



**Centre for Criminology
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PUBLIC OPINION ON THE DEATH PENALTY IN GHANA

Final Report

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FOREWORD

Justice Tankebe, Kofi Boakye and Atudiwe Atupare are to be congratulated for producing the first methodologically sound study of public opinion on the death penalty in an African state. This valuable study shows that in Ghana almost half of the 2,460 residents of the capital city Accra who responded to their survey were opposed to the death penalty in general and only nine per cent indicated that they very strongly supported it. As regards views on the Government proposal to abolish the death penalty in line with the recent recommendation of the Constitutional Review Committee, over half supported the proposal for all three capital crimes — murder, genocide and treason, and of these at least three-quarters were ‘completely supportive’ and only about a quarter completely opposed. Among the pro-abolitionists two-thirds gave as their reason either their belief in the sanctity of life or concern that innocent people might be executed. A valuable analysis of demographic variables and experience of crime victimization revealed that in all but one comparison (related to area of residence), a majority supported abolition. Even those who had suffered victimization through the murder of a family member were slightly more likely (51 per cent) to support abolition than oppose it.

Thus, this study has revealed one of the very few instances where government can be confident that the majority of the public would not be opposed to abolition or, if opposed, not strongly opposed. Furthermore, the authors provide good evidence to counter the argument that there could be a backlash following abolition by aggrieved parties who might seek revenge.

The authors also explore what their respondents would prefer as the maximum sentence to replace the death penalty. For all three capital crimes the majority (two-thirds in the case of murder) chose life without parole, as recommended by the

Constitutional Review Committee. However, by presenting them with some varied ‘scenarios’ of murder, the authors clearly demonstrate that support for life without parole would depend on the circumstances of the murder and the criminal history of the person convicted: in other words, that it should be a discretionary maximum, not a mandatory penalty. It is to be hoped that when the government legislates to abolish the mandatory death penalty, it takes this important message into account if it contemplates, as I hope it will not, replacement of death with a sentence of life without hope.

Professor Roger Hood

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We received expert advice on the questionnaire design from Professor Carolyn Hoyle of the Centre for Criminology at Oxford University. We are especially grateful to Professor Roger Hood of the Centre for Criminology at Oxford University for providing useful comments and guidance on the design of the questionnaire for this project, and for taking the time to read the entire manuscript and providing very useful advice.

Also special thanks to Margaret Appiah and Elizabeth Dadzie who managed a training workshop for field researchers and pilot study. Finally, we are indebted to all

the interviewers and supervisors for their hard work to ensure a high response rate for this project and to those who help with data entry.

SUMMARY

This publication reports findings from the first empirical study on public opinion on the death penalty in Ghana. The research was inspired by the work of the Constitutional Review Commission, which recommended in its final report to Government the abolition of the death penalty. The Commission advanced four main arguments for its recommendation: the current *de facto* abolition position does not adequately punish death penalty convicts; the lack of justification for the state arrogating to itself the right to take life; current international trends towards abolition; and belief in utilitarian principles which emphasise reformation as the fundamental aim of the justice system.

As can be seen, none of these reasons makes reference to public sentiments about the death penalty. The Commission's work involved a 'public' consultation, but opinion leaders and key stakeholders such as professional bodies and local advocacy groups dominated the process. For various reasons – for example, the structure of the process, lack of awareness of the consultative meetings, and the structure of people's routine activities – a large section of Ghanaians was unable to participate in the Commission's work. Yet, a wider public engagement would seem important given the peculiar history of the death penalty in Ghana and concerns about backlash effects in the form of vigilante violence. Moreover, Articles 3(3) and 13(1), which concern the death penalty, are entrenched provisions in the Ghanaian constitution. Therefore, notwithstanding Government's acceptance of the Commission's recommendations, a referendum is required to decide whether or not the death penalty should be abolished. Research evidence on the nature of public opinion on the death penalty will contribute to debate preceding the referendum.

The research began following a presentation by the authors at the invitation of the European Union Delegation in Ghana and the French Embassy on the 11th World

Day Against the Death Penalty in 2013. The research was funded by the Smuts Memorial Fund and the Cambridge-Africa Alborada Research Fund, University of Cambridge. The Centre of Criminology and Criminal Justice (Ghana) carried out the study based on a face-to-face survey of 2460 people randomly selected from four communities in Accra. The selected communities reflect the varying socio-economic and ethnic compositions of the capital city and country. The fieldwork was conducted in April and May 2014, and covered a broad range of issues in relation to the death penalty.

The results showed that views about the death penalty do not appear to be polarized. The majority of Ghanaian respondents (48.3%) expressed strong opposition to the death penalty. Only 8.6% indicated strong endorsement of this form of punishment. Almost 6 out of every 10 respondents supported abolition of the death penalty in cases of murder. Among those opposed to abolition, 7 in 10 would support a discretionary death penalty in place of the current mandatory death penalty. The most preferred replacement for the death penalty was life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Approximately, 71% of people interviewed chose life imprisonment without the possibility of parole as the alternative to the death penalty. This is consistent with the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Commission.

Popular commentary on the death penalty suggests that Ghanaians support retention of the death penalty for reasons of deterrence. The evidence from this study revealed a tripod of reasons: deterrence; retribution; and justice for victims' families. Among proponents of abolition, sanctity of life and the possibility of executing innocent people were the two prominent reasons. The data show very little evidence of potential backlash in the form of support for vigilante violence or lynching; 26% said they would take the law into their own hands if the death penalty was abolished. The

findings from a detailed analysis showed that traditional religious beliefs about supernatural punishments were a powerful force shaping attitudes to the death penalty. People who believed in these punishments were more likely to endorse the death penalty and to resist abolition for murder. This is novel finding in the academic literature on the death penalty. However, more research is required to establish more fully the mechanisms that link these beliefs to anti-abolition attitudes. There is evidence of hotspots of death penalty views from this study. Residents of high-class neighbourhoods were likely to oppose the death penalty and to support its abolition for murder. Support for the death penalty was concentrated in low-class migrant areas. An interesting finding emerged that low-class indigenous areas were more opposed to the death penalty than middle-class areas. Finally, a key issue in death penalty research concerns the role of scientific evidence, especially evidence on deterrence effects and wrongful conviction. The findings show that evidence has both *transformative* and *reinforcement* effects. While scientific evidence does not lead to a complete rejection of the death penalty, the findings showed that some anti-abolitionists are open to a reasoned debate, and will reconsider their views in the face of scientific evidence.

Taken together, the findings from this public opinion survey show a weak public support for the death penalty in Ghana. On the issue of abolishing the death penalty and possible backlash effect, the evidence suggests this is unlikely to be the case. Importantly, the survey reveals the complexity of public opinion on the death penalty and the need for evidence-based approach to understanding the roots of public concerns in order to prevent any possible backlash effects that might lead to pressure to reinstate the death penalty.

I: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT TO THE STUDY

Ghana still retains the death penalty for three main offences on its Criminal Code. These offences are treason (section 180); murder (section 46); and genocide (section 49A). Additional clause under which the death penalty may be imposed upon conviction is attempted murder by a convicted felon (section 48). Section 304(3) of the Criminal Procedure Code (Act 30) provides for modes of execution either by hanging or firing squad. Ghana is a de facto abolitionist country. The last executions took place in 1993; 12 people convicted of robberies and murder were executed by firing squad (Amnesty International 1993). Death sentences continue to be passed. As at August 2015, Ghana had 129 prisoners on death row, all for murder. The most recent case involved Johnson Kombian who sentenced to death by hanging for the murder of two police officers in 2015 (Ghana News Agency 2015).

In June 2012, the Government published a White Paper in which it accepted the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Commission to abolish the death penalty completely, and to replace it with imprisonment for life without parole. This study seeks to provide baseline data on public attitudes to the death penalty, the sources and nature of resistance to abolition, and backlash effects. Our overall aims are twofold: (i) to provide research evidence that contributes to the public discourse on the death penalty as Ghana prepares to vote on the relevant constitutional amendments, and (ii) to provide baseline data that would allow us to track trends in public attitudes over the next several decades.

II: SURVEY AND ITS METHODS

This study by the Centre for Criminology and Criminal Justice is based on a face-to-face survey of 2460 people in Accra between April and May of 2014. The Smuts

Memorial Fund and the Cambridge-Africa Alborada Research Fund at University of Cambridge co-funded the study.

The methodology for the study was quantitative. The primary method of seeking information on citizens' opinions on the death penalty was through a random sampling technique where selection of research participants involved a three-stage process. The first stage entailed a random selection of neighbourhoods. In their analysis of census data for Accra, Agyei-Mensah and Owusu (2010: 504) identified four social categories: 'migrant low class', 'indigenous low class', 'middle class' and 'high class' neighbourhoods. It was important for the present study to ensure that research participants from each of these neighbourhoods were represented in the study. The communities selected were Nima (migrant low-class neighbourhood), Chorkor (indigenous low-class neighbourhood), Teshie Nungua Estate (middle class neighbourhood) and East Legon Residential Area (high class neighbourhood).

Field supervisors and researchers were graduate students from the University of Ghana, Legon. They spent a day at each community working out how they might partition their assigned communities into four main zones. Within each zone, interviewers located an initial starting house. Within the house, an adult each (aged 18 or older) was randomly selected to complete the questionnaire. For the purposes of selecting subsequent respondents, interviewers chose every third house until they have covered 156 houses for each zone. Where a person selected refused to complete the questionnaire or there were no persons in a chosen house, interviewers moved to the next house. Out of 2829 people approached, 2460 completed the questionnaires, representing a response of 86.9%.

III: THE FINDINGS

1. Interest in the death penalty

The starting point was to establish level of interest and knowledge in the death penalty. The data showed that most people had no interest in the death penalty: 33.7% of those sampled said they were “not interested at all”, while 23.7% were “not very interested”. Even among those who expressed interest, only 8.6% said they were “very interested”, and a further 34% were “interested”. Thus, the intensity of interests in the death penalty among Ghanaians is quite different from those of citizens of Trinidad. In Trinidad, Hood (2011) found that 82% of people interviewed were “very interested” or “interested” in the death penalty; only 3% were “not interested at all”. The level of resistance to abolition in both countries is therefore, likely very different.

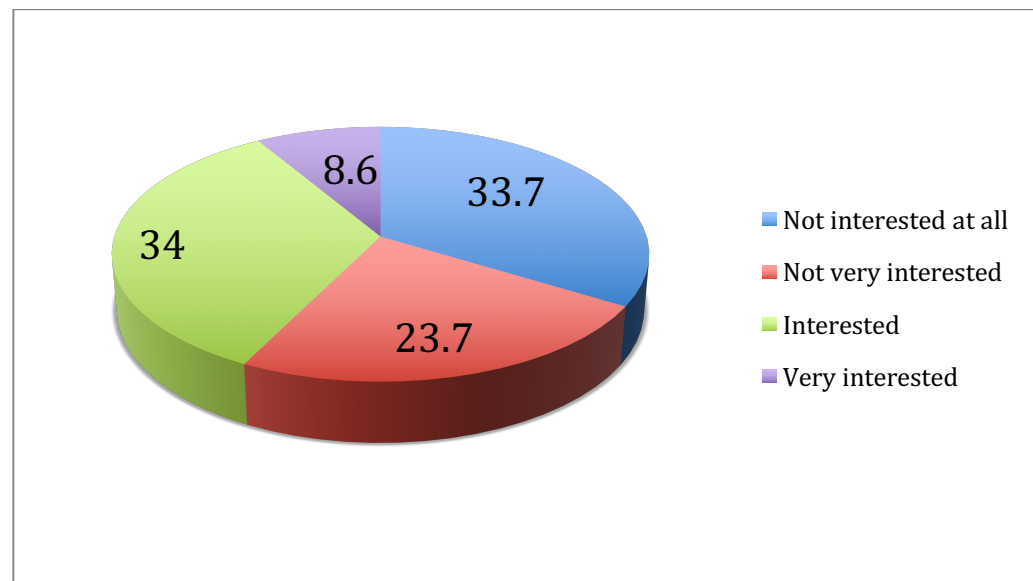


Figure 1: Level of interests in the death penalty

When asked to indicate their knowledge of the death penalty, 8 in 10 said they knew “nothing” or “little” about it (79.8%); 17.5% knew “something” about it, and only 2.7% reported knowing “a great deal” about the death penalty. To measure the *intensity* of

people's interest in the death penalty, we asked how often they discussed it with friends or family. The majority of the Ghanaians interviewed had never discussed the death penalty with friends or family members (84.5%, $n = 2057$); only 8.7% reported they had discussed it "several times" with friends or family, 5.3% have discussed it once, and 1.5% have done so twice.

2. Knowledge of death penalty crimes

As noted earlier, there are three main crimes that attract the death penalty in Ghana. These crimes are murder, treason and genocide. There is some indication from previous media reports which suggests public belief that the death penalty applies to robbery (peacefmonline.com 2014). This is a misperception. The only situation in which robbery becomes relevant is when a person convicted of attempted murder has a prior conviction for robbery. Conviction for attempted murder could arise in the course of a robbery or in an entirely separate crime incident (e.g., Daily Guide, 2015). A possible explanation for the misperception about the applicability of the death penalty to robbery may relate to media reporting, which often include detailed descriptions of robberies involving rape and murder (e.g., Daily Guide 2015). This may, in turn, increase public support for the death penalty.

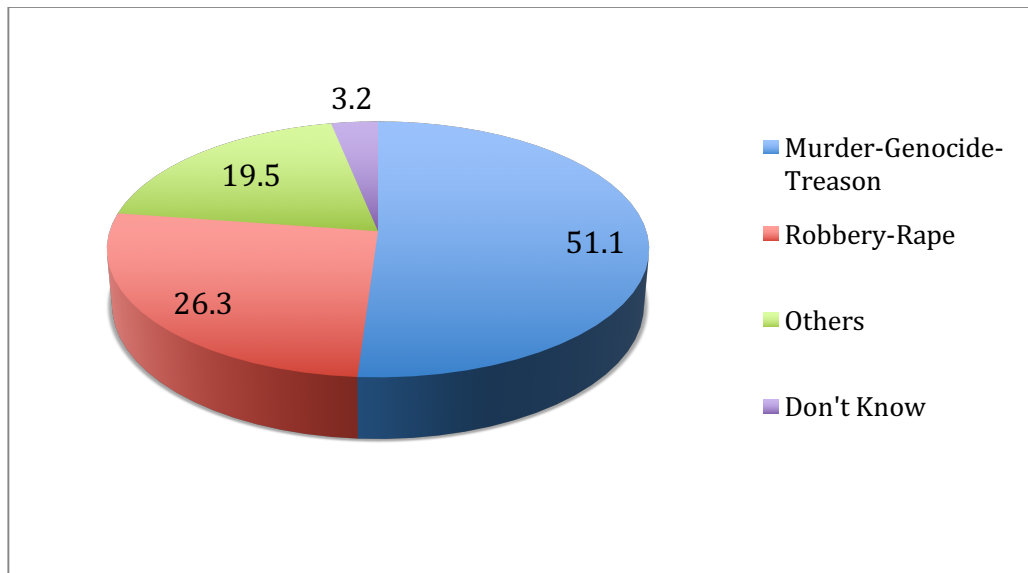


Figure 2: Knowledge of crimes that attract the death penalty.

In this study, we asked participants to indicate which crimes currently attracted the death penalty in Ghana. The results showed that only half (51.1%) of the sample of 2460 was able to correctly identify at least one crime, and this was usually murder. Interestingly, one in four people (26.3%) identified robbery or rape as crimes that attract the death penalty whilst about 1 in 5 (19.5%) mentioned crimes such as theft, prostitution, abortion and homosexuality. Only 3.2% admitted lack of knowledge of the crimes that attract the death penalty.

3. General support for the death penalty

Out of a valid sample of 2448 people, we found that 48.3% were intensely opposed to the death penalty, 32.1% were moderately in support, while 8.6% expressed intense approval for it.¹ The figures are even more striking by looking at the two extremes: that is, those strongly opposed versus those strongly in favour of the death penalty. Here we found that for every person who favoured the death penalty, there were five persons

¹ The full response categories ranged from “I Don’t support it at all”, “I somewhat support it”, “I support it”, “I Very strongly support it” to “Don’t know”

who opposed it. For purposes of comparison, the level of opposition in Ghana was higher than what pertained in the UK; results from YouGov polls showed 39% per cent were against the death penalty, with 17 per cent being undecided (Guardian 2014). In the case of Trinidad, Hood and Seemungal's's (2011) data showed that 89% favoured the death penalty and only 11% were opposed to it altogether. This level of support is greater than what we found in Ghana.

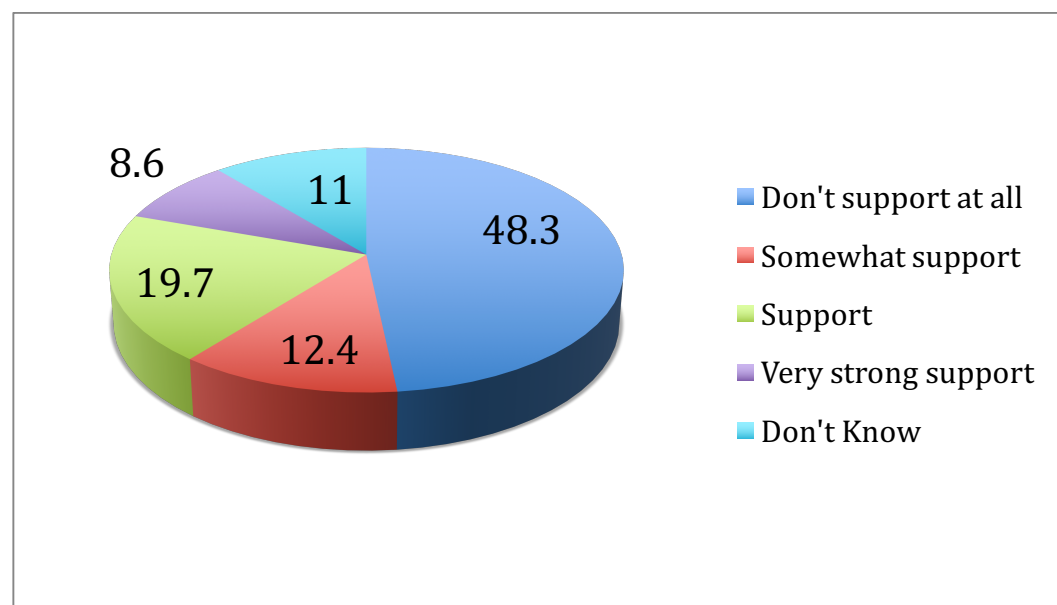


Figure 3: General Support for the Death Penalty (Note: $n = 2448$)

As previously reported, the majority of the Ghanaians interviewed were not interested in the death penalty and had never discussed it with friends or family. Among these Ghanaians ($n = 2048$)², 51.9% were completely opposed to the death penalty; only 6.2% were *very strongly* in support, while 29% “supported” or “somewhat supported” it (12.9% did not have an opinion). Among those who have discussed the death penalty with friends or family ($n = 376$), only 28.5% were completely opposed to it; 48.5% were moderately in support (17.6% supported it somewhat while 30.9% supported it).

² 9 people did not answer this question.

Finally, 22.3% of that sample was *very strongly* in support of the death penalty, a level of support that is more than thrice of what we found among those who avoided discussions of the death penalty.

Table 1 presents results of descriptive analysis exploring the distribution of death penalty views across a range of social categories. In terms of gender, opposition to the death penalty was more prevalent among females (58.2%) than males (50.2%). A chi-square test showed that this association between gender and opinions on the death penalty was statistically significant. Similar tests showed that victimisation experiences – whether personal or vicarious – did not make significant difference to support for the death penalty. Among those whose family member had been murdered, 45.3% opposed the death penalty; for those without such family history, 55.1 opposed the death penalty. However, this apparent association between murder within the family and death penalty opinion was on the borderline of statistical significance. Overall, it could be concluded from these descriptive analyses that criminal victimisation – whether direct or vicarious – does not appear to shape views on the death penalty.

Turning to age, we found opposition to the death penalty to be most prevalent among people of 18 to 24 years and those between 34 and 44 years: approximately, 6 out of 10 people in both age groups were opposed to the death penalty. Opposition was weakest among 25 – 34 year olds and 45 – 54 year olds. Further analysis revealed that the association between age and death penalty attitudes was statistically significant. Education also showed a statistically significant association with death penalty attitudes. University graduates expressed the strongest opposition to the death penalty (62.9%) but it was weakest among people with secondary school education (50.5%).

Criminologists have long examined spatial differences in violence (Weisburd, Groff and Yang 2012; Bottoms 2012; Shaw and McKay 1942) and in attitudes to

criminal justice agencies (Jackson et al 2012; Kane 2005). Prior studies of public opinion on the death penalty have not followed this example; we do not know whether or not there are *hotspots of death penalty views*. The results presented in Table 1 contribute to filling this gap in the extant literature. Opposition to the death penalty was concentrated in the high-class neighbourhood, where the level of opposition was 81.7%. Contrariwise, support for the death penalty was concentrated in the lower-class migrant neighbourhood: 73.1% of the research participants in this neighbourhood expressed support for the death penalty. Among the residents of middle-class area, opposition was 47.5%, a proportion that is lower than what pertained in lower-class indigenous area (52.3%). Chi-square tests showed an association between neighbourhoods and death penalty attitudes.

Table 1: Demographic Differences and Support for the Death Penalty³

	Opposition	Support
Gender*		
Male (<i>n</i> = 1067)	50.2	49.8
Female (<i>n</i> = 1064)	58.2	41.8
Personal (robbery) Victimisation		
No (<i>n</i> = 1824)	54.7	45.3
Yes (<i>n</i> = 322)	53.1	46.9
Vicarious (robbery) Victimisation		
No (<i>n</i> = 1715)	55.3	44.7
Yes (<i>n</i> = 427)	51.8	48.2
Vicarious (murder) Victimisation		
No (<i>n</i> = 2037)	55.1	44.9
Yes (<i>n</i> = 106)	45.3	54.7
Age*		
18 – 24 (<i>n</i> = 533)	60.4	39.6

³ Don't support at all ('Opposition'); any form of support ('Support')

25 – 34 (<i>n</i> = 697)	48.9	51.1
35 – 44 (<i>n</i> = 455)	58.7	41.3
45 – 54 (<i>n</i> = 252)	47.6	52.4
55 or older (<i>n</i> = 208)	55.3	44.7
Education*		
Basic (<i>n</i> = 366)	53.8	46.2
Junior Secondary (<i>n</i> = 660)	56.1	43.9
Senior Secondary (<i>n</i> = 537)	50.5	49.5
Post-Secondary (<i>n</i> = 234)	52.6	47.4
University (<i>n</i> = 272)	62.9	37.1
Neighbourhoods*		
Lower-class Migrant (<i>n</i> = 412)	26.9	73.1
Lower-class Indigenous (<i>n</i> = 601)	52.4	47.6
Middle Class (<i>n</i> = 571)	47.5	52.5
High Class (<i>n</i> = 595)	81.7	18.3

* Gender, ($\chi^2 (1) = 13.54, p < .001$; age, $\chi^2 (4) = 24.28, p < .001$; education, $\chi^2 (4) = 12.25, p < .05$; neighbourhoods, $\chi^2 (3) = 315.64, p < .001$).

4. The role of cultural norms in support for death penalty

Various prior studies have examined the role of cultural norms and values, with particular emphasis on religious beliefs (e.g. Wozniak and Lewis 2010). The results show statistically significant association between religious affiliation and attitudes to the death penalty, $\chi^2 (4) = 19.54, p < .001$. The majority of people without religious affiliation (55.7%) expressed support for the death penalty. It is the only group that support exceeded opposition. Support for the death penalty was weakest among Catholics (38%), protestants (43.3%) and those of Islam (47.4%).

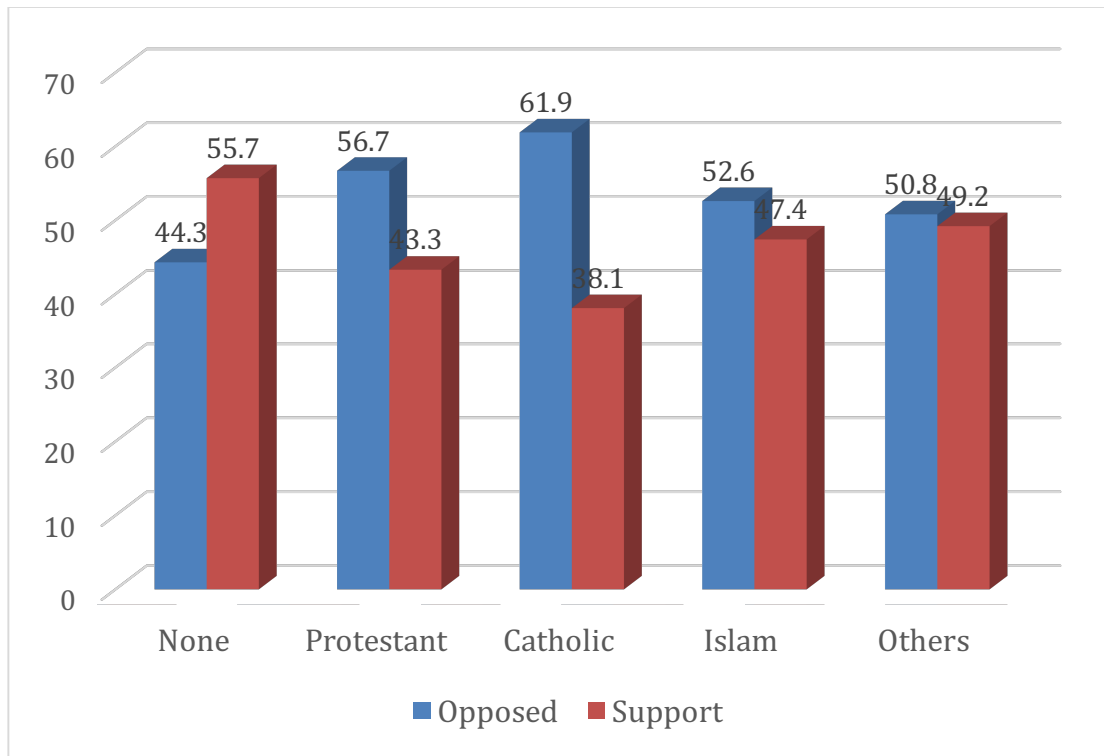


Figure 4: Religious Affiliation and Attitudes to the Death Penalty

In addition to religious affiliation, the study also examined the role of cultural beliefs about supernatural punishments by ancestral spirits and other deities. These entities occupy a central place in traditional Ghanaian beliefs about social control, and are believed to exercise constant surveillance over society (Assimeng 1999; Nukunya 1992). Punishments by these entities are held to be *immediate*, *escapeless*, and *severe* (Tankebe 2008; Abotchie 1997). A key feature of these beliefs is *collective responsibility*. It is the notion that “the potential consequence of crime whether secularly imposed or supernaturally visited, threatens the group as a whole, and not the culprit alone” (Abotchie, 1997: 13). Consequently, the group not only seeks to enforce crime prevention mechanisms; it also imposes its own sanctions to demonstrate its moral outrage and to preempt the need for sanctions from the supernatural entities. Given this, we hypothesised that the more people believe in these forms of punishment the more likely they might be to endorse punitive sanctions, such as the death penalty.

We used four items to measure these beliefs in supernatural punishments: (i) “I believe criminals never escape the punishment of ancestral spirits”; (ii) “I believe using traditional deities is a more effective way to punish criminals”; (iii) “I believe people who have lost their property or have been robbed should consult local deities”; and (iv) “I believe people who do bad things will be punished by the ancestral spirits”. On each of these measures, we found a statistically significant association between beliefs in supernatural punishments and attitudes to the death penalty (Table 2). Specifically, among people who believed ancestral punishments were inescapable 56.6% supported the death penalty; the proportion among non-believers was only 36.4%. Further, 64.2% of those who believed traditional deities were more effective in punishing offenders and 63.9% of those who would recommend these deities to victims expressed support for the death penalty.

Table 2: Cultural beliefs and death penalty views

	Opposition	Support
<hr/>		
Ancestral punishment inescapable*		
Disagree ($n = 866$)	63.6	36.4
Agree ($n = 843$)	43.5	56.5
Traditional deities punish criminals more effectively*		
Disagree ($n = 1282$)	58.7	41.3
Agree ($n = 430$)	35.8	64.2
Crime victims should consult local deities*		
Disagree ($n = 1286$)	59.4	40.6
Agree ($n = 454$)	36.1	63.9
Ancestral spirits will punish evildoers*		

Disagree (<i>n</i> = 1052)	60.9	39.1
Agree (<i>n</i> = 755)	43.7	56.3

* indicates statistically significant results; ‘Disagree’ combines ‘strongly disagree and disagree’, while ‘agree’ combines ‘strongly agree and agree’ responses. ‘Undecided’ response excluded

5. Support for the death penalty for other crimes

Socio-legal scholars and criminologists have drawn attention to what is called the “gap problem”. It is the idea that “however legal professionals and legal officials negotiate their way round the law, it is very much an open question how much of the official law is any part of the working consciousness of laypersons” (MacCormick 2007: 71). It is the gap between what *is* and what people *ought to be* the case. Understanding the nature and extent of this gap is important because it raises questions about the legitimacy of law, which in turn, has implications for public reactions to the law (see Bottoms and Tankebe 2012; Tamanaha 2004). In this study, we sought to gauge this gap by asking our sample whether or not they believe certain offences ought to attract the death penalty. This is important given that about a third of our sample identified, incorrectly, some of these crimes as currently attracting the death penalty in Ghana.

As the results show in Table 3, the majority of the sample agrees with the existing law. For violent sexual offences, support for the death penalty appeared contingent on age of the victim: for example, only 7.7% of the research participants would support the death penalty for rape of an adult, but support increased to 15.3% for rape victims aged between 10 and 14 years, reaching 22.6 % for cases involving children under 10 years. Interestingly, the gap between official law and people’s normative expectations or preferences was narrowest in the cases of public sector crimes. Here, we found 5.7% of the research participants would support the death penalty for people convicted of stealing public funds, and 6.7% would support it for

those convicted for “causing financial loss to the State”. However, the gap was widest for robberies: a third of the research participants (33.5%) indicated that they would support the death penalty for armed robbery. This would seem an unsurprising finding, since robberies regularly feature in media reports on crime.

Table 3: Would you support the death penalty for the following crimes?

Crimes	No	Yes
Armed robbery (n = 2154)	66.5	33.5
Stealing of public funds (n = 2156)	94.3	5.7
"Causing financial loss to the state" (n = 2150)	93.3	6.7
Rape of an adult (18 years or more) (n = 2155)	92.3	7.7
Rape of a child between 15 and 16 (n = 2156)	86.5	13.5
Rape of a child between ages 10 and 14 (n = 2155)	84.5	15.5
Rape of a child below 10 years (n = 2145)	77.4	22.6

6. Attitudes to abolition of the death penalty

As previously noted, the Government of Ghana has initiated plans to abolish the death penalty on the recommendations of a Constitutional Review Committee that was established in 2012. It was, therefore, important for the study to establish the nature of public reaction to abolition. An important methodological issue in the study of public opinion on the death penalty concerns how a researcher chooses to frame the question. In some cases, the question is framed as to elicit binary responses, such as “Yes”/ “No” or “favour”/“oppose” (e.g. Unnever and Cullen 2007). This is too simple because it effectively forecloses the possibility of having no opinion on the subject. It also fails to account for varying degrees of intensity in people’s opposition or support for abolition (Hoyle and Hood 2015). A possible solution is to offer people a range of responses that

cover a continuum of reactions. This was the approach Hood and Seemungal (2011) adopted in their study in Trinidad, and it was the approach we followed.

The results are displayed in Table 4. Across the three offences that currently attract the death penalty, the proportion of people who supported abolition was consistently greater than those opposed to abolition. Approximately, 6 in 10 people supported abolition for treason (60.9%), while 1 in 2 supported abolition for genocide (53%) and murder (53.9%).

Table 4: Reactions to Proposal to Abolish the Death Penalty

	Genocide (<i>n</i> = 2426)	Murder (<i>n</i> = 2416)	Treason (<i>n</i> = 2428)
Completely Opposed	29.4	24.9	22.0
Somewhat Opposed	9.3	8.6	9.3
Somewhat Supportive	11.7	10.8	15.7
Completely Supportive	41.3	43.1	45.2
Don't Know	8.3	12.5	7.7

7. Support for a discretionary death penalty

Some death penalty scholars have argued that posing the question purely in terms of support or opposition to abolition of *mandatory* death penalty might be unsatisfactory, limiting, and unhelpful (Sato, 2013; see also Hood and Hoyle 2015). Such a methodological approach does not only invite people to make crude and contextless assessments. It also reflects pessimism about the capacity and willingness of protagonists to make concessions. Thus, as Hood and Seemungal (2011) found in their study in Trinidad, people who oppose abolition of the death penalty might be disposed

to favour discretionary death penalty rather than mandatory death penalty. This implies a gradualist approach to abolition, beginning with a change from mandatory to discretionary death penalty. A discretionary sentence would allow judges to adopt a case-by-case, context-sensitive determination of the propriety of the death penalty.

In the light of these preceding issues, we asked the subsample of our research participants who expressed opposition to abolition of the mandatory death penalty whether they would support discretionary death penalty for murder. As shown in Figure 5, two-thirds (71%, $n = 777$) of opponents of mandatory death penalty were willing to support discretionary death penalty for murder. The results are consistent with Hood and Seemungal (2011) study in Trinidad which also found that, among those who were in favour of the death penalty (89%), the majority (71%) opted for a discretionary death penalty when offered the choice. Taken together, the evidence would seem to confirm the proposition that rather than governments concern with support for the death penalty it is perhaps better to measure the level of tolerance towards abolition (Sato, 2014).

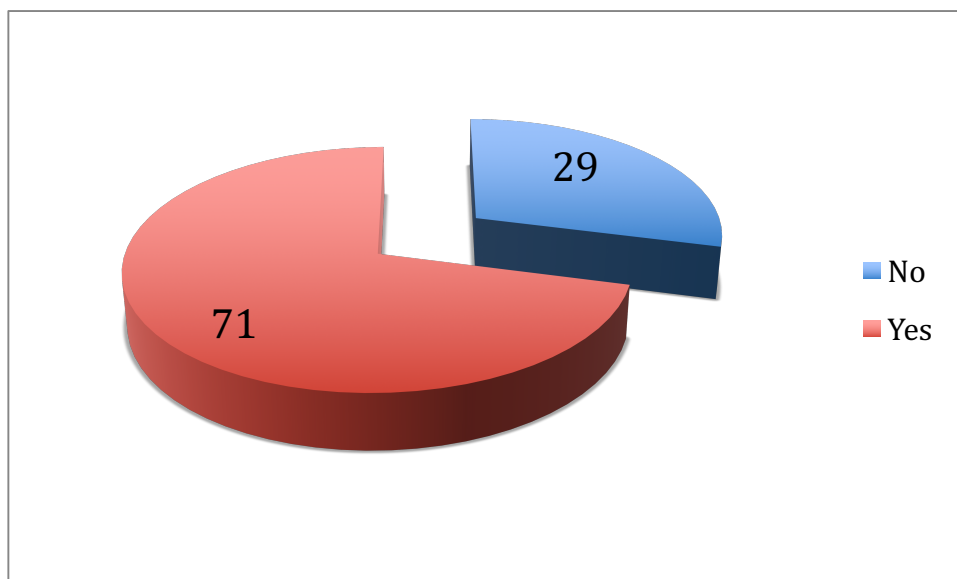


Figure 5: Support for a Discretionary Death Penalty

8. Demographic influence on support for abolition of the death penalty for murder

Murder is a relatively more common crime than treason and genocide. It is also an offence that attracts resentment, and exerts particularly strong emotional and psychological impact on the victim's family and society. The report, therefore, focuses mainly on attitudes to abolition for murder. We begin with analysis of structural variables that are associated with attitudes to abolition (see Table 5). Among women, 64.7% supported abolition for murder; it was 58.6% among men. In terms of age, support for abolition was most pronounced among young people aged between 18 and 24 years; 7 out of 10 people in this age group would like the death penalty for murder abolished. There was not much difference between 35 – 44 year-olds (63.1%) and old people (62.9%). Anti-abolitionist attitudes were concentrated among 24 – 35 year olds and 45 – 54 year olds.

Support for abolition was strongest among university graduates (79%) while opposition was prevalent among people with basic level education (43%). However, attitudes to abolition do not appear linear, such that the strength of abolition increases with levels of education. Thus, for example, people who reported junior secondary education were more supportive of abolition (64.4%) than those who had post-secondary education (61.7%), although the difference was not statistically significant.

Our analysis of general support for the death penalty revealed variations across neighbourhoods. Might views about abolition for murder mirror this finding? The results presented in Table 5 show that pro-abolitionist views are concentrated in high-class neighbourhoods (79.5%): a person who lives in a high-class neighbourhood is almost twice more likely to support abolition than someone in lower-class migrant neighbourhoods. Perhaps more strikingly, residents of lower-class indigenous

neighbourhoods expressed greater support for abolition (62.3%) than residents of middle-class neighbourhoods (57%).

How might we account for these differences? We saw earlier that support for abolition was strongest among young people and university graduates. Yet neither of these is concentrated in high-class and low-class indigenous neighbourhoods. For example, 26.6% of those aged between 18 and 24 and 49.7% of university graduates lived in high-class neighbourhoods; for low-class indigenous neighbourhoods, the corresponding figures were 18.4% and 3.7%, respectively. There were also more young people (31.5%) and university graduates (39.2%) in middle-class neighbourhoods than in low-class indigenous neighbourhoods. Yet support for abolition was weaker in the former than in the latter.

A candidate explanation for these spatial variations is the extent of ethnic heterogeneity and collective efficacy. Evidence from Agyei-Mensah and Owusu (2010) shows that the high class and indigenous lower-class neighbourhoods are more ethnically homogenous than the middle-class and migrant lower-class neighbourhoods. There is also evidence to show that the former group of neighbourhoods exhibit greater collective efficacy than the latter (Oteng-Ababio et al 2015). Collective efficacy refers to the dense network in the form of close family ties and relational networks that exist in these communities (Boakye, 2010). It is possible that residents of high collective efficacy neighbourhoods have personal associations with both victims and offenders, and this may have a restraining influence on their punitive attitudes, including support for the death penalty (Metz, 2010; Boakye, 2009). Thus, in this context, victims and offenders are both likely to be known members of the community, or even family members. In contrast, the weak support for abolition in migrant lower-class migrant neighbourhood and middle class neighbourhood may reflect a lack of collective

efficacy and the relatively high cost of crime to individuals in these neighbourhoods. For those who hold the hope of rising out of poverty but find the process rather slow and difficult, the experience of crime and the thought of being a victim may strike a particular fear, and this may condition their preference for harsh punishment to serve as a deterrence.

Table 5: Demographic Differences and Abolition for Murder

	Opposition	Support
Gender*		
Male ((<i>n</i> = 1036)	41.4	58.6
Female (<i>n</i> = 1032)	35.3	64.7
Personal (robbery) Victimisation		
Yes (<i>n</i> = 313)	41.9	58.1
No (<i>n</i> = 1771)	37.7	62.3
Vicarious (robbery) Victimisation*		
Yes (<i>n</i> = 420)	42.9	57.1
No (<i>n</i> = 1662)	37.1	62.9
Vicarious (murder) Victimisation		
Yes (<i>n</i> = 105)	48.6	51.4
No (<i>n</i> = 1976)	37.8	62.2
Age*		
18 – 24 (<i>n</i> = 521)	30.9	69.1
25 – 34 (<i>n</i> = 685)	43.2	56.8
35 – 44 (<i>n</i> = 434)	36.9	63.1
45 – 54 (<i>n</i> = 242)	42.1	57.9
55 or older (<i>n</i> = 200)	38.5	61.5
Education*		
Basic (<i>n</i> = 357)	43.4	56.6
Junior Secondary (<i>n</i> = 630)	35.6	64.4
Senior Secondary (<i>n</i> = 526)	39.9	60.1
Post-Secondary (<i>n</i> = 227)	38.3	61.7

University (<i>n</i> = 268)	32.1	67.9
Neighbourhood*		
Low-class Migrant (<i>n</i> = 400)	58.5	41.5
Low-class Indigenous (<i>n</i> = 592)	37.7	62.3
Middle Class (<i>n</i> = 546)	43.0	57.0
High Class (<i>n</i> = 576)	20.5	79.5

* indicates statistically significant results, suggesting that the differences were not the result of chance.

In terms of criminal victimisation, we asked the people interviewed whether any family member had been murdered: 4.7% (*n* = 114) responded in the affirmative, Families of murder victims appeared evenly split in their attitudes to abolition: 48.6% were opposed to abolition, while 51.4% expressed support for abolition. Among those with no history of family murder victims, support for abolition was much stronger (62.2%). The differences between (vicarious) victims and non-victims was statistically significant, suggesting it was beyond what could be expected by chance. Among victims of robberies, 58.1% supported abolition; for non-victims, it was 62.3%. The difference was not statistically significant, except for those who had vicarious experiences of robbery. As can be seen from Table 5, 57.1% of those whose family members or friends have been victims of robbery supported abolition. The corresponding proportion for those without such experience was 62.9%. This finding suggests that hearing about victimisation of loved ones tend to elicit emotionally charged response either out of anger or fear, or both.

To explore further the impact of crime-related factors, we examined the association between perceptions of crime trends and attitudes to abolition for murder (see Figure 6). Among those who said murder rates had increased, 37.6% were opposed to abolition while 42.1% of those who believed murder rates had decreased opposed

abolition. Opposition was weakest among those who believed murder rates were the same: 25.4%.

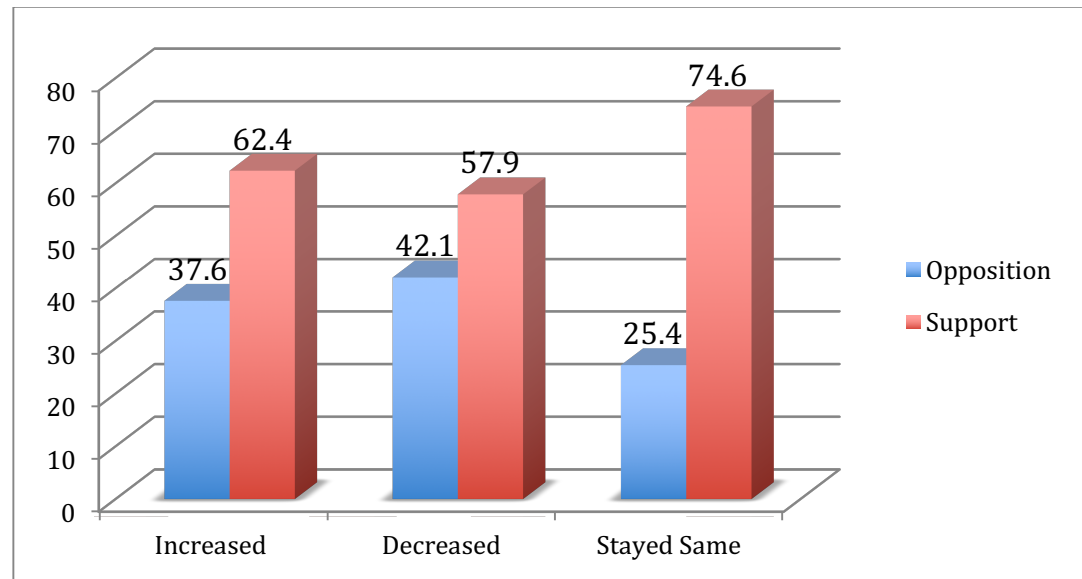


Figure 6: Murder Trends and Attitudes to Abolition

9. Cultural norms and support for abolition for murder

Earlier, we reported an association between one's religious affiliation and nature of opinions on the death penalty. Similar association was found between religion and support for abolition for murder ($\chi^2 (4) = 14.93, p < .01$). Support for abolition was weakest among people without religious affiliation (51.8%). It was highest among Catholics (66.3%) and Moslems (65%). Among protestants, it was 62.7%. Thus, across all three religious groups, 6 out of 10 people supported abolition.

Next, we examined the association between traditional beliefs in supernatural punishments and support for abolition. As shown in Table 6, among those who would encourage victims to seek redress at local deities, only 43.3% would support abolition for murder. The proportion among those who did not express such beliefs was 67.7%. Among those who did not believe in the inescapability of ancestral punishments, 69.3% supported abolition; for those who believed, support was 51.6%. A little over

half of the people who believed ancestral spirits would punish evildoers (52.1%); for those who did not believe in these ancestral spirits, support for abolition was 67.7%. Overall, these cultural beliefs would seem to inhibit abolition. As we argue later, there is urgent need for further research to understand more fully the links between these beliefs and abolition.

Table 6: Cultural Beliefs and Death Penalty Abolition

	Opposition	Support
Ancestral punishment inescapable*		
Disagree ($n = 851$)	30.7	69.3
Agree ($n = 812$)	48.4	51.6
Traditional deities punish criminals more effectively*		
Disagree ($n = 1263$)	34.0	66.0
Agree ($n = 413$)	56.7	43.3
Crime victims should consult local deities*		
Disagree ($n = 1268$)	32.3	67.7
Agree ($n = 442$)	57.0	43.0
Ancestral spirits will punish evildoers*		
Disagree ($n = 1036$)	32.3	67.7
Agree ($n = 725$)	47.9	52.1

* indicates statistically significant results; strongly disagree and disagreed combined as disagree, strongly agree and agree combined as agree; ‘undecided’ response excluded

10. Predicting support for abolition for murder

Until now, our analyses have been descriptive, offering basic information about (i) general support for the death penalty (ii) opinions on abolition, and (iii) the distribution of these opinions across different social groups. This section moves beyond descriptive analysis to understand the factors that predict people’s attitudes to death penalty abolition. The results from the regression analysis presented here therefore informs us

about i) how much all the factors analysed in this study together help us explain people's views on abolition; and ii) the explanatory value of the individual factors such as socio-demographic characteristic of the sample, the neighbourhood features and the crime-related and context specific characteristics identified in this study. Unravelling the key explanatory factors that shape people's views on abolition should help develop effective engagement strategy in the process towards abolition. For example, merely observing that there is a gender difference in attitudes toward abolition and that females are more likely than males to support abolition tells us very little about what explains this difference. It is possible that such a gender difference is as a result of a third factor such as the extent to which females have suffered personal or vicarious victimisation compared to males. This further analysis ensures that we can rule out such potential confounds and be confident that any gender differences observed in views on abolition is indeed the case and not influenced or explained by something else.

The full results from the regression analysis is presented in Appendix 2. The twelve socio-demographic and contextual factors analysed together explains 15.1% of people's views on death penalty abolishing. Neighbourhood features contribute the most (7.1%) to explaining people's views on abolition in this study. That is when all else is taken into account, our analysis shows that people living in high class neighbourhoods are more likely to support abolition of the death penalty compared to people living in low class (both indigenous and migrant) and working class neighbourhoods. Such difference will not be explained by gender, age, educational composition or any of the other contextual characteristics examined in this study. Again as shown in our earlier descriptive analysis, the next group likely to support abolition is people living in low class indigenous neighborhoods; those in low-class migrant neighbourhoods and middle class neighborhoods are least likely to support abolition.

The second important factor that contributes to explaining people's views on abolition in our analysis is traditional beliefs about supernatural punishment; this accounted for 4.6% of the explanation for abolitionist views. This means our earlier observation that people who believe in traditional notions of ancestral punishment were likely to hold anti-abolitionist views persist after considering factors such as neighbourhood differences, age, gender, educational background and other factors measured in this study. The influence of socio-demographic factors (age, gender, and education) persisted after controlling for possible confounds, although they contributed less (1.8%) compared with neighbourhood and cultural beliefs in supernatural punishment to explaining abolitionist views. It also emerged from the analysis that interest in death penalty -measured in terms of whether or not they had discussed the death penalty with friends or family- contribute uniquely to explaining views on abolition although less so than socio-demographic factors (1.4%).

11. Justifications for attitudes to abolition for murder

The Constitutional Review Commission offered four key justifications for its recommendation to abolish the death penalty:

- (i) Ghana's current status of de facto abolitionist "does not adequately punish people convicted of crimes that are punishable by death" (p. 644).
- (ii) The death penalty has the danger of "invariably transforming [the State] into a killer and there is no justification for the State to become a killer" (p. 644).
- (iii) "In almost every part of the globe, countries have abolished the death penalty... It can thus be seen that current international opinion is predominantly in favour of the abolition of the death penalty" (p. 645).

- (iv) “... human life is concerned and based on the utilitarian principle that punishment must serve the greater good, there is the need to focus on reformation of the criminal rather than the taking of life.” (p. 645).

The Government’s White Paper justified its decision to accept the recommendation on what it called the “the sanctity of life”, which it argued, was “a value so much engrained in the Ghanaian social psyche that it cannot be gambled away with judicial uncertainties” (White Paper, 2012, p. 44).

Our study examined the justifications offered by people who expressed pro-abolitionist and anti-abolitionist views. The results in Table 6 show that pro-abolitionists shared the Government’s twin justifications of “sanctity of life” and “judicial uncertainties”: 33.2% believed life was “sacred” while 31.1% were concerned about false positives – that is, innocent people being wrongly convicted and executed. Both of these grounds for abolitionist views do not necessarily operate separately. For example, it might be precisely because people believe life to be sacred that they are unwilling to risk the execution of innocent suspects. The argument against the effectiveness of the death penalty gained traction among only 16.7% of the people interviewed; this was similar to the proportion that believed people guilty of murder could be rehabilitated.

Anti-abolitionists offered three main justifications, almost evenly distributed. First is deterrence. This refers to the attempt to induce the avoidance of criminal conduct through threats of adverse consequence (Bottoms & von Hirsch 2010). Just over a third (33.9%) of those opposed to abolition believed the death penalty served such as deterrence effect against murder. This proportion is thrice higher than what Hood and Seemungal (2011: 13) in their study in Trinidad. In that study, retribution

was the main reason for resistance to abolition. This was also a rationale for anti-abolition in Ghana, although not the preeminent reason. As shown in Table 7, 1 in 3 people (31.7%) said murder was so serious that it required the visitation of punishment equal to the harm done. Therefore, people guilty of murder deserved the death penalty. The final leg of the tripod of justifications anti-abolitionists offered was the need to give justice to the families of murder victims (28.8%). Given that there are presently no studies on the views and expectations of families of murder victims in Ghana, it is difficult to establish how far the death penalty is their preferred sentence for offenders and what such a sentence means to them.

Table 7: Justifications for Attitudes to Abolition for Murder

	Opposition (<i>n</i> = 631)	Support (<i>n</i> = 1254)
People Deserve Another Chance	----	17.0
Life is Sacred	----	33.7
Ineffective	----	16.7
Innocent people may be killed	----	30.8
Other reasons	----	1.8
Guilty Deserves Death	31.7	----
Justice for families	28.8	----
Deterrence	33.9	----
Other reasons	5.5	----

12. The role of evidence in changing attitudes to abolition for murder

Given the prominence of deterrence and innocence as the justifications for attitudes to abolition for murder, the study sought to establish whether scientific evidence on both might alter people's views. In the first instance, interviewees were asked whether they would *still favour the death penalty* (in other words, oppose abolition), if new scientific

evidence showed that the death penalty was not better at preventing murder than imprisonment. The results, as displayed in Table 8, show that such evidence will have very little impact: those opposed to abolition would still strongly (48%) or somewhat (22.7%) favour the death penalty. Only 1 in 5 of them (26.7%) would be prepared to alter their support in the light of scientific evidence against deterrence effects. Among supporters of abolition, such evidence would strengthen their stance (85.4%).

Appendix 3 displays the results for those who had expressed intense interest in the death penalty – that is, they had discussed it with friends or family. Without the evidence, 51.2% said they were completely or somewhat opposed to the retention of the death penalty for murder, while 46.1% were somewhat or completely in favour of retention (2.7% had no opinion on it.) If presented with evidence on lack of deterrence effects, 73.6% of those who originally opposed to abolition for murder said they would still strongly or then somewhat favour the death penalty. Only a quarter (24.8%) said such evidence would persuade them to then strongly or somewhat oppose retention for murder.

Next we examine the impact of evidence on innocence. We asked whether people would still favour the death penalty if new scientific evidence became available to show that innocent people had in fact sometimes been executed. In comparison with deterrence evidence, innocence appeared to have a greater persuasive power among those opposed to abolition. Here, 37.3% said such evidence would make them strongly or somewhat oppose the death penalty. However, 60.3% would still strongly or somewhat favour the death penalty. Among those already in support of abolition, evidence of innocence had slightly greater impact in cementing their views (89%) than evidence on deterrence did (85%).

As in the case of deterrence effects, we also examined the impact of evidence of innocence on the views of those who have discussed the death penalty with friends or family. Among those who had originally favoured retention for murder, 63% would still strongly or somewhat favour retention. Approximately 34.9% would then strongly or somewhat oppose retention for murder. In comparison with the impact of deterrence evidence, evidence of innocence would seem to have a greater impact on attitudes to the death penalty.

Table 8: Impact of Evidence on Deterrence and Innocence

	Evidence on Deterrence		Evidence on Innocence	
	Opposed	Supported	Opposed	Supported
	(n = 806)	(n = 1289)	(n = 804)	(n = 2094)
Still strongly favour it	48.0	6.7	28.2	4.3
Still/then somewhat favour it	22.7	5.4	32.1	5.0
Then strongly oppose it	19.0	66.7	25.9	70.9
Still/then somewhat oppose it	7.7	18.7	11.4	18.1
Don't Know	2.6	2.4	2.4	1.1

13. Evidence of global trends and support for abolition

For domestic advocacy groups global trends, whether instigated by international conventions (such as UN resolutions A/RES/62/149 and A/RES/69/186) or not, constitute resources to be used to “mobilize and coerce decision-makers, who then instrumentally adopt the prescription embodied in the norm as their own” (Checkel

1997: 476-7). As previously noted, international trends towards abolition was a key argument for the CRC's recommendation for abolition. As our evidence showed, some of the reasons offered are consistent with what Ghanaians told us. However, domestic advocacy groups often appear to focus more on the fact of the demands of international conventions as sufficient justification for policy change and public support for such changes. Not much attention is given to the merits of the reasons upon which such conventions anchor their normative demands on States. Whether the fact of such international norms hold as much sway on the views of ordinary citizens as they do on advocacy groups remains unexamined. Thus in the context of abolition, we sought to investigate the extent to which Ghanaians were willing to alter their views of the death penalty in the light of those norms. Specifically, we asked the research participants whether it would make a difference to them if other nationals had abolished the death penalty.

The results in Table 9 show responses based on prior position on, and interest in, the death penalty. Among those opposed to abolition, 27.1% were willing to reconsider their position in the light of international trends, and such trends placed 16.8% in doubt. However, the majority remained unaffected. For those who support abolition, knowledge of global trend towards abolishing will strengthen their support for abolition (69.1%). One out of five would not alter their views on account of such trends. Interestingly, for those who never discussed the death penalty with family or friends, 55% would support abolition if they knew about the global trend toward abolition compared 42.1% of those who discuss the death penalty with family or friends.

Thus taken these results together, international norms or practices have relatively little purchase on the views of Ghanaians who are opposed to the death

penalty and those who show much interest in the subject matter. For the nonchalant Ghanaian or the Ghanaian already predisposed to support abolition, international norms will sway their views. The question we have not answered is why such norms influence or fail to influence the views of Ghanaians. Future studies that address this question will offer crucial evidence for those interested in overcoming resistance to abolition.

These findings appear to support the position of the Constitutional Review Commission. The Commission argued that international practices were not sufficient basis to overcome any resistance to abolition of the death penalty, and that advocates of abolition need to offer more “convincing arguments” Ghanaians might find acceptable (p. 641-2). Yet the Commission itself limits the audience to be persuaded to politicians and “the middle class”, with the reason that that has been the practice in Europe and other jurisdictions (p. 641). In a context where democratic consolidation remains incomplete (see, Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi 2005), overlooking the views of ordinary citizens might prove problematic.

Table 9: Knowledge of global trend towards abolishing and impact on responses

	Abolition stands		Discussion	
Does abolition trend make any difference?	Opposed (<i>n</i> = 804)	Supported (<i>n</i> = 1295)	Discuss (<i>n</i> = 366)	Don't discuss (<i>n</i> = 1756)
Yes	27.1	69.1	42.1	55.0
No	56.1	22.0	46.2	32.6
Not sure	16.8	8.9	11.7	12.4

14. Preference for alternative sentences

What should replace the death penalty? The Constitutional Review Commission recommended life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Government's White Paper did not indicate whether life imprisonment should be with or without the possibility of parole. We asked the research participants to indicate their preferred sentences for the three offences that presently attract the death penalty. Across the three offences, people preferred life imprisonment without the possibility of parole; 70.7% in the case of those convicted of genocide, 66% for murderers, and 65.2% for treason convicts (Table 10). On average, only 1 in 5 of those interviewed preferred life imprisonment with the possibility of parole.

Table 10: Preferred Alternative to the Death Penalty

	Genocide (<i>n</i> = 2441)	Murder (<i>n</i> = 2444)	Treason (<i>n</i> = 2393)
Life with Parole	20.4	23.3	18.2
Life without Parole	70.7	66.0	65.2
1 – 20 years	3.3	4.2	9.6
21 – 40 years	1.4	1.5	2.1
41 years or more	2.3	2.7	3.3
Other sentences	1.9	2.2	1.5

Thus, on the basis of the results in Table 10 above, the views of the Ghanaians interviewed align with the recommendations of the CRC. However, such a conclusion risks masking the possibility of contextual variation such that people might be open to other sentences depending on the particular circumstances of an offence. We focused on the example of murder to explore this hypothesis by presenting the research

participants with four different scenarios⁴: (i) stranger homicide involving recidivist offender; ii) stranger homicide involving first-time offender; iii) spousal homicide in the context of an abusive relationship; and iv) spousal homicide in the context of a non-abusive relationship. These scenarios allowed participants to make a decision of the preferred sentences, with the death penalty as an option.

The stranger homicides involved a man who robbed a local shop with a gun and killed the owner by shooting him in the head. He took away with him 200 Ghana Cedis cash. The difference between the two scenarios of stranger homicides was the presence or absence of criminal history for the offender. The response range from respondents recommending a prison term; a prison sentence with or without the possibility of release; the death penalty or any other punishment they prefer. Without criminal history, about a third (29.9%) of those interviewed chose the death penalty; the presence of information about criminal history increased the preference for the death penalty to 38.9%. Interesting that did not make the death penalty the most preferred sentencing option. Whether an offender had criminal history or not, the preferred sentence was life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

The fictitious case of spousal homicide involved two women who poisoned their husbands but for different reasons: in one case it was in reaction to an abusive treatment from the husband; in the other case, the woman wanted to be free to join her lover. For the case of the abused woman, 21.3% recommended the death penalty, while 35.9% opted for the same punishment for the woman who killed to make way for her lover.

⁴ These were based on those used in public opinion surveys in China (Oberwittler and Qi, 2008), Trinidad (Hood and Seemungal 2011) and Malaysia (Hood 2013), thus making it possible to compare responses across a number of different retentionist nations.

For this latter woman, most people wanted life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Life without possibility of parole was not a popular choice of punishment for the woman who had been in an abusive relationship. For her, the research participants were evenly split between those who preferred life imprisonment with out possibility of parole (27%) and those who recommended a determinate sentence of not more than 20 years (26.8%). Interestingly, it was the only case that we observed a greater spread of sentencing options; in all other cases, the choice had been between death sentence and life imprisonment without possibility of parole. This finding would seem to suggest that the CRC's blanket recommendation of life imprisonment without the possibility of parole might be too harsh for some Ghanaians. It suggests that, even with life without parole, there might be public support for granting judges the discretion to decide when to use it.

Table 11: Context and Support for Death Penalty

	Stranger Homicide		Spousal Homicide	
	<i>No Criminal History</i>	<i>Criminal History</i>	<i>Abusive Relations</i>	<i>Non-Abusive Relations</i>
Life with parole	19.6	7.2	27.0	10.0
Life without Parole	37.2	48.9	18.7	43.3
Death Sentence	29.9	38.9	21.3	35.9
0 – 20 years	6.6	1.6	26.8	5.5
21 – 40 years	2.1	0.6	1.5	2.3
41 years or more	3.1	1.8	1.7	1.5
Other sentences	1.5	1.0	2.9	1.5
<i>N</i>	2426	2427	2433	2418

15. Abolition and possibility of backlash effects

One of the key issues in the abolition debate concerns possible backlash effects. For example, the US Supreme Court's decision in *Furman v. Georgia* was followed by a rise in public support for the death penalty, which (partly) compelled the Court to reverse its decision in *Gregg v. Georgia* (see Mandery 2013). In Ghana, perceived public sentiments appear to constrain the definitive action on the death penalty. Prior to 1992, Ghana had executed people convicted for murder and treason. In some cases, such as 1979, the death penalty was imposed for public sector corruption and treason on the grounds of strong public support for criminal deterrence (Jackson, 1999; Ninsin, 1985). Although robbery per se does not constitute a capital offence, public perception to the contrary means there are concerns that abolition might create a backlash. The potential backlash might take the form of reductions in public confidence in legal institutions and recourse to vigilante violence. For example, the incidence of vigilante violence and its relation to lack of confidence (trustworthiness) in the police have been reported in previous studies in Ghana (Tankebe, 2009).

In this study, we examined whether people believed abolition would lead to vigilante violence or some form of lawlessness. We presented people with a scenario involving a domestic robbery that resulted in homicide:

Eric and John decided to rob a house. Both went in and pointed their guns at a husband and a wife, and demanded that they bring out all their money and jewelries. In the course of the robbery they shot dead the wife, took the money and ran out of the house. *As the death penalty has been abolished, the man knows that Eric and John will not be sentenced to death even if they were arrested and convicted for murder.*

We then asked a series of questions to establish what they themselves might do or what they thought most people would do. The results, in Table 12, show that about 1 in 3 people will support the victim's husband engaging in vigilante violence. However, in terms of what the research participants themselves would do, we found that less than a third (26%) were prepared to engage in similar acts of vigilantism. About 87% of those interviewed believed most people would avoid vigilante violence.

Table 12: Perceived Backlash of Abolition

	<i>Per cent Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing</i>
1. It would be right for the man to look for the robbers and shoot them dead for the murder of his wife.	31.6
2. I would look for them and killed them rather than report them to the police	26.0
3. Most people would report them to the police rather than take the law into their own hands.	86.7
4. It would be right to report the suspects to the police and allow the law to take its course.	86.5

It is possible that the results in Table 12 vary according to nature of people's views about abolition for murder. We therefore conducted further analysis in which we cross-tabulated endorsement of vigilantism with attitudes to abolition. As can be seen in Table 13, those who strongly opposed abolition of the death penalty would endorse those who engage in vigilantism (38.5%), and would personally resort to vigilantism (39.3%). For those with unwavering support for abolition, only 16% would endorse vigilantism or actively engage in it. Interestingly, about half of those who strongly oppose abolition (47.0%) also said it would be right to report suspects to the police and allow the law to take its course. On the basis of this results, it would seem that the fear of backlash effect in the form of vigilantism following abolition at best have little empirical basis.

Importantly, there would be no basis for concern especially if the alternative sanction and the justice system overall is perceived as effective.

Table 13: Perceived Backlash based on opposition or support for abolition

	Completely opposed	Somewhat opposed	Somewhat supportive	Completely supportive	Don't know
1. It would be right for the man to look for the robbers and shoot them dead for the murder of his wife.	38.5	9.1	13.0	16.0	23.4
2. I would look for them and killed them rather than report them to the police	39.3	8.6	9.9	16.2	26.1
3. Most people would report them to the police rather than take the law into their own hands.	34.1	8.8	8.1	37.2	11.9
4. It would be right to report the suspects to the police and allow the law to take its course.	47.0	9.5	7.5	28.0	8.0

IV: CONCLUSION

Some advocates of abolition have often shied away from public opinion due to a belief that the public is resistant to abolition. The catalyst for the study was the work of the Constitutional Review Commission, and its eventual recommendation for the abolition of the death penalty. We sought to establish the extent to which the Government's White Paper reflected or deviated from public views on the death penalty. Although the Commission's work was based on public consultation, it was very much an open question as to how far various segments of Ghanaian society were afforded the opportunity to express their views. This study fulfills this important gap. The main findings may be summarized as follows:

- (i) Views about the death penalty do not appear to be polarized. The majority of Ghanaian respondents (48.3%) expressed strong opposition to the death

penalty. Only 8.6% indicated strong endorsement of this form of punishment. Almost 6 out of every 10 respondents supported abolition of the death penalty in cases of murder. Among those opposed to abolition, 7 in 10 would support a discretionary death penalty in place of the current mandatory death penalty.

- (ii) The most preferred replacement for the death penalty was life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Approximately, 71% of people interviewed chose life imprisonment without the possibility of parole as the alternative to the death penalty. This is consistent with the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Commission.
- (iii) Popular commentary on the death penalty suggests that Ghanaians support retention of the death penalty for reasons of deterrence. The evidence from this study revealed a tripod of reasons: deterrence; retribution; and justice for victims' families. Among proponents of abolition, sanctity of life and the possibility of executing innocent people were the two prominent reasons. The data show very little evidence of potential backlash in the form of support for vigilante violence or lynching; 26% said they would take the law into their own hands if the death penalty was abolished.
- (iv) The findings from a detailed analysis showed that traditional religious beliefs about supernatural punishments were a powerful force shaping attitudes to the death penalty. People who believed in these punishments were more likely to endorse the death penalty and to resist abolition for murder. This is novel finding in the academic literature on the death penalty. However, more research is required to establish more fully the mechanisms that link these beliefs to anti-abolition attitudes.

- (v) There is evidence of hotspots of death penalty views from this study. Residents of high-class neighbourhoods were likely to oppose the death penalty and to support its abolition for murder. Support for the death penalty was concentrated in low-class migrant areas. An interesting finding emerged that low-class indigenous areas were more opposed to the death penalty than middle-class areas.
- (vi) Finally, a key issue in death penalty research concerns the role of scientific evidence, especially evidence on deterrence effects and wrongful conviction. The findings show that evidence has both *transformative* and *reinforcement* effects. While scientific evidence does not lead to a complete rejection of the death penalty, the findings showed that some anti-abolitionists are open to a reasoned debate, and will reconsider their views in the face of scientific evidence.

Preparations for a referendum on the proposals of the Constitutional Review Commission had stalled due to a court case challenging the constitutionality of the process. In October 2015, the Supreme Court dismissed the case, thereby clearing the way for the preparations to resume. As the findings show, there are demographic and neighbourhood differences in support for abolition of the death penalty, which cannot be easily dismissed. Further, the evidence does not support concerns about backlash effects after abolition. Finally, the findings suggest that the CRC's blanket recommendation of life imprisonment without the possibility of parole might be too harsh for some Ghanaians. It suggests that, even with life without parole, there might be public support for granting judges the discretion to decide when to use it.

Appendix 1: The Interview Schedule

SECTION A

This section asks for your views about the death penalty in general. Please, remember that the answers are only a matter of opinion, and it is your opinion that I am interested in.

Q1. How interested would you say you are in the death penalty in Ghana?

Not interested at all	Not very interested	Interested	Very interested
1	2	3	4

Q2. How much do you know about the death penalty in Ghana?

Know nothing about it (skip to Q4)	Know little about it	Know something about it	Know a great deal
1	2	3	4

Q3. You say you know at least something about the death; what is the most important thing you know about it

Q4. Do you support the death penalty?

I do not support it at all	I somewhat support it	I support it	I support it very strongly	I don't know
0	1	2	3	4

Q5. Please, indicate below why you say you support or do not support the death penalty?

Q6. When you get together with your friends or family, how often during a year would you say you discuss the death penalty?

We never talked about it (Skip to Q 8)	Once	Twice	Several times
1	2	3	4

Q7. If you have discussed the death penalty with your friends or family, what do you think their views are about the death penalty?

Some support it, but others oppose it	They all support it	They all oppose it	Don't Know	We never discuss it
1	2	3	4	5

Q8. Which crimes do you think currently attract the death penalty in Ghana?

SECTION B

The Constitution of Ghana states that people who are guilty of murder, genocide (i.e. killing with the intent of destroying a particular group), and treason (i.e. the crime of attempting to overthrow, or supporting others to overthrow, the government) must be sentenced to death (this is called mandatory death sentence). However, the Government has recently accepted a recommendation by the Constitutional Review Commission to abolish the death penalty completely and to replace it with imprisonment for life. What this means is that, no person will be sentenced to death, regardless of the crime and circumstances in which the crime took place.

Q9. Do you support the abolition of the death penalty for murder?

I completely oppose it (Skip to Q11)	I somewhat oppose it (Skip to Q11)	I somewhat support it (Go to Q10)	I completely support it (Go to 10)	I don't know (Skip to Q16)
0	1	2	3	4

Q10. You say you support the proposal to abolish the death penalty for murder in Ghana. What is your single most important reason for SUPPORTING the proposal? (PAUSE FOR A RESPONSE FROM THE INTERVIEWEE AND TICK THE APPROPRIATE BOX BASED ON RESPONSE)

People who commit murder deserve another chance; they can be rehabilitated.	
Life is sacred; no court has the right to take it away.	
Putting people to death won't stop others from committing murder	
Innocent people may be killed	
Other reasons (please specify)	

SKIP Q11.

Q11. You say you oppose completely or somewhat abolishing the death penalty for murder, would you support a decision to make it optional depending on the circumstances of the murder?

0 = No

1 = Yes

Q12. Would you support the death penalty for the following crimes?

	No	Yes
1. Rape of an adult (18 years or more)		
2. Stealing of public funds		
3. "Causing financial loss to the state"		

4. Murder		
5. Rape of a child below 10 years.		
6. Rape of a child between ages 10 and 14		
7. Rape of a child between 15 and 16		
8. Genocide		
9. Armed robbery		
10. Treason		
Others (please, specify)		

Q13. Suppose that new scientific evidence showed that the death penalty was not better at preventing murder than long imprisonment. Would you still favour the death penalty?

I would still strongly favour it	I would still/then somewhat favour it	I would then strongly oppose it	I would still/then somewhat oppose it	I don't know/I haven't an opinion
1	2	3	4	5

Q14. Suppose that new scientific evidence becomes available to show that innocent people have in fact sometimes been executed. Would you still favour the death penalty?

I would still strongly favour it	I would still/then somewhat favour it	I would still strongly oppose it	I would still/then somewhat oppose it	I don't know/I haven't an opinion
1	2	3	4	5

Q15. More than half of the countries in the world have now abolished the death penalty completely, for all crimes, and more are doing it every year.

Does this make any difference to your view on whether it is right for Ghana to abolish the death penalty completely?

0 = No

1 = Yes

3 = Not Sure

Q16. What is the single most important reason for OPPOSING the proposal to abolish the death penalty for murder in Ghana? (PAUSE FOR A RESPONSE, AND SELECT THE RELEVANT OPTION BELOW)

There can be no excuses for murder; everyone found guilty deserves to die.	
The death penalty is the only way to ensure justice for the families of victims of murder.	

The death penalty is the only way to prevent other people from committing murder.	
Other reasons (please, specify)	

Q17. Do you support the proposal to abolish the death penalty for genocide (i.e. killing with the intent of destroying a particular group)?

I completely oppose it	I somewhat oppose it	I somewhat support it	I completely support it	I don't know
0	1	2	3	4

Q18. Do you support the proposal to abolish the death penalty for treason (i.e. the crime of attempting to overthrow, or supporting others to overthrow, a government)?

I completely oppose it	I somewhat oppose it	I somewhat support it	I completely support it	I don't know
0	1	2	3	4

Q19. If the death penalty was indeed abolished, what sentence would you replace it with for each of the following offences?

A) Murder

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life in imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Other (please, specify)

B) Genocide (i.e. killing with the intent of destroying a particular group), (i.e. the crime of attempting to overthrow, or supporting others to overthrow, the government)

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life in imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Other (please, specify)

C) Treason (i.e. the crime of attempting to overthrow, or supporting others to overthrow, the government)

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life in imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Other (please, specify)

D.) Robbery

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life in imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Other (please, specify)

E.) Rape of a child below 10 years

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life in imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Other (please, specify)

F.) Causing financial loss

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life in imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Other (please, specify)

G.) Rape of a child between 10 and 16 years

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life in imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Other (please, specify)

H.) Stealing public funds

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life in imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Other (please, specify)

I.) Rape of an adult (18 years and above)

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life in imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Other (please, specify)

Q20. Please, consider the following scenario and tell us what your views are:

Eric and John decided to rob a house. Both went in and pointed their guns at a husband and a wife, and demanded that they bring out all their money and jewellery. In the course of the robbery they shot dead the wife, took the money and ran out of the house.

As the death penalty has been abolished, the man knows that *Eric and John will not be sentenced to death even if they were arrested and convicted for murder.*

A. It would be right for the man to look for the robbers and shoot them dead for the murder of his wife.

1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither Agree nor Disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
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B. I would look for them and killed them rather than report them to the police.

1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither Agree nor Disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
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C. Most people would report them to the police rather than take the law into their own hands.

1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither Agree nor Disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
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D. It would be right to report the suspects to the police and allow the law to take its course.

1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither Agree nor Disagree	4. Agree	5. Strongly Agree
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SECTION C

People have different ideas about the sentences, which should be given to offenders. You will now be presented with several case examples and asked about your opinion in each case.

Q21: Scenarios

A) A man robbed a local shop with a gun and killed the owner by shooting him in the head. He took away with him 200 Ghana Cedis cash. He had not previously been convicted of any crime. He was convicted of murder. Which sentence would you prefer/think he deserves?

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Death sentence
5	Other (please, specify)

Ask the interviewee for reasons for choice of sentence

B) A man robbed a local shop with a gun and killed the owner by shooting him in the head. He took away with him 200 Ghana Cedis cash. He had previously been in prison twice for robbery. He was convicted of murder.

Which sentence would you prefer/think he deserves?

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Death sentence
5	Other (please, specify)

Ask the interviewee for reasons for choice of sentence

C) A woman who had been abused by her husband for many years decided to kill him by poisoning his food. A neighbour discovered the death of the husband and reported it to the police. She was convicted of murder.

Which sentence would you prefer/think she deserves?

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Death sentence
5	Other (please, specify)

Ask the interviewee for reasons for choice of sentence

 D) A woman deliberately poisoned her husband, who died, so that she could be free to live with her lover. She was convicted of murder.

Which sentence would you prefer/think she deserves?

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Death sentence
5	Other (please, specify)

Ask the interviewee for reasons for choice of sentence

 E) Two masked robbers attacked a filling station and killed the manager. They also wounded two workers and took away 1200 Ghana Cedis cash. Both are convicted of robbery and murder.

Which sentence would you prefer/think they deserve?

1	A sentence of _____ years in prison [Respondent to specify]
2	Life imprisonment with possibility of eventual release when no longer a danger.
3	Life imprisonment without the possibility of ever being released
4	Death sentence
5	Other (please, specify)

Ask the interviewee for reasons for choice of sentence

 F). I would like to ask you about a situation where two people take part in a crime which results in a murder:

Two young men, Yaw and Kofi, were sitting under a tree one afternoon when Kwame, whom Yaw did not like, appeared. Yaw and Kwame started arguing over a young woman they were interested in. A fight began during which Yaw pulled out a knife and stabbed Kwame to death. Kofi had shouted to Yaw “go on”, but otherwise simply stood and watched, making no attempt to intervene. However, both Yaw and Kofi were subsequently convicted of the murder of Kwame.

I would like to ask about Kofi who simply stood and watched but encouraged Yaw and made no attempt to stop him. Do you think he should have been found:

1	Guilty of murder - just like Yaw since he encouraged Yaw and did not intervene?
2	Guilty of manslaughter - a less serious offence than murder which carries a lighter sentence?
3	Not guilty of murder or manslaughter - since he did not attack Kwame?
4	Don't know

G). I would like to ask you about a situation where two people take part in a crime which results in a murder:

Kwaku and Kojo decided to rob a bank. Kojo, who knew that Kwaku had a gun, drove them to the bank and waited outside in the car. Kwaku went in, waved the gun and demanded that the cashier hand over money. The cashier pressed the alarm bell. Kwaku shot her dead and ran out of the bank. He jumped into the car and was driven away by Kojo. Both Kwaku, the killer, and Kojo, the driver, were subsequently convicted of the murder of the cashier and robbing the bank.

I would like to ask you about Kojo who drove the car but did not enter the bank. Do you think he should have been found:

1	Guilty of murder - just like Kwaku because he participated in the robbery even though he didn't shoot the cashier?
2	Guilty of manslaughter - a less serious offence than murder which carries a light sentence?
3	Guilty of robbery but no murder or manslaughter - since he did not shoot the cashier?
4	Don't know

Q22. What would you say have been the trend of murders in Ghana in the last 5 years?

1. It has increased
2. It has decreased
3. It has stayed the same
4. Don't know

Q23. What would you say has been the trend of armed robberies in Ghana in the last years?

1. It has increased
2. It has decreased
3. It has stayed the same
4. Don't know

Q24. . What would you say has been the trend of crime in general in Ghana in the last 5 years?

1. It has increased
2. It has decreased
3. It has stayed the same

4. Don't know

Q25. Please rank on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = most effective policy and 5 = least effective policy, which you think are the policies most likely to be able to reduce crimes leading to death in Ghana.

POLICIES	RANK
More effective policing to bring criminals to justice	
Better moral education of young people	
Reduce corruption in the police and courts	
Reduce poverty	
Greater number of executions of offenders	
Long prison sentences for offenders	

SECTION D

People have different views about various aspects of life in Ghana. In this section, I would like to ask your views about some of these aspects of life in Ghana. There are no correct or wrong answers; I am only interested in what you think. The questions are in the form of statements; please, tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

Response categories: 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

Q1. I tend to trust whichever government is in power to do what is right.

Q2. Most of the judges in Ghana are corrupt.

Q3. Police officers in Ghana can be trusted to follow the law when they do their work

Q4. I often feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.

Q5. I usually get upset whenever I see someone in trouble or being treated unfairly.

Q6. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.

Q7. I think people deserve what they get in life

Q8. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.

Q9. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.

Q10. I accept others even when they do something that I think is wrong.

Q11. I can understand the way my friends feel whenever they are in trouble or in some difficulty

Q12. It is all right for members of the public to beat up crime suspects.

- Q13. People who kill suspected armed robbers should not be blamed.
- Q14. It is sometimes OK for people to take the law into their own hands if they feel the police are unable to protect them.
- Q15. It is pointless to hand over a suspected criminal to the police because they won't bring the offender to justice.
- Q16. Each community should organize itself to provide it with security against criminals even if the police disagree with that.
- Q17. I believe criminals never escape the punishment of ancestral spirits.
- Q18. I believe using traditional deities is a more effective way to punish criminals.
- Q19. I believe people who have lost their property or have been robbed should consult local deities.
- Q20. I believe people who do bad things will be punished by the ancestral spirits.
- Q21. I believe no one has the right to take another person's life.

SECTION E: VIEWS ABOUT POLICE IN YOUR LOCAL AREA

Response categories: 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree

- Q1. The police in this area can be relied upon to tackle armed robbery.
- Q2. The police in this area can be relied upon to support victims of crime.
- Q3. The police respond quickly to calls for assistance in this area.
- Q4. The court do not often take the needs of victims into account.
- Q5. There is not visible police patrol in my local area.
- Q6. The courts cannot give crime victims justice.
- Q7. The police in this area cannot protect people from criminals
- Q8. The courts are always on the side of criminals.
- Q9. The courts are always sensitive to the views of Ghanaians.

SECTION F

I would like to ask a few questions about yourself in this final section

Q1. Respondent's Sex

1. Male	2. Female
---------	-----------

Q2. What is your level of education?

No formal schooling	0
Primary Schooling	1

Junior High/Junior Secondary	2
Senior High/Senior Secondary	3
Middle School	4
GCE O'Level	5
GCE A'Level	6
Post-secondary school (e.g. a diploma or degree from a polytechnic or college)	7
Under-graduate	8
Post-graduate	9

Q3. How old are you?

1). 18 - 24 years	2). 25 - 34 years	3). 35 - 44years
4). 45 - 54 years	5). 55 - 64 years	6). 65 years or more

Q4. How would you describe your employment status?

1) Employed (Go to Q5)	2) Student (Go to Q6)
3) Housewife (Got to Q6)	4) Pensioner/Retired (Go to Q6)
5) Unemployed (Got to Q6)	

Q5. How would you describe the kind of work you do?

Q6. What is your main source of news?

1. Radio
2. Television
3. Newspapers
4. Internet
5. Others (please, specify)

Q7. How many days in a week do you use the source of news you have indicated above?

1. Once a week
2. Twice a week
3. Three times in a week
4. Daily

Q8. What is your religion?

1. Christianity	
A	Roman Catholic
B	Anglican
C	Pentecost/Charismatic
D	Methodist
E	Others (specify)
2. Islam	
3. No religious belief	
4. Others (please, specify)	

Q9. How important is religion in your daily life?

1 = Not at all important

2 = Somewhat important

3 = important

4 = very important

Q10. Have you personally ever been a victim of armed robbery?

0= No

1 = Yes

If Yes, how many times has this happened to you in the last 12 months?

0 = None

1 = Once

2 = 2 -3 times

Q11. Has any member of your family or a close friend been a victim of armed robbery?

0= No

1 = Yes

If Yes, how many times has this happened to you in the last 12 months?

0 = None

1 = Once

2 = 2 -3 times

Q12. Has any member of your family been murdered?

0 = No

1 = Yes

Q13. Has any member of your family been convicted of murder?

0 = No

1 = Yes

Q14. Have you ever committed a crime?

0 = No

1 = Yes

Q15. Have you ever been convicted or sentenced for a crime?

0 = No

1 = Yes

If Yes, what crime were you convicted or sentenced for?
.....

Q16. Has any member of your family or friends been convicted or sentenced for a crime?

0 = No

1 = Yes

If Yes, what crime were you convicted or sentenced for?
.....

Appendix 2: OLS Regression Prediction Support for Abolition for Murder

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
	(s.e.) β	(s.e.) β	(s.e.) β	(s.e.) β	(s.e.) β
Female	(.06) .07*	(.06) .06**	(.06) .06**	(.06) .06*	(.06) .04
Age (18 – 24)					
25-34	(.08) -.13***	(.08) -.13***	(.08) -.13***	(.08) -.11***	(.07) -.11***
35-44	(.09) -.05	(.09) -.05	(.09) -.05	(.09) -.04	(.09) -.05*
45-54	(.11) -.07*	(.11) -.08**	(.11) -.08**	(.11) -.08**	(.10) -.08**
55 or older	(.12) -.04	(.11) -.05	(.11) -.05*	(.11) -.04	(.11) -.05*
Education (None)					
JSS	(.08) .08**	(.08) .06*	(.08) .06*	(.08) .05	(.08) .03
SHS	(.09) .03	(.09) .00	(.09) .00	(.09) .01	(.08) -.01
Postsecondary	(.11) .03	(.11) .00	(.11) .01	(.11) .00	(.10) -.01
University	(.11) .09**	(.11) .04	(.11) .05	(.11) .05	(.11) -.02

Religious importance	(.05) –.00	(.05) –.00	(.05) .00	(.04) .03
Traditional religious beliefs	(.03) –.22***	(.03) –.22***	(.03) –.22***	(.03) –.16***
Murder Trends (Stayed the same)				
Increased		(.11) –.02	(.11) –.03	(.11) .00
Decreased		(.13) –.03	(.12) –.04	(.12) –.04
Robbery Trends (Stayed the same)				
Increased		(.12) –.01	(.12) .00	(.12) .01
Decreased		(.13) .04	(.13) .06	(.13) .09*
Personal Robbery victimisation		(.09) –.00	(.09) .01	(.08) –.02
Vicarious Robbery victimisation		(.08) –.03	(.08) –.02	(.08) –.02
Family Murder		(.14) –.04	(.14) –.03	(.13) –.02
Interest in death penalty			(.08) –.13***	(.07) –.10***
Neighbourhood (cat: High-class)				
Poor Migrant				(.09) –.33***

Poor Indigenous (08) –.14***

Middle Class (08) –.17***

F-Statistic	5.10***	13.20***	9867***	10.04***	16.88***
Adjusted R-Squared	1.8%	6.4%	6.6%	8%	15.1%
<i>N</i>	1965	1965	1965	1965	1965

Note: standard errors in parenthesis; * $p < .05$, *0 $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Appendix 3: Impact of Evidence on Deterrence and Innocence among those who have discussed death penalty with friends or family.

	Evidence on Deterrence		Evidence on Innocence	
	Opposed	Supported	Opposed	Supported
	(n = 193)	(n = 166)	(n = 192)	(n 168)
Still strongly favour it	47.2	10.8	23.4	6.0
Still/then somewhat favour it	26.4	14.5	39.6	12.5
Then strongly oppose it	20.7	60.8	25.0	64.3
Still/then somewhat oppose it	4.1	12.7	9.9	16.1
Don't Know	1.6	1.2	2.1	1.2

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