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Democratic Development in Africa

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DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

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RESEARCH QUESTION

What does democracy look like in Africa? Particularly, how democratic are African states and what barriers do African states face in consolidating democracy?

Looking at Uganda, Ghana, and Rwanda as case studies, what factors influence how democratic or not these countries are?

INTRODUCTION

The last three decades have seen states in Africa, alongside states around the world, experiment with democracy to varying degrees. Scholarship on the successes and struggle among these democratic attempts suggest certain factors influence the transitions to and consolidation of democracy. These factors include structural and contingent factors, national vs. international factors, and economic vs. political factors. Yet there are still unknown influences on democracy. My research seeks to understand the fundamentals of democracy in Africa, how democratic states are and what barriers do they face, and to compare three different countries to see what factors influence their democracies or lack thereof.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA

METHOD/DATA: Methodology: Comparative Country Case study: Rwanda, Uganda, Ghana

Data:

Democracy – Freedom House ratings; Afrobarometer public opinion

Rule of Law – Constitutional stability

Corruption – Corruption Perceptions Index

Economic Growth – GDP of each country in the last three decades

Hypothesis and Anticipated Findings:

Hypothesis: Ghana will be more democratic than Rwanda or Uganda based on the countries' willingness to extend presidential terms, its corruption index, and economic growth.

Anticipated Findings: I expect to find a correlation between corruption, economic growth, commitment to the rule of law and democratic outcomes in each country. I believe that the countries that have extended presidential term limits will be suffering more democratically than the countries that have not. I also believe that my findings will show lower numbers of corruption and higher economic GDP for countries with stronger democracy than those with weaker democracy. I believe Ghana will be the case with the strongest democracy.



Political Map of Africa

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