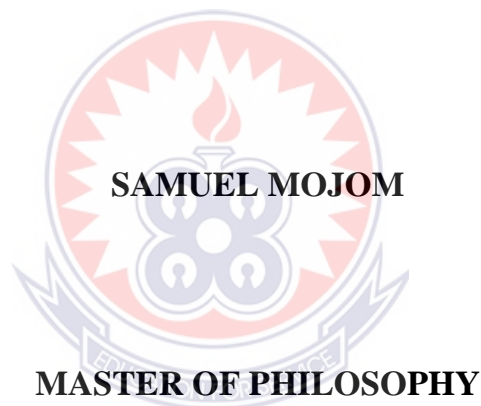# UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

THE ADOPTION OF THE CITIZENS CHARTER POLICY IN PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN GHANA: A TOOL FOR SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OR A MERE ADMINISTRATIVE RHETORIC?

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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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A Thesis in the Department of Political Science Education, Faculty of Social Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy (Political Science) in the University of Education, Winneba.

AUGUST, 2024

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Samuel Mojom, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature: ………….………………
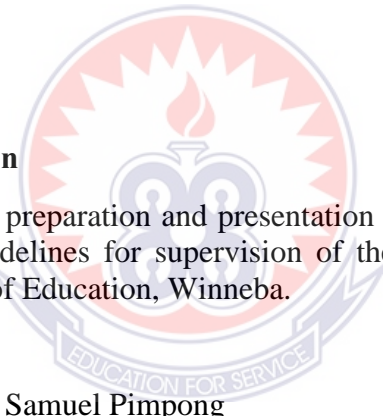
Date: …………………………………

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis/dissertation/project as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name: Dr. Samuel Pimpong

Signature: ………….………………

Date: …………………………………

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to my lovely family as well as all advocates of responsive and accountable public service delivery.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC	:	Academics
ACSH	:	Astana Civil Service Hub
APR	:	Annual Performance Report
CHRAJ	:	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CPI	:	Corruption Perception Index
CSOs	:	Civil Society Organisations
CSPIP	:	Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme
CSUs	:	Client Service Units
CT	:	Concurrent Triangulation
DESA	:	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DFID	:	Department for International Development
DVLA	:	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority
EU	:	European Union
FDA	:	Food and Drugs Authority
GCSI	:	Ghana Customer Satisfaction Index
GWCL	:	Ghana Water Company Limited
ICT	:	Information Communication Technology
LGCSP	:	Local Government Capacity Support Project
LGS	:	Local Government Service
MDAs	:	Ministries, Departments and Agencies

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MFWA	:	Media Foundation for West Africa
MLGRD	:	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MMDAs	:	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MoME	:	Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation
NACAP	:	National Anti-Corruption Action Plan
NPM	:	New Public Management
NPSRS	:	National Public Sector Reform Strategy
OECD	:	Economic Co-operation for Development
OHCS	:	Office of the Head of Civil Service
OSM	:	Office of the Senior Minister
PAT	:	Principal-Agent Theory
PE	:	Policy Expert
PET	:	Public Expenditure Tracking
PSRRP	:	Public Sector Reform for Results Project
PSRS	:	Public Sector Reform Secretariat
RTI	:	Right To Information
SE	:	Standard Error
SMART	:	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound
SPSS	:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
ST	:	Stewardship Theory
Std.Dev.	:	Standard Deviation

UEW   :   University of Education, Winneba

UK   :   United Kingdom

UN   :   United Nations

US   :   United States

WDR   :   World Development Report

ABSTRACT

The need for an improved public sector with bureaucrats to provide efficient services to the citizens, informed the adoption of the citizens charter policies in Ghana in October, 2007. The policy aimed at reinventing public service delivery in the country. Since its inception, numerous studies have been conducted to establish its implementation successes and failures in the health sector. However, the extant literature has little empirical findings on its impacts on the services of other public agencies. This current study sought to fill the gap by investigating the impact of the citizens charter programme on social accountability in terms of voice, answerability and enforceability in the service delivery of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) and the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA). The study was premised on the pragmatists research paradigm, using the concurrent mixed-method design to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from 219 sampled respondents and 10 expert informants respectively. The study established that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has had minimal impact on social accountability in the public service agencies. This was expounded with the assertion that the voice of the clients/citizens have been systematically curtailed through the limited level of involvement granted them during the crafting, implementation and evaluation of the service charters. The study again revealed that, the citizens charter programme currently has no legislative backings in Ghana, neither is there any government initiative towards institutionalising the programme in the public service agencies. Nonetheless, the citizens charter programme has improved upon the standards of service delivery and citizens' access to information. The study thereby concludes that the citizens charter programme in its current implementation state, is more of an administrative rhetoric than serving as a mechanism to make service providers responsive and accountable to the citizens. The findings contribute to knowledge in the extant literature on public sector reforms implementation. Since the enforceability of the citizens charter programme was found to be poor, the study recommends that the Public Sector Reform Secretariat under the Office of the President should draft a 'Citizens Charter Bill' to be passed by the parliament to give it a legal backing. Again, the Office of the Head of Civil Service in collaboration with the Public Service Commission should institute a 'Charter Mark System' to help rate public service agencies on their adherence to the tenets of the citizens charter programme.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The World Bank in its 2004 World Development Report (WDR) and the 2016 Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in its operation, labelled the existing system of accountability as following the long-route which has failed to keep the government bureaucracies responsive to the citizens. It thus demanded social accountability through the short-route (Guerzovich & Poli, 2020). Unlike political accountability which requires the citizens to delegate supervisory powers to elected officials, who in turn, enter into performance compacts with bureaucrats, social accountability advocates for a direct oversight role of the citizenry on service providers. Joshi (2008) asserts that there is a lack of effective accountability mechanism between the citizens and service providers, which calls for quality attention of policymakers. The state of public accountability in the lens of the World Bank Group is only effective at the 'supply side'. To wit, government embarking on intermittent policy reforms to get bureaucrats to serve the people well. Griffin et al (2010) as well as Alawattage and Azure (2021) iterated the need for the 'demand side' of accountability through a more citizen-led monitoring mechanism.

Social accountability thereby seeks to make powerholders responsive to the grievances of the people regarding inefficiency in service delivery, bureaucratic corruption and participation (Larsson & Grimes, 2022; Dhungana, 2020).

Hinging on this, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) in 2016 launched an evaluative search on its 50 projects in Bangladesh. It concluded that,

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efficiency, openness and equality were improved in areas that experienced a good-mix of government monitoring policies and citizen-led mechanisms. Congruent to this, The Kingdom of Nepal enacted the *'Guideline for making effective the governmental services, 1998 (GoN-OPMCM, 1998)'* to serve as legal watchdog on getting public service agencies to serve citizens effectively and responsively (Acharya, 2021; Tamrakar, 2010). In an independent review conducted on World Bank's accountability projects, Migliorisi and Wescott (2011) maintain that the concept of good governance could be strengthened in developing countries if the citizens demand for accountability and transparency in the activities of public institutions.

To succinctly position the consumer in the service delivery milieu, the Organization for Economic Co-operation for Development (OECD) unequivocally adjudged the citizens as partners in service delivery rather than being mere beneficiaries. This makes the citizens to envisage that public institutions should render services with honesty, competence and to effectively satisfy their natural and legal entitlements similar to what they receive from private entities (OECD, 2001, as cited in Bugaric, 2014). Blanton (2002) as well as Larsson and Grimes (2022) in their individual studies on public service delivery remarked that when citizens have adequate knowledge and information about the institutional frameworks of the government, it helps check against poor performance, abuse of power and to a large extent, curb corruption in public service delivery.

Public access to information in Slovenia for instance, is considered to be a painless activity due to the introduction of the 'just-an-official notification' concept as part of the Right to Information (RTI) initiative (Bugaric, 2014). On the contrary, the works of Adei and Boachie-Danquah (2003) and that of Eshetu (2011) seem to converge on

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a conclusion that the over reliance on highly centralized and top-down policy making and implementation approaches result in the poor service delivery in most developing economies in Africa. Citizens and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are largely excluded from the crafting and rolling-out of most government reform policies. Though the work of Eshetu (2011) acknowledged and commended the use of discretion by bureaucrats and service providers, it nonetheless, highlighted the concept of social accountability which seeks to give voice to the consumer and as a mechanism for a responsive public sector.

Social Accountability through the implementation of service charters is purported to make the citizens/customers principals not only to politicians but also to public service providers (Ackerman, 2004). The United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2021) in a sensitization exercise held in Kenya, reiterated that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development cannot be realised in the absence of an accountable, transparent and ethical public sector. Even though certain information on governance are to remain classified, proper accountability can be achieved when public institutions open-up and become proactive in the disclosure of essential information and give feedbacks to the citizenry (UN DESA, 2021; World Bank, 2018). Most recently, the Astana Civil Service Hub (ACSH, 2023) emphasized the need for responsive, accountable and legitimate public service to win the trust of the citizenry towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. It thereby calls for mechanisms to foster stewardship in public service delivery so as to get civil servants to truely serve collective interest over self-interest.

Larsson and Grimes (2022) in a recent study on societal accountability with respect to grand corruption in public procurement using 173 EU Regions, concluded that areas

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with strong civil society regimes experienced lower levels of bureaucratic corruption. In line with this, the study therefore seeks to make empirical inquiry on how social accountability has been realised in the public service delivery in Ghana after the introduction of the citizens charter programme.

Even though there are differences in the manner in which countries pursue their public sector reformation, there is however, a deep line of convergence on their prime aim to enhance administrative and public managerial capacity to lead the crusade for improved service delivery at the cutting-edge level. With the inception of the New Public Management (NPM) principles postulated by Christopher Hood in 1991, the traditional public administrator is required to adopt the logics utilised in the private sector and to also introduce measures that would ensure efficient and responsive service delivery. Wali and Azizur (2018) considered the citizens charter programme as one of such techniques which presupposes that the customer has the confidence to sanction defaulting public officials. They opined that the government of Bangladesh adopted the Citizen Charter in May, 2007 with the aim of benefiting from the positive feedback the United Kingdom (UK) registered after the delivery of the 1991 Prime Minister's White Paper by Sir John Major. The programme sought to make a suggestion to public service providers to re-orient their activities to be a more citizen-led approach than being bureaucratic. It also seeks to empower citizens by elaborating on their rights and responsibilities along the service delivery value chain (Wali & Azizur, 2018).

Being a signatory to the Open Government Partnership, Ghana has nonetheless, followed the steps taken by countries such as UK, France, Canada and Bangladesh among others, by adopting a somewhat cloned version of the Citizen's Charter in

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October, 2007. The Kufour led government is credited with the initiation, launching and to a minimum extent, implementation of the Citizen Charter at the tail-end of his second term (2005-2008) in office. During the policy launch, President Kufour purported that the citizens charter aimed at equipping the public sector to institute service standards that will serve as the basis for measuring quality and accountability in service delivery (Ohemeng, 2010). This reform policy has been attributed as the quest for Ghana to discover the 'holy grail' which has eluded the public sector for decades.

The citizens charter programme is therefore considered as a move by public service organisations to pre-inform their consumers on the full stock of services available, the pre-set standards against which such services would be rendered, the time frame within which each service will be delivered and the medium through which customer complaints will be channeled for redress (Ohemeng, 2010). To rake-in tremendous success in the implementation of this new public sector reform policy, it is imperative for regimes to make a retrospective view on the capacity of state institutions to realign themselves to operate within the tenets of the citizens charter.

The impact of the charter programme is mixed in the literature. Whereas Drewry (2005) and McGuire (2002) believe in the citizen empowerment and accountability aspect of the policy, other scholars such as Haque (2005) and Cheung (2005) are rather skeptical about the ability of the new reform programme to achieve its goals amidst deficient public sector apparatus existing in most developing countries (Huque & Ashan, 2016). Nepal has made significant progress in its public service delivery after introducing the citizens charter in 1998 (Acharya, 2021) as well as Bangladesh in the year 2008 (Korishi, Biswa & Rahman, 2022; Kundo, 2018). Against this

background, the study seeks to make enquiries into the extent to which the adoption of the citizens charter programme by the Kufour government in October, 2007 tends to mark the end of poor public service delivery. A key question that cuts across the study is the extent to which the service charters of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) and the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) have brought improvements in social accountability in public service delivery in Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Several reform policies introduced in the public sector have either been greeted with deficiencies in their implementation or failed to achieve the anticipated dividends (Ayee, 2018; Owusu, 2006; Wereko, 2008). To this end, Glover-Quartey posed the question as to whether the civil service in Ghana is an 'engine' for development or an impediment (Ayee, 2018)? Notwithstanding the glamorous launch of the Citizens Charter Programme in October 2007, Ghana continues to register a somewhat entrenched public accountability deficit which manifests in the high citizens' perception of corruption in public organisations (Eduafowa, 2018). The country scored 4.0 out of a maximum scale of 10.0 in the year 2012 and managed a marginal 4.7 improvement in the 2015 Corruption Perception Index (Eduafowa, 2018). In the 2022 CPI rankings, Ghana occupies the 72nd position out of 180 countries with an index score of 43 on a scale of 0-100 (where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 being very clean) (Transparency International, 2022). It is pertinent to notice that, a CPI score below 5.0 or 50 depicts higher level of corruption which leads to deficient public service delivery (Eduafowa, 2018). Corruption in the public sector is as a result of public accountability gaps and non-institutionalised rewards/punishment regimes among others (Ayee, 2018; Eduafowa, 2018; Englebert, 2015; Tsai, Morse, Toral & Lipovsek, 2019).

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Ghana Customer Satisfaction Index (GCSI, 2020) in its report on the 2019 consumer satisfaction survey in Ghana, found out that the consumers perceive the private retail sector services as satisfactory, relative to what they receive from the public sector. In the year 2019, the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG) and the Ghana Water Company (GWC) which featured in the survey polled an index score of 54.02 and 59.88 which translates into an academic grade 'D' and 'D+' respectively. Concerning the health sector, public health service delivery was found to be unsatisfactory by clients notwithstanding the recent proliferation of service charters in almost all leading government hospitals (Abekah-Nkrumah, Manu & Atinga, 2010). Nonetheless, the Accra Agenda for Action, 2008 placed emphasis on public sector results, accountability and transparency on the part of service providers (Alawattage & Azure, 2021). Moreover, the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness iterated the need for popular ownership of development through deliberate policy reforms on citizen engagement (Danhoundo, Nasiri & Wiktorowicz, 2018).

The impact of the Civil Service Performance Improvement Programme (CSPIP) on customer satisfaction in Ghana was found to be poor (Adei & Boachie-Danquah, 2003; Ayee, 2001). Likewise the October, 2007 Citizen's Charter Reform Policy (Ohemeng, 2010). This is however, in sharp contrast to the assertion that citizens charter increases efficiency and empowers service users to engage in direct interactions with service providers (Joshi, 2008). Even though as the citizens charter thrived by revamping the Client Service Units (CSUs) created under the CSPIP, it rather failed to beef-up logistics and human capital to undertake what was expected of them. For example, Ohemeng (2010) found out that most MDAs which were to champion the reform programme could not even accommodate their CSUs due to the funding inabilities of the government. Customer complaints units were not duly

created before the launch of the programme as observed by Ohemeng (2010). Also, attitudinal change management which constitutes one of the salient bedrocks for successful implementation of any reform programme was overlooked (Adei & Boachie-Danquah, 2003; Wereko, 2008).

For over fifteen years since the launch of the citizens charter programme in Ghana, what has been its impact on social accountability (Alawattage & Azure, 2021; Bratton & Gyimah-Boadi, 2016) in the public service delivery of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) and the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA)?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

i.   investigate the impact of the citizens charter policy on social accountability in terms of voice, enforceability and answerability.

ii. investigate the capacity building in terms of public awareness creation and personnel training towards the adoption of the citizens charter policy.

iii. ascertain what has been done by government to institutionalise the citizens charter policy in terms of behavioral change management, rewards/punishment mechanisms and legislative backings.

iv. examine the state of customer complaints mechanisms in the public service organisations towards the implementation of the citizens charter policy.

1.4 Research Questions

i.   What impact has the citizens charter policy had on social accountability in terms of voice, enforceability and answerability?

ii. How is the capacity building in terms of public awareness creation and personnel training towards the adoption of the citizens charter policy?

iii.   What has been done by the government to institutionalise the citizens charter policy in terms of behavioral change management, rewards/punishment mechanisms as well as legislative backings?

iv.   What is the state of customer complaints mechanisms in the public service organisations towards the implementation of the citizens charter policy?

1.5 Scope and Justification of the Study

The current study is limited to the Ashanti Regional Head Offices of the two selected public service organisations. This is to enable the researcher to reach out to the respondents with ease and within the limited time at hand. The objective of the study was further narrowed down to only investigate the impact of the service/citizen charters introduced in these agencies on social accountability to the citizens who patronize their services.

The Ashanti Region was chosen because contemporary studies conducted on the general satisfaction level of the public/citizens on service delivery in the Region seem to converge on a low level ratings by the customers on services provided by public institutions. In this regard, Luguterah and Dwomoh (2017) carried out a case study research using the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL), to examine the effectiveness of public service delivery in the Ashanti Region. The study concluded that the Ashanti Regional office of the GWCL could not effectively meet the demands of the communities for basic water supply due to poor communication between service providers and the general public. In the same vain, Adubofour (2019) in a study to assess customer satisfaction on services provided by the Department of Social Welfare, found out that, 68% of clients in the Ashanti Region were dissatisfied.

The quality of public service delivery in the Region is nonetheless gaining currency in the current literature. This thereby requires a purposive government intervention through policy reforms such as the citizens charter programme. Hinging on this, the study would investigate the impact of the citizens charter programme, if any, on social accountability in public service delivery of the Ashanti Regional head offices of the DVLA and the FDA.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The need for an improved public sector with a well-motivated and responsive personnel to provide efficient services to the citizens as customers, has seen most governments across the globe initiating and/or adopting several reform policies towards reinventing the services of government. However, little has been done in view of systematic research works to investigate the real impacts of these reform policies (Joshi, 2008). The available local literature has been dotted with much work concentrated on revealing the public sector reform programmes introduced by the government of Ghana; its implementation successes and shortcomings and corresponding recommendations (Adei & Boachie-Danquah, 2003; Ayee, 2001; Quartey, 2008; Wereko, 2008).

This notwithstanding, most of these studies are skewed towards service charters of individual public healthcare organisations (Abeka-Nkrumah et al, 2010; Agbemabiese, Anim & Nii Tettey Nyanyofio, 2015; Owusu, 2007) as well as empirical findings on public sector corruption and accountability deficits (Eduafowa, 2018; Englebert, 2015; Transparency International-CPI, 2022; Ohemeng, 2010). There is therefore the imperative for a systematic study to be conducted to help

establish the relationship between policy reform programmes, particularly, the citizens charter and the realization of a responsive and accountable public sector.

The research findings made significant contribution in enriching the existing literature by expanding the scanty theoretical knowledge on how reform policies can improve upon public accountability. Using the DVLA and FDA as the units of analysis has helped divert the narrative of service charters from the health sector to other service agencies. Hence, filling the gap in the local literature. It also serves as an empirical guide to relevant policymaking institutions such as the Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS), Public Service Commission and the Public Sector Reform Secretariat (PSRS) under the Office of the President in evaluating the strides of their reform programmes.

1.7 Organisation of the Study

The study is organised into five Chapters. Chapter one contains the introduction to the study, the statement of the problem, research questions, the objectives of the study, scope and justifications of the study, and significance of the study as well as the organisation of the study. Chapter two focuses on the review of related literature and theoretical framework of the study. Chapter three covers the study methodology. Chapter four contains the data analyses and presentation of results. With Chapter five ending with the summary of findings, discussions, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This Chapter presents the review of related theoretical and empirical works on public sector reforms, citizen participation in governance and social accountability in public service delivery. It also covers the theoretical and conceptual frameworks within which the entire study was situated.

2.1 A Mirror View of Popular Participation in Ghana

Ghana has crafted countless programmes to consolidate popular participation in her governing process by enshrining this essential political rights in the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution. This notwithstanding, several obstacles to effectively participate continue to bedevil the citizenry, as most people find it difficult to access the opportunities and institutional structures for participation in the decision-making process. The Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) (2019) rather maintains that, the rationale for the introduction of the decentralisation policy in Ghana is to draw public governance closer to the people at the grassroots level. To them, the involvement of the citizens in the policy making process should not be restricted to the local level but must extend to national level institutions such as the Parliament and the Ministries. Even though the paper applauds the strides made by the country in her democratic pursuit, it nonetheless concluded that democracy in Ghana seems not to travel beyond electioneering since most people remain passive and politically inactive before and after the election periods.

The Foundation again reported a huge disparity between government's countless policies on popular participation and its practicality on the ground. This they attributed to the lack of sanction mechanisms in institutions and agencies which starve the people of the opportunity to make input in their final decisions. This defeats the purpose of the decentralisation policy (MFWA, 2019). This study thereby seek to investigate the effort made by the government through the introduction of the citizen charter policy, to institutionalise reward/punishment mechanisms in the public service agencies.

Antwi-Boasiako (2010) opined that popular participation brings about government receptiveness, accountability and improves efficiency in the use of public resources. This is because citizens have the power to change or retain political leaders relative to their performance contract. It is pertinent to note that demanding public accountability through the elected officials (long route) has been the norm. However, the call for citizens/customers to have a direct link with service providers (short route) through the concept of 'citizens power' puts social accountability in the limelight (Guerzovich & Poli, 2020; World Bank, 2004; Word Bank, 2021). Pointing to the popular participation nightmare, Arthur (2016) found out that in the Mfantseman Municipal Assembly, scant opportunities were given to people of the local communities to participate in relevant decision-making processes that aimed at regulating their daily affairs. The field work again revealed that most residents in remote communities were denied voice, as almost all of the participants were reported to have zero knowledge about the existence of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); its regulations and standards; conditions for securing building permits from the Assembly; noise pollution and acceptable mining practices.

Tweneboah (2016) in his work on stakeholder participation on climate change policy also found out that policymakers normally include the affluent in society, loud civil society organisations and think tanks in the policy formulation process, but willfully neglect the inputs of the masses. In a face-to-face field interview conducted in the Asutifi District on popular participation in policy formulation, it was identified that women groups, farmers as well as most dwellers of mining communities were proportionally smaller in representation in decision-making than the men and those in the district capital (Osei, 2018). Asante (2020) observed that most Ghanaians are limited in their political participation soon after the excitement and emotional attachments shown during electioneering campaigns, processions and the long queuing to cast their ballot. This eventually makes public accountability unattainable as the people have to wait and endure poor services until another election.

In an analysis of the 2014 Afrobarometer survey data, Asante (2020) found out that less than 15% of the respondents establish contact with their parliamentarians and other government officials to report important societal problems or to have their opinion heard on an ongoing public discourse. On the contrary, 20%, 27% and 39% of the respondents indicated they normally contact their traditional leaders, assemblymembers and religious leaders respectively, on salient issues even though these institutions are ranked low in the use of the sovereign powers of the state for change. Again, it was revealed that a little over 85% never engaged the traditional media outlets regarding public issues, neither do they engage government functionalities on the performance of the government by constitutional or extra constitutional means available to them as citizens (Asante, 2020).

Disengaging the citizens in policy formulation and implementation by the government as well as the lack of motivation on the part of the citizenry to self-initiate the campaign for popular participation, made French et al. (2014, as cited in Orrnet, 2018) to conclude that the people who are the final consumers of government policy-decisions are seldom involved in the problem identification; policy formulation and implementation processes. The public is rather manipulated, tokenized and decorated by policymakers for their votes, but not their voice. Kpentey (2019) argued that the decentralisation policy that birthed the various MMDAs across the country only magnifies electoral participation of the grassroots rather than calling for grassroots participation in the public policy circle.

Tandoh-Offin (2013) remarked that Ghana's policy making challenges associated with the post-independence socialist-oriented economic policies of Kwame Nkrumah, were somewhat resolved with the inception of the decentralisation policy. However, decision-making in public organisations post this period, have been dominated by few political elites who exercise control over state resources (Whitfield, 2011).

Weible, Heikklia and deLeon (2012) is of the conviction that, the policy process is about the study of change, formation of the policy decision, related actors, public events and context. The authors continued that, the policy process calls for decision makers who are vested with the skills of negotiation, bargaining and accommodation of divergent interests to give it a political character. These skills-set ought to be cultivated by the public sector administrator. However, this cannot be said about most bureaucrats in Ghana since the tendency to follow the comprehensive policy process hinges on the importance of the event/issue, the sponsors of the issue, the political

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atmosphere at that time and the timing of the introduction of the issue (Abdulai, 2019).

The decision-making arena has never been purged of the constant interplay of political power, discretion and conflicting preferences. This informed the argument by Simeon (2008) that, policy making is not reduced to a matter of problem solving by the quest to formulate the best and cost-effective policy-decisions, but rather extensively covers the concept of choice between multiple goals and alternative solutions advanced by stakeholders amidst limited information, time and capital resources. This can best be achieved when bureaucrats exercise discretion in decision-making (Roman, 2015; Sowa & Seldon, 2013). In view of the multiplicity of the policy making environment, Ahenkan, Bawole and Domfeh (2013) in a study conducted in the Sefwi Wiawso Municipal Assembly to ascertain the rate at which citizens are involved in the management and administration of local government institutions, underscored that popular participation in decision-making helps in improving the effectiveness of service delivery. It also empowers the grassroots to participate in developmental processes that affect their lives.

The concept of popular participation in decision-making has been shrouded in Ghana since wider participation in the planning, budgeting and financial management of local agencies is found to be marginal (Ahenkan et al., 2013). Ayim, Dorgbetor and Agbetowoka (2019) in their work on '*citizens' participation in the decentralisation process of Ghana*', found that about 25% of the citizenry have no or little knowledge on the decentralisation concept. The study thereby concluded that, even though citizens participate in local elections, they are not part of the decision-making process and the planning of developmental projects. Alornyeku (2011) for instance, gave a

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good and in-depth exposure on the impact of bureaucratic principles operating in the public service delivery of the KMA to its clients. He further confirmed the practice of red-tapeism; insufficient and ineffective coordination of activities and unnecessary delays in responding to the plight of clients. The literature on popular participation of Ghanaians in governance thereby shows a gloomy picture. It further portrays an ineffective public accountability mechanism through elections-long route of accountability (Guerzovich & Poli, 2020; World Bank, 2004; Word Bank, 2021). Hence, the imperative for a more strict and direct accountability (short route) mechanism conceptualized in this study as Social Accountability. Since the citizen charter programme is purported to get service agencies to engage the citizens in their activities, this study sought to ascertain the level of voice granted service users in the activities of the DVLA and the FDA.

2.1.1 Incorporating citizens' input in the governing process of Ghana

Ongoing debates on the involvement of citizens in the policy formulation process is premised on the argument that, the state through the government machinery is the social vehicle to transport the resources needed at the decision-making table. Whilst the people are the repository of the 'what' and 'why' those policies are to be made (Azarya & Chazan, 1987, as cited in Asante, 2020). It has been observed that various governments in Ghana's history in one way or the other, have encouraged popular participation in certain aspects of the political system towards specified goals. Chazan (1976, as cited in Asante, 2020) consider the introduction of the concept of 'Young Pioneers Movement' by Ghana's premier president, Kwame Nkrumah as a way of integrating the youth in the nation-building process.

Moreover, the military junta led by General Ignatius Kutu Acheampong tried an ultimately failed attempt of a Union Government (UniGov) system which sought to incorporate diverse ideas from people of different professional backgrounds in the pursuit of national development. Owusu (1996, as cited in Asante, 2020) opined that Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings launched his lengthy political rule with a populist mantra of 'the people's power' and also instituted structures such as the People's Defence Committee (PDC) to get Ghanaians involved in government. Currently, president Akufo-Addo also exhibited similar traits with his famous call on Ghanaians to be 'citizens' rather than 'spectators' in the nation-building process.

In the year 2010, Plan Ghana in collaboration with the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC) crafted a programme to enable the youth to participate in public budget preparation exercise and to also equip them to hold policymakers accountable (Orrnet, 2018). This is one of the New Public management strategies to get citizens to press for accountability in public administration. Moreover, the Local Government Service (LGS) has designed popular participatory planning and budgeting to create the avenue for citizen involvement at the local levels. These initiatives translated into the implementation of the Local Government Capacity Support Project (LGCSP) in some selected Metropolitan and Municipal Assemblies in the year 2013 (Ghana National Action Plan, 2017). The LGCSP led to the establishment of Social Accountability Units (SAUs) in the selected local assemblies which will help develop and utilise public financial management templates to improve upon public education and popular participation in governance. How effective has the SAUs been in getting the ordinary service user to interact with, and demand service accountability from providers?

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Ghana is a signatory to the Open Government Partnership which requires international partners to consolidate transparency, accountability and the use of technology to enhance citizen participation for good governance (Ghana National Action Plan, 2017). To achieve these objectives, the government of Ghana organized an open consultative workshop in September, 2017 at Koforidua under the auspices of the Office of the Senior Minister (OSM) in conjunction with relevant Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) purposely to design a National Action Plan. It aimed at improving upon citizen involvement in governance and demand for public accountability. The 2017 National Action Plan (NAP) set out six resounding milestones geared towards encouraging, fostering and enabling participation of the people of Ghana in the general activities of government, namely;

i.   The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) through the Local Government Service (LGS) to expand the establishment of Social Accountability Units in all the 216 MMDAs by December 2018.

ii.   The MLGRD through the LGS to integrate and strengthen Client Service Units (CSU) and Social Accountability desk in line with the social accountability role of MMDAs by August 2019.

iii. The MLGRD and the LGS to monitor the implementation of popular participation framework by March 2019.

iv.   The MLGRD and the Office of the Head of Local Government Service to ensure that all MMDAs adequately support Accountability Units and Client Service Units to obtain real-time feedbacks from citizens by August 2019.

v.   The Ministry of Finance's Fiscal Decentralisation Unit, MLGRD and LGS to ensure that MMDAs comprehensively report on budget implementation (both financial and non-financial information) annually to citizens by March 2019.

vi.   The Parliament to provide quarterly reports on petitions and feedbacks received from the public by December 2018 (Ghana National Action Plan, 2017, p.10).

This development notwithstanding, Agbazuere (2020) described the policy formulation and implementation arena as having a huge disconnect between the policymakers and the people (i.e. The long route of accountability debunked in the World Development Report, 2004) which culminates in mass protests and rejections of government developmental policies. Crawford (2009) asserts that government programmes for popular participation are ineffective and sometimes mere strategies to get citizens along. Though there was significant participation of the people in sampled districts during elections, it does not commensurate with grassroots engagement in final policy outcomes by the elected officials. Kpentey (2019) simplified this menace by arguing that government structures are mere 'smoke screens' meant to create the impression of citizens' involvement, but become ineffective at implementation.

This current study is positioned in line with the aforementioned policy implementation gaps in the public sector. It seeks to investigate the impact of the much acclaimed citizens charter policy introduced fifteen years ago, aimed at reinventing public service delivery in Ghana. A significant question is on how the service charters crafted by various service agencies worked to ensure citizen participation as well as make the agencies responsive to their grievances.

2.1.2 The New Public Management (NPM) ERA

Most governments in developing countries are devising constructive measures through policy reformations to improve upon the wellbeing of the citizenry. Even though great strides have been made by most regimes, the diversity in the needs and

interests of the people has created the imperative for policymakers to design measures to help deliver efficient and timely services to citizens. Just as the private businesses strive to serve customers for profit, the government through the public service delivery agencies also ought to step-up efforts to increase public values (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2011). Even though there are variations in the mode of operation of private sector organisations and that of government agencies, Holmes (2011) maintained that, the tenets of the new wave of public administration requires policymakers to be citizen-centered. This is because the policies for the betterment of the people, must include the people themselves.

The call for the NPM was to meet the demands of the post-industrial communities. De Veries and Nemec (2013) carefully considered the NPM and attributed it to be an era of improved quality in service delivery, responsiveness and efficient use of public resources by bureaucrats through the adoption of identifiable logics practiced in profit-oriented organisations. Under this paradigm, public officials are required by standards to steer affairs but not to merely play a role (Moynihan, 2006). Commenting further, the author viewed the practicality of the NPM and posit that, public sector managers should be liberated from strict political restraints so as to become entrepreneurial and manage issues for results. Bureaucrats should not be made accountable for results only, but rather be given optimum space and discretion to manage for results through citizen-oriented policies.

The principles of the NPM has led to the adoption of several administrative strategies to help improve upon service delivery to the citizens as customers, chief among which is the citizens charter programme. The charter places citizens at the center-stage to decide what type of services are needed, how they should be delivered and the

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standards to be met by providers. It thereby repose confidence of the people in the service delivery chain and the mechanisms put in place to sanction office holders should they fail to meet the set standards (Wali & Azizur, 2018). Other scholars consider the citizens charter as a policy document that lists the areas that service providers are to be committed towards their citizens/customers through clearly stated benchmarks of quality service delivery (Beniwal, 2005).

The last quarter of the 20th Century as intimated by Beniwal (2005) has seen a shake-up in the administrative values of the governing system. Traditionally, the government-citizen interaction has been in the form of donor-recipient in which citizens have little to say in the decision-making process. Significantly, the New Public Management doctrine postulated by Christopher Hood came to break the monopolization of decision-making and called for the partnership of citizens and customers on one hand, and the government and service providers on the other hand. He concludes that the citizens charter which is a strategy under the NPM and good governance, sought to change the traditional top-centric government bureau into one that is bottom-up and citizen-oriented.

2.1.3 Revisiting the citizen's charter policy

Citizens Charters are extracts of the new public management paradigm which are instituted to get public service providers to be responsive by pre-informing customers of the existing services, rights and benchmarks against which such services will be assessed (Sharma, 2012). After its declaration by the Prime Minister-John Major in 1991, several regimes across the globe have since adopted the principle as a way of bringing reformations in the public sector. For instance, Sharma (2012) iterated that Chandigarh, India bought into the idea in 2004. The charter brought significant

alterations in service delivery in the city as service providing agencies were required to have citizen complaint centres and a universal electronic mail address to collate the complaints for redress. Mexico is another notable regime with adequate mechanisms to aid the lodging and resolution of customer complaints (Hevia de la Jara, 2008). This notwithstanding, the Chandigarh case study conducted by Sharma (2012) reveals that the charter programme had no meaningful impact on service delivery in India. It was reported that citizens had no open access to the charter document, most employees in the featured agencies were not consulted in the drafting of the charter and most adversely, the design and implementation of the reform policy followed the traditional top-down administrative approach.

In similar fashion, Tamrakar (2010) in a field survey on the impact of the citizens charter programme in Kathmandu, Nepal, found out that only 26% had timely services from the District Administration Office (DAO). In terms of citizens' awareness, 57% of the respondents have no knowledge about the charter due to its limited publicity. The DAO failed the litmus test on grievance handling implementation as majority of clients, representing 68% indicated they received no feedback on their complaints lodged (Tamrakar, 2010). Albeit, the citizens charter policy thrived in Nepal and made significant impact on customer satisfaction. The principle of procedural clarity was achieved as a result of the strict adherence to the citizens' access to information concept as confirmed by 81% of the clients of the DAO (Tamrakar, 2010).

In the case of Bangladesh, the citizens charter system was adopted in 2007 with the sole aim of improving upon public service delivery, transparency and accountability at the grassroots level (Sharma, 2012). The programme was met with same challenges

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as in the case of India. Huque and Ahsan (2016) also conducted a survey in Rajshahi District to find out the strides of the citizens charter programme, and concluded that, only a small number of people have knowledge of its existence. They continued that pertinent information were enshrined in the charter that received no inputs from the populace, the top-down implementation strategy was prevalent, as well as a haphazard and uncoordinated institutional framework. Ghana in a bid to follow the footsteps of other leading democracies such as US, Canada, UK to mention but few, introduced the much touted citizens charter programme in its public service delivery at the tail-end of the Kufour led administration in October, 2007 (Ohemeng, 2010). It has been reported that a total of 120 public organisations had signed onto the charter system by the close of the year 2008 (1st anniversary after launch). To this end, Ohemeng (2010) quizzed whether the new charter system can be the holy grail that the nation has hitherto waited for.

The adoption and popularization of the citizens charter programme in Ghana however, seems to be skewed towards the health sector. Most empirical studies in the local literature highlight the strides made by the Ghana Health Service (GHS) in partnership with the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), to launch the Patients' Charter Programme in 2002 (Abekah-Nkrumah et al., 2010). Typical of the launch of programmes that require the support of the masses, sensitization workshops were organised to train the staff and the media on the tenets of the patients' charter system. Related posters were printed and postered in the wards and offices to help educate the public. It recorded 4.9% significant improvement in the patient-nurse relationship in a survey conducted in Kasoa Polyclinic by Abekah-Nkrumah et al. (2010). The survey again found out that about half (46.6%) of the 102 patients respondents have knowledge about the patients' charter, of which, they got

such information from 'Self-sought' (45.1%), Mass Media (31.7%), Family/Friends (18.3%) and Hospital staff (4.9%). In terms of practitioners' respect for the rights of patients, effort has been made to enshrine these rights in Article 30 of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution (Yarney, Buabeng, Baidoo & Bawole, 2016).

Even though the patients' charter has yielded some results in healthcare delivery in Ghana, its impact is not widely felt due to certain unsurmounted challenges, of which, Abeka-Nkrumah et al. (2010) as well as Yarney et al. (2016) enumerated as follows; 1. The Charter is reduced to an administrative instrument utilised in few instances to sanction staff of the GHS who are seen to have violated the rights of patients. 2. The various professional bodies (i.e. Medical and Dental Council, Pharmacy Council and Nurses and Midwives Council) in the health sector are not bounded uniformly by the standards of the charter. 3. Professional Training Institutions in the health sector are not obliged to infuse the charter principles into their curricular to inculcate into students the standards to be met on the field.

Accompanying these teaming challenges is the limited effort made by healthcare institutions to educate clients and staff on the patients' charter. Abeka-Nkrumah et al. (2010) revealed in a survey that 91.2% of the hospital staff respondents indicated that they or their facilities did not organize sensitization seminars on the charter programme. Yarney et al. (2016) also found that staff participation during the drafting and adoption of the various patients charters was low in the case of the Ghana Health Service.

In a bid to avert these challenges in the implementation of the charter programme in Nepal, the government enacted the *'Guideline for making effective the governmental services, 1998 (GoN-OPMCM, 1998)*' Act. This Legislative Act marks the birth of the

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citizens charter in the Kingdom (Acharya, 2021; Tamrakar, 2010). The current government of UK has also conducted a deliberate policy review to check the impact of the citizens charter programme on service delivery. Even though tremendous successes were recorded, a new Citizen's Panel has been established to monitor the quality and efficiency of service delivery of state agencies (Korishi, Biswas & Rahman, 2022). Against this background, the study sought to ascertain the strides made by the government to institutionalise the Citizens Charter Policy in the public service agencies of Ghana, using the Ashanti Regional head offices of the DVLA and the FDA as case studies.

2.1.4 Treating citizens as customers of government rather than as voters

The multiplicity of customer demands on public service providers most often than not, degenerate into conflicts at the front-desk which ought to be resolved instantly. To effectively respond to this, Milakovich (2014) as well as Simeon (2015) called for employee empowerment through the use of discretion. A pool of specialized and knowledgeable frontline staff can help resolve most complaints of the customers without necessarily pushing them into long queues for managerial redress. Concentrating on the public sector, McClendon (1992, as cited in Milakovich, 2014) is rather of the view that public service providers are to prioritise the identification and categorization of existing prospective customers in the marketplace. He continued that public organisations that systematically categorize their customers according to their various needs, expectations and inputs, stand the chance of raking-in successes at the point of service delivery. Also, organisations can effectively respond to customer related problems by inculcating in their employees the listening attitude; teaching them conflict resolution and problem solving strategies; and giving enough authority-

space for frontline staff to deal diligently with citizens as customers rather than seeing them as mere beneficiaries of government supplies.

Management can design programs to internally reward employees for good customer relations at the end of a productive year. Milakovich (2014) observed that most governments institutions do utilise the 'secret shopper' technique in which employees from different public service providing agencies volunteer to seek for essential services in another agency so as to experience its customer service culture. When public service organisations become more customer-centered, service providers will treat citizens as competitive customers who want their complaints resolved at-the-point of occurrence devoid of bureaucratic delays. In this regard, Hevia de la Jara (2008) ingeminate that citizens are able to make suggestions as well as lodge complaints in public service institutions as a result of the 'Oportunidades programme' introduced in Mexico. Howbeit, Jayal (2008) brought to the fore, the weak participation of the service users in the public service delivery sector of Mexico.

Governments should adopt a 'marketing' orientation in other to train every single employee to empathise with citizens and help address issues that may crop-up along the service delivery chain (Milakovich, 2014). This feat however, seems unrealistic in the public sector as public agencies are often overwhelmed with bureaucratic accountability and standardisation of services to the point that, the psychological needs of the citizens are grossly ignored (Milakovich, 2014). Contemporary public administrators find it quite difficult to reconcile the call by proponents of NPM for a bottom-up and citizen-centered approach with that of the traditional top-down bureaucratic and scientific Weberian management modules.

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2.1.5 Meeting customer service standards in public service delivery

One of the principal tenets of the New Public management (NPM) is the use of the market logics applied in private businesses to improve upon customer satisfaction (De Veries & Nemec, 2013; Moynihan, 2006). It is however, challenging to leverage this in the public sector since the government finds it quite difficult to set performance standards across board; and to also motivate the vast pool of employees in the public sector. Wali and Azizur (2018) acknowledged the efforts made by government institutions to change the image of unresponsiveness to the plights of citizens to rather exhibit the qualities of the private businesses. In this direction, Milakovich (2014) is rather of the view that it is too costly for the public sector to build customer-responsive service agencies due to the conflicting priorities and vested interests of various bureaucracies. These interest variations notwithstanding, government agencies can still remain responsive to their customers if existing political leadership would be modeled along the principles of good governance and open government.

Employee empowerment has been one of the necessary evils that ought to be incorporated into the general operation of organisations. Milakovich (2014) posits that to get employees to internalize and run along the quality management principles, the strict adherence to rigid rules, formalize structures and rule of thumb must be toned down and rather give room for individual empowerment to help meet the needs of citizens. Employee empowerment involves the devolution of authority and freedom to do the needful within pre-established limits for customer satisfaction. It motivates frontline staff to add a voice in decision-making and go all length to satisfy the customer at the point of contact (Milakovich, 2014).

Milakovich (2014) opined that training frontline employees to build positive perception about themselves in relation with customers and management, is essential for the victory of any organisational change effort. He maintained that motivating employees to improve upon their customer service relations emanates foremost from building a sense of common purpose among individual employees; inculcating the desire to excel in their portfolios through empowerment; training and keeping them functional in the use of cutting-edge techniques to promptly respond to the needs of customers and never relenting on the need for reward and recognition. Organisational reward schemes are important in the quest to change employee behavior. They may be intrinsically generated in the form of peer recognition and better working conditions (hygiene factors), or they can be extrinsically induced through the introduction of employee bonuses, charter marks and promotions (motivators). No matter the form of the motivation given, empowered public employees in a well managed environment share the common goal of meeting and exceeding the performance standards agreed with customers (Milakovich, 2014).

Every empowered employee should be given the requisite training either on-the-job through role playing in the secret shopper system and/or off-the-job through formalized seminars and workshops. Since empowerment goes hand-in-hand with devolution/delegation of authority, Milakovich (2014) recommends that results of frontline employees should be carefully monitored by management. Devolution of authority aids in the prompt resolution of customer related conflicts by frontline staff at the point of occurrence. Prioritization of customer service by public sector managers encourages employees to become more responsive and accountable to the citizens they serve as well as to their superiors in the organizational hierarchy.

2.2 Differences between Customer Service in Public and Private Sector

Organisations

Although customer satisfaction is needed in almost all organisations (both public and private), there exist slight variations in how personnels in both sectors interact with their customers/consumers. Private businesses do pay much attention to recipients of their goods and services by investing resources into training employees on good customer relations so as to remain the best choice of the people in an endless competitive market. Milakovich (2014) iterates that private businesses are responsive to their clients due to the growing presence of other entities which offer similar services at either a reduced price and/or limited time frame.

The author continued that private businesses risk loosing revenue and credibility in the eyes of citizens should they fail to meet the service standards and their tastes. This becomes a form of incentive that will push management to allocate resources for employee training and empowerment programs. Even though the goal of every business entity is to retain its customers, the provider-recipient relationship existing in the private businesses is somewhat limited to one-time transaction, and intermittently extends to cover after-sales service and warranty regularities. Governments also engage in the provision of goods and services to same people, but hardly meet such market restrictions that bedevil the private sector businesses, hence, the leeway for most public service providers to remain passive to the concerns of the citizens they pledged to serve.

Public sector managers are nonetheless aware of the ongoing wave of good governance and social accountability. They are therefore to learn these service quality techniques and come out from the envelop of bureaucracy to promptly respond to the

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concerns of citizens within pre-set standards and regulations. All that needed to be done is to break the barriers for the adoption and practice of citizen-centered service delivery.

Milakovich (2014) remarked that there seems to be much talk on improving service standards in public agencies by the government than what is actually seen on ground. This verbose promise of public sector reformation to reflect the new public management principles does not encourage employees to serve citizens in a well networked, bottom-up and customer-responsive manner. This thereby worsens the inability of public agencies to relinquish traditional public management systems that take pride in top-down command and control for all activities. Despite these attitudinal barriers, many public employees and their professional associations in advance economies are exploring ways of infusing the private sector logics aimed at responding to citizens as customers rather than treating them as clueless and vulnerable beneficiaries of government benevolence. The call made by Prime Minister John Major for a citizens' charter in his 1991 White Paper is in the right direction to bring the citizens closer to public service providers for mutual satisfaction.

2.3 Public Administration Approach in Ghana

Even though regimes across the globe have unique and tailor-made approaches in managing their public affairs, there is a seeming resemblance in the characteristics of these public administration strategies. In this regard, Emery and Giauque (2014) underscore that public administration in many countries is hybridized, by blending the traits of traditional Weberian bureaucratic public management and that of contemporary models such as the New Public Management (NPM) and good

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governance. In the same vain, the public administration model in Ghana exhibits this hybridity (Ayee, 2018; Eduafowa, 2018). The Weberian bureaucratic public administration model stresses on due process, hierarchical control and process-based accountability. These principles are highly prevalent in the structure and manner in which the public sector is managed in Ghana.

On the contrary, the NPM emphasizes on administrative modifications such as the trading-off of process accountability for accountability for outcomes; hierarchical control for a more contract-like relationship between politicians and bureaucrats; and institutionalisation of performance-based pay measurable within agreed standards (Eduafowa, 2018). In Ghana, Ayee (2001) remarked without mincing words that the NPM principles are embedded in most public sector reform policies geared towards performance management, citizen-centered service delivery, and operational efficiency. He continued that the recent inclusion of performance contract signings by public officials and institutional performance email modules into the public service, clearly mimic the new public management theory. Moreover, Eduafowa (2018) acknowledged that Ghana practice the good governance concept which was ushered into Africa by the World Bank in 1989 following the failure of the Structural Adjustment Programs. The implementation of the decentralisation policy in Ghana, is an example of good governance since it focuses on grassroots participation in public governance.

Pertaining to good governance, the World Bank advocated for a paradigm shift from mere economic planning by public officials to now pay attention to the political atmosphere within which these economic plans unfold. It is envisioned by the World Bank that transparency in public administration will aid in the fight against

bureaucratic corruption, nepotism, red tape and economic mismanagement (World Bank, 2021).

2.4 Public Accountability Mechanisms in Ghana

Each of the three public administration paradigms practiced in Ghana has its own inherent approach to ensuring public accountability. The classical Weberian public administration lays emphasy on process accountability or adhering to due process by bureaucrats. The NPM also emphasizes on accountability for results; whereas the good governance complement by emphasizing on results achievement through citizen participation and down-ward accountability to citizens (Eduafowa, 2018). The author maintains that good governance and its advocacy for direct citizens participation has provided the bedrock for civil society activities in Ghana, to drum home the need to streamline public service provision to respond to the demands of citizens. Interestingly, while adopting the good governance approach to public accountability, citizens have sustained their expectation of achieving process accountability through the traditional public administration model. Thus, citizens still push for public officials to adhere to due process in their duties, get access to participate, as well as making service providers responsive to their concerns.

To help achieve public accountability in Ghana, successive regimes have institutionalised several mechanisms to regulate the activities of public servants and to curb bureaucratic corruption. These according to Eduafowa (2018) include legislations such as the Financial Administration Act 2003 (Act 654), the Public Procurement Act, 2003 (Act 663), the Whistle-blowers Act, 2006 (Act 720) and the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2019 (Act 989). Government investments have also been made in establishing other oversight institutions aside from the parliament and

judicial system to help fight public corruption. These are namely; the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Economic and Organized Crime Office (EOCO), the Public Interest Accounts Committee (PIAC) and most recently, the Office of the Special Prosecutor (OSP).

It is however, noticed that canvasing for accountability in the Ghanaian public sector is rather becoming vindictive and demotivating as experts consider it as deepening the cognitive bias principle referred to by Abraham Maslow as 'the Law of the Instrument' (Eduafowa, 2018). Abraham Maslow by this, is describing a person who is holding a hammer and considers every protruding object as a nail to strike. Eduafowa (2018) on this premise, remarked that the moral force developing across the Ghanaian society is one in which every transgression of standards of operation by a public servant, is deemed as a sign of corruption. Hence, the need to re-orient the populace on what actions constitute corruption that must be identified and punished and those that are to be treated as procedural breaches.

2.5 Evaluating Public Sector Reform Programmes in Ghana

Successive governments have recognised the failure of reform policies in Ghana's public sector (Republic of Ghana, 2014). For instance, leaders at the Senchi National Economic Forum of 2014 registered their displeasure on public sector performance by labelling both civil and public servants as being lackadaisical towards work. There has also been the identification of poor institutional capacity of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) as one of the warring factors against the formulation and implementation of effective policies for efficient service delivery to the citizens (World Bank, 2010). It is thus concluded that most lucrative developmental reforms and programs have abysmal implementation records in Ghana.

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Citizens are increasingly becoming infuriated about the waste of manpower and capital resources in formulating reform policies that are not likely to see the brightness of the day (World Bank, 2018). Most past anti-corruption strategies in Ghana went aground mainly due to the lack of effective and sustained coordination between the sourced MDA and other state institutional frameworks working on anti-graft programmes, as well as limited government support for the implementation of anti-corruption reforms (Republic of Ghana, 2015, as cited in World Bank, 2018).

In a bid to resolve these menace, the current Nana Addo Dankwah Akufo-Addo's government created the Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation (MoME) in 2017 under the Office of the President (OP) to gather data on reform policies and to provide short and medium term monitoring and evaluation of strategic flagship programs and projects (Government of Ghana, 2017). Inspite of any meaningful impact made, the capacity of the ministry was limited in terms of logistics and trained personnel to comb the length and breadth of the nation for this evidence-based data. Since the expansive nature of previous attempts at reforming public sector performance have either failed or yielded minimal results, the incumbent government in its National Public Sector Reform Strategy (NPSRS) (2018-2023) is rather focusing on improving selected areas namely; responsiveness, quality and adaptability (Republic of Ghana, 2018).

Hinging on the intention of the president to transform the public sector into one that focuses on results, the NPSRS (2018-2023) was officially launched by the President on 8th August, 2018 as a five-year strategic plan which calls for the normalization of results delivery models and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms across sixteen (16) selected MDAs (Republic of Ghana, 2018). The NPSRS is not sacrosanct in its

adoption and implementation as it seeks to complement other government strategic moves such as the National Coordinated Program for Economic and Social Development Policies (2017-2024); Medium-Term Policy Framework (MTPF), 2018-2021 and the Government Result Framework (GRF), 2017-2020. Together with the NPSRS, these strategic government documents highlight realistic measures geared towards improving public sector performance.

2.6 The Public Sector Reform for Results Project (PSRRP)

The Public Sector Reform Secretariat created for the NPSRS has been the official body supervising the implementation of the World Bank-sponsored Public Sector Reform for Results Project (PSRRP), 2018-2023. It is aimed at improving efficiency and accountability in the delivery of services by the selected sixteen (16) frontline service agencies including the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA); Birth and Deaths Registry (BDR); Passport Office; Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) (Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS), 2021). Among the goals of this project is to bring reformation in the service culture among the employees of these public service agencies. It is also to reform the existing structures, systems, processes, and internal management mechanisms of the agencies to help provide cutting-edge and timely services. To facilitate citizens' access to essential services by leveraging on available ICT infrastructure. Moreover, the PSRRP intends to re-engineer the business process of these entities to drastically reduce processing and waiting times, step-up service delivery standards, and improve upon the communication between service providers and users (OHCS, 2021).

As part of the World Bank-sponsored Public Sector Reform for Results Project, a key indicator set is to have at least 10 public service delivery entities to collect and

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publicise data on the total number of citizen/customer complaints received, resolved and/or awaiting redress (World Bank, 2020). It also targets that about 70% of citizen/customer complaints filed in the CHRAJ are to be resolved within minimum timelines. In line with this, the Government of Ghana through the PSRRP (2018-2023) has received a total of US$ 20.19 million World Bank credit towards improving efficiency, accountability and citizen engagement in public service delivery of the selected entities. The success of the project requires the Monitoring and Evaluation Secretariat (formerly MoME) under the Office of the President (OP) to embark on Annual Citizen Survey dubbed 'Listening to Ghana' to gather real-time evidence on performance and achievements of the flagship project. Also, a consultancy service is required to help reduce the processing time taken to register a vehicle from the current 6-hours to 1-hour by the DVLA at the end of the project; and to again identify and understand the capacity gaps and training needs of the staff of the DVLA (World Bank, 2020).

Howbeit, the civil service has since been bedevilled with insufficient logistics to facilitate the delivery of services to the citizens as government customers. For instance, the 2021 Civil Service Annual Performance Report (APR) recorded that 63.5% of the cohort appraised indicated that their offices or units lacked functional desktop/laptops, internet connectivity and smart workplace. The APR-2021 again pointed out that, of the 26 key reform strategies implemented in the year under review, about 69% are related to ICT for improved service delivery, 19% legal/regulatory, 8% of the reforms in organizational development and 4% related to improvement in social sector. In terms of personnel training, a significant 11.2% was recorded in the area of public relations and communication (OHCS, 2021).

The aforementioned challenges facing the nation in its reform policies are expected to be reduced to the barest minimum following a successful roll-out of the PSRRP. To further improve upon efficiency and accountability in the public sector, the Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS) and the Public Services Commission (PSC) are required by the project financier to periodically review and update the formats for Client Service Charters (CSCs) and ensure that all MDAs adopt and implement them (World Bank, 2020).

Finally, to fully deal with service delivery problems, public officials ought to go beyond ICT interventions to touch on the intangibles such as the behaviour of employees during working hours, attitudinal change management and performance incentives. SMART performance targets should also be set for each participating agency and rigorous data collected to monitor performance. The communication interface between the citizens and customers on the one hand, and the policymakers and frontline service providers on the other hand, must be strengthened through the Client Service Units (CSUs) of the MDAs (World Bank, 2018).

2.7 Conceptual Frameworks

The study was pitched within two major concepts namely: Transparency and Accountability; and Social Accountability as expounded in the ensuing paragraphs.

2.7.1 Transparency and accountability in service delivery

The quest to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has informed the decades long call for regimes across the globe to strengthen public accountability mechanisms (World Bank, 2021). The strides towards the realization of this accountability phenomenon ought to be directed in two closely related paths namely: 1) stepping-up government transparency efforts by unmasking information on public

dealings and 2) practicalizing social accountability mechanisms. Transparency in this contest is about the attribute of governments/bureaucracies, private and public organisations and even individuals to open-up in the clear disclosure of information, rules, plans, processes and actions to other parties (Transparency International, 2009). The literature on Transparency and Accountability Initiatives (ATIs) have judiciously considered the concept and also helped in bringing to the fore countless social accountability modules that have proven their worth in improving public accountability (Malena, Forster & Singh, 2004; O'Neil, Foresti & Hudson, 2007; Sirker & Cosic, 2007). This current study therefore, seeks to investigate the accountability concept in public service delivery by mapping it out with the adoption of the citizens/service charters as a public sector reform strategy in Ghana.

2.7.2 Ideological origin of transparency and accountability

Public Accountability became the green horn in governance and gained space in scholarly works after the 2004 World Development Report (WDR) pointed out that the shortfalls in service delivery across board are as a result of the corresponding failures in public accountability relationships between government and the people. It assessed and christened the conventional accountability mechanism, in which the people elect political leaders, who in turn, formulate regulatory policies to check on the activities of the service providers, as the 'long route of accountability'. This to them, has failed the vulnerable consumer. The argument rather favours the strengthening of the 'short route of accountability' in which the people are empowered to enter into direct accountability relations with service providers (Faila & Premand, 2018; Joshi, 2010). The interaction that goes on in the public service delivery arena along the long and short routes of accountability is as portrayed in Figure 2.1.

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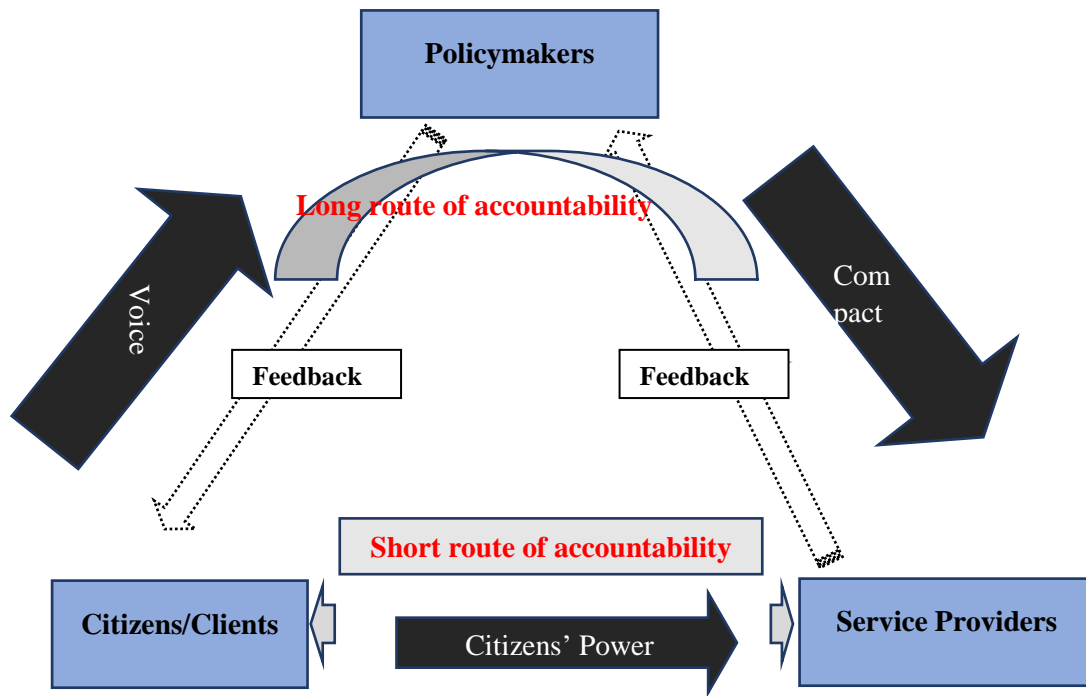
Figure 2.1: Long and short accountability routes

Source: Adapted from World Bank (2004) Social Accountability Framework.

The conventional route of accountability which requires citizens to select political representatives either through competitive elections or by popular endorsement, who in turns enter into performance compacts with service providers, has been short-circuited to give room for the citizens to enter into direct performance contracts with service providers. Figure 2.1 is a diagrammatic summary of the two routes of accountability. Citizens make their voices heard in public administration by demonstrating their preferences through voting.

The elected officials (the executive and legislature) constituting the authoritative body, ride on the mandate of the people to formulate policies and other regulatory measures to guide the operations of the service providers. As shown in the diagram, policymakers seem to play the role of a middleman who enters into performance compacts with service providers and thereby command adherence and receive

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performance feedbacks from service providers. This process of accountability goes back to commence from the citizens when elected officials are seeking to renew their political mandates. Hence, its description as 'long route' of accountability by the 2004 World Bank Development Report.

Pertaining to the short route of accountability, the citizens are empowered by having access to salient information on government services, belonging to civil society and advocacy groups and/or attitudinal changes which hitherto, make them unconcern about the happenings in government. These empowered citizens build direct relationship with the service providers and craft service standards with them. Through the use of citizens' power as portrayed in the Figure 2.1, service providers are held directly accountable to the people who receive/consume their services.

Transparency and Accountability in governance can be said to have originated from two different ideological waves in public administration. It asserted that the New Public Management (NPM) era introduced in the 20th Century is one prime source of the accountability advocacy (Joshi, 2010). The NPM stresses on the adoption of the market logics that operate in the private businesses in government agencies. Though the vertical accountability loop is to be maintained in the public sector, the direction of authority and power flow, was to now assume a downward trend, with accountability flowing to the citizens (Joshi, 2010). On the other hand, the need to strengthen democratic governance amidst the public institutional shortfalls, brought about the second wave of accountability and transparency initiatives. Democratic governance allows for the direct participation of the citizens in the activities of government. Hence, the imperative for public sector managers to release important information to the citizens (Fox, 2015, 2020).

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2.7.3 Putting transparency and accountability under perspective

The concept of accountability comprises of the relationship between a power holder (account-provider) and a delegator (account-demander) (Joshi, 2010). The power holder in this case is the service provider/government, whereas the delegator is the citizen/customer. Joshi (2010) identified four interactive ingredients in this accountability relationship, namely: setting performance standards; access to information about performance; making assessment about appropriateness; and sanctioning unsatisfactory performance. If accountability is conceptualised in this manner, social accountability initiatives then become the processes by which citizens agree on service standards with providers, gain relevant information, elicit justification and pass judgement as well as mete out sanctions when necessary (Arugay, 2016; Joshi, 2010).

Considine (2002) also defined accountability as the legal obligation to esteem the legitimate concerns of those affected by ones decisions, programmes and interventions. In doing so, public organisations ought to have a duty of care, provide information on expenditure and be subjected to legislators in the exercise of their authority (Ashworth & Downe, 2014). Accountability is to be seen not only in terms of following formal structures and rules, but also as a complex cultural and social process (Ashworth & Downe, 2014). Through accountability, public servants are expected to be answerable for their actions, and most importantly, sanctions are to be dished out when standards are not met (Anderson et al., 2020; Sizani, 2018; Tsai et al., 2019). Transparency enhances accountability in public service delivery when service providers eschew information asymmetry. This is a situation where service providers (power holders) have much information on proceedings than citizens (delegators). It also helps tone down agency cost (Bebchuk & Fried, 2004).

2.7.4 Transparency pitfalls in public service delivery

The dividends of transparency in public administration cannot be overemphasized, as it has even attained a 'quasi-religious status' (Hood & Heald, 2006). Objections to the transparency concept have rather been linked to public security (Roberts, 2006, as cited in Grimmelikhuijsen et al., 2017). Howbeit, there are exponents who criticize the general call for increased transparency in government with the following arguments; Firstly, O'Neil (2002, as cited in Grimmelikhuijsen et al., 2017) asserts that though transparency leads to a great deal of available information in government, it does not yield a corresponding trust of the citizenry. This is due to the proliferation of unregulated internet sites/blogs that publicise information on government. Also, public officials can hide behind disclosure of information to massage or skew facts to their advantage.

Secondly, Worthy (2010) is of the view that increased transparency in government operations can lead to an indiscriminate criticism of government officials by citizens. Most government activities are sometimes not justifiable by mere logical reasoning and as such, engaging in strict 'sunshine administration' has the potency of meeting a disenchanted citizenry who knows the skeleton in the carboard of the government. De Fine Licht (2014) also pointed out that transparency in decision-making will weaken the trust and legitimacy of most healthcare policies. On the contrary, others ascribe the cause of the lack of citizens' trust of government to be the unwillingness on the part of public officials to provide factual documentation on their activities. To this end, disclosing information about government processes is essential to increasing public trust (Faila & Premand, 2018).

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2.7.5 Social accountability conceptualization in service delivery

Definitions of social accountability differ. Albeit, they all point to how citizens engage with power holders to get them account for their actions. McGee and Gaventa (2011) simply put it as the processes involved in holding public actors responsible for their actions within pre-set standards. It is the set of tools utilise by citizens to influence the quality of service delivery by holding providers accountable (Ringold et al., 2012). Fox (2015) rather puts social accountability under a citizen-government perspective by defining it as encompassing all strategies that try to bolster both citizen engagement and government responsiveness for improved public sector performance. The accountability aspect of these social tools is the willingness of service providers (agents) to justify their actions, and to accept appropriate sanctions from citizens (principals) should they breach performance contracts.

Ackerman (2004) remarked that social accountability has 'answerability' and 'enforceability' as its two most important components. Answerability according to him, is about the entitlement of citizens to access relevant information from service providers and demand justification of their actions. Enforceability is also about the right of citizens to dish out appropriate sanctions to service providers should they fail to meet performance standards (Anderson et al., 2020; Fox, 2020; Tsai et al., 2019). In similar fashion, Jayal (2008), Bruen et al. (2014) and Danhoundo et al. (2018) agree that answerability in social accountability ensures the compulsion of service providers to meet performance goals, while enforceability requires actions with sanctions following their failure to comply. They argued for a third component known as 'voice'. This according to the scholars, is the instrument of accountability between citizens/customers and policymakers/providers. Accountability can be improved when citizens are given a voice in the choice of public officials who in turn make

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regulations to hold service providers accountable (Lewis, 2006). However, voice is not sufficient for accountability. Even though it may lead to answerability, it does not necessarily ensure enforceability (World Bank Group, 2004). Figure 2.2 typifies the endless interactions that goes on within the social accountability framework.
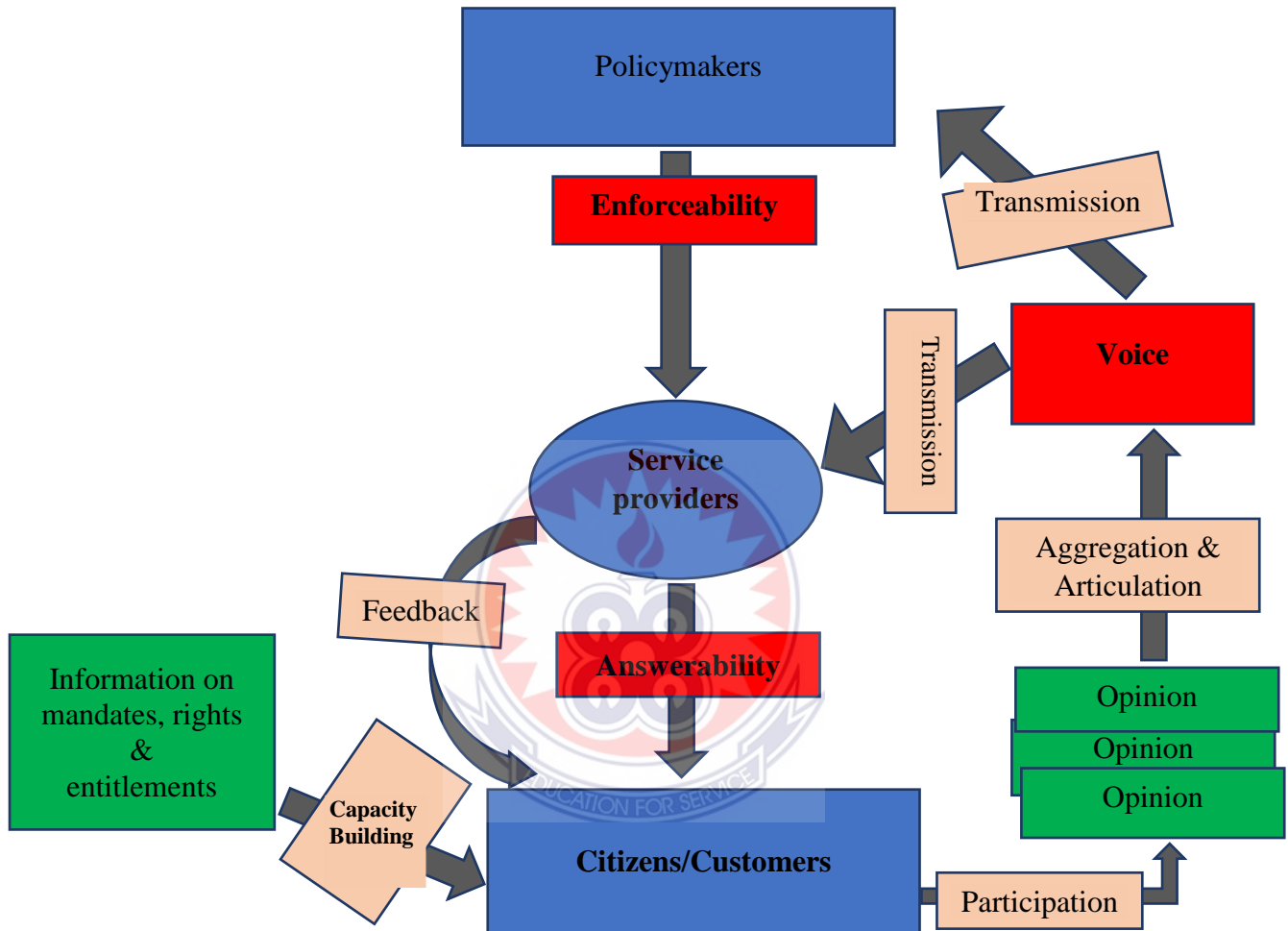
Figure 2.2: Components of an effective social accountability initiative

Source: Adopted from Baez-Camargo & Jacobs, 2013

Social accountability involves multi-structured processes that utilise divers tactics to promote collective action and citizens' voice along side governmental reforms that ensure public sector responsiveness (Boydell, 2018). As presented by Baez-Camargo and Jacobs (2013), effective social accountability concept reflects complicated interactions between multiple stakeholders with divergent interests and degree of

power at different stages in the service delivery process (Joshi, 2013; 2019; Ringold et al., 2012). In Figure 2.2, empowered citizenry with the requisite information about their basic rights and entitlements participate in the service delivery value chain by articulating their opinions, support in tax payment and choice (known collectively as voice) through policymakers. Policymakers then follow legal structures and acceptable best practices to prescribe and to enforce regulatory mechanisms within which service providers will operate. These service providers are answerable to the citizenry by giving them feedback on how they are performing their duties.

In consonance with the 'short route' of accountability advocated in the 2004 World Development Report, Baez-Camargo and Jacobs (2013) indicated a component which allows for the citizens to transmit aggregated voices directly to the service providers as well as enter into performance compacts and hold providers answerable. The goal of social accountability then, is to grant citizens access to relevant information on their rights and obligations, create the enabling environment for participation in efficient service delivery and to build accountable public sector (Naher et al., 2020). The direct participation of the citizens in public service delivery makes social accountability more different and appreciable to other forms of accountability such as the vertical and horizontal accountability (Joshi, 2019; Malena et al., 2004).

2.7.6 Dimensions of social accountability

Fox (2015) remarked that researchers do approach the concept of accountability from different dimensions, key among which is the vertical versus horizontal accountability stream. In this dimension, vertical accountability thereby refers to the interaction between the state and non-state actors in which citizens and their associations (Civil Society Organisations) are invariably partakers to hold public servants accountable.

While horizontal accountability refers to the mutual oversight interactions between state institutions such as the audit agencies, legislative and judicial systems (Mainwaring & Welna, 2003, as cited in Fox, 2015). In the bid to practicalize this accountability stream, Friis-Hansen and Ravnkilde (2013) cite the current mechanism through which local level government (MMDAs) officials are elected and supported by the people, who in turn, are being held answerable to national/central level political institutions, as the best example of the vertical-horizontal accountability dimension.

The other dimension is the short route versus the long route of accountability highlighted in the World Development Report (World Bank, 2004). Fox (2015, 2020) rather considered this accountability stream to have been framed out of the principal-agent theory. The long route of accountability refers to the practice by which citizens (principal) delegate authority to political representatives (agent) to serve their interests through established bureaucracies. In this regard, the citizens ride on the power of the ballot box, payment of taxes among other constitutional avenues to either support the policies of the officials or vote them out when their interests are not met. On the other hand, the short route of accountability allows the empowered citizens (informed principal) to directly influence the actions and inactions of service providers (agent) through diverse oversight and voice mechanisms. Fox (2015) however, bemoan the neglect of statutory public checks and balance institutions such as parliament, the judicial system, audit institutions and ombudsman agencies in the short route of accountability.

This study is in line with the long route versus short route accountability dimension. It thereby argues that citizens are to be empowered to enter into direct performance

compacts with service providers rather than going through the elected officials. The social accountability mechanism is therefore chosen in this study to help investigate the impact of the citizens charter programme introduced in Ghana, if any, on the responsiveness, answerability and efficiency of public service agencies to the citizens as customers.

2.7.7 Some notable social accountability mechanisms

Social accountability interventions vary relative to the interplay between citizens, civil society organisations and the community on one hand, and the state apparatus on the other hand. To this end, Boydell and Jill (2014) iterate that social accountability initiatives vary in scope and in form. Baez-Camargo (2016) agreed to this assertion and pushed further to categorize them under three distinct headings namely, planning and policy making; oversight on public budgeting and expenditure; and public service delivery. Sirker and Cosic (2007) remarked that these initiatives are not mutually exclusive, only that, what are often considered as social accountability initiatives often focus on specific aspects of service accountability and performance. Notable among these social accountability mechanisms are succinctly presented by Boydell and Jill (2014) as follows;

Citizen Charters prescribe rules and regulations to check the relationship between citizens as customers on the one hand, and government agencies as service providers on the other hand, as well as providing comprehensive outline on what standards these customers can anticipate and claim. The purpose of citizen charters according to the authors, is to increase the awareness level of stakeholders on service standards and citizen entitlements within standards agreed on by service providers. Another mechanism is the Community Committee System which refers to the teaming up of

civil society groups and government bodies in a more cordial manner to constitute an institutionalised oversight body to advocate for improved and effective health, education and other social protection initiatives. The committee system and its structures aim at promoting community-wide engagement in public decision-making.

Participatory Budgeting entails the consultation and participation of citizens in the budgeting cycle of state entities namely: the formulation stage, adoption stage and monitoring of budget execution stage. This social accountability initiative aspires to increase citizens' voice in the budgeting process, ensures transparency in governance, as well as help streamline targeted public spendings. Boydell and Jill (2014) also touched on Public Expenditure Tracking (PET) which is the involvement of civil society organisations in the monitoring of budget implementation by tracking disbursement of public funds for the delivery of public goods and services. PET proves valuable as it aids in effective investigation to identify problems such as leakages of funds or resources, and/or misappropriation of public funds. The Citizen Report Cards is another participatory means of aggregating citizens' feedback/reports on public service delivery.

Social Audits is another initiative in social accountability which provides the avenue for citizens/service users and CSOs to collect and publicise information on state resources allocated for service delivery. Community Scorecards in a similar fashion, allows for some level of community-based monitoring and evaluation of government actions. The scorecards are used by service consumers to gather information and rate particular services delivered, and the report cards presented in a stakeholder forum for discussion to help craft effective national development policies (Boydell & Jill, 2014).

2.7.8 The justification for social accountability

The ongoing debate on the fate of social accountability in public service delivery seems to go in favor of the initiative. To help project the essence of this phenomenon, Malena et al. (2004) remark that social accountability initiatives have three major impacts namely: 1) development effectiveness; 2) improved governance; 3) citizen empowerment. They continued that social accountability mechanisms are imperative to ameliorate the current ailing governance system where the conventional accountability channel (holding officials accountable through elections) seems to have achieved minimal results (Pande, 2008). The rampant agitations of the citizenry through protests, demonstrations and/or civil disobedience amidst growing dissatisfaction of government services, justify the call for social accountability. Citizens are exploring avenues outside the ballot box to make their voices reach-out to service providers (Joshi, 2008). Malena et al. (2004) ingeminate that, social accountability mechanisms have a role to play in realizing effective government developmental programmes.

The unresponsiveness of most government reform policies and the poor state of public services have increased citizen apathy in developing nations. The relationship between policymakers, service providers and citizens are often characterized with conflicting interests, ineffective communication mechanisms and information asymmetry. Against this backdrop, Malena et al. (2004) call for dialogue between these stakeholders using appropriate social accountability mechanisms to ensure higher levels of transparency and accountability in policy making.

Sirker and Cosic (2007) also vouched for the relevance of social accountability mechanisms by positing that citizens are able to interact with service providers and

other elected officials in a more responsible and systematic manner, since they have easy access to information to reflect on government activities. This they maintained, will go a long way to consolidate democracy. Service quality will significantly improve since government agencies will now interact with an informed and empowered citizenry in a check and balance relationship to shape policies on public goods and services (Ringold et al., 2012). Finally, Martey (2017) asserted that social accountability initiatives guarantee real-time empowerment to the poor and the most vulnerable people in society. Through initiatives such as community committee system, community scorecards and participatory budgeting, the voice of the less privileged can also be transmitted to policymakers and service providers for an improved service.

The short route of accountability associated with social accountability proves beneficial to both the citizen and service providers. This is because, articulated demands will travel along the shortest possible channel for immediate response. Nevertheless, social accountability initiatives are mostly effective when institutionalised (Mallick, 2006). In the case of Kenya, Danhoundo et al. (2018) established that the health service charters (patients' charter) have not been standardised in the healthcare institutions. This makes room for individual institutions to vary their degree of adherence to the tenets of the charter. In this regard, Ahmed (2008) opine that the existing horizontal accountability mechanisms of the state (judicial system, legislature, audit system) should be more transparent and open for civic participation.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by both the Principal-Agent Theory (PAT) and the Stewardship Theory (ST) to help investigate the impact of the citizens charter programme, if any, on social accountability in public service delivery in Ghana. It is however, worthwhile to note that the choice of the stewardship theory was just to supplement the agency theory to give in-depth theoretical meaning to the entire study.

2.78.1 The principal-agent theory (Agency Theory)

According to Niskanen's (1971) Bureaucratic Model, the PAT theory is a neo-classical economic phenomenon which explains the decision-making process of individuals, as a conscious effort to weigh the costs and benefits of alternatives and to choose the option that best maximizes utility and self-interest. It therefore requires bureaucrats to scale the rewards and punishment associated with their actions and inactions in the course of responding to the demands of the principal (Eduafowa, 2018). The theory is originally called the 'Agency Theory' which is believed to have been developed independently, but somewhat concurrently, by Barry Mitnick and Stephen Ross in 1973 (Mitnick, 2006).

Considering that both scholars were from the University of Pennsylvania, Stephen Ross in his 1973 publication on '*the economic theory of agency: the principal's problem*', emphasized on the principal's problem of framing-out an optimal compensation for the agent to get the preferred behaviour. While, Mitnick in his 1973 paper which he reviewed in January, 2006 titled '*fiduciary rationality and public policy: the theory of agency and some consequences*', rather focused on the institutional and social mechanisms that can be utilised to guide the behaviour of the agent (Mitnick, 2006).

The principal-agent model has also been considered by Miller (1992, as cited in Braun and Guston, 2003) to have been developed within the 'new institutional economics' framework. This framework assumes that rational actors focus on maximizing their utility according to their priorities. On this premise, the institutional agency theory developed by Barry Mitnick, becomes imperative to institutionalise mechanisms that can help constrain the choices of these rational actors. Hence, resolving the problems encountered by the principal in eliciting preferred behaviour from the agent.

Two problems occur within the principal-agent relationship namely; moral hazard and adverse selection. These problems arise from what proponents of the new institutional economics referred to as the 'opportunism of actors' in which self-interested rational actors seek to maximize their welfare (Hendrikse, 2003).

The agent most often than not, is likely to shirk duties and/or cheat in the compact due to his/her information advantage over the principal (Huque, 2005). The moral hazard becomes unavoidable since the principal has scant knowledge on the abilities of the agent to perform the contract. The limited information available to the principal weakens the search for potential agents who can best suit the delegated task. Hence, the adverse selection. Ting et al. (2007) assert that the tendency for the rational agent to seek their self-interests with guile do informs the decision to hide relevant information form the principal.

2.8.2 The principal-agent interaction

The principal-agent relationship is said to have commenced when the principal who have some tasks to be performed hire the agent and entrust these mandates to them. The principal is also required to provide resources equivalent to the mandate (Baez-Camargo, 2016). The agent is required by the compact to efficiently utilise the

resources given to provide effective services to meet the interest of the principal. Howbeit, the competition of self-interest by both parties can mess up the flow of resources and relevant information on performance from the principal to the agent and from the agent to the principal respectively.

The problem of moral hazard may overwhelm the principal and eventually results in the refusal and/or inability to provide the needed resources to the agent to perform the delegated tasks in the bid to protect self-interest (Huque, 2005). In the same vain, the agent being a rational actor may choose to maximize self-interest by not behaving to the preference of the principal. In the bid to shirk responsibility or hide the incompetence to perform the tasks, the agent will then choose to deny the principal access to relevant information about ongoing activities. Hence, making the delegation detrimental to what the principal wanted to achieve.

Amagoh (2009) maintain that information asymmetry sets in when the agent possesses relevant information that the principal does not have. This serves as an incentive for the agent to behave in opportunism which heightens agency cost. The author continues that, agency cost becomes unavoidable when the agent decides to maximize self-interest and willingly shirk duties with guile. Taken further, agency cost encompasses all fees or expenses incurred by an organization in an attempt to address actors' opportunism. These include instituting mechanisms to monitor agent performance as well as behavioral change management (Wankhade & Dabade, 2006). The principal could unveil the behaviour of the agent either during the hiring stage and/or task performance stage by incurring agency cost of investing in cutting-edge information mechanisms such as budgeting systems, reporting systems, board of

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directors as well as adding multiple layers of management (Wankhade & Dabade, 2006).

2.8.3 The principal-agent theory in public service delivery

In the public service delivery space, the service providers rightly become the agent who are to be responsive and accountable to the citizens/customers as the principal. To this end, Ackerman (2004) and the United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2021) call for the release of relevant information about the machinery of government to citizens to hold public servants accountable. Proponents of the principal-agent theory are however, of the view that the bureaucrats (agent) are inherently reluctant to be open and accountable to the people (principal) and as such, when left alone, will go all length to satisfy their self-interests at the expense of the citizens. This does not yield accountability dividends. Hence, the imperative for the government to incur agency cost on behalf of the citizens so as to compel bureaucrats through policy actions and legislations, to respond to the demands of the citizens (Eduafowa, 2018).

Bebchuk and Fried (2004) in their book titled '*Pay without performance: the unfulfilled promise of executive compensation'*, maintained that the woes of accountability deficit worsens when there is information asymmetry. This will lead to agency cost which then motivates the agent to deviate from the interest of the principal. The effort made by the Government of Ghana in the passage of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2019 (Act 989) is in the right direction towards incurring agency cost to help institutionalise the principal-agent theory in governance. The move helps reduce the negative impact of information asymmetry and provides incentive against actor opportunism.

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When optimal resources are provided to the agent, the principal ought to be empowered to monitor the performance of the agent vis-à-vis the original mandate, and to also have the desire and ability to sanction unsatisfactory performance (Anderson et al., 2020; Baez-Camargo, 2016; Fox, 2020). Has the introduction of the citizens charter policy in Ghana amidst its fun fare in October, 2007 served as an agency cost aimed at initiating positive change in the behaviour of service providers? Has the programme come to place the citizen/customer in a position where relevant information about public services can be accessed at ease to curb information asymmetry? Has there been any stride made by the government to institutionalise reward and sanction regimes to help deter bureaucrats from deepening actor opportunism? This study thereby becomes imperative to provide empirical answers to these questions within the principal-agent model (institutional agency) as it theoretical underpinning. The choice of PAT is thereby justified on its strength to clarify the relationship between service providers and government on one hand, and consumers, citizens, CSOs and international donor agencies on the other hand. Gailmard (2012) also unequivocally asserted that the principal-agent theory best suits any scientific enquiry on public accountability.

2.8.4 The stewardship theory

Stewardship Theory (ST) emerged in the 1990s in the field of Psychology and Sociology as a divergent phenomenon of the agency theory (Principal-agent). The ST broadly establishes a congenial working relationship between the steward and stakeholders. The theory was introduced by Davis James, Schoorman David and Donaldson Lex in their 1997 publication titled *"Towards a stewardship theory of management"*, as a critique of the self-maximisation concept projected in the agency theory. It has been argued that the 'agent' was replaced with the 'steward', who is

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believed to be mindful of self-actualisation, achievement, responsibility and collective goals in the company (ACSH, 2023).

The stewardship theory postulates that directors act as stewards of corporate resources in the best interests of all. They also prioritise organisational utility over self-serving benefits. To this end, Van Slyke (2006) opted for the steward to be rewarded with greater autonomy devoid of the fear of actor opportunism. This he maintains will promote efficiency and co-operation between directors and shareholders. It has also been recorded in the Australian public service delivery that the application of the tenets of ST has encouraged top civil servants to provide frank and fearless advice to the government towards the design and delivery of efficient and sustainable public services (ACSH, 2023). Proponents of ST ingeminate that there is no practical need for an institutionalised monitoring and bonding mechanism under the stewardship paradigm (Keay, 2017). The reason being that the principal do not need to prevent agency losses. In working towards corporate goals, the personal needs of the steward are fulfilled (Kluvers & Tippett, 2011). Howbeit, ST is criticised on grounds that the steward is given carte blanche when it comes to the use of discretion (Keay, 2017). Moreover, a greater transaction cost might be incurred by the principal in terms of time involved in joint decision-making and information exchange (Van Slyke, 2006).

2.8.5 Differences between agency theory and stewardship theory

There are some ideological differences between the agency theory and the stewardship theory when applied in corporate management and accountability. These are graphically presented in the Figure 2.3.

	Agency Theory	Stewardship Theory
Interests	Conflict of interests	Alignment of interests
Focus	Self-serving	Serving collective goals
Motivation	Extrinsic	Intrinsic
Power Distance	High	Low
Use of power	Institutional	Personal
Management style	External management	Bounded self-regulation

Figure 2.3: Ideological differences of agency theory and stewardship theory

Source: Adopted from Schillemans (2012): Moving Beyond The Clash of Interests**.**

It can be seen in the Figure 2.3 that the two theories differ in terms of their respective ideological underpinnings. Schillemans (2012) underscores that whereas the Principal-Agent Theory (PAT) assumes that the hired agent always have interests considered to be different from that of the principal, exponents of the Stewardship Theory (ST) rather foresee alignment and congruence of these interests with the organizational goals. An agent is extrinsically motivated ,and thus, becomes mindful of maximizing economic gains. On the contrary, stewards are intrinsically motivated and selflessly work towards professional achievements, and seek avenues for personal growth as well as the attainment of self-actualisation status along the Maslow's hierarchy of needs (ACSH, 2023; Van Slyke, 2006).

Pertaining to the use of power, the PAT appears to concentrate power in the principal who in turns delegate some to the hired agent to accomplish the contractual tasks. This power restriction will aid in preventing or managing the actor opportunism of the agent. Inversely, proponents of the ST advocate for stewards to be given autonomy in line of duty, and should only be guided by the quest for the attainment of collective-interests (Schillemans, 2012).

2.9 Conclusion

The existing theoretical and empirical literature has been thoroughly reviewed. The greater chunk of the research findings on public sector reform policies in Ghana are concentrated on their adoption and implementation challenges. other empirical studies on the citizens charter programme, are skewed towards the health sector with paucity of information on other sectors. Hence, making it imperative for this current study to expand the existing knowledge in the local literature. Chapter Three is devoted to the research methodology section of the study.
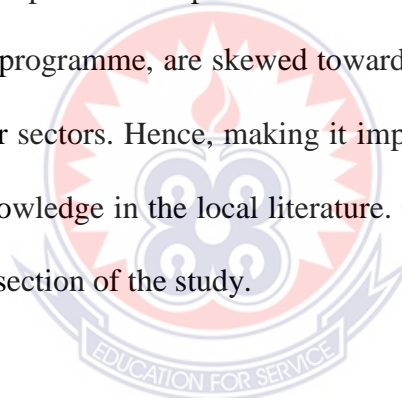
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The prime purpose of the study is to investigate whether the introduction of the citizens charter policy in the public service delivery in Ghana has yielded dividends in terms of social accountability or it is just one of the mere public administration rhetorics. This Chapter thereby presents the methods and procedures by which data was gathered and handled, the research paradigm and design adopted, types of data utilised and their respective sources. It also contains the sampling techniques utilised in selecting the research sample from the target population, research instruments design and questions formatting as well as how they were deployed on the field. The Chapter further presents the ethical considerations and a brief on the validity and reliability of the research instruments adopted.

3.1 Research Paradigm

To better situate a research study in the context that clarifies 'what' was studied; 'how' it was studied and the 'form' in which its findings were presented, Ary et al. (2010, as cited in Kuranchie, 2021) postulate that researchers ought to specify the theoretical and philosophical assumptions that guided the study. There are arguably two main philosophical assumptions available to the social scientists, namely; Ontology which defines how we see our social world either objectively, subjectively or realistically; and Epistemology which also defines how we enquire to know about our world either as positivists, interpretivists or pragmatists (Kuranchie, 2021; Geortz & Mahoney, 2012).

Positivists basically posit that knowledge (truth) exists in our world which is measurable and testable through theories and, can only be enquired about using strict scientific methods with no room for individual speculations (Creswell, 2011). Proponents of positivism argue for the use of quantitative data analysis techniques to establish cause-effect relationship between variables and the testability of hypothesis through rigorous statistical methods to either accept/prove or reject/falsify existing theories (Crowther & Lancaster, 2008). On the contrary, interpretivism postulates that knowledge about our world is value-laden and subjective to the perspective of the observer. It advocates for the immersion of the researcher in the entire field work to gather qualitative/narrative data so as to better understand the behaviour of the phenomenon under study in its natural setting (Creswell, 2011).

Hinged on the aforementioned research paradigms, this study rather harmonised the tenets of both paradigms by situating the entire work within the pragmatists research paradigm (Venkatesh et al., 2012). The Pragmatic Philosophical Movement is said to have been pioneered by Charles Sanders Peirce in the 1870s which later received contributions from William James and John Dewey (Haack & Lane, 2006). William James for instance, simplified the 'pragmatic maxim' pertaining to truth as a quality of value which is confirmed by its practical usefulness. Inferring from the pragmatic maxim, the study was premised on the philosophical foundation that, a research approach is valuable if only it aids in achieving the pre-set research objectives. Proponents of the pragmatic research paradigm believe in the theoretical concept of realism and thus, provides a middle ground between the positivists who argue that truth is only that which is measurable and nomothetic in nature on the one hand, and the interpretivists who advocate for subjective truth, on the other hand (Descombes, 2010, as cited in Kuranchie, 2021).

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The study adopted pragmatism over the two main paradigms because of its flexibility in allowing the researcher to utilise methods that will prove appropriate in achieving the stated research objectives without necessarily skewing to either the quantitative or qualitative research approach. It also makes room for a mixed-method research approach using both survey questionnaires and structured interviews to gather quantitative and qualitative data respectively (Creswell, 2011).

3.2 Research Design

Research design is about the conceptual blueprint or plan within which research activities are carried out (Akhtar & Islamia, 2016). Even though there exist numerous research designs, researchers are advised to rather choose the design that will ease the gathering of relevant data to answer the stated research questions. Since the study was conducted within the pragmatists' paradigm, the mixed-method research approach was adopted. Specifically, the corresponding research design of choice was the Concurrent Triangulation (CT) design. The CT design allows for a researcher to utilise both quantitative and qualitative research approaches simultaneously so as to help compare the findings (Kuranchie, 2021; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009; Mertens & Hesse-Biber, 2012).

Other mixed method research designs are the Sequential Explanatory and the Sequential Exploratory designs. Each requires the researcher to fully conduct either the quantitative or the qualitative research first and subsequently carry out the other so as to further explore the results or to test generated hypothesis for generalizability and vice versa. Though this is plausible, the study rather utilised the concurrent triangulation design due to its inherent economic nature in terms of time and cost required in data collection. Also, the triangulation of data gathered helped in building

more comprehensive description and explanation of the phenomenon under study (Kuranchie, 2021; Mertens & Hesse-Biber, 2012).

3.3 Units of Analysis and Units of Observation

Sedgwick (2014) simply distinguished between unit of analysis and unit of observation as the 'who' or 'what' for which data is analysed and conclusions drawn; and the 'who' or 'what' from which data is collected respectively. The unit of analysis in this study is the two selected public service agencies which have already signed onto the citizens charter policy. It comprises the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA). The selected entities are part of the 16 public service delivery entities featured in the US$35 million World Bank sponsored Public Sector Reform for Results Project (PSRRP, 2018-2023) under the National Public Sector Reform Strategy (NPSRS 2018-2024) introduced by the current government. As indicated in the implementation status and results report of the PSRRP, a total of US$20.19 million has been received by the government through the Office of the Senior Minister (OSM) to improve upon the efficiency, accountability and citizen engagement in the service delivery of the featured entities (World Bank, 2020). Settling on the two service agencies for the study is thus justified.

The unit of observation for the study comprises the personnel working in the two selected government agencies; the ordinary citizens/customers who patronize the services and identified leading experts on public sector reformation and social accountability.

3.4 Target Population

Research population is the entire collection of cases which meet a specific criteria around which research conclusions can be drawn (Kuranchie, 2021). A research population may be homogeneous or heterogeneous in terms of the characteristics of its individual components. It can also be either finite or infinite in terms of the total number of membership/components. To this end, the target population for the study is the entire staff and customers of the selected public service agencies as well as the policy experts. The accessible population is therefore heterogenous in composition and infinite in its membership. The research worked with accessible population due to the fact that the researcher's interest is rather on the government agencies who have already adopted the citizens charter programme in their service delivery. Again, the elements of the population were further limited to include only the customers of these agencies rather than the entire Ghanaian citizenry.

3.5 Sample Unit

The study categorized participants into three distinct strata namely; 1). The citizens/clients of the agencies; 2). The bureaucrats/staff of the selected public service agencies and 3). The public sector reform experts (Academics, CSOs and individuals). The rationale for this stratification was to aid in the allocation of ample space and time for the collection of comprehensive data from these core stakeholders rather than lamping them together.

3.6 Sample Size

The study selected a total of Two Hundred and Twenty-Nine (229) participants from the target population using both the simple randomised and purposive sampling techniques. It comprises of Two Hundred and Nineteen (219) respondents for the

survey research and Ten (10) participants for the interview session. The mixed-method research approach aided in the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data using questionnaires and semi-structured interview guide respectively. To succinctly determine the sample size to be used, the total population should be known (finite population) in order to make findings and generalization applicable to the entire population. Yamane (1967) proposed a simple mathematical formula which has been widely used by quantitative researchers. It requires the researcher to be certain of the total population of the study area and to decide on the confidence level as well as the permissible margin of error.

The formula is mathematically presented as $n = N/1+N(e)^2$ where 'n' is the expected sample size, 'N' is the total population and 'e' is the error margin. On the other hand, when the research population is infinite, Jung (2014) recommends the use of the Fisher's Exact Test formula. It is mathematically expressed as $N = [Z^2*p(1-p)]/d^2$ where 'N' is the sample size, 'Z' is the z-score of the chosen confidence level, 'p' is the estimated population variation and 'd' is the permitted error margin.

Since the total population size of the personnel of both the FDA and DVLA is finite, the study utilised the Yamane (1967) formula at a 5% permissible error margin to select 53 respondents out of a combined total of 61 personnel. Also, a total sample size of 166 participants was selected from the infinite citizen/clients population, using the Fisher's Exact Test formula at 0.5 population variation and z-score of 2.58 (99% confidence level) as shown below.

- Sample size of customers determined by the Fisher's Exact Test formula (Jung, 2014).

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N=[Z^2*p(1-p)]/d^2   [2.58^2*0.5(1-0.5)]/0.10^2   6.656*0.025/0.01

N= 1.664/0.01   N= 166.4   = 166

Therefore, sample size (N) = 166

- Sample size of personnel of both the DVLA and FDA determined by Yamane (1967) formula at 95% confidence level.

$$n = \frac{N}{[1+N(e)^2]}$$ n = 61/1+ [61(0.05) ^2]   n = 61/1+61(0.0025)

n = 61/1+0.1525   n = 61/1.1525

n= 52.9   = 53

Therefore, sample size (n) = 53

Table 3.1: Sample distribution

Category	Staff	Client	Sample	Sample Technique
FDA	25	83	108	Lottery method
DVLA	28	83	111	Lottery method
Policy Experts	-	-	10	Expert Purposive
Total	**53**	**166**	**229**	

Source: Researcher's own construct

3.7 Sampling Techniques

The study selected participants into the 219 sample size for the quantitative data gathering exercise by utilising the Simple Randomize method. This sampling method is an example of the probability sampling technique which gives individual elements in the target population, an equal chance of being selected into the research sample

(Kuranchie, 2021). Despite the existence of multiple forms of probability sampling methods such as the cluster sampling, systematic sampling and proportional stratification, the lottery method was adopted for the study.

The lottery method is one of the sampling methods under the simple randomized probability technique. It is mostly deployed in a survey research to give equal chances of selection to all the elements of the target population (Thomas, 2023). This sampling method helped tone down sampling error since comprehensive lists of the staff and clients of the service agencies were not readily available. The researcher applied the lottery method on the field by writing 'YES' and 'NO' on pieces of paper (equal shape and size) which were folded and allowed the staff and clients of the selected public service agencies to pick. Those who picked the 'YES' papers were selected to participate. This process helped to overcome any possible biases of the researcher in selecting respondents for the survey (Thomas, 2023)..

Additionally, the purposive non-probability sampling technique was adopted in selecting the 10 policy experts to participate in the qualitative data gathering session. The rationale behind this sampling method was to select key informants to help increase the depth of understanding of the phenomenon under study (Kelly, 2010; Palinkas et al., 2015). Purposive sampling is also known as Judgmental sampling, which allows the researcher to select elements into a sample size based on their unique characteristics, and by the assumption that they are the right group of informants to help achieve the stated research objectives.

Judgmental sampling comes in multiple versions namely, typical case sampling, maximum variation sampling, extreme case sampling, expert sampling and critical case sampling methods. The study adopted the expert purposive sampling technique

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to enable the selection of identified individuals with in-depth knowledge and expertise in public sector reforms (Kelly, 2010; Palinkas et al., 2015).

3.8 Primary Data Source

The study collected both quantitative and qualitative data since it adopted the Concurrent Triangulation (CT) Mixed-Method design. First-hand quantitative data was collected from a total of 219 respondents with the aid of survey instrument known as questionnaire. The survey item largely comprised of closed-ended questions with few open-ended questions carefully crafted by the researcher based on the stated research questions. A closed-ended questionnaire was utilised in gathering the data because it looks more appropriate to the research objectives. Also, in respondents' view, it proved relatively easy to answer the items which eventually reduced or eliminated lengthy recall of information as compared to the open-ended format.

Moreover, it offers an economical means of gathering data from a larger group of respondents and to achieve higher response rate, as well as being relatively easy to code and analyze (Johnson et al., 2016). On the other hand, qualitative/narrative data was collected concurrently from a total of 10 public sector reform policy experts through semi-structured interviews modeled around four major themes.

3.9 Secondary Data Source

Relevant policy documents on the Citizens Charter and other public sector reform programmes introduced in Ghana were reviewed. Leading World Bank reports as well as published journals on accountability, published and unpublished thesis/dissertations, related conference papers, committee reports on public sector reforms and social accountability, were thoroughly reviewed to help situate the study in the extant literature.

3.10 Research Instrument Design

Research instrument is the item or medium utilised to gather data in relation to the study objectives. In a quantitative study, Eladio (2006, as cited in Kuranchie, 2021) enumerated the traditional research instruments to include structured observation, survey (questionnaire), experiment and structured/semi-structured interviews. With the qualitative approach on the other hand, data can be collected through participant observation, focus group discussions, ethnography and in-depth interviews. This study utilised the survey tool known as questionnaire, which is a systematic compilation of questions administered to a sampled population to seek for information (Sreejesh et al., 2014). The study settled on using questionnaires rather than other quantitative tools like tests and experiments because it allows for more respondents to be reached within a researcher's limited resources (time and money) and also increases the response rate and quality for reliability (McLeod, 2018).

A survey instrument was deployed because of the researcher's interest to compare and generalize the findings of the study in a limited context by collecting information from a sample of individuals in order to construct quantitative descriptors of the larger population (Brancati, 2018). The study crafted two sets of questionnaires which were largely similar in terms of the research objectives. They however, slightly differed in terms of certain specific questions to be administered to the staff and clients of the selected agencies (Creswell et al., 2006; Driscoll et al., 2007). The imperative for the items disparities was to give enough question space to each category to help triangulate varied views on the citizens charter programme and its strides made, if any, towards improving upon social accountability in public service delivery.

Pertaining to the qualitative interview sessions, the study utilised a semi-structured interview guide. The choice of this instrument over others such as the in-depth interview, focus group discussion and participant-observation, was due to its strength of giving room for the researcher (interviewer) to rephrase, modify and to even add new questions along the interview session. It also allows for the interviewee to seek for clarification on questions, when subjected to further probing by the researcher (Koul, 2011, as cited in Kuranchie, 2021).

3.10.1 Administering the quantitative instrument

The study was conducted using the mixed-method approach, and as such, the quantitative session gathered data using the field survey tool known as questionnaire. In administering the tool by the researcher, the following protocols as prescribed by McLeod (2018) were observed before, during and after the field survey.

i. Drafted questionnaires were subjected to a thorough review by the thesis supervisor so as to make room for expert recommendations on question formatting, language use and presentation of items.

ii. A Cronbach's Alpha reliability test was performed to check the internal consistency of the scale items. In this regard, a good alpha ($\alpha=0.821$) was achieved.

iii. To practically verify the usability of the survey items, the researcher conducted a pilot-test of the tool by sampling 50 respondents from among the personnel of the Ashanti Regional Head Offices of the Ghana Post Limited and the Copy Rights Authority. The researcher chose these agencies because the staff as well as the customers/citizens who partronize their services share similar characteristics with the DVLA and FDA selected for the main study.

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The rationale for the pilot-test was to aid in re-wording certain questions that might induce leading or bias responses from the participants. It also helped in determining the time frame within which respondents were required to complete the survey exercise.

iv. Introductory letters were collected from the Department of Political Science Education, UEW, which were presented by the student researcher to the secretariat/main administration of the selected agencies to seek for permission for the data collection.

v. The face-to-face data collection approach was adopted on the field in administering the questionnaires to the respondents. This helped achieve good response rate, and guided respondents in understanding the items for informed answers as well as enabled the researcher to explain or interpret questions in the Akan (Asante Twi) dialect to respondents from the citizen/client category who might be challenged with the English language.

vi. The field survey exercise was completed in eleven weeks. That is from 3rd July to 19th September, 2023 (weekends and public holidays excluded).

3.10.2 The qualitative interview session

The study again conducted an interview session to help collect narrative data from the 10 selected policy experts. The interview session aided in gathering narrative data to complete the CT mixed-method adopted for the study. Participants in this session were selected using the purposive/judgmental sampling technique. This aided the collection of quality data from people with in-depth knowledge on social accountability (Kelly, 2010; Palinkas et al., 2015).

The qualitative data was collected with a semi-structured interview guide rather than doing an in-depth interview or focus group discussion. The rationale for this approach was to allow the interviewer to amend certain questions or vary the order of the main items for a smooth discourse. Also, the interviewee could ask for clarifications and slightly digress along the interview session, to help provide comprehensive information on the themes (Kuranchie, 2021). Before the start of an interview session, the researcher (interviewer) craved the indulgence of the participants to record the conversation with a programmable voice recorder. This tool served as the main medium to store and retrieve information provided by each of the 10 expert informants for accurate transcriptions and analyses (Yin, 2016).

After every interview session, the researcher did a playback of the recorded conversation to the interviewee for confirmation of the information provided. This activity helped the researcher to get the clear sense of thought of all the sampled informants for an unbiased data handling upon exiting the field.

3.11 Internal and External Validity

Validity of a survey instrument is about its ability to collect data to cover the intended study objectives (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005). It is also about subjecting a field instrument to a test to verify if it would measure what is intended (Field, 2005). The ability of an instrument to measure what is intended is mostly linked with quantitative research. In qualitative studies however, validity is achieved if the researcher was thorough, careful and sincere throughout the entire research process (Robson, 2002). Since the study utilised the mixed-method approach, the quantitative session ensured internal validity (content validity) by casting the questionnaires strictly based on the stated research objectives. The scope of the items covered

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almost, all the salient aspects of the concepts of social accountability. This also helped in ensuring the face validity of the survey instrument. Moreover, the wording of questions were in simple language, devoid of unfamiliar jargons.

To help achieve external validity, verified questionnaires were administered in-person (face-to-face) by the researcher to all the sampled respondents. Participants were accordingly categorized into two different groups (strata) namely, staff and the citizens/clients who patronize the services of the selected public service agencies. The rationale for the variety in the participants was to help reduce or eliminate biasness in the data gathering process. The items were administered to only respondents who fall in the stated categories.

Pertaining to the qualitative interview session, Robson (2002) suggest multiple ways of achieving validity namely, prolonged involvement of the researcher on the field; peer briefing; member checking of data; audit trail; as well as data triangulation. Even though these strategies have their individual strengths and weaknesses, my study adopted the data triangulation method to help ensure validity of the semi-structured interview guide. The information from the 10 selected expert informants were carefully recorded in verbatim using audio recording device, transcribed, analysed, and findings compared with the data collected using the questionnaires. The pragmatists' research paradigm adopted also improved upon validity since it allowed the researcher to blend diverse strategies that seem relevant on the field (Creswell, 2011).

3.12 Reliability

Instrument reliability is the ability of a research tool to produce the same or constant results when utilised by a different person under the same conditions to measure the

same construct (Robinson, 2009). The study achieved reliability as the researcher was guided in part by the principles of the positivists (objectivism) paradigm to distance himself from the answers/options chosen by respondents during the administration of the survey instrument.

Table 3.2: Instrument Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardised Items	N of Items
.821	.825	12

Source: Researcher's own construct

Table 3.2 presents the statistical computation of the instrument reliability. A Cronbach's Alpha (α) score of 0.821 was obtained upon subjecting the survey item to an internal consistency test. The instrument deployed is therefore reliable, since an Alpha value of +0.80 depicts a good internal consistency (Streiner, 2003).

Moreover, the study ensured reliability in the qualitative session by utilising both the data triangulation method and the theoretical triangulation method. Data triangulation came into play, when the researcher (interviewer) carefully compared the outcome of the interview with that of the quantitative survey, for accurate interpretation and conclusions. Theoretical triangulation on the other hand, was utilised in the form of carrying out a comprehensive literature review to discover previous empirical findings on the phenomenon under study; and to match them with the current findings (Golafshani, 2003; Gyaase, 2014).

3.13 Data Analysis

Since the study was pitched under the pragmatists philosophical orientation, the mixed-method research approach was accordingly utilised (Creswell, 2011).

Proponents of realism believe that data gathered will be termed relevant if only it helps the researcher achieve the stated objectives. Hinging on this, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for analysis. The study performed descriptive analyses of the data gathered using the survey questionnaires. Following the positivists' objectivity principles, responses given on the closed-ended questions and the few open-ended questions were pre-coded into '0' and '1' for easy entry into the SPSS computer software for analysis (Park et al., 2020). Data were reduced into simple frequency tables and appropriate descriptive statistics such as the Mean, Standard Deviation and Standard Error to help communicate findings along the positivists paradigm.

Moreover, the narrative data gathered from the semi-structured interview sessions were carefully transcribed using the orthographic data transcription model. The model aided the verbatim transcription of the narratives in the recorded interview sessions (Poland, 2002).

The deductive (theory-driven) thematic analysis approach was deployed to help developed the data into major themes base on the conceptual framework of the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019). Though recommendation is given for the writing of field notes as the sure way to collect data in qualitative research, this study rather utilised the audio recording method. The rationale for settling on the use of audio recording devices was to help capture in verbatim, the narrative information given by each participants without any possible note taking infractions of the researcher (Yin, 2016).

Again, the semi-structured interview guide helped to guard both the interviewer and the interviewee from going miles beyond the premise set by the study objectives or

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research questions. The data collected was analysed along the interpretivists research paradigm. In this regard, the transcribed audio recordings were disassembled by coding them with applicable abbreviations to help identify or remember the various participants and their distinct responses given, rather than using their names. This stage helped to hide the identity of the participants. Afterwards, data immersion was done to identify the key concepts of social accountability namely, 'citizens' voice', 'information access', 'agency answerability', and 'empowered to sanction' as well as 'complaint feedback' (Baez-Camargo & Jacobs, 2013).

The semantic approach was adopted to present the narratives of participants around the identified themes so as the aid in the description of participants perceptions on the concepts. Data was reassembled based on similar emerging patterns for discussions relative to the research questions. Since the concurrent triangulation mixed-method research design was in use, the data from both sessions were analysed and the findings compared with existing scholarly works (theoretical triangulation) to aid in the objective description and vivid interpretation of the phenomenon under study.

The data triangulation approach utilised ensured that both thematic and descriptive analyses were performed simultaneously on the qualitative and quantitative data respectively. Thematic analysis aided the identification of emerging themes from the interviews, while the descriptive analysis helped in describing the sampled respondents relative to the target population (Gyaase, 2014).

3.13.1 Handling missing values

Working with data collection instruments such as survey questionnaires is likely to generate datasets with some missing values. Zachary (2021) categorized these missing values into four types namely; 1). Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) which

identifies missing data points which follow no discernable sequence and thus, being independent of the remaining variables. 2). Missing at Random (MAR) identifies data points missing either due to recording or entry errors and thus, could be interpolated by inferring from the remaining values. 3). Missing not at Random (MNAR) identifies data values of which, the mechanism informing their missing could be known but cannot be accurately predicted by the researcher. These missing data however, have direct bearings on the outcome of the entire analysis. Hence, cannot be ignored. 4). Structurally Missing data (SM) identifies values or responses that participants refuse to provide with purpose. This could be due to a follow-up question considered not applicable to that respondent and thus can be explained with the remaining variables.

The quantitative data collected with the survey questionnaires recorded some structurally missing values. The study handled this type of 'missingness' by adopting the listwise deletion approach over other interpolation approaches (Zachary, 2021). The rationale for the deletion hinges on the fact that 'not applicable' items have no impact on the statistical analysis of the variables concerned.

3.14 Ethical Considerations

The study gave much credence to the under listed ethnical principles prescribed by Bhandari (2021) before, during and after the field work.

1. *Ethical clearance*: the researcher sought for the approval and clearance to conduct the study by taking introductory letters from the Department of Political Science Education, UEW.

2. *Informed consent*: the researcher sought for the consent of the respondents before administering the research instruments. Clarity was made on the fact that participants can exit the entire exercise at will.

3. *Respect for confidentiality and anonymity*: all information provided by the participants were handled confidentially with the identity of participants shrouded during the coding, entry, analysis and the presentations of findings.

4. *Objectivity in communicating results*: the field data collected were analysed and presented objectively devoid of personal biases.

3.15 Conclusion

The Chapter has presented a comprehensive view of the methodological underpinnings of the study. Tthe pragmatic-realism research paradigm permitted the blend of the quantitative and qualitative research approaches, to gather data to answer the research questions. Even though it has its weaknesses, its merit of accepting the use of diverse strategies to achieve the research objectives, duly compensates for the weakness. Hence, its adoption by the researcher for the study. Chapter Four makes a detail presentation of the results of the data analyses.
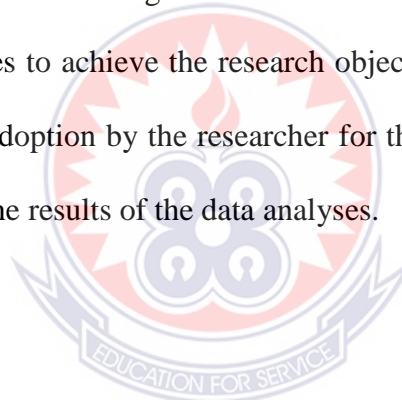
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

The rationale for the study is to investigate the impact of the citizens charter policy on social accountability in the public service delivery of the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) and the Driver and Vehicle Licencing Authority (DVLA). With the aid of survey instrument, quantitative data was collected from 219 respondents. it comprises of 166 combined clients of both the DVLA and the FDA, 25 staff of the FDA and 28 staff of the DVLA. Data was coded and entered into the SPSS computer software (version 21) and analysed quantitatively using applicable descriptive statistics. The data presented is from all sampled respondents at a response rate and response quality of 100%. This was achieved since the face-to-face questionnaire administering approach was utilised by the researcher on the field. The Chapter is presented in two distinct parts, with part 1) showing data from the clients of the service agencies, while part 2) covers the data from personnel of the agencies.

4.1 PART I: Data from Clients of the Service Agencies

4.1.1 Demography of clients

The study considered the demographic distribution of the clients since their differences may have an influence on the responses given. The demographic variables considered are gender, age, academic qualification, occupation, clientele status and clientele period of the respondents.

Table 4.1: Demography of clients

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Commulative Percent
Male	97	58.4	58.4
Female	69	41.6	100.0
Age Range			
18-25	9	5.4	5.4
26-35	50	30.1	35.5
36-45	64	38.6	74.1
46-55	38	22.9	97.0
56-65	5	3.0	100.0
Highest Education			
Basic	21	12.6	12.6
Secondary	63	38.0	50.6
1st Degree	50	30.1	80.7
Postgraduate	6	3.6	84.3
Other	26	15.7	100.0
Clientele Period			
0-2 years	68	41.0	41.0
3-5 years	50	30.1	71.1
6-9 years	34	20.5	91.6
10 years and above	14	8.4	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.1 shows the demography of clients of the service agency. Out of a total of 166 clients who participated, 97 (58.4%) are males whilst 69 (41.6%) are females. The Figures reveal that, majority of the clients surveyed at the DVLA and FDA are males even though a significant number are females. A total of 9 (5.4%) out of the 166 sampled were aged 18-25 years, 50 (30.1%) were between the age of 26-35 years, 64 (38.6%) were also 36-45 years with 38 (22.9%) between 46-55 years and 5 (3.0%) also aged 56-65 years.

The frequency distribution interprets that majority of the clients of the agencies ranged between the ages of 36-45 years and followed by the 26-35 years. The diversity in the ages shows a good mix of respondents who participated in the study. The Table again shows that a total of 21 (12.6%) had completed basic education, 63 (38.0%) had secondary education, 50 (30.1%) also had a bachelor's degree, 6 (3.6%) have attained a postgraduate degree with the remaining 26 (15.7%) also having other forms of academic qualifications. The statistics interprets that, out of the total 166 respondents, a slight majority have had up to secondary education which is narrowly followed by those with a bachelor's degree. A significant percentage also have at least basic education likewise other forms of academic qualifications. A chunk of the clients have attained at least secondary school education, thus, making their participation in the study appropriate.

Out of the 166 sampled clients, 68 (41.0%) have been clients of the agency for maximum of 2 years, 50 (30.1%) have spent 3-5 years, 34 (20.5%) have spent 6-9 years whilst the remaining 14 (8.4%) have been clients for 10 years and above. The Figures shows that majority of the clients have spent at most two years with the agency which is sparsely trailed by those who have been clients between 3-5 years. It also shows a significant number of them having above 5 years clientele experience with the service agency which helps in getting variety of response.

4.1.2 Capacity building towards the implementation of the citizens charter

The level of capacity building towards the adoption and implementation of the citizens charter programme was considered in the study, as it appears to be the bedrock for the success of the new policy. Clients were asked to tell their level of awareness of the existence of the policy at the national level, and also at the agency

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level as well as rate the frequency at which the public service agencies educate them on their service charters.

Table 4.2: Awareness of the existence of citizens charter in Ghana

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	53	31.9	31.9	31.9
No	113	68.1	68.1	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.2 shows that, out of a total of 166 clients, 53 (31.9%) affirmed their awareness of the existence of the citizen charter policy at the national level whilst 113 (68.1%) said they are not aware. The frequencies in the table portray that, majority of the respondents have no knowledge of the existence of the citizens charter policy in Ghana.

Table 4.3: Awareness of the existence of service charter in the agency

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	95	57.2	57.2	57.2
No	71	42.8	42.8	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.3 shows that 95 (57.2%) of the clients are aware of the existence of the citizen/service charter policy in the service agency whilst 71 (42.8%) indicated they are not aware. The statistics reveal that majority of the clients have knowledge of the existence of a service charter policy at the agency level even though a significant percentage are still not aware.

Table 4.4: Agency uses symposium/durbar to educate clients on service

        standards

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	38	22.9	22.9	22.9
No	128	77.1	77.1	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.4 shows that 38 (22.9%) of the clients indicated that the service agency do educate them on service standards through symposium/durbar whilst 128 (77.1%) indicated they have not been given such education.

Table 4.5: Rate at which agency use mass media to educate clients on service

        standards

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	49	29.5	29.5	29.5
Only once	14	8.4	8.4	38.0
Quite often	71	42.8	42.8	80.7
Very often	32	19.3	19.3	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.5 presents responses on the frequency at which the service agency educate its clients using the mass media. 49 (29.5%) said they have never been given such education, 14 (8.4%) said they have been educated through the mass media only once, 71 (42.8%) said they receive mass media education quite often whereas the remaining 32 (19.3%) indicated the agency educate them through the mass media very often.

4.1.3 Institutionalisation of the citizens charter policy

The study enquired about the existence of any parliamentary act (legislation) backing the implementation of the citizens charter and also about the inclusion of the citizen/clients in holding service providers accountable.

Table 4.6: Knowledge of any Parliamentary Act backing the citizens charter

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	25	15.1	15.1	15.1
No	141	84.9	84.9	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

A dichotomous question which demanded an absolute 'yes/no' response was posed on the awareness of any legislative backings of the citizen charter programme and the response is summarized in the Table 4.6. Of the total clients sampled, 25 (15.1%) indicated they are aware of a legislative act backing the citizens charter programme in Ghana whereas 141 (84.9%) said they have no knowledge of that.

Table 4.7: Frequency at which clients rate/assess agency staff/unit performance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	120	72.3	72.3	72.3
Only once	34	20.5	20.5	92.8
Quite often	12	7.2	7.2	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.7 shows that, 120 (72.3%) of the total 166 sampled have never gotten the opportunity to rate/assess the performance of the staff/ unit of the service agency, 34

(20.5%) indicated they have done that only once, with the remaining 12 (7.2%) doing that quite often.

Table 4.8: Clients assessment led to the reward/punishment of agency staff/unit

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	18	39.1	39.1	39.1
No	28	60.9	60.9	100.0
Total	**46**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.8 shows that, out of the 46 clients who had the opportunity to assess the performance of the staff/unit of the service agency, 18 (39.1%) of them indicated their assessment led to the reward/punishment of the staff/unit whilst the remaining 28 (60.9%) said their assessment had no effect on the staff/unit concern.

Table 4.9: Frequency at which service agency consult/invite clients for
                discussions on service standards

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	126	75.9	75.9	75.9
Only once	18	10.8	10.8	86.7
Quite often	22	13.3	13.3	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.9 shows that, 126 (75.9%) of the total 166 sampled have never been consulted for their opinion on service standards by the agency, 18 (10.8%) indicated their opinion had been sought only once whilst the remaining 22 (13.3%) indicated the service agency do seek for their opinion quite often.

Table 4.10: Agency respect/tolerate clients opinion in its daily operations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	38	22.9	22.9	22.9
No	128	77.1	77.1	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.10 shows that 38 (22.9%) consider their opinion as being respected/tolerated by the service agency whereas 128 (77.1%) said their opinion are not being respected/tolerated.

Table 4.11: Access to the full list of available services of the agency

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	139	83.7	83.7	83.7
No	27	16.3	16.3	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.11 shows that 139 (83.7%) of the total 166 sampled clients have access to information on the full list of services available at the service agency whereas 27 (16.3%) indicated they have no access to such information.

Table 4.12: Clients main source of information on the full list of agency services

Source	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Flyers/Hand bills	3	2.2	2.2	2.2
Posters	39	28.0	28.0	30.2
Digital screen	3	2.2	2.2	32.4
Website	94	67.6	67.6	100.0
Total	**139**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.12 shows that out of the 139 clients who have access to information on the full list of services available at the agency, a total of 3 (2.2%) indicated they accessed such information on agency flyers/hand bills, 39 (28.0%) got the information on posters, another 3 (2.2) accessed it on digital screens whilst the remaining 94 (67.6%) indicated they accessed the information on agency website.

4.1.4 Impact of the citizens charter policy on social accountability

The study sought to investigate the impact that the introduction of citizen/service charter programme has had on social accountability in the public service agencies. The four-point Likert response scale was deployed for the clients of the agency to tell their degree of disagreement or agreement to the positive statements posed.

Table 4.13: Impact of citizen charter programme on social accountability

Impact Statement	Strongly Disagree F(%)	Disagree F(%)	Agree F(%)	Strongly Agree F(%)	Total F(%)
Improved clients access to information	10(6.0)	29(17.5)	96(57.8)	31(18.7)	**166(100)**
Empowered clients to express their opinion	80(48.2)	47(28.3)	38(22.9)	1(0.6)	**166(100)**
Increased client consultation	93(56.0)	48(28.9)	23(13.9)	2(1.2)	**166(100)**
Improved agency tolerance of client opinion	100(60.2)	37(22.3)	29(17.5)	-	**166(100)**
Improved agency accountability to clients	68(41.0)	76(45.7)	22(13.3)	-	**166(100)**
Improved agency service delivery standards	8(4.8)	26(15.7)	83(50.0)	49(29.5)	**166(100)**
Improvement in resolution of customer complaints	112(67.5)	37(22.3)	17(10.2)	-	**166(100)**

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.13 portrays a summary of the sampled clients' response scale on the statements posed on the impact of the citizen charter programme on social

accountability in the service agencies. In this regard, the statement '*citizens charter has improved upon clients' access to information*' registered 10 (6.0%) strong disagreement, 29 (17.5%) disagree with the statement, 96 (57.8%) indicated they agree with the statement whereas the remaining 31 (18.7%) strongly agree. There is therefore a majority of the clients who consider the introduction of the citizens charter programme to have improve upon their access to information. The statement '*citizens charter has empowered clients to express their opinion*' had 80 (84.2%) of the 166 clients strongly disagreeing with the statement, 47 (28.3%) disagree, 38 (22.9%) registered their agreement with the statement whilst the remaining 1 (0.6%) strongly agree. The Figures portray that majority of the clients do not consider the citizen charter programme to have empowered them to express their opinion in public service delivery.

The study again posed a statement that '*citizens charter has increased customer consultations*'. On this, 93 (56.0%) indicated they strongly disagree, 48 (28.9%) disagree, 23 (13.9%) said they agree whereas 2 (1.2%) strongly agree with the statement. It thus shows that majority of the clients are reprobate on the citizen charter's improvement on agency consultations. The statement '*citizens charter has improved upon the agency's tolerance level of clients opinion*' attracted 100 (60.2%) strong disagreement, 37 (22.3%) said they disagree whilst the remaining 19 (17.5%) indicated they agree with the statement. The statistics reveal that majority of the clients do not consider the citizens charter programme to have improved upon the agency's tolerance level on their opinion.

The Table 4.13 also shows response on the statement that '*citizens charter has improved upon agency accountability to clients*'. In this regard, of the 166 sampled

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clients, 68 (41.0%) indicated they strongly disagree, 76 (45.7%) disagree whereas the remaining 22 (13.3%) registered their strong affirmation with the statement. It thereby shows majority of the clients disputing the assertion that agency accountability to its clients has improved due to the introduction of the citizen charter programme. Another statement posed was that '*citizens charter has improved upon service delivery standards*'. By this, 8 (4.8%) strongly disagree, 26 (15.7%) disagree, 83 (50.0%) agree whilst the remaining 49 (29.5%) strongly agreement. There is therefore a majority of the clients who are approbate on the citizens charter programme's improvement in service delivery standards. The study again posed a statement that '*citizens charter has improved upon agency resolution of customer complaints*'. In this regard, 112 (67.5%) of the 166 total clients strongly disagree, 37 (22.3%) disagree whereas the remaining 17 (10.2%) agree with the statement. It thereby shows a majority of the clients who disputed any improvement in agency resolution of customer complaints.

Table 4.14: Descriptive Statistics of the impact of citizens charter programme

Descriptive Statistics				
Citizens charter has...	**N**	**Mean**		**Std. Deviation**
	Statistic	**Statistic**	**Std. Error**	**Statistic**
improved upon clients access to information	166	2.8916	.05983	.77086
empowered clients to express their opinion	166	1.7590	.06405	.82521
increased clients consultation	166	1.6024	.05974	.76973
improved upon agency tolerance of client opinion	166	1.5723	.06001	.77316
improved agency accountable to clients	166	1.7229	.05311	.68425
improved agency service delivery standards	166	3.0422	.06242	.80417
improved agency resolution of clients complaints	166	1.4277	.05220	.67255
Valid N (listwise)	**166**			

Source: Field survey, (2023).

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Table 4.14 is a summary of the descriptive statistics performed on the degree of responses given by the clients on statements posed on the impact of the citizens charter programme. The measure of central tendency included the clients Mean response on the various statements and their corresponding Standard Deviations (Std.Dev). It shows that the largest Standard Deviations of 0.83 and 0.80 with interval of ±1.63 and ±1.57 to the target population respectively, are far lesser than the mean of the data set. This thereby reveals that the responses given are not farther or wider spread but rather concentrated around the mean. The Table also shows the Standard Error (SE) of the various mean responses. At a 95% confidence level chosen for the study, the smaller SE recorded interprets that the sample mean is more representative of the overall target population. Hence, making the sample size of 166 more representative and valid for the survey. The graphical representations of the descriptive statistics of clients' response on the various positive statements posed are as shown in the ensuing Figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7.
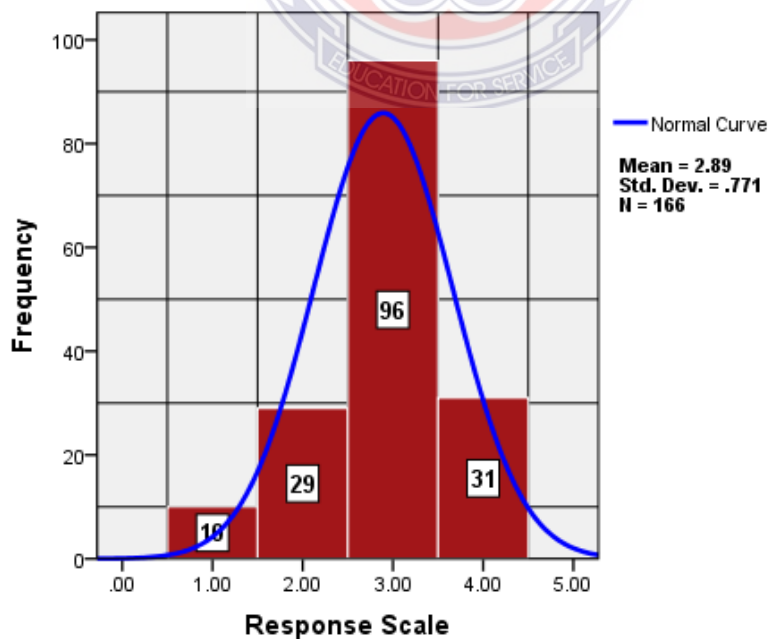
Figure 4.1: Citizens charter has improved upon clients access to information

Source: Field survey, (2023).

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Figure 4.1 is a graphical illustration of the responses on the citizens charter programme improving upon clients access to information. With a mean of 2.89 and a standard deviation of 0.77, the tallest bar (n=96) in the Figure shows that majority of the participants agree to the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has brought a level of improvement in access to information in the service agencies.
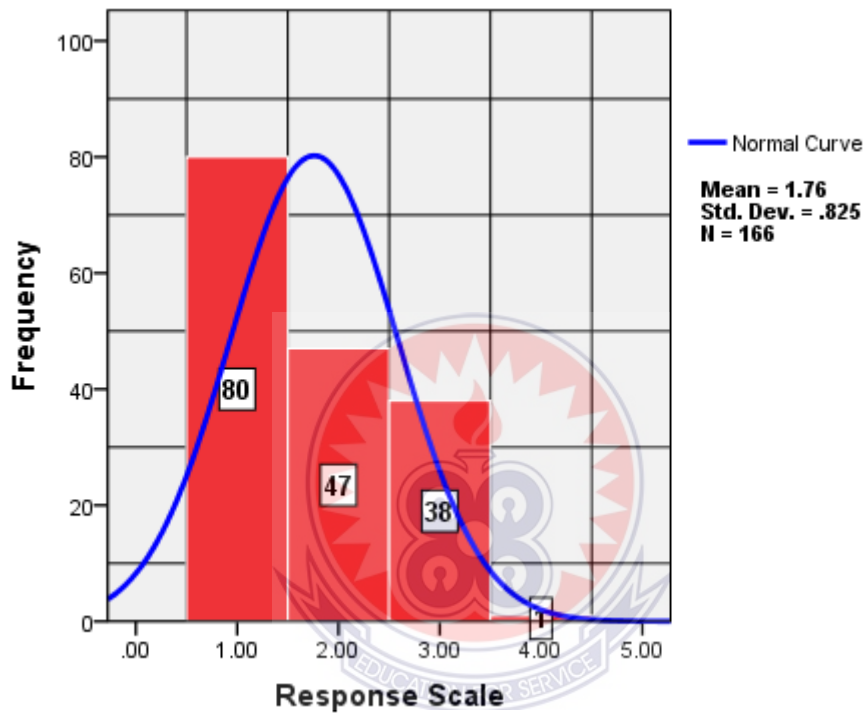
Figure 4.2: Citizens charter has enabled clients to express their opinion

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.2 is an illustration of the responses on the citizens charter programme enabling clients to express their opinion on the activities of the service agencies. With a mean of 1.76 and a standard deviation of 0.83, the tallest bar (n=80) in the Figure shows that majority of the participants strongly disagree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has enabled clients to express their opinion on the services of the agencies.

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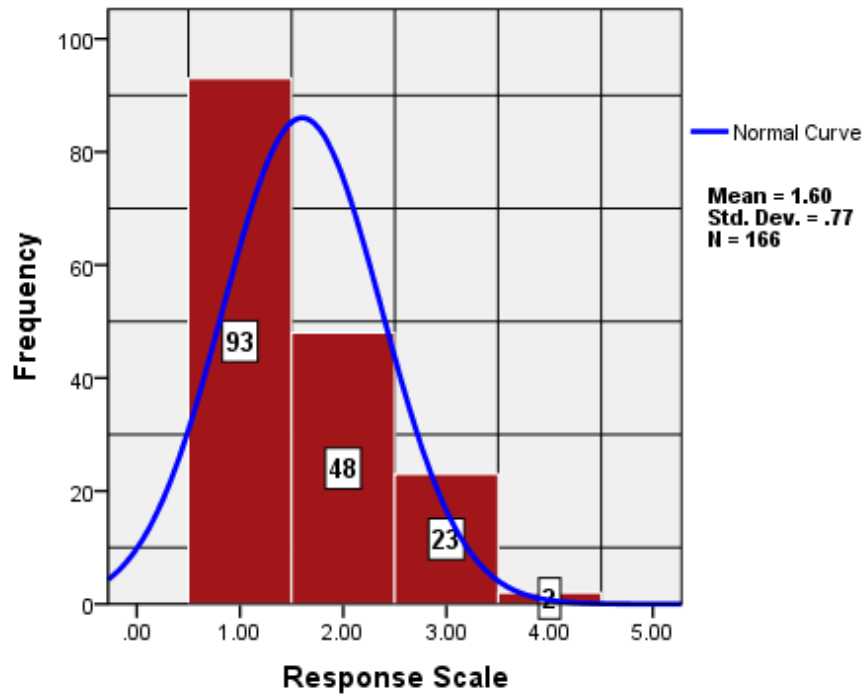
Figure 4.3: Citizens charter has increased client consultation

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.3 is a graphical presentation of the responses on the citizens charter programme helping to increase clients consultation by the service agencies. With a mean of 1.60 and a standard deviation of 0.77, the tallest bar (n=93) in the Figure shows that majority of the participants strongly disagree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has increased clients consultation by the service agencies.
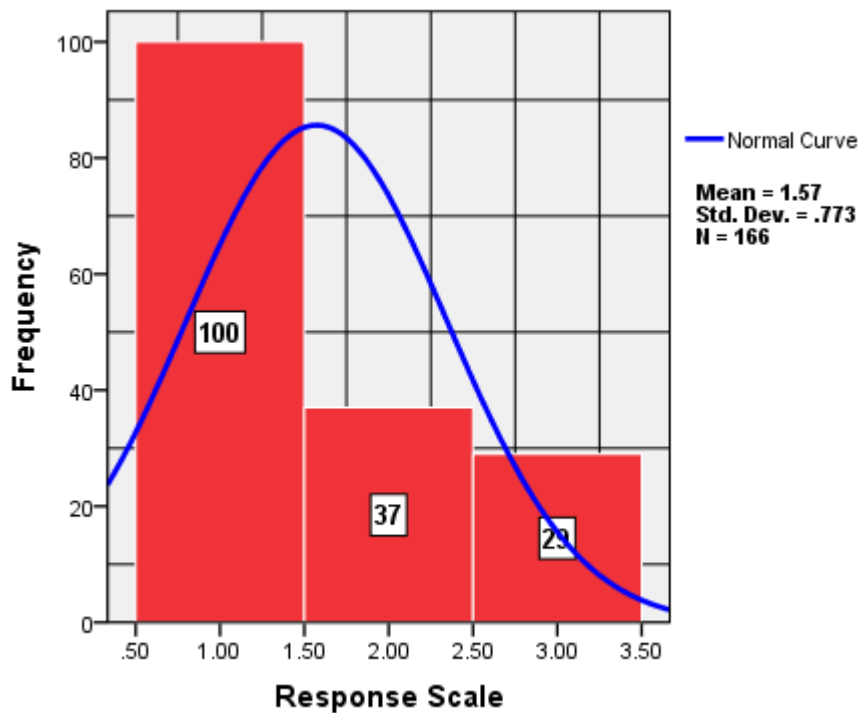
Figure 4.4: Citizens charter has ensured tolerance of clients opinion

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.4 is an illustration of the responses on the citizens charter programme ensuring tolerance of clients opinion on the activities of the service agencies. With a mean of 1.57 and a standard deviation of 0.77, the tallest bar (n=100) in the Figure shows that majority of the participants strongly disagree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has ensured tolerance of clients opinion on the services of the agencies.
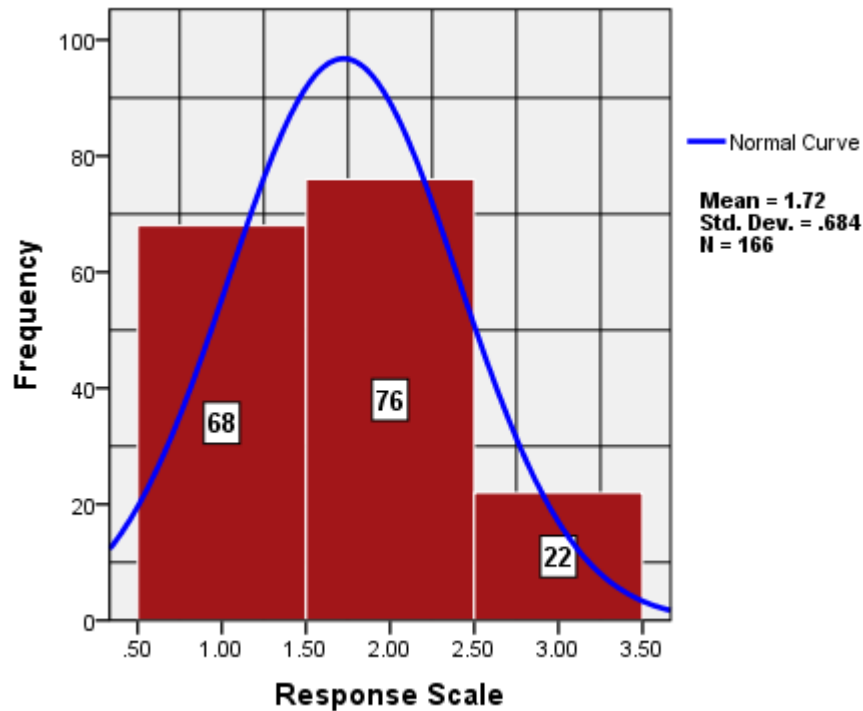
Figure 4.5: Citizens charter has made agency accountable to clients

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.5 is a graphical illustration of the responses on the citizens charter programme helping to make the service agency accountable to its clients. With a mean of 1.72 and a standard deviation of 0.68, the tallest bar (n=76) in the Figure shows that a slight majority of the participants disagree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has made the service agency accountable to its clients. This is closely followed by those who strongly disagree with the statement (n=68).
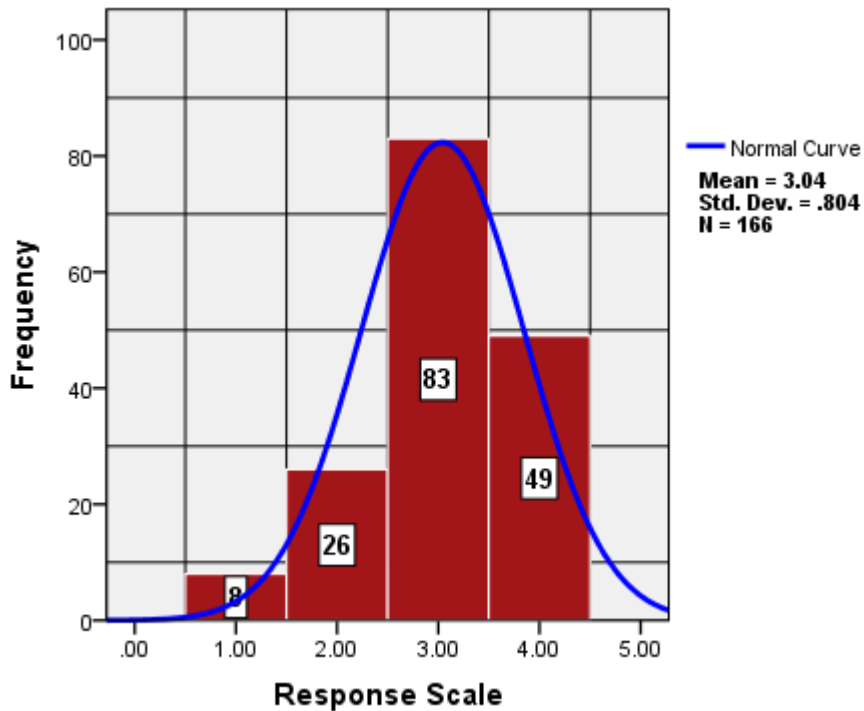
Figure 4.6: Citizens charter has improved upon service delivery standards

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.6 is an illustration of the responses on the citizens charter programme improving upon service delivery standards. With a mean of 3.04 and a standard deviation of 0.80, the tallest bar (n=83) in the Figure shows that majority of the participants agree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has improved upon service delivery standards in the agencies.

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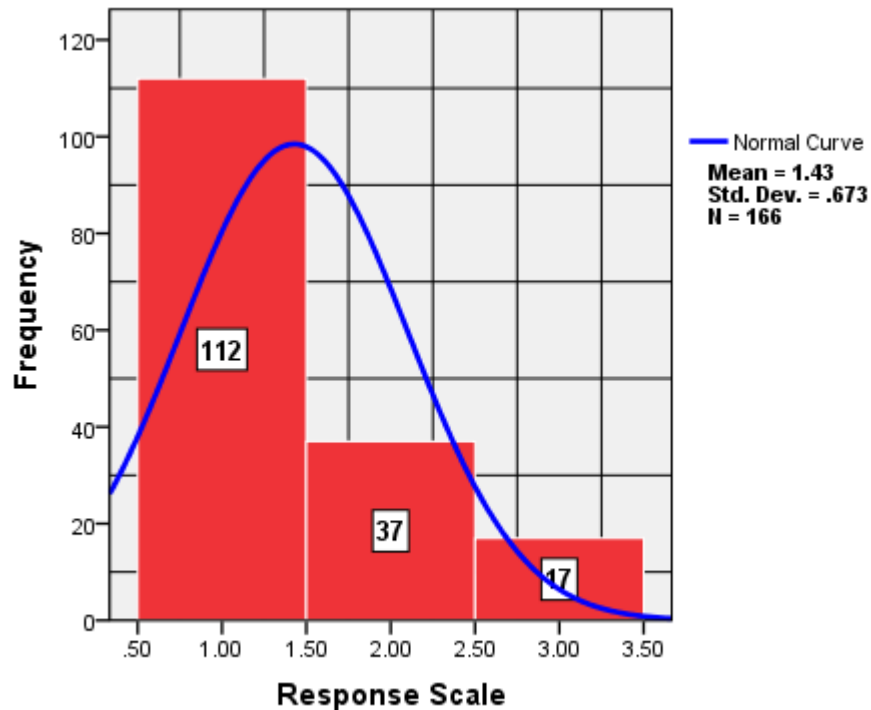
Figure 4.7: Citizens charter has improved upon resolution of client complaints

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.7 is a graphical illustration of the responses on the citizens charter programme improving upon the resolution of clients complaints by the service agency. With a mean of 1.43 and a standard deviation of 0.67, the tallest bar (n=112) in the Figure shows that majority of the participants strongly disagree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has improved upon the resolution of clients complaints by service agencies.

4.1.5 State of customer complaint and feedback mechanisms in the service

agency

The study sought to ascertain the state of customer complaints unit/office of the service agency, and to also enquire from clients whether they do receive feedbacks/acknowledgements from the service agency on complaints lodged.

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Table 4.15: Have you ever thought of making complaint on a dissatisfied staff/service

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	145	87.3	87.3	87.3
No	21	12.7	12.7	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.15 shows responses on whether respondents have ever conceived the idea of lodging complaint about a dissatisfied staff performance or standard of service received at the agency. In this regard, 145 (87.3%) affirmed they have had the thought lodging a complaint about a staff performance or service standard whilst the remaining 21 (12.7%) indicated they have never wished to make such complaints.

Table 4.16: Clients access to customer complaint unit/office at the agency

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	84	57.9	57.9	57.9
No	61	42.1	42.1	100.0
Total	**145**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.16 presents clients responses on whether they had access to a customer complaint unit/office to lodge their complaints at the agency. In this regard, 84 (57.9%) of the total 145 who thought of making complaints, indicated they had access to a customer complaint unit/office whereas the remaining 61 (42.1%) said they had no place to lodge their complaints.

Table 4.17: Level of reception received at the customer complaint unit/office

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very poor	1	1.2	1.2	1.2
Poor	19	22.6	22.6	23.8
Good	29	34.5	34.5	58.3
Very good	35	41.7	41.7	100.0
Total	**84**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.17 shows clients rating of the level of reception received at the customer complaints unit/office of the service agency. Out of the 84 clients who had access to a customer complaint unit/office, 1 (1.2%) said the reception was very poor, 19 (22.6%) rated it poor, 29 (34.5%) said the reception was good whereas the remaining 35 (41.7%) rated the reception received at the unit/office very good.

Table 4.18: Feedback/acknowledgement received from agency on complaints

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	40	47.6	47.6	47.6
No	44	52.4	52.4	100.0
Total	**84**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.18 shows whether clients got feedback/acknowledgement on complaints made at the service agency. Of the 84 clients who lodged complaints, 40 (47.6%) affirmed they received feedback/acknowledgement from the complaint unit/office whereas the remaining 44 (52.4%) said they have not received any feedback/acknowledgement as at the time of the research.

Table 4.19: Timing of complaint feedback/acknowledgement from service agency

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not prompt	5	12.5	12.5	12.5
Prompt	17	42.5	42.5	55.0
Very prompt	18	45.0	45.0	100.0
Total	**40**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.19 shows clients rating of the timing of the feedback/acknowledgement received from the customer complaints unit/office of the service agency. Out of the 40 clients who received feedback/acknowledgement, 5 (12.5%) said the feedback/acknowledgement was not prompt, 17 (42.5%) said it was prompt whilst the remaining 18 (45.0%) indicated that the feedback/acknowledgement received was very prompt.

Table 4.20: Responsiveness of the service agency to customer complaints

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very poor	13	7.8	7.8	7.8
Poor	67	40.4	40.4	48.2
Good	52	31.3	31.3	79.5
Very good	34	20.5	20.5	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.20 presents clients rating of the general responsiveness of the service agency to customer complaints. Out of the 166 total sampled clients, 13 (7.8%) rated the service agency very poor in its responsiveness to customer complaints, 67 (40.4%) rated it poor, 52 (31.3%) said the responsiveness is good whilst the remaining 34

(20.5%) rated the service agency very good in its responsiveness to customer complaints.

4.2 PART II: Data from Staff of the Service Agencies

4.2.1 Demography of the staff

The study considered the demographic data of the bureaucrats since their differences may have an influence on the responses given. The demographic variables considered include gender, age, academic qualification and period of service.

Table 4.21: Demography of service agency staff

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Commulative Percent
Male	28	52.8	52.8
Female	25	47.2	100.0
Age Range			
18-25	16	30.2	30.2
26-35	21	39.6	69.8
36-45	10	18.9	88.7
46-55	6	11.3	100.0
Highest Education			
1st Degree	42	79.2	79.2
Postgraduate	11	20.8	100.0
Service Period			
0-2 years	26	49.1	49.1
3-5 years	15	28.3	77.4
6-9 years	7	13.2	90.6
10-15 years	5	9.4	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.21 shows the demography of staff of the service agencies. Out of a total of 53 staff who participated, 28 (52.8%) are males whilst 25 (47.2%) are females. The Figures reveal a slight majority of the male staff over the females. A total of 16

(30.2%) were aged 18-25 years, 21 (39.6%) were between the ages of 26-35 years, 10 (18.9%) were also 36-45 years with the remaining 6 (11.3%) between 46-55 years.

The frequency distribution portrays a somewhat youthful workforce at the agencies as majority of the staff sampled range between the ages of 26-35 years and followed by the 18-25 years. Table 4.26 again shows that a total of 42 (79.2%) have completed bachelor's degree whilst 11 (20.8%) have attained a postgraduate degree. The data reveals that all the sampled staff of the service agencies have acquired tertiary education with a vast majority being bachelor's degree. Including these high literate staff in a study on public sector accountability is deemed appropriate.

Another salient bio-data captured is the number of years respondents have spent with the service agency. In this regard, 26 (49.1%) have been working in the agency for the past 2 years, 15 (28.3%) have spent 3-5 years, 7 (13.2%) have spent 6-9 years whilst the remaining 5 (9.4%) have been working for a minimum of 10 years. The Figures show that majority of the staff have at least 5 years working experience with the agency, though a significant number have more than 5 years' experience. The staff mix with varied years of working experience proved helpful in the data gathering process.

4.2.2 Capacity building towards the implementation of the citizens charter

The level of capacity building towards the adoption and implementation of the citizens charter programme was considered in the study. The staff were asked to tell their awareness of the existence of the policy at the national level and also at their agency level as well as the frequency at which the public service agency educate them on its service charter programme.

Table 4.22: Staff awareness of the existence of citizens charter in Ghana

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	12	22.6	22.6	22.6
No	41	77.4	77.4	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.22 shows that, out of a total of 53 sampled staff, 12 (22.6%) indicated they are aware of the existence of the citizen charter policy at the national level whilst 41 (77.4%) said they are not aware. The frequencies in the table portray that, majority of the staff have no knowledge of the citizens charter programme in Ghana.

Table 4.23: Staff awareness of the existence of service charter in the agency

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	15	28.3	28.3	28.3
No	38	71.7	71.7	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.23 shows that 15 (28.3%) of the staff are aware of the existence of the citizen/service charter policy at the agency level whilst 38 (71.7%) indicated they are not aware. The statistics reveal that majority of the staff have no knowledge of the existence of a service charter policy in the agency.

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Table 4.24: Staff educated on citizen/service charter through seminar/workshop

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	16	30.2	30.2	30.2
No	37	69.8	69.8	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.24 shows that 16 (30.2%) staff affirmed that the service agency did organized seminar/workshop to educate them on the citizen charter whilst 37 (69.8%) indicated they have not been given such education.

Table 4.25: Rate at which service agency train staff on customer service

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	6	11.3	11.3	11.3
Only once	6	11.3	11.3	22.6
Quite often	32	60.4	60.4	83.0
Very often	9	17.0	17.0	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.25 presents responses on the frequency at which the service agency organize training sessions on good customer services. In this regard, 6 (11.3%) said they have never been given such training, another 6 (11.3%) said such training sessions have been organized only once, 32 (60.4%) said its quite often whereas the remaining 9 (17.0%) indicated the agency do give them customer service training very often. The Figures reveal that the service agency quite often than not, train staff on good customer service even though a few of them are yet to benefit from such training programs.

4.2.3 Institutionalisation of the citizens charter policy

The study enquired from the staff about their knowledge of the existence of any parliamentary act (legislation) backing the implementation of the citizens charter programme as well as the existence of other mechanisms to help consolidate the policy at the agency level.

Table 4.26: Knowledge of any legislation backing the citizens charter

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	53	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

A dichotomous question which demanded an absolute 'yes/no' response was posed on staff awareness of any legal backings of the citizens charter programme. Table 4.26 shows that all the 53 sampled staff representing 100% have no knowledge of any legislative act backing the citizens charter programme in Ghana.

Table 4.27: Existence of charter mark system in the service agency

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	13	24.5	24.5	24.5
No	40	75.5	75.5	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.27 shows that 13 (24.5%) of the total staff sampled affirmed the existence of a charter mark system in the agency to reward best performing staff/units on good customer service whilst the remaining 40 (75.5%) indicated that there is no charter mark system in the agency.

Table 4.28: Staff given the chance to assess the performance of other staff/units

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	33	62.3	62.3	62.3
Only once	3	5.7	5.7	68.0
Quite often	13	24.5	24.5	92.5
Very often	4	7.5	7.5	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.28 shows that, 33 (62.3%) of the staff indicated they have never gotten the opportunity to assess the performance of other staff/units at the service agency, 3 (5.7%) indicated they had that chance only once, 13 (24.5%) said they are given such opportunity quite often with the remaining 4 (7.5%) indicating they do assess other staff/units performance very often. The frequencies reveal that majority of the staff have never been given the opportunity to assess their colleagues/units on service delivery standards.

Table 4.29: Staff assessment led to the reward/punishment of other staff/units

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	15	75.0	75.0	75.0
No	5	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	**20**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.29 shows that, out of the 20 staff who had the opportunity to assess the performance of other staff/units of the service agency, 15 (75.0%) of them affirmed that their assessment led to the reward/punishment of the staff/unit concern whilst the remaining 5 (25.0%) said their assessment had no effect on the staff/unit. The statistics reveal that even though majority of the staff are not given the opportunity to

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do peer-ratings, the agency mostly apply the outcome of the few who had such an opportunity on the staff/units under review.

Table 4.30: Frequency at which service agency consult/invite clients for discussions on service standards

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not at all	10	18.9	18.9	18.9
Only once	4	7.5	7.5	26.4
Quite often	26	49.1	49.1	75.5
Very often	13	24.5	24.5	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.30. shows that, 10 (18.9%) of the total 53 sampled staff indicated that their agency never consults or seek for the opinion of clients on its service standards, 4 (7.5%) indicated the agency did that only once, 26 (49.1%) said its quite often whilst the remaining 13 (24.5%) indicated that the service agency do seek for the opinion of clients very often. The Figures show that the service agency quite often than not, consult clients for their opinion on its service delivery standards.

Table 4.31: Tolerance level of service agency on clients opinion

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very poor	5	9.4	9.4	9.4
Poor	8	15.1	15.1	24.5
Good	19	35.9	35.9	60.4
Very good	12	22.6	22.6	83.0
Excellent	9	17.0	17.0	100.0
Total	**166**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.31 shows that 5 (9.4%) of the staff rated their agency very poor in tolerating the opinion of its clients, 8 (15.1%) rated it poor, 19 (35.9%) rated it good, 12 (22.6%) rated their agency very good whereas the remaining 9 (17.0%) rated the agency excellent in its tolerance to the opinion of clients. The statistics reveal that majority of the staff surveyed consider their service agency as being tolerant to customer opinions.

4.2.4 Impact of the citizens charter policy on social accountability

The study sought to investigate the impact that the introduction of the citizen/service charter programme has had on social accountability in the public service agencies. The four-point Likert response scale was deployed for the staff of these agencies to tell their degree of disagreement or agreement to the positive statements posed.

Table 4.32: Impact of citizens charter programme on social accountability

Impact Statement	Strongly Disagree F(%)	Disagree F(%)	Agree F(%)	Strongly Agree F(%)	Total F(%)
Improved clients access to information	6(11.3)	17(32.1)	25(47.2)	5(9.4)	**53(100)**
Empowered clients to express their opinion	13(24.5)	24(45.3)	14(26.4)	2(3.8)	**53(100)**
Increased client consultation	10(18.9)	15(28.3)	25(47.2)	3(5.7)	**53(100)**
Improved agency tolerance of staff opinion	12(22.6)	18(34.0)	19(35.8)	4(7.5)	**53(100)**
Improved agency accountability to clients	12(22.6)	19(35.8)	17(32.1)	5(9.4)	**53(100)**
Improved agency service delivery standards	4(7.5)	9(17.0)	32(60.4)	8(15.1)	**53(100)**
Improvement in resolution of customer complaints	14(26.4)	12(22.6)	21(39.6)	6(11.3)	**53(100)**

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.32 presents a summary of staff response on the statements posed on the impact of the citizens charter programme on social accountability in the service

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agency. In this regard, the statement '*citizens charter has improved upon clients' access to information*' registered 6 (11.3%) strong disagreement, 17 (32.1%) disagree with the statement, 25 (47.2%) indicated they agree with the statement whereas the remaining 5 (9.4%) strongly agreed. There is therefore a slight majority of the staff who consider the introduction of the citizens charter programme to have improve upon access to information by clients. The statement '*citizens charter has empowered clients to express their opinion*' had 13 (24.5%) of the 53 staff surveyed strongly disagreeing with the statement, 24 (45.3%) disagree, 14 (26.4%) registered their agreement with the statement whilst the remaining 2 (3.8%) said they strongly agree. The Figures portray that majority of the staff do not consider the citizens charter programme to have come to empower citizens/clients to express their opinion in public service delivery.

The study again posed a statement that '*citizens charter has increased customer consultations*'. On this, 10 (18.9%) of the 53 staff sampled indicated they strongly disagree, 15 (28.3%) disagree, 25 (47.2%) said they agree whereas 3 (5.7%) strongly agreed with the statement. There is therefore a slight majority of the staff who sees the citizens charter programme to have improved upon customer consultation. The statement '*citizens charter has improved upon the agency's tolerance level of staff opinion*' attracted 12 (22.6%) strong disagreement, 18 (34.0%) said they disagree, 19 (35.8%) agree and 4 (7.5%) indicated they strongly agree with the statement. The statistics reveal that majority of the staff do not consider the citizens charter to have had positive impact on the agency's tolerance to their opinion.

The Table 4.32 also shows response on the statement that '*citizens charter has improved upon agency accountability to clients*'. In this regard, of the 53 sampled

staff, 12 (22.6%) indicated they strongly disagree, 19 (35.8%) disagree, 17 (32.1%) registered their agreement with the statement whilst the remaining 5 (9.4%) strongly agree. It thereby shows majority of the staff disagreeing to the fact that agency accountability to its clients has improved due to the introduction of the citizens charter programme. Another statement posed was that '*citizens charter has improved upon service delivery standards*'. By this, 4 (7.5%) strongly disagree, 9 (17.0%) disagree, 32 (60.4%) agree whilst the remaining 8 (15.1%) registered their strong agreement with the statement. There is therefore a majority of the staff who see an improvement in the service delivery to clients as a result of the introduction of the citizens charter programme.

The study again posed a statement that '*citizens charter has improved upon agency resolution of customer complaints*'. In this regard, 14 (26.4%) of the 53 total staff who participated indicated they strongly disagree, 12 (22.6%) disagree, 21 (39.6%) said they agree whereas 6 (11.3%) strongly agree with the statement. It thereby shows a mixed staff judgement on the impact of the citizens charter programme on the resolution of customer complaints even though there is a marginal lead for those in agreement.

Table 4.33: Descriptive statistics of the impact of citizens charter programme

| Citizen charter has... | Descriptive Statistics | | | |
| | N | Mean | | Std. Deviation |
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
improved upon clients access to information	53	2.5472	.11290	.82196
empowered clients to express their opinion	53	2.0943	.11193	.81487
increased clients consultation	53	2.3962	.11847	.86246
improved upon agency tolerance of staff opinion	53	2.2830	.12455	.90676
improved agency accountable to clients	53	2.2830	.12743	.92772
improved agency service delivery standards	53	2.8302	.10686	.77796
improved agency resolution of clients complaints	53	2.3585	.13761	1.00181
Valid N (listwise)	**53**			

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.33 presents a summary of the descriptive statistics performed on the degree of responses given by the staff on statements posed on the impact of the citizens charter programme. The measure of central tendency included the staff Mean response on the various statements and their corresponding Standard Deviations (Std.Dev). It shows that the largest Standard Deviations of 1.0 and 0.93 with interval of ±0.27 and ±0.53 respectively, are far smaller than the mean. This thereby reveals that the responses given are not farther or wider spread but rather concentrated around the mean of the data set.

The Table also shows the Standard Error (SE) of the various mean responses. At a 95% confidence level chosen for the study, the smaller SE recorded interprets that the sample mean is more representative of the overall target population. Hence, making the sample size of 53 staff more representative and valid for the survey. Figures 4.8,

4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, 4.13 and 4.14 show the graphical representations of the descriptive statistics of the various impact statements.
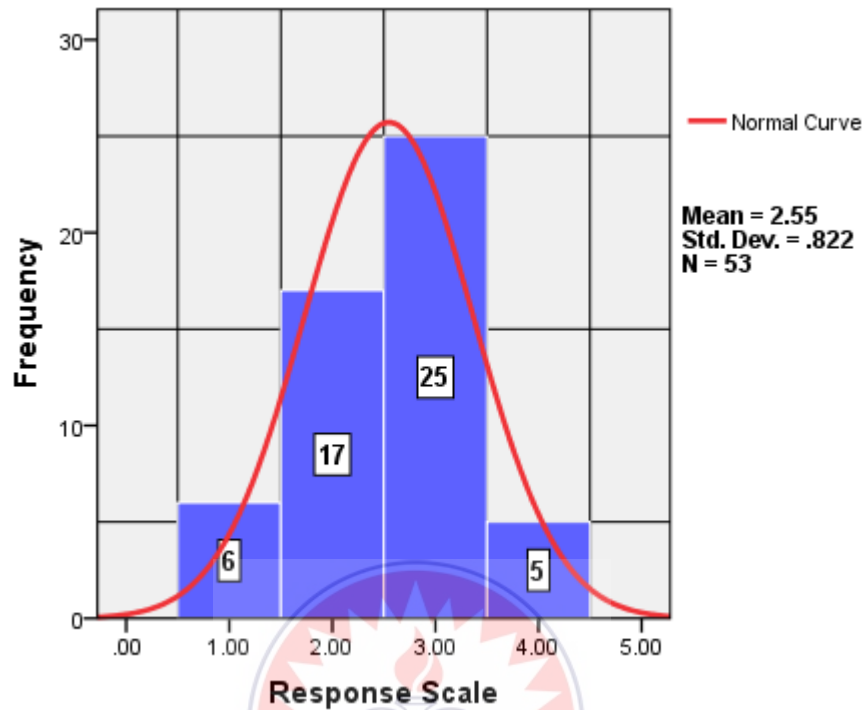
Figure 4.8: Citizens charter has improved upon clients access to information.

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.8 is an illustration of the staff response on the citizens charter programme improving upon clients access to infromation. With a mean of 2.55 and a standard deviation of 0.82, the tallest bar (n=25) in the Figure shows that majority of the staff agree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has improved upon clients access to information in the service agencies.

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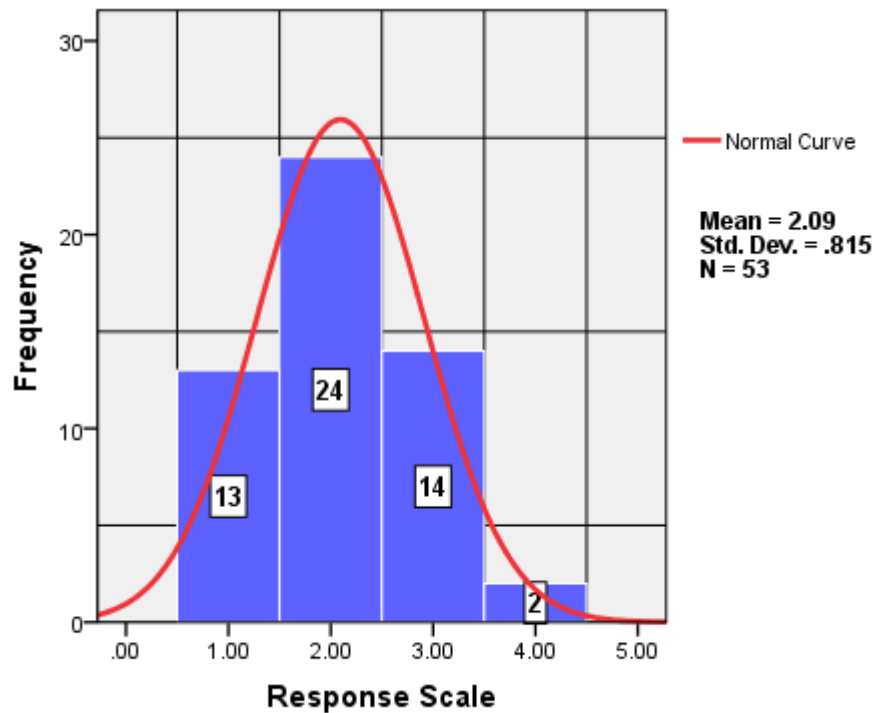
Figure 4.9: Citizens charter has enabled clients to express their opinion

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.9 is a graphical illustration of the staff response on the citizens charter programme enabling clients to express their opinion on the activities of the service agencies. With a mean of 2.09 and a standard deviation of 0.82, the tallest bar (n=24) in the Figure shows that majority of the participants disagree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has enabled clients to express their opinion on the services of the agencies.

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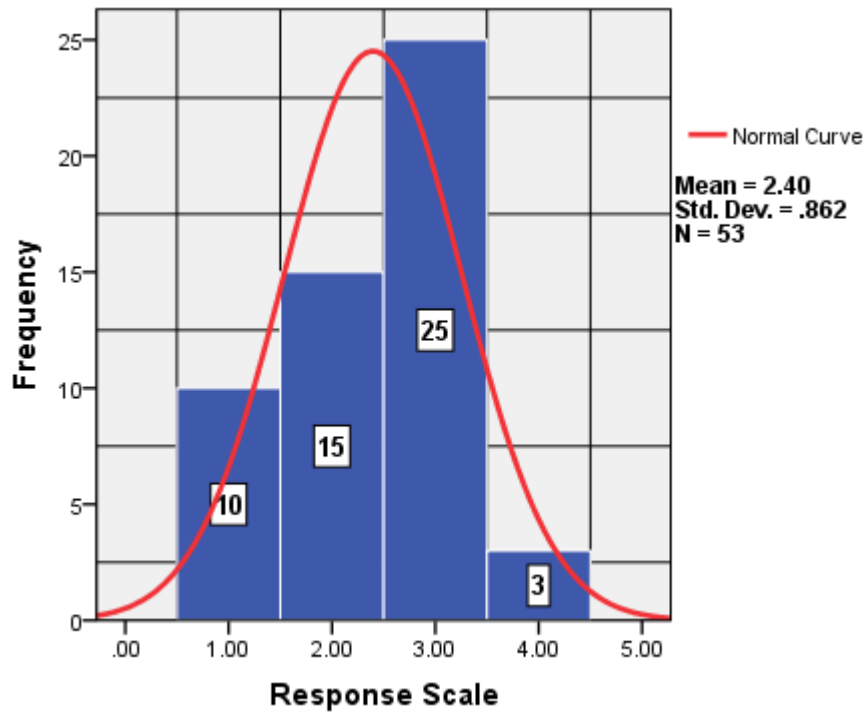
Figure 4.10: Citizens charter has increased client consultation

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.10 is an illustration of the staff response on the citizens charter programme helping to increase clients consultation by the service agencies. With a mean of 2.40 and a standard deviation of 0.86, the tallest bar (n=25) in the Figure shows that majority of the participants agree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has increased clients consultation by the service agencies.
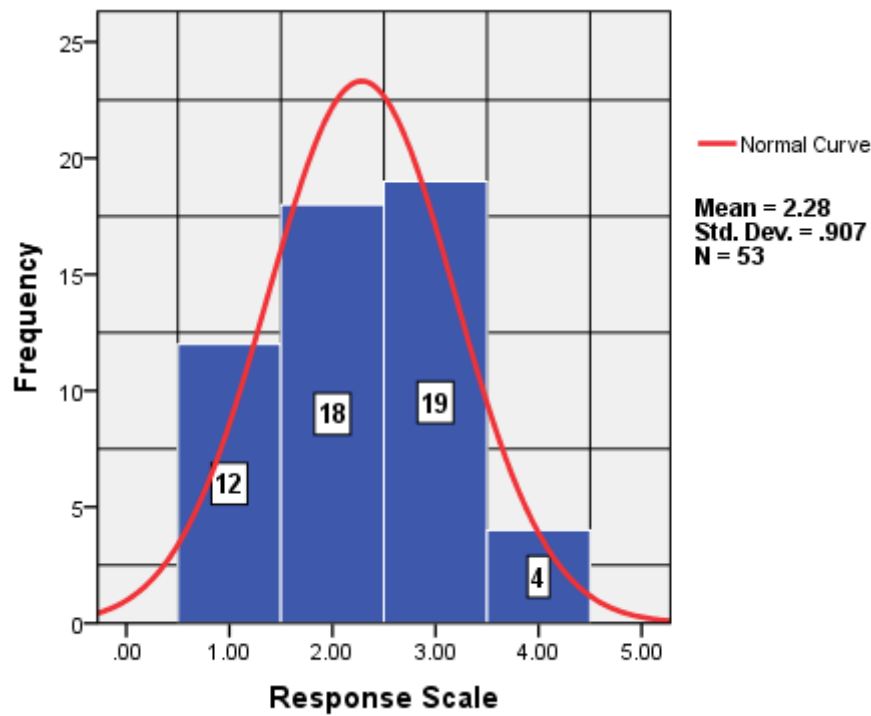
Figure 4.11: Citizens charter has ensured tolerance of clients opinion

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.11 is an illustration of the staff response on the citizens charter programme ensuring tolerance of clients opinion on the activities of the service agencies. With a mean of 2.28 and a standard deviation of 0.91, the tallest bar (n=19) in the Figure shows that a slight majority of the participants agree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has ensured tolerance of clients opinion on the services of the agencies. This is however, closely followed with those who expressed disagreement with the statement (n=18).

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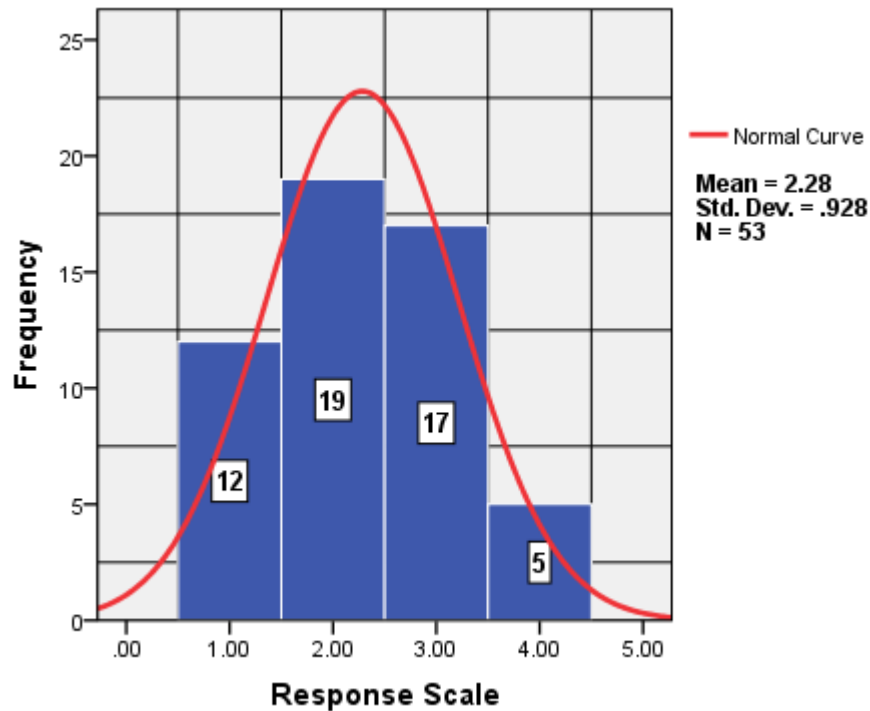
Figure 4.12: Citizens charter has made agency accountable to clients

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.12 is a graphical illustration of the staff response on the citizens charter programme helping to make the service agency accountable to its clients. With a mean of 2.28 and a standard deviation of 0.93, the tallest bar (n=19) in the Figure shows that a slight majority of the participants disagree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has made service agencies accountable to clients. This is however, closely followed with those who expressed agreement with the statement (n=17).

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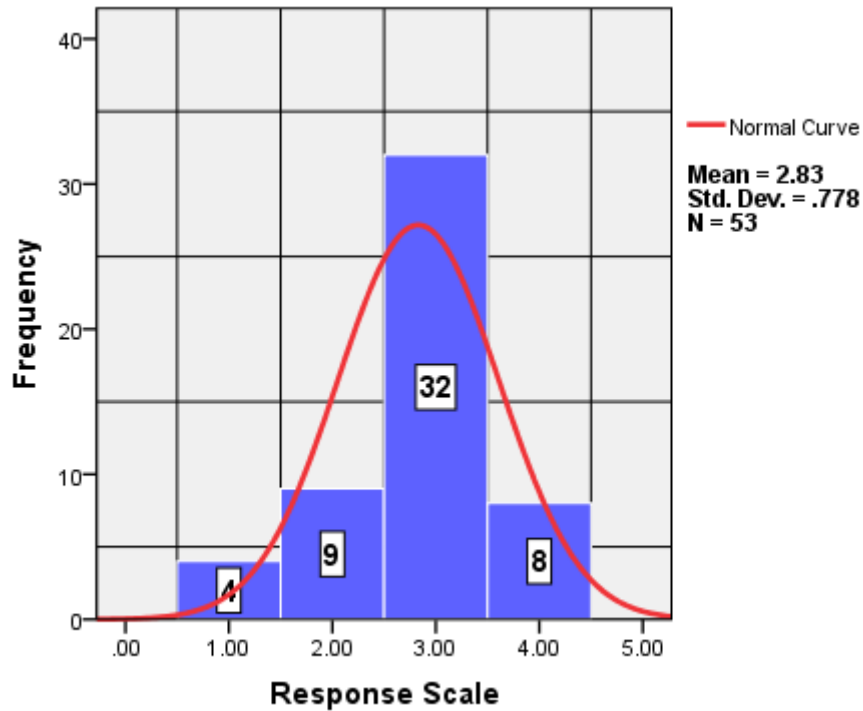
Figure 4.13: Citizens charter has improved upon service delivery standards

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.13 is a graphical illustration of the staff response on the citizens charter programme improving upon service delivery standards. With a mean of 2.83 and a standard deviation of 0.78, the tallest bar (n=32) in the Figure shows that majority of the participants agree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has improved upon service delivery standards in the agencies.

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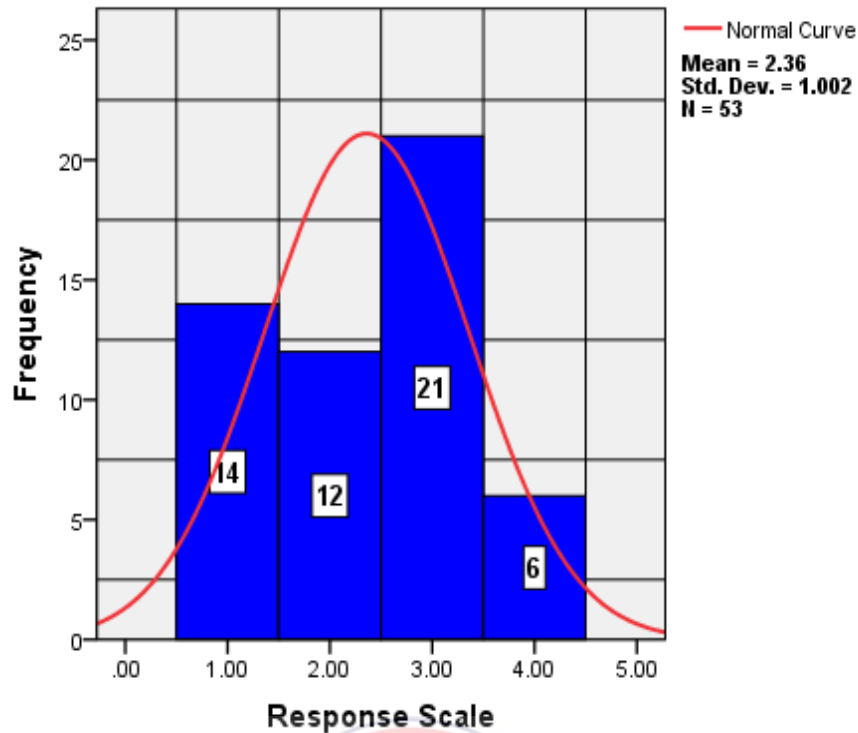
Figure 4.14: Citizens charter has improved upon resolution of client complaints

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Figure 4.13 is a graphical illustration of the staff response on the citizens charter programme improving upon resolution of clients compalints by the service agencies. With a mean of 2.36 and a standard deviation of 1.00, the tallest bar (n=21) in the Figure shows that majority of the participants agree with the assertion that the introduction of the citizens charter programme has improved upon the resolution of clients complaints by the service agencies.

4.2.5 State of customer complaints and feedback mechanisms in the service agency

The study sought to ascertain the state of customer complaints unit/office of the service agency, and to also enquire from the staff whether they do receive customer complaints as well as how they handle them if any.

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Table 4.34: Existence of customer complaints unit/office in the agency

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	40	75.5	75.5	75.5
No	13	24.5	24.5	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.34 shows staff response on whether there exist a customer complaints unit/office in their service agency. In this regard, 40 (75.5%) affirmed the existence of such unit/office whilst the remaining 13 (24.5%) indicated that there is no customer complaints unit/office in their agency. The frequencies reveal that majority of the staff attest to the existence of a customer complaints unit/office in their service agency.

Table 4.35: Ever received customer complaints on staff/service delivery standards

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	30	56.6	56.6	56.6
No	23	43.4	43.4	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.35 presents staff response on whether they have ever received customer complaints. In this regard, 30 (56.6%) affirmed they have ever received customer complaints in their line of service whereas the remaining 23 (43.4%) said they have never received complaints from clients of their agency. It thereby shows that majority of the staff sampled have ever received customer complaints in their line of service.

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Table 4.36: How staff handled customer complaints received

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Re-directed to complaints unit	11	36.7	36.7	36.7
Forwarded to complaints unit	12	40.0	40.0	76.7
Used my discretion to resolve it	7	23.3	23.3	100.0
Total	**30**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.36 shows how staff handled the customer complaints received at the service agency. Out of the 30 staff who have ever received customer complaints, 11 (36.7%) indicated they re-directed the customer to the customer complaints unit/office, 12 (40.0%) forwarded the complaints themselves to the customer complaints unit/office whilst the remaining 7 (23.3%) indicated they used their discretion to resolve/handle the complaints. The statistics reveal that most of the staff either forward the complaints received to the customer unit/office or re-direct the client to the customer complaints unit/office rather than use their discretion to resolve/handle it.

Table 4.37: Level of responsiveness to customer complaints by the agency

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Poor	8	15.0	15.0	15.0
Good	18	34.0	34.0	49.0
Very good	18	34.0	34.0	83.0
Excellent	9	17.0	17.0	100.0
Total	**53**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field survey, (2023).

Table 4.37 presents staff ratings of the level of responsiveness to customer complaints by their service agency. In this regard, 8 (15.0%) rated the agency poor, 18 (34.0%) rated it good, another 18 (34.0) indicated that their service agency is very good in its

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responsiveness to customer complaints whereas the remaining 9 (17.0%) rated the agency excellent. The statistics reveal that majority of the staff surveyed consider their agency as doing good in its responsiveness to customer complaints, though not so excellent.

4.3 Conclusion

The Chapter has presented in detailed the results of the data analysis. The frequency tables adopted aided in presenting the enormous data in simple statistical form. Vivid histograms were also utilised to give a comprehensive graphical summary of the data distribution. Chapter Five would concentrate on the summary of research findings, detailed discussion of major findings relative to the stated study objectives, conclusions as well as appropriate policy implications and recommendations for further research work.
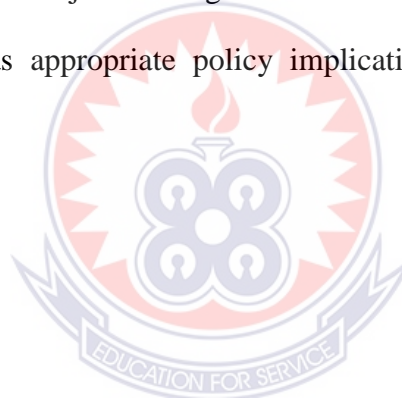
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The main objective of the study is to investigate the impact of the citizens charter programme on social accountability in terms of voice, answerability and enforceability in the public service delivery in Ghana. The Ashanti Regional head offices of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) and the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) were the units of analysis. This Chapter contains the summary of the major research findings, empirical and theoretical discussion of results, conclusions, and implication for policy actions as well as recommendations for further research.

5.1 Methods and Procedures

The study was pitched on the pragmatists research paradigm which gave room for the adoption of the mixed-method research approach. Hinging on this design, a quantitative survey was conducted in the selected service agencies with a total sample size of 219 comprising 53 staff of the agencies as well as 166 clients who patronize their services. A questionnaire with mainly closed-ended multiple choice questions was administered using the face-to-face approach. The data collected was descriptively analysed with the IBM SPSS v.21 computer software. Also, qualitative data was collected from 10 public sector reform experts using a semi-structured interview guide which aided in the data triangulation process.

5.2 Summary of the Research Findings

The study sought to investigate the impact of the citizens charter programme on social accountability in public service delivery in Ghana in terms of voice, answerability and enforceability. Other specific objectives are; 1) to investigate the level of capacity building in terms of public awareness creation and personnel training in the adoption of the Citizens Charter policy. 2) to evaluate the strides made by government, if any, towards the institutionalisation of the Citizens Charter policy in terms of behavioural change management, rewards/punishment mechanisms and legislative backings. 3) to examine the state of customer complaints and feedback mechanisms in public service organisations towards the implementation of the citizens charter policy. The research findings based on the stated objectives are as presented below.

5.2.1 Capacity building towards the implementation of the citizens charter

The study results reveal that a little over 68% of the clients as well as 77% of the staff have no knowledge of the existence of the citizens charter programme at the national level. However, most of these clients have knowledge of the service charters existing in the service agencies as affirmed by 57.2% which far outweighs the 28.3% of the staff who knew of the service charters at the agency level. Pertaining to awareness creation on citizen/service charters, about 78% of the clients attested to the fact that no symposium/durbar was organized by the agency, but rather quite often than not, provides them this education through the mass media. This corresponds with the over 69% of the staff who indicated their agencies did not organize workshops/seminars on the citizen/service charter programme.

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5.2.2 Institutionalisation of the citizens charter policy

On this variable, the study found out that all the staff sampled have no knowledge of the existence of any Legislative Act serving as a legal backing to the citizens charter programme in Ghana. Nonetheless, a little over 15% of the clients affirmed their knowledge of the legal status of the citizens charter, but could not mention any of its provisions. Moreover, majority of the clients as well as the staff have never had the opportunity to assess the performance of the staff/units of the service agencies. This was empirically confirmed by 72.3% and 62.3% respectively. This notwithstanding, 39.1% of the clients and 75% of the staff who had the opportunity to do the assessment indicated its outcome was fully applied by the agency to reward or punish those concern.

5.2.3 Effectiveness of the core tenets of the citizen charter in the service agency

The study found out that about 76% of the clients have never been invited/consulted by the service agency to seek for their opinion on its service delivery standards. This was further elaborated by 77.1% who consider their opinions as not being respected/tolerated by the service agency. On the contrary, over 73% of the staff rather gave credence to their agency that clients are often times consulted and as such, rated good in its tolerance to clients' opinion. It was further found that, majority of the clients representing 83.7% have access to the full list of available services of the agency, with applicable costs, delivery time frame as well as standard options. These service information are mainly accessed on the agency websites (67.6%) as well as information posters (28%).

5.2.4 Impact of the citizens charter programme on social accountability

The study found out that, a combined total of 76.5% of the clients are approbate on the citizens charter improving upon their access to information in the agency. This was further proven by a total of 56.6% of the staff who expressed their agreement in this regard. Pertaining to the expression of clients opinion, 76.5% of the clients disputed the assertion that the citizens charter programme has empowered them to express their views on the service standards of the agency. Majority of them representing 84.9% as well as 82.5% reiterated that the citizens charter has had no impact on getting the service agencies to seek for their views as well as to respect/tolerate such views, if any, respectively. On the other hand, about 70% of the staff respondents also affirmed the inability of the service charter programme to empower clients to express their opinion on public service delivery standards. Albeit, a little over half (52.9%) of the staff accepted that there has been an increment in the rate at which the agency consults its clients for their opinion even though they rejected its strides in getting the agency to tolerate those views.

The study again discovered that, about 87% of the clients as well as 59% of the staff do not believe that the citizens charter has enabled service agencies to remain accountable to the customers. Majority of the clients representing 89.8% expressed their degree of disagreement with the assertion that the introduction of the citizen/service charter has improved upon the agency's resolution of customer complaints. The staff were somewhat divided on this assertion as 50.9% and 49.1% expressed their agreement and disagreement respectively. Significant findings were made on citizens charter's improvement in the standard of service delivery. To this end, 79.5% of the clients as well as 75.5% of the staff were in affirmation.

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5.2.5 The state of customer complaints and feedback mechanisms in the agency

The study found out that majority of the clients representing 87.3% have ever wished to lodge complaints on either a staff and/or a standard of service received at the agency. Of this category, almost 58% had access to a customer complaints unit/office at the agency to lodge their complaints. They accordingly, rated the level of reception received at the unit/office very good. Pertaining to the agency staff, the existence of a functional customer complaints unit/office was largely confirmed by a little over 75%. This was further elaborated by a combined 76.7% of those who indicated they ever received complaints from clients, either forwarding the complaints to the customer complaints unit/office or redirecting aggrieved clients to the unit/office rather than using their discretion to resolve/handle it.

On the general responsiveness of the agency to customer complaints, a little over half (51.8%) of the clients rated the service agency to have performed good if not very good. Nonetheless, a significant 48.2% labeled the agency poor, if not very poor, on its responsiveness to customer complaints. On this variable, the staff hold a contrary view to that of the clients. Whereas 15% rated their service agency poor in its responsiveness to customer complaints, 68% and 17% of the staff rated their agencies very good and excellent respectively.

5.3 Discussions of Major Findings Relative to the Research Objectives

The research utilised the concurrent mixed-method design which was guided by the pragmatists paradigm to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from 219 respondents and 10 expert informants respectively. This section presents a detailed discussion of the major findings to give empirical answers to the four research questions.

5.3.1 Research question 1: What impact has the citizens charter policy had on social accountability in public service delivery in terms of voice, enforceability and answerability?

The study found out that the citizen/service charter programme have had a positive impact on access to information. This is because, majority of the clients representing almost 77% affirmed that the service delivery agencies do provide them essential information about the available services. This concurs with Acharya (2021) assertion that service users in Nepal achieved information clarity and easy access to public service lists after the implementation of the citizens charter programme. This notwithstanding, the access to information did not empower clients to express their views. Hence, failed to translates into increasing the voice of 76.5% of the clients.

Citizens participation in the public service delivery chain is low which further confirm the assertions of Agbazuere (2020) as well as Kpentey (2019) that there exist a huge disconnect between bureaucrats and the people they appear to serve. The study found out that over 80% of clients are either systematically curtailed from making direct inputs into the activities of the service agencies or demotivated due the intolerance of their views, if any. This concurs with Jayal (2008) on the weak participation of service users in public service delivery in Mexico. It is also in line with the insignificant space given for citizens' participation and advocacy recorded in Nepali public service agencies (Acharya, 2021).

Howbeit, the findings vividly portrays an opposing picture to that of Hevia de la Jara (2008) who found that the people of Mexico were empowered to make suggestions to public institutions in their service delivery under the Opportunidades programme. Moreover, Sirker and Cosic (2007) posit that when citizens have access to

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information, interaction with service providers becomes prompt. Martey (2017) further heighten this by arguing that the voice of the poor and marginalized is amplified by the adoption of social accountability mechanisms. It is thus noticeable that the 'voice' component of social accountability in service delivery in Ghana is either missing or suffocated by the intolerance of service agencies.

In terms of answerability, Ackerman (2004), Jayal (2008) and quiet recently, Bruen et al (2014) labeled it as essential and irreplaceable component of social accountability. The scholars maintain that answerability places a level of compulsion on service providers to meet performance goals envisaged by the principal. On this variable, the study found out that both the clients and staff of the service agencies are approbate on the strides made by the citizens charter programme in improving upon public service delivery. With a respective Mean response of 3.04 (±1.22) and 2.83 ((±0.22) as well as a Standard Deviation (Std.Dev) of 0.80 and 0.78 relative to the target population, the descriptive statistics succinctly attest to the service delivery improvement credited to the citizens charter programme.

The findings thereby appropriate Baez-Camargo and Jacobs (2013) position on getting service providers to serve citizens effectively and efficiently. It is pertinent to notice that answerability ought to move hand-in-hand with accountability (Ashworth & Downe, 2014; Sizani, 2018). When public service providers become committed to the furtherance of the interests of consumers, accountability becomes automatic. The study found out that majority of the clients constituting 86.7% attested to the inability of the charter programme to get service providers to remain accountable to them. This plight was further elaborated with almost 73% of the service users indicating that they have never had the opportunity to assess/rate the performance of the staff/units of the

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service agencies. For accountability to thrive, Joshi (2010) prescribed four interactive ingredients namely, setting performance standards; access to information about performance; making assessment about appropriateness of actions; and dishing out sanctions on unsatisfactory performance. Even though service users confirmed improvement in information access and service delivery, it did not lead to agency accountability on performance standards.

Enforceability which culminates in the ability of the principal to sanction unsatisfactory actions of the agent was evidently absent in the case of the agencies sampled. It was found that the clients absolutely have little influence or input in the rewards and punishment of frontline service providers. Contrary to the assertions of Ringold et al. (2012) and Fox (2015, 2020) on the accountability aspect of social accountability mechanisms, the study findings portray a lack of accountability on the part of the service providers to their consumers. A Mean response of 1.72 and Std.Dev of 0.68 statistically confirms the disagreement of about 87% of the client as well as 58.4% of the staff on the impact of the citizens charter programme on accountability in public service delivery.

Mallick (2006) is rather of the view that social accountability initiatives are mostly effective when institutionalised. Legislative backings, Charter Mark systems and rewards/punishment regimes are among the recommended ways to institutionalise the citizens charter in public service institutions. The study found out that there is no charter mark system in the service agencies to create the enabling environment for clients and/or staff to evaluate the performance of staff and units of the agency, and to award marks to high performing staff/units.

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A total of 33 of the 53 staff sampled representing 62% indicated they have never had the opportunity to do a performance peer review/appraisal. The expert informants concur to the lack of a charter mark system by positing that *"if you are implementing anything and you don't have a means of evaluating it, then it becomes a mere talk. So it is quite relevant to have the charter mark* (PE1, 2023)*"*. Another informant maintain that *"the agencies have annual performance report where they fill very long forms but that has nothing to do with how they treat customers* (AC2, 2023)*"*. This finding vividly reflects the lack of standardization mechanisms existing in the Kenyan health service charter system (Danhoundo et al., 2018).

5.3.2 Research question 2: What is the level of capacity building in terms of public awareness creation and personnel training towards the adoption of the citizens charter programme?

The study found out that public awareness creation on the citizens charter programme has been very low. A little over 68% of the clients have never heard of the programme and thus, indicated they have no knowledge of the existence of the policy in Ghana. Pertaining to the staff of the service agencies, almost 78% and 72% have no knowledge of the citizens charter programme at the national and agency level respectively. To this end, one of the expert informants opine that…

> *There is no doubt that a lot of hype was made at the launch of the citizens charter policy, but I don't think there was a systematic training for the public servants; after the initial hype especially with changes in government, it seems to have died a natural death* (PE1, 2023).

Seminars/workshops have not been organized to orientate personnels on the service charters. The findings reaffirm that of Ohemeng (2010), Abeka-Nkrumah (2010) as

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well as Yarney et al. (2016) that most Ghanaians have no idea about the citizens charter. It also concurs with the findings of Tamrakar (2010) in Nepal that 57% of citizens have no knowledge about the citizens charter as a result of low publicity. It is rather outside Milakovich (2014) recommendations that frontline employees should be trained to serve customers in a prompt and responsive manner. Again, the citizens charter programme in Ghana, just like its counterparts in Bangladesh (Sharma, 2012) and Rajshahi district in India (Huque & Ahsan, 2016), had limited involvement of the citizenry/customers during its drafting and adoption.

In an attempt to underscore the need for public awareness creation and employees training, an expert informant ingeminates that *"the charter programme required a whole gamut of activities for a cultural change until it becomes both the practice of the service givers and those seeking the service* (AC1, 2023)*"*. In an environment which is hostile to citizens participation, service delivery might be inefficient as well as increasing the tendencies for unaccountability (Naher et al., 2020).

5.3.3 Research question 3: What strides have been made by government, if any, towards the institutionalisation of the citizens charter programme?

It was found that there is no parliamentary act providing a legal backing to the adoption and implementation of the citizens charter programme in Ghana. Majority of the clients constituting 85% and all the staff of the service agencies respectively indicated their lack of knowledge of any existing legislation. In the same vain, the few clients who seem to know of any legal status could not mention any of its provisions.

An academic reaffirmed this by arguing that…

> *the CHRAJ system is partially a constitutional instrument, but besides that there has not been any systematic way of institutionalizing and acculturating both the public servants and the citizens about it; Parliamentary legislation, hmmm, practically nothing to regulate the implementation of the citizens charter* (AC1, 2023).

The findings are therefore in sharp contrast with the implementation of the charter programme in India. The positive strides made by the programme in India was in part attributed to the introduction of '*The Right of citizens for Time Bound Delivery of Goods and Services and Redressal of their Grievances Bill, 2011*'. The case of Ghana further deviates from that of Nepal, where the citizens charter policy thrived and made significant impacts on public service delivery as a result of the enactment of '*Guideline for making effective the governmental services, 1998 (GoN-OPMCM, 1998)*'. The citizens charter policy was further consolidated with the passage of the '*Good Government Act,* 2008' (Acharya, 2021; Tamrakar, 2010).

Wankhade and Dabade (2006) maintain that institutionalizing accountability mechanisms through Legislative Acts will help reduce the actor opportunism that militate against the principal-agent relationship. The agent may decide to maximize self-interest by shirking responsibilities and keeping performance information from the principal since there are no legal repercussions (Amagoh, 2009; Huque, 2005). In the case of Ghana, the study found out that the policy/programme aimed at getting the service providers to be responsive and accountable to the citizens is not legally enforced.

The interviewees argued along the line that "*there has not been any attempt to initiate one, and I don't think for political reasons the government is interested in putting its agents on the pedestal* (PE1, 2023)". Hence, reaffirming the World Bank (2010) position that most lucrative developmental reform programmes have abysmal implementation record in Ghana.

5.3.4 Research question 4: What is the state of customer complaints in the public service agencies towards the implementation of the citizens charter programme?

The study findings revealed that as many as 58% of the clients who ever wished to lodge complaints either about a staff or standard of service received, had access to a customer complaints unit/office. This thereby indicates the existence of customer complaints units/offices in the service agencies. It was further confirmed by almost 77% of the sampled staff that they either forwarded the complaints received to the complaints unit/office or re-directed aggrieved clients to the unit/office. The findings is in tandem with that of Hevia de la Jara (2008) on the accessibility granted to public service users in Mexico to customer complaints units under the opportunidades programme.

It also emulates the charter system practiced in Chandigarh, India in which service providing institutions are required to establish customer complaints centres and a universal electronic mail to collate complaints for possible redress (Sharma, 2012). The current findings however, make a divergent assertion thirteen years down the line to that of Ohemeng (2010) that customer complaints units were not duly created in most public institutions before the launch of the programme in Ghana. This thereby

shows an improvement in the establishment of customer complaints unit in the service agencies. Albeit, an expert informant maintained that…

> *the service agencies should have a mechanism through which user complaints will be channeled for an ombudsman to sanction defaulting service providers. But this is missing in the whole system...[De-facto]there is no customer complaints mechanism in the public service agencies. But de-jure, there is always a higher superior to complain to. More need to be done than just creating offices* (PE1, 2023).

Pertaining to agency feedback mechanisms on the other hand, it was revealed that a little below 48% of the clients who did lodge a complaint received a form of acknowledgement or feedback from the service agency. Moreover, about 88% of these dissatisfied clients rated the feedback received from the customer complaints unit/office as being prompt. This resonates with UN DESA (2021) recommendations that for accountability to thrive, public institutions are to be responsive to the public by giving them prompt feedbacks on their concerns. It also somewhat depicts the short route agent-principal feedback loop postulated by Baez-Camargo and Jacobs (2013).

This notwithstanding, a slight majority of the clients representing 52% did not receive feedbacks on the complaints made, which goes a long way to lessen the answerability and responsiveness of public service agencies to the service users. To this end, the expert informants unanimously alluded to the fact that there is no effective feedback mechanism instituted in the public service agencies. Hence, issuing a recommendation for the CHRAJ to appropriate its punitive measures in the service agencies to serve as a form of motivation for total compliance.

5.4 Conclusions

Based on the research findings, the following empirical conclusions are accordingly drawn on the stated objectives.

1. The introduction of the citizens charter programme in public service delivery in Ghana have had minimal impact on social accountability. Even though there have been improvements in clients' access to information on available products and services, the voice of clients are still curtailed amidst high intolerance level of service providers on clients' opinions, and lack of participation or involvement of the clients in the adoption, implementation and evaluation processes of agency service charters as well as its failure to hold service providers accountable to the customers.

2. There is a low level of public knowledge on the citizens charter programme and its intended purposes. Little effort has been made by the government or service providing agencies to create public awareness as well as equip bureaucrats on the tenets of the charter programme.

3. No attempt has been made by government to institutionalise the citizens charter programme in the public service agencies. Ghana currently has no Legislative Act providing a legal backing to the adoption and implementation of the programme, likewise, the absence of any policy initiative on its enforcement towards a responsive public service delivery.

4. There is the existence of customer complaints units/offices in the service providing agencies to give ear to the grievances of the customers. Most clients do receive feedbacks/acknowledgements on their complaints, even though it does not translates into corresponding resolutions of such complaints by the service agencies.

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Inferring from the aforementioned research findings, the study thereby concludes that the Citizens Charter Policy in its current implementation state, is more of an administrative rhetoric than serving as a mechanism to get service providers to remain responsive and according to the citizens. In the absence of clear policy implementation guidelines as well as legislative enactments, public service institutions have no compulsion to appropriate the tenets of the citizens charter programme in their daily operations. To this end, the country stands the chance of reaping the full benefits of the reform programme, if the citizens are empowered through public education to demand accountability from service providers as well as the government showing commitment in passing a Citizens' Charter Bill for its enforcement in the public sector.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

i. The study encountered some level of response apathy from the management of the selected service agencies due to the sensitive nature of some of the questions. The researcher minimized this by laying emphasis on the academic utility of the study outcomes as well as the strict adherence to the principles of anonymity and confidentiality of information.

ii. The face-to-face or self-administered survey approach adopted on the field proved somewhat challenging in getting information from the personnels of the agencies due to their busy work schedules. Howbeit, the researcher dedicated more days towards the entire survey process and thereby getting them to respond on any day they seems ready, which prolonged the period for the data collection.

iii. The limited scope of the study covering only service users of the Ashanti Regional head offices of the DVLA and FDA rather then the entire populace

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somewhat militate against the generalizability of the research findings. This was nonetheless, neutralized by choosing a 95% confidence level, a relatively larger sample size as well as including diverse category of stakeholders of public service delivery in the sample.

5.6 Implication for Policy Actions

i. Since there is a low level of public awareness and staff knowledge on the citizens charter programme, the government through institutions such as the NCCE, Information Service Department and the CHRAJ should prioritise public education on the programme through the mass media outlets.

ii. Since there is no existing legal backings of the citizens charter programme in Ghana, the Public Sector Reform Secretariat under the office of the president should initiate and forward a 'Citizens Charter Bill' to the parliament to be passed to help enforce its tenets in the public sector.

iii. Since there is limited consultations of service users in the development of service standards of the public agencies, and poor resolution of customer complaints, the Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS) in collaboration with the Public Service Commission should institute a 'Charter Mark System' to help reward high performing staff/agencies on responsive service delivery.

5.7 Recommendations for Further Research

The study deployed the concurrent mixed-method design to investigate the impact of the citizens charter programme, if any, on social accountability in public service delivery in Ghana. The scope of the study was however, limited to the Ashanti Regional head offices of the DVLA and the FDA. The findings portray that the reform programme in its current implementation state, is more of any administrative

rhetoric than it serving as an enforcement mechanism to get service providers to remain responsive and accountable to citizens as customers. The limited involvement of the citizens/clients in the services of the public agencies, notwithstanding the country's adoption of the citizens charter policy, warrents a further empirical study to ascertain how the e-governance mechanism can help increase citizen participation in public service delivery.

The study further established that the citizens charter policy currently, has no legal status in Ghana. To this end, public service providers have no compulsion to act within the tenets of the charter programme. The service user is thereby not empowered to play the oversight role assigned. A further study could be conducted using purely qualitative approach, to explore how the mass media can collaborate with service users to ensure a responsive and accountable public sector.

One of the core tenets of the citizens charter policy is the right of the service user to receive prompt feedbacks on complaints lodged. The rate at which service providers respect this right, effectively communicates their tolerance of the views of the customer. The citizens charter programme in its current form, has had a minimal impact on the prompt resolution of customer complaints in the service agencies. This therefore requires the intervention of a statutory body such as the CHRAJ. An empirical study should be conducted to help establish the role of the CHRAJ in protecting the rights of the citizens in the public service delivery chain.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire for Clients of the DVLA

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE EDUCATION

Preamble:

This study is conducted purposely to investigate whether the adoption of the Citizen Charter policy in the public service delivery in Ghana has yeilded dividends in terms of social accountability or it is just one of the usual administrative rhetorics. The Government of Ghana through the Public Sector Reform for Results Project (PSRRP, 2018-2023) has received World Bank sponsorship to improve upon the delivery of essential public services to the citizenry in 16 selected agencies, of which, the DVLA is a part. The researcher is a final year Master of Philosophy (MPhil.) student in Political Science. As a cherished customer of the DVLA, I would be much grateful if you could assist by responding candidly to some few questions below which are designed to last for 20 minutes maximum. All information provided will be analysed for academic purposes amidst strict confidentiality and anonymity. Thanks for your cooperation in advance.

Please make a <u>tick</u> (√) in the applicable box

Bio-data

1. What is your gender?   Male [ ]   Female [ ]

2. What is your age range?   18-25[ ]   26-35[ ]   36-45[ ]   46-55[ ]   56-65 [ ]

3. What is your highest academic qualification?   Non-formal [ ]   Basic [ ] Secondary [ ]   1st Degree [ ]   Postgraduate [ ]   other, please specify------------- -------------

4. What is your current occupation?   Unemployed [ ] Student [ ] Self-employed [ ] Public/Civil Servant [ ]   Farmer [ ]   Industrial worker [ ] other, please specify----- ----------

5. What is your current customer/clientele status with the DVLA?   Car dealer [   ]

Instructor [ ]   Licensing agent [ ]   Private customer [ ]   other, please specify------- ---------

6. How long have you been a customer/client of the DVLA? 0-2yrs [ ]   3-5yrs[ ] 6- 9yrs[ ]   10yrs and above[ ]

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Level of capacity building towards implementation of the Citizen Charter

7. Are you aware of the existence of the Citizen Charter policy in Ghana?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

8. Do you have knowledge of the existence of a service charter in the DVLA?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

9. Has the DVLA ever organized a symposium/durbar to educate you on their available services and standards of delivery?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

10. How often do the DVLA uses the mass media outlets to educate you on their available services and standards of delivery?   Not at all [ ]   Only once [ ]

Quite often [ ]   Very often [ ]

Strides made by government towards the institutionalisation of the Citizen Charter

11. Are you aware of the existence of any law (Parliamentary Act) backing the implementation of the Citizen Charter policy in the DVLA?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

12. If yes, please kindly state two (2) provisions of the Act

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13. How often do the DVLA give you the opportunity to rate/assess the performance of any staff or department/unit?   Not at all [ ]   Only once [ ]   Quite often [ ]

Very often [ ]

14. Would you say any staff or department/unit of the DVLA has been punished or rewarded based on your performance ratings/assessments?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

Operationalization of the core tenets of the Citizen Charter in the DVLA

15. How often do the DVLA consult you for your opinion on their service standards? Not at all [ ]   Only once [ ]   Quite often [ ]   Very often [ ]

16. Would you say your opinions are respected/tolerated by the DVLA in its daily operations?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

17. Do you have access to the DVLA's full list of available services, time of delivery and their corresponding prices/costs to be paid?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

18. If yes, what is your **main** source of such information?   Flyers/Hand bills [ ] Posters [ ]   Text message [ ]   Digital screen display [ ]   Website [ ] other, please specify---

19. Have you ever been provided the opportunity to access the services relative to driver and vehicle licensing from any other agency/institution aside from the DVLA?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

The relationship between the Citizen Charter policy and Social Accountability
Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the following statements on the impacts of the citizen charter on social accountability in the DVLA in the table using the four points Likert scale. All positive statements are coded as **1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Agree and 4=Strongly Agree.**

Statement	1	2	3	4
20. The citizen charter policy has improved upon access to information				
21. The citizen charter policy has empowered you to express your opinion				
22. The citizen charter policy has improved upon customer consultations in the DVLA				
23. The citizen charter policy has made it possible for the opinions of the customer to be respected by the DVLA				
24. The citizen charter policy has made it possible for the DVLA to be accountable to its customers.				
25. The citizen charter policy has improved upon the standards of service delivery in the DVLA.				
26. The citizen charter policy has improved upon the resolution/handling of customer complaints in the DVLA.				

The state of citizen/customer complaints and feedback mechanism towards the implementation of the Citizen Charter policy in the DVLA

27. Have you ever conceived the idea of making complaints about a disatisfied staff performance or standard of service received from the DVLA?   Yes [ ]   No [ ] **(if 'No', proceed to Q32)**

28. If yes, did you have access to any customer complaint office/unit in the DVLA to lodge the complaints?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]] **(if 'No', proceed to Q32)**

29. How would you rate the level of reception received at the customer complaint office/unit?

Very poor [ ]   Poor [ ]   Good [ ]   Very good [ ]   Excellent [ ]

30. Did you receive any feedback or acknowledgement from DVLA on the complaints made?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]   ] **(if 'No', proceed to Q32)**

31. If yes, how would you describe the timing of the feedback/acknowledgement received?

Not prompt [ ]   Prompt [ ]   Very prompt [ ]

32. How would you rate the DVLA in its responsiveness to the complaints/concerns of customers.   Very poor [ ]   Poor [ ]   Good [ ]   Very good [ ]

Excellent [ ]

33. What would you recommend to help improve upon the DVLA's services to the citizenry?

Thank you for participating in this research study. Have a good day.

Contact: 0548011885

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire for Staff of the FDA

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE EDUCATION

Preamble:

This study is conducted purposely to investigate whether the adoption of the Citizen Charter policy in the public service delivery in Ghana has yeilded dividends in terms of social accountability or it is just one of the usual administrative rhetorics. The Government of Ghana through the Public Sector Reform for Results Project (PSRRP, 2018-2023) has received World Bank sponsorship to improve upon the delivery of essential public services to the citizenry in 16 selected agencies, of which, the FDA is a part. The researcher is a final year Master of Philosophy (MPhil.) student in Political Science. As a functional staff of the FDA, I would be much grateful if you could assist by responding candidly to some few questions below which are designed to last for 20 minutes maximum. All information provided will be analysed for academic purposes amidst strict confidentiality and anonymity. Thanks for your cooperation in advance.

Please make a <u>tick</u> (√) in the applicable box

Bio-data

1. What is your gender?   Male [ ]   Female [ ]

2. What is your age range?   18-25 [ ]   26-35 [ ]   36-45 [ ]   46-55 [ ]   56-65 [ ]

3. What is your highest academic qualification?   Non-formal [ ]   Basic [ ]

Secondary [ ]   1st Degree [ ]   Postgraduate [ ]   other, please specify---------------

4. What is your current employee/staff status?   Casual [ ] Permanent [ ]

 Internship [ ]   National Service [ ]   Contract [ ]   other, please specify---------------

5. How long have you worked with the FDA? 0-2yrs [ ]   3-5yrs[ ] 6-9yrs[ ]

10-15yrs [ ] 16yrs and above [ ]

6. What is your current department/section/unit?---

7. How long have you been in this department? 0-2yrs [ ] 3-5yrs [ ] 6-9yrs [ ]

10-15yrs [ ] 16yrs and above [ ]

Level of capacity building towards implementation of the Citizen Charter

7. Are you aware of the existence of the Citizen Charter policy in Ghana?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

8. Do you have knowledge of the existence of a service charter in the FDA?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

9. Were you consulted for your opinion or invited to participate in the drafting of the Service Charter of the FDA?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

10. Would you say that the FDA tolerate or respect your opinion in crafting/developing its service charter?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

11. Has the FDA ever organized a seminar/workshop to educate you on the citizen/service charter policy?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

12. How often do the FDA organized training sessions to equip you with good customer service skills?   Not at all [ ]   Only once [ ]   Quite often [ ]   Very often [ ]

Strides made by government towards the institutionalisation of the Citizen Charter

13. Do you have knowledge of the existence of any law (Parliamentary Act) backing the implementation of the Citizen Charter policy in the FDA?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

14. If yes, please kindly state two (2) provisions of the Act

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15. How often do the FDA give you the opportunity to rate/assess the performance of any staff or department/unit?   Not at all [ ]   Only once [ ]   Quite often [ ]

Very often [ ]

16. Would you say any staff or department/unit of the FDA has ever been punished or rewarded based on the outcome of your performance ratings/assessments?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

Operationalization of the core tenets of the Citizen Charter in the FDA

17. Do you have knowledge of the existence of a charter mark system in the FDA to reward the staff or department/unit which delivered high standard services to clients? Yes [ ] No [ ]

18. How often do the FDA consult the customers/clients for their opinion on service standards ?   Not at all [ ]   Only once [ ]   Quite often [ ]   Very often [ ]

19. How would you rate the FDA on its tolerance to the opinions of the customers/clients on its available services and standards of delivery?   Very poor [ ] Poor [ ]   Good [ ]   Very good [ ]   Excellent [ ]

20. Would you say that customers/clients have the opportunity to make their choices on the standard of services to access at the FDA?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

The relationship between the Citizen Charter policy and Social Accountability
Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the following statements on the impacts of the citizen charter policy on social accountability in the FDA in the table using the four points Likert scale. All positive statements are coded as **1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Agree and 4=Strongly Agree.**

Statement	1	2	3	4
21. The citizen charter policy has improved upon access to information by customers/clients of the FDA				
22. The citizen charter policy has empowered the customers/clients to express their opinion on the service standards of the FDA				
23. The citizen charter policy has improved upon customer consultations/engagement in the FDA				
24. The citizen charter policy has made it possible for your opinion to be respected/tolerated by the FDA				
25. The citizen charter policy has made it possible for the FDA to be accountable to its customers/clients.				
26. The citizen charter policy has improved upon the standards of service delivery in the FDA.				
27. The citizen charter policy has improved upon the handling/resolution of customer complaints in the FDA.				

The state of citizen/customer complaints and feedback mechanisms towards the implementation of the Citizen Charter policy in the FDA

28. Is there any dedicated/known customer/client complaints unit/office in the FDA? Yes [ ]   No [ ]

29. If yes, would you say that the unit/office is functional? Yes [ ]   No [ ]

30. Have you ever recieved a complaint from a customer/client about the standards of service delivery in the FDA?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

31. If yes, how did you handled the complaints made by the customer/client? Ignored it [ ]   Re-directed to the complaint unit [ ]   Forwarded to the complaint

unit [ ]   Used my discretion to resolve it [ ]   other, please specify----------------------
------

32. Would you say that the FDA allows for the use of discretionary power by its staff to resolve or handle customer/client complaints at the point of occurance?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

33. How would you rate the FDA in its general responsiveness to the complaints of customers/clients. Very poor [ ]   Poor [ ]   Good [ ]   Very good [ ] Excellent [ ]

34. What would you recommend to help improve upon the FDA's services to the citizenry?

Thank you for participating in this research study. Have a good day.

Contact: 0548011885

APPENDIX C

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE EDUCATION

Preamble:

This study is conducted purposely to investigate whether the adoption of the Citizen Charter policy in the public service delivery in Ghana has yeilded dividends in terms of social accountability or it is just one of the usual administrative rhetorics. The Government of Ghana through the Public Sector Reform for Results Project (PSRRP, 2018-2023) has received World Bank sponsorship to improve upon the delivery of essential public services to the citizenry in 16 selected agencies including the DVLA and FDA. The researcher is a final year Master of Philosophy (MPhil.) student in Political Science. As an expert informant, I would be much grateful if you could assist by responding candidly to some few questions below. The interview session is designed to last for 45 minutes maximum. All information provided will be analysed for academic purposes amidst strict confidentiality and anonymity. Thanks for your cooperation in advance.

Bio-data
i. What is your gender?   Male [ ]   Female [ ]

ii. What is your age range?   25-35 [ ]   36-45 [ ]   46-55 [ ]   56-65 [ ]

66-75 [ ]

iii. What is your current occupation/portfolio? Please specify----------------------------

Thematic questions

1. The Kufour government introduced the Citizen Charter policy in October 2007 as a way of reinventing the public sector for efficient service delivery to the citizenry. How would you describe the capacity building in terms of awareness creation and training that have gone on towards its adoption and implementation.

2. In your opinion, what strides have the government made towards the institutionalisation of the citizen charter policy in the public service agencies.

3. Would you say the introduction of the citizen charter policy has improved upon the standard of public service delivery in government agencies to the citizenry? And why?

4. Has there been any significant changes in the general responsiveness to the concerns or complaints of clients/customers by public service agencies as result of the adoption of the citizen charter policy? And why?

5. What are your thoughts on the impact of the citizen charter policy on social accountability in public service agencies.

6. Please what are your final words in relation to social accountability in public service agencies as well as recommendations for an improved service delivery?

APPENDIX D

Introductory Letter

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE EDUCATION
✉ P. O. Box 25, Winneba, Ghana   ✈ psed@uew.edu.gh
☎ +233 (050) 1434035
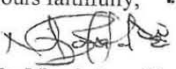
18ᵗʰ May, 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: SAMUEL MOJOM

This is to introduce to you **Mr. Samuel Mojom** from the Department of Political Science Education, University of Education, Winneba. He is undertaking a study on the topic: **The Adoption of the Citizen Charter Policy in the Public Service delivery in Ghana: A tool for Social Accountability or mere Administrative Rhetoric.**

This researcher need your help by way of volunteering information on this subject to enable him to complete his research. Please, the research is purely for academic purposes and all information is treated as confidential.

Kindly give him the necessary assistance he may need.

Yours faithfully,   DPT.OF POLITICAL SCIENCE EDUC
                          UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION
                               P. O. BOX 25
                                 WINNEBA
Ms. Magdalene Nyarko
For: Ag. HOD, Political Science