

# The Role of the National Commission for Civic Education in Citizenship Education during and After Elections: A Focus on the 2012 Elections in Ghana

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## Abstract

*The advancement of major democracies across the globe has been as a result of constitutional and political education. Education primarily drives the growth of nations based on the training and most importantly the skills it offer to the citizenry of nations. Significantly, democratic consolidation which occurs partly as a result of civic education and initiatives have been looked at by countries, Ghana is no exception. Arguably the role of the National Commission for Civic Education (NNCE), which is a body mandated by the parent law of Ghana to teach people their civic rights and responsibilities which invariably influences the conduct of people during and after elections has not been fully studied. Based on primary and secondary sources, this paper investigates or better still throws more light on the NCCE of Ghana: their roles and contribution during and after elections with emphasis on the 2012 presidential elections in Ghana. The lessons gleaned are useful for both the NCCE and the citizens of Ghana and most importantly for those who believe in the usefulness of civic education in the twenty-first century.*

**Keywords:** *National Commission on Civic Education, Elections, Democracy, Electoral Commission, Ghana*

## 1. Introduction

Democratic elections in countries like Africa are very essential. Especially since the 1960s through to the 1980s, there have been several military coup d'états and counter coups as a result of political intolerance. In 1992, Ghana decided to go back to democratic rule. Therefore the 1992 constitution was drawn as the primary law of the land to guide the conduct and the actions of a new democracy which also called for democratic elections. The first two democratic elections from 1992 onwards were won by the National Democratic Congress (NDC). From the year 2000 to 2004, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) won democratic elections held in Ghana. Again, in 2008, the NDC won democratically held elections in Ghana. It is believed that civic education formed a core of the mandate given to the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) to educate the citizenry concerning their rights and responsibilities as enjoined by the fundamental law of the land. It is also believed that The NCCE has performed this constitutional mandate since it was founded in 1992.

It is also essential to note that the role of education in the life of any nation cannot be gainsaid. The absence of education - formal and informal would put at stake the very survival of a nation. People with the requisite knowledge in every conceivable area of human endeavour - economic, social, political, scientific, and technological - are needed for the advancement of any nation. Apart from helping people to become useful members of society, education helps them to develop an appreciation of their cultural heritage and to live more satisfying lives. In addition, education contributes to social change and social mobility. For a nation to attain a relatively complex level of development — a civilization - its members must learn a great deal. Education is the principal means of acquiring and teaching the essential knowledge and skills. It is “education which provides the ethical cement that helps to hold together the very civilization of nations.”<sup>1</sup> It is therefore very essential to pay attention to citizen education.

Indeed, the role of citizenship education in any nation is not different in substance from that sketched above for education in general. Plato recommended a rigid regimen of citizenship education which would

equip leaders with the moral and intellectual capabilities to enable them steer the affairs of state in the right direction.<sup>2</sup> According to Coleman, a very important fibre in democratic theory is the hypothesis that education is a correlate if not a requisite of democratic order<sup>3</sup>. In the words of Akplu: “Without citizenship training, nation building will be frustrating and impossible. To build a united and strong nation, we must awaken the political and economic consciousness of the population.”<sup>4</sup> Also, Antwi opined that education has the political function of engendering consensus on certain fundamental issues among the members of a political system in order that they may be allegiant to the assumptions that undergird that political system.<sup>5</sup> It is important to note that this is so irrespective of the political system under consideration – authoritarian, totalitarian or democratic.

Education for democratic citizenship however becomes little more burdensome for the simple reason that citizens are not just “sheep to be led” but must consent to the direction and destination they are led. It is indeed an onerous task “to fill the numerous and various roles of democratic citizenship.”<sup>6</sup> In further elaboration Callahan et al state: “Democratic citizenship is multidimensional, multidirectional. Rights bestowed are not balanced by responsibilities assumed nor is the domain of democratic citizenship limited to government and politics. It encompasses roles and relationships within the economic system and social system as well. Participation in each of these systems is characterised by reciprocal rights and obligations.”<sup>7</sup> No one, not even the leading exponents of democracy anywhere in the world today can successfully operate a democracy on mass illiteracy and mass ignorance. We cannot have the democratic freedom, justice and, equality when the majority of the people do not know their rights and responsibilities. The democratic institutions must be created and participation in the political process must be popular. Citizenship education - a vigorous one - is necessary to broaden the base of civil society (citizen) participation.

Knowledge of the constitution and the democratic principles it embodies, for example, enables the citizens understand, defend and protect the constitution. Again, when people know the constitution, they are more likely to become appreciative of the interpersonal, social, and other relationships that the constitution highlights: for instance why citizens should pay taxes, work for national unity, be law-abiding and tolerant of the views of other people.

As the maxim goes, eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. If our people are to be able to defend the constitution against any usurpers from both within and without, they need sustained and vigorous citizenship education. Merely “to enshrine our liberties or legal codes in charters is not itself enough to preserve them”<sup>1</sup> as aptly stated in a small book “Know Your Civic Rights and Responsibilities” compiled by Ibn Yamoah. “Unless we practice democracy we have only embalmed our high ambitions; they remain only words on paper.”<sup>11</sup> Aristotle puts it better: “The real contribution to society was to be found in the political attitudes of the people. Without these supportive predispositions in the psyche of the society their paper manifestations - such as written Constitutions - will be worthless and ineffective no matter how well written.”<sup>9</sup>

Democracy means more than the totality of its institutions. A vibrant democracy is in large part a function of a democratic civic culture, “culture being the behaviours practices and norms that define the ability of a people to govern themselves.”<sup>10</sup> In other words “democracy is not a machine that runs by itself once the proper principles and procedures are inserted. A democratic society needs the commitment of its citizens.”<sup>11</sup>

The need for an intensive citizenship education is better appreciated against a backdrop of 25% of the population of Ghana not being able to read and write.<sup>1</sup> The democratic consciousness of the youth, the army of the unemployed, the men and women folk, the women and civil servants, the military and the

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<sup>1</sup> CIA World Factbook, <http://www.indexmundi.com/ghana/literacy.html>, accessed 28<sup>th</sup> May 2014. This entry includes a definition of literacy and Census Bureau percentages for the total population, males, and females. Accurate as at 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

police, parliamentarians and the ministers of state, the ruler the ruled, indeed all and sundry, must be raised for the herculean task of consolidating the democratic enterprise we have embraced since 1992. The following quotation by Henry Peters Baugham succinctly captures the rationale behind citizenship education - democratic citizenship education. "Education makes a people easy to lead but difficult to drive; easy to govern but impossible to enslave."<sup>13</sup>

The essence of educating the citizens on their constitutional rights as well as their responsibilities including encouraging them to participate fully in the democratic elections held in Ghana cannot be underestimated. However, the institution, NCCE, which has been legally or constitutionally mandated to educate the people on these issues among other things, has not received much attention by both researchers in Ghana and elsewhere. The problem is widespread affecting the very citizens who are to choose the leaders of Ghana hence having the tendency to affect the democratic discourse.

As previously stated citizenship education is considered essential to the sustenance of any political system, its ideological posture notwithstanding. In a democratic political system the task becomes particularly more critical because of the role citizens are expected to play. As aptly noted in the *Random House Encyclopedia* "democratic institutions of government and a free political system do not themselves guarantee wide and effective' participation in political systems. For this, people need certain level of political knowledge, a consciousness of their political rights and the belief that their participation is worthwhile."<sup>14</sup> Herein lays the problem. How can the people be equipped with the relevant political knowledge and thereby awaken in them a consciousness of their rights and responsibilities as citizens of a democratic society? For, as United State Supreme Court Justice, Baiden once observed, "The greatest menace to freedom is an inert people."<sup>15</sup> Considering the fact that Ghana has a literacy rate of 75 %, the problem becomes much more formidable. 25% of the population are still unable to read and write.

### ***Aim***

The aim of this paper is to ascertain the effectiveness of citizenship education as provided by the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) in ensuring effective citizenship participation in elections in Ghana focusing on the 2012 election.

### ***Hypothesis***

In this study the validity of the following assumptions will be tested: Owing to militating factors both within and without, the National Commission on Civic Education did not make the desired impact in its task of educating the electorates during the 2012 elections. It was not able to effectively collaborate with the Electoral Commission of Ghana to effectively organise and educate people, before and after the 2012 elections. The NCCE has not collaborated well with political parties in educating party followers and enhancing dialogue between political parties.

### ***Theoretical Perspectives***

An understanding of citizenship education is better approached from a prior understanding of socialization in general and political socialization in particular. "Socialization refers to the whole process by which an individual, born with behavioural potentialities of enormously wide range, is led to develop actual behaviour which is confined within a much narrower range - the range of what is customary and acceptable for him according to standards of his group".<sup>16</sup> Political Socialization is "the transmission from generation to generation of the ethos of a political system by the conscious and unconscious instilling of the values of the political culture."<sup>17</sup>

Political socialization is either latent (indirect) or manifest (direct). Latent political socialization refers to "the transmission of non-political attitudes which affect attitudes towards analogous roles and objects in the political system". "Manifest political socialization takes place when a person learns explicitly about politics. It is made up of political institutions; the behaviour expected of citizens, the respect accorded to political leaders, the proper level of political participation. Both latent and manifest political socialization

are carried out by various socialization agents: the family, schools, the mass media and the peer group. The citizenship education carried out by Ghana's National Commission on Civic Education falls under the manifest variant of political socialization. Such education the NCCE offers is very essential and worth studying. What is clear is that in Ghana the NCCE is invariably tasked with the mandate to among other things educate the people concerning their civic rights and responsibilities which include political participation.

### ***Delimitation***

The study concentrates on citizenship education provided by a constitutional commission - The National Commission for Civic Education - in Ghana's Fourth Republic. The study partially touches on traditional agents of political socialization such as the mass media based on actions which emanates from the initiative of the National Commission for Civic Education. Attention has been paid to the general operations or activities of the NCCE with special emphasis on their roles and collaborations with the Electoral Commission before and after the 2012 elections.

### ***Procedure***

The research relied on documentary sources - primary sources, such as annual reports, periodical articles, government publications, archival documents, monographs, symposia collections, and lectures and published research reports. Other primary sources such as newspaper and magazine reports were also used. These were supplemented with requisite secondary sources such as encyclopedias, reviews of literature and other books. A survey—questionnaire and interviews—was conducted as well. The data gathered from these sources were analysed thematically. Some tables were also derived from this study to give us a statistical representation of the outcomes of the study. We have used both footnotes and end notes as referencing styles.

## **2. Discussions**

The discussions are primarily focused on confirming or contrasting the earlier assumptions or hypotheses. They include:

- The National Commission for Civic Education has not made the desired impact in its task of educating the people (electorates).
- It has not been able to effectively collaborate with the Electoral Commission of Ghana to effectively organise and educate people, before and after elections.
- The NCCE has not collaborated well with political parties in educating party followers and enhancing dialogue between political parties.

Also, attention has been paid to analysing the statistical data derived from the administered questionnaires. Responses from a selected sample of thousand (**1000**) electorates ranging from age 18 to 66+ were randomly selected. These persons - male/female represent a section of the demographics of the population of Ghana whose views and opinions pertaining to the role as well as the contributions of the NCCE before and after elections and after elections in Ghana matter. We have also relied on primary reports and journal articles, newspaper and online sources.

Parliament in fulfilment their constitutional provisions, on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1993 passed the Act establishing the NCCE. The act received a presidential Assent on the same day. The NCCE Act, Act 452, sets out the composition, the organisational structure, the functions and other matters relating to the organisation.<sup>2</sup> In brief, the NCCE is to create and sustain awareness of constitutional democracy for the achievement of

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<sup>2</sup> National Commission for Civic Education, First Annual Report, 1994

political, economic, and social stability through civic education.<sup>3</sup> In 1994, Mr. Chris Hesse the then chairman of the NCCE argued that whereas it might be difficult to quantify in numerical terms the success of civic education work, the NCCE believes it can measure its success through peoples active involvement in the NCCE activities and their reaction to issues, growing demand on elected leaders to be accountable to the electorates and the emergence of the culture of questioning of campaign promises.<sup>4</sup> The others include increased calls by members of the society on the need of the NCCE to intensify its activities in problem areas, increased calls on members of political parties to avoid insults from the political game and the expressed need for political dialogue as against confrontation at all levels of the party's structure.<sup>5</sup> Were these objectives attained before the 2012 general elections in Ghana? Below are tables 1.0 to 5.5, representing the bio-data of the sampled population and responses to the administered questionnaires.

**Table 1. Biodata**

Gender		Age		Marital Status		Religious Affiliation		Formal Education	
Female	432 (43.2%)	18-25	620 (62.8%)	Married	208 (20.8%)	Christian	784 (78.4%)	None	12 (1.2%)
Male	556 (55.6%)	26-35	200 (20.2%)	Separated	28 (2.8%)	Muslim	160 (16.0%)	Primary	32 (3.2%)
Un-answered	12 (1.2%)	36-45	120 (12.1%)	Widowed	8 (0.8%)	African Traditional Religion	16 (1.6%)	Secondary	256 (25.7%)
		46-55	28 (2.8%)	Single	732 (73.2%)	Other	28 (2.8%)	Post-secondary	20 (2.0%)
		56-65	8 (0.8%)	Divorced	4 (0.4%)	Un-answered	12 (1.2%)	College	124 (12.4%)
		66+	12 (1.2%)	Un-answered	20 (2.0%)			University	448 (45.0%)
								Post-graduate	68 (6.8%)
								Other	12 (1.2%)
								Un-answered	24 (2.4%)

The table above represents Ghanaians, male-female with varied religious persuasions and beliefs. It includes persons who have neither had any form of formal education, that is, persons who cannot read nor write and those who have had some basic or primary education to the university level. Significantly, the non-literates and those who could not read or write properly had their questions translated to them by the administrators of the questionnaires to elicit answers from them. It is essential to state that out of the 1000 selected sample, seven hundred and thirty-two (73.2%) are single and 208 (20.8%) married. The 620 (62.0%) respondents ranging from ages 18 to 25 also suggest a youthful population.

Also, table 2.1 as shown below represents the ethnicity, occupation and income brackets of the sampled population. The respondents ranged from labourers, artisans, civil servants as well as the self employed. This significantly could define the level of exposure and varied expectations. It is important to also stress that the respondents showed a high Akan population of 632 (63.2%) out of a thousand sampled. It is also amply shown in the table that the non-Akans also formed part of the respondents. This shows that the opinion of majority and minority groups in Ghana concerning the roles of the NCCE is represented.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

**Table 2.0 Occupation, Income and ethnic group**

Occupation		Income		Ethnic Group	
Artisan	4 (0.4%)	Up to 200	104 (10.4%)	Akan	632 (63.2%)
Farmer/fisherman	4 (0.4%)	201-300	92 (9.2%)	Ewe	88 (8.8%)
Businessman/woman	100(10.1%)	301-400	96 (9.6%)	Dagbani	72 (7.2%)
Soldier/policeman	8 (0.8%)	401-500	64 (6.4%)	Hausa	64 (6.4%)
Civil servant	32 (3.2%)	501-600	52 (5.2%)	Nzema	20 (2.0%)
Self employed	108(10.9%)	601-700	44 (4.4%)	Ga	56 (5.6%)
Teacher/lecturer	32 (3.2%)	701-800	40 (4.0%)	Other	56 (5.6%)
Labourer	2 (0.2%)	801-900	44 (4.4%)	unanswered	12 (1.2%)
Clerk/secretary	20 (2.0%)	901-1000	56 (5.6%)		
Professional	52 (5.2%)	1001-1999	48 (4.8%)		
Student	528(53.1%)	2000+	80 (8.0%)		
Unemployed	52 (5.2%)	Other	180 (18.0%)		
Other	32 (3.2%)	Unanswered	100 (10.0%)		
Unanswered	20 (2.0%)				

Again, **table 3.0** below represent the total population of Ghanaians and non-Ghanaians who responded to the questionnaires. It also represents those who voted in the 2012 elections and 2008 elections. Nine hundred and forty (94.0%) Ghanaian electorates responded to the questionnaires. However fifty-six non-Ghanaians (5.6%) also responded to the questionnaires. This proved useful because non-Ghanaians form part of the entire sample who have either witnessed or noticed the operations of the NCCE and better still have an independent opinion as to whether the roles of the NCCE has really benefitted the lot of the people in Ghana including foreigners. It is understood that educators of civic rights and responsibilities sometimes focus on getting electorates to sometimes stay out of trouble during and after elections. Once there is peace, both citizens and foreign expatriates benefit from the peace that exists in the political space. Also, eight hundred and four (80.4%) of these respondents voted in the 2012 elections against five hundred and twenty (52.0%) in 2008. This notwithstanding, the increase in voter participation in the 2012 cannot be only credited to the NCCE.

**Table 3.0. Ghanaians, Non-Ghanaians and Voter Participation**

Are you a Ghanaian?		Did you vote in the 2012 election?		Did you vote in the previous election? (2008)	
Yes	940 (94.0%)	Yes	804 (80.4%)	Yes	520 (52.0%)
No	56 (5.6%)	No	188 (18.8%)	No	480 (48.0%)
Unanswered	4 (0.4%)	Unanswered	8 (0.8%)	Unanswered	0 (0.0%)

***Electoral Education of the Electorate by the NCCE before the 2012 Elections***

The education of the citizenry before Election Day becomes very necessary during the election year. In most instances institutions that educate electorates on elections use several mediums. Severally, these educational mediums also serve as basis for getting educators like the NCCE introduced or known to the people or electorates. Table 4.0 below represents the knowledge of the electorates about the NCCE. The

questions asked include: Have you heard or do you know anything about the NCCE? If yes how did you get to know about the Commission?

**Table 4.0 Knowledge of the Electorates about the NCCE**

Have you heard about National Commission for Civic Education?		If yes, how did you get to know about it?	% based on people who answered yes	Do you know the electoral commission ?		If yes, how did you come to know about it?	% based on people who answered yes
Yes	764 (76.4%)	Television	332 (43.6%)	Yes	924 (92.4%)	Election	312 (35.3%)
No	228 (22.8%)	Newspaper	140 (18.4%)	No	72 (7.2%)	Radio	220 (24.9%)
Unanswered	8 (0.8%)	Radio	144 (18.9%)	Unanswered	4 (0.4%)	Internet	36 (4.1%)
		Internet	32 (4.2%)			Posters	28 (3.2%)
		Posters	12 (1.6%)			Television	176 (20.2%)
		Friends/co-workers	32 (4.2%)			Friends/co-workers	12 (1.4%)
		Family & relations	1 (0.1%)			Family & relations	16 (1.8%)
		Other	60 (7.9%)			Newspaper	32 (3.6%)
		unanswered	8 (1.1%)			Other	12 (1.2%)
						Unanswered	40 (4.5%)

Responses from **Table 4.0** suggests that a majority of the respondents, which is **seven hundred and sixty-four** (76.4%) out of the sampled population of **one thousand** (100%) have heard about the NCCE. It is important to state that a significant number of **two hundred and twenty-eight** (22.8%) people at the time of responding to the questions had not heard anything about the NCCE. Significantly, **three hundred and thirty-two** (43.6%) respondents which form a majority of the population indicated that they heard about the NCCE through Television. The others include News paper (140), Radio (18.4%), Internet (4.2%), Posters (1.6%), and friends/co-workers (4.2%). The others include Family and relations (0.1%); other (7.9%) and eight (1.1%) abstained or did not answer the question relating to the medium through which they heard of the NCCE. The responds show that the presence of the NCCE in the media (Print and electronic) is high but their efforts in reaching out to the people has not permeated or resonated in the respective family units in Ghana. The family’s knowledge and dissemination of information concerning the NCCE and what they represent or do is very little or nil. There was however a sharp contrast when they were asked same question in a different way, do you know the Electoral Commission (EC)? This time there was only **seventy-two** (72%) people who did not know anything about the NCCE and **four** (0.4%) people who did not answer. It can therefore be approximated that **(924 -764)** which is **160** are persons who did not remember exactly how they heard about the NCCE. Also the follow-up question to the second question, how did you know about the NCCE? Rather placed elections at the top with **three hundred and twelve (312)** people.

Key issues arising out of this data include the fact that the NCCE over the years especially in 2012 have used television, radio, news papers, posters, internet and other forms of media to disseminate information or educate the electorates as well as the general citizenry about their constitutional rights and responsibilities. It has also confirmed that the NCCE is mostly effective during the election year or when there is going to be national elections. Although the NCCE is seen as important educational tool, the people in the country do not necessarily know the major actors who are involved in making the NCCE a success story or failure. For example in table 4.0 below, four hundred and ninety (**49.0%**) people out of one thousand (**1000**) noted that they did not know the present chairman of the NCCE.

**Table 4.0**

Who is the present chairman/person of the NCCE?		% (1000)
Larry Bimi	96	9.6%
Afari Djan	140	14.0%
J.A.Kufour	4	0.4%
Gbevlo Lartey	52	5.2%
Johnson Asiedu Nketiah	16	1.6%
Charlotte Osei	228	22.8%
Don't know	464	46.4%

***The NCCE and other Actors in Electoral Education***

It is essential to point out that although the NCCE has a constitutional mandate to educate the people of Ghana concerning the civic rights and responsibilities, over the years there are other actors or players who have been involved in educating the people concerning their rights with much emphasis on electoral education in Ghana. Since 1994 the NCCE argued that they were poised to serve as a credible focal point to co-ordinate all civic education activities in the country.<sup>6</sup> The need to build bridges of co-operation with other state institutions, identifiable bodies, political parties and other relevant institutions has been a key strategy of the NCCE to create the necessary atmosphere for consensus building which is so viable in any viable democracy.<sup>7</sup> There is the need to recall that the fourth republican constitution provided for the establishment of various commissions to enhance democracy in the country. Aside the NCCE, the constitution established the National Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the National Media Commission for the first time. The Electoral Commission was re-established out of the National Commission for Democracy. The NCCE has collaborated with all these institutions among others especially the EC.

Again, attention is paid to the immediate periods before and after elections. Respondents have confirmed from table 5.0 that **424 (42.4%)** people showed that the NCCE is the only body that provides election related education in Ghana. However, **556 (55.6%)** people noted that the NCCE is not the only body that provides election related education in Ghana. The study further confirms through respondents in table 5.0 that the media as well as the electoral commission are also major providers of electoral education in Ghana. This notwithstanding, the media is noted by the public as the group that offered much electoral education before the 2012 elections **524** as compared with **455** of the Electoral Commission. **Table 5.0** further confirms that the NCCE did electoral education before the 2012 elections in Ghana yet not less than 416 (41.6%) people noted that they did not hear anything about any electoral education of the NCCE. However, 423 (46.8%) respondents which is the majority of responses on how they heard about the NCCE education, showed that they watched the NCCE electoral education on television rather than all the other variables, that is, radio, internet, news paper, poster among others.

Leading to the 2012 elections, officers of the NCCE continued to educate the electorate and called on the political parties and leaders to pursue peace and to desist from activities that could incite violence in the general election. The NCCE also entreated the youth to champion the cause for peace and tolerance before, during and after elections. The NCCE enumerated some of these and made it known to the general public through the “Yes for Peace” project which sought to engage youth leaders across the country to inculcate into their minds the necessity of leading their fellow youth through a peaceful and serene election season.<sup>8</sup> Political parties in their activities were to desist from insulting opponents and

<sup>6</sup> National Commission for Civic Education, First Annual Report, 1994

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> NCCE Urges Youth to work for peace, [www.graphic.com.gh/news/politics/2855-ncce-urges-youth-to-work-for-peace.html](http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/politics/2855-ncce-urges-youth-to-work-for-peace.html)

destroying their party banners and posters, removing opponents' posters and flags; use of provocative language against opponents during rallies and meetings, transporting people to opponents camps to destroy their items and multiple voting among other activities that had the potential to destroy or hamper peaceful elections in the December 2012 elections.<sup>9</sup> From the Northern Region of Ghana, the NCCE sent a message to the media that they should say nothing evil, see nothing evil and report nothing evil till October 2013 in order to prevent chaos during and after the Supreme Court verdict on the election 2012 petition.<sup>10</sup> This message was communicated in every corner of the country.<sup>11</sup> In a statement to the Daily Graphic, the NCCE said 'as citizens of Ghana, the need to uphold and defend the constitution and the duty to foster national unity and live in harmony with others is imperative.' Within this period of the election 2012 petition in Ghana, the NCCE made efforts to collaborate with key stake holders. They include the National Peace Council, National Media Commission (NMC), Ghana Independent Broadcasters Association, Ghana Journalists Association, and the Christian Council of Ghana. The others were the Catholic Bishops' Conference, Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Federation of Muslim Councils, office of the National Chief Imam, security services, National Council of Christian Charismatic Churches, Ghana Trades Union Congress, National House of Chiefs and several other institutions and associations.<sup>12</sup> The NCCE further engaged all political party leaders especially the parties involved in the petition before the Supreme Court to engage their members and supporters and work towards promoting peace in Ghana, political tolerance and peacefully accepting the Supreme Court's verdict.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 5.0**

Is the NCCE the only body that provides election related education in Ghana?		If NO, which other body/institution do you know that provides election related education?		Did you hear about any NCCE educational campaign before the 2012 election?		If yes, how did you hear about it?	
Yes	424 (42.4%)	Media	524 (52.4%)	Yes	576 (57.6%)	Television	423 (46.8%)
No	556 (55.6%)	Electoral commission	455 (45.5%)	No	416 (41.6%)	Radio	327 (36.2%)
Unanswered	20 (2.0%)	Other	18 (18.0%)	Unanswered	8 (0.8%)	Internet	5 (0.6%)
		unanswered	3 (0.3%)			Newspaper	92 (10.2%)
						Neighbourhood	11 (1.2%)
						Friend/ co-worker	0 (0.0%)
						Family/ relation	0 (0.0%)
						Poster	30 (3.3%)
						Other	3 (0.3%)
						unanswered	12 (1.3%)

Table 5.1 below pays attention to a very critical aspect of the research. The fact that there are several people who have heard about t the NCCE does not suggest that the NCCE is firmly rooted in the communities in Ghana. The question, “have you attended any fora or symposium held by the NCCE concerning the civic rights and responsibilities of the electorates before the 2012 elections?” was not answered in the affirmative. Only Twenty-four (**2.4%**) people out of one thousand (**1000**) respondents

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Responsible Media is Scarce Commodity-NCCE Northern Region, [www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/2012-02-08-08-32-47/regional/2684-reponsible-media-is-scarce-commodity-ncce-n-r](http://www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/2012-02-08-08-32-47/regional/2684-reponsible-media-is-scarce-commodity-ncce-n-r), accessed 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2014

<sup>11</sup> Ghana News Agency (GNA), NCCE Urges Ghanaians to Accept Supreme Court Verdict, [www.ghanaweb.com](http://www.ghanaweb.com), accessed 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2014

<sup>12</sup> NCCCE works on national cohesion, stability, [www.modernghana.com/news/476589/1/ncce-works-on-national-cohesion-stability.html](http://www.modernghana.com/news/476589/1/ncce-works-on-national-cohesion-stability.html) accessed June 4th 2014

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

said yes. Seven hundred and seventy-six of the respondent never attended any symposium or forum organised by the NCCE before the 2012 elections.

**Table 5.1**

Have you attended any fora/symposium held by the NCCE concerning the civic rights and responsibilities of the electorates before the 2012 election?		If Yes, where was it held?
Yes	24 (2.4%)	Ashanti regional office
No	776 (77.6%)	Chiefs palace
Unanswered	200 (20.0%)	Kumasi
		Sefwi Juaboso
		Unanswered - 20

Table 5.2 below enhances the discussions. Thus assessing the performance of the NCCE concerning electoral education in Ghana, the following questions were asked. If you know the NCCE do you think it did a good job in educating electorates on their civic rights and responsibilities about the 2012 elections?, If yes how well do you think the NCCE carried out its work?. A majority of four hundred and forty respondents out of one thousand noted that the NCCE did a good job in education the electorates before the 2012 elections but this does not take away the fact that three hundred and sixty of the one thousand respondents also noted that the NCCE did not do a good job in educating the electorates concerning their civic rights and responsibilities before the 2012 elections. A total of **196 (19.6%)** respondents out of one thousand stated that the NCCE did not do too well and **120 (12.0%)** noted that the NCCE did extremely well. The general picture which is drawn per the responses of the respondents shows that the electorates are not extremely happy about the performance of the NCCE. This is emphasised by the fact that those who noted that the NCCE did quite well (35.2%) were more than those who stated that the NCCE did very well (33.2%). This emphasises the degree of uncertainty of the electorates about the effectiveness and performance of the NCCE.

**Table 5.2**

If you know the NCCE, do you believe it did a good job in educating electorates on their civic rights and responsibility about the 2012 election?		If Yes, how well do you believe the NCCE carried out its work?	
Yes	440 (44.0%)	Extremely well	120 (12.0%)
No	360 (36.0%)	Very well	332 (33.2%)
Unanswered	200 (20.0%)	Quiet well	352 (35.2%)
		Not too well	196 (19.6%)

### *Collaborations of the NCCE with the Electoral Commission (EC)*

The Electoral commission of Ghana is mandated constitutionally to conduct elections in Ghana. It is important to state that the EC has been giving some electoral education before and after elections. Out of thousand respondents nine hundred and four noted that they know the electoral commission. This shows that a majority of the electorates know the EC than the NCCE. Several factors could be attributed to this fact but that is not the major thrust of this study. Rather the study sought to find out the levels of collaboration and most importantly how effective it's been before and after the 2012 elections in Ghana. In terms of collaborations, **table 5.3** below shows that the electorates either do not know or have not seen much collaboration between the NCCE and the EC. Five hundred and eighty-four respondents (58.4%) noted that they did not know or see any collaboration between the EC and the NCCE in educating the electorates before the 2012 elections in Ghana. Three hundred and twenty (32.0%) out of a thousand

populations noted that there has been some level of collaboration. The two figures suggest that there is either inadequate collaboration between the EC and the NCCE or there is little or no public knowledge about it.

**Table 5.3**

<b>Do you know the Electoral Commission?</b>		<b>If Yes, Do you know about any collaboration between the EC and the NCCE in educating the electorates before the 2012 elections?</b>	
Yes	904 (90.4%)	Yes	320 (32.0%)
No	96 (9.6%)	No	584 (58.4%)
Unanswered	0 (0.0%)	Unanswered	96 (9.6%)

Table 5.4 below shows that much commitment has not been shown by the NCCE in educating the electorates concerning their civic rights and responsibilities after the 2012 general elections in Ghana. Out of a thousand respondents, three hundred and ninety-two (39.2%) confirmed that they have heard educational campaigns of the NCCE whereas six hundred and four people denounced hearing any educational campaign of the NCCE concerning the civic rights and responsibilities of the electorates after the 2012 elections. Again out of the three hundred and ninety-two respondents who confirmed that the NCCE has still been educating the people concerning their civic rights and responsibilities, two hundred and twenty-two which forms the majority of the respondents noted that they heard about the educational campaign on Television followed by Radio (116) and Newspaper (20). In addition, table 5.5 shows that only fifty-six (5.6%) respondents have attended any fora or symposium held by the NCCE. This shows that a significant number of the population in Ghana who have heard of the educational campaigns of the NCCE except watching or listening to their educational campaign on TV and radio and sometimes reading newspapers and posters have not really participated in any of the fora or symposium organised by the NCCE.

**Table 5.4**

<b>Have you heard about the NCCE educational campaign concerning the civic rights and responsibility of the electorates after the 2012 election?</b>		<b>If Yes, how did you hear about it?</b>	
Yes	392 (39.2%)	Television	222 (56.6%)
No	604 (60.4%)	Radio	116 (29.6%)
Unanswered	4 (0.4%)	Internet	10 (2.5%)
		Newspaper	20 (5.1%)
		Neighborhood	4 (1.0%)
		Friends/ co-workers	8 (2.0%)
		Family/ relations	4 (1.0%)
		Poster	0 (0.0%)
		other	8 (2.0%)
		unanswered	0 (0.0%)

**Table 5.5**

<b>Have you attended any fora/symposium held by the NCCE concerning the civic rights and responsibilities of the electorates after the 2012 election?</b>		<b>If Yes, where was it held?</b>
Yes	56 (5.6%)	Northern Region
No	940 (94.0%)	Volta Region, Ho
Unanswered	4 (0.4%)	Accra, NCCE head office
		Tamale
		Kuntanase
		Accra
		Sir max
		Ashanti regional office
		Takoradi
		Moon star hotel
		Techiman
		Chiefs palace
		Unanswered – 44

### 3. Summary and Conclusion

From the discussion of some of the relevant literature in the introductory aspect of the study it was noted that democratic society is established by an educated people, especially those that have been schooled in defending their constitutional rights. Based on the study, we learnt that the citizens are schooled or educated by the NCCE concerning their constitutional rights as well as the need for them to vote peacefully to elect their leaders. The fact that the electorates went to the polls to vote during the 2012 elections meant that they respected their constitutional rights to vote or elect their leaders. Again, by going to the polls during the 2012 elections but not resorting to the use of the barrel of the gun meant a consolidation of the gains or attempts made at ensuring a democratic society.

Again, the general peace enjoyed by Ghana during and after the 2012 elections in Ghana amplified the fact that citizens' education as done by the NCCE and other stakeholders contributed immensely towards peace. Although it has been argued that Ghanaians are generally peace loving people with a culture that creates the atmosphere for respect for authorities, the value placed on the embryonic democracy of Ghana was strictly protected by the citizens who had some form of political, electoral and constitutional education by the NCCE and its collaborators.

In a democratic political culture, we understand that the roles that citizens play are important as the institutions that oil the wheels of democracy. The study points to an NCCE that has not been able to execute its mandate as expected by the citizenry yet it cannot be underestimated that their scant efforts contributed towards a citizenry that respected the electoral institutions and rules that made the 2012 elections peacefully and to a large extent successful.

The study has found out among other things that the educational campaigns of the NCCE are much stronger before elections than after elections. This notwithstanding the NCCE has not been very strong in getting its messages and programmes across to the electorates. The reasons could be many but the study has shown that the people rather perceive that radio and television rather served as more useful tools in electoral education than the NCCE. Respondents have shown that even though there has been a certain level of collaboration between the EC and NCCE, they still note that level of collaboration has not been strongly felt by the electorates. Arguably it could be as a result of the fact that the people of Ghana rather pay attention to the EC than the NCCE. It is also as a result of the fact that the people have little or no knowledge about the operations of the NCCE. The study has confirmed that the NCCE did not make a tremendous impact before the 2012 general elections and has done little or nothing when it comes to civic

education after the 2012 elections. It is clear that the impact of the NCCE at the family level is very little. This is because of the absence of forums or lack of participation of societal members in such fora or symposiums. As a result of this, several families or community people do not have several of their members trained or educated by the NCCE to enable them pass on significant information about the NCCE and the constitution to them. This has further increased society's lack of awareness and participation of programmes organised by the NCCE.

It's been argued that 'the idea of establishing democracy-enhancing institutions emanates from the desire to ensure that our democratic process succeeds. That is as much as possible to avoid, reduce or completely eliminate the social, political and economic aberrations which hitherto had bedevilled our national life since independence'<sup>14</sup> Based on this it can be argued that although the respondents are not very enthused about the general visibility and performance of the NCCE in our communities and the country at large, the NCCE has endeared itself in promoting peace and encouraging peace especially before and after the 2012 elections. Having kept the peace, the constitution of Ghana has not been overthrown as a result of any insurrection. This can be partly attributed to the efforts and collaboration of the NCCE with other stakeholders in promoting peace before and after elections.

Although the statistics generated from the questionnaire points at an NCCE that has not been able to achieve its constitutional mandate or goals especially before and after the 2012 elections, it is important to stress that the NCCE has been consistent in her efforts to achieve the goals it's been constitutionally mandated to serve. For example The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) in its pre-election environment observation report for July 2012 noted that the NCCE carried out civic education for first-time voters in some constituencies they observed. They include the Keta Constituency in the Volta Region and the Jaman South 4 Constituency in the Brong Ahafo Region on their rights and responsibilities and on the electoral process particularly with regard to the importance of the voter identification card, the exhibition of the voters' register and election offenses.<sup>15</sup> Again in Atiwa Constituency where the New Patriotic Party's (NPP) flag bearer refers to in his infamous speech that supporters of the NPP taught the followers of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) a lesson, the NCCE organised a peace march. CODEO also noted close collaboration between the NCCE, the EC and other civic groups. In Ashanti region for example, the regional and Municipal Directors of the NCCE met the Bekwai traditional council to discuss how to conduct the general election peacefully in the municipality. Similarly, collaborative programmes with NCCE and the EC were held in Ellebelle constituency in the Western Region,, Nkoranza North and Dormaa West constituencies in the Brong Ahafo Region and Kwahu South in the Eastern Region.<sup>16</sup>

It is important to stress that although this study pays attention partly to the collaboration of the NCCE and the EC, we have mentioned that in terms of its operation from 1994, the NCCE has also paid attention to collaborating with the political parties to achieve their constitutional goals. Some of these examples have been noted in this section of the discussions. However, the nature of the relationship between the NCCE has not been always smooth. For example, major political parties like the NDC, NPP and the Convention Peoples Party (CPP) contesting the December polls boycotted the NCCE's election 2012 discussions on education. The discussion was to share with the political parties the findings of a nationwide survey report; "Election 2012 – Matters of concern to the Ghanaian voter". The main objective of the survey was to collate information of national concern to the Ghanaian voters, provide political parties with issues that voters would like them to address; provide candidates with critical areas Ghanaians and their constituents want them to address concerning matters raised and finally to provide NCCE with adequate information

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<sup>14</sup> National Commission for Civic Education, First Annual Report, 1994

<sup>15</sup> CODEO Pre-Election Environment Observation Report for July 2012

<sup>16</sup> CODEO Pre-Election Environment Observation Report for July 2012

that will enable her undertake effective civil/voter education towards December 2012 election.<sup>17</sup> In spite of this, it can be surmised that the NCCE played an invaluable role in ensuring a peaceful 2012 elections in Ghana and went further to do some post-election education through major stakeholders at the national and community levels to engender support for peace prior to the verdict of the Supreme Court during the 2012 election petition in the year 2013.

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<sup>17</sup> Major Parties Boycott NCCE Election 2012 Discussion on Education, [www.politics.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201210/95361.php](http://www.politics.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201210/95361.php), accessed 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2014

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