**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague**

**Faculty of Economics and Management**

**Department of Economics (FEM)**

**Master's Thesis**

# The impact of Poverty and Corruption on Economic Growth in Ghana: A Case Study in the Ashanti Region

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# CZECH UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES PRAGUE

Faculty of Economics and Management

# DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Bachelor of Science Samuel Osei Afriyie

Economics and Management

Thesis title

**The impact of Poverty and Corruption on Economic Growth in Ghana: A Case Study in the Ashanti Region**

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**Objectives of thesis**

The thesis will deal with selected factors influencing economic growth in Ghana.
Research questions:
How do poverty and corruption interact to affect economic growth?
What measures can be taken to address poverty, corruption and economic growth?

**Methodology**

The preparation of the thesis can be divided into several sub-steps. The titles of the chapters may be different, but they must meet their objectives in terms of content.

In the introduction, the author briefly introduces the topic and explains why the topic is relevant for processing. In the following chapter, entitled "Objectives", the author specifies the research question, the aim of the work and the hypotheses associated with the processing of the work. At the same time, he explains the potential contribution of his work to the current research or practical application.

The creation of a literary search will follow. This section will provide a detailed overview of the literature and the current state of knowledge, focusing on corruption, poverty and economic growth in Ghana. It will include a critical analysis of the most important studies, including the methods used, the results found and, where appropriate, the problematic points. Methodically, this part of the work will be the analysis of documents.

The literary search will provide a basis for the author to specify the methods used for the analytical part of the work. The chapter entitled "Methodology" will present in detail all the methods used; it will also include the source of the data, their description and the process of their preparation for the analysis.

In the next step (analytical part), the author applies the knowledge gained during the literature study to analyse the obtained data using the methods specified in the methodology. This part is a core component of the thesis. This part of the thesis will contain the analysis results and a comparison of the results with other authors focused on the same topic (discussion). This part may also contain recommendations for policy makers or other interested parties.

In the final part (Conclusion), the author will summarise his findings, mention the limitations of the research and indicate possible possibilities for further research.

**The proposed extent of the thesis**

60 – 80 stran

**Keywords**

Ghana, poverty, corruption, corruption perception index, economic growth, economic development

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**Recommended information sources**


Appiah-Otoo, I. et al. (2022) 'Financial development, institutional improvement, poverty reduction: The multiple challenges in West Africa', Journal of Policy Modeling. Elsevier B.V., 44(6), pp. 1296–1312. doi: 10.1016/j.jpolmod.2022.11.002.

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Karnane, P. and Quinn, M. A. (2019) 'Political instability, ethnic fractionalization and economic growth', International Economics and Economic Policy. International Economics and Economic Policy, 16(2), pp. 435–461. doi: 10.1007/s10368-017-0393-3.

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**Declaration**

I declare that I have worked on my master's thesis titled " **The impact of Poverty and Corruption on Economic Growth in Ghana: A Case Study in the Ashanti Region**" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the master's thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 31.03.2025 _____

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I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, doc. Ing. Irena Benešová, Ph.D. for her patience, assistance, and support during this thesis.
To my mother Elizabeth Konadu and my entire family, I was able to persist because of your unwavering love, selflessness, and faith in me. Thank you to my friends, especially my classmates, for the laughs, coffee runs, and reminding me stay dedicated to my studies. You deserve this milestone just as much as I do. Thank you all.

**The impact of Poverty and Corruption on Economic Growth in Ghana: A Case Study in the Ashanti Region**

**Abstract**

The study examines the impact of poverty and corruption on economic growth in Ghana, with a focus on the Ashanti Region. Poverty and corruption are recognized as critical impediments to economic development especially in developing economies. The study aims to investigate the extent and effects of poverty, the forms and impact of corruption, and their combined influence on economic growth. Therefore, using a quantitative research approach, data were collected from 126 respondents through structured surveys, and statistical analyses which include descriptive, inferential, and hypothesis testing, were conducted. The findings reveal a significant relationship between poverty and economic growth, which demonstrates that limited access to education, healthcare, and financial resources constrains productivity. The study also confirms that corruption, especially bribery, nepotism, and misappropriation of public funds, undermines economic efficiency and discourages investment. The Kruskal-Walli's test results indicate that perceptions of poverty and corruption are different based on demographic characteristics, which reinforces the argument that economic deprivation encourages susceptibility to corrupt practices. The study contributes to economic development discourse as it affirms institutional theories that link governance structures to economic outcomes. It recommends targeted policy interventions, which include institutional reforms, anti-corruption measures and educational investments. Future research should, however, adopt longitudinal and sector-specific approaches in order to further explore the dynamic interplay between poverty, corruption, and economic growth.

**Keywords:**

Ghana, poverty, corruption, corruption perception index, economic growth, economic development

**Vliv chudoby a korupce na hospodářský růst v Ghaně: případová studie v regionu Ashanti**


## Abstrakt

Studie zkoumá dopad chudoby a korupce na hospodářský růst v Ghaně se zaměřením na region Ashanti. Chudoba a korupce jsou považovány za zásadní překážky hospodářského rozvoje, zejména v rozvojových ekonomikách. Cílem studie je zkoumat rozsah a dopady chudoby, formy a dopady korupce a jejich kombinovaný vliv na ekonomický růst. Proto byla pomocí kvantitativního výzkumného přístupu shromážděna data od 126 respondentů prostřednictvím strukturovaných průzkumů a byly provedeny statistické analýzy, které zahrnují deskriptivní, inferenční a testování hypotéz. Zjištění odhalují významný vztah mezi chudobou a ekonomickým růstem, což ukazuje, že omezený přístup ke vzdělání, zdravotní péči a finančním zdrojům omezuje produktivitu. Studie také potvrzuje, že korupce, zejména úplatkářství, nepotismus a zpronevěra veřejných prostředků, podkopává ekonomickou efektivitu a odrazuje od investic. Výsledky Kruskal-Walliho testu naznačují, že vnímání chudoby a korupce se liší na základě demografických charakteristik, což posiluje argument, že ekonomická deprivace podporuje náchylnost ke korupčním praktikám. Studie přispívá k diskurzu ekonomického rozvoje, protože potvrzuje institucionální teorie, které spojují struktury vládnutí s ekonomickými výsledky. Doporučuje cílené politické intervence, které zahrnují institucionální reformy, protikorupční opatření a investice do vzdělávání. Budoucí výzkum by však měl přijmout dlouhodobé a odvětvově specifické přístupy, aby dále prozkoumal dynamickou souhru mezi chudobou, korupcí a hospodářským růstem.



**Klíčová slova:** Ghana, chudoba, korupce, index vnímání korupce, ekonomický růst, ekonomický rozvoj

**Table of Contents**

1. Introduction ..... 1

2. Goals ..... 3

2.1 Research Objectives ..... 3

2.2 Research Questions ..... 3

2.3 Research Hypotheses ..... 3

3. Research Methodology ..... 5

3.0 Introduction ..... 5

3.1 Research Philosophy and Approach ..... 5

3.2 Research Strategy and Choice ..... 7

3.3 Time Horizon ..... 8

3.4 Techniques and Procedures ..... 8

3.4.1 Data Collection Source ..... 8

3.4.2 Data Collection Method ..... 9

3.4.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques ..... 10

3.4.4 Selection Criteria ..... 12

3.5 Data Analysis ..... 12

3.5.1 Demographic Analysis ..... 12

3.5.2 Descriptive Analysis ..... 13

3.5.3 Inferential Statistics ..... 14

3.5 Ethical Considerations ..... 16

4. Literature Review/Theoretical Part ..... 17

4.0 Introduction ..... 17

4.1 Brief Economic Overview of Ashanti Region and Ghana ..... 17
4.1.1 Ashanti Regional Overview ..... 19
4.2 Cause and Effects: Poverty, Corruption, and Economic Growth ..... 23
4.3 The Interplay of Corruption and Poverty ..... 27
4.4 The Current State of Corruption and Poverty in Ghana ..... 28
4.5 Literature Gap ..... 32
5. Empirical/Practical Part ..... 33
5.0 Introduction ..... 33
5.1 Demographic Analysis ..... 33
5.2 Descriptive Analysis ..... 37
5.3 Inferential Analysis ..... 44
6. Discussion of Findings ..... 48
7. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation ..... 51
7.0 Introduction ..... 51
7.1 Summary of the Study ..... 51
7.2 Conclusion ..... 52
7.3 Limitations of the Study ..... 53
7.4 Recommendations ..... 54
8. References ..... 57
9. Appendices ..... 69
Appendix 1: Research Questionnaire ..... 69

## 1. Introduction

Economic growth remains an essential measure of national development, living standards, and sustainable development in any country (Dragoi, 2020). Meanwhile, developing countries, particularly in West Africa, are still facing challenges such as poverty and corruption that hinder their development trajectory (Kutor, 2014; Ikejiaku, 2009). For decades, achieving a consistent economic growth remains a priority for Ghana – a lower-middle-income country adjacent to the Gulf of Guinea in the Western part of the African continent (Gieger, Trenczek, & Wacker, 2019; Usman & Landry, 2021). However, Ghana mirrors the challenges of other developing countries to economic development, which include poverty and corruption. Although sectors like mining, agriculture, and services are contributing significantly to the economic growth, there is a substantial part of the Ghana's population in poverty as the economic benefits are unequally distributed (Cooke, Hague, & McKay, 2016). While poverty limits access to essential resources and entrenches inequality (Sawyer, 2019; McAreavey & Brown, 2019), corruption, on the other hand, reduces investor confidence and undermines institutional efficiency, impeding foreign and domestic investment and overall productivity (Spyromitros & Panagiotidis, 2022; Giorno, Dileo, & Busato, 2024).

One of the most significant economic hubs in Ghana is the Ashanti Region, often regarded as the economic heart of Ghana. The region is home to cities such as Kumasi that thrive as commercial centres and hosts a mix of other rural and urban populations that provides a compelling context for exploring the interplay between economic growth, corruption, and poverty. The Ashanti Region is a perfect reflection of Ghana's socioeconomic reality with an even spread of rural and urban communities with distinguishing access to essentials like education, infrastructure, and healthcare. While poverty persists and hinders economic participation and progress, corruption in the region also remains a pervasive challenge. These realities, according to the Transparency International, reflect in Ghana ranking high at 43$^{rd}$ with the Corruption Perception Index as well as a 24.2% of its population categorised as poor and living below national poverty line (Transparency International, 2024; OXFAM International, 2024). The interconnection between corruption and poverty, thus, is cyclical and complicated, with the cause-and-effect interlinkage. Poverty exacerbate corruption by increasing population's vulnerability to exploitation while corruption also deepens corruption as resources are diverted

from necessary investments and services to private pouches. Collectively, they are significant obstacles to economic growth by reducing productivity.

Since the Ashanti Region is important to Ghana's economy, it is critical area of focus for understanding the broader implications of corruption and poverty. Hence, examining their effects in this region ensures this research investigates the systemic challenges that impede economic progress in Ghana. Additionally, this research, conducted in 2024, explores the potential interventions that address the challenges and make recommendations for policymakers and investors in alignment with Ghana's development agenda. Meanwhile, the relevance of this study is reflected in Ghana's commitments to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with particular focus on Goal 1 (No Poverty) and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Therefore, this research provides valuable insights that support the efforts to create models for a more inclusive sustainable growth for the Ashanti Region nd Ghana as a whole.

## 2. Goals

The research primarily focuses on exploring how poverty, economic growth, and corruption relate and affect one another in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The research explores the extent of poverty and corruption in the region and how they affect economic growth. Similarly, the study investigates measures of mitigating the effects of corruption and poverty on economic growth and foster sustainable development.

### 2.1 Research Objectives

These following objectives are specific to this study:

1. To investigate the extent and effects of poverty in the Ashanti Region on economic growth.
2. To assess the extent, forms, and effects of corruption in the Ashanti Region on economic growth.
3. To investigate the poverty-corruption interaction and their combined impact on economic growth in Ashanti Region.
4. To suggest actionable measures in addressing poverty and corruption and their measure effectiveness on economic growth in Ashanti Region.

### 2.2 Research Questions

1. What is the extent of poverty in the Ashanti region, and how has it affected economic growth?
2. What are the most common forms of corruption in the Ashanti region, and how have they impacted economic growth?
3. How do poverty and corruption interact to affect economic growth in the Ashanti region?
4. What measures can be taken to address poverty and corruption in the Ashanti region, and how might these measures impact economic growth?

### 2.3 Research Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1**

$H_0$: Poverty in the Ashanti Region does not significantly affect economic growth.

$H_1$: Poverty in the Ashanti Region significantly affects economic growth.

**Hypothesis 2**

$H_0$: Corruption in the Ashanti Region does not significantly impact economic growth

$H_1$: Corruption in the Ashanti Region significantly impacts economic growth.

## 3. Research Methodology

### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter of the dissertation presents a step-to-step approach to the research methodologies in investigating the impact of poverty and corruption on the economic growth of Ghana, with a primary focus on Ashanti region of the country. Utilising the Saunders' research onions (Saunders et al., 2019), the research methodologies incorporated a six-step methodological process, including research philosophies, approaches, techniques, strategies, time horizon, and research choice, while putting the research processes into context. This guides the research process, including data collection and other relevant details of the research tools employed. Additionally, ethical considerations, emphasising the research's commitment to providing valid and reliable research outcomes.

### 3.1 Research Philosophy and Approach

Research methods are based on underlying set of beliefs and assumptions, which are generally referred to as research philosophy (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2019). Thus, research philosophies are a set of assumptions and beliefs guiding the way data about specific phenomenon should be collected and processed for research outcomes (Kenaphoom, 2021). Well-thought-out assumptions regarding a research topic will constitute to the alignment of credible research philosophy, which will play a significant role in underpinning the research strategy, methodological choice, and data collection methods and analytical processes (Mauthner, 2020). While ontological assumptions are inclined with the nature of reality, they shape research objects are viewed and studied (Tombs and Pugsley, 2020). Meanwhile, epistemology is concerned with assumptions about what a valid and acceptable knowledge is constituted of (Kenaphoom, 2021). Hence, research must strike a balance between how it views the research objects (ontology) and its investigation on how the knowledge are developed (epistemology) (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill, 2019). This way, assumptions leading to the choice of research philosophy are well guided towards choosing befitting philosophies. Consequently, this research adopts an objectivist and positivist research philosophy, since its focus and assumptions of the reality can be observed through numerical data, from an external standpoint.

Objectivism leverages the assumptions of the natural sciences (Sauders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2019). It maintains that social reality under research is external to researchers and other social

actors; hence, considering social entities and actions to be similar to physical entities of the natural world, existing independently (Levers, 2013). Therefore, the experiences and interpretations of social actors and researchers do not influence the outcomes of research. This is in line with positivist philosophy. The positivism paradigm is built upon the assumptions of objectivity and external observations of facts and realities (Ryan, 2018). To positivism, social reality can be identified, understood, and measured (Maksimović and Evtimov, 2023). Epistemologically, positivists argue that knowledge must be built objectively, with limits on the influence of the researchers or participants (Scotland, 2012). hence, appropriate separation must exist between researcher and research participant to ensure adequate development of truth and knowledge. Positivism operates in objectivity and dualism (Park, Kongo, and Artino, 2019). That is, research process must follow strict protocols that absolutely reduces bias in the study (objectivity) while it believes participants and researcher are separate and must collaborate in the process of finding truth and developing knowledge (Junjie and Yingxin, 2022).

Additionally, for research outcomes to be credible, objective and reliable, it must follow a systematic design in investigating its subject; thus, approaches in research determine the direction of reasoning, explained as the procedure towards concluding to new and existing knowledge (Daniel, 2016). Meanwhile research approach is split into two – deductive and inductive approaches. The positivist's philosophical basis for this research aligns with the deductive research approach (Chirkov and Anderson, 2018). Deductive approach is employed to postulate theories that researcher can test to be true or not, based on the new social reality under review (Malhotra, 2017). Previously existing knowledge or model determined the hypothetical theory direction of a deductive-based reasoning in research (Woiceshyn and Daellenbach, 2018). Hence, if the results to validate the previously existing knowledge are satisfactory, the theory can be considered as law-like; however, if the outcomes of the validation do not satisfy, the research can be regarded as a new knowledge which can serve as basis for future research (Park, Bahrudin, and Han, 2020).

The basis for deductive approach is the generalisation of specific models and theories through validation, arrived at by collecting large numerical data, is in line with the philosophy of positivism (Chirkov and Anderson, 2018). That is, a social reality under study can be observed objectively with the computation of sufficient numerical data. Overall, deductive approach

primarily incorporates a large amount of measurable data, which are computed and interpreted objectively in a bid to validate a previously existing knowledge and generalise (Park, Bahrudin, and Han, 2020). While deductive approach is objective, precise, and appropriate for testing theories and existing truths, it can, however, lack detailed insights and narratives that incorporate contextual reflection of data (Srisilla, 2023). The same way, deductive approach may involve superficial data which may not be appropriate to answer how and why questions of research (Park, Bahrudin, and Han, 2020). Nonetheless, with the objectivity and incorporation of causal-effect relationships in quantitative and deductive research, the why and how answers can be objectively answered through enough numerical data (Apuke, 2017).

This research, therefore, incorporates the assumptions of the positivists to a large extent in order to investigate the impact of corruption and poverty on the growth of Ghana's economy, specifically in Ashanti region, as well as using deductive approach. Although the choice of positivist paradigm limits the extent to which the research reflects the subjective understandings and experiences of participants and researchers, the research, however, can boast of reliable, testable research outcomes observing data and social realities from an external standpoint (Purnamasari, 2016).

### 3.2 Research Strategy and Choice

The strategic direction of research determines the core choices of data collection and computation; hence, quantitative and qualitative research strategies are with their limitations and advantages and differing patterns (Daniel, 2016). The primary aim of deciding any research strategy is to effectively reflect the social reality understudied with no or minimal interferences and biases (Panucci and Wilkins, 2011). Therefore, research strategy that largely minimises subjective interferences and biases during its process of data collection, computation, to interpretation is the quantitative research (Daniel, 2016). Hence, this research adopts a quantitative research strategy is gathering and computing data. Thus, quantitative research strategy concerns itself with the objective observation and measurement of social realities through mathematical and statistical computations of data in order to offer a more reliable, testable answers to research questions the research seeks (Mohajan, 2021). With measurable data collected from observing variables and the adoption of statistical tools, quantitative research tools are popular for objectively collecting, analysing, and interpreting data in a way

that they test, predict, and validate theories of social reality (Reed et al., 2021). Thus, the results and findings of a quantitative research strategy are largely dependent on the quality of process in collecting and analysing data. Hence, for deductive approach to validate previous theories or knowledge, there must an adequate process of observation and measurement without any form of bias. This way, the findings are fit for validation or nullification of previous theories, as well as for generalisation. Therefore, this research focuses on finding objective answers to the role poverty and corruption play in the economic growth of Ashanti region of Ghana.

### 3.3 Time Horizon

Due to unavailability of relevant data over the years, reflecting the rate of poverty and corruption in Ashanti region, Ghana, this research focuses on collecting cross-sectional data. Thus, this research collects data of varying variables, reflecting the current effects of poverty and corruption on economic growth in Ashanti region of Ghana.

### 3.4 Techniques and Procedures

Since the research adopts a quantitative research strategy, there are specific techniques and tools appropriate for data collection and analysis to ensure efficient research process. The processes, including data collection, data analysis, sampling methods, selection criteria, and other tools necessary for the research process to be smooth and reliable. This research is a

#### 3.4.1 Data Collection Source

The inability to collect secondary data over a long period of time to ensure longitudinal research limits the research's ability to collect extensive, relevant data on corruption and poverty in Ashanti Region of Ghana, to explain the economic growth in the region. However, the research collects a mix of primary and secondary data, reflecting the current situations in the region. Primary data are more reflective of the social realities understudied since they are collected from the direct sources (Lowry, 2015); however, most primary data are affected by research participants biases. Additionally, primary data may take more time to collect since meeting individuals, specified for the data collection, may involve physical or online contact which can be disruptive and invasive (Taherdoost, 2021). Nonetheless, this research collects data from its source, following a strict, technical procedures to promote transparency, confidentiality, and

social reality reflectivity. Primary data are collected from relevant stakeholders, such as residents, in Ashanti region.

On the other hand, secondary data, describing the recent social and economic developments and realities in Ashanti region of Ghana that can be gathered online are collected. This way, the research gathers all available data relevant to promote valid research outcomes. Secondary data are economical to collect, reducing time and financial efforts to gather (Cheng and Phillips, 2014). Similarly, secondary data are largely collected due to their easy accessibility and quality (Johnston, 2014). Despite these advantages, secondary data can limit or alter analytical processes, altering original research questions or direction, since the data are already collected and processed, and researcher has no control over the dataset (Cheong, Lyons, and Majumdar, 2023). Nonetheless, this research collects secondary data that are most relevant and reflect the research questions and objectives. Additionally, this research employs a mixed source of data to ensure the reality in Ashanti region of Ghana is reflected in the data collected, increasing the validity of the research outcomes. Secondary data are therefore collected from relevant database, such as Ghana Statistical Services and World Bank.

### 3.4.2 Data Collection Method

This research collects primary data using close-ended survey method. Data are collected from residents about their understanding and experiences of the level of corruption and poverty in Ashanti region and the effects on the current economic indicators in the area. Since the research is quantitative, it is important to align all methods and tools to fit in quantitatively. Hence, the choice of a close-ended survey (Appendix 1) affords the research the ability to collect quality data in a measurable and quantifiable manner, using categorical data (Mathers, Fox, and Hunn, 2007). Despite the data being subjective and thoroughly deeper than secondary data may offer, the data are embedded in ranks and numbers that allow computational process of quantitative research (Hansen and Świderska, 2023). The data collection method, therefore, is contained in an online close-ended survey sent to residents of Ashanti region to answer based on their experiences and perspectives of the economic and social reality in the region. The data for this research is collected between August and December in 2024.

### 3.4.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Sample and sampling techniques play a significant role in enhancing research's validity and reliability. Since the research is quantitative, there is a need to critically evaluate the approach to selecting respondents to avoid researcher's interferences. The region understudied boasts of over 5 million people (Ghana Districts, 2022), which is beyond the capacity of this research. While the target population is a very large and difficult to study, subsets are developed to represent the larger population to ensure research-ability (Casteel and Bridier, 2021). These smaller populations, referred to as samples, reflect the realities of the larger population; thus, using sample population for research must return with similar and closely similar research outcomes as the larger population (Andrade, 2020). While the research field is saturated with several sampling techniques, sampling techniques must be in line with research philosophy and approach, as well as the research strategy and choice to ensure research findings are fit for generalisation (Polith and Beck, 2010).

Therefore, this study collected primary data from residents of Ashanti region. The residents of Ashanti region are spread across 18 municipalities, 1 metropolitan, and 24 districts (Local Government Services, 2015). However, in this research, the 18 municipals are the basis for sampling. While it is arguable that out of the two forms of sampling techniques – probability and non-probability, the most effective and unbiased is the probability sampling technique (Sharma, 2017). This is due to its fundamental principle of equality in selection among all population members (Rahman et al., 2022). That is, every resident under the region being studied have the chance to be selected as research participants. Additionally, probability sampling technique aligns with the quantitative and positivist research on which this research is built on. Therefore, stratified and simple random sampling are employed in the collection of data from residents of Ashanti region of Ghana. It is known that stratified sampling allows a large population to be split into strata. And since Ashanti region is a large population, the research will first divide the population into subgroups, based on its 18 municipalities (Figure 2), which are regarded as the strata, through which simple random sampling will be conducted.

*Figure 1. Ashanti Region (Wikipedia, 2024)*

The simple random sampling was incorporated into the data collection process to ensure all residents in Ashanti region, as well as the 18 municipalities, have equal probability of being selected for the research. This way, the research has no influence on selecting samples and further reduces biases (Noor, Tajik, and Golzar, 2022). The simple random sampling technique allows for the representation of each member of the population. It is similar to picking from a shuffled bowl or container, where any sample selected is entirely by probability (Horton, 2024). According to Fox, Hunn, Mathers (2009), the simple random sampling method is appropriate for larger population size and allows for variety in population. This study, therefore, divides the population into strata (municipalities) and then randomly select residents in each municipality.

The sampling process are explained in a step-by-step approach below:

**Stage 1: Stratification**

Split Ashanti into 18 municipalities: Ahafo Ano North, Asante Akin Central, Asante Akim South, Asokore Mampong, Asokwe, Atwima Nwabiagya, Bekwai, Ejisu, Ejura Sekyeredumasi,

Juaben, Kwabre, Kwadaso, Mampong, Obuasi, Offinso, Oforikrom, Old Tafo, and Suame municipals.

**Stage 2: Simple Random Sampling**

Using the fishbowl method, 10 residents are randomly selected from each municipality as respondents.

**Stage 3: Criteria for Selection**

Each resident selected must satisfy the research criteria for selection.

### 3.4.4 Selection Criteria

This study, following the sampling process, collects data from 180 residents of Ashanti region, spread across its 18 municipalities. However, to ensure residents selected are effective to providing accurate data that form the basis for this research's analysis, this research developed selection criteria to guide the sampling process and sample selection. Therefore, the criteria for selection require the residents to (i) have stayed in Ashanti in more than five years (ii) be above 18 years of age (iii) be economically active, and (iv) be healthy and mentally stable. These criteria ensure that respondents are able, physically and mentally, to provide relevant data needed for the study. Additionally, they must have experienced the economy through active participation in the economy as well as be legally of age. This way, the study does not flout any legal or ethical standards.

## 3.5 Data Analysis

This research analyses the primary data using descriptive since the study is a positivist, quantitative work.

### 3.5.1 Demographic Analysis

The demographic analysis serves as a foundational step in contextualising the study's sample population by examining key respondent characteristics, including age, gender, education level, employment status, and residency duration (Eime et al., 2018). The demographic analysis is achieved through frequency and percentage distributions, which provide a clear breakdown of the socio-economic composition of participants (Eime et al., 2018). The justification for this approach is threefold. First, demographic analysis establishes a baseline understanding of the

sample, ensuring that it reflected the diversity of the Ashanti Region. Given that the study employed stratified and simple random sampling across 18 municipalities, demographic analysis is crucial in verifying whether the sample adequately captures variations in economic activity, urban-rural divides, and other regional disparities (Dominguez-Catena et al., 2025).

Second, the analysis helps to identify potential biases that can possibly influence the study's validity (Dominguez-Catena et al., 2025). For instance, engagement level, either based on age or gender could indicate potential biases and begs to find factors that may have contributed to the differences. Such imbalances could skew perceptions of poverty and corruption, particularly if younger, more educated individuals have different economic experiences compared to older, less educated populations. Overrepresentation and underrepresentation of any group may indicate imbalance and questions the reliability of the study's outcomes and may affect generalisability (Leung, 2015); meanwhile, demographic analysis becomes pertinent in providing a comprehensive overview of the socio-economic characteristics of the participants. Finally, the use of measurable, objective demographic data aligns with the study's positivist philosophy, which prioritises empirical observation and quantifiable evidence. By categorising respondents into discrete groups (e.g., income brackets, employment types), the analysis minimises subjective interpretation, reinforcing the study's commitment to objectivity. However, a critical limitation arises from the cross-sectional nature of the data—while it captures a snapshot of the population, it cannot account for longitudinal trends or shifts in economic behaviour over time (Glavac et al., 2003).

Meanwhile, insights from the demographic analysis reveals the socio-economic vulnerability of the study, providing critical insights into how much people earn in the Ashanti region of Ghana. It will provide us with key insights that may reflect the general economic atmosphere in Ghana.

### 3.5.2 Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis represents the positivist approach to summarising and coordinating collected data to expose patterns, trends, data dispersion, and central tendencies (Doyle et al., 2020). According to Loeb et al. (2017), descriptive analysis is appropriate for identifying the need for a solution, the interventions needed, and what problems are plaguing the population (Cooksey, 2020; Murphy, 2022). With descriptive analysis, the research can embrace core

positivists principle of minimal subjective interference, although it limits the effectiveness of the analysis to provide research outcomes on causal effects to certain context, which are mainly done by interpretive and ethnographic techniques (Loeb et al., 2017). Descriptive analysis, according to Doyle et al. (2020), provides a general comprehensiveness of patterns and trends about a particular reality or problem across a population understudied. Therefore, the adoption of descriptive analysis, in this study, is backed by the need to arrive at objective findings about the problems affecting economic growth in Ashanti region, as well as identify patterns and trends in corruption and poverty among its residents. This way, the research can further find the causal-effect relationship between these variables – corruption, poverty, and economic growth – in Ashanti region of Ghana.

### 3.5.3 Inferential Statistics

The inferential analysis in this study is designed to rigorously test the hypothesised relationships between poverty, corruption, and economic growth, with the adoption of number of statistical techniques tailored to the data's characteristics. The selection of these methods is not arbitrary but grounded in established statistical theory and the epistemological commitments of the research. Each technique is chosen to address specific challenges posed by the data while maintaining the study's positivist orientation, which prioritises objectivity, replicability, and generalisability.

#### 3.5.3.1 Normality Test

The use of Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk tests to assess data normality was a necessary first step in determining the appropriateness of parametric statistical methods. Parametric tests, such as ANOVA and linear regression, assume that data are normally distributed, and violating this assumption can lead to Type I or Type II errors (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012). The K-S test, which compares the sample distribution to a theoretical normal distribution, and the Shapiro-Wilk test, which is more sensitive to small sample sizes (Razali & Wah, 2011), were both employed to ensure robustness. The finding of non-normality aligns with common challenges in social science research, where Likert-scale data often exhibit skewness or kurtosis due to the subjective nature of responses (Boone & Boone, 2012). This justified the subsequent shift to non-parametric alternatives, which do not rely on normality assumptions.

Critically, while these tests can confirm non-normality, they, however, do not illuminate the underlying reasons for the revealed distribution (Uttley, 2019). Response bias, which includes clustering answers at extreme ends of scales, or sample heterogeneity, where subgroups like urban and rural respondents, may provide fundamentally differing response patterns and limit the effectiveness of normality tests.

#### 3.5.3.2 Robust Tests of Equality of Means

This study also critically examines the equality of means by using ANOVA. The use of Welch's ANOVA, a robust test, is to cater for the inequality of variances, if there is any (Delacre et al., 2017). This choice reflects a growing consensus in applied statistics that Welch's test is preferable to classic ANOVA in real-world data, where variance homogeneity is rarely achieved (Field, 2018). The method's utility in detecting true differences despite data irregularities have been established in the literature (Kohr & Games, 2014). However, Welch's ANOVA is not a panacea. While it controls for Type I error inflation, it may lack power in small or highly unbalanced samples (Erceg-Hurn & Mirosevich, 2008). The study's reliance on this test without reporting group sizes or variance ratios leaves unanswered questions about potential power limitations.

#### 3.5.3.3 Non-Parametric Tests

For hypothesis testing, the Kruskal-Wallis H-test is deployed as a non-parametric alternative to one-way ANOVA. This test ranks data rather than relying on mean values, making it resilient to non-normality and outliers (Corder & Foreman, 2014). Its use here was theoretically sound, as it aligned with the study's need to compare ordinal (Likert-scale) data across residency-duration groups without assuming parametric conditions. However, the Kruskal-Wallis's test has interpretive limitations. Its result can only indicate the possibility of group differences, it cannot identify the differences, necessitating the need for post-hoc analyses. Post-hoc analyses are required to identify where differences lie (e.g., Dunn's test with Bonferroni correction).

Ultimately, the inferential analysis's strengths lie in its adherence to assumption-checking and methodological flexibility. By diagnosing non-normality and variance heterogeneity early, the study avoided inappropriate parametric tests that could have compromised validity.

### 3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards in research have become an important aspect for considerations, particularly primary data collection methods (Bos, 2020). The collection of primary data may erupt certain ethical dilemma (Ganiyu and Madanayake, 2019); however, this study manages the ethical dilemma effectively by following strict ethical principles and guidelines of the school and the broader research field. One of the core ethical principles is protection of participants rights. Hence, this research heightens the importance of respondents' privacy and confidentiality, as well as their safeguarded. The research provides an information sheet and consent form for potential respondents to fill and willingly and non-intimidatingly agree to the terms, processes, and purposes of the research. Also, they provide consent and are assured of confidentiality, as personal information is not required. Similarly, all data collected are collected in confidentiality and stored effectively. The research, therefore, embraces voluntary participation and confidentiality. Confidentiality in research is a widely discussed issue of ethics in research, and the effectiveness of a consent form and protected data are increasingly important to respondents (Bos, 2020); thus, the research keeps collected data in a secured online cloud with restricted access.

Additionally, there are increasing demands of transparency of research process as well as adhering to a standard procedural framework throughout the research (Prager et al., 2019). Therefore, this research takes seriously the importance of transparency and the potential conflicts of interests, especially on the end of the research. Vulnerable groups, such as under-18 population, sick and mentally unstable people are excluded from the research sampling. Furthermore, the research's adoption of quantitative approach further emphasises the limitedness of researcher's influence on the process and outcomes of the research (Daniel, 2016). Ultimately, the research findings in this study reflects the realities of the data collected since the process are not subjected to human subjectivity and interferences.

## 4. Literature Review/Theoretical Part

### 4.0 Introduction

This section of the thesis comprehensively explores relevant existing literature to understand the interplays of corruption, poverty, and economic growth, particularly as it affects the Ashanti region of Ghana. To contextualise the review, this chapter introduces an overview of Ghana's economic landscape and Ashanti Region, explores the current state of corruption and poverty in Ghana, shedding light, through previous literature, on the corruption and poverty interplays, and finally, exploring the impacts of corruption and poverty on economic growth, with a dynamic view of the trio's cause and effect relationship.

### 4.1 Brief Economic Overview of Ashanti Region and Ghana

Ghana, geographically sitting on Sahara's south, first gained its independence among all other African nations from the United Kingdom in 1957. Ghana shares its land borders with Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire), Togo, and Burkina Faso (see Figure 2). The country's population currently stands at 29.6 million (World Population Review, 2018).

*Figure 2. Map of Ghana and Its Neighbouring Countries (ISSAfrica, 2020)*

Agricultural sector in the country takes up the larger portion of the population, forming Ghana's economic backbone, with about 52% of the labour force engaging in agriculture, contributing about 54% of Ghana's GDP and accounting for over 40% of the country's export earnings (FAO, 2023). Ghana, however, exports other major products (see Figure 3), such as gold (US$9.7b, 37.5%), crude petroleum (US$1.15b, 25.4%), cocoa beans (US$2.4b, 10.7%), and Brazil nuts, coconuts, and cashews (US$1b, 3.39%). The country's GDP growth slowed down in 2022, from 5.4% in 2021 to 3.2%, and the decline in economic growth affected the non-extractive sectors, agriculture, and services sectors. Similarly, the country is experiencing high inflation and interest rates, which continue to depress investment and private consumption (World Bank, 2023).

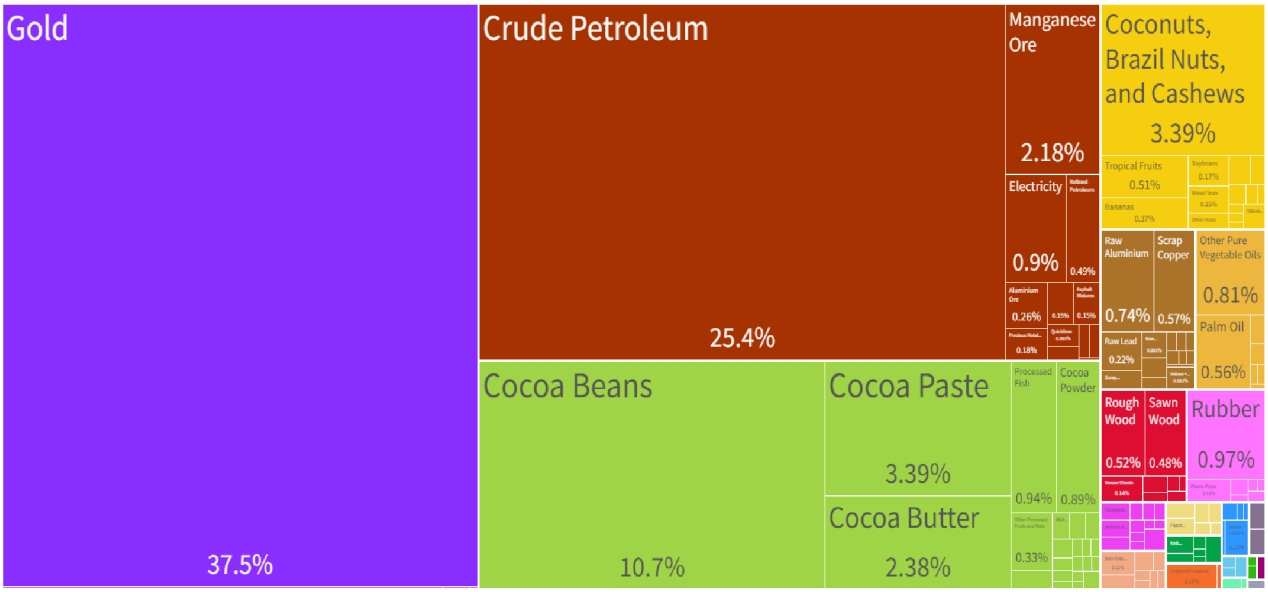


*Figure 3. Ghana's Export 2021 (OEC, 2023)*

Ghana still battles with poverty reduction. Following a report from the World Bank (2023), the country's international poverty rate is estimated at 20.5% in 2022, reflecting the decline in Ghana's fight towards poverty reduction. The cost of living has significantly increased and was linked to the increments experienced in food costs, electricity and water costs, value-added tax, and the depreciation in Ghana currency (ITA, 2022). The current economic realities in Ghana place a strain on household budgets, particularly for the low-income residents who spend a considerable size of their income on feeding (Bank of Ghana, 2022). Although the international poverty rate is expected to decline by 2025 from 20.5% to 19.5%, poverty, in the short term, is expected to slowly surge due to the rise in cost of essentials such as electricity, food, and water, as well as the value-added tax (World Bank, 2023).

### 4.1.1 Ashanti Regional Overview

Since the foundation of the Ashanti Empire in the 17th century, Ashanti Region has been recognised as one of the most thriving regions in Ghana (Quitana, 2010). The region is known for its widespread wealth accumulation, education, and military power since its foundation (Cleveland, 2015).

*Figure 4. Map of Ghana Showing Ashanti and Other Regions (Ferreira et al., 2022)*

Ashanti region is home to a large share of the service economy due to its central position and extensive urbanisation (Khan, 2020). The region, housing the big and important markets of Kumasi help stamped its place as the second most important hub for trade and services, after Accra (Millennium Cities Initiative, 2013). This, however, leads to the declining number of agricultural workers in the region, although the sector still employs 26% of the region's labour force (MLNR, 2017).

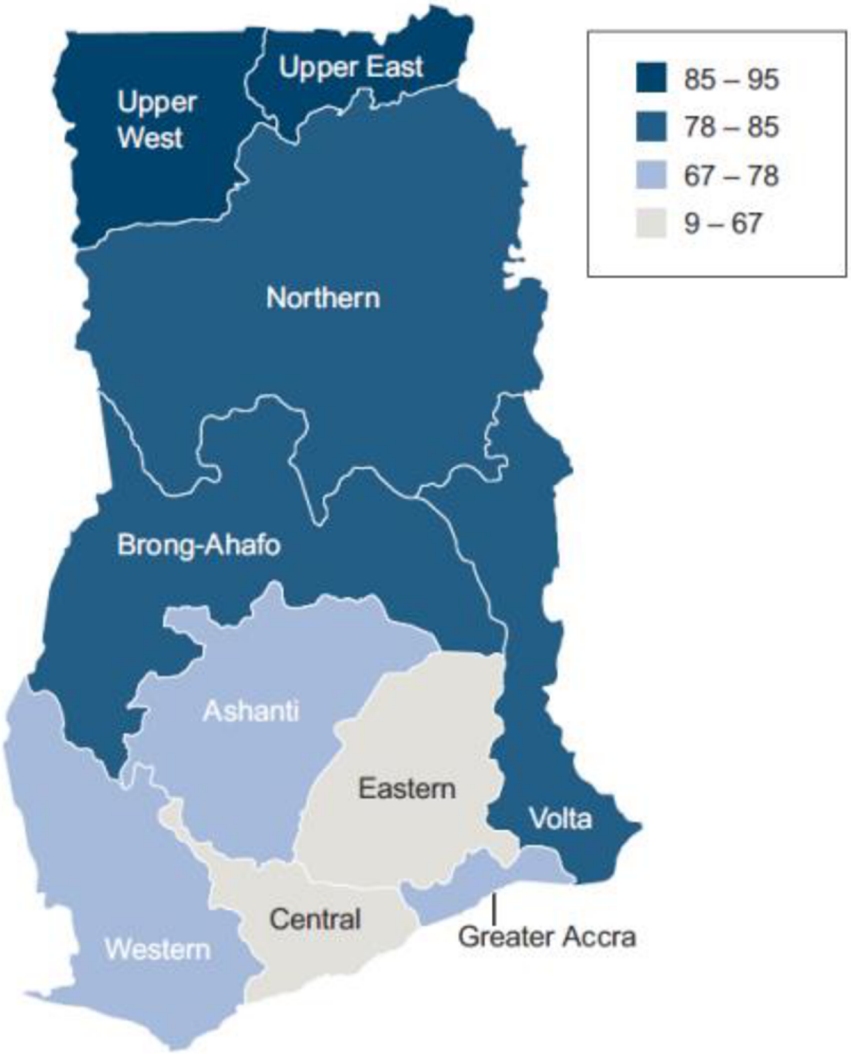


*Figure 5. Percentage of Households Engaged in Agriculture (Mulanga, 2017)*

The Ashanti region, approximately having 5.4 million people residing there in 2021, (Ghana Statistical Services, 2023; See Figure 5), covers about 19% of Ghana's overall population, growing at annual rate of 2.1% (City Population, 2023). Sixty-nine percent of the population in Ashanti region is economically active, with a little of over 700 thousand working in the agricultural sector (Boateng, 2022). Typically, a large portion of the region's population are dependent on agriculture as a means of survival. Thus, it can be concluded that agriculture dominates the economic activities of Ashanti, followed by service and industrial sectors. However, the region's steady population growth complicates its economic sustainability. The

higher population density recorded in the region gives rise to increased pressure on the infrastructure and resources, intensifying the problems of urbanisation process. Thus, the excessive expansion of the city limits makes it difficult for the infrastructure to follow (Anarfi et al., 2020).

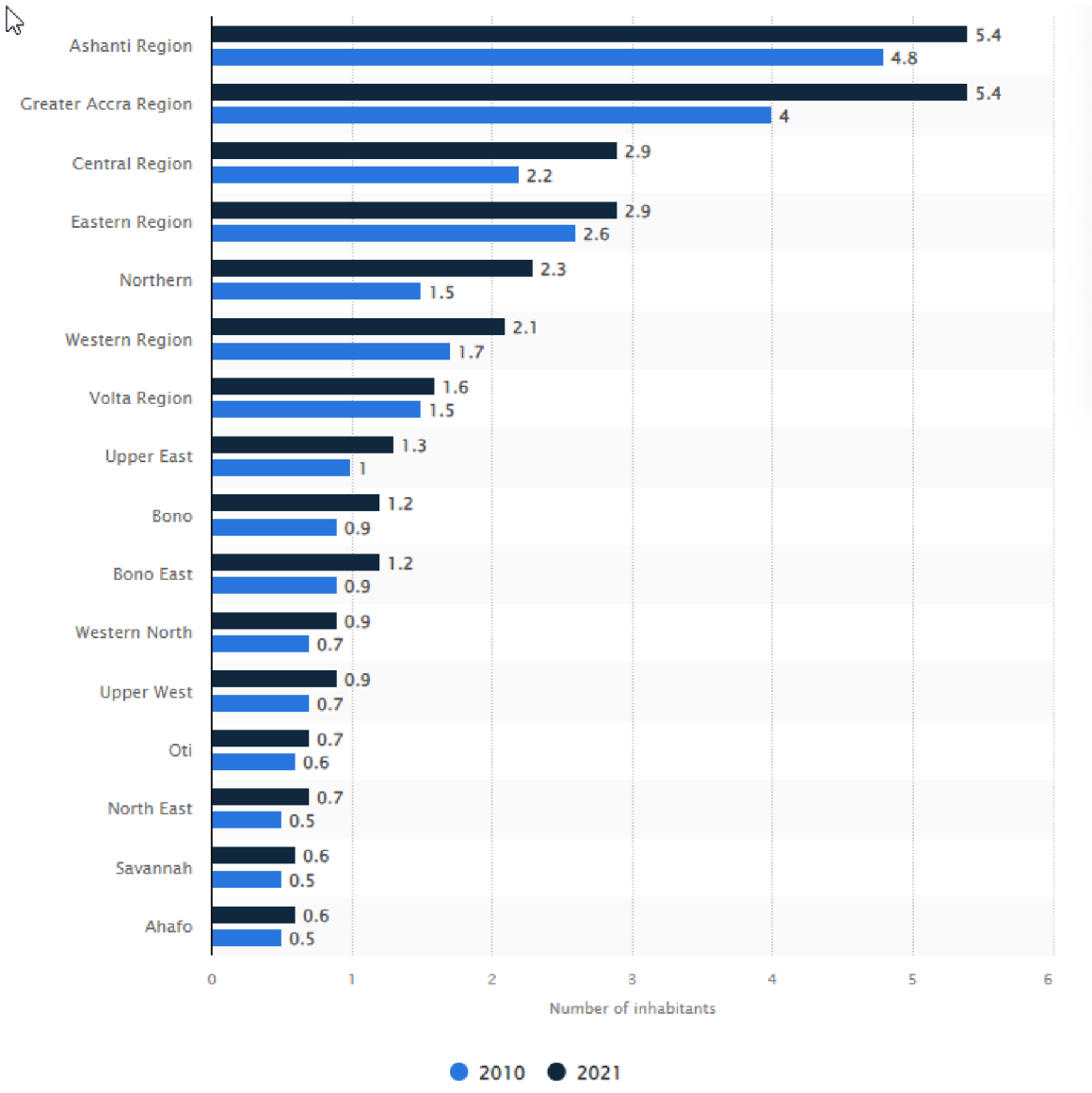


*Figure 6. Population in Ghana, by Region (Sasu, 2023)*

As a subnational constitutional monarchy with the Asantehene as its traditional head of state, the Ashanti Region stands out within Ghana's political landscape (Awuah, 2019). The current

alignment with the political program raises the possibility of conflict. The absence of procedures for monitoring, controlling, and managing natural resources currently encourages corruption and ineffective government (Adu-Baffour et al., 2021).

*Figure 7. Map of Ashanti Region, Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013)*

### 4.2 Cause and Effects: Poverty, Corruption, and Economic Growth

Corruption, according to Sodré (2014), is a serious social problem that distorts and skews how national resources are distributed, making it less productive and having an impeding effect on economic growth. This scenario may be exacerbated when corrupt acts directly or indirectly impair government functions, or when unfair advantages are achieved. As a result, a number of factors emerge that impair fundamental economic determinants such as macro-financial stability, investment, total factor productivity, and human capital accumulation, among others. Furthermore, corruption, when it destabilises state structures, could lead into government

distrust and civil unrest, which may come with their own severe economic and social consequences (IMF, 2016).

According to Chetwynd, Chetwynd, and Spector (2003), increased corruption undermines competitiveness, raises costs for corporations, and impedes on the ability of the state's public services to be effective and efficient. This is a pointer to one of the most pernicious outcomes of corruption – an increase in poverty. It is for an established fact, according to Gupta, Davoodi, and Alonso-Terme (2002), that corrupted institutions are geared towards satisfying the people in power and ones with privileged network, widening the income gap and increasing poverty. Nonetheless, because of the presence of social and income inequality, informality, and skewed economic incentives, poverty can generate corruption, particularly in places where it is a chronic problem (Negin, Rashid, & Nikopour, 2010; Chetwynd et al., 2003; Dobson & Ramlogan-Dobson, 2012). In the same vein, the relationship between poverty, economic growth, and corruption, according to Yunan and Andini (2018), who investigated ASEAN nations for a timespan of 2002 to 2015, more than the study of Rahayu and Widodo (2012). Four nations were chosen due to similarities in their indicators: Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, and Malaysia. The random effects model and Granger causality tests were used in the investigation. The findings, thus, indicate that there was a one-way causation in the Philippines, from poverty to corruption and economic growth to corruption. Meanwhile, in Thailand, economic growth to poverty was the only causality reported. There was no evidence of causation in the other two nations.

N'zue and N'guessan (2006) investigated the link between corruption, poverty, and economic growth using panel data from 18 African nations from 1996 to 2001. This study's empirical evidence reveals that there is no causal link between corruption and poverty, but there is one-way causation from corruption to income disparity. Other pertinent findings include the fact that growth causes corruption and poverty affect economic and national growth. Furthermore, when poverty and corruption are viewed together, they are linked to growth, just as poverty and growth combined contribute to corruption. Similarly, Sodré (2014) studied the effect of official corruption on socioeconomic indices in Brazilian towns. The author utilized the instrumental variables approach and data from Brazilian Controladoria-Geral da Unio (Comptroller General of the Union - CGU) reports to accomplish this. As a corruption variable, the number of

irregularities found by the CGU was used. The findings indicate a positive relationship between the number of abnormalities and the share of the poor. Furthermore, increasing the number of abnormalities to fifty raises the proportion of impoverished people in the cities studied and reduces income by 5%. There was also a causal association between corruption and poverty, with an increase in corruption leading to an increase in the proportion of impoverished people in municipalities.

Because of the aftermaths of corruption, particularly for vulnerable populations in developing countries, the academic literature (da Silva et al., 2022; Castro, 2019; Gyimah-Brempong, 2002; Gupta et al., 2000; Hellman et al., 2000; Hendriks et al., 1998), even in its early stages, includes various research that aimed to prove the presence of causation between corruption and poverty. For example, Bayar, Sasmaz, and Ozturk (2017) analysed this connection for eleven European nations and concluded that poverty fosters corruption. Rahayu and Widodo (2012) and Sodré (2014), on the other hand, discovered that corruption promotes poverty when examining the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Brazilian towns, respectively. However, in most cases, the researchers failed to account for individual variation. In this regard, Sodré (2014) innovates by employing an approach that allows for the capture of such variability in the investigation of causation between corruption and poverty. Corruption is both a source of poverty and an impediment to its abolition. The link between the act of corrupting and poverty is numerous and widespread. Corruption, for example, hinders growth and worsens poverty, undermining institutions (Negin et al., 2010). Corruption in the public sector is frequently viewed as exacerbating poverty circumstances in countries already grappling with economic growth challenges and undergoing democratic transition. Chronically impoverished countries, on the other hand, are viewed as vulnerable to systemic corruption as a result of socioeconomic and social inequities, as well as skewed economic incentives (Chetwynd, 2003).

It has been determined that the presence of corruption creates a negative perception that discourages people from honouring their tax obligations, resulting in lower revenue, which in turn jeopardises the effective delivery of public services, compounding the economic inefficiency of the country. Because of the apparent corruption in the country, the people lose trust in public administrations and public institutions and hence withdraws patronage of these services (Kaufman et al, 2005); hence, production is widely affected. According to Anderson et

al. (2003), while some believe that corruption reduces confidence and trust in public institutions, other scholars contend that a decline in trust in public institutions fosters corruption inside the country. A decline in faith in public institutions leads to a drop in respect for the validity of these institutions' powers, and hence a rise in the use of violence and criminality to attain one's goals. As a result, the community takes the law into their own hands since they feel the police are corrupt, the judicial system is unbiased, and all other public servants are simply there to benefit themselves, resulting in increasing crime inside crime. The negative impact of this is a decrease in revenue from these institutions, which leads to a decrease in investment in these institutions. According to Uslaner (2007), countries with higher levels of citizen confidence in official institutions are better equipped to combat corruption.

Moreso, before any investor agrees to invest in any area, a thorough cost-benefit analysis is performed to determine the potential returns on investment. The investor will weigh long-term profitability against the cost of corruption in the state or nation where they want to invest. Most of the time, the mere impression of corruption deters international investors, resulting in lower investment. According to Alemu (2012), a unit increase in corruption perception reduces Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) by 9 to 14 percentage points. Furthermore, according to Al-Sadig (2009), the decision for FDI location is dependent on factors such as quality infrastructure and local investment in public services, healthcare, and income inequality, and the absence of these will reduce the likelihood of foreign investors placing significant funds in businesses within such countries. This is because they perceive a greater cost of investing where bribes must be paid in order to obtain licences and other governmental permits to conduct business through their cost-benefit analysis. This has a negative impact on profitability because these funds are generally vague and indeterminate, discouraging investment. Fear of further prosecution by other authorities, as in the instance of the Airbus bribery case, deters investors from engaging in considered corrupt nations.

African countries get a considerable amount of external aid to help them prosper economically. Aid may be syphoned into private wealth as a result of high levels of corruption, slowing growth. Since colonial times, extractive foreign direct investment (FDI) has propelled Africa's economic progress. Despite vast natural resources, FDI to African countries has declined in both relative and absolute amounts in recent years (African Development Bank 2000). Part of the reason for

this is corruption in African countries (Brunetti et al. 1998). In African countries, corruption is typically decentralised and disorganised, with paying a bribe to one person not guaranteeing that a service will be supplied. This form of corruption may be more harmful to growth and development than the centralized and organized corruption observed in Asia. For all of these reasons, corruption is likely to have a different impact on economic growth in African countries than elsewhere. Because the causes and economic consequences of corruption may be influenced by cultural and institutional variables as well as low poverty levels, focusing solely on African nations reduces the cultural and institutional variability inherent in most cross-national studies of corruption.

### 4.3 The Interplay of Corruption and Poverty

The fight against corruption is economically important in many developing countries, particularly the Sub-Saharan Africa regions, because it increases poverty, exacerbates inequalities, and creates economies with skewed structures. According to the African Centre for Economic Growth (AFCG, 2000), there is a critical link between corruption and poverty, and severe corruption impedes development in the most unexpected and incapacitating ways is an elite activity. While the impoverished are excluded from the benefits (You & Khagram, 2004). Corruption is a source of poverty and a barrier to effective poverty eradication. It has the potential to derail developing countries' efforts to alleviate poverty. The links between corruption and poverty are numerous and regular. Corruption in the public sector stifles economic growth and increases poverty. Poverty, on the other hand, breeds corruption by undermining economic, political, and social institutions. However, high levels of corruption worsen the poor's living situations by distorting the entire decision-making process pertaining to public sector programmes. Corruption exacerbates poverty by impeding productive programmes such as education and healthcare at the expense of larger capital-intensive enterprises that can provide more great possibilities for unlawful income extraction. Alternatively, social and income inequalities in emerging nations exacerbate power disparities and promote corruption (Ndikumana, 2006).

According to the 1998 IMF working paper, corruption affects the poor by increasing income inequality and thus stunting economic growth. It is revealed that the low-income population and businesses pay a higher proportion of their income to corrupt officials in the form of bribes and

extortions than any other social class, making it more of a regressive tax on the poor (Bhargava et al. 2004). The poor population are the most affected by the system corruption orchestrated in the government and by public officials (Kaunain, 2018). In one of its publications, Transparency International (2009) found in a poll that the percentage of persons in the lower income quintile paying bribes for services greatly outnumbers those in the higher income quintile paying bribes. According to Gyimah-Brempong (2002), "the combined effects of decreased income growth and increased inequality indicate that corruption disproportionately affects the poor in African countries." Corruption has the consequence of impeding good governance, which ensures justice and equity within the state.

### 4.4 The Current State of Corruption and Poverty in Ghana

It has been argued that corruption can hinder economic growth by impeding physical capital accumulation, as Wei (2000) discussed. Corruption can impede the accumulation of human capital (Varvarigos & Arsenis, 2015) and lead to the inefficient allocation of government resources(Sahnoun & Abdennadher, 2020), as corrupt governmental officials prioritise their profit (Jain, 2020). Corruption in Ghana has become a serious issue, particularly with regard to high-profile instances, which has lowered public confidence in the government and is expected to have long-lasting negative consequences on public perceptions of the democratic system (Kaunain, 2018).

Up to 2012, Ghana experienced tremendous economic growth and poverty reduction after the restoration of democracy in 1992; however, after 2012, the pace of poverty reduction slowed significantly (Figure 8). Ghana reduced poverty by half between 1991 and 2012 while barely increasing economic disparity (Cooke et al., 2016).

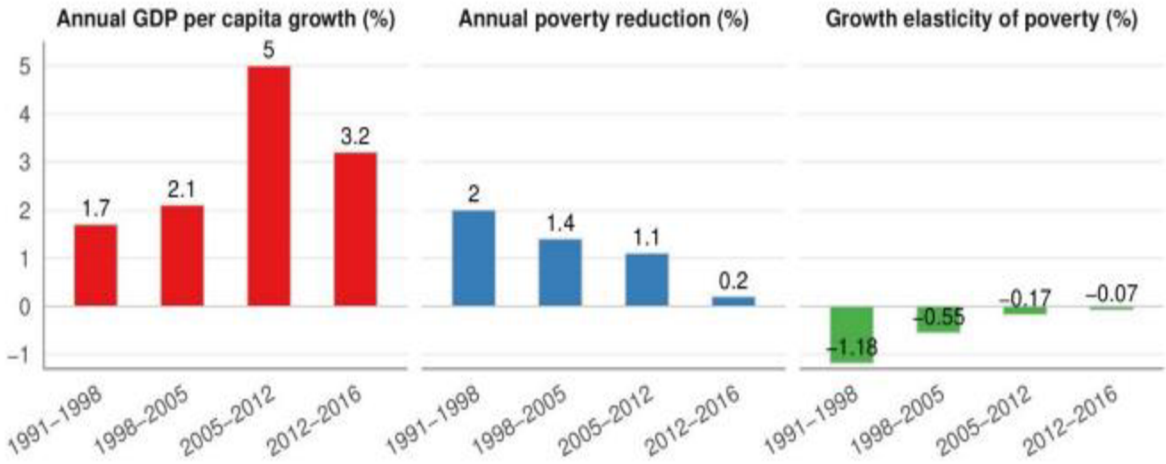


***Figure 8. Growth Rates of GDP per Capita, Poverty Rate Changes, and Growth Elasticity of Poverty (World Bank, 2020)***

The poverty rate in Ghana in 1991 was 47.4 percent at $1.90 PPP per person per day. By 2012, it had decreased to 12.0 percent, which is lower than both the average poverty rate in lower-middle income nations as well as Sub-Saharan Africa. But in 2016, the poverty rate marginally increased to 13.3 percent. Additionally, the COVID-19 outbreak is considered a factor in the recent rise in poverty since 2020. The reduction in poverty elasticity, as reported by the World Bank in 2020, can be attributed to an increase in inequality between areas, in some cases, even within regions, especially in poorer regions. Between 2012 and 2016, the rate of poverty reduction varied greatly by region. While poverty increased in the four poorest regions (Upper West, Upper East, Northern, and Volta), it substantially decreased in the four wealthiest regions (Greater Accra, Ashanti, Central, and Eastern). Additionally, there was more disparity within poorer regions. Inequality in Ghana has increased since 2012, when it was already higher in the four poorest regions (Volta, Upper East, Northern, and Upper West) than in the four richest (Greater Accra, Ashanti, Eastern, Central, and Western), while it has decreased in the four richest (Cooke et al., 2016; World Bank, 2020).

There has been a movement in labour from agriculture to non-agricultural self-employment and wage work in the private sector in the regions of the nation where poverty has decreased the most. Workers in the Greater Accra, Central, and Ashanti regions made the shift to wage

employment in the private sector and non-agricultural self-employment (World Bank, 2020). On the other hand, there are still over 70 individuals employed in agriculture in the northern three districts (see Figure 2).

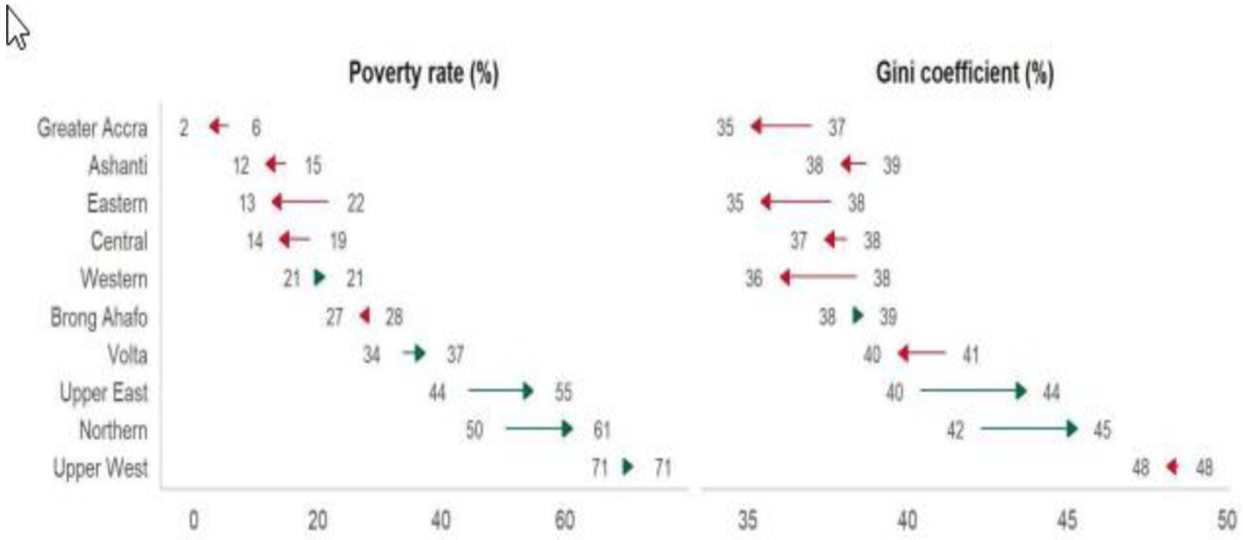


*Figure 9. Poverty Rates and Inequality (Gini index) by region in 2012 and 2016 (World Bank, 2020)*

All levels of the Ghanaian government are corrupt, and crimes involving violence against women and children, such as female genital mutilation and cutting, and human trafficking frequently go unpunished (US Department of State, 2017). Additionally, Ghana serves as a transhipment hub for illegal substances, including heroin from Afghanistan and Pakistan and South American cocaine (US Department of State, 2017). According to a report by the country's think tank IMANI, Ghana loses more than $3 billion USD annually to corruption. According to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2017, Ghana is ranked 81st out of 180 nations (Transparency International 2018). According to the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, Ghana received the following ratings in percentile rank 1, which means Ghana governance is ranked top rating (WGI, 2016).

According to the Heritage Foundation's 2018 Index of Economic Freedom, Ghana's economy ranks 122nd out of 170 in terms of economic freedom, with a score of 56.0. With lower ratings for property rights and labour freedom indicators outweighing gains in judicial effectiveness,

public spending, and fiscal health, the country's overall score has increased by 0.2 points (Kaunain, 2018). The total score of Ghana, which is placed 19th out of 47 sub-Saharan African nations, is higher than the average for the region but lower than the global average. The nation is ranked 32 out of 129 nations on the 2018 Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index (BTI).

The International Budget Partnership's (IBO) Open Budget Index offers a benchmark for comparing the transparency of national budgets. Ghana had a score of 50/100 for transparency in the 2017 Open Budget Survey from IBP, which rated how much budget information is made available to the public. Furthermore, a 22/100 rating for public participation indicates that there are little possibilities for the general public to participate in the budgeting process (UNODC, 2022). Finally, according to the IBP, which gives Ghana a score of 43/100 in terms of budget oversight, the legislature and supreme audit institution only provide a little amount of scrutiny of the budget. Ghana received a score of 65.0 (out of 100.0) for overall governance in the 2017 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), placing it in the top 10 highest-scoring nations (8 out of 54). However, the country's overall governance has worsened by -1.5 points over the past ten years, making it the eighth worst on the continent (Mo Ibrahim Foundation 2017).

Additionally, political corruption still exists despite institutional and legal frameworks to address it, vigorous media coverage, and government anticorruption programmes (Freedom House 2018). A number of high-profile and well-reported examples of corruption in the previous President Mahama's administration impacted the popular perception of that administration and ultimately led to its downfall. Corrupt practices appear to be on the rise, and the public's opinion of how cases are handled has gotten worse in recent years due to economic issues. As a result, these corruption scandals have reduced public confidence in democratic institutions (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018).

Ghana's low levels of corruption compared to other African nations nonetheless provide a challenge for companies already operating there or looking to invest there (GAN Integrity 2018). Business confidence continues to be severely hampered by widespread corruption, a deficient legal system, and an unregulated property rights system (Freedom House, 2018). In order to access public services, bribes and other irregular payments are frequently made (GAN Integrity 2018; Freedom House 2018). Companies asking for licences and permissions are

routinely confronted with requests for facilitation fees, and low-level government personnel have been known to request a "dash" (tip) in exchange for facilitating licence and permit applications (GAN Integrity 2018). According to financial analysts, Ghana has descended into the dark ages as a result of the pervasive corruption in the public sector that businesses must deal with (Business Ghana 2017). The status of the nation is compared to a "man drowning and clutching at straws."

### 4.5 Literature Gap

The literature provided a proper illumination on the compound relationships between economic growth, corruption, and poverty, with focus on Ashanti region in Ghana. The key explorations in the literature assert that corruption is prevalent in various sectors of the Ghanaian economy; however, it is more pronounced in the public service. Similarly, the myriads of studies has highlighted corruption and poverty has an agent to dampening economic growth, although their relationship is complex and multidirectional. While the literature explored a wide range of literature relevant to the research topic, there are limited studies exploring the corruption and poverty in regions and how they contribute to the economic growth in the respective region and the entire Ghanaian economy. Similarly, many of these studies employed secondary data from websites and organisations measuring poverty and corruption in the country, and neglect that economic growth is best captured through the citizens' living standards and experiences. The experiences, perspectives, and opinions of the people of Ashanti, likewise Ghana, regarding the impacts of corruption and poverty on economic growth are largely excluded in research.

## 5. Empirical/Practical Part

### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter looks into the findings and the analysis of the research on the impact of poverty and corruption on economic growth in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. It examines the data that was collected from respondents through the adopted research questionnaire (Appendix 1) in order to provide empirical evidence for the study's research questions and hypotheses. Meanwhile, out of the targeted 180 participants, only 126 responses obtained were valid and this represents a response rate of only 70%. Moreover, the analysis is structured into three sections which include: demographic analysis, descriptive analysis, and inferential analysis.

The demographic analysis outlines the characteristics of the respondents which include their age, gender, education level, employment status, and length of residency in the Ashanti region. This helps to establish a contextual understanding of the sample population. The descriptive analysis looks into the patterns and the trends in poverty as well as corruption within the region; it identifies how these factors contribute to influencing economic activities. In addition, the inferential analysis uses a non-parametric technique to assess the relationship between poverty, corruption, and economic growth, thereby determining the significance and strength of these associations.

### 5.1 Demographic Analysis

The demographic characteristics of the respondents provide some insights into the socio-economic composition of the study population, which strengthens the understanding of the impact of poverty and corruption on economic growth in the Ashanti Region [Table 1]. The gender distribution reveals that most of the respondents (59.5%) are female, whereas the males only constitute 40.5%. However, this imbalance may suggest that women are more willing to participate in surveys or that they are more affected by socioeconomic issues in the region compared to their male counterparts.

The age distribution indicates that 52.4% of respondents fall within the 18–25 age group, followed by 34.9% in the 26–35 bracket, while only 12.7% are aged 36 and above. The dominance of younger respondents suggests that economic challenges, especially unemployment and financial instability, affect the youth disproportionately. Educational

attainment data shows that 73% of respondents have attained higher education, with only 8.7% having primary education. This suggests a relatively educated population, yet the persistence of poverty and unemployment highlights potential mismatches between education and economic opportunities.

Employment status data indicates that students represent the largest group (47.6%), followed by self-employed individuals (26.2%), and only 19.8% are formally employed. The significant proportion of self-employed individuals points to the role of informal economic activities in the region. Monthly income levels further reinforce economic constraints, as over half (54%) earn between 500–1000 GHS, while only 19% earn above 2000 GHS. This disparity in income is a suggestion of financial vulnerability among a majority of residents.

Length of residency data shows that 42.1% of them have lived in the region for 5–10 years, and only 9.5% for more than 20 years; this implies significant internal migration. In addition, only 6.3% receive poverty alleviation assistance, which indicates limited access to support programs. Household sizes range predominantly between 3–5 members (64.3%), with trade (34.9%) and services (43.7%) as the main household income sources. Also, 60.3% of them rely on public transport, thereby stressing transportation challenges that may affect economic participation.

**Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents**

| Question | Response | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| What is your gender? | Female | 75 | 59.5 | 59.5 | 59.5 |
| | Male | 51 | 40.5 | 40.5 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 126 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| What is your age group? | 18-25 | 66 | 52.4 | 52.4 | 52.4 |
| | 26-35 | 44 | 34.9 | 34.9 | 87.3 |
| | 36-45 | 12 | 9.5 | 9.5 | 96.8 |
| | 46-55 | 4 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 100.0 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | 126 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| What is your highest educational qualification? | Primary | 11 | 8.7 | 8.7 | 8.7 |
| | Secondary | 23 | 18.3 | 18.3 | 27.0 |
| | Higher education | 92 | 73.0 | 73.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 126 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| What is your employment status? | Employed | 25 | 19.8 | 19.8 | 19.8 |
| | Unemployed | 8 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 26.2 |
| | Self-employed | 33 | 26.2 | 26.2 | 52.4 |
| | Student | 60 | 47.6 | 47.6 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 126 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| What is your monthly income range? | Below 500 GHS | 11 | 8.7 | 8.7 | 8.7 |
| | 500–1000 GHS | 68 | 54.0 | 54.0 | 62.7 |
| | 1001–2000 GHS | 23 | 18.3 | 18.3 | 81.0 |
| | Above 2000 GHS | 24 | 19.0 | 19.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 126 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| How long have you lived in the Ashanti region? | Less than 5 years | 31 | 24.6 | 24.6 | 24.6 |
| | 5–10 years | 53 | 42.1 | 42.1 | 66.7 |
| | 11–20 years | 30 | 23.8 | 23.8 | 90.5 |
| | More than 20 years | 12 | 9.5 | 9.5 | 100.0 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | 126 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| Are you receiving any poverty alleviation assistance? | Yes | 8 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 6.3 |
| | No | 118 | 93.7 | 93.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 126 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| What is the size of your household? | 1–2 | 7 | 5.6 | 5.6 | 5.6 |
| | 3–5 | 81 | 64.3 | 64.3 | 69.8 |
| | 6–8 | 38 | 30.2 | 30.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 126 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| What is the main source of income for your household? | Agriculture | 23 | 18.3 | 18.3 | 18.3 |
| | Trade | 44 | 34.9 | 34.9 | 53.2 |
| | Services | 55 | 43.7 | 43.7 | 96.8 |
| | Others | 4 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 126 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| What is your primary means of transportation? | Walking | 20 | 15.9 | 15.9 | 15.9 |
| | Personal Vehicle | 30 | 23.8 | 23.8 | 39.7 |
| | Public Transport | 76 | 60.3 | 60.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 126 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Source: Author's Compilation Via SPSS

### 5.2 Descriptive Analysis

In Table 2, the descriptive analysis of the survey responses points to the significant role of poverty when it comes to shaping economic growth in the Ashanti Region. The findings suggest that poverty is an issue that is pervasive, with 56.3% of the respondents agreeing and 6.3% strongly agreeing that it remains a critical challenge. This aligns with the vicious cycle of poverty model (Myrdal, 1957), which posits that poverty is self-reinforcing, limiting access to essential resources necessary for economic mobility. The standard deviation (S.D) of 0.85423 and variance of 0.730 indicate a perception that is relatively consistent among respondents regarding the prevalence of poverty.

Education is recognized as a key determinant of economic prosperity, as highlighted by Becker's human capital theory (1964). In this study, 59.5% of respondents agreed and 17.5% strongly agreed that lack of access to basic education contributes to poverty. The standard deviation of 1.01734 suggests some variation in responses, maybe due to the differences in individual educational experiences. In the same vein, limited healthcare access was identified as a constraint to productivity, with 57.1% agreeing and 11.1% strongly agreeing. The grossman health capital model (1972) supports this, as it states that poor health reduces the ability of an individual to work efficiently, thereby impeding economic growth.

Moreover, unemployment was recognized largely as a major contributor to poverty, with 47.6% agreeing and 32.5% strongly agreeing. This is a reflection of the Keynesian economic theory, which asserts that high unemployment levels reduce the aggregate demand, and this slows economic expansion. In addition, poor infrastructure was perceived as a limitation to economic opportunities, with 53.2% agreeing and 17.5% strongly agreeing. This supports the endogenous growth theory (Rivera and Romer, 1990), which stresses that investment in infrastructure is an important driver of economic progress.

The respondents had mixed views on the effectiveness of local government poverty alleviation efforts, with 26.2% strongly agreeing, but 20.6% disagreeing. This is a suggestion of inefficiencies in policy implementation, thus highlighting the need for a more targeted approach to poverty reduction. Also, the lack of entrepreneurial activities due to poverty was acknowledged by 56.3% of respondents, strengthening the Schumpeter innovation theory as

cited by Ferreira et al. (2017), which argues that financial constraints limit business creation and economic dynamism.

**Table 2. Extent of Poverty and Its Effect on Economic Growth**

| Statement | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree | S.D. | Variance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Poverty is a significant issue in the Ashanti region | 4 (3.2%) | 10 (7.9%) | 33 (26.2%) | 71 (56.3%) | 8 (6.3%) | .85423 | .730 |
| Lack of access to basic education contributes to poverty | 7 (5.6%) | 10 (7.9%) | 12 (9.5%) | 75 (59.5%) | 22 (17.5%) | 1.01734 | 1.035 |
| Limited access to healthcare affects productivity | 7 (5.6%) | 11 (8.7%) | 22 (17.5%) | 72 (57.1%) | 14 (11.1%) | .98937 | .979 |
| Unemployment is a major cause of poverty | 8 (6.3%) | 7 (5.6%) | 10 (7.9%) | 60 (47.6%) | 41 (32.5%) | 1.09767 | 1.205 |
| Poor infrastructure limits economic growth opportunities | 4 (3.2%) | 21 (16.7%) | 12 (9.5%) | 67 (53.2%) | 22 (17.5%) | 1.05313 | 1.109 |
| High poverty levels reduce household spending | 10 (7.9%) | 17 (13.5%) | 12 (9.5%) | 63 (50.0%) | 24 (19.0%) | 1.17487 | 1.380 |
| Local government has been effective in reducing poverty | 15 (11.9%) | 26 (20.6%) | 22 (17.5%) | 30 (23.8%) | 33 (26.2%) | 1.37201 | 1.882 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Poverty has resulted in lack of innovation and entrepreneurial activities | 7 (5.6%) | 10 (7.9%) | 11 (8.7%) | 71 (56.3%) | 27 (21.4%) | 1.04322 | 1.088 |

Source: Author's Compilation Via SPSS

From Table 3, corruption remains a significant hurdle to economic development, with various forms influencing the efficiency of institutions and dynamics of the market. The findings show that bribery in government institutions is prevalent, with 47.6% of respondents agreeing and 20.6% strongly agreeing. This aligns with Rose-Ackerman's (1997) corruption theory, which posits that systemic bribery distorts the efficiency of public service and leads to suboptimal economic outcomes. The standard deviation (S.D) of 0.90234 suggests relatively consistent responses.

Nepotism in employment was identified as a critical factor that affects economic efficiency, with 46.0% agreeing and 18.3% strongly agreeing. This supports the meritocracy theory (Peters and Pierre, 2004), which argues that when recruitment is based on favoritism rather than competence, productivity declines. The variance of 1.070 indicates some level of variability in opinions, possibly due to the differences in sectoral exposure. Similarly, misappropriation of public funds was widely acknowledged, with 41.3% agreeing and 25.4% strongly agreeing. This finding is supported by studies such as Mauro (1995), which found a negative correlation between corruption and economic growth due to resource misallocation.

The allocation of government contracts was also perceived to be highly corrupt, with 46.0% agreeing and 20.6% strongly agreeing that this reduces fair competition. This is consistent with the rent-seeking theory (Krueger, 1974), which suggests that corrupt practices in procurement create inefficiencies by favoring firms that are politically connected over competitive ones. In addition, 52.4% of respondents agreed that the judicial system is influenced by corruption, this thus reinforces the findings from Kaufmann et al. (1999), which highlighted that weak legal frameworks reduce investor confidence and economic stability.

Corruption in public procurement was found to result in poor-quality infrastructure projects, with 54.0% agreeing and 31.7% strongly agreeing. This supports Tanzi and Davoodi's (1997)

research, which demonstrated that corruption inflates project costs while compromising quality. Furthermore, businesses face high informal costs due to corruption, as noted by 54.8% of respondents. This is in line with Wei (2000), who found that corruption increases the cost of doing business and this in turn reduces competitiveness.

Also, 42.9% agreed and 27.0% strongly agreed that corruption deters foreign and local investment, a finding supported by Drury et al. (2006), who argue that investor confidence diminishes in highly corrupt environments. These findings underscore the urgent need for governance reforms and institutional transparency to mitigate corruption's adverse effects on economic growth in the Ashanti Region.

**Table 3. Forms of Corruption and Their Impact on Economic Growth**

| Statement | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree | S.D. | Variance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bribery is common in government institutions | - | 14 (11.1%) | 26 (20.6%) | 60 (47.6%) | 26 (20.6%) | .90234 | .814 |
| Nepotism in employment significantly impacts economic efficiency | 3 (2.4%) | 20 (15.9%) | 22 (17.5%) | 58 (46.0%) | 23 (18.3%) | 1.03427 | 1.070 |
| Public funds are often misappropriated | 7 (5.6%) | 13 (10.3%) | 22 (17.5%) | 52 (41.3%) | 32 (25.4%) | 1.12476 | 1.265 |
| Corruption in the allocation of government contracts reduces fair competition | 3 (2.4%) | 20 (15.9%) | 19 (15.1%) | 58 (46.0%) | 26 (20.6%) | 1.05071 | 1.104 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The judicial system in the Ashanti region is influenced by corruption | 4 (3.2%) | 14 (11.1%) | 16 (12.7%) | 66 (52.4%) | 26 (20.6%) | 1.00740 | 1.015 |
| Corruption in public procurement leads to poor-quality infrastructure projects | 4 (3.2%) | 10 (7.9%) | 4 (3.2%) | 68 (54.0%) | 40 (31.7%) | .97928 | .959 |
| Businesses in the Ashanti region face high informal costs due to corruption | 4 (3.2%) | 10 (7.9%) | 11 (8.7%) | 69 (54.8%) | 32 (25.4%) | .97176 | .944 |
| Corruption has deterred foreign and local investment | 3 (2.4%) | 21 (16.7%) | 14 (11.1%) | 54 (42.9%) | 34 (27.0%) | 1.10045 | 1.211 |

Source: Author's Compilation Via SPSS

From Table 4, the findings point to the mutually strengthening relationship between poverty and corruption in the Ashanti Region. The data shows that 53.2% of respondents agreed and 15.1% strongly agreed that poverty creates conditions that enable corruption to thrive. This aligns with the Klitgaard corruption formula ($C = M + D - A$), which suggests that corruption flourishes when monopoly power (M) and discretion (D) are high, while accountability (A) is low. In environments that are poverty-stricken, the individuals may resort to corrupt means in order to access essential services, and this only further solidifies the systemic inefficiencies.

Moreover, 42.9% of the respondents agreed and 34.1% strongly agreed that corruption among public officials worsens poverty, and this supports the empirical studies such as Gupta et al.

(2002), who found that corruption affects the poor disproportionately by diverting public funds away from those services that are essential. Similarly, 70.6% agreed and 15.9% strongly agreed that high poverty levels increase susceptibility to corruption and this supports the vicious cycle of the poverty model (Myrdal, 1957), which argues that poverty reduces the ability of the individuals to resist exploitative practices.

Poverty and corruption were also seen as jointly limiting access to economic opportunities, with 45.2% agreeing and 32.5% strongly agreeing. This finds alignment with institutional theory (North, 1990), which suggests that weak institutions hinder equitable access to economic resources. In addition, 40.5% of respondents agreed and 22.2% strongly agreed that poverty and corruption discourage private investment, consistent with Mauro's (1995) findings that corruption lowers investment and economic growth.

On policy interventions, 42.9% agreed and 33.3% strongly agreed that strengthening anti-corruption laws can reduce corruption, reinforcing the good governance theory (Kaufmann et al., 1999). Furthermore, 35.7% agreed and 31.7% strongly agreed that increasing access to education can alleviate poverty, a principle supported by Becker's human capital theory (1964). 45.2% strongly agreed that transparency in public resource allocation encourages economic growth, echoing the findings by Tanzi and Davoodi (1997) that transparent governance improves economic efficiency.

**Table 4. Interaction Between Poverty and Corruption and Their Combined Effects on Economic Growth**

| Statement | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree | S.D. | Variance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Poverty creates conditions that enable corruption to thrive | 4 (3.2%) | 15 (11.9%) | 21 (16.7%) | 67 (53.2%) | 19 (15.1%) | .98238 | .965 |
| Corruption among public | - | 10 (7.9%) | 19 (15.1%) | 54 (42.9%) | 43 (34.1%) | .90276 | .815 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| officials worsens poverty | | | | | | | |
| High poverty levels increase susceptibility to corruption | - | 6 (4.8%) | 11 (8.7%) | 89 (70.6%) | 20 (15.9%) | .66289 | .439 |
| Poverty and corruption jointly limit access to economic opportunities | 7 (5.6%) | 10 (7.9%) | 11 (8.7%) | 57 (45.2%) | 41 (32.5%) | 1.11010 | 1.232 |
| Poverty and corruption discourage private investment | 14 (11.1%) | 10 (7.9%) | 23 (18.3%) | 51 (40.5%) | 28 (22.2%) | 1.23682 | 1.530 |
| Strengthening anti-corruption laws reduces corruption | 8 (6.3%) | 11 (8.7%) | 11 (8.7%) | 54 (42.9%) | 42 (33.3%) | 1.15660 | 1.338 |
| Increasing access to education reduces poverty | 7 (5.6%) | 11 (8.7%) | 23 (18.3%) | 45 (35.7%) | 40 (31.7%) | 1.14764 | 1.317 |
| Transparency in public resource allocation boosts economic growth | 7 (5.6%) | 3 (2.4%) | 8 (6.3%) | 51 (40.5%) | 57 (45.2%) | 1.04368 | 1.089 |
| Community-based initiatives can address | 7 (5.6%) | 14 (11.1%) | 26 (20.6%) | 50 (39.7%) | 29 (23.0%) | 1.12145 | 1.258 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| poverty and corruption | | | | | | | |

Source: Author's Compilation Via SPSS

### 5.3 Inferential Analysis

***Result of the Normality Test***

The result of the normality test which is assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and the Shapiro-Wilk tests, indicates that the data for the *Effect of Poverty on Economic Growth*, *Corruption on Economic Growth*, and their *Combined Effect* deviate significantly from a normal distribution (Sig. = 0.000 in all cases). Given that both of the tests reject the null hypothesis of normality at a 1% level of significance, the data is non-normally distributed.

Moreover, parametric tests such as the t-tests, ANOVA, and regression models assume normality. Therefore, the presence of non-normality is a suggestion that alternative statistical methods should be considered. Meanwhile, non-parametric methods, such as the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis test, or the Spearman's rank correlation, would be employed, as they do not assume normality. In addition, bootstrapping techniques can be used to generate robust estimations.

**Table 5. Test of Normality**

**Tests of Normality**

| | Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Effect_of_poverty_on_economic_growth | .214 | 126 | .000 | .890 | 126 | .000 |
| Corruption_on_economic_growth | .232 | 126 | .000 | .891 | 126 | .000 |
| Combined_effect | .189 | 126 | .000 | .883 | 126 | .000 |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Source: Author's Computation via SPSS

***Robust Tests of Equality of Means***

The Welch test results indicate that the *Effect of Poverty on Economic Growth* has a statistically significant difference in means across groups (Welch's F = 425.494, df1 = 3, df2 = 61.320, p = 0.000). Welch's ANOVA is used when the assumption of homogeneity of variances is violated, which makes it a more reliable alternative to standard ANOVA. The significance value ($p < 0.05$) suggests that the effect of poverty on economic growth varies significantly across different groups.

However, robust tests could not be performed for *Corruption on Economic Growth* and *Combined Effect* because at least one group had zero variance. This means that for these variables, there is no variation in the responses within at least one category which makes mean comparisons invalid.

The implications of these findings are significant. The presence of significant mean differences for the *Effect of Poverty on Economic Growth* warrants that we carry out a post hoc analysis, thus, a non-parametric method, such as Kruskal-Wallis is required as is performed.

**Table 6. Robust Tests of Equality of Means**

**Robust Tests of Equality of Means[b,c]**

| | | Statistic[a] | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Effect_of_poverty_on_economic_growth | Welch | 425.494 | 3 | 61.320 | .000 |
| Corruption_on_economic_growth | Welch | . | . | . | . |
| Combined_effect | Welch | . | . | . | . |

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

b. Robust tests of equality of means cannot be performed for Corruption_on_economic_growth because at least one group has 0 variance.

c. Robust tests of equality of means cannot be performed for Combined_effect because at least one group has 0 variance.

Source: Author's Computation via SPSS

***Analysis of the Kruskal-Wallis Test Results***

The Kruskal-Wallis test results indicate that the distributions of *Effect of Poverty on Economic Growth*, *Corruption on Economic Growth*, and *Combined Effect of both Variables* significantly differ across categories of how long respondents have lived in the Ashanti region ($p = 0.000$ for all three variables). Therefore, given that the significance level is 0.05, the null hypothesis, which assumes no difference in distributions, is rejected in all cases. This is a suggestion that the length of residency in the Ashanti region influences the perceptions of poverty, corruption, and their combined impact on economic growth.

Meanwhile, since the Kruskal-Wallis test is a non-parametric alternative to ANOVA, it is useful when data do not meet the assumptions of normality. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that at least one group differs significantly from the others, though the test does not specify which groups differ.

**Table 7. Analysis of the Kruskal-Wallis Test Results**

**Hypothesis Test Summary**

| | Null Hypothesis | Test | Sig. | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The distribution of Effect_of_poverty_on_economic_growth is the same across categories of How long have you lived in the Ashanti region? . | Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test | .000 | Reject the null hypothesis. |
| 2 | The distribution of Corruption_on_economic_growth is the same across categories of How long have you lived in the Ashanti region? . | Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test | .000 | Reject the null hypothesis. |
| 3 | The distribution of Combined_effect is the same across categories of How long have you lived in the Ashanti region? . | Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test | .000 | Reject the null hypothesis. |

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Source: Author's Computation via SPSS

### *5.4 Test of Hypothesis*

**Hypothesis 1: Poverty and Economic Growth**

*($H_0$): Poverty in the Ashanti Region does not significantly affect economic growth.*

*($H_1$): Poverty in the Ashanti Region significantly affects economic growth.*

From the Tests of Normality, the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests have p-values of .000, and this indicates that the data is not normally distributed. Given this, non-parametric tests such as the Kruskal-Wallis test were employed.

The Hypothesis Test Summary Table shows that the Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis test for poverty and economic growth produced a p-value of .000, which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggests a significant relationship between poverty and economic growth in the Ashanti Region. Moreover, the Welch Robust Test of Equality of Means further confirms this significance with an F-statistic of 425.494 and a p-value of .000.

**Hypothesis 2: Corruption and Economic Growth**

*($H_0$): Corruption in the Ashanti Region does not significantly impact economic growth.*

*($H_1$): Corruption in the Ashanti Region significantly impacts economic growth.*

Similarly, for corruption and economic growth, the Kruskal-Wallis test also has a p-value of .000, which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This confirms the significant effect of corruption on economic growth. However, the Robust Tests of Equality of Means could not be performed due to zero variance in at least one group.

## 6. Discussion of Findings

*Objective 1:*

The findings of the study indicate a statistically significant relationship between poverty and economic growth in the Ashanti Region. The inferential test results, especially the Kruskal-Wallis test suggest that poverty is a determinant of economic growth. These findings echo the theoretical framework of the vicious cycle of poverty (Nurkse, 1971), which states that poverty limits the accumulation of capital, economic expansion and productivity. In addition, the stages of the economic growth model (1960) by Rostow suggest that economies require an initial injection of capital in order to transition from stagnation to self-sustaining growth, which is a condition that regions that are poverty-stricken lack.

The findings resonate with Sachs (2012), as he argues that extreme poverty levels limit economic development as it restricts human capital investment and reduces productivity. Similarly, Gohou and Soumaré (2012) highlight that in sub-Saharan Africa, poverty creates a high dependency ratio, and this lowers aggregate demand and slows economic progress. However, a counterargument is obsereved in the work of Dollar and Kraay (2002), as they assert that economic growth itself is the most effective tool for the reduction of poverty. This therefore raises a policy dilemma: should interventions focus on the alleviation of poverty directly through social safety nets, or should they give priority to economic growth as a long-term solution?

Furthermore, the demographic and descriptive analysis suggests a high incidence of poverty in certain age groups and educational levels. A strong correlation exists between low educational attainment and a higher poverty rate, and this corroborates the human capital theory (Becker, 1964), which has the postulations that investment in education strengthens productivity and economic mobility. The findings echoes this theory, as it indicates that poverty is more prevalent among those individuals with lower levels of education, thereby reducing their contribution to economic growth.

Meanwhile, from a policy perspective, these findings suggest that economic interventions in the Ashanti Region should give priority to both education and skill development as mechanisms for the alleviation of poverty. This approach is consistent with the capability approach of Sen

(1999), which stresses the importance of expanding the ability of the individuals to engage in economic activities as a means of overcoming poverty.

*Objective 2:*

The study provides evidence that corruption impacts economic growth significantly. The Kruskal-Wallis test for corruption rejects the null hypothesis, which confirms a strong negative relationship between corruption and economic growth. This finding aligns with the public choice theory (Buchanan and Tollison, 1984), which argues that corruption distorts the allocation of resources, reduces economic efficiency and weakens institutions. In the same vein, the endogenous growth theory (Rivera and Romer, 1990) suggests that corruption undermines both innovation and investment, thereby slowing down economic expansion.

Moreover, d'Agostino et al. (2016) demonstrate that corruption lowers economic growth as it discourages foreign investment and increases the costs of transactions. Similarly, Mo (2001) estimates that a 1% increase in corruption reduces GDP growth by approximately 0.72%, and this stresses the detrimental impact of corruption on the performance of the economy. The economic stagnation, in the Ashanti Region which is indicated by the descriptive findings, echoes the theme of this argument and this suggests that corruption may hinder private sector investment and thus limit economic opportunities.

A critical detail that is present in the findings is the potential for corruption to serve as a 'grease' or 'sand' in the economic engine. Although the dominant view sees corruption as detrimental (sand in the wheels), some scholars, such as Méon and Sekkat (2005), argue that in environments that are highly bureaucratic corruption may facilitate economic transactions (grease in the wheels). However, the findings of the study support the 'sand in the wheels' perspective, given that corruption in the Ashanti Region appears to worsen inefficiencies rather than promote productivity.

The descriptive statistics highlight that corruption is perceived to be more prevalent among government officials and procurement processes, and this aligns with the studies that identify corruption in the public sector as an obstacle to development (Damijan, 2023). The demographic findings further suggest that younger respondents express stronger concerns over corruption, and this potentially reflects an increased awareness and intolerance of corrupt practices among

the younger generations. This therefore points to the importance of institutional reforms and mechanisms for public accountability in order to reduce the impact of corruption on economic growth.

Hence, from a policy point of view, these findings point to the need to strengthen anti-corruption institutions, such as the Ghana Economic and Organized Crime Office (EOCO). In addition, the adoption of digital governance strategies, as suggested by Mungiu-Pippidi (2023), could reduce opportunities for rent-seeking behavior by increasing the transparency in the transactions of government.

*Objective 3:*

The combined effect of poverty and corruption on economic growth reveals the connectedness between structural and institutional constraints. Although the inferential analysis could not compute a robust test due to the zero variance in at least one group, the individual tests suggest that both factors pose a significant hindrance to economic development. This therefore supports the institutional economics perspective (North, 1990), which asserts that economic growth is dependent on well-functioning institutions that minimize corruption and create opportunities for wealthy generation.

The findings are a reflection of the dual trap hypothesis (Mohapatra, 2021), which posits that developing economies suffer from simultaneous institutional and economic deficiencies which make it difficult for them to escape low-growth equilibria. The Ashanti Region is an example of this scenario, as a high poverty level reduces educational opportunities, whereas corruption limits the efficiency of economic policies which creates a reinforcing cycle of underdevelopment.

Moreover, a similar pattern is observed in other African economies. Gyimah-Brempong (2002) for instance finds that corruption and poverty jointly reduce economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa, with corruption worsening income inequality. In the same vein, Kaufmann and Kraay (2002) argue that weak governance structures perpetuate both corruption and poverty which leads to institutional sclerosis, where economic policies fail to produce meaningful development outcomes.

One notable finding from the demographic analysis is the regional disparity in the perception of economic challenges. While the urban respondents emphasize corruption as a primary barrier to growth, the rural participants focus more on poverty and the lack of infrastructure. This divergence finds alignment with the spatial poverty trap theory (Rabiei-Dastjerdi and Matthews, 2021), which suggests that regional disparities in economic opportunities contribute to long-term developmental inequality.

## 7. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

### 7.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study, as well as conclusions based on the research objectives and hypotheses. The conclusions are formulated against the backdrop of existing literature and statistical evidence. Furthermore, the chapter provides practical recommendations for policymakers, institutions, and researchers to address poverty and corruption effectively. It also highlights some of the limitations of the study and suggests areas for future research, which ensures that the study contributes to academic and policy discussions on sustainable economic development.

### 7.1 Summary of the Study

This study looks at the interaction between poverty and corruption and their combined effects on economic growth in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The study is grounded in the premise that poverty and corruption are both interlinked and mutually reinforcing phenomena that significantly pose as challenge to economic development. The study's aim is to assess the extent to which poverty and corruption impact economic growth, with specific objectives that focuses on their individual and combined effects. The research questions and hypotheses test whether poverty and corruption significantly affect economic growth.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, which integrates both qualitative and quantitative data. A structured survey was conducted, and statistical analyses that includes descriptive, inferential, and hypothesis testing were used to assess relationships between the key variables. The literature review synthesizes theoretical perspectives, such as the vicious cycle of poverty and the institutional corruption theories, and draws insights from empirical studies that highlight the detrimental effects of these factors on economic progress.

Findings from the demographic analysis reveal the socioeconomic characteristics of respondents, while the descriptive statistics indicate strong perceptions linking poverty and corruption to economic stagnation. Inferential analyses, which include normality tests, robust tests of equality of means, and hypothesis testing, confirm that poverty and corruption significantly affect economic growth. The Kruskal-Wallis test results further reinforce these relationships, which leads to the rejection of the null hypotheses.

The discussion examines these findings in relation to previous studies and some established theoretical models. The implications highlight that poverty creates conditions that are conducive to corruption, which in turn worsens economic underdevelopment. Comparative analysis with past research demonstrates consistency with global trends, especially in developing economies where weak institutional frameworks allow corruption to thrive.

### 7.2 Conclusion

This study examines the relationship between poverty, corruption, and economic growth in the Ashanti Region. The research was guided by the aim of determining the extent to which poverty and corruption influence economic development. In alignment with this aim, the study was structured around three core objectives: assessing the effect of poverty on economic growth, examining the impact of corruption on economic growth, and evaluating the combined effects of both factors. The findings provide strong empirical evidence that supports the assertion that poverty and corruption are significant impediments to economic progress in the region.

The first objective, which focused on poverty, revealed that high poverty levels restrict economic opportunities, reduce productivity, and hinder infrastructural development. Households experiencing economic deprivation struggle with limited access to education, healthcare, and financial services and this reinforces a cycle of stagnation. This therefore helps to ensure that the first objective of the study has been achieved.

The second objective investigated the role of corruption and confirmed that it worsens poverty and further impedes economic growth. Corruption distorts market mechanisms, diverts public resources, and discourages investment. The results resonate with institutional theories of corruption, which argue that weak governance structures enable corrupt practices, leading to

inefficiencies and reduced economic output. This outcome is a pointer to the fact that the second objective of the study has been achieved.

The third objective examined the combined effect of poverty and corruption on economic growth. Findings indicate that these factors operate in a mutually reinforcing manner, which amplifies their negative impacts. The lack of economic opportunities perpetuates corrupt practices, while corruption deepens economic inequalities, and this makes poverty reduction efforts less effective. This outcome supports the systemic corruption model which posits that endemic corruption creates institutional instability and this leads to persistent underdevelopment.

The study establishes a strong empirical and theoretical link between poverty, corruption, and economic stagnation in the Ashanti Region. Therefore, given these findings, the third objectives of the study has been achieved.

### 7.3 Limitations of the Study

Despite the significant contributions of this study, certain limitations must be acknowledged, as they have implications for the validity of the findings. Thus, recognizing these constraints is essential for contextualizing the results and informing future research directions.

*Geographical and Contextual Limitations*

The study focused exclusively on the Ashanti Region, which, although it is economically significant in Ghana, it does not necessarily represent the entire country. Socioeconomic and institutional factors that affect poverty, corruption, and economic growth may differ across regions due to the variations in governance, resource allocation, and demographic structures. This limitation may affect the transferability of the findings to other regions with distinct economic and institutional settings. Future research could expand the geographical scope to provide a more comprehensive national or cross-country perspective.

*Methodological Constraints and Data Availability*

The study primarily relied on survey data and inferential statistical techniques, which, although robust, may have inherent limitations. Self-reported data on corruption and poverty are susceptible to response biases, social desirability effects, and potential underreporting of

sensitive issues. In addition, while inferential tests established statistical significance, the study design does not establish causality, meaning the observed relationships cannot be definitively interpreted as causal effects. Thus, incorporating longitudinal data or mixed-methods approaches could strengthen future analyses.

*Theoretical and Measurement Limitations*

While the study was grounded in economic and institutional theories, the complexity of poverty and corruption requires measurement approaches that are multidimensional. Economic growth is influenced by several factors beyond poverty and corruption, which include infrastructure, education, and global economic trends. The study's reliance on specific indicators may not fully capture the broader structural challenges that face the region. Future research should therefore integrate more diverse economic indicators and qualitative insights to provide a deeper understanding of these relationships.

## 7.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to address the negative effects of poverty and corruption on economic growth in the Ashanti Region. These recommendations focus on practical policy measures and areas for future research to ensure sustainable economic development.

### For Practice

*Strengthening Institutional Frameworks to Combat Corruption*

The study confirms that corruption significantly hinders economic growth, aligning with institutional theory (North, 1990), which highlights the role of strong institutions in promoting economic stability. To address this, the government should enhance anti-corruption policies by strengthening the independence and enforcement capacity of institutions such as Ghana's Economic and Organised Crime Office (EOCO) and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ). Although it has been established that Ghana's anti-corruption institutions are significantly undermined by political interferences, bureaucratic inertia, and resource constraints (Abdulai, 2017). For instance, EOCO's prosecutorial independence is frequently compromised by executive influence, as seen in high-profile cases dropped under

political pressure (Gyimah-Boadi & Prempeh, 2019). Hence, mere enhancing the independence of these agencies is not sufficient if the systemic patronage networks are not addressed. While transparent public procurement systems, digital governance, and strict accountability measures can reduce rent-seeking behaviours, as emphasized by Tanzi and Davoodi (1997), are effective, there is a need to also constitutionally safeguard these agencies by insulating them from executive control. Additionally, lessons can be drawn from countries like Rwanda, where digital tracking systems for public funds have reduced corruption and improved service delivery.

Moreso, agency budgets should be tied to conviction rates and asset recovery metrics, as exemplified in Singapore's Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB). This will strengthen the effectiveness of these institutions to drive out corruption and be independent to a large extent. In the same vein, there is a need to incorporate and mandate public audits of anti-corruption cases by non-state actors and significant collaborations with NGOs and relevant international anti-corruption bodies. This can mirror Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) where cases of anti-corruption are brought to the public for audits and every process are published to ensure transparency and accountability. Other approaches to strengthen the works at the anti-corruption institutions include the "asset confiscation first, prosecution later" adopted in Nigeria, where assets are seized from suspected corrupt individuals prior to their trial to circumvent delays in their legal proceedings.

*Enhancing Educational and Economic Opportunities*

Findings suggest that poverty, particularly due to low educational attainment, restricts economic mobility. According to Becker's Human Capital Theory (1964), investment in education enhances productivity and economic participation. Government and private stakeholders should expand access to vocational training and technical education to equip individuals with employable skills. Empirical studies, such as Hanushek and Woessmann (2008), confirm that education is a key determinant of long-term economic growth. Policies should also prioritize financial inclusion programs, such as microfinance and entrepreneurial support initiatives, to empower individuals in low-income groups.

*Promoting Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Development*

A significant limitation to economic growth in the Ashanti Region is the dependence on a limited number of economic activities. Endogenous growth theory (Rivera and Romer, 1990) suggests that innovation and investment in infrastructure are crucial for long-term growth. The government should diversify the regional economy by incentivizing industrial development beyond agriculture and traditional trade. Infrastructure investments, such as improved road networks, digital connectivity, and energy access, can attract investment and enhance economic competitiveness. Calderón and Servén (2010) indicate that infrastructure development contributes significantly to poverty reduction and economic growth in developing economies.

*Encouraging Community-Led Development and Transparency Initiatives*

The study highlights that both poverty and corruption affect different socio-economic groups in varying ways. Drawing from Sen's Capability Approach (1999), empowering local communities through participatory governance can enhance policy effectiveness. Local authorities should implement citizen monitoring initiatives to increase transparency in public resource allocation. Countries such as Kenya have successfully implemented public expenditure tracking systems (PETS), which allow citizens to monitor the flow of funds in real time, reducing corruption and ensuring that resources reach their intended beneficiaries (Reinikka and Svensson, 2004).

**for Future Research**

Despite its contributions, the study has limitations that create opportunities for further research.

*Longitudinal and Causal Studies:* Since this study is cross-sectional, future research should adopt longitudinal studies in order to track poverty and corruption trends over time; this will help to establish causal relationships. Panel data analysis can provide a more robust understanding of how policy interventions impact economic growth.

*Sector-Specific Analysis:* Future research should assess how corruption and poverty affect specific sectors such as education, healthcare, and trade. Studies such as those by Gupta, et al. (2002) show that corruption in education and healthcare disproportionately affects the poor, which warrants targeted policy responses.

*Comparative Regional Studies:* Expanding the research to multiple regions in Ghana or conducting cross-country analyses can strengthen the transferability of the findings and provide

broader policy recommendations. The spatial poverty trap theory suggests that regional disparities influence economic growth which makes comparative studies valuable for national development planning.

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**List of Figures**

Figure 1. Ashanti Region (Wikipedia, 2024) .....11
Figure 2. Map of Ghana and Its Neighbouring Countries (ISSAfrica, 2020) ..... 18
Figure 3. Ghana's Export 2021 (OEC, 2023) ..... 19
Figure 4. Map of Ghana Showing Ashanti and Other Regions (Ferreira et al., 2022)..... 20
Figure 5. Percentage of Households Engaged in Agriculture (Mulanga, 2017) ..... 21
Figure 6. Population in Ghana, by Region (Sasu, 2023)..... 22
Figure 7. Map of Ashanti Region, Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013) ..... 23
Figure 8. Growth Rates of GDP per Capita, Poverty Rate Changes, and Growth Elasticity of Poverty (World Bank, 2020) ..... 29
Figure 9. Poverty Rates and Inequality (Gini index) by region in 2012 and 2016 (World Bank, 2020) ..... 30

**List of Tables**

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents ..... 34
Table 2. Extent of Poverty and Its Effect on Economic Growth..... 38
Table 3. Forms of Corruption and Their Impact on Economic Growth..... 40
Table 4. Interaction Between Poverty and Corruption and Their Combined Effects on Economic Growth ..... 42
Table 5. Test of Normality..... 44
Table 6. Robust Tests of Equality of Means ..... 45
Table 7. Analysis of the Kruskal-Wallis Test Results ..... 46

## 9. Appendices

### Appendix 1: Research Questionnaire

**The Impact of Poverty and Corruption on Economic Growth in Ghana: A Case Study of the Ashanti Region**

**Research Description**

I am Afriyie Samuel Osei. This questionnaire is designed to gather insights and opinions on The Impact of Poverty and Corruption on Economic Growth in Ghana: A Case Study of the Ashanti Region. The information collected will contribute to the findings on the impact of poverty and corruption on economic growth as well as provide measures to address poverty and corruption. You have been asked to participate due to your residency in the region. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any point without giving a reason. You will complete the questionnaire within 20-30 minutes. Your responses are confidential and will be used solely for research. Data collected will be anonymized and securely processed and stored.

**Consent**

By continuing, you have confirmed that you have read the consent form and understood the study's purpose, and therefore, consented to this research and agreed to participate voluntarily. You understood that the data you provide through your responses will be used anonymously.

Hypotheses:

1. H1: There is a significant negative relationship between the extent of poverty in the Ashanti region and economic growth.

2. H2: The prevalence of corruption negatively impacts economic growth in the Ashanti region.

3. H3: The interaction of poverty and corruption exacerbates their combined negative impact on economic growth in the Ashanti region.

4. H4: Measures addressing poverty and corruption will positively influence economic growth in the Ashanti region.

**Section 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants**

This section gathers information to contextualize responses based on participant characteristics.

1. What is your gender?

Male ☐ Female ☐ Others ☐

2. What is your age group?

18 – 25 ☐ 26 – 35 ☐ 36 – 45 ☐ 46 – 55 ☐ 56 – Above ☐

3. What is your highest educational qualification?

No formal education ☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Higher education ☐

4. What is your employment status?

Employed ☐ Unemployed ☐ Self-employed ☐ Student ☐

5. What is your monthly income?

Below 500 GHS ☐ 500–1000 GHS ☐ 1001–2000 GHS ☐ Above 2000 GHS ☐

6. How long have you lived in Ashanti region?

Less than 5 years ☐ 5–10 years ☐ 11–20 years ☐ More than 20 years ☐

7. Are you currently receiving any form of government or NGO Poverty Alleviation assistance?

Yes ☐ No ☐

8. What is the size of your household?

1–2 ☐ 3–5 ☐ 6–8 ☐ 9 and above ☐

9. What is the main source of income for your household?

Agriculture ☐ Trade ☐ Services ☐ Other ☐

10. What is your means of transportation?

Walking ☐Personal Vehicle ☐ Public Transport ☐ Other ☐

**Section 2: Extent of Poverty and Its Effects on Economic Growth**

(Tick one of the boxes that most answers the question for you)

| S/N | **Extent of Poverty and Its Effect on Economic Growth** | **Strongly Disagree** | **Disagree** | **Neutral** | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | Poverty is a significant issue in the Ashanti region. | | | | | |
| 12 | The lack of access to basic education contributes to poverty in this region. | | | | | |
| 13 | Limited access to healthcare affects the productivity of individuals in the Ashanti region. | | | | | |
| 14 | Unemployment is a major cause of poverty in the region. | | | | | |
| 15 | Poor infrastructure (e.g., roads, electricity) limits economic growth opportunities. | | | | | |
| 16 | High poverty levels reduce household spending, which negatively affects businesses. | | | | | |
| 17 | The local government has been effective in reducing poverty in the Ashanti region. | | | | | |
| 18 | Poverty in this region has resulted in a lack of innovation and entrepreneurial activities. | | | | | |

**Section 3: Forms of Corruption and Their Impact on Economic Growth**

(Tick one of the boxes that most answers the question for you)

| S/N | **Forms of Corruption and Their Impact on Economic Growth** | **Strongly Disagree** | **Disagree** | **Neutral** | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19 | Bribery is common in government institutions in the Ashanti region. | | | | | |
| 20 | Nepotism in employment significantly impacts economic efficiency. | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21 | Public funds are often misappropriated in this region. | | | | | |
| 22 | Corruption in the allocation of government contracts reduces fair competition. | | | | | |
| 23 | The judicial system in the Ashanti region is influenced by corruption. | | | | | |
| 24 | Corruption in public procurement leads to poor-quality infrastructure projects. | | | | | |
| 25 | Businesses in the Ashanti region face high informal costs due to corruption. | | | | | |
| 26 | Corruption has deterred foreign and local investment in the region. | | | | | |

**Section 4: Interaction Between Poverty and Corruption and Their Combined Effects on Economic Growth**

(Tick one of the boxes that most answers the question for you)

| S/N | **Interaction Between Poverty and Corruption and Their Combined Effects on Economic Growth** | **Strongly Disagree** | **Disagree** | **Neutral** | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 27 | Poverty creates conditions that enable corruption to thrive in the Ashanti region. | | | | | |
| 28 | Corruption among public officials worsens poverty by misdirecting funds meant for development. | | | | | |
| 29 | High poverty levels increase susceptibility to corruption at the community level. | | | | | |
| 30 | Poverty and corruption jointly limit access to economic opportunities. | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 31 | The combination of poverty and corruption discourages private investment in the region. | | | | | |

**Section 5: Measures to Address Poverty and Corruption and Their Potential Impact on Economic Growth**

(Tick one of the boxes that most answers the question for you)

| S/N | **Measures to Address Poverty and Corruption and Their Potential Impact on Economic Growth** | **Strongly Disagree** | **Disagree** | **Neutral** | **Agree** | **Strongly Agree** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 32 | Strengthening anti-corruption laws and enforcement will reduce corruption in the Ashanti region. | | | | | |
| 33 | Increasing access to education is an effective way to reduce poverty. | | | | | |
| 34 | Promoting transparency in public resource allocation will significantly boost economic growth. | | | | | |
| 35 | Community-based initiatives can effectively address both poverty and corruption. | | | | | |

Appendix 2:

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