



International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

HUNG PARLIAMENT AND GOVERNMENT'S SERVICE DELIVERY IN A DEMOCRATIC STATE: A CASE OF GHANA'S 8TH PARLIAMENT OF THE 4TH REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT :

In parliamentary democracies, the failure of one party to win majority of seats in parliament following elections can create Hung Parliament. As used in the context of the legislature, a hung parliament describes a situation where no particular political party has an absolute majority of legislators in a parliament. There is a popular view among scholars that hung parliament can affect government functioning and service delivery in a negative way. Others also share the belief that hung parliament does not necessarily lead to bad political outcomes but can inure to the benefit of the state. This study examines the effect of hung parliament on government services delivery in Ghana, specifically, the 8th Parliament of Ghana's Fourth Republic. Since the inception of its democracy in 1992, most ruling parties have earned majority seats in parliament with the exception of the 8th Parliament in 2020 following general presidential and parliamentary elections. The 8th parliament in Ghana provides a unique empirical context for investigating the impact of hung parliament on the functioning of government. This study employed qualitative and secondary research methodology to assess how the 8th parliament that reflected the features of hung parliament influenced government service delivery during the NPP administration spanning the years, 2020-2024. Data collected from Member of Parliaments, Civil Society Groups and other subject matter experts. A purposive sampling strategy was adopted in selecting the respondents. Interviews were used to gather data from the research respondents. Employing thematic analysis and logical inferences, the research findings generally suggest that hung parliament can derail government functioning through political instability, increased negotiations, potential policy changes, and economic uncertainty. However, hung parliaments can also enhance oversight, openness responsiveness, and accountability which serves the national interest. Policy implications of the study and opportunities for further research are finally delineated. Among other things, it is recommended that governments facing hung parliaments will need to increase greater cooperations, negotiations, and compromises to ensure policy continuity and support from opposing parties in parliament.

Introduction

In Ghana, parliament is an important democratic institution directly representing the public. It plays crucial roles in shaping and influencing government policies promoting good governance and protecting public interest. It is the third most important state institution. In the event of a hung parliament, the main options are either a coalition government is formed out of two or more parties (as in Germany and Sweden at present), or a minority government, typically formed by one large party which seeks to govern alone without a majority in parliament. A minority government may therefore have to strike deals on an ad hoc basis on each piece of legislation it puts before parliament. Minority governments can also come to a formal agreement with opposition parties that falls short of a coalition, whereby in return for some policy concessions smaller parties commit to support the government on crucial 'confidence' issues that could bring down the Cabinet. The requirement for government to negotiate and compromise, and the greater ability of opposition parties to influence the policy-making process, can be seen as an advantage. This can mean that although it can take longer to reach a decision, this is then based on a broader consensus that will stand the test of time, and avoids the 'flip-flopping' that is sometimes seen when one majority government is replaced with another. Some argue that such consensual styles of government are actually better for tackling big, long-running policy challenges.

A hung parliament is a term used in legislature to describe a situation where no particular political party has an absolute majority of legislators in a parliament. The functions of parliaments have been variously described by scholars and in parliamentary documents but there have been few, if any, reported studies of how parliamentary practitioners see their own institutions. Mezey (1979, 6) defines a legislature as a 'predominantly elected body of people that acts collegially and that has at least the formal but not necessarily the exclusive power to enact laws binding on all members of a specific geopolitical entity'.

The aim of general elections is to win an absolute majority. An absolute majority is when one political party has more MPs than all the other parties put together. A party without a majority relies on cutting ad hoc deals with other parties to win the votes required to pass new laws. This could be in the form of an informal coalition i.e. a pact between parties to co-operate on a range of issues. These are sometimes called 'confidence and supply' agreements: where one or more smaller parties guarantee support for a minority government's budget and in no-confidence votes in return for some of their own policies being given the green light. Unlike in a formal coalition, the smaller parties in a confidence and supply deal do not have to agree to support other

laws proposed by the government. Proceeding from this backdrop, this study seeks to assess the effects of hung parliament on government's service delivery and to find way of addressing problems associated with hung parliament in democratic state. This study will provide reliable information on how a hung parliament tends affect government service delivery, assesses the effects of hung parliament on government's service delivery and finds ways of addressing problems associated with hung parliament in a democratic state like Ghana.

Hung Parliament in Ghana: A Historical Review

Ghana as state has an interesting political history. After independent, the country adopts a multi-party system until 1964. Her electoral authority is the Electoral Commission. Members of parliament are elected by direct popular vote in single-member constituencies using the first-past-the-post system for a 4-year term, subject to renewal by the constituents based on performance and other factors. After independence there has been alternation of power from military to civilian till 1992. Beyond 1992 is a clear democratic journey.

The trajectory of Ghana's democratic has been after decolonization is an interesting one. The period 1957-1958 was a Democratic regime led by the Convention People's Party. From 1958-1964 was also Democracy although it took different form. It was led by Convention People's Party. From 1964-1966 seem to veer off the lane by ushering the country into a One Party State, i.e. the Nkrumah led CPP. The 1966-1969 was a Military Regime, National Liberation Council. The 1969-1972 was a Democracy Supreme Military Council I. From 1972-1979 Military Regime, Supreme Military Council II. 1979-1981 was a Democracy, Provisional National Defence Council. The 1981-1992 was a Military Regime, led by Armed Forces Revolutionary Council. 1992-1996 Emerging Democracy National Democratic Congress. 1996-2000 Democracy. National Democratic 2000-2008, Democracy New Patriotic Party. 2009-2012 Democracy National Democratic Congress. From 2012-2016 Democracy National Democratic Congress. From 2016-2024 was Democracy led by New Patriotic Party and from 2024 to date- National Democratic Congress.

This to and fro movements were triggered by factors hovering around politics, economic, humanitarian and socio-cultural. Among are the political Parties that set the tone for democracy in Ghana after decolonization were; ACP - Action Congress Party, APRP - All People's Republican Party, AYA-Anlo Youth Association, CPP - Convention People's Party, DPP – Democratic People's Party, EGLE - Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere, FY - Federation of Youth, GCP - Ghana Congress Party, GCPP - Great Consolidated Popular Party, MAP – Muslim Association Party, NAL - National Alliance of Liberals, NCP - National Convention Party, NDC - National Democratic Congress, NIP - National Independence Party, NLM -National Liberation Movement, NPP - New Patriotic Party, NPP - Northern People's Party, NRP - National Reform Party, PAP - People's Action Party, PCP - People's Convention Party, PFP - Popular Front Party, PHP - People's Heritage Party, PNC - People's National Convention, PNP - People's National Party, PP - Progress Party, SDF -Social Democratic Front, TC - Togoland Congress, TFP - Third Force Party, UGM - United Ghana Movement, UNC - United National Convention, UNP - United Nationalist Party, UP - United Party.

The modus operandi for capturing political power from 1957 took different forms. As some were forming political parties to help annex power, others were re-grouping existing parties to fast track the process. This re-grouping is called Coalitions. Typical among them were; *Grand Coalition* (Contested the 2004 Presidential Election). It included People's National Convention (PNC), Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere (EGLE), and Great Consolidated People's Party (GCPP); *Great Alliance* (Contested the 1996 Presidential Election), made up of New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the People's Convention Party (PCP); *Progressive Alliance* (Contested the 1992 Presidential Election) Members include the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere (EGLE), and the National Convention Party (NCP). They again contested the 1996 Presidential Election with the addition of Democratic People's Party (DPP).

Since the inception of the 4th Republic, governments in power have enjoyed majority, and in some cases, overwhelming majority in parliament, in exception of the 2020 elections. Ghana is yet to experience a situation where a party that wins the presidential elections having minority seat in the parliament. The first parliamentary election of the 4th Republic which the New Patriotic Party (NPP) boycotted, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) won 189 out of the 200 seats. The remaining 11 seats were picked by the National Convention Party, 8 seats, Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere (EGLE) Party, 1 seat and independent MPs, 2 seats. Below is the representation of the parliamentary elections in Ghana from 1992 to 2024

YEAR (1992)	POLITICAL PARTIES	ELECTION RESULTS
	NDC	189
	NCP	8
	EGLE	1
	INDEPENDENT	2
TOTAL		200

Parliamentary results of the 1992 general elections-Ghana

The 1996 parliamentary election produced an outcome that again gave majority to the ruling party (NDC, 133 seats; NPP, 61 seats; CPP, 5 seats; and PNC, 1 seat. This trend of majority MPs generally elected on the tickets of ruling parties continued through to the 7th Parliament of the 4th republic, even though in some cases it was a narrow majority. In instances where there was a slim majority for the governing party, the practice whereby MPs elected on the ticket of smaller political parties and those who contested the parliamentary election as independent candidates decide to do business with the majority side gave governments the numbers.

	POLITICAL PARTIES	ELECTION RESULTS
	NDC	133
	CPP	5

YEAR (1996)	NPP	61
	PNC	1
TOTAL		200

Parliamentary results of the 1996 general elections-Ghana

YEAR (2000)	POLITICAL PARTIES	ELECTION RESULTS
	NDC	92
	CPP	1
	PNC	3
	NPP	99
TOTAL		200

Parliamentary results of 2000 general elections

YEAR (2004)	POLITICAL PARTIES	ELECTION RESULTS
	NDC	94
	CPP	3
	PNC	4
	NPP	128
	INDEPENDENTS	1
TOTAL		230

Parliamentary results of 2004 general elections

YEAR (2008)	POLITICAL PARTIES	ELECTION RESULTS
	NDC	116
	CPP	1
	PNC	2
	NPP	107
	INDEPENDENT	4
TOTAL		230

Parliamentary results of 2008 general elections

YEAR (2012)	POLITICAL PARTIES	ELECTION RESULTS
	NDC	148
	CPP	1
	PPP	0
	NPP	123
TOTAL		272

Parliamentary results of 2012 general elections

YEAR (2016)	POLITICAL PARTIES	ELECTION RESULTS
	NDC	106
	NPP	169
TOTAL		275

Parliamentary election results of 2016 general elections

The December 7 2020, parliamentary election, produced a legislature that departed from the norm. The main opposition NDC garnered 137 seats, exactly the same as what the governing party, NPP obtained with an independent candidate picking the remaining single seat. As usual, the independent MP, who is a die in the wool NPP but went independent because of some challenges with the party prior to the elections, pitched camp with the governing NPP. The outcome of the 2020 parliamentary election is therefore historic and very significant for the 4th Republic, especially as the country works towards strengthening and consolidating its young parliamentary democracy. Nevertheless, a number of Ghanaians and organizations involved in parliamentary monitoring work may be wondering what this equal numerical strength means for parliamentary work, especially the substantive work at the Committee level. The outcome of the 2020 parliamentary elections brought into being, a hung parliament of equal numerical strength for the two main political parties (National Democratic Congress, 137 seats; New Patriotic Party, 137 seats; and independent, 1 seat)

YEAR (2020)	POLITICAL PARTIES	ELECTION RESULTS
	NDC	137
	NPP	137
	INDEPENDENT	1
TOTAL		275

Parliamentary election result-2020 general election - Ghana

This is largely a response of the Ghanaian electorate to the terminal failure of parliamentary oversight over the executives and a clarion call on the current legislature to embrace reforms to transform itself. This paper gives insight on how a review of the internal rules of parliament can help strengthen the legislature in exerting itself. The emerging dynamics arising from Ghana's hung parliament is likely to deepen collaboration and build consensus between the two sides of the House. In spite of the many writings about hung parliament with regards to forming committees, the dynamics and challenges there is very little body of knowledge regarding how a hung parliament affects government's service delivery amidst partisan politics in Ghana. This is what the study seeks to investigate.

Review of Related Literature

Critics often contend that a hung parliament inherently leads to a feeble and unstable administration, where cabinet members lack the requisite power and mandate to effectively address pressing fiscal, societal, and national security dilemmas. Conversely, proponents assert that such a scenario could fundamentally transform the nation's political ethos for the better. They argue it necessitates the inclusion of a wider array of elected representatives in the policy-formulation process, fostering enhanced transparency and curbing executive authority while bolstering the collective influence of the legislative body (Norton, 2008).

Norton (2008) further identifies another beneficial aspect of minority governance stemming from a hung parliament: the accountability of elites. A minority government, by encompassing and consulting a diverse spectrum of representative viewpoints, might empower political leaders to make more audacious decisions than otherwise possible. This is largely because the onus for such challenging choices would be distributed among multiple parties and leaders. Norton also suggests that a minority government can indeed pursue an extensive legislative agenda, though it might need to adopt a more persuasive and conciliatory approach to policymaking than if it held an outright majority.

Radek (2015) emphasizes the significant cultural ramifications of a hung parliament. It's believed that the most profound shifts in parliamentary customs would materialize under a period of minority government rather than a coalition. A coalition demands adherence to collective responsibility, thereby requiring robust party cohesion to function effectively. In stark contrast, a minority government could amplify the leverage of backbenchers, as individual Members of Parliament and various interest groups are better positioned to extract concessions. Ultimately, minority governments, which can arise from a hung parliament within the Westminster system, shouldn't always be disparaged. Alongside coalition governments, they reflect evolving party systems and the transposition of electoral system anomalies onto the broader political framework (Radek, 2015).

Pannel (2024) posits that a political faction falling short of an absolute majority might opt to govern autonomously, eschewing any formal accord with rival groups. Even when a party establishes a minority administration without a pre-arranged pact, its capacity to retain the chamber's confidence and enact legislation hinges upon collaborating with other political entities. In this precise sense, a hung parliament inherently ushers in a multi-party governance structure, even if a single-party government nominally persists.

The ultimate determination of whether to pursue a formal understanding rests with the party's principal leader. They will meticulously weigh three paramount factors when making this pivotal choice.

Firstly, the magnitude of the deficit separating them from an outright majority is crucial. Assembling the requisite votes for legislative initiatives and matters of confidence becomes considerably simpler if a party requires merely a handful of votes, rather than dozens. The condition of the opposing factions also plays a significant role; a fragmented opposition facilitates easier governance for a minority. This dynamic was evident in the 2016 Welsh Assembly elections, where the Labour Party secured 29 seats, just two shy of a majority. Labour subsequently elected to form a minority coalition with the sole Liberal Democrat Assembly Member, Kirsty Williams. This decision was partly influenced by the opposition's disunity, with Plaid Cymru, the Conservatives, and UKIP holding markedly divergent political stances and securing 12, 11, and 7 seats respectively.

The second consideration pertains to the leader's personal standing. A hung parliament can represent a moment of considerable political peril for a party's head, particularly if they were widely anticipated to achieve an outright majority. Striking an arrangement with another party – and the parliamentary stability it confers – can exert a stabilizing influence, dampening conjecture about the leader's individual position. Theresa May, for instance, failed to secure an absolute majority in 2017, despite enjoying a compelling lead in pre-election polls. Consequently, her status as leader of the Conservative Party

and prime minister abruptly appeared precarious. The pact she swiftly forged with the Democratic Unionist Party allowed her to assert that she possessed the necessary parliamentary backing and a legitimate mandate to continue. As a result, she remained in her role for an additional two years, albeit significantly enfeebled.

The third consideration is more outward-looking: the message the party or its leader intends to convey to the nation, encompassing the business community and financial markets. Governing without any formal agreement with other parties, with the inherent volatility this engenders, may provoke unfavorable reactions from investors and the markets. The heightened risk of a failed confidence vote and a subsequent election would amplify uncertainty and adversely impact the UK's standing as an investment prospect. Most political entities aspire to demonstrate their capacity to foster a stable environment conducive to economic expansion and capital injection; a formal agreement frequently offers the most direct pathway to achieving this. Other priorities can be presented with greater credibility when underpinned by a stable arrangement. For May, Brexit constituted the central imperative of her premiership. In negotiations, she needed to assure the European Union that, should a deal be reached, she would be able to garner the necessary support for it in the House of Commons and successfully implement it. This made securing a deal all the more indispensable.

Pannell (2024) posits that a political party lacking an absolute legislative majority broadly possesses four distinct avenues for forming a government: a minority administration, a confidence and supply compact, a co-operation accord, or a formal alliance. While a singular party can indeed preside as a minority, there are, in principle, no numerical constraints on how many factions could partake in the other arrangements. In continental Europe, it is not uncommon for as many as five parties to forge coalition governments, though given the historical dominance of two primary parties, this scenario is considerably less probable within the United Kingdom's political framework.

Minority governments lacking a formal understanding are constituted by a solitary party without a numerical advantage in the House of Commons. Such an administration will still be obligated to command the assembly's trust, thereby necessitating reliance on other political groups to align with its position on critical votes of confidence. Beyond explicit confidence divisions, a minority government, by its very nature, will also require the endorsement of other parties to advance any part of its legislative agenda. Consequently, it must engage in collaboration with the opposition on a vote-by-vote basis. This implies that the stability of these arrangements can fluctuate significantly, contingent upon the legislative body's composition. Such governance becomes less arduous for the ruling party in a fragmented parliament: if the opposing factions are disunited and unlikely to coalesce on numerous policy matters, a minority government can more readily endure and successfully enact at least some of its proposed laws, bill by bill. Conversely, a legislature where opposition parties exhibit greater alignment is more apt to precipitate the downfall of a minority government by collectively obstructing its legislative initiatives.

A confidence and supply agreement constitutes a pact between political entities that assures backing for the government in pivotal votes of confidence, as well as in budgetary and financial appropriations (supply). Beyond these fundamental stipulations, there can be substantial variability in the specific provisions of a confidence and supply agreement. Such an accord could delineate policy particulars, mechanisms for collaborative efforts, the exchange of information, and procedures for dispute resolution.

A coalition signifies a formal understanding between two or more parties to establish a joint administration. Parliamentarians from both participating parties are inducted into the cabinet, and Members of Parliament from both factions are instructed to vote in unison. Such an agreement is typically established for the entire duration of a parliamentary term, although it is feasible to incorporate review clauses enabling parties to reassess their standing within the government and make necessary adjustments at interim junctures. Review clauses have been regularly employed in Ireland, where coalitions are more prevalent than in the United Kingdom.

A co-operation agreement represents a somewhat less precisely defined alternative, and unlike the aforementioned options, it is entirely without precedent in the Westminster system. It can occupy a position somewhere between a more formalized coalition and a less politically binding confidence and supply agreement. Generally, though not invariably, it encompasses support on votes of confidence and frequently entails an understanding to collaborate on specific policy domains while the smaller party retains its opposition status in other areas. As of the current juncture, both the Scottish and Welsh administrations are engaged in co-operation agreements (Pannell, 2024).

Numerous observers express apprehension regarding the deleterious impacts of a hung parliament on the celerity and thoroughness of fiscal recalibration. However, an electoral outcome that fails to bestow a definitive majority upon a singular political faction need not presage financial catastrophe, as posited by Joachim Wehner – the ultimate consequence hinges upon how the resultant administration navigates the circumstances.

The assertion that minority or coalition governments possess a diminished capacity to react effectively to economic upheavals gained significant traction following a seminal paper by Nouriel Roubini and Jeffrey Sachs, published in 1989. Their research presented empirical observations indicating that nations governed by minority or coalition administrations exhibited elevated budget shortfalls in the aftermath of the 1973 oil crisis. Alberto Alesina and Allan Drazen elucidated this predicament as a "war of attrition," wherein rival interest groups endeavor to foist the burden of adjustment onto other segments of society, thereby engendering a stalemate that impedes necessary fiscal alterations.

While this argument appears highly compelling at first glance, robust reasons exist to question the inevitability of such a detrimental outcome. For starters, a succession of academic works has cast doubt upon the empirical conclusions advanced in Roubini and Sachs's article. Some subsequent re-analyses suggest that minority governments, though not coalitions, are indeed correlated with larger budget deficits, while other investigations conclude that the particular governmental structure exerts no discernible influence whatsoever on fiscal performance. Furthermore, cross-national inquiries consistently reveal an empirical pattern where minority administrations constitute approximately one-third of all governments in parliamentary systems. Among the nations frequently governed by minority cabinets is Sweden, currently lauded as an exemplar of successful fiscal consolidation. Evidently, a minority government is not inherently predestined to be detrimental to financial health. The crucial determinant, according to a prominent study by Mark Hallerberg, Rolf Strauch, and Jürgen von Hagen, lies in how minority or coalition governments strategically manage the prevailing political environment.

Methodology

This paper employed a combination of both qualitative research and secondary research methodology. The qualitative research is conventionally adopted to study a research phenomenon from the perspectives and experiences of subjects. The research problem is qualitatively oriented as people have their own subjective opinions on the pros and cons of hung parliament and how it shapes government service delivery making the qualitative research approach the most appropriate research to adopt in this paper. The secondary research on the other hand involves a review of scholarly perspectives on the research subject matter and a review of other documents that reflect the research subject matter. The study sampled Parliamentarians, CSOs, and other subject matter experts. Collection of data from all these sources constitute methodological triangulation which helps to validate research findings. The research participants were selected with the use of a purposive sampling strategy. This sampling strategy describes the selection of a research participant based on the person's knowledge and information wielded on the research phenomenon. In this study, this sampling technique ensured that respondents could accurately respond to the research questions. Both primary and secondary data sources were used in the study. The primary data was taken from the research targeted population whereas the secondary data was taken from other studies and reports. The research instrument used for data collection was mainly interviews which essentially afforded respondents and the research greater freedom in speaking to the research questions and probing the responses of subjects respectively. Data collected in the study was analysed using thematic narration and logical deductions. This entail searching for similarities in responses, searching for dominant themes, and inferring from manifest responses of respondents. More specifically, data in the study was analysed by using the approach suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) which entail these steps: 1) familiarization with the data, (2) coding the data, (3) identifying initial themes, (4) searching for themes across transcripts, (5) reviewing themes, and (6) producing the report.

Results and Discussions

The primary objective of this paper was to assess the impact of hung parliament on the functioning and service delivery of governments within the context of Ghana as witnessed under the 8th Parliament of Ghana. Based on the interview responses, it is evident that hung parliament has both negative and positive impact on government functioning.

Analysis of the interview data suggests that hung parliament is associated with delays in legislations, rise in negotiations, political instability, potential for policy changes and investment and economic uncertainties. Most participants acknowledge that due to the absence of clear majority on the part of the ruling government, there was the cases of delays in legislations. Also, due to this, the ruling government had to engage in so many negotiations and renegotiations to secure the support of opposing parties. It was moreover revealed that parties from opposing sides show greater proclivity of employing delay tactics that affect the speed of government activity in a negative way. The data further reveals other negative impact of hung parliament on the general economy as a whole. Specifically, these vignettes from participants confirm these claims:

“Under hung parliament, parties must negotiate and agree on a common platform and power-sharing arrangement, which can be a lengthy and complex process. These governments rely on support from other parties to pass legislation and survive confidence votes. This often involves making deals and concessions to secure the necessary backing.”

“Governments in hung parliament must engage in more negotiation and compromise with other parties to advance their agenda. Also, minority governments may struggle to implement their policies if they cannot consistently secure the necessary support in parliament.”

“There are also possibility of parties in hung parliament to employ various tactics to influence legislation and government actions, including using confidence and supply votes. In some cases too, minority governments can be more vulnerable to collapse, especially if they face strong opposition or internal divisions”/

“A hung parliament means the ruling party no longer has automatic control over parliamentary votes, making it harder to pass bills and implement policies.”

“Governments may need to negotiate with other parties to secure support for their agenda, potentially leading to compromises and watered-down policies. Parliamentary tactics, such as delaying tactics or amendments, become more prominent as parties try to influence the legislative process. Minority governments are vulnerable to confidence votes, where the government's survival is dependent on the support of other parties. Defeats in confidence votes can trigger a change of government although this has not been the case in Ghana”

“Coalitions, while offering a majority, can be inherently unstable due to differing priorities and ideologies among the parties involved. This can lead to frequent disagreements and potential government collapses.”

“The prospect of a hung parliament can create uncertainty and volatility in financial markets and business confidence. This is due to the fact that businesses may face uncertainty about future government policies due to the potential for policy changes resulting from negotiations and compromises.”

“Uncertainty about government stability and policy direction can impact investment decisions, as businesses may be hesitant to commit to long-term projects. A hung parliament can lead to increased economic uncertainty, potentially impacting business confidence and growth”

Although these problems were identified with hung parliaments, some respondents report some positive impact of hung parliament. Most respondents were of the view that hung parliament also create conditions that can ensure the national interest. Respondents suggest that hung parliament leads to improved oversight, accountability, openness and responsiveness. This may be explained that under hung parliament, the ruling government has to cooperate with other minority parties in parliament in order to have its way. Failure of the ruling government to do this can dampen the support for its

policies making it unpopular. This markedly contrasts with a situation where the ruling government having a clear or absolute majority may ignore opposing views, suggestions and opinions of other parties and still have its way. Participants again observe that in the 8th parliament, consensus building was higher as compared to previous parliaments in Ghana. This according to respondents reduced antagonism that has been typical of parliaments in the era prior to 2020. This increased consensus and cooperation among opposing parties in parliament.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that hung parliaments are not necessarily bad in terms of its potential effects on government services delivery. Although hung parliaments have the effect of inducing political instability, potential policy changes, and economic uncertainty, they still have the benefits of ensuring proper oversight and accountability, openness and responsiveness which serves the national interest. Governments in power facing hung parliaments will need to increase greater cooperations, negotiations, and compromises in order to have their way true and for policy continuity and support from opposing parties.

Suggestions for further research

The present study was conducted only in the Ghanaian context which implies that the results cannot fully capture the realities and nuances in other political jurisdictions. Therefore, it is recommended that future research should focus on other countries to enhance generalizability of findings. Future research can also benefit from comparative studies so as to reveal the similarities and differences in how hung parliaments operates in different political jurisdictions and the contextual factors that play out in the process.

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