pro-economic redistribution, nationalization of resources and policies oriented as anti-establishment tend to characterize left-wing populism as largely evident in most studies on populism manifestation in Latin America (Acemoglu et al., 2011; Madrid, 2008). In the context of the United States and Britain, such approaches may study right-wing populism embedded in anti-immigration policies and border controls in a way that populists use to signal to a fraction of the population (their base) that they are fulfilling the promises upon which they were voted for.

In terms of the political mobilization and organization variant of the political-strategy approach, Weyland (2001) asserts that populism serves "as a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, institutionalized support from large numbers of mostly unorganized followers" (Weyland, 2001, p. 14). This variant focuses not on what populists say, but what they do in terms of the methods and instruments they use in capturing and retaining political power. It further emphasizes "the type of political actor that seeks and exercises power; and the principal power capability which that political actor mobilizes as support basis" (Weyland, 2017, p. 55). Unlike other alternatives on winning political power solely by relying on established institutions such as informal groupings, institutionalized political parties or military establishments, this variant helps us to understand that populism may often revolve around a single individual political actor establishing personal preeminence and unconstrained leadership even when he emerges from the military. An example is Juan Peron of Argentina (Weyland, 1996). To further demonstrate their distance from the establishment, populists continue mobilizing their mass support and hold frequent elections and plebiscites (Ibid). By recognizing such widespread mass support, they then resort to unmediated mechanisms (TV and social media communications) for speaking to their base to maintain and strengthen their commitment and loyalty. Populism as a strategy kickstarts the process of drawing into the political space groups hitherto excluded or marginalized (Mouzelis, 1985).

The policy choices variant of the political strategy approach has the utility of shedding light on the features of populism in practice in terms of showing clearly how populists leaders make real-time policy choices rather than relying on mere ideas, words and speeches like the ideational and discursive approaches will have it (Weyland, 2017). According to Weyland (2017), ideational and discourse-centered approaches to populism may classify political actors like Marie Le Pen and Gianfranco Fini as populists, whereas these rightist extremist actors may not qualify as populists under a political strategy-based approach. A political-strategy approach will classify Le Pen and Fini not as populists but as radical right-wingers due to their unwillingness to soften their posture on their 'resentment-driven ideologies' which arguably tend to keep them confined to the fringes of political power. Unlike Trump, the two are unable to tailor their strategies and appeals in ways that would maximize their chances of capturing the government. Their strategy to stick to their dogmatic and extremist worldviews "predictably draw widespread rejection and hostility" (p. 105). Further, in the context of fascism and populism, a political-strategy approach serves as a relatively viable distinguishing tool between the two phenomena because not only does it stand a greater chance of illuminating how both share affinities in terms of mobilization strategies, but quite significantly it is able to unpack the observation that while fascists may employ violence against perceived 'enemies' as a way of appeasing and drawing mass support from their base, populists would rather employ non-violent means of achieving populist objectives and winning the trust and loyalty of their base.

Populism as a Discursive Style: The discursive approach comes down to the style of communication or language that a populist actor may choose to employ in constructing the people-elite dichotomy (Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013). In this respect according to Kazin (1995), the communicative styles used by populist actors to spread populist ideas are just as important as the populist ideas themselves. He argues that it may be out of place to conceive of populism as an ideology that illuminates the core beliefs or motives of specific political actors, but rather it is ideal for populism to be seen as a mode of expression that can be "selectively"

and "strategically" used by liberals or conservatives seeking to render salient a societal cleavage built upon the 'us' and 'them' notion. Approaching populism from a discursive angle comes with some methodological implications that researchers would have to follow to generate empirical knowledge. In terms of the unit of analysis, adherents of the discursive approach consider the specific instances of political expressions and trace how actors shape and re-shape their rhetorical style relative to their professed ideology. In terms of methodological approach, the most viable tools are interpretive research methodology with textual analysis (Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013).

Laclau (2005) is seen in the populism literature as having advanced the notion that the difference between the 'us' against 'them' is an 'empty signifier' that can take many shapes based on the meaning (embedded in communication and political expressions) that populists actors ascribe to it by vocally identifying and drawing the boundaries for who are to be considered the 'us' against the other. One could argue that approaching populism from the discursive framework has more strength relative to the other two approaches because analyzing the discourse and identifying patterns and contradictions in the speeches of political actors may enable a political scientist to not only discern the idea or ideological inclinations of the populist actor but also to discern beforehand what kind of mobilization and organization strategies are likely to be employed. This point leads into Pauwels' (2011) observation that, to approach populism as an ideology does not necessarily take away the possibility that it has a particular discursive style to it as well; essentially, if populist actors aim to return power to the ordinary 'people', it thus should come as no surprise that they would use a form of communication and expression that the common people can easily relate to.

While scholars working within the ideational approach talk about the set of ideas harbored by populist actors, they however leave undertheorized how these ideas are communicated and expressed (Hawkins, 2018). Such under-theorization is a significant shortcoming of the ideational approach essentially because to sieve through the discursive styles, expressions and rhetoric of populists enable us to see how the framing of direct statements can have politically polarizing effects on constituents, especially when most populist-oriented electorates may solely rely on speeches of populist candidates and incumbents to take political actions rather than resort to reading their intended policies in manifestos. For example, Duterte and Orban's populist ideas will have no effect on electorates if it is not spoken in a way that illuminates the people-elite antagonism. Aggrieved masses are most positioned to act on the spoken words of their populist leaders rather than resort to past records to sieve through their leaders' ideas or resort to policy documents. Words and framing are powerful and may have the strongest mobilizing force than just ideas.

Populism's Place in Comparative Politics: If anything, modernization theory (Lipset, 1959) and the causal pathways of economic development should lead us to democratization and not its reversal in Western countries. Until contemporary times, liberal democracy reigned supreme and radical parties seemed to have been sidelined for life, but now voters being fed up with liberal democracy have turned to authoritarian populism which has grown prominent from America to Europe and from Asia to Australia (Mounke, 2018). We are no longer in the moment where rule of law, checks and balances, powerful independent judiciaries are as viable as they used to be (Scheppele, 2016). In Orban's Hungary, judiciary, parliamentary controls and constitutional rule continue to be undermined (Lendvai, 2017). In a similar vein, the Philippines from the election of Duterte has experienced its share of democratic fatigue and degeneration. "The Philippines went from a bastion of human rights and liberal values in Southeast Asia to a new haven for 'Asian values" and strongman leadership" (Heydarian, 2017, p. 7). Similar observations had been prevalent in the rules of Juan Peron of Argentina in 1946, Andreas Papandreou of Greece in 1981, Alberto Fujimori of Peru in 1990, Silvio Berlusconi of Italy in 1994, Hugo Chavez of Venezuela in 1998 and Rafael Correa of Ecuador in 2007 (Pappas, 2019). These populists once in power propelled a system that was democratic but not liberal (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017) and advanced political polarization and deeper assault on institutions.

As strong institutions are an essential element to the sustenance of democracy, such assault on them should be of great concern to comparativists. The study of populism is essential in comparative politics because as Galston (2018) reveals, it shows that liberal democracy faces a number of internal challenges which had fallen at the blindside of scholars. Western liberal democrats had for a long period of time been focusing on how democracy dies in other places like when there were violent uprisings and coup d'états in the developing world but now find themselves turning to their own country (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018). The study of populism

reveals that there is another way to break a democracy. Although less dramatic, it is equally destructive (Ibid). Democracies now do not die at the hands of military generals, captains and colonels but of elected leaders-presidents who subvert the very process that brought them to power (Ibid). While there are no coup d'états, there are now the incessant declarations of martial law and suspension of decades-old constitutions and legal systems. In other respects, while populism tends to limit the viability of party competition by virtue of depicting competitors as evil or enemies of the people, one cannot dispute how the study of populism in advanced democracies has enhanced our knowledge on the modes of political mobilization and participation.

Populism as a political strategy does illuminate that when politicians come to the level of voters and become ordinary and unofficial, common people are driven to connect with them and further come out in large numbers to vote in elections. Arguably, a populist's down-to-earth appeal and their mobilization effects do not only drive populist supporters, but also mainstream party supporters who fear that their voting apathy and indifference may lead to the election of their worst possible candidate. On the wider democratization level, populism does illuminate the degree of pessimism that comparativists and even International Relations (IR) democratic peace theorists may harbor about the rate at which we might expect democracy to spread or be adopted. In much of Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America, U.S. governments had historically used diplomatic pressure, foreign aid and other foreign policy tools to facilitate democratization and counter authoritarianism but according to Levitsky & Ziblatt (2018), America is no more a democratic model and Trump posed a threat to global democracy given that he neither did enough to strengthen it in America nor propel its spread to countries prone to authoritarianism and strongman rule. The degree of pessimism about the spread of democracy may thus be warranted whenever populism comes into the picture.

3. Prospects of Populism Resurgence in Post-Biden America

The underlying causes of 21st-century populism in the United States are not hard to fathom. Feelings of neglect among the American working class, pre-dominance of globalist policies, nostalgia for monocultural societies and rejection of postmaterial values have been studied to fuel populism. Not only were these issues central for populism surge in 2016, 2020 had its share of these sentiments but this time with the backing of a strong and unrelenting section of the public glued by conspiracy theories and misgivings about the electoral process. It is important to underscore that, absence of the 2020 pandemic handling fiasco and racial reckoning, America may have had another taste of populism as Trump's economic policies were popular among the corporate elite and upper-middle-class with beneficial outcomes trickling down to the poor in terms of access to jobs. The kind of mediums for propagating right-wing populist messages have even grown in number and their reach of audiences and now only need a purposeful and strategic leader willing to tap into it.

Trump's status as a political outsider resonated well with the majority of his base who largely bemoaned the disconnect between them and career politicians coupled with seeming threats about the predominance of lobbyists and special interests in Washington. Such personality of Trump brings up a challenging feat for potential right-wing populists who would not only have to demonstrate their outsider status to the populist base but be willing to accommodate and fan insider-outsider rhetoric and monocultural society sentiments. Some analysts do maintain the sustenance of the Grand Old Party (GOP) without Trump (Donatelli, 2021; Halon, 2021), but the least said about that the better. The more the party moves away from Trump, the less enthusiasm it is likely to bring to his populist base. This would not only create apathy among his base but more so dwindle the mobilization effect that Trump has on his voters. Political rhetoric bordering on "woke", "cancel culture" and fears of demise of Western civilization (Lahut, 2021; Hennessey, 2021; Moran, 2021) is likely to dominate 2022 and 2024 electioneering campaigns. Unless the GOP stick to discourse about policy and merits, the overemphasis on such rhetoric may largely deepen the divide within the GOP into those willing to stick with Trump versus those willing to ride with the Cheney's, the Romney's, the Murkowski's, and the Burr's.

The prospects of a splinter GOP are no joke. Local GOP censorships of congressmen and women following votes to convict Trump in his second impeachment speak to the assertion that Republican constituents are willing to hold Washington politicians to ransom should they demean Trump's influence in the party. Looking at the rise in desire among Republicans for a third party evidenced in Lincoln Project's rhetoric, one may

prima facie argue that Trump's populist grip on the party will come at greater political costs to the Republican party fueled by those willing to move on from Trump. Sticking with Trump or Trump-endorsed candidates may likely translate into higher Republican voter turnout but may not automatically guarantee the White House. Indications about Mike Pompeo, Ron DeSantis, Ted Cruz, Tom Cotton or Tucker Carlson's potential nominations as leaders in the post-Trump GOP (Forgey, 2021; Bradner & Warren, 2021; Colvin, 2021; Lahut, 2020; Dorman, 2021) are well in order as their unrelenting loyalty and support for Former President Trump persisted even after he left office. As the rhetoric of these personalities resonates well with Trump's base, a step towards the nomination of either one of them is likely to mobilize Republican voters. Gallup's 2021 survey results in Figure 1 demonstrate that a fairly large number of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are willing to move more to the right. Although the survey findings are subject to significant change between 2021 and 2024, one might not rule out how the above-mentioned personalities are more drawn to champion an embrace of more conservatism and right-wing populism to fulfill the wishes and demands of Trump's base and Republicans in general.

Figure 1: Republicans Most Inclined to Want Party to Become More Conservative: Jan. 21 – Feb. 2, 2021

[Asked of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents] If you had to choose, would you rather see the Republican Party – [ROTATED: become more conservative, stay the same, (or) become more moderate]?

	All Republicans/Republican Leaners	Republicans	Republican-leaning Independents
	%	%	%
More	40	44	36

(Source: GALLUP, 2021)

Elizabeth Cheney's Ouster and the GOP's Future: Being vocal and unrelenting about Trump's way of politics certainly come with consequences and Elizabeth Cheney's censure and ultimate ouster as House GOP Conference chair was a prime example. The question is whether Cheney's position on Trump exonerates her should the GOP fail to take over the house in the 2022 midterm elections. With the president's party historically performing poorly in mid-term elections (McCarthy, 2018), a GOP landslide in 2022 midterms would only offer a rationalist explanation for the embrace of populism championed by Trump or Trump-endorsed candidates. One could easily predict that in the event of a landslide, GOP local leaders would be more emboldened to not only weed out moderate and anti-Trump Republicans but more so champion rhetoric that would seek to further delegitimize the 2020 election results and mobilize Trump's base for a massive turnout in 2024. Such actions are likely to be clothed under calls for a need for a formidable and united GOP intended to discredit allegations of internal civil war and a deviation from Lincoln's party. Stefanik's speech after being elected as GOP conference chair partly lends credence to this (Wagner et al., 2021). Republican leaders like Stefanik inclination to embrace Trump and his loyalists can be seen as part of a movement gradually veering away from discussions on the merits of what the GOP has to offer in terms of conservative policy initiatives to discussions resonating with Trump's base. According to Historian Nicole Hemmer, "Republicans are speaking to a very loyal, committed base that responds strongly to that kind of rhetorical red meat, that responds strongly to the fight, that wants to see their representatives take it to the left, whatever that looks like" (Bokat-Lindell, 2021, para. 11).

Agency of Independents and Moderate Republicans Pre and Post January 6, 2021, Capitol Riots: In Figure 2, Pre-January 6 Approval Ratings of President Trump among independents/Third Party voters sat at 46% approval and 53% disapproval (Alomran & Winter, 2021). That for Self-Identified Republicans sat at 87% approval versus 13% disapproval. Self-reported Trump 2020 voters approved the President's job by 92% percent with 8% disapproving of the job he was doing. After the events of January 6 as illustrated in

Figure 3, his approval ratings fell to 36% among independents/Third Party, 80% among Self-Identified Republicans and 81% among Self-Reported Trump voters (Ibid). Factors that likely drove this drop in Trump's approval rating can be attributed not only to his handling of the events of January 6, but also his series of speeches aimed at inciting or mobilizing his supporters against the certification of election results and the consequential threat on the lives on legislators (Ibid). If these numbers are anything to go by, then one could argue that expelling Cheney from House Republican leadership may cost the Republican party as Cheney's current position on Trump likely resonate with moderate Republicans and independents and her ouster does little to mobilize them to vote for the Republican party in subsequent elections. The added advantage that Cheney's ouster gives to Democrats is the ability to fend off the cancel culture allegation levelled against Democrats with the assertion that the GOP itself cancels and rejects Republicans' views and perspectives that deviate from ones held by Trump loyalists. Looking at the figures, in order to win back the support of Independents and Republicans who thought Trump was culpable of inciting the riots, a broad and official condemnation from GOP leaders is non-negotiable. Although this step is very unlikely, diverse perspectives and opinions within the GOP should be largely embraced and entertained to court Independents and Moderate Republicans are driven by conservative values and policies and not necessarily Trump loyalists.

Figure 2

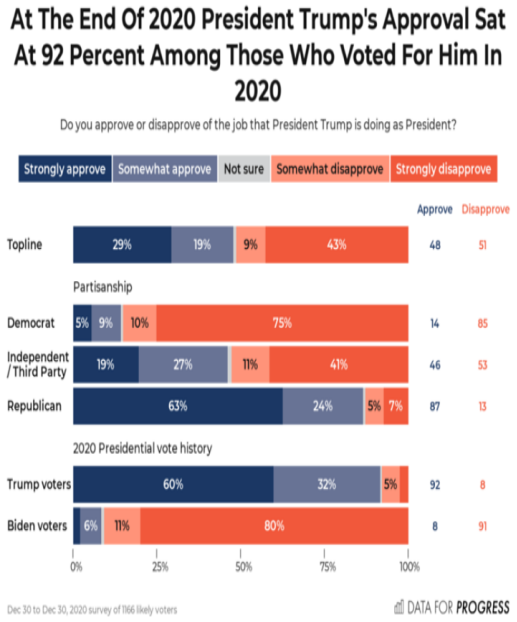
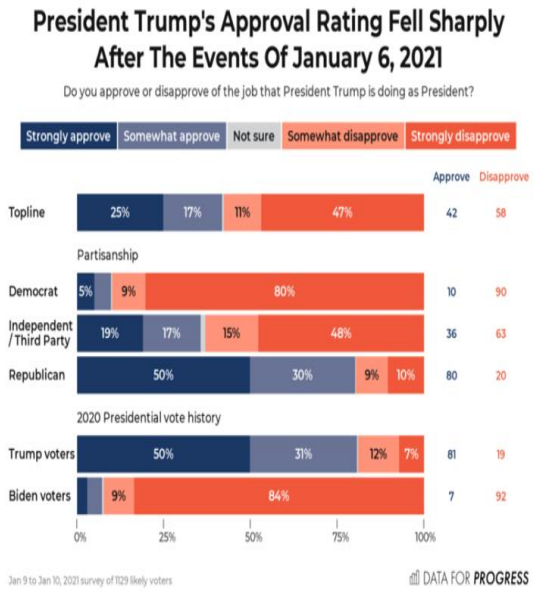


Figure 3



Source: Data for Progress (2021)

While Trump was unable to secure reelection, he had quite an impressive showing, and one may comfortably assume that his base is unrelenting to bring him back to the White House. Continuation of his rhetoric by popular GOP leaders, local GOP censures of anti-Trumpers and diminishing allegations of Trump's culpability in the Capitol riots sends a clear signal that right-wing populism is alive and well even after Trump's exit from power. It is prudent however for populism scholars to envision differing forms of populism should other Trump-endorsed candidates secure GOP nominations. For right-wing populism to be nipped in the bud in 2024 and beyond, swift attention towards the "left-behinds" in globalization is not optional. As the Rust Belt region was crucial to Joseph Biden's election, a well-planned industrial policy targeted towards that region will likely endear his administration to its constituents as some manufacturing giants are likely to be revived. This can be done by instituting far-reaching policies in Biden's American Jobs Plan to not only satisfy these sections of the public who not only lost their sources of livelihood due to the heavy manufacturing declined in

the region but also harbor a great sense of nostalgia about the region as a once significant center of global manufacturing.

In fleshing out some of the causal pathways for the election of Trump and Erdogan, Esen & Yardımcı-Geyikçi (2019) had argued that the failure of the political establishment to be responsive to voter preferences and act responsibly in policymaking once voted into office were prime mechanisms behind Trump and Erdogan's election. "Whereas responsiveness refers to the tendency of governments to respond to the demands and wishes of voters, responsibility requires acting prudently in policymaking and considering the wider electorate" (p. 446). It is high time mainstream parties conscientiously balance responsiveness and responsibility by devising policies and strategies that address the legitimate economic concerns of the 'left-behinds in globalization and modernization. We surely would not expect a White-working class voter in Youngstown, Ohio (Gest, 2016) to vote for the Democratic party or pre-Trump Republican party if the latter's policies predominantly favor Wall Street and the capitalist class and do not contain a single policy component on the ways to revive some of the old local manufacturing industries which used to sustain their economic livelihoods.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study sought to review the various approaches to the study of populism. The main assertion of the paper is that while the ideational approach's "thin-centered" strand has the tendency to blur the boundaries of populism and lead scholars to accept anything as populism, it nevertheless enables us to capture populism usage in multiple contexts. The paper also discussed the prospects of populism resurgence in post-Biden America by looking at Republicans' inclination towards more conservatism, prominent issues within the GOP after Trump's defeat and voters' reaction to the January 6, Capitol Riot. It is worth concluding that the global focus on economic growth and macro-economic stability one would argue have translated into growing inequalities with the political elites and college graduates mostly reaping its benefits. While the maintenance of macro-economic stability should be paramount, there should also be significant effort in ensuring that the wider electorates are not left off the radar in terms of benefitting from the economic gains. Mainstream parties and governments tend to listen and fulfill the demands of their base and do not often accommodate the demands of the wider electorate. These parties often make a portion of the electorates feel abandoned in times of crisis and populists as strategic as they are would capitalize on these grievances, mobilize them and finally capture power. The consequences then manifest in the form of attacks on liberal institutions and structures of government deemed partly responsible for the plight of their base supporters. The January 6, US Capitol riots demonstrated to the world that American democracy is fragile, and populism may be one of its most lethal threats.

Unless calculated attempts are made to unite the country and purge it from the high levels of political polarization among other factors, post-Biden America is likely to have another taste of populism. Populism brings up critical points that political scientists can no longer ignore. That is issues bordering on immigration and multiculturalism. These trends are increasingly seen as fanning the acceptance of right-wing populists and at the scholarly and policy level, the study of populism makes us aware of the fact that comparativists can no longer take for granted the fallouts of immigration and multiculturalism. It is highly critical that change, growth and transformation in the socio-economic make-up of Western countries benefit everyone because when that fails then populism would certainly find a voice and a leader who would not care about breaking century-old democratic rules to fulfill promises. Although the cultural dimension (Gest, 2016; Calhoun, 2017; Norris & Inglehart, 2019) for the rise of populism especially right-wing and authoritarian populism is potent, one could assume that as the newer demographic cohorts (like Generation Z and millennials) were born and socialized into Western societies characterized by post-material values, increased immigration and multiculturalism, the aversion towards those trends may gradually fade away relative to that of the older population who spent majority of their formative years in material and monocultural societies. Those growing trends in the long run may not be viable sources of grievance for right-wing populists to capitalize on. The economic and anti-elite grievances however will still be viable targets if there is no equitable distribution of wealth and prosperity.

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