The Level of Trust Between International Election Observers and Incumbents in Unconsolidated Democracies

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THE LEVEL OF TRUST BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVERS AND INCUMBENTS IN UNCONSOLIDATED DEMOCRACIES.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

By

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY Rogers Mtui ENTITLED The Level of Trust between International Election Observers and Incumbents in Unconsolidated Democracies BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

A great deal of research focuses on the question of why incumbents invite IEOs but do not explicitly explored the root cause of why cheating in elections occurs despite the presence of IEOs. The occurrence when incumbents in young democracies invite international election observers (IEOs) and nevertheless cheat in elections has not been fully explored. This research advances the following expectation: incumbents seeking international benefits and whose electoral institutions are not fully mature are more likely to invite IEOs and cheat in an election. This is due to the ability of the incumbents who are seeking for the reelection to change electoral rules so as to be reelected, be able to influence the national electoral board to act in a partisan way, ability to manipulate voter registration, and lastly, the ability of the incumbents to maneuver with the IEOs activities. The findings of this research has open a door for researchers to look at the problem of election manipulation from a different angle. Furthermore, it will help IEOs and NGOs trying to promote democracy have a better understanding of the context in young-democracies.

Keywords: Democracy; autocracy, International election observers, geopolitics; international community; Fraudulent election; Ghana; Israel; Zimbabwe; Egypt
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUEOM</td>
<td>African Union Election Observation Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARICOM</td>
<td>Caribbean Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Carter Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEC</td>
<td>Central Commission of Conduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEO</td>
<td>Commonwealth Handbook on Election Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODEO</td>
<td>Coalition of Domestic Election Observers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG</td>
<td>Commonwealth Observation Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS</td>
<td>Congressional Research Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSCE</td>
<td>Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EISA</td>
<td>Electoral Institute for Sustainable Development in Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU EOM</td>
<td>European Union Election Observation Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRW</td>
<td>Human Rights Watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA</td>
<td>International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEOs</td>
<td>International Election Observers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGO</td>
<td>Intergovernmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>IHRLG</td>
<td>International Human Rights Law Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
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<td>IOs</td>
<td>International Organizations</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRI</td>
<td>International Republican Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LHA</td>
<td>Lancaster House Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDC</td>
<td>Movement for Democratic Change</td>
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<td>MFA</td>
<td>Macro Financial Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Democratic Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDI</td>
<td>National Democratic Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEA</td>
<td>National Election Authority of the Republic of Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEC</td>
<td>National Election Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-governmental organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>New Patriotic Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organization of American States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE/ODIHR</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Proportional Representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVTs</td>
<td>Parallel Voter Tabulation System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCO</td>
<td>Shanghai Cooperation Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>STM</td>
<td>Short-Term Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNSSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCC</td>
<td>World Council of Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZANU-PF</td>
<td>Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front</td>
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Chapter One

General Introduction

Introduction

One of the most puzzling questions about inviting International Election Observers (IEOs) is not necessarily why incumbents invite IEOs, but rather, why invite someone to interfere in state’s domestic politics? In other words, give up state’s sovereignty and invite someone to judge your domestic elections? Furthermore, what factors influence inviting IEOs? For example, will an incumbent still invite IEOs even if they intend to cheat in an election? Another interesting question is how incumbent choose which IEOs need to be invited. This study investigates how the existence of various IEOs, their inconsistent behavior, are perceived by incumbents. The study has also investigate how incumbents respond to IEOs in either compliance or fake compliance.

Furthermore, it has focused on incumbents who invite IEOs and cheat, invite IEO’s and not cheat, do not invite IEO’s and not cheat, and do not invite IEO’s and cheat. For this reason, elections within Zimbabwe, Ghana, Israel, and Egypt have been explored. This chapter provides a detailed and comprehensive overview of the context for the primary research question of this study: Why do incumbents invite IEOs and nevertheless cheat?

Background

The practice of the observation of elections in a sovereign state goes back to 1857 when the European Commission observed elections in Moldavia and Wallachia (Jianu, 2011). Later, the practice of observing elections was adopted when the United Nations (UN) was formed in 1945. Even then, IEOs assisted only transitional governments, especially at the end of colonial rule (1950’s-70’s), with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and after the Cold War, in governments that transitioned from authoritarian rule to democracy. Thus, before the 1990s the practice of IEOs was not regarded as the international norm, and only countries that were in transition were observed.
After the Cold War, states started to invite IEOs more frequently to signal to the international community that they were a democracy. The practice spread so quickly that by the 2000’s, more than 80% of countries that held competitive elections invited IEOs (Kelley, 2008). Therefore, by the 1990’s, states that did not invite IEOs were perceived as conducting fraudulent elections (Kelley, 2008).

Once international election observation became an international norm, inviting IEOs became a signal to distinguish who was a part of the ingroup or outgroup in a democratic block. Powerful international actors practiced democratic values as one of the preferences on how state actors should behave. One way to show compliance with democratic values is through the invitation of IEOs. For example, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Organization of American States (OAS) started to observe elections not just in their region but across the globe. Also, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were formed to promote democracy in sovereign states. Thus, not only did international election observation become an international norm, but there was a proliferation of governmental and nongovernmental actors to promote democracy.

A great deal of research on international norms and domestic politics has been conducted and draws one’s attention to how IEOs are widely accepted as a universal standard for establishing free and fair elections (Kelly, 2008; Hyde, 2011; Cruz, 2005). Rationalists believe that IEOs are accepted as an international norm because societal actors and politicians receive an incentive (Hyde, 2011). In contrast, constructivists believe the IEOs are accepted as an international norm because there is a sharing of understanding that constitutes actor identities and interests (Kelly, 2008; Fennimore, 1996).
A central proposition of this thesis is that both schools of thought are right; norms sometimes constrain and sometimes construct. Rationalists and constructivists can explain why states will compromise their sovereignty and invite outsiders to interfere in domestic politics, specifically in a domestic election. Although these approaches are advantageous for explaining why one would choose to invite IEOs, they hinder the discussions on why one would choose to invite IEOs and, nevertheless, cheat in an election.

A third approach seeks to explain why governments invite IEOs to observe elections they plan to steal (Mukhtorovu & Foroughi, 2017; Donno, 2001; Kelly, 2010). This school of thought focuses on observers’ affiliation to the state and their influence on regional power. The state that invited IEOs, in this instance, was a post-communist state, where Russia, as a regional power, had much influence on the state. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), who both have an affiliation with Russia, gave a positive report to a flawed election in Tajikistan, which was contrary to the findings of the OSCE and other NGOs, who did not have affiliations with Russia. The attitudes and perceptions of the CIS and SCO toward the Tajikistan election were that they understood the culture and traditions of the country better than the OSCE. Thus, for years, the incumbent took advantage of this situation to invite the CIS, SCO and OSCE and cheat in elections due to the support he received from Russia (Mukhtorovu & Foroughi, 2017).

Evidence shows that IEOs that are intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) are less likely to condemn a flawed election when compared against NGOs due to IGOs’s evaluation to be constraint by theirs stats’s interest (Kelly, 2010). Thus, incumbents who intend to cheat in an election, can invite only IGOs or both IGOs and NGOs and benefit from their contradictory reports to help spin the criticism. Double standards are one way that the norm of IEOs is unable to
constraint the behavior of some incumbents regarding elections. When IGOs punish some norm-violating states and not others, those who do not get punished due to their geopolitical position or because of fear of post-election violence, encourage those not punished to continue with their behavior (Donno, 2001).

The researcher’s comparative analysis of four cases contrasts with the approaches above. This approach is built on the assumption that: First, there are incumbents who do not invite IEOs and still conduct free and fair elections. Second, there are incumbents who invite IEOs and do not cheat. Third, there are incumbents who do not invite IEOs and cheat in an election. Fourth, there are incumbents who invite IEOs and yet cheat in an election. Thus, this approach is going to explain why these four scenarios exist.

Statement of the Problem and Research Question

On May 7, 1989, Panama’s Electoral Tribunal nullified the results of the election, which was still underway, on the basis that foreign observers had a goal of promoting the idea of electoral fraud (Branigin, 1989). The nullification led to violence and protest from opposition groups. The IEOs backed the opposition’s contention that it won the elections by a 3-to-1 margin (Branigin, 1989). The US used the negative reports of IEOs as one, among many other reasons, to invade Panama, overthrow Gen. Manuel Antonia Noriega and help the new president be sworn into office (Hersh, 1986). Scholars of international law argue that this “unilateral military intervention” by a powerful state could create fear among smaller states that election monitoring will lead to a more “Panama-style” of post-election intervention (Franck, 1992). Thus, the involvement of the US in domestic politics in Panama, based on the IEOs’ reports, should have sent a signal to incumbents intending to cheat and still choosing to invite IEOs. Why do incumbents continue to invite IEOs and nevertheless cheat? Since it is well known that control over the Panama Canal was in the
interest of the US, do powerful actors tend to enforce international norms based on their preference and foreign policy? Are IEOs that are linked to powerful states, endorsing the incumbent who is preferred by those powerful states?

Inviting IEOs is the choice of a state; without a formal invitation, IEOs cannot monitor elections (Code of Conduct for IEOs, 2005). Research conducted by Hyde shows that from 2000 to 2006, more than 80% of countries that were holding competitive elections invited IEOs despite the increased number of negative reports from IEOs (Hyde, 2011). Negative reports from this time triggered post-election violence and domestic uprisings, reductions in foreign aid, exclusion from international forums, and sometimes sanctions by international institutions or powerful states (Donno, 2013; Kelly, 2008; von Borzyskowski, 2019). Nevertheless, not inviting IEOs can lead the international community to shame states and label incumbents as cheaters. The absence of IEOs in the 2009 Iranian national election amounted to criticism from world leaders (for example, US President Barack Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel). World leaders based to some extent their arguments of unfair election practices on the absence of IEOs (Hyde, 2011). Thus, why do so many incumbents still invite IEOs despite some being caught in the act of cheating during an election and receiving negative election reports? Why do incumbents want the endorsement that they have conducted a free and fair election from IEOs when they have no intention of conducting a free and fair election?

One would expect that once a norm becomes widely accepted, resistance to its compliance is minimum and the commitment is high. At the same time, there is an expectation that the greater the number of norm advocates (foreign states, norm activists, other international organizations), the better the implementation of that norm. However, regarding the non-binding norm of free and fair elections, the result is the opposite of the expectation. From the 1990's –2000's the number of
states who invited IEOs significantly increased and at the same time there was a proliferation of both IGO and NGOs who worked extensively as norm advocates to ensure there was compliance with the non-binding international law of conducting free and fair elections. Surprisingly, many cheating techniques in an election evolved during this time frame. As a result, the number of flawed elections around the globe significantly increased (Donno, 2013). Thus, the expectation was to see more fair and free elections than fraudulent ones with the non-binding norm, but the opposite was observed. Does the presence of IEOs help incumbents develop a certain resistance or immunity to pressure from non-binding international norms?

One would expect that once an incumbent has chosen to invite IEOs, then there will be a free and fair election. Furthermore, one would expect that IEOs are impartial and that they will deter fraudulent elections and uphold the principle of free and fair elections. Despite the presence of IEOs, some cases confirm that incumbents were able to cheat in an election and get away with it. For example, in Armenia (2007), police prevented opposition parties from campaigning. In Albania (1996), the parliamentary election votes cast for the opposition were altered with pre-marked ballots for the ruling party. In the Dominican Republic (1994), names were deleted from the official voter registry during President Joaquin Balaguer’s election to win the re-election, and the list goes on and on. Thus, there is growing frustration among scholars of international norms on free and fair elections that norms are regularly violated with impunity (Krasner, 1999).

In comparison with the above examples where incumbents were able to cheat in an election and get away with it, there are cases where incumbents could not get away with cheating. Negative reports from IEOs sparked post-election violence in Panama (1989), Cameroon and Mauritania (1992), Togo (1998), Nigeria (1999), Ethiopia (2005), Kenya (2007), Ivory Coast (2010), and Gabon (2015) (Borzyskowski, 2019). In other countries, negative reports from IEOs resulted in
mass protests that led to the downfall of the regime, for example, Philippines (1986), Serbia (2000), Georgia (2004), Ukraine (2004), and Kyrgyzstan (2005). Therefore, it is worth asking, why are there inconsistencies in the IEOs reporting process of a free and fair election? Why do IEOs sometimes report free and fair elections while other times report fraudulent elections when there is cheating in both instances?

One would expect that IGOs would be more likely to condemn fraudulent elections than NGOs. IGOs have the means to punish states that violate the norms through sanctions, shaming, or isolation from the international community, whereas NGOs have limited resources and power to punish states that conduct fraudulent elections. Research suggests that some IEOs are biased and sometimes apply double standards in their judgment of an election (Kelly, 2010).

There are four shortcomings from the above explanations regarding the norm’s implementation, compliance and enforcement on inviting IEOs. First, the IEOs’ invitation has become an international norm rather than the conduct of free and fair elections. Second, the multiplicity of IEOs has led to inconsistency, double standards, and contradictory reports. Third, the norm of inviting IEOs is non-binding due to the ambiguity of the tools of enforcement when compliance with the norm fails. Fourth, despite the expectation that regional IEOs will be better actors in enforcing this non-binding norm, there is variation in how regional actors condemn or praise a flawed election. Thus, for a state to conduct free and fair elections, something more is needed apart from inviting IEOs.

For a long time, the literature on international norms, especially non-binding norms, relied on constructivist theory. Constructivists believe that a state complies with norms because they believe in them, and they believe the norms are legitimate in constructing an identity. However, there are states who invite IEOs but do not appear to believe in the norm of a fair and free election. The
question then becomes, why would an incumbent cheat in an election in which they have invited IEOs to observe if they believe in the norm and think that the norm is legitimate?

What factors, then, determine an incumbent’s choice to invite or not to invite IEOs? On what basis do incumbents prefer certain IEOs over others, and what are the reasons for the preference? Does it matter if the election is observed by IGOs, NGOs, or a combination of both? What negative impact do domestic institutions play on norm compliance? This thesis uses Zimbabwe, Ghana, Israeli, and Egypt as case studies to answer the above questions.

Literature Review

The literature on IEOs can be divided into three parts: First, the emergence of the norm and why states choose to invite IEOs; second, the behavior of IEOs, namely biases, double standards, and political preferences, and third the impact of IEOs on domestic politics.

In the first category, scholars focused on election observers in the Americas (North America and South America), suggesting that the idea of inviting IEOs emerged here. Cruz argues that the constitutional structures of the Americas alone can account for the emergence of IEOs (Cruz, 2005). Thus, Cruz believes that states from Americas have stipulations that provides room for inviting IEOs. The weakness with Cruz’s argument is that international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) who monitor elections could operate outside the Americas without great difficulty (Kelly, 2008). Reports from observers' groups show evidence of elections outside the Americas, including cases from Malaysia in 1982, Zimbabwe in 1985, and the Philippines in 1986. Cruz’s argument contradicts the fact that the US, as part of the Americas, has several states that enacted laws prohibiting IEOs from accessing their elections.

Moreover, Kelley (2008) argues that Latin American countries did not advocate for IEOs, fearing that IEOs could lead to the “Panama-style” of unilateral military innervations and a new
kind of colonialism. Thus, the idea that the emergence of IEOs was a result of its diffusion from Latin America is contrary to the existing evidence. However, the idea Cruz raised about constitution structures is very important in explaining why an incumbent may have the power to cheat in an election and remain unchallenged by the domestic institutions.

Two of the most recent studies examining the emergence of the norm, inviting IEOs, use different approaches. These two studies (Kelly, 2008; Hyde, 2011) are foundational to this current study. The study by Kelley adopts ‘the norm lifecycle’ model by Finnemore and Sikkink, while the study by Hyde builds its argument in economic theory relating to signaling and international norms (Kelley, 2008; Hyde 2011). Finnemore and Sikkink theorize that within the evolution and influence of norms there is a norm lifecycle. They claim that norms enter a three-part patterned cycle (Norm Emergence, Norm Cascades, and Norm Internalization) with special behavior logics controlling each part of the cycle (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998:895-896).

In her theory on the emergence of IEOs, Kelly concluded that causal mechanisms have led to inviting IEOs to become a norm. She claims that norm entrepreneurs advocated for the practice of election observation caused it to spread and lobbied powerful states to pressure non-complying states to change their behavior (Kelly, 2008). Contrary to Kelley’s explanation of activist through entrepreneurship, the general theory proposed by Finnemore and Sikkink (Hyde, 2011) argues that motivation for the initial spread and acceptance of international norms resulted from the incentives of individual states to signal that they are democratic and avoid being labeled as “pseudo-democrats” by influential international actors (Hyde, 2011:18). Thus, the two prominent studies (Hyde, 2011:18, Kelly,2008) on IEOs elucidates the motives for a state or incumbent to invite IEOs, but they do not answer the question of why incumbents initiate invitations to IEOs and then choose to cheat in an election.
Most of the literature seeking to answer the question, what motives a state or incumbent to invite IEOs, ascribed the answer to the stigma that is posed to incumbents if they did not invite IEOs. There is a belief that if an incumbent chooses not to invite IEOs then the intention to cheat was obviously present (Kelley, 2008; Hyde, 2011). The stigma imposed upon those who did not comply with the norm of inviting IEOs seems to be very important in explaining what motivates states or incumbents to choose to invite or not to invite IEOs. The imposed stigma also explains why a state like Russia, who is not in favor of inviting IEOs and not looking for material compensation, still invites IEOs for elections.

Most of the literature studying regime changes and foreign aid supports the idea of incentives as a motive to influence democratic values. The literature review suggested that donor states’ preferences are attached to foreign aid given. Hence recipient states must show that they have those preferences in mind as they hold democratic elections (Dollar & Alesina, 2000; Bermeo, 2011). Dollar and Alesina argue that Nordic countries give aid to countries with good institutions and openness, France gives aid to former colonies who are tied by political alliance, while the US pattern of aid is vastly influenced by their interests in the Middle East (Dollar & Alesina, 2000). The idea of incentives as a motive for incumbents to invite IEOs is more logical than pressure from strong actors and entrepreneurs. First, national elections are among matters which are essential to the domestic jurisdiction of any state (Article 2(7) of UN Charter, 1949). Second, to invite IEOs is a choice for states and incumbents and not a requirement since sovereignty principles protect states from the interference of foreign actors in domestic matters (Hyde, 2011). Most importantly, the economic factor of receiving foreign gifts is a driving force for norm compliance or non-compliance regarding inviting IEOs.
Do the behaviors of IEOs impact the choice and behavior of incumbents who invite them? The literature analyzing the behavior of IEOs does not directly explain ‘why incumbents choose to invite IEOs and cheat in an election.’ This does not mean the literature is not important. The literature analyzing the behavior of IEOs is an important source in formulating hypotheses for this research. The main argument in the literature is that international organizations and transnational actors have political associations and preferences beyond their formal missions (Kelly, 2009). Most IGOs are shown to be constrained by the politics and preferences of their national states. As a result, IGO and regional IEOs, in some elections, judged the results of the elections of the inviting states based on their own states’ foreign policy and preferences. In turn, these IEOs were more likely to endorse a flawed election than NGOs (Peou, 1998; Donno, 2010; Nielson, Hyde & Kelly 2019). Evidence also showed that different standards were used in judging an election based on the geographical position of a state. For example, IEOs were more likely to endorse elections that were below the standard of a free and fair election in Africa as compared to Asia (Dodsworth, 2018). Shannon(2017; pg 7) argues that “If norm enforcement is inconsistent, the socialization process will suffer as well.” Thus, to greater extent the inconsistent, double standard and variation in judgments among IEOs is a major factor that could result in states inviting IEOs and still cheating in elections. Do incumbents who intend to cheat selectively invite IEOs based on how they perceive the IEOs bias? If IGOs are more likely to endorse flawed elections, as compared to international NGOs, do incumbents who intend to cheat tend to invite IGOs? The current literature analyzing behavior, politics, and preferences of IEOs does not answer the question ‘why do some incumbents invite IEO and still cheat, but it does indicate that incumbents might use the behavior of IEOs as an excuse to spin criticism when caught cheating in an election.
The most recent literature analyzing the impact of IEOs’ reports on domestic politics can be divided into two groups: studies that view the presence of IEOs as a solidification of authoritarian rule and studies that view IEOs as a catalyst for post-election mass protest or post-election violence. The first group argues that the presence of multiple IEOs, including those with the intent to push back democratic values (those who view democracy as western culture) and IEOs who intend to promote democratic value, diminishes the influence of those who want to promote democracy (Foroughi and Mukhtarova, 2017). One study uses the case of Tajikistan to show the causal mechanism for inviting IEOs and cheating in elections. The study showcases Tajikistan, a state previously cautious of IEOs, specifically the OSCE. Tajikistan was initially motivated to invite the IEO and then began utilizing OSCE recommendations for improvement to their democratic elections because 58% of all aid allocations received by Central Asia came from the European Commission Humanitarian Office, which held the norm of inviting IEOs (Foroughi and Mukhtarova, 2017). Later, when the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organizations (SCO) were invited and subsequently endorsed a flawed election contradicting the OSCE, Russia began to criticize and blame the OSCE for being biased against post-communist countries. Subsequently, inviting IEOs and cheating in an election appeared to become the norm in Tajikistan. Here, the literature proposes using “carrot on a stick” (provide aid but set some pre-conditions which must be met before the recipient acquires the aid) rather than unconditional love as a motive for inviting IEOs.

The set of studies argues that most IEOs are not condemning flawed elections because of the fear of post-election violence and mass-protest (Fisher, 2013; Daxecker, 2012; von Borzyskowsk, 2019). These studies shed light on why an incumbent would choose to invite IEOs and cheat in an election. However, due to the proliferation of IEOs with varying behavior, motivations, and
preferences for declaring a free and fair election, a proper assessment of which IEOs will endorse fraudulent elections and who will not be needed alongside a proper assessment which highlights what motivates incumbents to invite particular IEOs. Do incumbents who invite IEOs and cheat in an election assess the behavior of IEOs before they invite them? If so, what criterion do they use?

There are claims that sometimes an IEOs’ connection with donor countries can lead to inconsistencies in their monitoring of various elections (Fisher, 2013). The result of this inconsistency provides room for inviting IEOs and cheating in an election. This was evident in the Uganda election of 2011. Museveni’s regime supported US foreign policy, which included fighting a terror group (Al-Shabab) in Somalia. This is one of the examples provided by the author confirming the IEOs’ practice of ignoring a fraudulent election. Fisher claims that the internal politics of the donor community and misplaced perception of the recipient of aid, led donors to make inconsistent and ineffective steps to monitor and declare an election free and fair (Fisher, 2013). If the claim made by the author is valid, then there is a need to look at the relationship between IEOs and donor countries and how this relationship can influence the decision of the IEOs. This piece of evidence will open a door to explain why incumbents invite IEOs and, nevertheless, cheat in elections.

When IGOs, international NGOs, and IEOs are funded by states, then their approach to judging elections may reflect the foreign policies of the states that they are affiliated with. Therefore, incumbents who invite these IGOs, INGOs, and IEOs should understand that they might make decisions that align with the foreign policy of the affiliated states. Literature on foreign policy and international norms indicated that there is an interaction between a state’s foreign policy and the norm for inviting IEOs (Shannon, 2017). Although the literature on IEOs has not discussed a causal mechanism to fake compliance by domestic actors, the literature on foreign policy and
international norms has argued that “foreign policies that affect state sovereignty and lack normative justification can lead to the degree of fake compliance” (Noutcheva, 2007). Noutcheva studied European Union (EU) foreign policies and how the Balkan States perceived them. The Balkans understood that the foreign policies and conditions imposed on them by the EU were contrary to their principle of sovereignty, on the other hand, they also understood that without showing the EU some compliance with their election, they would lose support and aid. As a result, fake compliance on the part of the Balkans was a way to send signals to the EU that they concur with the EU’s conditions that were imposed on them (Noutcheva, 2007). This explanation sheds light on fake compliance when incumbents chooses to invite IEOs and nevertheless choose to cheat in an election. The study conducted in the Balkans regarding foreign policy, is similar to the norm of inviting IEOs for those states which are seeking foreign aid, and it highlights the impact of foreign policy from powerful states upon domestic politics. However, the Balkans study differs from this study in that domestic elections are a matter of state sovereignty, and states have a choice with regard to inviting or not inviting IEOs. Moreover, Noutcheva concluded that the perceived lack of legitimacy opens up political space for domestic actors to contest elected positions taken by the EU on normative grounds (Noutcheva, 2007). Does inviting IEOs and cheating in an election demonstrate “fake compliance” or “norm contention?”

The motivating factors that lead incumbents to engage in the behavior of inviting IEOs are commonly linked to material interest and the stigma imposed upon incumbents who did not choose to invite IEOs. When choosing not to invite IOEs, the incumbent is often viewed by the international audience as someone intending to cheat in an election (Kelley, 2008). However, the decision maker’s (incumbent’s) response to international norms depends on their power, interests, personality, and many additional variables (Shannon & Keller, 2007). Other studies argue that
“States do not necessarily accept stigma, but they act on the basis of the particular categories assigned to them” (Adler, 2014). States who had a prominent geopolitical status may have opted to invite IEOs and cheat in the election because they knew they could get away with the cheating, or they may have opted not to invite IEOs at all, and no one in the international community would have questioned their decision or stigmatized them (Donno, 2010). In the literature, there was an agreement among scholars that the geopolitical consciousness of a state influenced the foreign policy behavior of a state (Condulescu, 2009). Thus, states behave in the international structure according to their geopolitical consciousness. The question which arises is ‘what strategy will an incumbent, who faces stigma if they do not invite IEOs and has no geopolitical status advantage, use when there is an election? Adler (2014) argues that some states will wear their stigma as “a badge of honor,” which means the state will not care about condemnation from international audiences, while other states will try to avoid being stigmatized. States that want to avoid being stigmatized by the international community will often invite IEOs. However, if an incumbent is not popular in the domestic arena, they are confronted with more choices in regard to inviting IEOs. Thus if an incumbent is more likely to lose an election than win, the only clear path to win the election is by cheating. Thus, the choice left for an incumbent is to invite IEOs who will not interfere with the preferred method of cheating. For example, if the incumbent intends to use pre-election manipulation, he will invite short-term IEOs who will focus mainly on ballot box manipulation.

Incumbents who choose to invite IEOs and cheat in an election are risk-takers. The theory that seeks to explain the nature of risk assessment and the dynamic of risk tendency, with regard to this research, is a psychological model developed by Tversky and Kahneman (Tversky and Kahneman, 1991). The significance of this theory is its ability to both explain and predict risk tendency, even
under conditions of uncertainty. In general, this theory predicts that people tend to be cautious when they are in a good position (gains) and more likely to take the risk when they are in a bad position (losses). Thus, incumbents who are confident in winning an election without cheating are in a good position (winning and, thus, risk-averse), and incumbents who cannot win an election without cheating are in a poor position (losing and thus, a risk-taker).

The vast majority of the literature on democratic transition and consolidation agrees that when democracy is not “the only game in town” incumbents will invent various undemocratic tactics to win in an election (Linz & Stepan, 1996, Kammias & Sarantides, 2016). When there are clear negotiations between consolidated democratic states (often the donors when it comes to aid related to democratic promotion) and those in the process of creating a consolidated democracy (often the recipients of aid), the behavior of incumbents, as well as the organizations that promote democracy are important to the negotiations. Thus, most conditionalities that are negotiated between a democratic consolidated state and other institutions or states (those looking to acquire incentives) aim to transform the structure of a state and the attitude and behavior of incumbents (Pridham, 2009). An incumbent can either be a constraints challenger or a constraints respecter in both the domestic structure and/or the international structure (Keller, 2005). There is agreement among scholars that those structures of a state (electoral rules and constitutional structures) work to constrain incumbents who intend to manipulate the electoral results (Kunicová & Ackerman, 2005). Thus, the lack of structure at the state level, those that can constrain an incumbent, become a loophole that allows an incumbent the choice and means to cheat in an election. Based on the above discussion, this study has examined, whether the inconsistency of IEOs’ reports between IGOs, NGOs, and regional IEOs is a loophole for those incumbents intending to cheat in an election. The study has also examine whether the domestic structure and the incumbent leadership
traits can predict whether an incumbent is more likely to cheat in an election. The main question here is this: Is an incumbent constrained by their domestic structure or by IEOs in their choice on whether to cheat or not to cheat when IEOs are invited? Specifically, this research has try to understand the causal mechanism for “fake compliance” (inviting IEOs and cheating in an election).

**Theory and Proposed Hypotheses**

This study advances the theory that *the existence of multiple IEOs and their inconsistency on verdicts in elections allows an incumbent who is not constrained by their domestic structure to selectively invite IEOs and cheat in an election*. This theory is built on the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of any state by respecting states’ elections. Based on this principle, a state can choose whether to invite IEOs to observe their election and choose which IEOs they want to invite.

For the theory to work, four hypotheses are discussed in this section. These hypotheses are: **H1**: An incumbent who is a risk-taker, whose state has weak institutions and who seeks international benefits through demonstration of democratic election, will selectively invite the IEOs and nevertheless cheat in an election.

A risk-taker incumbent will make the risky decision to invite IEOs while challenging weak institutions of the state due to the lack of strong electoral rules that constrain incumbents from cheating. At the same time, constitutional structures constrain an incumbent from misusing the power granted by the constitution in order to win the election. Sheffer and Loewen (2019) describe the confidence of leaders in times of re-election using the term risk-taker behavior, stating that overconfidence is associated with the willingness to make risky decisions. Thus, incumbents who
are not popular domestically but are overconfident in their re-electability due to their autocratic nature in their leadership, will make a risky decision to invite IEOs and cheat in the election.

Pre-election fraudulence is more likely to be observed by longtime observers rather than short-time observers. Peou (1998) shows that the International Republican Institute (IRI) and National Democratic Institute (NDI) have been in Cambodia since 1992. Their assessment of the 1998 election was not only based on election day observations but also on what happened prior to the day of the election (Peou, 1998). Kelly’s (2010) research, including ten different cases, found that IGOs are nearly twice as likely to endorse elections compared to International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs). Thus, an incumbent who intends to cheat in an election is more likely to restrict INGOs who are primarily long-term observers to take advantage of short-term observers who are mostly IGO. If the incumbent sees the regional IEOs as ones who can endorse the election, then there is a chance to choose to invite mostly reginal IEOs including from the incumbents region (Foroughi & Muhtorova (2017) demonstrated that Tajikistan could use the positive reports from regional observers (CIS and SCO) to deflect the negative report from OSCE. Thus, an incumbent can use a positive report from IEOs to criticize the negative reports that are given by other IEOs.

**H2**: An incumbent who is a risk-averse, whose state has strong institutions but who seeks international benefit, will invite IEOs and not cheat in an election.

Most states whose institutions restrain anyone from cheating in an election are more likely to invite IEOs and not cheat. Kelly (2008) suggested that invitations to IEOs are primarily a result of domestic groups placing pressure on their government to invite outside observers (Kelly, 2008). In contrast, Kunicová and Ackerman (2005) insisted that constitutional rules and constitutional structures can influence the level of corruption in an election directly. On the other hand, states that received aid from international donors based on democratic transition elections will have little
to no choice but to invite IEOs. Alesina and Dollar (2000) show that donors increased aid to newly transitioning democracies to help them maintain democracy. This suggests that a state that has transitioned to democracy will continue the effort to show that they are a true democracy through the invitation of IEOs, and they will not cheat in an election.

**H3** An incumbent who is risk-averse, whose country has special status in the international community but is constrained by the electoral rule and state institutions, will not invite IEOs and not cheat in an election.

Some incumbents are constrained by their domestic environment and hence see inviting IEOs as a threat, especially to their national sovereignty, and therefore, will opt not to invite IEOs. Keller (2005) suggested that leaders typically assess their domestic environment before responding to the international norm. Most of these states that chose not to invite IEOs have something that makes them important to the international community: geographical location, history, resources or relationship to a world superpower. If the domestic structure constrains the incumbent in such states, then the incumbent will not cheat in an election.

**H4**: An incumbent who is a risk-taker, whose country has a special status in the international community and who is not constraint by their state's institutions, will not invite IEOs and cheat in an election.

Hypothesis 4 includes states with the same characteristics as in hypothesis 3, except that their domestic structure provides room for incumbents to challenge the rules and cheat in an election.

**Table 1. Hypothesis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>H1 - Selectively invite IEOs and cheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>H2 - Invite IEOs and not cheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>H3 - Not invite IEOs and not cheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>H4 - Not invite IEOs and cheat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table designed by researcher (2022)
Significance of the Study

This study examines the causal mechanism of fake compliance in response to the international norm of inviting IEOs, through the prism of perceptions by incumbents of the IEOs behavior and preferences. It seeks to understand the behavior of the incumbents who invite IEOs and cheat in an election, as well as, understand how the behavior and preference of international organizations who seek to promote democracy through election observation facilitate this fake compliance of the international norm. The study also makes a case for widening the debate on international norms and domestic structures. While the study will contribute to the literature on international norms, foreign policy, international organizations, and democratic promotion, it will also link the study of international relations with comparative politics. This study will utilize comparative approaches to see how domestic structures constraint an incumbent who violates non-binding international norms. The interaction between IEOs and domestic actors involves diplomacy and negotiation since non-binding norms enforcements require diplomacy. IEOs monitor whether the laws of a country hosting an election are violated, and at the same time, the international norms of free and fair elections are implemented. Thus, this research will contribute to the literature on diplomacy, negotiation, and foreign policy. Therefore, this study will contribute to the literature on how non-state actors play a significant role in IR in diplomacy and negotiation. Literature on IEOs and their interactions with domestic elections have exposed biases, double standards, and inconsistencies in IEOs reports. However, it has not explicitly explored the danger that is posed by that inconsistency to emerging democracies. This research will investigate this danger and hence contribute to the literature. The study will also benefit regional organizations, such as the European Union Election Observation Mission (EUEOM), African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM), Organization of American States (OAS), The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human
Rights, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR) and the Arab League as it points out the need for cooperation among regional actors to eliminate the inconsistency between IEOs which poses a danger to democracy.

Limitation of the study

This research will focus on states that conduct elections periodically, states that are trying to practice competitive elections, and unconsolidated democracies. The assumption here is that consolidated democracies have strong institutions that constrain incumbents who intend to cheat in an election. This study will also limit itself to four cases: Zimbabwe, Ghana, Israel, and Egypt. The researcher was also constrained in finding a state that practices democratic elections, does not invite IEOs, and not cheat in an election and thus chose Israel because it does fit into this category. Also, Israel might look like a consolidated democracy, but it was selected because, on closer inspection, it was found that Ghana, which is not considered a consolidated democracy, has a higher free and fair election rating (of free and fair elections) than Israel and Ghana still invites IEOs when Israel does not follow this international norm. This research will focus on IEOs who are intergovernmental as well as non-governmental. Little attention will be paid to domestic NGOs who engage in election observation. This is due to the theory and objective of this research. In talking about international norms, the researcher will focus on IR theories, but international law will not be incorporated.
Chapter Two

International Election observers and Electoral Misconduct

Introduction

It is indisputable that IEOs, both International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) as well as Intergovernmental Organization (IGO), have gained a reputable influence worldwide. Governments in various countries invite INGOs and IGOs to assess their elections and legitimatize their governments. The expectation from international spectators is that governments that identify themselves as democratic will conduct a free and fair election. Surprisingly, even those who intend to manipulate the election still invite IEIOs. The IEOs’ credibility is one factor that helped them to gain influence worldwide, but in some situations example in Tajikistan, IEOs have endorsed highly flawed elections. That begs the question, why do some IEOs compromise their credibility and endorse flawed elections? Do IEOs focus on their mandate to assess the quality of elections, or do their assessments reflect other biases? There are some occasions when incumbents invite IEOs, yet cheat in an election. Can the behavior of the IEOs facilitate the choices incumbents made on whom to invite and what form of manipulation to employ? This chapter will focus on the behavior of IEOs as well as electoral misconduct to see whether there is a link between the electoral misconduct, such as the behavior of those IEOs that an incumbent prefers them to monitor the election. It is important to study the behavior of IEOs not only to answer the research question but also because scholars who study democracy use data from IEOs’ assessment.

Electoral Misconduct

Electoral Misconduct here refers to all activities that favor one side prior to and on an election day. Scholars agree that incumbents choose to cheat in an election as an attempt to hold power, and for that to happen, they employ a variety of tactics and tools to suppress a free political competition or deter an opposing side to participate in an election (Donno & Roussias, 2012; Birch,
Thus, granting confidence in winning an election and defeating their opponent. These tools and tactics differ in pre-election misconduct and Ballot fraud, but tools used on pre-election misconduct exert a psychological effect on the election day. Thus, even if an incumbent does not attempt to cheat on an election day, the pre-election misconduct can be sufficient to win an election. In this case, both or all opposition parties and their supporters have already been affected psychologically prior to election day (Donno & Roussias, 2012).

Empirical evidence demonstrates that if the State’s structure does not constraint an incumbent, then an opportunity is created for electoral misconduct. A State’s structure in which only the government can facilitate the condition of free and fair elections provides an opportunity for repression and pre-electoral misconduct by the misuse of government facilities and power. For example, in the 2001 OSCE/ODHIR report on the Republic of Belarus’ presidential election notes the State structure as a source of undemocratic election context. The Belarus State is a vertical structure where only the government can facilitate free and fair election, but it also has a at its legacy unaccustomed to opposition and pluralistic political debate (OSCE/ODHIR, 2001). The constitution of Belarus allows the president to use a presidential decree to regulate the electoral framework, and the Central Commission of the Republic of Belarus for Elections and the Conduct of Republic Referenda (CEC) has the final say in all election matters. As a result of this structure, the Belarus incumbent Alexander Lukashenko’s government committed both pre-election misconducts as well as ballot fraud. For example, the opposing candidates were denied access to the state-run mass media, and there was the discrimination of oppositions. Domestic observers lacked independent media and the opposition was denied the opportunity to participate in a campaign (OSCE/ODHIR, 2001). The delay of issuing visas for OSCE/ODHIR observers was interpreted as a way to ensure OSCE/ODHIR could not deploy long-term observers but rather
short-term observers. As a result, it was hard for OSCE/ODHIR to document pre-election misconduct. There were 44 complaints on election day, including vote counting irregularities and tabulation of results that contradicted that of the observers and the CEC. Observers noted that the incumbent received 70% of the vote, whereas CEC announced 75.65%. Thus, on election day, the CEC and IEO contradict the data collection and observation.

It is worthwhile to argue that risk-taker incumbents, who are smart, will consider committing pre-election misconduct as compared to ballot fraud. Here the argument will be highlighted by the 2001 Azerbaijan parliamentary elections. The report of OSCE/ODIHIR shows that “on election day polling was marked by numerous violations and the vote count was completely flawed” (OSCE/ODHIR, 2001). Thus, it necessitated a re-election. In contrast to Belarus, there was no evidence of pre-election misconduct or repression in Azerbaijan. Therefore, the opposition was given the freedom to campaign, the media was free to monitor and cover the campaign along with reporting opposing viewpoints, and there was no censorship of media.

This section aims to compare two types of Electoral Misconduct: Pre-election Misconduct and Ballot Fraud. The comparison between the two types of electoral misconduct helps to understand whether an incumbent who intends to cheat in an election and yet invites IEOs, has a preference on the type of electoral misconduct to deploy. This concept assumes that an incumbent who invites IEOs and yet cheats is a powerful risk-taker. To invite IEOs and cheat in an election is risky business because of the unpredictability of IEOs behavior, and the tools of manipulation may not have the desired result. Therefore, an incumbent who intends to cheat and at the same time invites IEOs is expected not only to be a risk taker but a calculated risk-taker who has a strategy in place. One has to evaluate and compare which manipulation strategy to take, when to
take it, and whether to rely on pre-election misconduct and repression of the opposition, or on ballot fraud, or both.

**Pre-election Misconduct**

Pre-election misconduct can also be known as a deterrence tactic because it aims to constrain both opposition parties as well as their supporters from participating in an election. Pre-election misconduct includes tools that constrain the ability of opposition parties to register, campaign, communicate key messages, and repress the opposition (Birch, 2007). Thus, pre-election tactics and repression may deter voters from casting ballots for their opposition or expressing their support during their campaigning. Therefore, pre-election misconduct boosts the winning chance for an incumbent who abused administrative resources, including all resources intended to be used for government purposes rather than for personal gain.

Pre-election misconduct that includes repression of the oppositional parties depends heavily on the State structure. The OSCE/ODIHR report from the 2001 Belarus presidential election highlighted that Belarus is unaccustomed to opposition and therefore holds pluralistic political debates due to the legacy of its state structure. Belarus was formally a communist country before it transitioned to democracy. Therefore, Belarus has a vertical State structure responsible for control not only the government but also democratic elections. The dependency on that structure inhibits democratic processes (OSCE/ODHIR, 2001). Thus, if the structure of a state does not constrain an incumbent who intends to cheat in an election, one choice the incumbent has is to engage in pre-election misconduct.

Most often, incumbents who intend to deploy pre-election misconduct and also invite IEOs, including official long and short-term observers, will prefer to avoid the presence of long-term observers. Again, the report of OSCE/ODHIR from 2001 indicates that, when OSCE/ODHIR tried
to send long-term observers, Belarus delayed visas for the observers ensuring, that observers could not monitor pre-election misconduct (OSCE/ODHIR, 2001). Thus, one possible way to invite IEOs and cheat in an election is to manipulate the time frame observers can monitor elections and understand and manipulate the behavior of the IEOs. Therefore, incumbents who cheat in an election are calculated risk-takers who study the IEOs and identify the type of cheating most likely to yield preferred results.

There are three major effects of pre-election misconduct. First, the opposition can be discouraged from running. Which means some might boycott elections due to fear of repercussions. Opposition leaders may see no pathway to victory and feel defeated before election campaigning begins. Second, pre-election misconduct could include restrictions on the ability of opposition candidates to campaign. Third, pre-election misconduct may involve violence and intimidation of voters who want to support opposition parties and candidates. These three pre-election misconduct tactics, though unethical, ensure an electoral win for an incumbent. In their research, Donno and Roussias (2012) show that pre-election misconduct can boost the probability of winning for an incumbent to 14.9%. If an incumbent can win in an election by employing pre-election misconduct tactics, then it is possible to demonstrate a free and fair election in the eyes of short-term observers on an election day, win the election, and declare the election was free and fair despite cheating in the unobserved pre-election period. Thus, pre-election misconduct has a significant effect on election day outcomes, the effect which is unseen by IEOs who are short-term observers.

It is also important to be familiar with how pre-election misconduct is carried out and whether IEOs are capable of detecting and monitoring this type of misconduct. One tactic utilized by incumbents is the manipulation of the media. Manipulation of the media creates an unbalanced
allocation of media coverage in state control outlets. It also includes intimidation of journalists and outright censorship, eliminating the opportunity to express opposing points of view accurately.

Pre-election misconduct could also involve the misuse of police or military force to deter the opposition and its supporters or limit the ability of their opponents to deliver their message. Using the same example of 2007 Armenian election, police tried to create obstacles to campaign for the opposition party by dispersing of their supporters using tear gas (Donno & Rousias, 2012).

Western governments are thought to be vulnerable to an incumbent who abuses their office to win the election. However, studies show that they are tolerant of some forms of repression and electoral manipulation (Bílek, 2021). If this is to say an incumbent who intends to cheat in an election and yet invites IEOs could choose forms of repression and electoral manipulation that will not catch the attention of the western IEOs (Bílek, 2021). Observations of 147 elections results demonstrate that linkage to the west does not actually provide sufficient protection to the opposition leaders and groups. If IEOs’ assessments resemble the political stand of their respective states, then IEOs will also be tolerant to some forms of repression and pre-election manipulation. Thus, opposition leaders and groups could only hope for protection from IEOs on the election day and not in pre-election campaigning. Therefore, pre-election manipulation is a good tool for an incumbent who intends to invite IEOs and cheat in an election.

In an election cycle, what happens after the election day could affect the next election. Post-electoral misconduct is important to consider for future elections to be free and fair. If repression as one tool in pre-election, as stated above, could deter voters from having a free choice on an election day, then post-election misconduct should also be considered misconduct because it deters opposition leaders and voters from having the courage for the next election in an election cycle. This can encourage a cycle of misconduct and eliminate the opportunity to have fair and
free elections for a decade. For example, in the case of Rwanda under Paul Kagame or Belarus under Alexander Lukashenko post-election misconduct had long-term effects on election results. In Rwanda Victoire Ingabire, a woman who sought to run for the presidency in 2010 to challenge President Paul Kagame, was arrested, tried, and sentenced to 6 years in prison. She was released on September 2018 (Burke, 2018). Likewise, in Belarus, the opposition leader Svetlana Tsikhanouskaya fled the country, fearing for her life after the election fallout. Protesters went to the street, and she knew that Lukashenko would hold her personally responsible for the protests (Talmazan, 2020). These two examples are the type of deterrence that does not happen on election day to the opposition leader but has a considerable effect on their future participation of opposition candidates. How can Ingabire find the courage to run for president again? How can Tsikhanouskaya go back to Belarus to compete with Lukashenko? IEOs might put these incidents in their report, but most of the report will reflect election day observations. Again, apart from all that happened, Kagame received support from France, Israel, European Union (EU), and the US. On the other hand, as the EU demonstrated their disapproval of Lukashenko by planning sanctions against Belarus, Russia confirmed a $500m loan to Belarus (Rainsfold, 2021; Parker, 2021). These actions will affect future elections.

The main question here is: Since there appears to be a double standard on how pre-and post-election misconduct are punished by those with power in the international community, is that due to inconsistency or lack of long-term IEOs? Would the presence of long-term IEOs solve the problem of inconsistency by more consistently punishing these types of misconduct?

In this chapter, when discussing the behavior of IEOs, these two questions will be addressed. However, studies show that election-day irregularities catch the attention of IEOs more than pre-election misconduct (Kelly, 2009; Kelly 2010; Donno and Rousias, 2012).
Ballot Fraud

Ballot Fraud happens on an election day and may include any tool that intends to distort the voting process, ballot counting, or tabulation process. There are various tactics used on election day by those who intend to engage in ballot fraud. Here are common tactics. First, ballot fraud can be in the form of ballot stuffing, where a greater number of ballots are cast than the number of people who cast a legitimate vote. Thus, illegal votes or more than one ballot per voter are submitted in ballot stuffing instead of one ballot per voter. Second, ballot fraud can be in the form of multiple voting where one person might be able to vote multiple times in an election. Electors can illegally enroll voters more than once by providing false names and addresses. This is enrollment fraud. Sometimes the ruling party will strategically ensure there is a double registration for their supporters.

A good example was in the Parliamentary Elections in Georgia in 2003 (OSCE, 2004). Prior to election day, the Georgia authorities tried to address the repeated problem of the voter list, but nothing was done. As a result, on election day, some voters were able to vote twice. Third, ballot fraud can include tampering with the registration lists, such as purposely removing names of those who are considered to support the opposition party and hence eliminating that voter’s opportunity to vote on election day. Fourth, the certification of fraudulent results occurs. Fifth, violation of voter secrecy can occur on election day. Violation of secrecy here refers to the context where the party crews can monitor who did not vote for the ruling party and hence create fear for voters who want to vote for the opposition.

The Georgian parliamentary 2004 election has all the above election day fraudulent actions in addition to pre-election misconduct. The final report of OSCE/ODHIR (2004) mentioned the tampering of voter lists, lack of fair campaigns where there was a use of administrative resources
for the incumbent in power benefit, the media were biased and compared the opposition leader Mikheil Saakashvili to Adolf Hitler. In addition, the composition of the election commission gave an advantage to the presidential parties. There was a persistent delay of results, production of dishonest election results during tabulation, ballot stuffing, multiple votes per voter, destruction of ballot boxes, and some domestic observers were intimidated and arrested. Thus, the report of OSCE/ODHIR for the Georgia parliamentary election represents a number of election day/ballot frauds. The election day fraudulent was not tolerated by IEOs, and their report contributed to a mass protest that culminated in the resignation of President Shevardnadze. The election results were annulled by the Supreme court of Georgia.

Incumbents who want to cheat in an election can take advantage of traditional and cultural practices that do not accommodate democratic election practices. In a free and fair democratic election, every individual has the freedom to choose for whom to vote, and every individual vote is confidential. However, there are states where the practice of proxy voting is allowed. In this practice, the male head of households votes on behalf of female members in their absence. IEOs view proxy voting as problematic and define this practice as a form of ballot fraud. For example, in 1998, in the parliamentary elections in Macedonia, IEOs noted that people were collecting voting cards of those that had not yet voted then voted on their behalf (OSCE,1998). Thus, since the personal representation of those absentees needs only voting cards for the absent voters, this practice makes it easier for an incumbent to organize people to commit ballot fraud. In circumstances like the above mentioned, observers can report it but not condemn the practice because it is connected to administrative irregularities and tied to the tradition and culture of a state. The above example of cultural practices is one of those areas that IEOs address in their
reports but do not ensure a statement of fraudulent election since the basic laws of the state-monitored allow proxy voting.

**IEOs’ Behavior**

IEOs can be categorized into two groups: those who are Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and those who are International non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs). It should be noted that in most cases, those IEOs who are Regional Organizations are acting at the same time as IGOs. Examples of IEOs who are IGOs focused on in this research are the European Union Election Observation Mission (EUEOM), the African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), Southern African Development Community (SADC), Commonwealth Observation Group (COG), the Arab League, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The research has selected AUEOM, SADC, ECOWAS, EUEOM, and COG as a focal point for the behavior of IEOs who are IGOs, specifically for the four cases that will be analyzed in this research. Whereas OSCE/ODIHR and the Organization of American States (OAS) will be used to analyze other supplementary cases. However, it should be noted that other IEOs may appear in this paper to support the argument.

The second group of IEOs who are also INGOs that will be the focus of this paper will be the Carter Center (CC), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the International Republic Institute (IRI), and the International Human Rights Law Group (IHRLG). What distinguishes between IEOs who are IGOs from INGOs is their political preference that is linked to the foreign policy of IGOs member states. Thus, the decision in endorsing or condemning an election is influenced by their foreign policy and their interest and relationship to the country that invites them to observe their election. On the other hand, not all IEOs who are INGOs are free from bias. Some are biased
due to their affiliation to the states that sponsor them, such as providing operating funds. Others are biased but more independent in their assessment of the quality of elections. Elaboration and examples of the arguments regarding bias below will be provided. In short, this study categorizes IEOs into two groups. One group being as embodiments of States and the other group as independent IEOs. This distinction is important in examining the behavior of IEOs as well as incumbents' choice in inviting them.

Table 2. Monitoring Organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-governmental organizations</th>
<th>Intergovernmental Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(CC) Carter Center</td>
<td>(CIS) - Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ECF) - Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC counties</td>
<td>(ECOWAS) - Economic Community of West African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IHRG) - International Human Rights Group</td>
<td>(OAS) - Organization of American States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IRI) - International Republican Institute</td>
<td>(OAU) - Organization of African Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(NDI) - National Democratic Institute</td>
<td>(OSCE) - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table designed by researcher (2022)

Another factor that makes distinctions between IEOs is the presence of long-term observers and short-term observers. Within the same organization, some IEOs have long-term observers who remain in the country before and after elections. Short-term observers focus on the day of the election. These divisions within the same organization are very important to mention in this study because not all IEOs have both long and short-term observers, and not all incumbents want long-term observers. It is argued and believed that long-term observers have a better understanding of the country’s culture and political context. IEOs who are long-term observers may have contradictions in their reports due to their presence in the country prior-to election day. Observations prior to election day are crucial because most incumbents tend to conduct pre-election cheating as defined and explored in a previous sub-chapter. However, not all IEOs can
afford long-term observers since it requires financial capability, commitment, and a productive relationship with the country seeking IEOs. Moreover, for security purposes, some IEOs who have the tendency to condemn flawed elections will not be welcomed during their extended stay in a country where the incumbent intends to cheat in an election.

This section will highlight five factors that influence IEOs’ biases and how they impact both incumbents’ choices and decisions and the IEOs’ operation. First, it will explore which irregularities cannot be accommodated even by less critical IEOs and that incumbents who intend to cheat and at the same time seek legitimacy from IEOs must know which form of cheating in which to engage and which ones to avoid. Second, there will be a comparative study between INGOs and IGOs with regards to who might be more biased and why. Third, there will be an explanation of how the IEOs politics constrain their assessments of election quality. Fourth, it will explain why the idea of endorsing elections with improvements can lead to IEOs to endorse flawed elections. Lastly, we will see how pre-election violence plays a major role in how IEOs endorse elections.

In the literature on international norms and democratic promotions, two words have been used interchangeably to identify international actors that are invited by states to witness and report the quality of their election to international and domestic audiences. Some scholars have used ‘monitoring’ (Cruz, 2005, Kelly, 2008), while others have used ‘observation’ (Hyde, 2011). Both monitoring and observation represent the same thing: to witness and see the process of an election with the intent of examining whether the basic laws of the state concerning the election are followed and then write an evaluation report. This report can be negative, positive, or inconclusive. When the report is negative it means the IEO’s report condemns the election to be not free and fair, while positive means IEO’s report endorses the election process as free and fair. Inconclusive
reports come when the IEOs report does not call the election fraudulent, nor does it confirm it to be free and fair. Inconclusive reports occur in those states where IEOs fear post-election violence: when IEOs want to protect their state’s relationship and the incumbent who has not conducted a free and fair election, when there is an improvement compared to previous elections, and sometimes if the incumbents’ state is a strategic partner, and when condemning the election could directly harm the relationship with IEOs home states. In rare cases, on election day when everything was fair, but there was much pre-election misconduct, IEOs may avoid dining the evidence from pre-election misconduct to their final judgment, nor will they want to praise the election based on the election day only; therefore, they prefer to produce an inconclusive report.

One example of the inconclusive report from IEOs was that produced by the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) regarding Haiti’s election in 2011 (OAS & CARICOM, 2011). In their report, neither OAS condemned the pre-election misconduct, nor praised the election day or defined the whole election process to be free and fair. Most media criticized the lack of condemnation in the OAS and CARICOM report. The Guardian wrote, “Our analysis confirmed what many observers saw on the ground, including ballot box stuffing, fraud and people unable to vote because they did not appear in the registry” (Weisbrot, 2011) while British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) wrote, “the 28 November vote was widely denounced, with reports of ballot box stuffing and violence and intimidation at polling stations” (BBC, 2011). Thus, both the Guardian and BBC represent what OAS and CARICOM should have seen in Haiti, but they chose neither to praise nor condemn but to continue support for the incumbent who went to the second round despite the opposition having won the first round. The election in Haiti is an example where the incumbent cheated, and IEOs decided not to condemn nor praise the election process but endorsed it.
The question here is, does neither praising nor condemning amount to legitimizing the election? Thus, an incumbent who expects to cheat both on pre-election and election day will choose to invite IEOs who will not condemn the electoral misconduct even if they do not praise the election process. This example represents a bias that is linked to IEOs political preference as well as analysis based on some level of improvements compared to previous elections in Haiti. OAS failed to condemn the election due to Haiti’s geopolitical position. The Congress Research Service (CRS) Report of July 18, 2011 states, “Congress views the stability of the nation with great concern and commitment to improving conditions there [...] Haiti has been making the transition from a legacy of authoritarian rule to a democratic government” (Taft, 2011). Thus, improvement and geopolitical position were two major concerns for the biased behavior of OAS in assessing the Haiti election in 2011. This sets a precedent for future election fraud.

The stand of Regional IEO like OAS or OSCE in an election can influence those IEOs who are NGOs but belong to the same region despite being regarded as independent. In the 2011 election in Haiti, CC, NDI, and IRI tried not to contradict the OAS and CARRICOM reports. For example, NDI commented that although OAS saw improvement in the 2011 Haiti election compared to previous elections, the results were questioned by some domestic observers and some candidates alleged it to be fraudulent. However, despite the NDI comment of here say, they did not voice their stand on their assessment of the 2011 Haiti election. The above examples show that powerful INGOs can influence NGOs in assessing elections as IEOs. Therefore, the incumbent who intends to cheat needs to wisely choose which IEOs and INGOs to extend an invitation and which should be avoided.

Some IEOs cannot tolerate election misconduct that happens on election day, even if the condemnation will harm the relationship between the incumbent and the state that is affiliated with
the IEO observing the election. The case of the Armenian election in 2003 could elaborate the above argument. When OSCE observed the election in Armenia, the OSCE was confronted with a challenge on how to behave. Due to Armenia being a former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (UNSSR), there is a danger that OSCE’s condemnation could give Russia a reason to criticize the EU since Armenia still has an affiliation with Russia who is a regional counterpart of Europe and democracy. Another challenge was that 2003 was the first Armenian democratic election since independence, so to condemn the election process could discourage the step toward democracy that has already been achieved. However, not to condemning a fraudulent election could harm OSCE’s reputation and influence monitoring the quality of future elections. Thus, IEOs can find themselves in a dilemma struggling to maintain their credibility and avoid damaging their relationships with powerful countries. However, if a state monitor is independent of the states that send IEOs to monitor the election, it is easier for those EOIs to use a stick (condemnation) since they have a carrot (financial assistance) to offer. This was the same thing with Armenia. Since Armenia was dependent financially on the EU and OSCE, it carries the political preference of the EU. Below is an explanation of the above assumption and arguments.

Robert Kacharian, the president of Armenia, invited the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and OSCE in the presidential election in 2003 and ended up cheating in that election. The OSCE report indicated that the election fell short of international standards (OSCE, 2004). The report highlighted the shortcoming of the election, such as media favoring Kacharian, state resources were used to help him, ballot stuffing, and vote counting was tempered. Without hesitation, the OSCE concluded that Armenia failed to hold a fair election (OSCE, 2004). Despite the condemnation from IEOs, the Armenian Constitutional Courts refused to annul Kacharian’s victory, and Russian President Vladimir Putin was quick to congratulate
Kacharian. Moreover, there was push back from Kacharian officials who claimed, however, that Armenia had differing rules and views on democracy compared to Europe (OSCE, 2004). OSCE’s ability to criticize the Armenian election comes from the EU financial support that gives it power toward Armenia. After Armenia gained independence in 1991, it experienced a balance of payment and domestic fiscal deficits, so the EU, through its Macro Financial Assistance (MFA), gave Armenia a total of 109 million euros between 1991-1997 (European Commission, 2006). EU’s support for Armenia has been constant since 1991. More recently, the EU provided Armenia with 92 millions Euros to fight coronavirus (Reuters, 2020). Thus, OSCE’s decisional behavior to choose to condemn the election of Armenia was influenced not only by maintaining its reputation but also due to the dependence of Armenia in the EU for its economic survival. Hence, for Kacharian to remove the questions over his legitimacy he has no choice but to make some reforms or choose other forms of manipulations such as pre-election manipulation so that he will get a better verdict in future elections.

Table 3. IEOs Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IEOs Embodiment of States</th>
<th>Independent IEOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Prioritize political relationships</td>
<td>1. Strongly condemn fraudulent election day behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Refuse to associate with other members for fear of repercussion</td>
<td>2. Free on their assessments and intends to improve democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Strongly influenced by the political preference of their states in assessing the quality of election.</td>
<td>3. They are not influenced by personal relationships but rather by the basic standard of conducting elections in democratic states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Influenced by the relationship between the Incumbent’s country and their state.</td>
<td>4. Desire to be neutral actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Fear of instability if they do not endorse the election.</td>
<td>5. Tend to be more critical than IEOs as an embodiment of the state</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table designed by researcher (2022)
Conclusion

This chapter focused on election misconduct, the behavior of IEOs, and how the incumbent who intends to cheat in an election must balance his/her choice on which agency to invite and in what form of manipulation to engage. The first section, which talked about pre-election misconduct, has demonstrated that these forms of manipulation have psychological effects on both voters as well as candidates who want to run for elections. Furthermore, that research has shown that this impact can harm the opposition candidates’ ability to win on election day, even if on the election day there is a free and fair situation and IEOs are there to witness procedures. Pre-election misconduct is a deterrence tool for voters not to choose the opposition party candidates and can intimidate voters who support opposition to change their minds or abstain from voting. This section concluded that those incumbents who intend to cheat in an election and yet invite IEOs would have greater chance to win the election if they can use the pre-election misconduct effectively. The second section of this chapter analyses the election day misconduct and found that most incumbents who intend to cheat and have invited IEOs are more likely to receive a negative verdict because most IEOs do not tolerate election day fraud. Thus, those who conduct election day fraud in the face of IEOs either have a strong State who will stand with them or regional IEOs who will support them despite being condemned by other IEOs. This situation has occurred in Armenia, Belarus, and Haiti.

The third section looks at the behavior of IEOs. This section found that IEOs are biased in assessing the quality of elections. Their biases are influenced by their political preference and the country that they are monitoring the election. Countries of great geopolitical power are more likely to get away with cheating in an election. This geopolitical power can be as a trading or strategic partner. Strategic partners can be created to serve goals such as fighting against terrorism in the
region, control of illegal immigration, the presence of drug trafficking, the creation of stability of the region, and supporting a certain ideology. It concluded that INGOs are less likely to condemn election misconduct than NGOs. However, at the same time, it is found that even NGOs who have affiliation with their home state due to their dependency on finance to run their organization have a double standard in judging the quality of elections. This chapter, therefore, comes to concludes that, yes, it is possible for an incumbent to invite IEOs and yet cheat. For such an incumbent to get endorsement and remain in power, such an incumbent has to make a wise choice. Their wise choice will include whom to invite and which form or forms of manipulation they will engage in to secure their victory. Whether an incumbent chooses to engage in either pre-election or election day misconduct is to place himself/herself in a risky situation. If an incumbent chose only pre-election manipulation, such incumbent should be sure that such misconduct is sufficient to win the election without misconduct on the election day. There is greater risk for the one who chooses to conduct election day misconduct because the IEOs are less likely to tolerate misconduct and the media pays more attention to the election day than pre-election corruption (Daxecker, 2012). Thus, an incumbent who intends to cheat in an election and yet invite IEOs is a risk-taker. If the incumbent knows for sure how IEOs will behave, then they extend an invitation and choose forms of manipulation in which to engage. Furthermore, if the state doesn’t have certain forms of power or a strong ally, and if they invite a certain kind of IEO, they are also risk-takers.
Chapter Three

Methodology and Introduction of Variables.

Introduction

The previous chapter argues that an incumbent who intends to cheat in an election and yet invited IEOs is influenced by the perceived behavior of the IEOs. These IEOs can be placed into two categories: first, that of dependent IEOs, meaning they serve the interests of the members states, and secondly, independent IEOs, those that distance themselves from state pressure and interests of states. It is paramount to categorize IEOs according to their behavior because incumbents who intend to cheat and yet invite IEOs, base their invitation on previously assessed behaviors and strategically choose what forms of manipulation and repression to deploy to win in an election and acquire an endorsement from the IEOs. Therefore, building on the arguments presented in Chapter Two, this chapter outlines methods used in this research and the variable that are used to understand the relationship between IEOs biases and the choice made by an incumbent who intends to cheat in an election and yet invite IEOs.

This research has focused on the presence of IEOs in the setting where the invitee intends to cheat. Accordingly, the analysis will focus on the following questions: Who were invited? What is their affiliation with the state that is being monitored? In what states are the IEOs embodied? Who finances the IEOs? What process is required before their final report becomes public? Have the IEOs ever changed the ruling of the report after their preliminary report, and what influenced that flip? Are the IEOs free, without considering other factors like the geopolitical importance of a state, in monitoring the election. What forms of manipulation were utilized? Did the incumbent rely on pre-election manipulation, election day manipulation, or both forms of fraudulent behavior? Did the incumbent invite the IEOs for a short-term or long-term presence? Are there
improvements in an election compared to the previous election, and what were those improvements? Does the incumbent have any relationship with a powerful state(s) that impacts the decision of inviting IEOs and the choice of form of manipulation? What is Russia, China, the USA, the EU or the UN’s perspective about the fairness of the election? How does the history of a country impact the election manipulation?

Methodology

This research has employed a qualitative research method. Hence, to evaluate the expectations outlined in Chapter Two, this work has used a variety of method research designs. First, the researcher utilized comparative approaches, that is to say, a rational approach, a cultural approach, and an institutional approach. A rational approach is necessary to look at the incumbent’s behavioral choice to cheat in an election and yet chose to invite IEOs. The rational approach explores how an incumbent intends to maximize his/her chance to win an election through varieties of choices: whom to invite a monitoring party, the length and actual time a monitoring part is invited, and type of IEOs or regional IEOs. In addition, what form of repression/manipulation to employ and how to use the media and police to gain an advantage in an election must be decided. A cultural approach will help to understand whether some cultural practices that are utilized by an incumbent be termed as cheating and how IEOs perceive them. For example, the issue of proxy voting practices can be a significant challenge to IEOs to decide whether fraud was conducted since the country’s law allows it. Finally, the institutional approach will help to analyze the issues based on the argument that if the institutions are weak, the presence of IEOs in an election does not deter an incumbent from manipulating the election.

This research also relied on interviews conducted by media to assess the perceptions of the IEOs by both the incumbent who intends to cheat in an election and the candidates from
opposition parties. The archival media interviews are essential to this research because it provide direct quotes and first-hand information of the events, but sometimes there will be dataset as well as video and pictures that help to clarify the political environment and the behavior of an incumbent as well as IEOs. This study will focus on four cases to answer the question of why will an incumbent invite IEOs in an election and yet cheat? These four cases are Ghana, Zimbabwe, Egypt, and Israel. The explanations of why these cases were chosen are detailed in Chapter One.

**Dependent and Independent Variables**

This study advances four Hypotheses: **H1**: An incumbent who is a Risk Taker, whose state has weak institutions, and who seeks international benefits through demonstration of democratic elections, will selectively invite the IEOs and nevertheless cheat in an election; **H2**: An incumbent who is a Risk Averse whose state has strong institutions but seeks international benefit will invite IEOs and not cheat in an election; **H3** An incumbent who is Risk Averse whose country has a special status in the international community but is constrained by the electoral rule and state institutions will not invite IEOs and not cheat in an election; and **H4**: An incumbent who is a Risk Taker whose country has a special status in the international community and who is not constraint by the institutions of the state will not invite IEOs and will cheat in an election. From the above hypotheses, the independent variables (IV) for this study are: **IV1**: Seeking international benefits associated with democracy; **IV2**: Strong or weak institutions **IV3**: Geopolitical status; and **IV4**: Risk Averse or Risk Taker. On the other hand, the dependent variables (DV) are: **DV1**: Invite IEOs and cheat, **DV2**: Invite IEOs and do not cheat; **DV3**: Not invite IEOs and do not cheat; and **DV4**: Not invite IEOs and cheat.
Table 4. Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Invite IEOs and Cheat</td>
<td>• Weak Institutions (unconstrained)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Risk Taker Incumbent</td>
<td>• Seek International Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Invite IEOs and not cheat</td>
<td>• IEOs’ Biases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Risk Averse Incumbent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not invite IEOs and not cheat</td>
<td>• Strong Institutions (constraints)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Risk Averse Incumbent</td>
<td>• Seek international Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not invite IEOs and Cheat</td>
<td>• Strong Institutions (constraints)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Risk Taker incumbent</td>
<td>• Can acquire International Benefits due to geopolitical status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not invite IEOs and Cheat</td>
<td>• Weak Institutions (unconstrained)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Risk Taker incumbent</td>
<td>• Can acquire international benefits due to geopolitical status</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table designed by researcher (2022)

The dependent variables and independent variables fall into four scenarios in this study. The first scenario is when an incumbent chooses to invite IEOs and cheats in an election. The decision to cheat in an election happens when an incumbent wants to remain in power despite having a low chance of winning in an election. In order to cheat, an incumbent has to misuse the power granted to him/her, and a successful misuse of government resources for personal gain happens when the institutions of a state are weak or unable to question or constraints the incumbent. An example of this is when the court, as well as the National Election Commission (NEC), are not independent, nor is the parliament. However, the question is if the incumbent has few or no constraints in the domestic arena and is able to peruse electoral misconduct without consequences, why then invite IEOs? Is it because inviting IEOs invites consequences if there is an intention to cheat? Inviting IEOs has some benefits if they endorse the election, then there is a chance to acquire international benefits. As explained in the previous chapter, an incumbent will also study the IEOs behavior to know whom to invite and what forms of manipulation in which to engage. However, this kind of
business of inviting IEOs and yet cheating in an election is a risky business. The risk is present because IEOs are inconsistent in their bias, and therefore only a risk-taking incumbent will choose to invite IEOs and still cheat in an election.

The second scenario is when an incumbent decides to invite IEOs and not cheat in an election. In this circumstance, the incumbent country has strong institutions that can question and punish any form of using government power or resources for personal gain. The incumbent in this scenario must depend on the results of a free and fair election, his or her popularity, and the independence of the NEC and parliament (for those who follow the parliamentary system) to win the election and not from election manipulation. In addition, the incumbent will invite IEOs so that the legitimacy is not in question, and since there is no expectation of cheating, credible IEOs will be invited. Thus, both long-term and short-term IEOs will be welcomed to observe various aspects of an election. This incumbent, who invites IEOs and does not cheat, is a risk-averse incumbent because he/she does not want to take any risk since there are constraints from the institutions and the presence of IEOs. Therefore, the independent variables are: strong institutions, popularity, and international benefit. While dependent variables are: risk-averse behavior, decisions to invite IEOs and not cheat.

The third scenario falls on the category where an incumbent is risk-averse, as in the second scenario, but since the incumbent’s country in this situation has a special status (geopolitical status), the incumbent will not invite IEOs and will not cheat in an election because of the constraints from strong institutions and structure of the government. The incumbent’s risk averse behavior is influenced by domestic constraints as well as the perception that inviting IEOs will interfere with the country’s domestic politics. Thus, the independent variables will be strong
institutions, the structure of the government, and special status, while dependent variables will be risk-averse behavior, decide not to invite IEOs, and choose not to cheat in an election.

The fourth and last scenario is the situation where the incumbent is not constrained by the weak institutions, and the structure of the government gives him/her the choice to misuse the power granted to him/her, the incumbent will not invite IEOs since the country has a special status and therefore, can benefit from the international community without the demonstration of democratic value. This incumbent is also not popular in the domestic arena because of the misuse of government properties for personal gain. Therefore, to stay in office, the incumbent does not observe human rights laws and abuses anyone who opposes him/her. Thus, to win in an election, the incumbent needs to rig the election process and will not invite IEOs, because they will expose what is happening and harm the country’s status. However, not inviting IEOs does not guarantee that news media will not report misconduct, but IEO’s reports cause more harm than media because the incumbent can control domestic media but not IEOs. This incumbent is a risk taker because he/she does not represent the status of his/her country. If a regime change maintains the country’s strategic place for international community, another incumbent might come to power by any means (coup, civil war) and still get support from the international community. Therefore, the independent variables are: weak institutions, support from elites, and the country’s geopolitical status. On the other hand, dependent variables are: Risk behavior, avoid the presence of IEOs, and cheat in an election.

Intervening Variables

The first intervening variables are taken from the NELDA dataset: data of elections; whether regular elections were suspended before the election in question; were these the first multiparty elections; whether the opposition was allowed; were there significant concerns as to the
freedom and fairness of the election; was IEOs present and if so were monitors present? Were some monitors denied the opportunity to be present by the government holding elections? Did any monitors refuse to go to an election because they believed it would be fraudulent? And, is the country said to have a substantial economic, military, or political relationship with a Western country or Western IGOs, and if so, which one? These variables provide information on which IEOs are present in an election and the nature of the election. With this information, it is easy to know the nature of the electoral process. The NELDA dataset outlines the details of each country’s individual elections, especially the situations leading up to the election and the type of IEOs involvement.

DIEM dataset will also provide variables: Pre-election, post-election, and final documents coded, the number of days that the delegation is in the country, joint observation mission, monitoring organization code, the number of pre-election assessment visits, the number of statements issued before election, observed campaign rallies, observation of voting and counting. These variables provide information on election monitoring for each election, details of their findings, and assessments. These variables are helpful because they offer insight to the nature of election observations, especially the IEOs.

**Data Collection**

This research seeks to collect data from Israel, Egypt, Ghana, and Zimbabwe regarding the involvement of IEOs in their elections and how the incumbents behave in those elections. This data will focus on presidential or parliamentary elections, electoral processes, institutions, the status of these countries (geopolitical position, natural resources, economic level, and military capability), their ways of acquiring international benefits, their governmental structure, incumbent behavior, and perceptions on IEOs, and IEOs assessments of their elections and their preferences.
There is focus on parliamentary because some countries, especially Israel, get their Prime Minister through the votes in the Israel’s Parliament (the Knesset). The government structure is defined by the country’s constitution, and this defines the level of power given to the incumbent. This is important, especially in those areas where an incumbent has misused power to deter his/ her opponent from competing in a free and fair election.

The data for this research was mainly collected in various ways: through the use of IEOs archival reports, domestic media, as well as international news outlets such as CNN, Aljazeera, BBC, and other credible both international and domestic newspapers, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Bank reports. The credibility of media matters, but to get the facts, the research will compare multiple news sources that reported the same issue to see if there is bias.

Supplemental data provided by secondary literature will be important in this research. This secondary literature will shed light on the status of the country, institutions, government structure, and information on incumbents as well as the behavior of IEOs. Here the secondary literature will include journal articles, dissertations, as well as books. YouTube is also a good source to observe and hear both IEOs and incumbents because YouTube has videos that can be accessed readily and allow the opportunity to listen to incumbents’ speeches during the campaign, pre-election, on election day as well as after the results are announced. Videos provide the context as well as the perception of the incumbent towards IEOs. Further opposition candidates have monitors, and their claims regarding the election can shed light of what is going on or what misses in the IEOs assessment.
Chapter Four

Presentation of Data and Findings

Introduction

This Chapter presents the researcher’s expectations of each case, evidence obtained from each case, and a discussion of whether evidence and expectation correlate. In this chapter, four cases: Ghana, Zimbabwe, Israel, and Egypt, will be presented, analyzed and compared.

The Case of Ghana

(I) Expectation

The researcher uses the three questions asked by freedom house under the area of political rights in any country. The scores on those three questions help the researcher anticipate what behavior can be expected from an incumbent in an election in Ghana. For the first question, “Was the current head of government or other chief of national authority elected through free and fair elections”. Ghana scored 4/4, which equals 100% in this area (Freedom House, 2021). The second question is, “Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections” (Freedom House, 2021). Ghana scored 4/4 equaling 100%. On the third question, “Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies,” Ghana again scored 4/4 equaling 100% (Freedom House, 2021). Thus, based on these scores for the three questions above, the researcher expects that an incumbent in Ghana will most likely not cheat in an election.

In the case of Ghana, the researcher expects an incumbent from Ghana to invite IEOs and not cheat in an election. The incumbent will face constraints from institutions and traditional norms and hence will not selectively invite IEOs to benefit himself by cheating in an election; rather, the incumbent will invite IEOs who will not favor the incumbent but help in the promotion of free and
fair election. The researcher will expect the incumbent to invite IEOs who have influence in the international community and who can promote the legitimacy of the government. The incumbent will do so because the promotion of democracy is one of the best ways for the country to get access to international benefits such as trading, foreign aid, foreign investments, as well as International Monetary Fund (IMF) funding.

(II) Evidence

This section will cover elections in Ghana from 1992-2020. The researcher chose to begin with the year 1992 because that was the year Ghana transitioned to democratic elections. Table 5 shows the most prominent IEOs Ghana has invited from 1992 through 2020. It also shows IEOs’ affiliation with Ghana, their embodiment with what state, and who finances those IEOs.

Table 5. Various IEOs Invited to Ghana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IEO</th>
<th>Affiliation Based On</th>
<th>Embodiment</th>
<th>Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>Individual donors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUEOM</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>EU</td>
<td>EU member states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>(W. African countries)</td>
<td>ECOWAS Member states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFES</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td></td>
<td>USAID, UK AID, Australian AID, Canada, New Zealand, US Department of State, Kingdom of Netherland, and the Republic of France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUEOM</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>African States</td>
<td>AU Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Commonwealth Members</td>
<td>UK, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Embassy</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDI</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>Individual Donors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRI</td>
<td>Donation</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>Individual Donors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table designed by researcher with the aid of database from; the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), European Union Observers Mission (EUEOM), Cater Center (CC), International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES), African Union Election Observation Mission (AUEOM), Commonwealth Observer Group (COG), National Democratic Institution (NDI) and International Republican Institute (IRI). (2022)
Data collection on table 5 indicates that Ghana invited IEOs affiliated with EU, AU, Commonwealth Countries (The commonwealth consists of 54 countries, including the United Kingdom) or ECOWAS. Ghana is a member of AUEOM, COG, and ECOWAS observers’ mission. Thus, inviting AUEOM, COG, or ECOWAS strengthens regional cooperation with other states. Head of EU delegates to Ghana ambassador Claude Marten highlighted that Ghana and the EU have a common agenda “to promote regional economic integration, peace and security, democracy, rule of law and human rights” (Cooperation that Count, 2020). Marten emphasized that the cooperation between the EU and Ghana resulted from Ghana’s transformation to democracy since 1992 and that the EU is committed to supporting Ghana’s transition to a middle-income country is influenced by Ghana’s commitment to democracy (Cooperation that Count, 2020). Therefore, Ghana invited EU-EOM to maintain its partnership with the EU.

Data from table 5 above shows that Ghana also invites IEOs who are independent such as IDI, IRI, and CC. All three of these IEOs, despite being independent, do influence the US government. Most leaders of these IEOs that are independent hold political positions or used to hold position in the US government. A good example was Senator John McCain, who was a prominent figure in the US politics and, at the same, the chairperson of IRI. Senator McCain was a chair of IRI for 25 years (IRI website, August 25, 2018). In 2000 McCain introduced a resolution (s.Res 314 –106th Congress) to sanction Zimbabwean leaders (S.Res.314-106th Congress,1999-2000). Prior to McCain’s introduction of his resolution, IRI and NDI conducted a pre-election assessment in 1999 in Zimbabwe and predicted the election to be not free and fair (IRI website,1999). The researcher is aware that this section deals with the case of Ghana; however, the example of the 1999 IRI/NDI pre-election assessment in Zimbabwe and McCain, who was the senator and chairperson of IRI to introduce a resolution in Congress, shows that IRI, NDI, and CC
are independent but have influence to the US government. Thus, these independent IEOs can also lobby the US government to those they endorse to benefit from USAID or those they condemn to be sanctioned.

The case of Ghana offered a good comparison between International Election Observers (IEO), who are International Governmental Organizations (IGOs), and International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO). IGOs-IEOs that were invited to Ghana, especially IRI, NDI, and CC, work with civic organizations and domestic observers to promote democracy in Ghana. For example, IRI, NDI, and CC partnered with John A Kufuor foundation to empower youth in strengthening their commitment to democratic government (IRI website August 12, 2016). CODEO website also affirms that IRI/NDI and CC are among their donors (CODEO Website). INGO–IEOs have engaged with domestic observers in Ghana for the development of democratic institutions, as well as support for civic education as compared to IGOs. The existence of Parallel Voter Tabulation system (PVTs) in Ghana was an idea introduced by IRI and NDI in their effort to equip CODEO with the tool that will help them to have quality data from elections, which will boost voter confidence in the electoral process and assist EC to know where they need to solve disputes (NDI and PVTs Academy, 2019). Thus, INGO-IEOs, who are invited to Ghana, work with CODEO and other civic organizations to make sure independent institutions in Ghana such as Electoral Commission (EC) and Supreme Court have the responsibility to sustain Ghana’s democracy.

Data from table 5 shows that the most IEOs that link Ghana to the EU, UK, CANADA, and the US are COG, EUEOM, IRI, NDI, and CC. EUEOM links Ghana to the EU, and COG links Ghana with UK and Canada, whereas IRI, NDI, and CC link Ghana to the US. EU member states, the UK, the US, and Canada have influence in the international community. US and UK are among
five permanent members of the UN security council. Whereas Canada, EU members such as France and Germany also have influence in the international community. All the above states mentioned (US, UK, Germany, Canada, and France) are financially stable, have military power, and influence in the international community. Thus, IEOs whose member states have influence in the international community due to their significant share in the global economy and are the best agencies to a signal to the IC that Ghana has the characteristics (Free and fair election) needed to acquire benefits from the international community. Therefore, Ghana is strategic when inviting IEOs to their elections.

To acquire benefits from the international community, a country is required to maintain good diplomacy with powerful states. Powerful states mean those states that are economically and militarily strong. Most of the IEOs who are invited to Ghana have a good relationship with powerful states or are themselves an embodiment of powerful states who identify themselves with democratic values. The researcher mentioned democratic values here because there are other powerful states such as China or Russia that do not identify themselves with democratic values. Thus, Ghana not only invites IEOs for legitimacy, the purpose of showing its adherence to democratic values, but also for economic diplomacy purposes. Therefore, through the invitation of IEOs, Ghana builds its diplomatic ties with the US, EU, UK, and Canada. On the other hand, a state needs good relations with neighboring states to have a regional influence. Thus, figure 1 shows that Ghana also invites ECOWAS and AUOEM, of which Ghana is a member state, as regional IEOs.

**Process Required Before Final IEOs Reports Are Made Public**

The researcher found that most IEOs give a preliminary statement within three days of the end of the electoral process. However, the process taken before the final report is to be released to
the public differs among the various IEOs. The difference is seen between those IEOs that are IGOs and those who are INGOs. IGOs have a fixed manual/handbook that explains in detail requirements for both the preliminary and final report. The manual explains when and who is responsible for preliminary and final reports (AUEOM, 2013 and EUEOM, 2008). Figure 2 shows relevant parts of the AUEOM and EUEOM manuals. On the other hand, the researcher found that INGOs have no fixed manual/handbook but rather a variety of manuals/handbooks that are based on pre-election assessments and a type of election. The nature of the election informs which manual/handbook INGOs IEOs will use during election observations. (NDI Observer Handbook, 1999). The researcher found that most INGOs-IEOs design manual/handbook for the purpose of domestic election observers to use while conducting election observations (NDI Handbook, 1995). Some INGOs, such as CC, inform when the final report would be made public in their preliminary statement, depending on individual election circumstances. For example, when CC published their preliminary statement for the 2008 run-off election in Ghana, they stated that they would publish a final report after 120 days (CC Preliminary Statement Ghana Election, 2008). Often, the final report requires time before it is released by IEOs, both INGOs without a manual/handbook, as well as IGOs with a manual/handbook.
Table 6. AUEOM and EUOM Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Observer Manual</th>
<th>AUEOM</th>
<th>EUOM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary statement</td>
<td>“The preliminary Statement is released after the polling day and is expected by all stakeholders and the international community”</td>
<td>“EU observers issue public preliminary statement presented by the Chief Observer shortly after the Election Day (usually within two days) at a press conference. The Chief Observers will also answer to questions posed in that occasion”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Final Report</td>
<td>“Recently, the AU has started publishing its EOM reports on the AU website within two months after the close of the Mission”</td>
<td>“A comprehensive final report is issued within two months of the completion of the election process”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Evidence suggests that preliminary statements have more impact on the endorsement and legitimacy of an election than the final report. In the Commonwealth Handbook on Election Observation (CHEO), chapter 6.5 states that:

“The Preliminary Statement is arguably one of the most important outputs for an observer team. It presents the preliminary findings and conclusions on the entire process and is issued at the time of highest and most intense media and public interest…. the Preliminary Statement receives the largest amount of media coverage and is so critical in defining the mission in the perception of stakeholders, the media and public” (GPD Handbook Election Observation, 2019).

Thus, preliminary statements can influence public opinion as well as the IC on how they will view and judge the results of an election. In the 2008 Ghana presidential election, ECG announced the results on the 3rd of January, 2009 (CNN, 2009). EUEOM gave their preliminary statement on the 3rd of January, but their final report was released 30 days after the preliminary report. The CC, NDI, and IRI gave their preliminary statements on the 3rd of January, 2009.
Data from table 7 above outlines how IEOs differ in their process of giving their final election reports. Some reports focus more on the pre-election assessment. (NDI and IRI, 2009). Some IEOs release data 60 days before the final report comes out. Most long-term observers (NDI, IDI & Carter Center) focus on pre-election assessments, while short-term and intergovernmental IEOs (EUEOM & AUEOM) focus on election day and post-election assessments. Thus, final reports consist of all matters raised during pre-election, the election day, and post-election. The question is what matters more to incumbents who intend to cheat in an election: positive preliminary statements from IEOs or positive final reports? Clearly, the answer is that the positive preliminary statements from IEOs have more substantial impact on the endorsement and legitimacy of the election winner. It is obvious that the public and media outlets pay particular attention to the announcement of results and the statements from IEOs made soon after the election day. This time of excitement and public attention is a good time for an incumbent to receive positive criticism and support from IEOs, the effects of which help to silence one's opponents. After the election, there is a time when the losing side can contest the election. The loosing opponent can use unfavorable preliminary statements from IEOs to mobilize post-election violence to protest the election. Thus, when the final election report is publicized by IEOs 60 or 120 days
after the preliminary report saying the election was not free and fair, the opportunity to influence or oppose that current election has already passed, leaving the final IEOs report to be potential influential in the next election cycle. The preliminary statements are paramount for an incumbent’s legitimacy. Therefore, an incumbent who intended to cheat in an election and yet invited IEOs will profit from inviting IEOs who have a tendency to offer positive criticism or support in their preliminary statements.

In the case of Ghana, for the election in 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016, and 2020 final reports affirm preliminary statements given by IEOs and CODEO and the EC report. From 2000-2020 there has never been ambiguous final reports or a contradictory statement between IEOs nor conflicting reports between IEOs and EC. Thus, the absence of contradictory reports or a report that condemns the election is evidence that Ghana is a country with a good history of free and fair elections. Therefore, the evidence suggests that most incumbents who won elections in Ghana since 2000-2020 have not relied entirely on manipulation.

**Did the incumbent rely on pre-election or ballot manipulation?**

IEOs who have observed Ghana’s election since 2000 has praised Ghana’s election based on seven areas. First, both political parties did their campaigning openly and freely. Second, Ghana allowed all parties to do door-to-door voter education. Third, the civil society, the coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO), and the Institute for Democratic Governance and Commission for Human Rights work together with both political parties to ensure that there was a free and fair election. Fourth, polling stations were supplied with adequate material and opened on time. Fifth, security forces played a positive role in ensuring transparency in the election. Sixth, the counting of ballots was completed swiftly and accurately. Seventh, the court has put forward an accommodative program to speed electoral dispute resolution. Furthermore, CODEO
introduced a parallel vote tabulation system (PVTs) to ensure that the Electoral Commission announced the accurate vote that has been counted with the ability to announce who won by how many votes. Both the government and EC of Ghana want transparency in their election, which is why the CODEO was allowed to introduce the PVTs. It also shows that the domestic observers in Ghana had the freedom to ensure that elections were conducted in a free and fair context.

Since 2000 Ghana has run a competitive, free and fair election, and there has been a peaceful transfer of power from one party to another. Figure 1 below shows that from 2000-2020, the average difference in the votes between a loser and a winner was only 6.4%. Also, between 2000-2020 there has been a transfer of power between the two major parties. The 2000 election was a landmark election for a peaceful transfer of power from the ruling Party (NDC) to an opposition party (NPP). Since 2000, presidential elections in Ghana have continued with peaceful transfers of power in 2008 and 2016. Table 7 shows improvements and consolidation of democracy in Ghana.

Evidence from IEOs reports along with media reports has shown that since 2000, no incumbent has relied on manipulation to win an election. Evidence from both IEOs and CODEO has shown no incidences of pre-election manipulation or ballot manipulation.

**Has Ghana shown improvement in Democracy?**

Freedom House is an INGO that promotes freedom and democracy across the globe. Freedom House focuses on seven key areas, and one among them is political rights which focuses on the electoral process. The seven key areas include; political rights, political pluralism and participation, functioning of the government, civil liberties, associational and organizational rights, the rule of law, and personal autonomy and individual Rights (Freedom House, 2021). Those seven areas are evaluated, and a country is given a score of 100 if it scores 100% in all seven areas of
evaluation. Scores above 70 indicate that a country is a consolidated democracy, conducts elections with integrity, and holds legitimate, free and fair elections. Thus, countries that score 70 and above are acknowledged among international political leaders as valid and democratic states.

There are three questions asked under the area of political rights. The scores from those three questions help the researcher to anticipate what behavior can be expected from an incumbent in an election. These questions are: First, “Was the current head of government or other chief of national authority elected through free and fair elections?” (Freedom House, 2021). Second, “Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?” (Freedom House, 2021). Third, “Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies?” (Freedom House, 2021).

With regard to the first question, Ghana scored a 4/4, which means they received 100% in this area. Under the second question, Ghana scored 4/4 = 100%. Under the third question, Ghana again scored 4/4 = 100%. Therefore, based on the scores from these three questions, the researcher expects that an incumbent in Ghana will not cheat in an election.

The Freedom House Index 2021 identified Ghana as a country with a high level of democracy with a global freedom score of 82 points. The United States scored 83. Thus Ghana is rated only one point behind the US according to the Freedom House Index for 2021. Ghana should therefore be considered a country with a high level of electoral integrity. Data from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) also indicated that Ghana has been improving democratically and has held clean, free and fair elections since 2000 (IDEA, 2021). The international IDEA monitors 165 countries worldwide and evaluates a country’s democracy based on five lenses. These five lenses are: representative government, fundamental rights, checks on government, impartial administration, and participatory engagement. Under
representative government, IDEA consists of four subcategories: clean elections, inclusive suffrage, free political parties, and elected government. Thus, for IDEA’s data to indicate that a country has improved democratically, it also means it has improved in conducting clean elections.

Final reports from most IEOs include a section about previously conducted elections, and that section revisits elections since a country has transitioned to a multi-party democracy. Ghana transitioned to multi-party democracy in 1992. In the 2012 report, COG highlighted Ghana’s progress from 1992-2012 by showing election improvements in every election cycle (1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, and 2012). This previous data was incorporated into the 2012 election observation assessment (EISA, 2012). In 1992, COG highlighted shortcomings stating that there was no “unsatisfying playing field” by citing a fundamentally flawed voters register that helped the ruling party win the election. Then, in 1996, it was noted in the election report that the voter registry had improved, which returned people's confidence in the electoral process. In 2000, for the first time in the history of Ghana, the ruling party, NDC, was defeated by an opposition party, NPP, and the preliminary and run-off elections were declared by IEOs as free and fair. It was also the first time that there was a peaceful transfer of power between the ruling party and NPP. Then in 2004, the NPP won the election and the media and IEOs described it as a free and fair election. In 2008, the NDC won the election, and the NPP accepted the defeat. COG described the 2008 election as a “reference for the African continent” on democracy (COG, 2012). Finally, in the 2012 election, there was tension between the two major political parties, the NDC and the NPP, and to resolve the tension, the National Peace Council (NPC) and Inter Party Advisory Committee (IPAC) were created to promote an inter-party dialogue (EU EOM, 2016). The creation of those two committees and the political dialogue between the two major parties was also a sign of maturity in Ghanaian democracy.
During the observed election in 2016, the report included recommendations from the EU to help the EC of Ghana be more effective and transparent. None of the 20 recommendations given by the EU-EOM suggested there was fraud in the election but rather areas of improvement (EU-EOM, 2016). The EU formed an Election Follow-Up Mission (EFUM) in 2019 to review the recommendations suggested by EU-EOM in 2016. The final report from EFUM concluded that Ghana has worked on some of the recommendations made in IEOs reports (EU-EFUM, 2019). The report from EFUM in 2019 is another piece of evidence that Ghana has improved its democratic election process. Ghana has also conducted competitive democratic elections since 2000, as seen in figure 4. Thus, Ghana has not only conducted competitive elections but has also managed to conduct free and fair elections. Therefore, there was evidence of improvement in every election cycle in Ghana, the improvements that were not linked to fraud, but rather the efficacy and more transparency in the electoral process in Ghana. Evidence shows that Ghana has made steps toward democracy. From 2000 to 2020, Ghana has not had fraud in its elections but has had more transparency.
Figure 1

Ghana election results 1992-2020

Source: This table was designed by the researcher with the aid of various IEOs Reports (COG, EU-EOM, AUEOM). These votes are in percentage.

Does the Incumbent have any relationship with powerful states such as Russia, European Union, China, or the United States? Does this relationship or lack thereof impact how IEOs judge the election?

Ghana has a good relationship with the EU and the US. These relationships are based on Ghana’s commitment to freedom and democratic values. Congressional Research Service (CRS), in their 2019 report on Ghana/US relations, highlighted the fact that the US sees Ghana as a “stable US partner” because of its democracy (Cook, 2019). The CRS also highlighted the 2009 visit from
former US President Barack Obama to Ghana. President Obama stated that Ghana had become a democratic model for other African countries.

Moreover, the CRS report highlighted that the US provided election assistance to Ghana for a total of $10.6 million in 2016. The US also supported CODEO with Parallel Tabulation Vote systems (PVTs) in 2008, which helped increase the public trust in the electoral process (US Embassy in Ghana, 2020). Most IEOs also depend on the information obtained by PVT for their assessments, thus impacting how IEOs judge Ghana’s election (US Embassy in Ghana, 2020). PVTs also assist ECs in pinpointing and resolving election disputes. (Cook, 2019). The existence of PVTs in Ghana was introduced by IRI and NDI in their efforts to equip CODEO with the tools needed to collect quality data from an election.

Ghana has taken advantage of the endorsements from IEOs such as Cater Center (CC), National Democratic Institute (NDI), and International Republican Institute (IRI) to forester its economic diplomacy with the U.S. The US has a bilateral trading agreement with Ghana, and in 2015 it reached $1.2 billion (U.S. and Ghana Bilateral agreement-US Embassy, 2021). The US imports automobiles, fuel, excavation machinery, and oil drilling equipment to Ghana, while the US imports from Ghana; Cocoa beans, petroleum products, wood products, and gold. Thus, Ghana inviting IEOs and not cheating in an election has benefited Ghana to access international trading with the U.S.

The European Commission on International Partnership stated that Ghana and the EU have a good partnership. The EU states that the partnership is based on four priorities, namely security, migration, climate change, and private sector development (EU website, 2021). Through this partnership, Ghana traded more with the EU in 2015 than the US. In 2015, Ghana and the EU
traded 4.3 billion dollars\(^1\) while Ghana traded 1.2 billion dollars with the US. Thus, Ghana has a good relationship with both the EU and the US. Both the EU and the US have interests with Ghana regarding their foreign policies. This relationship between Ghana, the EU, and the U.S affects how IEOs assess Ghana’s elections. However, the involvement of IRI, CC, and NDI in Ghana’s elections and their cooperation with CODEA and the Electoral Commission of Ghana has helped strengthen domestic institutions in Ghana, let alone enhancing free and fair elections. The head of EU delegates to Ghana, ambassador Claude Marten, stated that Ghana and the EU have a common agenda “to promote regional economic integration, peace and security, democracy, rule of law and human rights” (Cooperation that Count, 2020). Marten emphasized the cooperation between the EU and Ghana, which resulted in Ghana’s transformation to democracy after 1992. He let it be known that the EU is committed to supporting Ghana’s transition to a middle-income county because of Ghana’s commitment to democracy (Cooperation that Count, 2020). The minister of finance and planning, Hon. Seth Terkper, reiterated that “about half of all Official Development Assistance (ODA) received by Ghana is financed by the EU and its member states (Cooperation that Count, 2020). Terkper affirmed that Ghana had received assistance totaling 1.4 billion US dollars through 2020. Thus, Ghana has benefited from the EU and the US based on their commitment to democracy and through the conducting of free and fair elections. This demonstration, in turn, has helped Ghana to have strong institutions that hinder an incumbent from misusing the power given to him. The researcher has shown above that International non-Governmental (INGO)-IEOs such as CC, IRI, and NDI, as well as the U.S embassy in Ghana and the EU, have worked extensively partnering with Coalition of Domestic Observers (CODEO),

\(^{1}\) This amount was originally 3.7 billion Euros. It has been converted by the researcher to US dollars based on the exchange rate between the Euro and US. Dollar on Jan 2, 2022 at 9:52 am
electoral commission as well as civic societies to strengthen democratic institutions in Ghana. Therefore the invitation of IEOs has contributed to the building of strong democratic institutions in Ghana.

**How does the History of Ghana impact election manipulation?**

Two key figures are important in the history of Ghana. First is Kwame Nkrumah, the first prime minister and the first president of Ghana. Due to Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanism and socialist agenda, he was overthrown by a military coup in 1966. The resistance to a socialist agenda and power struggles soon after independence enabled Ghana to have strong institutions today. Ghana was the first black nation to gain independence from colonialism in 1957. The country then experienced a series of military coups between 1966-1990. In short, from 1957-1993, Ghana has been in a struggle for democracy. Within that period, they had seven military Generals as Head of State through military coups and five presidents from four different political parties. The second key figure is Jerry Rawling, who led Ghana from 1981-2001. Rawling’s vice president contested the 2000 Ghana presidential election as the National Democratic Congress (NDC) candidate. Rawling lost to this opposition party candidate (New Patriotic Party-NPP), and Rawling peacefully transferred power to the NPP. The peaceful transfer of power in 2000 from NDC to NPP, facilitated by Rawling, marked a milestone for Ghana’s democracy. Rawling began a tradition of peaceful transitions of power between parties which continued in 2008 and 2016. In 2008, John Atta Mills won the presidential election, and he pushed for more constitutional amendments that strengthened democracy in Ghana. Thus, there has been a continual struggle for democracy in Ghana, which both politicians and citizens have supported. Thus, these struggles have led to strong institutions, as well as norms and traditions of respecting the people’s voice as demonstrated in democratic free and fair elections.
Conclusion

The researcher expected that incumbents in Ghana would invite IEOs and not cheat in an election. The evidence correlates with the research’s expectations. Evidence has shown that between 2000-2020 there has been no report of electoral manipulation, whether pre-election manipulation or ballot box manipulation in Ghana. The evidence reveals that the incumbents, despite having power as executive presidents, are constrained by institutions, domestic observers, media, civil society, the tradition and norm of a peaceful transfer of power, and their international relationships. Ghana underwent a political struggle toward democracy between 1966-1992. During the struggle, Ghana managed to build an awareness of democracy which gave power to free media, civil society, and domestic observers. Ghana uses its democratic status to further its relationship with the EU and the US. As a result, incumbents are constrained to signal to the IC that they respect free and fair elections. Thus, Ghana uses democracy as a tool for economic diplomacy and foreign policies since Ghana is considered to be of geopolitical importance in the region. Therefore, the theory holds that if the domestic structure, allies' expectations of a democratic demonstration, and institutions constrain an incumbent, then that incumbent will invite IEOs and not cheat in an election.

The Case of Zimbabwe

(I) Expectation

There are three questions asked by freedom house under the area of political rights in any country. The scores on those three questions help the researcher anticipate what behavior can be expected from an incumbent in an election in Zimbabwe. For the first question, “Was the current head of government or other chief of national authority elected through free and fair elections.” Zimbabwe scored 1/4, which equals 25% in this area (Freedom House, 2021). The second question
is, “Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections” (Freedom House, 2021). Zimbabwe scored 1/4 equaling 25%. On the third question, “Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies,” Zimbabwe again scored ¼, equaling 25% (Freedom House, 2021). Thus, based on these scores for the three questions above, the researcher expects an incumbent in Zimbabwe will most likely cheat in an election.

The research expects the incumbent of Zimbabwe to invite IEOs who have influence in the international community and who are against EU and US foreign policies. The incumbent will invite IEOs not because of the promotion of democracy or international benefits but rather to cheat the system and stay in power and challenge US and EU foreign policy toward Zimbabwe. The expectation is that Mugabe will selectively invite IEOs whom he perceives will support his regime or his challenge of US and EU foreign policy.

(II) Evidence

Who was invited, and what is their affiliation with the state that is being monitored?

Mugabe lost popularity due to the economic backlash in Zimbabwe, which led to the rise of a new political party in 1999. In 2000, Mugabe lost the constitution referendum, and it was the first loss for Mugabe in an election since 1980 (Winter, 2019). Knowing he was going to face a presidential election in 2002, Mugabe started to punish the white community by taking their farms without compensation, removing sources of funding from opposition parties and leaders, allowing “war veterans” to intimidate those who supported opposition leaders, and effectively ensuring that the opposition could not campaign in rural areas, and attracting new support by promising ‘land handouts’ from white farmers (Winter, 2019). Thus, Mugabe showed signs that he wanted to stay in power by any means. Therefore, the researcher expects a Zimbabwe incumbent to cheat in an
election. In general, the land reform agenda was the only tactic Mugabe used to regain his popularity; land reform was legislatively enacted in the Lancaster House Agreement (LHA) of 1979 (Winter, 2019).

Mugabe signed the LHA because he was assured by the US president, Jimmy Carter (US President 1977-1981), that the US would support financing Zimbabwe for the land redistribution program. Between 1980-1999, Zimbabwe received 44 million pounds \(^2\) from the UK for land reform in Zimbabwe as per the LHA of 1979 (Melber, 2002). Margaret Hilda Thatcher, who was the prime minister of the UK from 1979-1990, ensured that Zimbabwe received finance from the UK to support land reform in Zimbabwe as per the LHA agreement. Tony Blair, the UK prime minister 1997-2007, stopped financial support to Zimbabwe and accused Mugabe of using the fund inappropriately for Mugabe’s own, including giving funds to the elite. In 1986, Ronald Regan, then President of the US, suspended the disbursement of economic aid to Zimbabwe that started during Carter’s administration. Aid was suspended due to the criticism from Zimbabwe’s high officials over US support against the apartheid regime in South Africa (Gwetzman, 1986). In response to both US and UK retaliation, Mugabe decided to part from the LHA and created his own land reform. Mugabe’s (2001) campaign slogan was, “Land is economy, economy is land.” Due to a lack of financial support and drought in Zimbabwe, Mugabe’s popularity dropped. In 2000, for the first time, Mugabe was defeated in the constitution referendum, which aimed at confiscating white owned land for redistribution to black farmers without compensation (BBC AFRICA, 2000). The opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), mobilized those who rejected the referendum and were seen by Mugabe as supporters of white landowners. The MDC saw the constitution referendum defeat as a sign of Mugabe’s decline in popularity and

\(^2\) 44 million pounds is equivalent to $59.6 million based on Jan 21, 2022 at 9:48pm exchange rate.
power. Thus, by 2000, Mugabe was unpopular in Zimbabwe, and he perceived that the UK and US were working with IEOs to remove him from power and instead support the MDC.

By 2000, Mugabe perceived that more former allies and supporters were biased against him and his agenda on land redistribution. In 2000, the EU parliament election observation committee, headed by Pierre Schori, condemned Zimbabwe’s parliamentary election stating it was not free and fair (EU-EOM, 2000). President Mugabe’s regime retaliated by denying Schori and other EU representatives visas to observe the 2002 presidential election. IRI and NDI also refused to observe the 2000 parliamentary election in Zimbabwe because of their affiliation with the US. Due to all the factors mentioned, Zimbabwe and President Mugabe were stigmatized by the international community demanding Zimbabwe to: return to a free and fair election, to have a credible land reform, and that police and military forces should be subordinated to civilians. A good example of pressure and stigma toward Zimbabwe from the international community was the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 (ZDERA). ZDERA was an act from the US congress prohibiting US support for multilateral debt relief and credit for Zimbabwe’s government until they conducted a free and fair election and restored the rule of law (Cook, 2019). Thus, President Mugabe was confronted with two choices: to deal with international pressure in relation to human rights violations and autocratic rule or adopt international norms for free and fair elections and risk losing the presidential election. Nissen (2014) stated that material and social resources are important for how a state responds to a stigma. States that are weak in terms of resources may have few choices when it comes to coping with stigma from the international community, In response to the stigma from international community, the researcher expects Mugabe to invite IEOs and cheat in an election selectively. Incumbents will choose to invite IEOs who are expected to give positive criticism, and those IEOs who are expected to give negative
criticism will not be invited. Zimbabwe is poised to selectively invite IEOs to counter the stigmatization from the international community due to Mugabe’s political behavior. Mugabe was advocating for unity for Africans, Asians, and South Americans against the EU and the US, whom he thought were imperialists imposing norms on other countries across the globe. Nissen (2014) theorized that if an incumbent succeeded in countering or opposing a stigma, then the one who imposed that stigma would be perceived as the transgressor. Thus, Mugabe countered the stigma imposed by the EU and US by refusing the accreditation to the IEOs affiliated with the EU or the US. As an alternative, he invited IEOs from China, Russia, Brazil, Iran, and other states that are victims of fraudulent elections based on the statements from IEOs affiliated with the US and EU.

Since its independence, Zimbabwe has maintained a democratic multiparty system with weak opposition parties due to strongman politics. Mugabe, who fought the guerrilla war for the independence of Zimbabwe, established himself as the only strongman to rule Zimbabwe. As a result, Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) has dominated Zimbabwe politics since the 1980s due to the lack of alternative parties. In 1999, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) was formed and presented a challenge to Mugabe. Previously, most Zimbabweans supported Mugabe because of his land reform agenda, but due to the economic degradation, most supporters left ZANU-PF to join MDC, especially those who wanted changes. Mugabe responded by employing the politics of labeling. He labeled the MDC leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, a puppet of the imperialists, linking Tsvangirai with the EU and the US. As a result, IEOs who criticized the election was perceived by Mugabe as supporters of the MDC and Tsvangirai. In 2002, Zimbabwe refused delegates of EUOEM from Sweden, Britain, Denmark, Finland, Germany, and the Netherlands to observe the election in Zimbabwe because these countries were biased against Mugabe and in favor of the opposition party MDC (The Washington
Post, 2002). Thus, the problem of Mugabe inviting only IEOs who do not criticize him began when the new opposition party, MDC, emerged in 1999. Therefore, the incumbent wanted to cheat in a presidential election to remain in power, but the incumbent still wanted legitimacy from the IEOs.

Evidence shows that incumbent Mugabe invited IEOs whom he perceived would offer positive criticism (EISA, 2002). In 2002, Pierre Schori, Sweden’s Ambassador to the UN and head of the EUEOM delegates for the 2002 presidential election in Zimbabwe, was considered as ‘persona non grata’ by Zimbabwe and was supposed to leave the country (The Guardian, 2002; The New York Times, 2002; CNN WORLD, 2002). Previously, Schori was the head of delegates for the EU’s parliamentary observers who negatively criticized the 2000 Zimbabwe parliamentary election (Washington Post, 2002). Figure 5 summarizes the IEOs invited to Zimbabwe. It is clear in figure 5 that IEOs who gave negative criticism of the parliamentary election was not allowed to be observers in the next election cycle. This style of inviting IEOs who were perceived as not biased against Mugabe’s regime began in 2000. Prior to the 2000 parliamentary election, INGOs and IEOs such as NDI, Cater Center, and IRI conducted a pre-election assessment. They predicted that the 2000 parliamentary election would not be free and fair due to the unfairness that Mugabe’s regime showed to the opposition party. As a result, NDI, IRI, and CC were refused accreditation to observe the 2000, 2002, and 2008 elections. EU-EOM criticize the 2000 election as not being free and fair. Zimbabwe refused visas to some of the election delegates from the EU who were a part of the 2000 EU-EOM observing the 2002 presidential election. COG criticized the 2002 presidential election in Zimbabwe and was not invited in the 2008 presidential election. Thus, Figure 5 shows that those who negatively criticize one election were refused accreditation in the next election. Figure 5 shows that new IEOs were invited to fill the spaces left by those in Mugabe’s regime and refused accreditation.
There were also statements from leaders in Mugabe’s regime, which indicated that only those who offered positive criticism were invited to observe in the next election cycle. Simba Makoni, the former finance minister for Mugabe, was quoted before the 2008 presidential election as saying, “those who believe that the only free and fair election is where the opposition wins, have been excluded since the ruling party, ZANU-PF is posed to score yet another triumph” (McGreal, 2008). Makoni’s statement also shows that Zimbabwe invited only IEOs that supported Mugabe’s regime.

Table 8. Member states that Delegates were Refused Accreditation in 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IEOS</th>
<th>Country Member State Not Invited</th>
<th>Level of Democracy Score (rating out of 100)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU-EOM</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Netherland</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRI,NDI,CC</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COG</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9. IEOs invited in Zimbabwe in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country invited (IEOs)</th>
<th>Level of Democracy (rating out of 100)</th>
<th>Name and Character of the leader invited as an IEOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Abdelaziz Bouteflika (the longest serving president of Algeria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Hosni Mubarak (Longest serving president of Egypt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Rupiah Banda (Controversial election in 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Dmitry Medvedev (President) and Vladimir Putin (PM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Muammar Gaddafi (President of Libya, 1969-2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Joseph Kabila (Took power through military means and was supported by Zimbabwe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Daniel Ortega (anti-US rhetoric)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Omar al-Bashir (Ruled Sudan for almost 30 years and anti-US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Yoweri Museveni (Ruled Uganda for more than 35 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Hugo Chávez (Anti-US and known corrupt politician)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>José Eduardo dos Santos (Ruled Angola between 1979-2017 and enriched his family)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Armando Guebuza (Involved in major corruption during his time as president)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Jakaya Kikwete (A best friend of President Mugabe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Hu Jintao (President of China 2003-2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (Poor relations with the US and EU)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EISA, 2009 and Freedom House Index 2021

In trying to see which IEOs were favored by the incumbent Mugabe, and why the researcher broke down the IEOs and their member states that were invited in 2008 (Table 9) and those member states refused accreditation in 2002 (Table 5). The researcher then uses the number assigned to these members states by Freedom House to compare their level of democracy. In 2008,
the way the incumbent invited IEOs showed clearly that an incumbent invited only those who offered positive criticism. It was evident that the incumbent was against IEOs from the US and EU. Figure 6 shows IOEs invited to the 2008 presidential election. The second column indicates the IEO’s rating from Freedom House, 2020, and these scores are out of 100 points. The illustrated graph shows that most intergovernmental IEOs came from countries where the level of democracy is rated below 50 out of 100. The researcher found that Mugabe invited delegates from countries with incredibly low scores like China (scores 9), Libya (scores 9), Venezuela (scores 14), and Iran (Scores 16). Mugabe refused accreditation from countries with incredibly high scores like Sweden (scores 100), Finland (Scores 100), Canada (scores 98), Netherland (scores 98), or Germany (scores 94). Thus, the above contrast in assigned characteristics between those invited and those not invited, clearly shows that the incumbent favors to invite member states of IEOs who do not practice free and fair elections. Therefore, the researcher suggests that the incumbent Mugabe will invite IEOs that will endorse an election even if fraud occurs.

**Processes taken before releasing that Final Report.**

Figure 2 shows that most IEOs deliver their criticism right away during their preliminary reports while some wait. People only pay attention to reports that come out a few days after the election (COG Manual, 2019). Any reports that come out 2 to 3 months are of no consequence. Evidence shows that Mugabe invites IEOs who do not criticize the election results right after the election. Thus, Mugabe invites legitimate observers so long as their reports and criticism would only come out later when they don’t matter anymore. This evidence also explains why Mugabe singled out one person (the head of the delegates of EUOEM in 2000) and denied him his
accreditation in 2002. Therefore, the positive criticism from IEOs soon after the election is what Mugabe pays attention to when choosing to invite.

The 2008 Zimbabwe presidential election was held on the 27th of June 2008 (SEOM,2008). Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC Countries (ECF) gave their preliminary statement (which was the final report) on 30th June 2008 (3 days after the election) (ECF, 2008). SADC election observer Mission (SEOM) gave their preliminary statement on 29th June 2008, 2 days after the election (SEOM, 2008). The Pan-African Parliament (PAP), which condemned the election, gave their preliminary statement on 29th June 2008, 2 days after the election. AUOM issued its preliminary statement on the 29th of June 2008, 2 days after the election. Evidence showed that the head delegate for the IEOs and those delegates who observed the election are the ones who declared the election as fair or unfair.

Have IEOs ever flipped their assessment after their preliminary Statement? If so, what influenced that change?

This researcher found evidence that IEOs flip, or change, their statement after their preliminary assessment. In the 2008 Zimbabwe presidential election, SEOM, in their preliminary statement, the head of mission stated, “The election did not represent the will of the people of Zimbabwe” (Reuters, 2008). On the other hand, the SEOM final report was ambiguous. It stated that the election was conducted according to the laws and the constitution of Zimbabwe and that the boycott of MDC was a problem. Some IEOs, such as AUOM, acknowledged the presence of intimidation and violence in 2008 in the pre-election period (AUEOM, 2009). However, they think the election and the winner were legitimate since, on the election day, they did not see electoral

3 Pierre Schori (Head of delegates for EUOM) was denied accreditation for 2002 presidential election in Zimbabwe due to the negative criticism he gave soon after parliamentary election in 2000.
misconduct (AUEOM, 2009). Evidence has shown that those who headed observation mission
delegates who gave a negative assessment in their preliminary statement, the Zimbabwean regime
considered their statement as individual opinion, and not the assessment of the whole mission
group. In the 2000 Zimbabwe parliamentary election, Pierre Schori was the head of the observer’s
mission. Pierre negatively assessed the election, and the regime retaliated against him and he was
declared, ‘persona non grata’ (Meldrum, 2002). Thus, IEOs who give a positive preliminary
statement or change their report from negative to positive received accreditation in Zimbabwe.

**Are the IEOs free without considering other factors like geopolitics in monitoring the
election?**

There was evidence that most IEOs from Africa, Asia, and South America were
sympathizing with incumbent Mugabe based on the land crisis or dispute in Zimbabwe. Evidence
showed that in 1930 the South Rhodesian (Today Zimbabwe) passed a Land Appointment Act
(LAA), which made it illegal for Black African people to own land outside of established ‘native
reserves’ (Mhaka, 2020). The result of LAA was that after independence, Zimbabwean Whites
were only 4.5% of the population yet owned 51% of the land (Mhaka, 2020). Most IEOs are given
a summary of Zimbabwe history before giving their report and mentioned the major problem to be
disproportional land ownership (COG REPORT, 2000 & 2002, SADC REPORT, 2002). Hence the
reports connect the history of Zimbabwe and the results of the election. Incumbent Mugabe labeled
IEOs from the U.S. and EU that gave a negative assessment as imperialists who supported white
farmers (Streater, 2019). Evidence shows that Mugabe has managed to mobilize some IEOs to
support him through his rhetoric about western imperialists. In the 36TH African Union Summit on
SABC News live television incumbent Mugabe said,

“The imperialists are everywhere in Africa: Through NGOs who help for Regime change, we are free why Regime
change? Another day Kikwete was telling me that he was told that his ruling party Chama cha Mapinduzi has ruled
for a long time they should allow another party to take over. Is that Democracy? And that was coming from Europe. Mr. Ban Ki-moon tell them to shut their mouth. 1

After Mugabe made the above statements, all the delegates from that summit stood up and applauded Mugabe. Mugabe was telling the summit that it is not only him that is persecuted and was able to stir up his rhetoric to get support. Thus, Zimbabwe had no geopolitical importance, but Mugabe was able to convince most IEOs to sympathize with him due to the land crisis in Zimbabwe. Incumbents use sympathy to choose those who sympathize with him and cheat in an election.

What forms of Manipulation were used?

First and foremost, one must understand that the president of Zimbabwe was granted too much power by the Zimbabwe Constitution of 1980, which was amended in 1987 (Winter, 2019). The power granted to the president can result in a conflict of interest. Section 30 (1) of the 1980 Zimbabwe Constitution, amended in 2013, gives the president an immunity to being personally liable to any civic or criminal proceedings in any court. Section 63 (1) of the Zimbabwean Constitution, as amended in 1987, grants the president power at any time as he wishes to prorogue or dissolve the parliament. Section 87(2) of the same constitution allows the president to appoint a tribunal and appoint three tribunal members, including appointing a chair of that tribunal to remove a judge of any court.

Further, Act 14/1988, 28/1989, 11/1991 (section 32) and 20/1994 (section 21) gives the president the power to assign salary, allowance, and other benefits to the vice president, ministers, and parliamentary members from time to time. Thus, the constitutional power granted to the president does not constrain his behavior but rather opens a door for him to utilize these powers to benefit himself, including maintaining his position as president. Therefore, the court, the parliament, and member of the president’s cabinet will be constrained to challenge the president
when breaking norms. If the president cannot be questioned by the two other branches of the government (Legislature and Judiciary), is it not possible to stay in power even if he is not popular?

Reports of most IEOs have stated clearly that the Ruling party ZANU-PF and the incumbent Mugabe have used violence and intimidation toward the opposition party’s supporters (COG, 2002). Even IEOs such as SEOM, and AUOM who seem to legitimize the election as free and fair elections in the 2008 election, have stated clearly that there was violence and intimidation in the pre-election period. (AUEOM, 2008; SEOM, 2008; ECF, 2008). The Electoral Commission Forum of SADC Countries (ECF) mentioned in their report that MDC was prevented from campaigning freely, and 120 of their officials were arrested by police. The public and state media covered ZANU-PF only, and that pre-election manipulation dominated the run-off election (ECF, 2008). In the 2000 election, IRI and NDI were denied accreditation because of their pre-election assessment, which mentioned pre-election manipulation (NDI&IRI, 2000). So, this evidence shows that the incumbent relied on pre-election manipulation.

Did the incumbent invite long-term or only short-term visits of Independent Election Observers?

IEOs delegates who are short-term mission (STM) normally stay in a host country for 10-14 days and focus mainly on a few days before election day, election day, and up to 72 hours after the polling has occurred (AU 2013, 30; EU 2016, 158). IEOs who send STM to an election is limited to properly analyze most of the pre-election manipulation. Evidence showed that the incumbent Mugabe relied heavily on short-term IEOs to monitor the election. Most observers in the 2002 and 2008 presidential elections were given accreditation merely one day before the election day (EISA, 2009). In the 2000 Parliamentary election, IRI & NDI, who are long-term observers, were denied
accreditation by the Zimbabwean register office (EUEOM REPORT, 2000). World Council of Churches (WCC) observers were given accreditation on June 23rd, 2000, one day before the polling opening (EUOEM report, 2000). In the 2000 parliamentary election, EUOEM delegates arrived in Zimbabwe on the 20th & 21st of June 2000, two days before the election, and left the country on the 27th. (EP observation Report, 2000). Thus, the incumbent relied on short-term observers to legitimize the election and can delay accreditation so that IEOs could not witness pre-election manipulation.

Not all IEOs focused only on the election day regardless of sending STM delegates to an election. As a result, incumbent Mugabe does not invite random STM to an election but selectively invites IEOs who will not say much about pre-election manipulation since they did not witness the cheating. IEOs such as AU-EOM and SADC-EOM have endorsed the 2002 and 2008 elections based on the election day and ignored what happened in the pre-election. (AU-EOM,2002,2009). On the other hand, COG has condemned 2002 presidential elections based on pre-election manipulation (COG, 2002). Mugabe did not invite COG in the 2008 election after noting that he made a mistake by assuming that being STM, they will not base their report on the pre-election manipulation.

Was there an improvement compared to the previous election, and what did the observers say based on the improvement?

In the 2000 parliamentary election, COG, in their report, praise was granted to Zimbabwe based on previous elections compared to the ones before 2000. Later in the 2002 presidential election, the same COG who praised the 2000 election condemned the 2002 election based on the 2000 election results. In 2008 the first round of elections that was conducted on 7th March 2008 was praised by all IEOs. However, the 2008 2nd round election was condemned by the most
credible IEOs. Then, since the 2008 election, until incumbent Mugabe was thrown out of his position by a military coup (2017), there was no improvement compared to the previous election. Thus, there was an improvement in the 2000 election and the first round election in 2008.

**Does an incumbent have relationships with powerful states? How does this relationship impact his ability to cheat and get away with it?**

Evidence shows that China and Russia supported Zimbabwe during the 1970’s guerrilla warfare and after independence. Mugabe was prohibited from entering the US and EU as part of sanction in response to the 2002 election (the Guardian, Wed 8 May 2002). Despite Mugabe being isolated by the west (U.S and EU), he maintained a good relationship with China and Russia. President Xi visited Mugabe in Zimbabwe (BBC, 2015). Mugabe visited Russian President Vladimir Putin (The Kremlin, 2015). In 2008 Russia and China vetoed to block the U.S. resolution on sanctions against Zimbabwe due to what happened in the 2008 election. This evidence is also supported by those he invited in the 2008 election, China, Russia, Iran, India, Indonesia, and Brazil (EISA, 2009) and who were not invited, U.S., EU, and the UK. In 2008 US and EU proposed sanctions against Zimbabwe leadership, but China and Russia vetoed the resolution (SC/93936 11 July,2008). Figure 7 below shows those who opposed the sanctions and why Mugabe invited China, Russia, and Indonesia in the 2008 election. The evidence in Table 10 also suggests that Mugabe was able to build an alliance to counter the stigma that was posed by the U.S. and EU. Above all, on 30 January 2015, Mugabe became the African Union Chairperson, which cemented Mugabe’s legitimate position as president of Zimbabwe.
Table 10. Vote for UN SC/9396 (2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote in favor</th>
<th>Against</th>
<th>Abstain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium,</td>
<td>China,</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina</td>
<td>Libya,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faso,</td>
<td>Russia Federation,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica,</td>
<td>South Africa,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia,</td>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UN SC/9396 of 11 July, 2008

What system followed before the transition to democracy began? How does the history of the country impact election manipulation?

The purpose of this short narration of history is to show why Mugabe, starting in the year 2000, changed his style of inviting IEOs. Starting in the year 2000, it was clear that Mugabe only invited IEOs who would not challenge his legitimacy, the electoral process, as well as the outcome of elections. Zimbabwe has never been a single-party system, but before 2000 Mugabe had never had a challenge like what he faced in 2000 from Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). The MDC was formed in 1999 due to the economic backlash in Zimbabwe (EISA, 2000). Data on table 11 and 12 show the background of Zimbabwe and their current political situation about inviting IEOs and cheating in an election.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Changes</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>BSA colonize Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi under Cecil Rhodes</td>
<td>The settler occupied fertile land (Three countries called Southern Rhodesia)</td>
<td>Land crisis become a topic and Mugabe tool to get supporters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>British took over Southern Rhodes from BSA</td>
<td>White Settlers develop a segregation society</td>
<td>Incumbents get support when accusing EU and U.S. IEOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Zambia and Malawi become independent from Britain</td>
<td>RF threaten to Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from Britain</td>
<td>Mugabe’s perception that Ian Smith Supporters want him out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>The RF under Ian Smith carried the threat of UDI</td>
<td>Zimbabwe became Rhodesia &amp; Mugabe started the guerrilla war</td>
<td>Mugabe created good connections to the military and Veteran of wars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Smith &amp; Mugabe sign LHA</td>
<td>A parliamentary system, 20/100 reserved seats for the whites (Minority)</td>
<td>Highlight how Zimbabwe was on a good track to transition to Democracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1st Democratic Election</td>
<td>Mugabe becomes PM and Rev. Canaan Banana ceremonial president.</td>
<td>Mark the start to transition to Democracy in Zimbabwe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Constitutional change</td>
<td>Executive Presidency no 20/100 seats.</td>
<td>Mark the beginning of one-man rule and the popular vote in Zimbabwe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>MDC was formed</td>
<td>Mugabe’s power is challenged for the first time since 1980.</td>
<td>Threat Mugabe’s stay in power Cheating in an election to stay in power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>EUOM gave -ve report</td>
<td>Mugabe will invite only IEOs that will give a positive report</td>
<td>Invite IEOs and yet cheat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: COG 2000 Zimbabwe Parliamentary Report and Article by Robert Block in 2002
Key: RF-The Rhodesian Front, LHA-Lancaster House Agreement, MDC-Movement for Democratic Change, ESAP-Economic Structural Adjustment Programs-BSA-British South African Company
Mugabe’s selection of IEOs was based on his view that the US and European countries are against his regime because of his fight against the white minority in Zimbabwe, who occupied most of the fertile land. As a result, he invited IEOs who were not critics of him. That is why he preferred to invite IEOs from Africa or Eurasia. However, no data shows that there was a democratic improvement under his regime. Thus, despite his perception that some IEOs were against him, then he invited other IEOs does not imply that Mugabe intended to improve democracy in the country. The data in figure 10 below shows a constant decline of democracy in Zimbabwe between 1998-2008 (Freedom House, 2008). The same data indicates that before 2000, there was a slight improvement of democracy in Zimbabwe. Prior to 2000, Mugabe invited the European Union Election Observation Mission (EUEOM), Commonwealth Observation Group (COG) and other INGOs IEOs. After 2000, Mugabe no longer invited the above groups of IEOs, instead he selectively invited African and Eurasia IEOs. With this selected group of IEOs from 2001 to 2007 the data in figure 10 below shows a constant declining of democracy in Zimbabwe since. This could be interpreted as political strategy to seek endorsement despite not conducting a free and fair election. Therefore, inviting IEOs by itself does not improve democracy in a state, rather a political will from an incumbent to conduct a free and fair election.

Table 12. Ten years Review of Political Rights and Civil Liberty of Zimbabwe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Political Rights</th>
<th>Civil Liberty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>5.5 PF</td>
<td>6.5 PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>6.5 PF</td>
<td>6.5 PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>6.6 NF</td>
<td>6.6 NF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>6.6 NF</td>
<td>6.6 NF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>6.6 NF</td>
<td>6.6 NF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>7.6 NF</td>
<td>7.6 NF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>7.6 NF</td>
<td>7.6 NF</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>7.6 NF</td>
<td>7.6 NF</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>7.6 NF</td>
<td>7.6 NF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>7.6 NF</td>
<td>7.6 NF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key notes: PF (Partly Free) and NF (Not Free)

Conclusion

The expectation in the case of Zimbabwe was that the incumbent would selectively invite IEOs and cheat in an election. The evidence showed that the incumbent selectively invited IEOs
he perceived would not offer negative criticism and he refused accreditation for the next election cycle to those IEOs who offered negative criticism. The incumbent also took advantage of weak institutions that were not able to constrain him and, in fact, permitted him to cheat in an election. In response to the international stigma, the incumbent counteracted the stigma by mobilizing those who would support his idea of land reform, as well as anti-imperialists both domestically and internationally. The incumbent managed to portray IEOs from the US and EU as transgressors. Due to the international isolation, which led to an economic backlash, the incumbent was forced, by his party after the military coup to resign in 2017. The evidence above is sufficient and correlates with the expectations, ultimately suggesting that the theory holds.

The case of Israel

(I) Expectation

The researcher uses the three questions asked by freedom house under the area of political rights in any country. The scores on those three questions help the researcher anticipate what behavior can be expected from an incumbent in an election in Israel. For the first question, “Was the current head of government or other chief of national authority elected through free and fair elections.” Israel scored 4/4, which equals 100% in this area (Freedom House, 2021). The second question is, “Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections” (Freedom House, 2021). Israel scored 4/4 equaling 100%. On the third question, “Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies,” Israel again scored 4/4 equaling 100% (Freedom House, 2021). Thus, based on these scores for the three questions above, the researcher expects that an incumbent in Israel will most likely not cheat in an election.
The researcher expects the incumbent in Israel not to invite IEOs and not to cheat in an election. The researcher’s expectation is based on Jewish anxiety to foreign interference that is linked with the traumatic memory of the history of being occupied by other nations, which has posed a threat to their existence as a nation. That history stretches as far back to their ancient history (biblical history) up to and through May 14, 1948, when the State of Israel was established. Israel’s institutions and historical legacy led the researcher to expect the incumbent to be constrained and not cheat in an election. Under the evidence section below, the researcher will explain why both the structure of the institutions and the nation’s history have led incumbents to respect the Knesset (Israel Parliament) and the peaceful transfer of power. The culmination of these events provoked the constraint of an incumbent who might want to cheat in an election. Moreover, Israel’s geopolitical importance helps Israel acquire its legitimacy in the international community even without showing that it respects human rights or the demonstration of democracy. Israel will not invite IEOs, not only because of being anxious about foreign interference in their domestic affairs but also because international organizations are so careful in criticizing Israel. Thus, the researcher expects Israel not to invite IEOs because of their geopolitical importance and the historical legacy of their institutions. Therefore, their geopolitical importance becomes one factor that leads the state not to invite IEOs for elections.

(II) Evidence

Israel and IEOs Relations

The issue of inviting IEOs for Israel has to do with Israel’s foreign policy, which is mainly associated with their identity. Two historical events that form Israel’s identity. Their ancient history (Biblical history), which explains the formation of Israel and its connection to the Promised Land (Canaan), is the first base of their identity as Israel. The first historical event connects Israel’s
identity to the land. Thus, retaining the promised land informs how Israel’s foreign policy and diplomatic relationship with other nations are formed. The second historical event is the Holocaust (when approximately six million Jews died) which took place during WWII under the leadership of Adolf Hitler. Since the independence of Israel in 1948, the Holocaust has been the essence of Jewish identity. Thus, the fear during the Holocaust was the genuine fear of Israel to survive as a nation. Evidence shows Israel’s fear of survival as a nation and their belief that they are the chosen nation among all other nations has impacted how Israel perceives and experiences international organizations (IOs). Israel believes that IOs, especially international monitors, are biased against Israel (Brom, 2004). Furthermore, the idea that Israel is the chosen nation among other nations holds Israel to a higher moral standard than those who do not believe that Israel is a chosen nation. Therefore, without understanding what informs Israel’s identity, it will be hard to understand why Israel has built a defensive mechanism when it comes to IOs criticism.

Has Israel ever invited IEOs? The answer is no. Evidence shows that Israel has never invited IEOs or accepted IEOs’ proposition to monitor the election in Israel. The first Knesset of Israel on January 25th, 1949, was not supervised by the UN or IEOs but rather by Israelis themselves (Knesset election, 1948). Thus, evidence shows that since the formation of Israel as a nation, they have never invited IEOs. Israel has stated publicly that they don’t and they will never invite IEOs. In 2018 when there was a request to invite IEOs from IOs in Israel, the speaker of the Knesset Yuli Edelstein said, “We have never accepted the presence of outside observers of our democratic process, and the idea that we would ever do so is inconceivable.” (Wootliff, 2019). The Statement from Edelstein is evidence that Israel has never invited IEOs and has no plans to do so. The statement also highlights Israel’s desire for no interference by outsiders in their democratic process. Edelstein doubled down on Israel’s refusal to invite IEOs in his letter, which
explained why Israel rejected IEOs coming to Israel. One reason, among many, is stated in this letter from Edelstein:

“Since gaining independence more than seventy years ago, the nation-state of the Jewish people has been a beacon of democracy that illuminates its surroundings. It ensures that all its citizens benefit from the freedoms of assembly and the press, safeguards human rights, and carries out changes of government in an orderly manner through a fair process that is fully and independently overseen by the relevant authorities” (Wootiff, 2019).

Knesset’s letter as speaker unequivocally demonstrates that Israel has never invited IEOs. Edelstein’s letter also shows that one of the reasons for Israel not to invite IEOs is that they have appropriate authorities in place ensuring that their election is free and fair, and they do not need IEOs.

Another reason for not inviting IEOs to Israel is that they do not want their allies to monitor their election. Israel explained to their closest ally that they could take care of their domestic affairs because they have capable domestic institutions. In 2011, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed the joint session of the US Congress talking about democracy. Netanyahu started clearly that the US does not need to export democracy to Israel because Israel is capable of ensuring democracy within its borders (Journal of Palestine Studies, 2011). Netanyahu’s speech to the US Congress is additional evidence that Israel wants to handle its domestic affairs and does not need outsiders to interfere.

Israel is involved with IEOs, specifically OAS, ESCE, and other IEOs, granting permission to observe elections in Israel occupied Palestine. Although, Israel has been accused of not letting IEOs monitor elections in West Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. In 2021, the EU accused Israel of ignoring the request from the EU to observe the Palestinian election for those who live in parts of Jerusalem (Toameh &Lazaroff, 2021). Thus, the evidence shows that Israel will still be reluctant to allow IEOs to observe elections in their geographical area, including areas they control, even if the election observed is not Israel’s own election.
The Geopolitical Position of Israel

Scholars of international relations agree that for a state to acquire geopolitical importance, it must have variables such as military strength and willingness to use it, surplus economy (provide aid and invest in other states), an ideology of leadership that serves as a model to other states, a cohesive system of government, competency of human resources, development of information and communication, as well as, science and technology (Sachs & Huggard, 2015). Thus, when a state has some of those variables, it can dominate neighboring states and become a strategic partner in the IC. Evidence shows that Israel has invested itself militarily in their region and is always ready to use its military. Israel is the only democratic nation in the Middle East region (bar Tunisia) (Freedom House, 2020; Edwards, 2018, 188). Israel is a strategic partner for countries that are interested in the Middle East, such as the US and Great Britain. The geographical location of Israel and its history make Israel an important geopolitical player within the IC. Therefore, even without the demonstration of democracy, Israel has an important place within the IC.

Israel is where Jesus Christ was born; it is the Holy Land where Christianity was born. Many Christians make pilgrimages to Jerusalem and considered Israel God’s chosen nation. Those who use common or revised lectionary when delivering sermons on Sundays, within mainline Christianity, read passages from the Old Testament and references Israel, the Promised Land. The Biblical story has shaped Christianity for many years, and Israel, the promised land, has a special place within people's hearts due to their religion. There are famous bible verses that Christians use to defend Israel “Now Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel” (Numbers 24:1) or “The Lord remembers us and will bless us: He will bless the house of Israel” (Psalm 115:12). There is also a biblical verse in Genesis that says God sworn to Abraham and his descendants (Israel) that the territory in ancient Canaan, is their promised land on the eastern end of the
Mediterranean Sea. Thus, the above biblical verses are among some of the biblical verses that shaped many people across the globe and gave Israel legitimacy as geopolitically important. Therefore, it is harder to criticize Israel when it does not invite IEOs or even when it violates human right.

The biblical story attracts many politicians across the globe to defend Israel. US Secretary of State Mr. Pompeo, when addressing Israel at the 2019 Christians United for Israel, said, “the Lord did smile at me.” Thus, the biblical story has shaped so many leaders in their perception of Israel, and Israel knows it. Therefore, it is easy for Israel to benefit from the international community without the demonstration of democracy or adherence to human rights. In 2019, President Trump tweeted “The Jewish people in Israel love him like he is the King of Israel” (Bailey, 2019). Israel enjoys geopolitical importance and hence, does not get criticized for not inviting IEOs to their elections. IRI and NDI have a reputation for criticizing most countries that do not give them accreditation. Surprisingly, IRI and NDI have never criticized Israel for denying them accreditation in the territories that Israel occupies, but the Palestinians host the election. They have never conducted a pre-election assessment as they normally would for other countries.

The second event is the holocaust when the Jewish people faced genocide (approximately 6 million Jews died) and persecution under Hitler, followed by the relocation and immigration of Jewish people and the establishment of Israel as a protected and official country for the Jewish people. These two historical events: the exodus from Egypt and the Holocaust, make Israel exceptional in the international community but also have shaped their domestic structure as well as politics (political structure). Internationally, both the biblical story that defines Israel as God’s chosen nation and the Holocaust elicit sympathy from other nations with Israel. For Example, the US has laws that protect discrimination against Jews and policies that protect the nation of Israel.
Political institutions in Israel and electoral Manipulation.

The evidence shows that Israel had competitive elections with no reports of manipulation recorded. The electoral system in Israel constrains the incumbent from cheating in an election, but also, the judiciary branch is free and will punish a party or incumbent who cheats in an election (Plesner, 2019). The way Israel’s political system and its institutions are designed, it is so hard for an incumbent to cheat in an election. Israel conducted four elections from 2019-2021 without a winner (Rasgon, 2021). Since 2019, neither Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu nor his opponents were able to win enough seats in Parliament to form a coalition government with a secure majority. Despite the struggle to win the majority in the parliament for four consecutive elections, there were no indications or claims that Netanyahu intended or tried to rig the election. Thus, the political system, and institutions are well designed to constrain incumbents who want to benefit in an election through the misuse of their power. Therefore, Israel's structure makes it difficult to cheat and steal an election.

Israel's parliamentary democracy is unitary (not federal), with national elections for its unicameral parliament government governed by electoral rules of proportional representation. Israel’s primary source of governing is its parliament (Knesset) named after the Great Assembly of the first reconstituted Jewish state in the 5th Century B.C.E. The modern Knesset form is a unicameral, 120 seat parliament, chosen by national elections via proportional representation (PR) every four years. Duverger’s Law (a political science theory) suggests that proportional representation leads to a multiparty system representing various interests and ideologies, all competing for seats. Combined with the rule related to electoral thresholds, PR parliamentary system can incentivize more or few parties. Israel’s electoral threshold of 3.25% is used with the PR. Thus, the result of 120 PR seats and a low 3.25% electoral threshold is a guaranteed coalition
government. Evidence shows that there has never been a party that has held the majority of seats (61) in parliament. When a party gets an alliance totaling 61 seats, they can control the parliament. The above explanation shows that an incumbent is constrained by the electoral system, and it is hard to cheat. Remember, people, vote for a party, not an individual. At the same time, to form a government and become Prime Minister of Israel, one needs their own party and other parties to form a coalition. Therefore, any attempt to cheat in an election will jeopardize the chance to attract other parties to form a coalition government.

**Israel’s allies are a source of soft Power across the Global**

UN data includes a list of Vetoes in the UN security council, which shows that since independence (1948-2020), the US alone has cast negative votes (vetoes) more than 42 times for resolutions that were against Israel (Dag Hammarskjöld Library, 2021). All these resolutions were to deal with the Israel-Palestine conflict. On the one hand, these resolutions against Israel interest the UN. Still, they have also caused Israel to mistrust international involvement in their affairs due to their belief that international monitors that are linked with UN are biased against Israel (Brom,2004). This bias can be one of the reasons why Israel does not invite IEOs. The conflict between Israel and Palestine has also damaged Israel’s relationship with most Arab states. As a result, Israel defends itself militarily, economically and defends its institutions against any harm from the outside. Hence, IEOs can also be perceived by Israel as an invitation to attack to its democratic institutions.

**History of Israel and how it has impacted its current democratic election.**

There are two historical examples that inform the current democratic culture of Israel. First, the Zionist Congress that took place in 1897 in Basel, Switzerland, where various Jewish communities’ representatives democratically debated how to fulfill Jewish self-determination. Thus, democratic processes were adopted by making important decisions based on a majority
vote. Second, the pre-state political system in the land of Israel under the Ottoman Empire and later under the British mandate developed a political system based on proportional representation and commitment to democratic principles. Before Israel enacted laws concerning the political system, the two examples mentioned above established democratic principles, values, and practices. In 1950, Knesset members voted to postpone issuing a formal constitution, known as the ‘Harari’ (Yitzhak Harari) decision. Thus, until recently, Israel does not have a formal constitution but rather basic laws. Jews carried on the democratic principles in the absent of a constitution because of the two historical examples the researcher mentioned above.

During the first Zionist Congress and the Ottoman Empire and British mandate Israel had no constitution, and yet, they were able to make their decisions democratically. These two historical events informed Jews on the importance of choosing a leader through democratic means. The above history also shows that Israel did not have to transition to democracy after their independence in 1948, and yet, they built their politics on the democratic principles that had been practiced since 1897. Thus, the historical legacy on adopting democratic principles in the absence of a constitution is evidence that the presence of a constitution alone in a country without a domestic structure that enforces democratic principles cannot sustain democracy.

The electoral system in Israel has been reformed twice. From 1948-1992 the PM was chosen by the Knesset, and from 1992-2001 the PM was chosen by direct or popular vote. Then from 2001 to the present, the PM was chosen by the Knesset. The people chose to elect the PM in the direct election system (two ballots). While in the indirect election system (one ballot), people choose to elect a party. The two-ballot system (direct) meant people had more choice; however, it was blamed for party fragmentation because it increased the power of small parties. The popular vote meant creating one strongman in politics. Thus, returning to a single ballot was a means to
reverse the unforeseen consequences of the direct election system (Ottolenghi, 2007). The Nazi rule in Germany and the Ottoman Empire has also shaped the democratic culture in Israel. These two historical events were a lesson for Israel to avoid the rule of one strongman politics. As a result, they have opted to choose a PR, a representation system, and the threshold rule to ensure not only a coalition government but also votes that are directed to party ideology rather than a popular candidate. The PR, threshold rule, and the strong institutions are what make it harder for an incumbent or party to cheat in an election. Thus, Israel's history before independence helps Israel ensure that appropriate authorities and systems constrain incumbents.

**Conclusion**

The researcher expects Israel not to invite IEOs in their election because of their geopolitical importance, and the researcher expects the incumbent not to cheat in an election because of the domestic institutional structures. The evidence correlates with the researcher’s expectation and therefore, the theory holds.

**The Case of Egypt**

(I) Expectation

The researcher uses three questions asked by Freedom House under the area of political rights in any country. The scores on those three questions help the researcher anticipate what behavior can be expected from an incumbent in an election in Egypt. For the first question, “Was the current head of government or other chiefs of national authority elected through free and fair elections.” Egypt scored 0/4, which equals 0% in this area (Freedom House, 2021). The second question is, “Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections,” (Freedom House, 2021). Egypt scored 1/4 equaling 25%. The third question is, “Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant
election management bodies.” Egypt again scored 1/4 equaling 25% (Freedom House, 2021). Thus, based on these scores for the three questions above, the researcher expects an incumbent in Egypt will most likely cheat in an election.

The researcher expects the incumbent in Egypt not to invite IEOs and cheat in an election. The incumbent will use the advantage of the country’s geopolitical importance to influence international relationships and foreign policies rather than the demonstration of democracy and adherence to human rights. The incumbent in Egypt will take advantage of weak domestic institutions which do not constraint incumbents from cheating in an election. The incumbent will also use the leverage Egypt has on the US, EU, or Britain to make sure that IEOs do not have much influence on the incumbent's legitimacy to the international community (IC). That is to say, the incumbent will use the geopolitical importance of Egypt as a lobbying tool to the IC.

(II) Evidence

Which IEOs were invited, and what is their affiliation with the state that is being monitored and the states that the IEOs are embodied?

One cannot explain the history of Egyptian engagement with IEOs without the mention of the Arab Spring in 2011. Before 2011, Egypt did not invite IEOs; even opposition parties and public opinion did not support the idea of inviting IEOs for elections. The main augment was that IEOs would interfere with Egyptian sovereignty. Egypt had its first-ever free and fair election in 2011, soon after the Arab spring revolution (Edwards, 2018; pg. 204). Before 2011, Egypt had an authoritarian leader, President Hosnin Mubarak, who ruled Egypt from 1981-2011; during his reign Egypt never invited IEOs. Mubarak’s regime has publicly and explicitly stated how it perceived IEOs. The statement given by the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Mufid Shehab, in 2010 highlighted four reasons why Egypt was not inviting IEOs: First, the regime believes that IEOs
would interfere with the electoral commission. Second, the regime fears that IEOs will supplement domestic observers. Third, the regime believes that IEOs are supposed to be invited by states that are not confident with their institutions or by new states with no authority or institutions to supervise the electoral process. Fourth, the regime thinks that citizens, both those who support the opposition and the ruling party, are against IEOs on the ground of national sovereignty.

The idea of inviting IEOs to observe elections in Egypt did not just happen after the Arab spring; rather, the public opinion had been changing since the 2000s regarding inviting IEOs. Data from the World Public Opinion and Freedom House in 2009 has shown that 2/3 of Egyptians approved of the invitation of IEOs (Freedom House, 2009; Dunne and Hamzawy, 2010). The rigidity of the regime regarding the invitation of IEOs shows their perceptions regarding independent IEOs (INGOs). IEOs who are INGOs were the first ones to request accreditation in Egypt. In 2006, IRI and NDI applied to work in Egypt but never registered. As a result, in 2011, the administration told both the IRI and NDI to leave Egypt because they were in Egypt illegally. (IRI website). Egyptians (or the Egyptian incumbent), after the Arab Spring, also worried about INGOs and NGOs since they work to provide civic education for the citizens (Amnesty International, 2016). The regime’s fear toward INGOs could explain why, when the regime decided to invite IEOs, they chose to invite IEOs who are IGOs and not INGOs. Starting in 2014, Egypt decided to start inviting IEOs, but the evidence shows that they mostly have accredited regional IEOs, such as EUOM, AUOM, The Arab League, and COMESA, to observe elections. Data on table 13 shows who was invited in 2014, and 2018 to observe the Egyptian elections. Data on table 13 also shows that none of the regional IEOs ever criticized Egyptian elections in either their preliminary statements or final reports. Thus, the regime decided to invite IEOs only aiming at using IEOs as a pacifier to calm down the public opinion.
Table 13. IEOs in Egypt 2014 and 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>Types of IEOs</th>
<th>Judgment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU-EOM</td>
<td>EU-EOM</td>
<td>Regional IEOs</td>
<td>Positive criticism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU-EOM</td>
<td>AU-EOM</td>
<td>Regional IEOs</td>
<td>Ambiguous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab League</td>
<td>Arab League</td>
<td>Regional IEOs</td>
<td>Positive criticism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern and Southern Africa</td>
<td>COMESA</td>
<td>Regional IEOs</td>
<td>Positive criticism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table designed by researcher using data from EU-EOM, AU-EOM, COMESA, and Arab League Observer Mission (2022)

Who financed those who were invited, and what process is required before the final report? Have they ever flipped after the preliminary report, and what influenced the flip?

In chapter three, the researcher explained that there are two types of IEOs. There are those IEOs that are the embodiment of the states who are state-funded and, most of the time, represent states’ interests. There are also IEOs that are independent, who are not funded by states. State-funded IEOs are constraint by states on how they assess an election and where they are invited. Figure 10 shows that when Egypt decided to invite IEOs, they mostly focused on inviting regional IEOs. Regional IEOs are state-funded IEOs and represent the interest of those states and their relationship to the state being observed. In 2014, EUEOM and AUEOM, in their preliminary reports, praised the election of Egypt. Later in their final reports, they reiterated that the election was free and fair but not peaceful, which led to low voter turnout (Brozus and Roll, 2014). This change of tone by the regional IEOs was a result of being scrutinized by their member states and media after the preliminary report was released (Kirkpatrick, 2014). Despite EUEOM and AUEOM praising the 2014 Egypt election, almost all international media (CNN, BBC, Aljazeera) and other newspapers (The Guardian, The Washington Post, New York Times, 2014) condemned
the 2014 Egyptian election. The research conducted from 2011-2014 shows that EU states are more interested in ensuring Egypt’s stability and security in the region rather than democracy (Klant, 2017). This research (2011-2014) is evidence that EUEOM election assessments will be based on EU interest rather than the actual assessment of the election. Therefore, it is easier for the regime to invite regional IEOs.

The idea of inviting regional IEOs from Africa and Arab League benefits the Egyptian regime. Egypt is a member of AUEOM and the Arab League. Egypt contributes financially and participates in decision-making for both AUEOM and the Arab league. Therefore, it is so hard for AUEOM or the Arab League to offer negative criticism to Egypt about an election without softening their tone. The headquarters for the Arab league is in Cairo -Egypt (Arab League, 2021). The Arab league aims to strengthen ties among member states, coordinating their policies, and promote common interests. Most of the member states of the Arab League are not pro-democracy (bar Tunisia) (Freedom House, 2020). Thus, due to the fact that the member states of the Arab League are not pro-democracy, it is beneficial for Egypt to invite them because they will not scrutinize Egypt's shortcomings in their election.

Egypt is an important partner in the African Union because of its history, military power, as well as geopolitical importance. Thus, inviting AUEOM to observe Egypt’s election does not deter the regime from rigging the election; in fact, it helps the regime domestically to legitimatize the regime’s election to power because the people were able to choose the ruler of Egypt. Therefore, choosing to invite IEOs is a political strategy to evade the changes that the 2011 Arab Spring demanded of the regime.

Egypt is a strategic partner for the EU. Due to Egypt’s geopolitical importance it has leverage over the EU when it comes to condemning those who do not observe democratic
principles. EU-EOM's decision is influenced by EU foreign policies and the current situation of refugees flowing to their states from North Africa (Pancerski and Norman, 2018). In 2018, the EU offered Egypt financial investment incentives if Egypt could control the stream of refugees coming to Europe from North Africa (Pancerski and Norman, 2018). Thus, Egypt agreed to invite IEOs and focused its invitation on regional IEOs who have a good connection to Egypt and understand Egypt’s political strategy; to receive an election endorsement that helps domestically and regionally. The evidence shows that Egypt does not invite IEOs to please the IC but rather to please the domestic community that demanded democracy during the Arab Spring revolution.

**Are the IEOs free from considering factors like the geopolitical influence of a state while monitoring elections?**

Egypt is very important to the IC due to its geographic location. The fact that the EU would offer Egypt financial incentives and investments to help them to control refugees coming to Europe is evidence that Egypt’s geographical location is extremely important to the IC. There are four factors that make Egypt’s geopolitical important: The Suez Canal, high population, strong military in the region, and the preservation of the artifacts from ancient times. Thus, these four factors show that Egypt is a strong ally of the US and EU.

The Suez Canal gave Egypt its position in the international community and became a point of leverage for Egypt. At the London Conference, on the Suez Canal, on the 27th of August, 1956, secretary Dulles described the canal as the “lifeline” between Europe and Asia for the special role it plays between the European economy and the petroleum products of the Middle East (London Conference on Suez Canal, 1956). The Suez Canal connects the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea and trade between Europe and Asia. President Nasser nationalized the Canal, and he called it a “strategic position of Egypt.” Thus, for centuries the canal played a major role in the relationship
and economy between European nations and the Middle East. Hence, Egypt being part of and controlling the Suez Canal makes Egypt a strategic partner in the global economy. Therefore, it is hard for Egypt to be stigmatized by the international community when it does not comply with democratic norms and principles due to its geopolitical position.

The researcher found that the Suez Canal still plays a major role in global trade in the 21st century. This is very evident from the incident in March 202, where a ship carrying containers blocked the Suez Canal, and as a result, hundreds of ships were backed up in traffic jams, which caused global supply chain problems. Economists have estimated that about 12% of total global trade moves through the Suez Canal (Ponken, 2021). Ben Ponken, one of the logistics experts for NBC news, commented that “Everything from food, furniture, clothes and shoes to exercise equipment, electronics, car parts could be affected” (Ponken, 2021). In the press conference, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (Director General of World Trade Organization (WTO)) said “nearly $10 billion dollars of trade was affected each day” due to the Suez blockage by a container (WTO flagship annual trade statistics and trade forecast, March 31, 2021). Thus, the Suez Canal is a major connection between Europe and Asia but also for trading across the globe.

The researcher also noted that not only is the Suez Canal a strategic gateway for trading between the Middle East and the West, but the Suez Canal is also an important transit for Navy carriers from the US and Russia. On April 5, 2021, the Free Stars and Stripes Newsletters had a heading “US Navy carrier group transits Suez Canal for the first time since container ship freed” (Garland, 2021). The Pentagon also admitted that the Suez Canal is one alternative transit route to the Middle East (Jacob, 2021).

Population is also one of the factors that give Egypt geopolitical importance. World Bank data indicates that in 2020 the population of Egypt was 102,334,403 (World Bank Data of the Egyptian...
Population, 2020). The UN projects that by 2068, the population will almost double the current number to 200,000,000 people (two hundred million people). This indicates that most countries in Europe, China, Japan and America will be interested in having a relationship with Egypt due to its high population with new market places.

Egypt has a strong military compared to most countries in the region. The Egyptian military is ranked among the best top 20 military forces globally, and as a country, Egypt is ranked 13th (Armstrong, 2021). The strength of Egypt’s military gave Egypt influence in the region and positioned them as an important ally to the US and Israel, which only increased Egypt’s strength and influence. Thus, the population, the military size, and the strength of the military, qualify Egypt for a geopolitical position in the world. Egypt has preserved many artifacts from ancient times, and most of the earliest civilizations are believed to be found in Egypt. Egyptian artifacts contributed significantly to the study of architecture and engineering across the global (Elhalfawy, 2016). Thus, the study of artifacts research on ancient civilization and language has given Egypt an additional degree of geopolitical importance in the IC, not to mention the influx of foreigners visiting these ancient sites.

The above evidence of geopolitical importance influences IEOs, especially INGOs from the EU and US, and how they observe and report Egypt’s elections. AUEOM’s final report of 2018 mentioned incidents where IEOs were not allowed to stay in a polling station for more than 30 minutes (AUEOM, 2018). Both AUOM and EOM did not condemn this limitation of 30 minutes for IEOs, but rather, they recommended Egypt give IEOs more time to observe elections in polling stations. There was also a delay in the accreditation by the National Election Authority of the Republic of Egypt (NEA). IEOs recommend the NEA speed up accreditation instead of commending the NEA’s action; whereas, in Zimbabwe, the delay of accreditation for IEOs was
harshly condemned by the EOM, IDI, NDI, and most western media outlets. Delay of accreditation is a big deal, especially if an incumbent wants only short-term observers who will not observe prelection manipulations. In 2018, AUEOM reported that they sent short-term observers. The 2014 AUEOM report shows that only short-term observers were invited. Moreover, the 2014 EUEOM final report mentioned electoral manipulation (EUEOM, 2014), but in their conclusion, they stated the election followed the laws and constitution of Egypt. Thus, Egypt’s geopolitical importance influenced how IEOs observed and judged the Egyptian election.

**What forms of manipulation? Did the incumbent rely on pre-election manipulation or election day manipulation, or both.?**

Prior to 2011, the electoral process in Egypt was monitored and administered by the Presidential Election Commission (PEC). Incumbent Mubarak conducted both pre-election manipulation and ballot box manipulation. After the Mubarak regime, Egypt formed the National Election Authority (NEA) and started to invite IEOs (IFES, 2018). Most media outlets began to report pre-election manipulation but no one undetected ballot fraud. In the 2014 election, some IEOs were limited to 5 minutes to access polling stations, and some were denied access altogether (Williamson, 2014). The denial of IEOs to polling stations or limiting their time observing polling stations is evidence that there was fraudulent activity going on the election day. Evidence in this chapter also shows that Egypt invited only short-term IEOs, which indicates that the incumbent did not want pre-election manipulation to be detected. The report from the Human Rights Watch in 2018 indicates that what happened prior to the election is an indication that the 2018 is neither free nor fair (Human Right Watch, 2018). The final report of the EUOM overview of the 2014 presidential election indicates incidents of multiple voting and 33 isolated cases where there was
an attempt to influence voter choice. (EUOM, 2014). Thus, the presence of IEOs in Egypt has changed the form of manipulation, and also, more pre-election than ballot box was reported.

**Table 14.** Compared 2014 and 2018 IEOs reports and preliminary statements from IEOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Egyptian Presidential Election 2018 IEOs Reports</th>
<th>Egyptian Presidential election 2014 IEOs Reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AUEOM</td>
<td>EU EOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The election was conducted in an orderly transparent manner</td>
<td>The presidential election was administered in line with the law, in an environment falling short of constitutional principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No electoral manipulation; it was peaceful</td>
<td>Polling centers were peaceful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High turnout among women</td>
<td>The gender imbalance among election official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The election was free and fair.</td>
<td>There were minor procedural infractions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IEOs report and the Carnegie Endowment for international peace. (2014)

From the above comparison, it is evident that IEOs sees improvement between the 2014 and 2018 elections. The main improvement is the fact that in 2018 election was administered by NEA for the first time and not PEC. (IFES report, 2018). Under PEC, there were more criticisms, especially on election day compared to when NEA oversaw the election (EUOM, 2014).

**Does Incumbent have any relationship with Powerful states, and does that influence the decision to invite and the decision to manipulate the election?**

Egypt is an ally of the US. Egypt and Israel signed a peace treaty with Israel (Camp David Accords of 1979) under the influence of the US. Due to the signing of the Camp David accords,
Egypt receives every year from US military assistance in the form of finance and intelligence support. Egypt has been receiving support from the US, and the military assistance has no tie to the promotion of democracy in Egypt but the peace agreement. Egypt also benefits from its relationship with the EU. Before the 2018 presidential election, the Human Rights Watch (HRW) conducted a pre-election assessment in Egypt. The HRW recommended on Feb 13, 2018, one month before the election, that the US, EU, and the European States should stop financing Egypt if it continues to violate the human right and the conduct of planned rigged election (HRW, 2018). Despite the condemnation from HRW, Egypt continues to receive support financially from the EU and US because it is a strategic partner. The Congressional Research Service (CRS) that was updated on September 30/2021 reported that the “Egyptian government rejects foreign criticism of its human rights practices as illegitimate interference in Egypt’s domestic affairs.” RS report has also shown that since the signing of the Peace Accord US and Egypt has conducted every year a large-scale joint military exercise known as “Bright Star.” CRS report also shows that since 1979-2020 Egypt has received $49,661,424,152 for military assistance, and since 1946-2020 Egypt has received from the U.S $33,189,150,268 for economic assistance. Thus from 1946-2020, Egypt’s assistance from the US is $82,850,574,420, which makes it the second largest recipient of U.S assistance after Israel. Egypt’s bilateral relations with US and EU gave it leverage to access benefits from the international community. Therefore, Egypt does not need to demonstrate its level of democracy to acquire international benefits.

**What system followed before Egypt’s transition to democracy?**

Since 1952 Egypt has been ruled by four strongmen backed by the military, except for Muhammad Morsi (2011-2013), who tried to transform Egypt into a democratic state. The regime of Gamal Abdel Nasser (1954-1970), Anwar Sadat (1970-1981), Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011), and
Abdel Fattah al Sisi (2013-present) has formed the traditional politics and democracy in Egypt. After the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981, emergency law was declared in Egypt. Hosin Mubarak became president, and during his presidency, he kept extending the law every three years until 2011. Evidence shows that this law caused a permanent state of emergency in Egypt, and as a result, a free and fair vote in an election was not possible (HRW, 2010). From 1981-2011 security officials took advantage of the emergency law and cracked down on those who fought for democracy, those who tried to have public meetings, and those who opposed the regime were detained for a long period of time without charge (HRW, 2010). The state of emergency was still in operation in Egypt under President al-Sisi until he announced to end it on October 25th, 2021 (Yee, 2021). Evidence shows that the state of emergency has benefited those in power to use the military to detain anyone opposing them even, without charge (Yee, 2021). Thus, Egypt’s autocratic system of government, which operated from 1981-2011, functioned with the help of the state of emergency laws, and even after the 2011 Egyptian revolution, these laws still influence how Egypt governs.

**Conclusion**

The evidence shows that Egypt has geopolitical importance. Before 2011 Egypt has never invited IEOs. Evidence also reveals that public opinion forced the regime to start inviting IEOs, but due to its geopolitical importance IEOs who are invited legitimate the elections as free and fair to please the public and not the international community. Thus, the expectation and evidence corroborate and therefore the theory holds.

**Comparative of the four cases and analysis**

This section aims to compare the four cases: Ghana, Zimbabwe, Israel, and Egypt. The comparison is based on the evidence obtained in every case and the question ‘why incumbents
invite IEOs and yet cheat in an election. The researcher has summarized the evidence in fig. 12 below. In comparing these four cases about why an incumbent dare to invite IEOs and yet cheat in an election, these cases have revealed that if an incumbent behavior is not constrained by norms, and traditions that have been generated as well as strong institutions, then there is a high possibility for an incumbent to use the power granted to him and cheat in an election. The two cases (Ghana and Israel) have strong institutions, norms and traditions that constraint incumbents from cheating in an election. In one case (Ghana) IEOs were invited despite it having a high rate in terms of democracy, while the other case (Israel) does not invite IEOs. Research shows that Israel has geopolitical importance, which enables it to have cooperation and partnership with states who want to be hegemonic globally. Ghana has no direct geopolitical importance based on resources or location and hence needs democracy promotion to match the characteristics of their partners who have influence in the international community so as to benefit from this partnership.

The other two cases (Zimbabwe and Egypt) have weak institutions, as well as a tradition of one strongman staying in power being backed by the military and other coercive apparatuses. Thus, an incumbent in Zimbabwe or Egypt has an opportunity to cheat in an election and get way with the pressure from the public due to military support and weak institutions. Again, Zimbabwe invited IEOs, while Egypt never invited IEOs before the Arab Spring (2011). Hosni Mubarak, who was the president of Egypt for almost 30 years from the 1980s until 2011 and has never invited IEOs but has a good relationship with the U.S and EU, who characterize themselves in their foreign policy to promote democracy across the world. Egypt has geopolitical importance and hence does not need to invite IEOs to enhance partnership with US or EU. However, the Arab Spring and the change of public opinion toward IEOs have forced Egypt to invite IEOs. The invitation of IEOs in Egypt does not deter incumbents from cheating in an election because of its weak institutions,
norms, traditions, and the relationship between Egypt and the IEOs that are invited to Egypt. IEOs that are invited to Egypt are INGOs who, by negatively criticizing the election, could lose the partnership with the regime and the diplomatic relationship, which could result to losing an Egypt as strategic partner. Robert Mugabe has been the president of Zimbabwe from 1980 to 2017 for almost 40 years. Like Egypt Mugabe took advantage of the weak institutions and the popular tradition of considering him a strongman and was also backed by the military and other coercive apparatus in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has no geopolitical importance that is based on its location or resources, and therefore, Mugabe must cooperate with EU or US, i.e. he needs to demonstrate democratic practices.

The researcher also found that Mugabe has tension with EU leaders such as Schori, PM of UK Cameroon, and U.S president Regan. These tensions and his sentiments towards white farmers, who hold almost 70% of Zimbabwe’s economy, added more pressure and a door of criticism from IEOs from the US and EU. Then, President Mugabe chose to invite IEOs from China and Russia to get back up economically and be defended against sanctions that will be posed against him. In other words, Mugabe invited IEOs to counter the stigma posed to him from the EU and US, as well as to get support from Russia and China to stay in power. Mugabe took advantage of the tension between Russia and China versus U.S and E.U on democratic norms and cultivated a partnership with China and Russia to counter the pressure posed on him by US and EU. Mugabe’s sentiments and rhetoric also influenced partnerships with fellow African countries and partnerships from most Asian countries and South America.
Table 15. Findings from the Four Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ghana</th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
<th>Israel</th>
<th>Egypt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why Invite IEOs</strong></td>
<td>To enhance cooperation as well as financial support</td>
<td>To enhance cooperation and seek legitimacy</td>
<td>Do not invite</td>
<td>Invite to please it domestic public after the Arab Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who Are Invited</strong></td>
<td>IEOs that has a relation with states that Ghana has a cooperation/partnership</td>
<td>IEOs that sympathize with incumbent Mugabe and who offer positive criticism</td>
<td>Do not invite</td>
<td>IEOs whose reports can restore public trust to the government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why Not Invite</strong></td>
<td>Do invite</td>
<td>Do invite but not IEOs who give negative criticism</td>
<td>Conscious of their geopolitical importance for security purposes and sovereign</td>
<td>Before 2011 did not invite due to geopolitical importance, for security purposes and sovereign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why Able to Cheat in an Election</strong></td>
<td>Incumbents do not cheat due to the constraints from domestic institutions, traditional norms</td>
<td>Incumbents cheat due to no constraints of domestic institutions and traditional norms</td>
<td>Incumbents do not cheat due to the constraints from domestic institutions, traditional norms</td>
<td>Incumbents cheat due to no constraints from domestic institutions, traditional norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Check and Balances</strong></td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>The constitution gives the president power; thus, he can constrain the judiciary branch or parliament from challenging him</td>
<td>The prime minister is constrained by parliament (Knesset) and Judiciary branch</td>
<td>Only the military can constrain or challenge the president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allies Outside their Region</strong></td>
<td>EU, UK, CANADA and US</td>
<td>Brazil, China, Russia, Iran</td>
<td>US and U.K</td>
<td>US UK and EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Freedom House Democracy Index</strong></td>
<td>(Freedom house, 2021)</td>
<td>82 (free)</td>
<td>28 (not free)</td>
<td>76 (free)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GDP per Capita 2020</strong></td>
<td>$2,205.5</td>
<td>$1,214.5</td>
<td>$44,168.9</td>
<td>$3,569.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table designed by researcher (2022)
Chapter Five

Conclusion

The Puzzling Question

This study opened with a puzzling question. Leaders across the globe who come from young democratic states are expected to invite international election observers (IEOs) to their domestic elections to receive endorsements. Those who tend to refuse to invite IEOs are stigmatized and labeled as undemocratic. Sometimes their refusal to invite IEOs is interpreted by most members of the international community as an act to intentionally isolate themselves from the international community. The non-binding international norm of inviting IEOs is also viewed by some members in the international community as the interference into their domestic affairs. One aspect of a sovereign state is for its citizens to be able to choose their leaders freely without foreign interference. Since inviting IEOs is a non-binding norm, states and their leaders can choose whether to comply with the norm or not. Surprisingly, leaders who intend to cheat in an election still choose to invite IEOs and persist in unethical behaviors considered to be cheating or rigging an election. The essential question explored was, why do incumbents invite IEOs and yet cheat in an election?

Theory in Brief

My central argument is that the existence of multiple IEOs and their inconsistency on verdicts in elections allows an incumbent who is not constrained by their domestic structure to selectively invite IEOs and cheat in an election. This theory is built on the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of any state by respecting states’ elections. Based on this principle, an incumbent or state can choose whether to invite IEOs to observe their election and choose which IEOs they want to invite.
The norm of inviting IEOs is an unbinding norm, as a result a state has a choice whether to invite IEOs or not to invite. On the other side there are many norm entrepreneurs (the IEOs) without a central body to regulate them. As a result IEOs contradict themselves on their verdict of the same observed election. This contradiction among IEOs is an opportunity for an incumbent who want to invite IEOs and yet cheat. There are non-governmental international election observers (INGO-IEOs) who tend to be free from the preferences of their states. On the other hand, there are governmental international election observers (IGO-IEOs). IGO-IEOs' operations are based on the preferences of the states that form them. The behavior (double standard and biasness) of the IEOs and their multiplicity without a body that regulates them has become a loop-hole for those incumbents who intend to cheat. Incumbents manipulate the system by strategically deciding whom they invite and what form of manipulation to employ. Thus, the improvement of democracy in a state does rely on its institutions and the political will from political leaders to conduct free and fair elections. The researcher argues that IEOs do not deter incumbents who intend to cheat in an election but rather, their presence generates a new form of manipulation for an incumbent who intends to cheat.

**Findings**

The researcher presented a variety of evidence in support of the above argument by using data from four cases. These cases present a detailed description of the characteristics of countries who invite IEOs and yet cheat, who invite and do not cheat, who do not invite IEOs and do not cheat, and who do not invite and yet cheat. The same data shows that IEOs can deter fraud and improve the quality of elections. At the same time, data also demonstrates that IEOs can endorse fraudulent elections. The danger of endorsing fraudulent elections can lead to the decline of democracy in a state. More importantly, the presented data highlights various types of IEOs and
their behavior. Furthermore, these cases show also that the geopolitical importance of a state determines how the international community responds to geopolitical countries who do not invite IEOs or invite, and yet cheat in an election. Thus, no stigma is imposed to countries with geopolitical importance as compared to those with no geopolitical importance. All these varieties of characteristics mentioned above are supported by the four cases of Ghana, Zimbabwe, Israel, and Egypt.

The Case of Ghana

Evidence shows that incumbents in Ghana have a 20-year history of inviting IEOs (since 2000-2020) and not cheating in an election. Ghana had a lengthy struggle to establish democracy between 1966-1990. The first President of Ghana Kwame Nkrumah aligned Ghana with Russia and China and promoted the idea of socialism and Pan-Africanism. Nkrumah's political ideology led to the military coup in 1966 and since then, followed by a succession of military coups through the 1980’s. This historical background impacted Ghana’s ability to build strong institutions and a civic society that adhered to democratic values. The willingness of Jerry Rawling (president of Ghana from 1981-2001) to conduct free and fair election, the partnership between the Coalition of Domestic observers (CODEO), IEOs and Electoral Commission (EC) of Ghana, gave birth to a new norm of conducting a free and fair election in Ghana. Thus, incumbents in Ghana were constrained by the domestic institutions and the tradition of peaceful transfer of power from the two major political parties in Ghana. Therefore, IEOs in Ghana played a major role to strengthen the institutions.

Ghana invited IEOs who have influence in the international community. IEOs endorsement of Ghana’s elections helped to send a signal to the international community and in turn Ghana had a pathway to international benefits such as trading, foreign aid, and cooperation with the US and
European Union (EU). Thus, Ghana invited IEOs for two purposes. First, to signal to the IC that they adhere to the democratic values, and second to gain economic diplomatic purposes.

In all the four cases, Ghana was the only case that invited both INGO-IEOs and IGOs-IEOs.

The Case of Zimbabwe

The incumbent in Zimbabwe did invite IEOs and yet cheated in an election. The EC of Zimbabwe and the civic societies did not operate with freedom. Zimbabwe was ruled by the same man, and same party since its independence in 1980’s through 2022. There is a lack of a political will from the ruling politicians to conduct a free and fair elections in Zimbabwe. The incumbent selected IEOs who will endorse the election despite being not free and fair. Evidence has shown that those who criticize the election were not invited in the following election. Those IEOs whose states have a poor rate in democratic values were favored to observe the election in Zimbabwe. The more surprising evidence was when Zimbabwe decided to invite China, Russia, and Iran to observe the 2008 election. Thus, the purpose of inviting IEOs was more of a norm contention rather than compliance.

Zimbabwe built its alliance with Russia, China and Iran to counter the stigma that was imposed by those who support democracy. Despite Zimbabwe inviting IEOs its democratic scores kept declining due to the existence of weak institutions that did not constrain Mugabe. The case of Zimbabwe also shows an unusual incident where US and EU states brought a resolution at the UN to sanction Zimbabwe for not conducting a free and fair election. In turn this resolution was vetoed by Russia and China. Thus, Mugabe was not constrained by his domestic institutions and used Russia, China and others who were against the US and EU to get away with the stigma imposed on him.
The Case of Israel

Evidence shows that Israel has never invited IEOs and did not cheat in an election. Israel has a geopolitical importance and therefore, is not stigmatized by IC when it does not invite IEOs. This case also shows that Israel has strong institutions that constrain incumbents from cheating in an election. More importantly, Israel has a long history of adhering to democratic values and the transfer of power between the parties. The geopolitical importance of Israel helps it to acquire international benefits without the promotion of it being a democratic state through the invitation of IEOs.

The Case of Egypt

Egypt has a geopolitical status but in comparison with Israel, the incumbent in Egypt does not invite IEOs and yet does cheat in an election. Egypt has weak institutions that do not constrain an incumbent who intends to cheat in an election. The history of Egypt has built a culture of a strongman ruler who has military support backed by US and Israel. Thus, the domestic structure of Egypt enables the incumbent who has support from the military to cheat in an election.

Further Studies

While working on this study the researcher was puzzled to find that even states that are viewed as autocratic are financing IEOs. Given the decline of democracy and the rise of authoritarianism, the rise of deep fake IEOs is a legitimate concern. Further studies can look at what danger does it pose to democracy when there is a growing number of IEOs whose member states are autocratic. The researcher also found that some of the IEOs delegates were headed by former presidents who have a history of rigging elections and unethical electoral practices during their time as presidents. What danger does it pose to democracy when the head of delegates of IEOs does not support free and fair election?
Overall, the data collected from the four cases have supported the four hypotheses and the central argument of the research. Thus, if the domestic structure of a state does not constrain the incumbent and the international community has double standard in playing its role, then the incumbent can still invite IEOs and nevertheless cheat in an election.
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