

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT – A CASE STUDY OF
NKONYA – ALAVANYO AREA IN GHANA**

By

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Social Science, University of Cape Coast in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy degree**

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Student's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Francis Mensah

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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ABSTRACT

There are different ways in which conflicts can be handled. For any conflict handling mechanisms to be successful, people's attitudes, behaviour and root causes or contradictions have to be addressed in the light of genuine commitments of all parties engaged in the peace process. Absence of such genuine commitments can result in serious challenges.

The study was undertaken to examine the management mechanisms of the Nkonya and Alavanyo conflict in the Volta Region of Ghana. The study analyzes the management process with particular focus on the selection process of the mediation committee members, the mechanisms and approaches adopted by the mediation committee as well as the challenges that became associated with the mediation process. The research utilizes qualitative approach and purposive sampling methods.

The study concludes that various conflict management mechanisms have been employed in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. However, the conflict management processes imparted knowledge which gave more credibility to the Multi-Track Diplomacy theory of conflict management as the appropriate mechanism for this conflict.

The study recommends that there is the need for intensive peace education in school curricular and in communities and this must be continuous since conflict management is not an event but a process. Conflicts having dynamic root causes or are protracted, need the involvement of all stakeholders in their management process.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife, Mrs Gifty Mensah and children,
Gifty-Darlene Mensah and Francis Kwame Mensah.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
Background to the study	1
Statement of the problem	8
Objectives of the study	10
Specific objectives	10
Research questions	11
Significance of the study	11
Organization of the study	12
Limitations of the study	13
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE	14
Introduction	14
Conflict	14

Stages of conflict	18
Conflict management	25
Conflict management and conflict prevention	28
Conflict management and conflict resolution	30
Theoretical framework	32
Conceptual framework	54
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	57
Introduction	56
Study area	56
Research design	69
Case selection	61
Target population	62
Sampling technique and sample size	63
Justification of target population	65
Data collection instruments	70
Data sources	72
Reconnaissance survey	72
Data collection	73
Data analysis	73
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	75
Introduction	75
Historical origins of the conflict	75
Mediation efforts	78

effects of the conflict	83
Nature of the conflict	85
Selection process of the mediation committee members	88
Procedure used by the mediation committee members	90
Approaches adopted by the mediation committee members	106
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	110
Introduction	110
Summary of findings	110
Conclusions	116
Recommendations	117
REFERENCES	120
APPENDICES	133
1. Interview guide for community key informants	133
2. Focus group discussion guide for VRCC/WANEP/CRS	136
3. Interview guide for the mediation committee members	138
4. Interview guide for traditional authorities	141
5. Interview schedule for youth and women group leaders	144

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Summary of stages of conflict as it escalates	24
2. Summary of stages of conflict as it de-escalates	24
3. Conflict theories	40
4. Conflict management theories	53

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Mitchell's Conflict Model	16
2. Conflict stages	19
3. Schema of multi-track diplomacy	50
4. Conceptual framework	55
5. Map of the study area	57
6. Mediation process	105
7. Approaches of the mediation committee	109

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	-	Alternative Dispute Resolution
CC	-	Consultative Committee
CDPBT	-	Catholic Diocesan Peace Building Team
CPS	-	Community Peace Setters
CRS	-	Catholic Relief Services
FGD	-	Focus Group Discussion
GIPC	-	Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
GM	-	Grunner Map
HCDPBT	-	Ho Catholic Diocesan Peace Building Team
HIPC	-	Highly Indebted Poor Country
IMTD	-	Institute of Multi-Track Diplomacy
NCCE	-	National Commission for Civic Education
NGO	-	Non Governmental Organisation
NPP	-	New Patriotic Party
PNDC	-	Provisional National Defence Council
UN	-	United Nations
UNDESA	-	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
VRCC	-	Volta Regional Coordinating Council
WANEP	-	West Africa Network for Peace-building

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Conflict Management is the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures and by working with and through the parties involved in that conflict (Best, 2006). The term conflict management covers the entire area of handling conflicts positively at different stages, including those efforts made to prevent conflict, by being proactive. Conflict management encompasses conflict limitation, containment and litigation. In the words of Burton (1990a), conflict management may include ‘conflict prevention’ a term he uses to connote containment of conflict through steps introduced to promote conditions in which collaborative and valued relationships, control the behaviour of conflict parties. The term “conflict management” is perhaps an admission of the reality that conflict is inevitable, but that, not all conflicts can always be resolved; therefore what practitioners can do is to manage and regulate them.

Conflict is an intrinsic part of human existence. It occurs between and within states, towns and villages. All over the world, the idea of conflict has received a high degree of attention and interests. These interests brought to bear

Max Weber's (1978) idea of class, power and status. According to Weber's social stratification, society is subdivided into three categories: class (economic order), status groups (social order) and parties (political order) which are viewed as the cause of distribution of power within society resulting in social differences and inequalities.

Karl Marx's (1971) idea of class antagonism where the dominant ideology of every society is the ideology of the dominant class which appears at first glance to conflict with the character of the proletarian revolution as the conscious overturning of society by the proletariat, as a product of the conscious, independent activity of the wage-earning masses. Lewis Coser's (1956) idea of conflict as the struggle over values and claims to scarce resources where one party tries to out-do or injure the other. Conflicts such as World Wars I and II, the Cold War, the Iraq-Iran War and the wars in the South Balkans brought various changes in the types and nature of global conflicts (Eriksson, Mikael, Margareta, Sollenberg and Peter Wallensteen, 2002).

Moreover, the end of the Cold War was viewed as the "ultimate triumph of Western liberalism" which created a hope among many people, signalled an end to the history of global hostilities and marked the beginning of peace in the world. However, this hope proved to be based on a total misconception of realities, as the "ultimate triumph" in political liberalism did not necessarily bring real peace in the long run. It therefore became clear that, although the end of the Cold War brought various changes in the nature of global conflicts, violence

persists (Eriksson, et. al 2002). Countries have been experiencing armed conflict which caused immense human suffering, infrastructural devastations, depletion of human resource and damage to the social and cultural fabrics of societies (World Bank, 2000).

However, in environments where there are no violent conflicts, security is guaranteed and the environment becomes conducive for engaging in economic and agricultural activities and, peoples' livelihoods can be ensured (Francis, 2006). Hence developmental activities can best be pursued in an environment without violent conflicts.

The image of Africa from the 1970s to the 1990s has been that of a continent of conflict and violence, perennially on the edge of survival. Africa thus stands out as a continent of uniquely violent and conflictual politics, a continent where force and conflict make the everyday life of the people even more demeaning than other poor parts of the world (Chabal, 1994:197). Africa's violent present and recent past is seen through the frameworks of identity, participation and legitimacy. Stedman (1991:369) subdivides these causes of conflict into struggles for power, ethnicity, militarism, alienation of people and deep-rooted historical, socio-economic and cultural elements.

Ghana has experienced violent inter- ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts which have proven difficult to resolve. Some of these conflicts date to almost one century. One such conflict is that between the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo in the Volta Region, over a disputed land. The Nkonya are Guan speaking people

currently located in the Jasikan District while the Alavanyo are Ewe speaking people currently in the Hohoe District. According to Tsikata and Seni (2004), the violent conflict between the Nkonya and Alavanyo dates back to 1923.

However, anecdotal account suggests that the conflict dates back in 1903. The stake at that time was over a disputed land. According to Tsikata and Seni (2004) the land in dispute is a prime forest land rich in timber species, bamboo and cola nuts, and has also been used for cocoa, oil palm and food crops production for decades. The dispute over the land emerged over boundary demarcations traced to a map drawn by a German surveyor named Grunner in 1913. This map is known as the Grunner Map (GM). The map was reportedly used to settle land disputes between the Nkonya and Alavanyo people during the period of German colonization of the area prior to the First World War.

There have been several attempts to resolve the conflict. One of the attempts was a series of litigations in the law courts over the disputed land. For instance, according to a rejoinder written by Komla Tom in the (*Chronicle* of 4th November, 2003) four court cases between 1957 and 1980 have all been ruled in favour of the Nkonya. The verdict was based on the 1913 Grunner Map showing the boundary of the disputed land. Anane Quist stated in the (*Evening News*, 3rd March, 2003) that a spokesperson of the Nkonya chiefs, stated at a news conference that as far as the Nkonya chiefs were concerned, there was no land dispute in the area as it had been settled by the Court of Appeal in 1975. He therefore concluded that all the trouble in the area was being fomented by the

Alavanyo people so that the government would intervene to enable them to re-litigate.

Not surprisingly, Tom (1997) alerted that the Alavanyo side had a different position on the court decisions. They have argued that the 1913 Grunner map on which the decisions were based was not accurate and too small in scale, and therefore never intended as the basis for boundary demarcations. They, in turn have cited three colonial and post colonial court cases in support of their position (*Ghanaian Times* 15th February, 1997 Letter to Togbega Tsedze Attakora VII, Fiaga of Alavanyo). This position appears to have the support of the Mireku Committee which argued that “the implementation of the court’s decision will not help to promote peace between the two traditional areas” (Mireku, quoted in letter of Togbega Tsedze Attakora, Fiaga of Alavanyo. *Ghanaian Times*, 15th February, 1997).

There were further escalations in 1983 and 1990s. During these periods, the conflict assumed a form in which sporadic violence, killings and maiming became regular occurrences. This created a situation of fear, uncertainty, insecurity, tension, suspicion, hatred and bitterness between the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo. The two communities lived as though an iron curtain was erected between them. People along the common border could not sleep in their homes. Every form of social relationship was severed. Blood relations could neither meet nor interact freely. As a result, the two traditional areas experienced socio-economic stagnation. There was hunger and poverty. The people are farmers and

yet they could not have access to the land because of the conflict. Education was virtually stalled. The two kilometre road linking the two areas became impassable.

Civil society organisations such as the Catholic Relief Services have attempted some settlements but without any significant success. Since 1996, prominent individuals and social movements have decided to talk peace to the conflicting communities. For instance, the Alavanyo Youth Association in 1997 called for a high powered committee to look into the dispute and resolve it once and for all instead of waiting for hostilities to begin and arresting the culprits (*Ghanaian Times*, November 15, 1997). Notable individuals include Dr. Kwabena Adjei, the current chairman of New Democratic Congress an Nkonya citizen and William Kpende, an Alavanyo citizen.

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church also led reconciliatory moves. The church ensured that their members from the opposing communities celebrated all anniversaries together. The involvement of the church was attributed to the fact that majority of the inhabitants of the conflict communities were members of the church (*Ghanaian Times*, November 15, 1997). The efforts of both the individuals and the church were largely uncoordinated and did not target many of the key actors in the conflict. It therefore had very little effect, if any on the factors that could trigger re-escalation.

In 2003, hostilities resumed. The scale of the escalation was traumatic. In the words of William Kpende, “lives were lost on a daily basis”. Appeals were

therefore, made to the Moderator of Evangelical Presbyterian Church to find ways of resolving the problem. The individuals tried to talk peace in their respective communities and to their own people. This continued until an appeal to the Volta Regional Co-ordinating Council (VRCC) was heard and the Mireku Committee was formed to resolve the conflict.

Governments' efforts have been ad-hoc measures built around peace enforcement. In February 2003, for example, the Member of Parliament for Biakoye, Dr. Kwabena Adjei, appealed to the government to deploy soldiers to the area to stem the tide of frequent conflicts and its attendant loss of lives and also establish a high powered committee to investigate the conflict and define the boundaries of the two areas (*Daily Graphic*, 1st March, 2003). That same year, the Volta Regional Minister went to Parliament at the behest of two Members of Parliament from the Volta Region to answer questions regarding the conflicts and government efforts to resolve them (*Daily Graphic*, 4th November, 2003). It was revealed by Tom (2003) that the Volta Regional Security Committee had deployed a police/military taskforce in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area since September 2002.

Members of Parliament were also invited to help with conflict management and they held separate meetings with the chiefs and people of the two areas to find solutions to the conflict (*Daily Graphic*, 4th November, 2003:5). The situation continued until the conflicting parties petitioned the Volta Regional Coordination Council (VRCC) in 2004 to intervene. In response, the VRCC

facilitated a process in which the conflicting parties themselves selected a Mediation Committee to help in resolving the conflict. The chiefs from both sides also found it difficult to discuss traditional matters of common interest. However, the mechanisms used in the management of the conflict have not been told so that it could be of benefit to conflict management efforts elsewhere.

Problem statement

There are several longstanding disputes among various communities across the country. In the course of these conflicts, many people have been killed, displaced or robbed of their life opportunities. According to Tsikata and Seni (2004 cited in Mahama, 2010:132-133), in the Volta Region alone, about four main violent conflict areas have been identified. They are the Nkonya-Alavanyo, Nkwanta, Peki-Tsito and Abutia Kpoeta. The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict was one of the long standing conflicts in the Volta Region that had national attention. The Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict is an inter-ethnic conflict which arose over 80 years ago, about disagreements over a boundary and the use of resources on the disputed land.

The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict continued in a sporadic manner since the first recorded outbreak of hostilities in 1923. The late 1990s saw several escalations of tension between the two communities involving the police with one incident resulting in violence in which five people died (Mahama, 2010:134). The nature of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict is intractable. One news report captured it succinctly that “...observers along the fronts hinted that since 1923, the conflict resurfaced every ten years with bloody consequences” (*Ghanaian Chronicle*, 14th

February 2003). The ten years periodic recurrence of the conflict had led many to conclude that there are spiritual undertones to it. Conscious efforts were made by both sides to prepare for an escalation every ten years. In this way the least rumour of war resulted in re-escalation.

The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict has disrupted life and living in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area. The conflict created strong sentiments of hatred, anger, vengeance, fear and rebellion. Socio-economic development has slowed down and the fabric of social interaction suffered. The Chiefs and Queen mothers of Nkonya and Alavanyo after a three-day conflict transformation and peace building workshop organised by the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict mediation committee in 1997, noted with concern that:

Today, there is hunger and poverty in our (Nkonya/Alavanyo) communities because we are farmers who have denied ourselves access to land. We are no more able to sponsor our children in school... Trade between the communities is no more possible and roads linking us with other towns have become impassable due to insecurity (*Ghanaian Times*, 15th February, 1997).

The essential point is that all previous management efforts have been ad-hoc. Predictably, court decisions were win-lose further increasing tensions. The institution of committees of enquiries only followed violent incidents. In consequence, government troops were permanently stationed in the area to enforce peace. Though there were occasional arrests, swoops and seizure of guns,

the presence of troops also had its own negative contribution to the conflict. This problem was expressed by the Member of Parliament (2003) who was reported to have given the example of “peace keepers who were stationed in the area but who with time, gained economic interest hence losing focus and becoming part of the problem” (*Ghanaian Chronicle*, February 14, 2003:8) .

Despite the various management mechanisms used in managing the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, there is still a recurrence of the conflict. This makes the management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict intractable. This research therefore, focuses on why the management mechanisms adopted so far have not resolved the conflict.

Objective

The general objective of this study is to examine the management mechanisms of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

Specific objectives

- Describe the nature of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.
- Examine the factors that were considered in selecting the mediation committee members for the management of the conflict.
- Examine the procedures used by the mediation committee in the management of the conflict.
- Assess the approach adopted by the mediation committee in the management of the conflict.
- Make recommendations for conflict management.

Research questions

- What is the nature of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict?
- What factors influenced the selection of the mediation committee members for the management of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict?
- What were the procedures used by the mediation committee in the management of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict?
- How effective was the approach adopted by the mediation committee in the management of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict?

Significance of the study

Conflict issues are being reported all over the world. In the past years, Africa has been occupied with several conflicts in different forms over such issues as land, ethnicity and chieftaincy. Ghana is not an exception to this plague. The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict for instance has lasted for over eight decades, not withstanding its destructive nature. Despite government and non - governmental organisations efforts to resolve the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, the conflict keeps recurring between the two feuding ethnic groups and this tends to negatively affecting local level development.

Conflict management experts and the whole society have been seeking for ways to resolve the conflict in Nkonya and Alavanyo areas and other ethnic conflicts around the country in order to minimize their impact on development efforts. In this light, research into the management of the over 80 year old Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict will be significant for several reasons:

This study will contribute to literature on the management of conflict and development, as well as empirical knowledge on the effects of protracted conflicts on development. The results of this study will also provide pragmatic information to help manage the Nkonya - Alavanyo conflict and other protracted resource based conflicts around the country. It is equally hoped that the findings and recommendations of this study would be of interest to government, non – governmental organisations and other interest groups involved in conflict and development.

Organization of the study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One includes the background to the study, the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the research questions and the significance of the study, the organisation of the study and limitation of the study. In Chapter Two, relevant literature is reviewed. This covers issues on conflict, conflict management, relationship between conflict prevention and conflict management, relationship between conflict resolution and conflict management. Theoretical basis and conceptual framework are also examined in this chapter.

Chapter Three discusses the various methodological issues related to data collection and analysis of the study. It comprises a description of the study area, the study design, the population, the sample and the sampling techniques, the data collection techniques and the data analysis procedure. Chapter Four discusses the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict into detail tracing its historical basis, causes and

dynamics, and current developments; presentation and analysis of the results of the study, while Chapter Five contains the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations.

Limitation of the study

A number of challenges were encountered in conducting a study, particularly in a conflict area. One major problem encountered in the study was the issue of security and trust. Moving to some parts of the area was not very secure for the researcher and his assistants. Though the research assistants were able to go to their own communities, trust was a problem since people suspected them of trying to seek information in order to enable their opponents to attack them.

Also, due to the work of MPs and some NGOs, the researcher had to move up and down to Accra to get them to take part in the work. The researcher had to spend a lot of time and money on the movement from one place to another. This, coupled with the diverse nature of the traditional area, posed financial constraints. Also, conducting the FGDs was a major problem particularly among the women groups. This was because most of the women groups were market women and so getting them together was not easy. The researcher had to visit them several times before making headway.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The perception of threat, or actual occurrence of conflict, is necessary for the initiation of conflict prevention, management or resolution measures, and hence it is essential to address the concept of conflict before exploring how to manage such occurrences. The first step is to understand what constitutes a conflict.

Conflict

Conflict is one of the most inevitable things in life and occurs at all levels of human society and takes different forms. However, conflict has been defined and used differently. The traditional definition of conflict, says that a conflict is the result of opposing interests involving scarce resources, goal divergence and frustration (Swanström & Weismann 2005). According to Coser (1956), conflict occurs when two or more people engage in a struggle over values and claims to status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. Coser argues that the parties in conflict are in competition or struggle over their identity, resources or power in which the conflicting parties attempt to injure one another.

One thing that is worth pointing out in Coser's definition is the fact that it identifies the causes of conflicts which include struggles over people's identity, power and resources. Conflict, therefore, is a struggle which is either positive or negative between two parties in pursuit of interests and goals on which they sharply disagree.

Czempiel, (1981a) suggests that conflicts should not be defined simply in terms of violence (behaviour) or hostility (attitudes), but should also include incompatibilities or differences in issue or position. Such a definition is designed to include conflicts outside the traditional military sphere and is based on behavioural dimensions. . According to Lund (1996), conflict occurs when two or more parties pursue incompatible interests or goals through actions that the parties try to undo or damage each other.

These parties could be individuals, groups or countries. The parties' interests can differ over access to resources, the control of political or traditional power, their identity and values or ideology (Maiese, 2003). The realization of these needs and interests by people can lead to conflict. When two groups or individuals such as ethnic groups pursue incompatible interests and needs which could either be political, economic, social or cultural, they can engage in conflict which can be violent.

According to Mitchell (1988) conflict has three inter-related components namely: conflict situation, conflict behaviour and conflict attitude. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

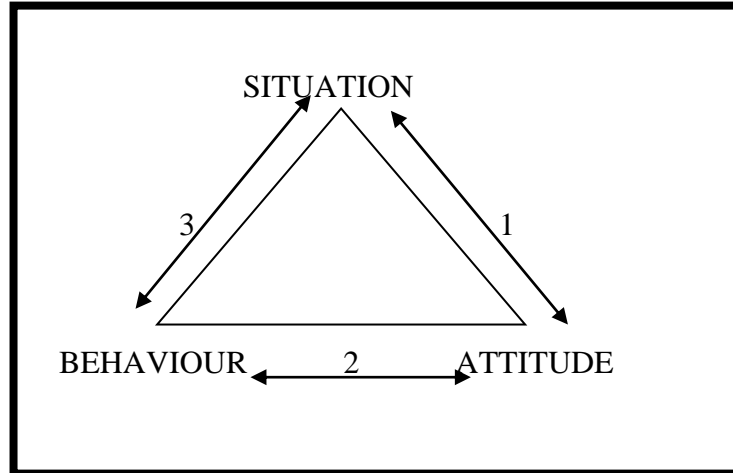


Figure 1: Mitchell's Conflict Model

Source: Chris Mitchell (1988)

According to Mitchell (1988) conflict has three inter-related components namely, conflict situation, conflict behaviour and conflict attitudes. Mitchell argues that conflict situation is about the incompatible goals of parties and mostly the realisation by the parties that they are deprived of achieving such goals, they become frustrated hence the tendency of generating conflict. Mitchell again argues that conflict attitude has to do with the perceptions of parties. When parties perceive that they are being denied of what is due them, a negative attitude of, for instance, frustration or competition is reinforced. Conflict behaviour is the specific actions of parties directed against other parties, to stop them from achieving their goals. Thus, the attitudes of conflict parties translate into their behaviour and these cause the conflict. If these attitudes are negative the accompanying behaviour will be negative leading to a possible confrontational conflict situation. All these three reinforce each other and cause conflict.

Mitchell's conflict model was created for political and military conflicts, but is also applicable to the changes in perception of conflicts that communities have experienced. However, Mitchell's model depicted in figure 1 is complicated by the fact that conflicts often occur in mixed-motive relationships where the parties involved, both have cooperative and competitive goals. According to Tjosvold and Leung (1998), Mitchell's model seems to have neglected this pluralistic / multifaceted dimension to the relationship. The competitive element creates conflict and the cooperative element creates incentives to negotiate an agreement (Walton and McKersie, 1965). Conflicts tend to occur even when the involved parties have highly compatible goals (Deutsch, 1973). This can be explained by including frustration, obstruction, and interference in the definition.

Wallenstein (2002) defined conflict as a situation in which two or more parties strive to acquire the same scarce resources at the same time. Scholars generally agree that there needs to be more than one party to have a conflict, and that time factor is important. Wallenstein (2002:17) has pointed out that resources are not only economic in nature, and that the terminology might miss conflicts involving economic orientation, human security, environment, historical issues, etc. A conflict is, moreover, in many cases based on perceptions, rather than on attitudes or behaviour as it has generally been defined. When discussing the concept of conflict, perception should be included as a central concept since the conflict and the opponent's intentions often are defined according to subjective perceptions.

There could be an abundance of space for agreement in a conflict, but if the parties perceive the conflict as being impossible to resolve or the opponent to be untrustworthy this might not help in managing the conflict (Swanström & Weissmann, 2005). Thus, conflict in this work is conceived as situation where two or more parties clash over a set of incompatible demands leading to strained relationship because the parties have developed interest and identity as a result of their persistent parallel claims.

The stages of conflict

A conflict is not a static situation, but a dynamic one – the intensity level changes over time hence, conflict stages. An understanding of the conflict stages is essential for an understanding of how, where and when to apply different strategies and measures of conflict management. According to Swanström and Weismann (2005:68), conflicts tend to be described as cyclical in regard to their intensity levels, i.e. escalating from (relative) stability and peace into crisis and war, thereafter de-escalating into relative peace. In principle, conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution are regarded as applicable in different phases of a conflict. In sum, conflict prevention measures are designed for the early phases, before a conflict becomes manifest (open). Management measures are applied in later phases when a conflict is manifest, but before violence has occurred. Conflict resolution could, on the other hand, be applied in the de-escalation phase after a violent conflict has occurred (Swanström & Weismann, 2005).

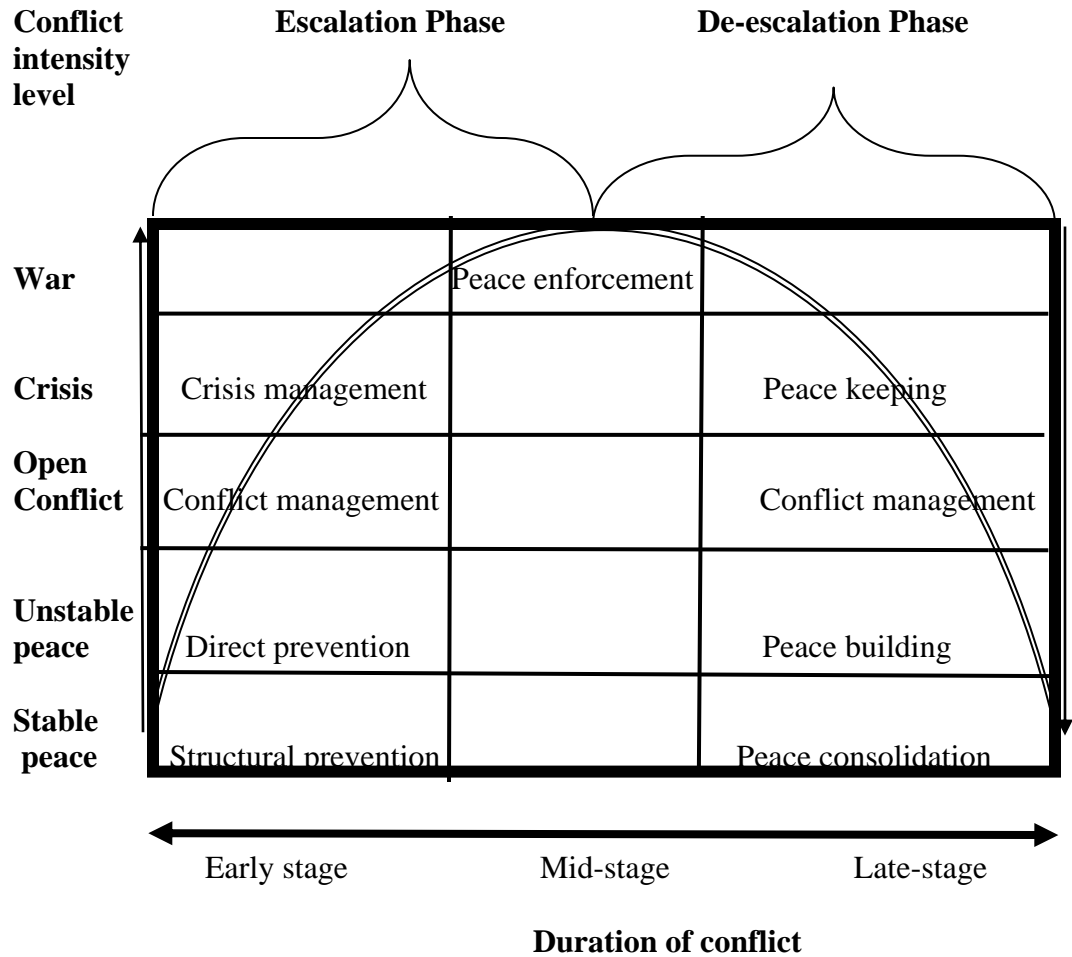


Figure 2: The conflict stages

Source: Swanström and Weismann, (2005)

The curve in Figure 2 is divided into five levels of conflict intensity (stable peace, unstable peace, open conflict, crisis, and war) in a total of nine chronological phases. Stable peace is a situation where tension between the parties is low and there exists different forms of connections and cooperation between them, often including economic and environmental cooperation, as well as cooperation within other non-sensitive issue-areas. During a period of unstable

peace, tension has increased. This is a situation where, the tension between the parties is so high that peace no longer seems guaranteed. An open conflict is when the conflict is defined and the parties have taken measures to deal with it, even if militarized options are not adopted. In the crisis phase, the risk of war is imminent and militarized options are the preferable or likely option.

There may be sporadic violence between the parties at this stage, but there is no regular open violence. In the war phase, on the other hand, there is widespread and intense violence. In the de-escalation phase the pattern is reversed, moving from war to crisis, through open conflict and unstable peace to finally reach a situation of stable peace. According to Swanström and Weismann (2005) the easiest way to distinguish between the concepts is by focusing on the time factor. Starting with conflict prevention, it is by definition applied before the conflict has become open and violent, that is to prevent a conflict from emerging in the first place (or to prevent a conflict from re-escalating in a post-conflict phase (Clément, 1997a).

Conflict prevention measures are effective at the levels of stable- and unstable peace before a conflict has become manifest. Here, it is important to differentiate between structural- and direct preventive measures. The former are most applicable in the stable peace phase and consist of structural measures that often aim at specific groups or issues such as economic development, political participation or cultural autonomy (Swanström & Weismann, 2005). The benefits of applying structural measures at an early stage is simply that the acceptance of preventive measures tends to be higher at low levels of inter-party suspicion and

hence more far-reaching and institutional measures can be implemented. If structural preventive measures are implemented at an early stage, including both the building of institutions and development of trust and (longer-term) cooperation, they decrease the perceived need to, and hence risk of, escalating a potential conflict issue into the level of unstable peace. The more pronounced a conflict becomes the more specific measures it requires (Swanström & Weismann, 2005).

In the unstable peace phase, the direct preventive measures are directed at issues with a shorter term goal in mind that is to reduce tension and create trust between the actors. Direct preventive measures can, for example, be formal or informal workshops dealing with the possible conflict issues. They can also aim at creating openness in certain fields such as the military, reducing military spending, or achieving cooperation in rescue operations. Other examples include sanctions, coercive diplomacy, the dispatch of special envoys, and problem-solving workshops. It should be noted that the border between structural and direct prevention is unclear and that aspects of the two are often overlapping.

Conflict management and crisis management involve tactics that are enforced when violent conflict is deemed likely (conflict management) or imminent, but before a situation escalates into war (crisis management) (Swanström & Weismann, 2005). Swanström & Weismann (2005) also argue that conflict management can be enforced, as soon as the conflict has been identified by the actors, as an effort to reduce tension and prevent further escalation. Direct measures, such as reduction of military forces, third party

intervention, informal and formal communication, can be designed to handle the conflict and reverse destructive behaviour into constructive.

Crisis management is employed in the short time frame before a war is to erupt, when the conflict escalates rapidly and the time for management measures is limited. This period is characterized by a scarcity of time and other resources to address the conflict, as well as inadequate information (Swanström & Weismann, 2005). Crisis management entails more drastic measures than conflict management and aims at containing the outbreak of militarized conflicts with all available means. Examples of such measures include third party intervention by actors such as the United Nations.

Swanström & Weismann noted that during the stage of war, neither prevention nor management is possible. Military means are used as the primary tool, even if political, economic and social tools are used simultaneously to decrease the opponent's willingness and/or capability to fight. At this stage, the actors either have to fight things out until reaching a so-called hurting stalemate where both parties realize the need to end the conflict, or peace has to be enforced by external actors. At this stage there are of course many different measures that could be utilized, but few of these are peaceful. One example of a measure is to prevent military conflicts from spreading to other states or regions. It should be noted that there is often a great reluctance to allow external intervention before war tiredness and a hurting stalemate has been reached.

If the militarization of a conflict is temporarily controlled, either through a peace treaty or a cease fire, it may be possible to reverse the positions of the

actors and make them adopt more constructive behaviour. Initially, the focus is on separating the actors and preventing further mistakably or deliberate escalation (peace keeping). This stage is comparable to the crisis stage in the escalation phase and often involves third party actors that assist with peacekeeping and/or monitoring (Swanström and Weismann, 2005).

When the more imminent threats of re-escalation have been dealt with, further opportunities exist for less short-term and direct measures, and the conflicts move into the conflict management phase. When the conflict has deescalated further, a phase of peace building follows, which gives room for more long-term measures. Finally, if the peace building efforts meet with success, the conflict moves to the peace consolidation phase where the aim is to make actors more cooperative and create an inclusive peace for all involved parties. In other words, the de-escalation phase shares many similarities with the escalation phase (Swanström and Weismann, 2005).

In short, at each point in time, different kinds of measures need to be applied to maximize the ability to handle a conflict. If overarching conflicts between two or more actors are to be managed, focus needs to be on further issues than solely the core issues. This is essential for the building of trust and confidence between the parties and vital for the successful prevention of further escalation, and/or the possibly resolution of the conflict in the longer term. According to Lee (2005), the dynamics of conflicts are most complex, and each conflict consists of a large number of issues, or sub-conflicts. This complexity must also be taken into account when addressing how to manage a conflict. By

trying to reduce the idea of what complex phenomena a conflict is, one's ability to manage the conflict will inevitably be hampered. The stages of conflict and their management mechanisms derived from the literature for both escalation and de-escalation phases have been summarised in Tables 1 and 2 respectively.

Table 1: Summary of the stages of conflict as it escalates and its management mechanisms

Level	Stages	Management mechanisms
1	Stable peace	Structural prevention
2	Unstable peace	Direct prevention
3	Open conflict	Conflict management
4	Crisis	Crisis management
5	War	Peace enforcement

Table 2: Summary of the stages of conflict as it de-escalates and its management mechanisms

Level	Stages	Management mechanisms
1	War	Peace enforcement
2	Crisis	Peace keeping
3	Open conflict	Conflict management
4	Unstable peace	Peace building
5	Stable peace	Peace consolidation

Conflict management

The field of conflict management draws many of its principles from with alternative dispute resolution (ADR). Cooley (1996) asserts that ADR refers to a variety of techniques for resolving disputes without resort to litigation in the courts. Thus introducing consensual problem solving and empower individuals by enabling them to control the outcome of their dispute and develop dispute resolution mechanisms that would preserve personal and business relationship. Ansah-Koi (1995) argued that the cessation of violence is not the end of conflict resolution. Conflict resolution should begin with an appropriate conception of peace so that the absence of manifest conflict would not be construed to mean presence of peace. Since the least reaction can trigger congruent violent action from the other camp and result in re-escalation of the conflict in conflict resolution cessation of hostility should be followed by watching out seriously for early warning symptoms.

Through ADR, multiparty “win-win” options are sought by focusing on the problem (not the person) and by creating awareness of interdependence among stakeholders. According to Moore, Keith M., Daniel, Gnomou B., and Bertelsen M., (1999), ADR refers to a variety of collaborative approaches including negotiation, and mediation.

Negotiation has been defined as the process we use to satisfy our needs when someone else controls what we want (Brown & Marriot, 1993). Ansah-Koi stressed the significance of confidence-building, third party intervention and the resolution of structural problems. The same author argues that negotiation

normally occurs because one has something the other wants and is willing to bargain to get it. According to (West, 2003) negotiation is a process whereby parties to a dispute hold discussions or dealings about a matter with a view to reconciling differences and establishing areas of agreement, settlement or compromise. Kendie and Akudugu (2010), believe that conflict resolution is only possible through cooperation and negotiation and the elimination of suspicion through transparent negotiations where all actors are seen as equal partners. Being communication for the purpose of persuasion, negotiation is the pre-eminent mode of dispute resolution. Thus, Richardson and Wang (1993) believe that without effective communication and trust, conflict resolution is not possible. Negotiation is a voluntary process in which parties meet “face to face” to reach a mutually acceptable resolution of the issues in a conflict.

Mediation involves the assistance of a neutral third party, a mediator, who helps the parties in conflict jointly reach agreement in a negotiation process but has no power to direct the parties or enforce a solution to the dispute. In Africa for instant mediation committee is basically composed of representatives of conflict parties (mainly elders), local government officials, religious leaders, and members of different community-based organisations, the formation of such committees has been suggested as a valid strategy to mediate and de-escalate longstanding violence over natural resources on the community-level (Ndegwa, 2001). Mediation always takes place on a voluntary basis; no party can be forced to participate in a mediation procedure. Mediation is also voluntary in the sense that

either party may, if it so chooses, abandon the mediation at any stage prior to the signing of a settlement agreement

On a general level, conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution are broad terms for methods and mechanisms used to avoid, minimize, and resolve conflicts between different parties (Russett, 1998). Conflict management is the process of reducing the negative and destructive capacity of conflict through a number of measures and by working with and through the parties involved in the conflict (Best, 2006). According to Tjosvold and Leung (1998), conflict management is a successful tool for resolving conflicts over a longer time period, and that it creates the foundation for effective conflict resolution.

This is contrasted to a more Western argument that the importance of conflict management lies in its ability to solve short-term conflicts. Conflict management covers the entire area of handling conflicts positively at different stages including those efforts made to prevent conflict, by being proactive. Conflict management encompasses conflict limitation, containment and litigation. Tanner (2000) has defined conflict management as the limitation, mitigation and/or containment of a conflict without necessarily solving it.

Swanström (2002a) has added to this definition and argued that conflict management should imply a change, from destructive to constructive, in the mode of interaction. Zartman (2000) has argued that conflict management refers to eliminating violent and violence-related actions and leaving the conflict to be dealt with on the political level. Zartman's argument has been somewhat

criticized as NGOs, academic institutions and religious structures have emerged as important actors and now influence the conflict management process.

Wallenstein (2002) has also claimed that conflict management typically focuses on the armed aspects of a conflict. Swanström (2002b:219-224), on the other hand, has argued that an armed conflict is not necessarily needed for conflict management to be applied. Swanström's argument is that as soon a structural problem is defined or a direct conflict is manifest, without being militarized, it can and should be addressed by the active parties and the international community. As soon as a conflict has been militarized, the momentum has been lost and the political and economic cost to manage the conflict escalates quickly.

Conflict management and conflict prevention

Conflict prevention means different things to different people and there is no single definition that is agreed upon. During the Cold War, many practitioners and academics viewed preventive action as synonymous with pre-emptive strikes (Wallenstein, 1998). After the Cold War, this has changed, and preventive measures have come to receive a new meaning and the emphasis has shifted to the peaceful prevention of disputes. With regard to the development of the concept of conflict prevention, Bjurner (1998) has pointed out that conflict prevention is a fairly new sub-culture of security and foreign policy studies. This idea was opposed since the idea of prevention was central during the congress of Vienna in 1815 (Doherty, 2001).

It is necessary to think about what mechanisms may be designed to deal collectively with those factors likely to bring about conflict in the future and how to deal with them in advance. In this connection, early-warning mechanisms should be devised. Early warning is a vital tool in conflict management. Though complicated in its application, it is an important way of dealing with disasters, and useful in providing preventive response by organizations responsible for conflict resolution (Oquaye, 1995). Due to the risk of disasters, there is a need, however, to strengthen arrangements in such a manner that information from sources of conflict can be used to assess whether a threat to peace exists and to analyze what action might be taken to alleviate it

According to Lund (1996) conflict prevention is an action taken in vulnerable places and times to avoid the threat or use of armed force and related forms of coercion by states or groups to settle the political disputes that can arise from destabilizing effects of economic, social, political, and international change. Carment and Schnabel (2003) define conflict prevention as a medium and long-term proactive operational or structural strategy undertaken by a variety of actors, intended to identify and create the enabling conditions for a stable and more predictable international security environment. This makes conflict prevention part of conflict management process since it is employed also during post conflict reconstruction.

Conflict management and conflict prevention has, in a similar way, been argued to be different sides of the same coin. It has also been argued that conflict management is required in order to enable the initiation of preventive measures

aiming at resolving the dispute. Zartman (2000) argues that the difference merely exists in theory and that both concepts are intertwined in the practical implementation.

At the operational level of conflict prevention, Lund (1996) argues that preventive measures are especially effective at the level of unstable peace, which is a “situation where tension and suspicion among parties run high but violence is either absent or only sporadic”. This is arguably not always the case since some preventive measures are best operationalized at an earlier stage, preferably during stable peace where there is a minimum of suspicion between potential adversaries. The reason for this is simply that the acceptance of preventive measures is higher when no suspicion disturbs the situation. If institutions, trust and cooperation are built at an early stage, it is less likely that the conflict reaches the stage of unstable peace.

Preventive measures are designed to resolve, contain and manage conflicts so that they do not erupt into violent conflicts. This makes conflict prevention an important part of conflict management. It is important to point out that conflict management can be introduced at all levels of a conflict spiral and that it is widely used in crisis management and war situations.

Conflict management and conflict resolution

The process of conflict management is the foundation for more effective conflict resolution. A distinction between conflict management and conflict resolution is, however, needed as a starting point as the concepts often are

confused or integrated in an inappropriate manner. Conflict resolution refers to the resolution of the underlying incompatibilities in a conflict and mutual acceptance of each party's existence, while conflict management refers to measures that limit, mitigate and/or contain a conflict without necessarily solving it (Wallenstein, 2002). Zartman (2000) has pointed out that both the conflict resolution aspect and the conflict management aspect are needed to arrive at a positive result. Zartman (2000) argues that they are both ends of the same continuum. One end aims at resolving the current conflict so that business or peace can move on while the other aims at resolving the deeper underlying conflict over time.

Conflict resolution either aims at resolving or terminating conflicts in an open and predictable process in accordance with legal principles or focus on efforts to increase cooperation among the parties to a conflict and deepen their relationship by addressing the conditions that led to the dispute, fostering positive attitudes and allaying distrust through reconciliation initiatives, and building or strengthening the institutions and processes through which the parties interact (Lund, 1997).

According to Tjosvold and Leung (1998), conflict management is a successful tool for resolving conflicts over a longer time period, and that it creates the foundation for effective conflict resolution. This is contrasted to a more Western argument that the importance of conflict management lies in its ability to solve short-term conflicts. Both of these views are entirely accurate, and compatible, and there might just be a cultural difference in our focus. Both of

these views can, and should, be incorporated in a theoretical framework for conflict management and resolution, since they entail no inherent contradiction. They are in fact often applied in different stages of a conflict and address fundamentally different issues.

Nevertheless, Zartman and Rasmussen (1997) claim that the difference is one of long-term versus short-term perspectives and that it is a question of either resolving the underlying problem or the current problem. In sum, conflict management and conflict resolution are different concepts, but at the same time they are closely interrelated. They are two mechanisms at different sides of a continuum, used to deal with the same conflicts but at different stages of these conflicts.

Theoretical framework

Many theories of conflict exist in explaining the nature of conflict in society. The Human Needs Theory of conflict, Relational Theory of conflict, Structural Theory of conflict are the conflict theories that underpin the study of this conflict whereas Track one Diplomacy Theory of conflict management, Track two Diplomacy Theory of conflict management and Multi-Track Diplomacy Theory are the conflict management theories underpinning this study.

Human Needs Theory of conflict

The main assumption of the human needs theory is that all humans have basic human needs which they seek to fulfil and that the denial and frustration of these needs by other groups or individuals could affect them immediately or later, thereby leading to conflict (Rosati, J., Carroll, D. & Coate, R. 1990). Basic human

needs in this sense comprise physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs. In essence, to provide access to one, for example food and deny access to another will amount to denial and could make people to resort to violence in an effort to protect these needs. Burton (1979) refers to food, shelter, sex and reproduction as basic needs. Burton identified a link between frustration which forces humans into acts of aggression and the need on the part of such individuals to satisfy their basic needs.

According to Burton (1979b), individuals cannot be taught to accept practices that destroy their identity and other goals that are attached to their needs and because of this; they are forced to react against the factors or individuals that they see as being responsible for threatening such needs. The human needs theory argues that one of the primary causes of protracted or intractable conflict is people's unyielding drive to meet their unmet needs (Burton, 1990b). Reiman (2000) identified the deprivation and denial of needs as ranging from relative inequality to a lack of resource for personal subsistence. The belligerents would engage in various alternative behaviours (war or violence) to satisfy such basic needs.

Conflict management in this theoretical frame focuses on a problem-solving approach to the underlying needs and grievances from where the conflict originates. Consequently, if resolution is to be found, the needs of both parties must be addressed and satisfied at all levels. What this theory of conflict management envisages, is the use of dialogue, confidence building measures or activities and the creation of conflict resolution mechanisms. Ansah-Koi (1995)

emphasised this position is a multi-faceted knowledge based approach which could well be seen as an extension of the conflict dynamic approach. Ansah-Koi argued that the cessation of violence is not the end of conflict resolution. Conflict resolution should begin with an appropriate conception of peace so that the absence of manifest conflict would not be construed to mean presence of peace. Since the least reaction can trigger congruent violent action from the other camp and result in re-escalation of the conflict in conflict resolution cessation of hostility should be followed by watching out seriously for early warning symptoms.

Ansah-Koi stressed the significance of confidence-building, third party intervention and the resolution of structural problems. Conflict resolution would allow for the effective management of rumours and threats of insecurity. A well directed third party intervention is needed in the resolution of conflict. This prevents the situation where the least reaction triggers a re-escalation. In the same way, the resolution of structural problem must not be seen to be conclusive unless it is related to the transformation of traditional status quo so that traditional order gives way to purposeful change.

From the perspective of the resource base conflict, conflict management is only possible through the satisfactory redistribution of resource. According to LeBaron (2002), the resource based conflict management processes generally involve 'First and Second Track officials and non officials' it excludes grassroots citizen diplomacy groups whose objectives have more to do with relationships.

This is because in conceiving conflict as competition over resources or material things, the person's needs are separated from the issues.

Economic theory of conflict

Economists, like all theorists, attempt to explain the occurrence of conflict in human society through economic explanations and basically see humans as rational beings who have the tendency to fight over things that are material (Faleti, 2006). This has led to the greed and grievance theses in attempting to explain conflicts in society. The greed thesis sees conflict in society as resulting from human greed and the desire of some people, called conflict entrepreneurs, to benefit from conflict that propels them to go to war (Collier, 2006). Collier gives the example of a rebel group in a country, which uses grievance as a bait to go to war in order to gain economic benefits.

The grievance thesis, however, believes that conflict in society is not just the result of greed, but a number of economic, social and historical factors (Collier, 2006). Collier (2006) observes that lack of economic opportunities such as employment, poverty, lack of educational opportunities and underdevelopment are factors that mainly cause conflict although the geography, history, ethnic and religious factors may also account for the existence of conflict in a society. Also, Berdal and Malone (2000) opine that economic factors such as poverty, economic disparities and unemployment are the main factors that compel people to violence although a lot of other factors do exist. They believe that the contest for the control of economic assets, resources and systems are the basic causes of conflicts in human society.

Thus, economic theories attribute the existence of conflict in society to the contest for resources, unemployment, economic inequalities, poverty, human greed and underdevelopment. Some conflicts which arise from economic factors such as the fight over resources tend to affect development negatively because these conflicts become violent thereby leading to destruction of property and people livelihoods. As a weakness, the economic theory over-emphasizes economic factors as being the main reason for conflict in society. This is not so because a conflict could exist independent of economic factors unless we want to argue that man's reason for conflict is mainly economic in nature. New conflicts arising within many countries arise from other factors such as identity, ethnicity and religion other than only economic factors.

The Relational Theory

The relational theory explains conflicts in terms of sociological, political, economic and historical relationships between groups (Best, 2006). Differences in cultural values create the tendency to see others as intruders. A past history of conflict between groups makes it difficult for them to trust one another and this creates conditions that increase the chances of conflict. According to Maoz (1982), in situations where multiple groups share a common resource that is fixed in nature, the chances that each will attempt to eliminate, neutralise or injure the other to monopolise the resource, is as high as the tendency to enter into a negative relationship.

A number of conflicts grow out of a past history of conflict between groups that has led to the development of negative stereotypes, intolerance and

discrimination. Such negative exchanges between groups may make it difficult for efforts to integrate different ethnic groups within the society to succeed because past interactions make it difficult for them to trust one another. For this reason it has been difficult for people to see themselves as partners in progress because they have a past history of conflict woven around the control over resources within their territories. The knowledge that two groups have to compete for the same resource creates conditions that will produce conflict over how to share such a resource.

According to LeBaron (2002), conflict management in this frame leads to 'enhanced' participation by all parties, better understanding, calm discussions and acceptable outcomes. This is because conflict as perceived in this wave as a relationship problem which according to Felati (2006), creates mistrust, misunderstanding and stereotypes, arising from a lack of contract and the systemic dehumanisation of the other. Consequently, conflict management in this wave is focused on repairing broken relationship and making belligerents to see the human face of the other party.

The relational dimension focuses on reducing the effects of war, relation hostility through the repair and transformation of damaged relationship. The instruments used are reconciliation, forgiveness, trust building and future imaging. It seeks to minimize poorly functioning communication and maximize mutual understanding. The personal dimension consensus desired changes (attitudinal and emotional) at the individual level. If individuals are not able to

undergo a process of healing to assuage their pain and grief towards those at the other side of the conflict, there will be broader repercussions. The destructive effects of social conflict must be minimised and its potential for personal growth must be maximised.

Structural theory

The main argument of the structural conflict theory is that conflict is built into the particular ways societies are structured and organised (Best, 2006). The structural theory looks at social problems like political and economic exclusion, injustice, poverty, exploitation and inequity as sources of conflict. Best argues that conflicts occur because of the exploitative and unjust nature of human societies, domination of one class by another. Ross (1993) noted that in situations where economic and political discrimination and weak kinship ties are the defining characteristics of a society, the chances that conflict will result are higher. According to (Kothari, 2006) the control and use of resources lies at the heart of the deepening crisis in the world today.

When social, economic, cultural or political change is externally driven, the assumption is that these institutions have problems that need to be dealt with by imposing new, radically different ones. The problem of economic underdevelopment, unintegrated social and political institutions as well as demographic factors put pressure on human settlement and available resources thereby being some of the factors responsible for the emergence of the conflict.

The structural root of conflict focuses on the symbols, perceptions, identities and meanings that give rise to conflict. LeBaron (2002), explained the

structural root as relating to the way we order and structure our thoughts and our feelings and the cultural message that shape our perceptions of social phenomenon in society. In this case, we can neither use a strategy centred in problem solving nor in improving communication alone. In this case, LeBaron (2002) effectively located conflict management in line with our culture and the belief that “wars begin in the minds of men and that it is in the minds of men that it can be resolved”. LeBaron further advanced the argument to give meaning to the point about conflict management in the context of structures. LeBaron (2002) wrote:

“We have to begin by acknowledging that our logic and common sense about how to communicate arise from our own ways of knowing how easy we make meaning of our lives. These ways are influenced by cultures, personality context and a whole system of knowing, called world view”.

This means that current conflict management attempts should have a focus on addressing cultural stereotyping inequality and eliminating the structures of domination and exploitation underlying social conflict. In relating this to ethnic conflict Felati (2006) opines that conflict management politics should focus on the personal and social dimensions of cultures, values, needs and experiences of parties in the conflict. Conflict management must focus on and deal with ‘how meaning is created and assigned to actions and events’ (Maoz, 1999) because while people may appear to have been fighting over land or other resources, others may be actively assigning meanings to situations and interactions they are

experiencing as part of the conflict. Conflict theories underpinning this study has been summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: conflict theories

Conflict theories	Assumptions	Lead to	Result in
Human needs	Denial of access to satisfy basic needs	Frustration	Conflict
Relational	Differences in cultural values	Discrimination	Conflict
Structural	Political and economic exclusion	Pain and grief	Conflict

Conflict management theories

According to Kriesberg (1998), theories in the field of conflict management have grown parallel in conjunction with the development of social movements from the 1960s. Wallensteen (2002:15) also noted that conflict management is a recent development because it never became an organised activity until the mid 1950s. This situation is however not coterminous with the development of theories of conflict management. There are many different sets of theories in the field of conflict analysis and conflict management to the extent that it seems the theories that operate in the field are as diverse as there are authors.

Track one diplomacy theory

The term "track-one diplomacy" refers to official governmental diplomacy or "a technique of state action, which is essentially a process whereby

communications from one government go directly to the decision-making apparatus of another" (Said A.S., Lerche, Jr., C.O. & Lerche III. C.O., 1995). Idowu (2005) explains in the following words: "Imposed solutions are based on the assumptions that mutual agreement and mutual benefit are impossible. What one party gains, the other must lose. It is not surprising that those who lose are usually dissatisfied with the outcome or such solutions are rarely successful in ending conflict. Discontent with the outcome may actually increase irritations over the original cause of conflict and later aggression even more likely".

Thus, track-one diplomacy is conducted by official representatives of a state or state-like authority and involves interaction with other state or state-like authorities: heads of state, state department or ministry of foreign affairs officials, and other governmental departments and ministries. These official diplomatic efforts can be distinguished from unofficial interactions, which may involve conflict resolution specialists, private citizens, non-governmental organizations. Along the official track, Said et al. (1995) stressed that track-one diplomacy may take place bilaterally between two states, or multilaterally when several states interact together, and even regionally or globally through inter-governmental organizations.

According to Said et al. (1995). the purpose and intentions of track-one diplomatic efforts may vary greatly: track-one diplomacy may be used coercively and may involve sanctions, ultimatums, and psychological intimidation; it may be used persuasively and involve argumentation and/or compromise; it may be used as a means of adjusting states' relationship to and views of one another; and it

may be a tool for reaching mutual agreements which may themselves reflect elements of persuasion or coercion. Track-one diplomacy varies not only according to the different roles states play, but also according to the manner in which these track-one roles are carried out. Official interactions may be at the senior head-of-state level, ministerial level, or involve lower-level officials. According to the Institute of World Affairs (2001), Track one diplomatic activities include: Informal consultations, Special envoys, Mediation and Negotiations.

Track-one diplomacy takes place as part of the regular interactions of states and also throughout the life cycle of conflicts. The Conflict Research Consortium of the University of Colorado (1999) offers a critique of conventional track-one diplomacy on the basis that it emerges from a win-lose view of diplomatic success, thereby encouraging competitiveness and positional bargaining. In addition, track one diplomats are committed to representing their state's interests, which may not always include a strong interest in quickly resolving a conflict. Track-one diplomacy is not always easily applied for successful conflict resolution.

Diplomats engaged in negotiations as direct parties seek to further their own country's interests by influencing other direct participants in negotiations, by influencing mediators, and by influencing the international community. Additionally, Kaufman (2002) writes that supporters of track one diplomacy act as the mediator for the conflicting sides thus offering legitimacy to the contending

parties without the parties themselves becoming involved in the negotiation process before each party is ready to commit to an agreement. Kaufman (2002) states, that the 'third-party track one mediators' are "individuals of high regard in the international community. Usually these individuals are selected because both the actor they represent has some relevant power, authority or legitimacy in the eyes of the parties to the dispute and because of their own personal skills as mediators.

The traditional approach to conflict management has been the view that a coercive power is the primary ingredient for determining the outcome of a conflict that man evolved from a state of nature in which life was brutish. That is why government sometimes offer a coercive force to manage conflict. Conflict management in this context is already reduced to peace enforcement. Kriesberg (1998) criticised this assumption insisting that the popular thought attributes conflict among humans to be due to human nature suggesting our hopelessness. The point is that this traditional conception comes with a mind set. It views conflict as part of human nature.

In this regard destructive conflicts are seen as a product of our socialisation (Maoz, 1999). Ury (2007) explained that this fatalistic acceptance of destructive conflict as part of our human nature is the biggest obstacle to conflict management. It inhibits our efforts to develop constructive approaches to manage conflict. Therefore, this approach has not been given any prominence in any

recent conflict theory. The focus has also been shifted away from Track One Activity which locates conflict management as the preserve of governments.

Track two diplomacy theory

Montville (1991) defines Track Two Diplomacy as: “an unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups or nations that aim to develop strategies, influence public opinion, and organize human and material resources in ways that might help resolve their conflict”. It is therefore notable that Track Two Diplomacy is in no way a substitute for official, formal, "track one" government to government or leader-to-leader relationships. Azar (1991) also argued that Track Two Diplomacy is a process that enables group representatives to work towards resolving intergroup conflict in a non-threatening, non-coercive and non-confrontational environment. Azar (1991) stated that there are three stages or processes in Track Two Diplomacy theory.

The first stage is a series of problem solving workshops or forums. These workshops are designed to bring influential people from the respective communities in conflict, but not the key decision makers, together to explore alternative means of defining their conflict. The goal is to transform their perceptions about the conflict from zero-sum to win-win. The facilitators do not seek to impose or even offer solutions to the conflict, their purpose is to facilitate communications and gently guide the participants towards changing their attitudes and perceptions themselves. Through this change comes the ability to view the

conflict in new terms. This is the transformation that makes viewing the conflict as zero-sum to viewing it as win-win, possible.

The workshops are composed of a series of plenary and small group meetings over several days. These formal meetings are supplemented by informal social events such as dinners and sightseeing. The atmosphere is conducive to bridge building and understanding and not to power politics and bargaining. Kelman (1991) has defined seven central features of these workshops: "its healing purpose, its analytical process, its focus on needs, its establishment of alternative norms, its stress on self-generated learning, the facilitative role of its third party, and the clinical nature of its research enterprise."

According to Azar (1991) the second stage process of track two diplomacy theory is to influence public opinion and to change the attitudes and perceptions of the protagonist communities. These changes will be based on the alterations that were made by the participants in the problem solving workshops. This is by no means a simple or automatic process, but one that takes time, and a great deal of perseverance and patience. Before the communities themselves can be targeted, the workshop participants must first convince the decision makers in their communities of the veracity of their newfound perceptions. After this has been achieved, the wider communities can undergo a process of transformation.

Azar (1991) considered in this process the corporative economic development. Cooperative Economic Development is not engaged in as a

substitute for problem solving oriented conflict management, but as a means to enhance it. Cooperative economic development is just a cooperative venture whose goal is to alleviate the worst material sufferings of the contentious communities. It is usually directed towards the group that has been historically victimised and underdeveloped. Azar (1991) furthermore, notes that the satisfaction of basic needs of the victimized, either along communal lines or as part of a national strategy, should be the ultimate priority of government development policies. Only thus can we move toward managing protracted social conflict.

The basic needs can first be met by providing jobs for those who have been chronically unemployed. It is amazing how agreeable people can become once they have useful jobs to keep them busy and some money in their pockets to spend. Coogan (1995) noted the importance of job creation for success of the peace process. Though these material gains will not eliminate the conflict, they will help to alleviate it in the worst sections of the communities and it will provide people with tangible proof that things can change and can work.

However, one of the key phenomena that track two diplomacy has been developed to deal with is Protracted Social Conflict. Protracted social conflict is a type of conflict that is not based on material interests, but is one, based on needs; particularly identity related needs of ethno-national or communal groups (Kelman, 1991). Azar (1991) describes this conflict type as: The identity groups, whether formed around shared religious, ethnic, racial, cultural, or other

characteristics, will act to achieve and insure their distinctive identity within a society. When they are denied physical and economic security, political participation, and recognition from other groups, their distinctive identity is lost, and they will do whatever is in their power to regain it. In short, this is the origin of protracted social conflict. Protracted social conflicts define intractable conflicts as conflicts that are not readily amenable to resolution.

Kelman (1991) believes that the focus on needs is essential in the process of attitude and change of perception: For example, if both parties of a conflict insist on possession of the same territory, they are boxed into a zero-sum definition of the conflict, whereby the demands of one can be satisfied only at the expense of the other. When they look behind these positions, however, they may discover that one party wants the territory to satisfy its security and economic needs and the other to satisfy its identity needs. Having redefined conflict in these terms, conflicting parties can begin to search for a solution that would allow one to express its national identity without jeopardising the other's national security.

Track Two Diplomacy has been tried and proven successful in changing the attitudes and perceptions of workshop participants. It is an essential step in paving the way for Track One Diplomacy to succeed. In most cases of protracted social conflict, Track One Diplomacy has been tried and has failed. The elites seek to bargain and manipulate in order that their constituencies can get the best 'deal' possible. Although this is normal in international relations, this will not be successful in solving the seemingly intractable cases of protracted social conflict.

Multi-Track Diplomacy theory

One theory that can be used in the attempt to address the theoretical deficiency and to appropriately bridge the multi-faceted theories in the field of conflict management is the Multi-Track Diplomacy theory of Diamond and McDonalds (1996). As the name implies, this theory does not rely on activities by any one track as the panacea to conflict resolution. It recognises the use of what Diamond referred to as a 'systems approach'. This is a multi-faceted approach to conflict management which demands that various societal segments are involved in the resolution of a conflict.

Diamond and McDonalds (1996) coined the term Multi-Track Diplomacy to explain their model shown below in figure 4. The multi – track diplomacy model is a systematic approach that calls for the involvement of a diversity of actors and activities needed for successful conflict resolution. The schema of Multi-Track Diplomacy emphasize that state and non-state actors alike are seen as integral and complementary organs in conflict management. The imperative in this schema calls for the bridging of all theories and perspectives in conflict management. This theory adopts a systemic approach, giving a role to all societal structures and groups in conflict management. It is worth considering because it sought to reject the individualistic and somewhat segmented approaches to the analysis of conflict management process.

This research is located within the Multi-Track Diplomacy Theory because the theory emphasises the integration of both track one and two initiatives for successful conflict resolution. In this perspective, all society members, from those in elite leadership positions, a variety of community specialists including lawyers, economists, scholars, chiefs and queen mothers, and youth/women/religious leaders to those at the grass roots level have a role to play in conflict management.

The theory was developed by Diamonds and McDonalds (1996) as an extension of Montville's (1989) concept of Track Two Diplomacy is an unofficial contact and interaction aimed at resolving conflict with the belief that it is only through a collaborative effort among all societal sectors and power structures that real change is possible. It holds that grass root participation by citizens is essential in conflict management. It emphasises the use of human relations approaches to dialogue, listening and diplomacy and operates with the belief that activities which emphasize the humanity of each party are ways to transforming adversarial relationships. According to Ury (2007) citizens or civil society can constructively contribute to conflict management acting as provider, bridge builder, equalizer, mediator, healer, witness and peacekeeper as they move through and within the field of the conflict management.

Multi-Track Diplomacy like other citizenship diplomacy theories hold that conflict resolution is a public peace process. The public peace process is based on the assumption that while governments are the official bodies that make peace

agreements, successful conflict management depends on public consent and the involvement by different groups and individuals within the society. This process is within the Multi – Track Diplomacy framework depicted in figure 3 below that the study will analyse in relation to the process and strategies used in the management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

Track 9: (Inner circle) Public opinion / Communication

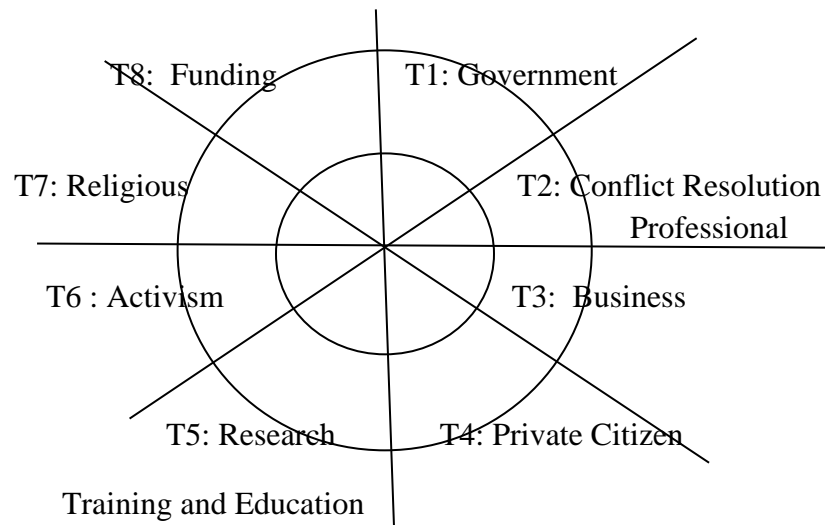


Figure 3: The Schema of Multi-Track Diplomacy

Source: Diamond and McDonald (1996): The institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy (IMTD)

The model shown in Figure 3 has nine tracks and each track has a role to play for either simultaneously or successively if a conflict is to be managed effectively. Government which is the first track is involved in peacemaking through the formal processes and institutions of government as in official diplomacy, policy making and peace building activities. Also to be added is crisis management and the maintenance of law and order. Professional in track

two relates to the real of conflict management by professional or non-governmental organisations. They are people who are well vested in the area of conflict management. Their activities are in the areas of analysis, prevention, resolution and management of conflict. Business in track three makes enormous contributions to peacemaking in potential and actual forms. It provides economic and commercial opportunities, which prevent conflict. It also helps to build local and international friendship and understanding and opens informal channels of communication as well as other ways of supporting peace building activities.

Private Citizens in track four are individuals who can be involved in peace and development activities through citizen diplomacy, exchange programs, private voluntary organisations, non-governmental organisations and other peacemaking activities. They are normally key allies who can help in managing peace. Research, training and education in track five covers three areas of research, as it connects to educational institutions and specialised institutes, think tanks and special research centres. It includes training programmes in conflict and peace, and specialised skills of negotiation, mediation and general conflict transformation. Activism in track six covers practices and activities like active non-violence, peace and environmental activism, human rights protection and peace, campaigns against proliferation of small arms and light weapons, social and economic justice and protests against governmental policies that threaten peace.

Religion in track seven deals with beliefs and peace oriented actions of spiritual and religious communities. Pacifism, humanism, non-violence and brotherliness are actions promoted by dominant religions as peace oriented conduct. Funding in track eight is a silent but crucial actor in the peacemaking realm. Many foundations exist that provide resources to governmental and private groups, to engage in peace building activities. Communication and the media in track nine (the inner circle) are channels for the dissemination of information thus, they are aggregate of public opinion and the voice of the people. This comes in different forms such as print and electronic and films.

These nine tracks may not be exhaustive as such. However, they provide a useful starting point for understanding the array of actors and participants in the conflict management sector. The success of the use of this method will become useful, depending on the way parties respond to their conflict situations and whether or not they use the methods and skills of conflict management. The roles of all the tracks would be assessed. A summary of the conflict management theories in this study is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Conflict management theories

Conflict management theories	Assumption	Lead to	Result in
Track-one diplomacy	Coercion, Sanction Intimidation	lose-lose or win-lose	Open conflict
Track-two diplomacy	negotiation litigation	win-lose	Unstable peace
Multi-Track diplomacy	public peace process	win-win	Stable peace

Conceptual framework

It is clear that development is meaningfully achieved through the existence of peace. Peace here refers to the absence of violent conflict and the implementation of effective conflict management mechanisms which results in maintaining the security of the people. Ethnic and resource base conflicts, very often, are intractable conflicts which involve values, deprivation of needs and broken structures such as political and economic exclusions (Coleman, 2000). Thus, ethnic and resource base conflicts are often protracted and remain very difficult to resolve and their continuous existence poses danger to local level development and they tend to seriously hinder security which is needed to ensure peace for development.

Ethnic and resource based conflicts as shown in Figure 4 primarily result from deprivations which are further exacerbated by factors like lack of access to power, resources and economic and political marginalization (Causal Factors)

which are magnified by peoples' struggle for their identity and basic needs. The continuous ethnic polarization through these factors leads to violence (conflict) which results in low income, low investments and loss of lives. Hence decrease the level of development (Output).

Effective management mechanisms of ethnic and resource based conflicts can have positive implications for development. Schoeman (1998) argues that a society in which violent conflict is absent, the people develop their communities by pursuing economic and other developmental activities. In resolving ethnic and resource base conflicts, one needs to focus on satisfying the basic needs which have been deprived (UN DESA, 2001) and also creating a proportional equality in deep-rooted cultural and identity issues (Richardson Jr. & Wang, 1993) using third party intervention and inter-group cooperation (Horowitz, 2000).

All of these can be done by effectively engaging the conflicting parties in mediation, inter-group dialogue, conflict management workshops, litigations, third party intervention and also impose sanctions (Input). Issues which are mostly root causes of conflict when tackled properly results in effective conflict management thereby trickling down to sustainable peace which has implications for local development (Feedback).

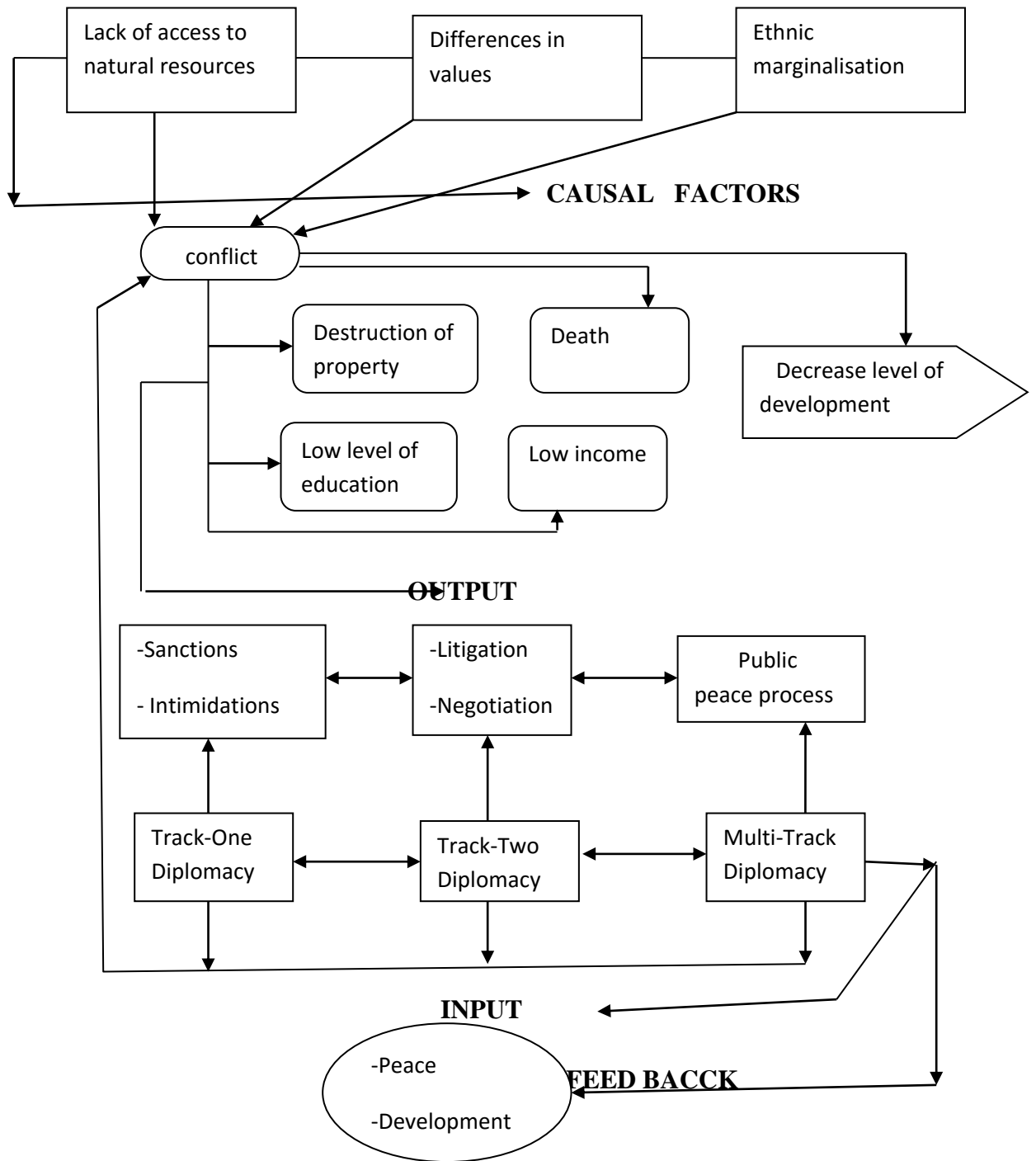


Figure 4: Conceptual framework

Source: Author's construct

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the methodological approaches used for the study. These include the study area, research design, case selection, target population, sampling technique and sample size, data collection instrument, pre-testing of instruments, data collection, and sources of data and methods of data analysis.

Study area

The study was conducted in the Nkonya-Alavanyo Area which is located in the Jasikan and Hohoe districts in the Volta region. The Republic of Togo borders the Hohoe district to the east, while to the west is Kpando District. The north of the Hohoe district is bordered by Jasikan District and to the south is Ho Municipal. Jasikan district is bordered on the east by the Republic of Togo, the north by Kedjebi District and the south by Hohoe District. The Nkonya and Alavanyo Areas has 21 communities with a total population of 75,614 (Alavanyo 33,042 and Nkonya 42,572) (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). Figure 5 shows the map of Nkonya-Alavanyo disputed land in the Volta region of Ghana.

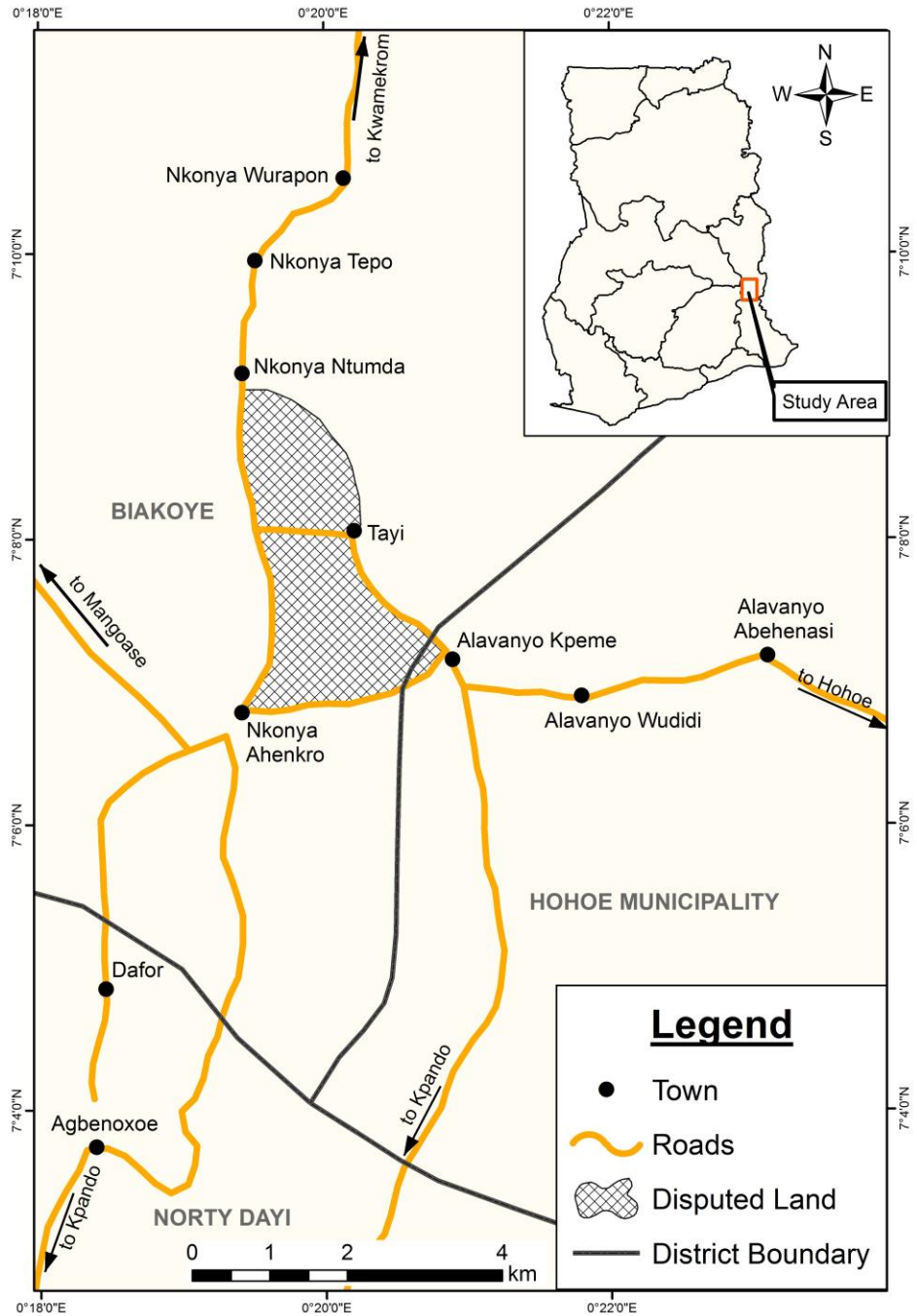


Figure 5: Map of central Volta Region showing the disputed land

Source: GIS / Remote Sensing and Cartography Unit: Department of Geography and Regional Planning, UCC. 2013

Politically, there are two levels of authority in both Areas: The local government authority and traditional authority. The local government authority, represented by the district assemblies, provides administration at the local level and is headed by district chief executives. In accordance with the Local Government Act, PNDC Law 207, 1988, the District Assembly is the highest political and administrative authority. The assembly works with decentralized departments for the administration and development of the district.

The traditional authority embodies the chieftaincy institution which has their paramount chiefs as the head. The Nkonyas are governed by two paramount chiefs, one in the north of the area, Nkonya Ahenkro and the other in the south, Nkonya Kadjebi. This has created a strong north-south divide linguistically, politically and socially between these two groups of Nkonya people. However, Alavanyo people have only one paramount chief seated at Alavanyo Kpeme.

Economically, agriculture and fishing are the main activities in the two traditional areas and the largest employers accounting for about 82 per cent of the total employment (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). Culturally, there are many ethnic groups in the Nkonya/Alavanyo area. These include the Lolobi, Akpafu, Deme Wudidi, Likpe, Buem and Bowiri (Ghana Statistical Service, 2005). Rattary (1932) indicates that most of the ethnic groups are migrants to the present area. Ethnic heterogeneity has had implications for ethnic relations and harmony in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area since this has led to conflict in the area. .

The Alavanyo traditional area celebrates the Golofose and Yam Festival. Not only are the festivals celebrated to announce the new harvest, but the ancestors and gods are also given sacrifices. The festivals also serve as a forum at which the divisional and sub-chiefs renew their allegiance to the Paramount chief. Betrothal ceremonies are more significant than marriage ceremonies in both traditional areas. Polygamy and divorce are both present, although few have enough money to have more than one wife. Despite the misunderstandings between the different ethnic groups in the Nkonya/Alavanyo area, there are inter ethnic marriages between them (ghanadistrict.com).

Research Design

The design for this study is a case study. The use of case study as a research design is extensively utilized (Sarantakos, 1997). A case study design of a research is well suited for projects in which a researcher aims at gathering contextual and detailed information and knowledge about an individual, political or social phenomenon (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2000). A case study is an excellent method in cases where a researcher seeks to test, falsify or confirm an existing theory (Sarantakos, 1997). Since the objective of this study is to examine the management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, the use of case study is appropriate. The case chosen for this study is the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict in the Volta Region and is descriptive in nature.

The study adopts a qualitative approach of research as it involves the interpretation of instances of the phenomenon. This involves speaking to people,

and focuses on explanations and interpretations of their experiences about the management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. The study adopts this qualitative approach because it is thought that a qualitative study is more appropriate to explore the different conditions and factors which contribute to the management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

The qualitative method is also adopted for a number of reasons: Newman (1994) opines that case study is a form of qualitative research approach which allows detailed investigations of individuals, groups, institutions or other social units and focuses on understanding the particular case in its complexity: in this case, conflict management in Nkonya-Alavanyo. Also, Maoz (1999) explains that, qualitative methods of research are finding important application within the field of conflict management because it allows for an in-depth investigation and interpretation of the stories related to how a conflict is managed.

Many other researchers who have successfully used the qualitative case study in studying different conflicts have extolled the benefits of such a design. These include Doherty (2001), Swanstrom and Weismann (2002) and Maoz (1996). Doherty (2001) used qualitative case study to study the tragic confrontation between the Branch Dividians and the Federal Bureau of Investigations in Waco, Texas. Swanstrom and Weismann (2002) used the qualitative case study to study conflict resolution in East Timor. Payne and Payne (2004), also used qualitative case study to study the Compassionate Listening Project which has been aimed at managing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Dougherty, Weismann and Pace concluded that qualitative method allows for the descriptions of the people, places and interactions being investigated. The qualitative methods deepen our understanding of the dynamic and specific nature of the social realities involved in conflict management.

The researcher chose to adopt the qualitative method by using in-depth interviews with open-ended interview questions with the intention to allow the respondents to freely discuss the topic of the study and to thoroughly express their thoughts, values and attitudes. The issues involved in one conflict are so diverse that a qualitative study would require due diligence which imposes the need for a case study. This study adopts the use of qualitative methods in order to investigate fully the procedural framework in the management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

Case selection

Cases are chosen because one cannot study different conflicts in one study without compromising quality. The Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict is described as one of Ghana's most intractable conflicts. Though the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict is a violent one, it is certainly not the most bloody inter communal conflict in Ghana but its existence for nearly a century makes it a unique case for study. The persistence of the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict over the years makes it complex because many interests got involved which rendered the conflict transcending many different forms of conflict management mechanisms.

Access to data in the management of this nature of conflict is never easy since conflict issue and its management is delicate and people are economical with information. Fortunately, the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict has received a lot of media attention which makes access to data relatively easier. Hence, a motivation to select this conflict and study it. It is argued that the use of a single case study decreases the reliability of the analysis since it does not allow for cross-comparison. However, this is not the case here because well defined criteria have been used when selecting the case. All choices made can in fact risk lowering the reliability if done inappropriately and without criteria for selection.

Target population

The target population is segmented into groups of people involved in the conflict and the conflict management process to ensure fair representation of opinions. The groupings are representatives of both parties involved in the conflict or its management process. These include: Youth group leaders, Women group leaders, Volta Regional Coordinating Council members, Mediation Committee Members, Chiefs / queen mothers and elders, District Chief Executives and Assembly men/women, Non Governmental Organisations and key informants of the general public. These groups are selected for the study because they have been key in the conflict in terms of its effects, efforts at managing the conflict and having a fair knowledge about the conflict situation in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area.

To achieve the purpose of this study, the researcher chose to interview and also had a focus group discussion with both men and women because they are equally affected by the conflict and could make meaningful contributions towards its management. However, the two feuding ethnic groups (Nkonyas and Alavanyos) were the main focus since they were the people directly engaged in the conflict and equally have opinions on issues in the conflict. Moreover, both ethnic groups had participated in the management process of the conflict. The objective behind the choice to interview and have focus group discussions with these respondents was the researcher's belief and conviction that these types of individuals could potentially give an illustrating picture of their factual and practical reasoning, rather than imagined reasons.

Sampling technique and sample size

These segmented groups or respondents were selected by the use of purposive sampling technique. This technique is used due to the fact that the researcher has a fair knowledge of the peculiar characteristics of the respondents that are relevant to the study. Yin (1999) suggests that in some purposive samples, researchers use their expertise or knowledge to include some subjects or interviewees in the sampled population. The researcher, therefore, used the purposive sampling technique to select respondents such as, youth leaders, women leaders, Volta Regional Coordinating Council members, mediation committee members, chiefs / queen mothers and elders, District Chief Executives and Assembly men, Non Governmental Organisations and key informants (community elders) from the general public in these two traditional areas because

of the various roles they play in the management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, and the information and experiences they have gained. This technique enabled the selection of respondents who were relevant to the study and also had relevant information for the study. In this research, all these individuals and groups were purposively sampled by the researcher because they had been part of the peace process in the study area and had relevant information needed by the researcher for the study.

Six communities in the two traditional areas were purposively drawn out of 21 communities in both Nkonya and Alavanyo area, taking into consideration the fact that they have been the scenes of the conflict. They are Ahenkro, Ntumada and Tepo in the Nkonya Traditional Area and Kpeme, Wuwudi, and Alavanyo Tayi in the Alavanyo traditional area.

The population for the study constituted all persons and individuals involved in the peace mediation process between the two communities. There was a broad participation of various actors and people from the two communities. Therefore, estimating the exact population involved in this peace negotiation was a difficult task. However, the various actors involved in the peace mediation formed the population for this study. These mainly involved members of the Nkonya / Alavanyo conflict management committee, chiefs, queen mothers and elders, youth leaders, women leaders, assemblymen/women, district chief executives, the West Africa Network for Peace-building, members of parliament and the Catholic Relief Services.

Justification of the target population

Volta Regional Coordinating Council

The Volta Regional Coordinating Council (VRCC) comprises of the regional minister, the deputy regional minister, all district chief executives in the region, the presiding members of the district assemblies in the region and two chiefs from the regional house of chiefs. The functions of the council include the formulation and the coordination of programmes through consultation with district assemblies in the region. The Council is responsible for harmonizing these programmes with national development policies and priorities, and for monitoring, implementing, and evaluating programmes and projects within the region. Thirteen out of 30 Volta Regional Coordinating Council members were purposively selected included the deputy regional minister, district chief executives for Nkwanta north and south, South Dayi, Kpando, Kadjebi, Krachi East and West, Ve and Avatime, the presiding member and Paramount chiefs of Likpe and Wusuta traditional areas. One crucial role that the VRCC performed in the management of the conflict which made the researcher to select it as part of the target population was, that it was petitioned by the chiefs and queen mothers of the two conflicting traditional areas to intervene in resolving the conflict which they did by placing the burden of managing the conflict on the belligerents.

West Africa Network for Peace-building

The West Africa Network for Peace-building, Ghana (WANEP-GHANA) was formed in December 2002. Incorporated under the corporate laws of Ghana

as a peace-building NGO, WANEP-GHANA seeks to facilitate the creation of a sustainable culture of non-violence, justice, peace and social reconciliation in Ghanaian communities by ensuring coordination and effectiveness among peace practitioners in order to avoid duplication of efforts and maximize the use of resources for more effective responses to conflict situations. Five members from West Africa Network for Peace Building involving the Executive Director, National Network Coordinator, Administrative manager, Programme Officer on Peace Education and the Expediter were purposively selected to be part of the target population because during the Nkonya / Alavanyo conflict, WANEP played a vital role by providing training for the various structures formed by the mediation committee to equip them with professional competency in conflict management. As a result, the researcher selected it to be part of the target population.

Catholic Relief Services

The Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has operated in Ghana since 1958 with the goal of improving the quality of life among the poor and the vulnerable and helping victims of disasters. It also engages in peace-building projects which are implemented in partnership with the Catholic Diocesan partners through the Satellite Peace Centre Initiative. Five members from the Catholic Relief Services comprising of the Chief Operating Officer, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Strategy and Organisation Development Officer and Executive Vice President for Overseas Operations were purposively selected to be part of

the target population because of the role the CRS played in the management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. It financially supported the Nkonya/Alavanyo mediation committee which enabled the committee to begin work.

Youth and women leaders

The youth and women leaders assist in the field of development. They work in many capacities, ranging from advocating for national policy change, to organizing at the community level. Eight out of 13 youth leaders (one from each selected community and two former leaders) and 8 out of 12 women leaders (one from each selected community and two former leaders) were purposively selected to be among the target population. The involvement of the youth and women leaders as part of the target population by the researcher was due to the fact that they were involved in the peace process in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

Nkonya – Alavanyo Mediation Committee

The Nkonya-Alavanyo mediation committee was formed in 2003 to mediate in the Nkonya / Alavanyo conflict and to bring a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Four out of 7 mediation committee members comprising of the chairman, the vice chairman, the secretary and the Krachi traditional ruler, a member. The mediation committee was purposively selected by the researcher as part of the target population because it was the central committee set up to manage the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict.

Chiefs, queen mothers and elders

Chiefs, queen mothers and elders of a community have multiple duties, ranging from maintenance of social norms to provision of basic social amenities and to creating political awareness among subjects. They settle conflicts over land ownership or traditional marriage procedures. Twelve chiefs/queen mothers (6 out of 21 chiefs selected from the study communities - Ahenkro, Ntumda, Tepo, Wudidi, Tayi and Alavanyo Kpeme); (6 out of 21 queen mothers, one from each selected study community) and key informants (elders) from Ahenkro, Wudidi and Kpeme. These were purposively selected as part of the target population because they have been key in the management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. It was the request of the chiefs, elders and queen mothers of both Nkonya and Alavanyo communities that led to the formation and inauguration of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee. Their efforts made the researcher to involve them as part of the sampled population.

District Chief Executive and Assembly men

The district chief executive is the political-administrative head in each district and is responsible for the performance of the executive and administrative functions of the District Assembly. He or she is also the chief representative of the central government in the district whereas Assembly members represent single member wards. Two district chief executives (made up of Hohoe municipality and Jasikan district) and 4 out of 21 Assembly men (selected from Ntumda, Kpeme, Akpafu and Alavanyo Dogbedze) were purposively selected. These groups of people played major roles in the mediation process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo

conflict as they called on the government to intervene, by sending delegations to enquire into the cause of the conflict and offer solutions.

Members of Parliament

In general, MPs are expected to be legislators, lobbyists for constituent causes and advocates. However, the most obvious role of the MP is to represent his/her constituents. Two members of Parliament purposively selected are the MPs for Hohoe north and Buem constituencies. During the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict, members of parliament appealed to the government to deploy soldiers to the area to stem the tide of frequent conflicts and its attendant loss of lives and also establish a high powered committee to investigate the conflict and define the boundaries of the two areas and for this reason MPs were made part of the sampled population by the researcher.

The procedure used in sampling the target population segments was the quota sampling method. With this method and the qualitative approach of this study, a sampling frame is not required. Thus, the researcher set a quota of 66 respondents to be chosen from specific target population groups with a total population of 167. The researcher chose respondents according to their composition in the entire population that is their status and the part they played in the management of the Nkonya- Alavanyo conflict.

Data collection instruments

Data was collected using interview guide and focus group discussion. Social science research uses the term ‘fieldwork’ in two different ways. First, it is used in a general sense to cover several kinds of qualitative methods. Burgess (1993) describes it in that sense as “a style of investigation that is referred to as qualitative method; interpretive research; case study method and ethnography”. It is used in the second way by Payne and Payne (2004) to refer to an aspect in the qualitative research process where data are collected, over a period of time, in a naturally occurring setting. However, the term could also be used to refer to any data collection trip, be it in a specific social setting or not. Thus, fieldwork can mean “data collection stage of a project in a social setting that tries to reflect the naturally occurring order of events and subjective meanings of those being studied”.

Interview allows the researcher to explore in more detail the issue that is under study. McNamara (1999) notes that interview is particularly useful for getting the story behind a participant’s experiences. Kvale (1996) explains that the qualitative research interview seeks to describe the meanings of central themes in the life of the subjects. Interview guide is used for this study because the researcher seeks to collect data at both factual and ‘meaning’ levels. Contacts were established with informants who are citizens resident in the community during community visits to the study area. The researcher visited the informants (who were not resident in the community) in their offices as was conducive to

each respondent. Alternatively, telephone interviews were also arranged where face-to-face contact was impossible. A total of 43 respondents were interviewed.

During interviews, the researcher's focus was on the procedural framework in the management of the conflict. In each interview, the researcher's focus was centred on questions like: How were the Mediation Committee members selected? How were the activities of the Committee co-ordinated? What methods and procedures were used in the management of the conflict? These questions were essential in maintaining the focus of the research to avoid the temptation of concentrating on 'non essential' points.

Focus group discussions (FGDs) were also used to obtain in-depth information on the conflict and also supplement and cross-check information obtained from the interviews. The FGDs were organized by first identifying the target population segments involved and then arranging to meet them in their respective communities for the discussions. The aforementioned methods of data collection were combined to enable the researcher to use the strengths of each to overcome the deficiencies of the single method (Sarantakos, 2005).

Three FGDs were conducted with the first group involving the 13 selected members from the Volta Regional Coordinating Council; the second group involved five selected members from West Africa Network for Peace-building while the third group was made up of five selected members from the Catholic Relief Services. Thus a total of 23 respondents were participated in the focus group discussion. In all, 66 respondents out 167 target population were involved in both the interview and the focus group discussion for the study.

Sources of Data

Data for this study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Sources of primary data for the study were information obtained from the informants. The primary data was obtained through interview and focus group discussions since they allow the collection of information that is sensitive and crucial. Interview guide was designed and used as an instrument to carry out interviews to generate information from the respondents. The use of interviews and focus group discussions as qualitative research techniques was necessitated by the need to generate detailed response from the informants about the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict and its management process.

The sources of secondary data for this study included all relevant documents concerning the conflict and conflict management. These documents included Legislative Instruments, reports of committees set up over the years, press release and conferences. Others included research from newspaper articles, journals and internet materials.

Reconnaissance survey

Preliminary visit was made to the study area to establish contacts with respondents and obtain information about the study area, as well as ensure adequate understanding of the issues in the study. The reconnaissance survey was also carried out to ensure whether the recording of responses was allowed and to know the expectations of the main field work. The reconnaissance was undertaken in February 2012 with seven respondents made up of one mediation committee

member and six general respondents in Deme and Wurupong within the Nkonya / Alavanyo traditional area. The analysis of the reconnaissance survey revealed that some issues raised were not properly understood by respondents and some questions were not well framed.

Data collection

The actual data collection was undertaken from August to October, 2012 and involved the researcher and five research assistants. The research assistants were recruited in Ho to help in the study. Training was given to them on the objectives of the study and how to interact with respondents. Two of the research assistants were Kpando, one from Nkonya, one from Alavanyo and one from Peki. This was to enable them to move freely into their own communities since security was a problem in other rival communities. The training of the research assistants offered the opportunity to the correct translation of the instruments into the local dialects of Nkonya and Alavanyo.

Data Analysis

It is common knowledge within the field of conflict management, that one way conflicts can be transformed is the careful presentation of narratives about the conflict. Since this study was a qualitative case study, the data was analysed qualitatively. The data obtained from the field were edited for consistency of the set of interview guides as well as the set of focus group discussion guides. The results were grouped under general themes or topics for the analysis. Consequently, the responses were presented in narratives for the analysis.

The schema of multi-track diplomacy model was adopted for the analysis of the procedural framework used in the management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. This was necessary because, according to Ross (1997), action evaluation in any type of conflict is based on the existence of some sort of model. Ross also notes that all core theories of practice in conflict management are based on “the principles that guide action”. This is why many scholars (Lund 1996; Mitchell 1981; Wallensteen 1994, 2002; and Zartman 1989) have attempted successfully to develop different models for analysing conflict management processes.

Since all the models could not be used at one time, a selection was made. The analysis was therefore based upon Multi-Track Diplomacy model developed by Diamond and McDonald (1996). Multi-Track Diplomacy model is considered the most applicable and appropriate because it tended to be more integrative. Besides, the Multi-Track Diplomacy model is selected because it emphasises the involvement of all groups and the use of multi-faceted theoretical or analytical approaches to the study of the processes of conflict management. The analysis focused on the management process to find out the procedures within which the conflict was being managed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The chapter discusses the views of respondents on the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict highlighting on the historical basis of the conflict. It also examines the views of respondents on the conflict management mechanisms adopted in relation to the factors considered in selecting the mediation committee members, the procedures used by the mediation committee members and the approaches adopted by the committee members.

Historical origins of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict

The Nkonya Alavanyo conflict has arisen from an 80 year old boundary dispute between the Nkonya, a Guan group in the Jasikan District and the Alavanyo, an Ewe group in the Hohoe District. It is not clear what the precise relationship between the two groups is, apart from their situation as neighbours sharing land boundaries but some accounts of the conflict state that the Nkonyas claim to be the traditional and original owners of lands in the area. Alavanyo people settled on Nkonya land with the consent of the Nkonya people years ago. The two groups were however, bound by ties of inter marriages.

According to Tsikata and Seni (2004) the first recorded violent incident took place in the colonial period in 1923 during preparations for Empire Day Celebrations. However, anecdotal account suggests that the conflict dates back to 1903. Since the first outbreak of violent clash in 1923, the relationship between the two ethnic groups remained hostile. There were subsequently abductions. These conditions re-defined and re-shaped the nature of the conflict. Tsikata and Seni (2004) notes, that the land in dispute is a prime forest land rich in timber species, bamboo and cola nuts, and has also been used for cocoa, oil palm and food crop production. In 1913 the conflict recurred and Grunner, a German surveyor was employed by the colonial governor to draw a map demarcating the boundary between the two ethnic groups. This map is known as the Grunner Map (GM). The map was reportedly used to settle land disputes between and among the ethnic groups in the Nkonya / Alavanyo area during the period of German colonization of the area prior to the First World War.

The Nkonya based their claim to the land on the demarcations outlined in the GM. They have tendered this map as supporting evidence in court in several cases and had rulings in their favour. On the contrary, the Alavanyo continue to challenge the validity of the GM in settling disputes related to ethnic boundaries. The Alavanyos based their claim on traditional boundary demarcation mechanisms such as the planting of “anya” trees. The Anya tree (otherwise known as Buna or Ntome in some communities) has a great **significance** and that is the ‘anya’ tree could stand all weather conditions so it is capable of being a tool to be use for boundary demarcation. The court should resort to the

‘anya’ trees as the appropriate tool for land demarcation. The Nkonya disputed this, which supposed that there is no acceptable symbol of demarcation on the disputed land. Inherent in the claims is that if one side wins the other loses.

This kind of situation has been noted by Ubi (2001) as a trigger factor in sparking ethnic and communal conflict over land. Ubi (2001) notes that conflict erupts when the claim of one party to the land territory becomes incompatible with the claim or desire of the other to satisfy their own basic interests and needs within the same physical territory. As a conflict with territorial imperative, this statement fits the case of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. However, the issues involved in the conflict were more than just the claim to the disputed land. The stake of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict which was land changed to include issues related to identity, recognition and power over who controls the disputed land.

Events in the area were characterized by what the chiefs and queen mothers described in a press statement as ‘sporadic’ violence, killings and maiming, fear, uncertainties, insecurity, tension and bitterness. Further violent clashes occurred in 1990s, 2003 and 2004. Between 2003 and 2004, the conflict became more consistent. The nature of aggression and violence led to the permanent military presence in the area. The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict is not only resource based but also ethnic conflict.

It was expected that Mireku Committee learnt from all the problems associated with the earlier efforts at resolution of the conflict. However, the committees’ proposal for the government to take the dispute land would not solve

the root cause of the conflict. Moreover, the management mechanisms did not address the position of the feuding parties in terms of their goals. Individuals, who talked about peace, have their efforts largely uncoordinated. There was also a limited participation of the belligerents in the management process which showed that the conflict management efforts excluded the virtues expounded by the multi-track diplomacy theory.

Mediation efforts

Peace and the resolution of conflicts help development thrive in a society. There is therefore the need for a peaceful resolution of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, to enable indigenes engage in their economic activities. Various resolution mechanisms were adopted which included:

The courts

According to a letter written by an Nkonya citizen, since the eruption of the conflict to 1980 four court cases have been adjudicated. This reveals that the courts have been extensively involved in adjudicating the land dispute.

According to a respondent from the Nkonya-Alavanyo mediation committee, during the interview commented that the efforts in the conflict have involved 'persistent litigations in the law courts' over the disputed land but the desired results had not been achieved. The litigations rather worsened the situation because the Alavanyos have never accepted any of the court's rulings on the grounds that the Grunner Map was not sufficient evidence in support of the Nkonya claim.

Besides, the method of boundary demarcation using the ‘anya tree’ is not tenable in law, thereby giving the Nkonyas the advantage before the law court. The lack of a common and acceptable symbol of demarcation on the disputed land has been the underlying factor that contributes to the re-escalation of the conflict. Another respondent also made statements that the use of the court as a management mechanism in the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict rather caused the conflict to recur. The management methods used could be described as either inadequate or defective. The Nkonya /Alavanyo conflict is value based. Therefore, it could not be managed through adversarial approaches or court rulings. The management process of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict has been imposed solutions. Olowu (2001) explained in the following words:

Imposed solutions are based on the assumption that mutual agreement and mutual benefit are impossible. What one party gains, the other must lose. It is not surprising that those who lose are usually dissatisfied with the outcome or such solutions are rarely successful in ending conflict; Discontent with the outcome may actually increase irritations over the original cause of conflict and later aggression even more likely.

Thus, the Nkonya –Alavanyo conflict re-escalates after every court verdict is declared. This is because one party gains everything and the other loses everything. Such a result always has the tendency to cause the conflict to recur. This was the essential bases for re-escalations of the conflict over the years until it was contained.

This is why LeBaron (2002), explains that the resource based conflict management processes generally involve the meeting of one's basic needs. This is because in conceiving conflict as competition over resources or material things, the person's needs are separated from the issues. Consequently, if resolution is to be found, the needs of both parties must be addressed and satisfied at all levels. From the perspective of the resource base conflict, conflict management is only possible through the satisfactory redistribution of resource.

Committees

The committees that were set up were perceived as not neutral. For example, in November 1992 the Provisional National Defence Council government appointed the Acquah Committee to investigate the dispute and prescribe solutions to the government. No hearings of the committee took place due to the reasons, that a member of the committee fell ill and also the secretary of the Acquah Committee was from Nkonya side and his neutrality was questioned by the Alavanyo group. In 1995, the District Chief Executives of Hohoe and Jasikan jointly appointed the Mireku Committee to inquire into and resolve the dispute. Although the Mireku Committee wrote a report, it was not implemented. The recommendation of the committee was that the government should take over the disputed land. Interestingly, both sides rejected the Mireku Committee's report.

One member of the Volta Regional Coordinating Council revealed during the focus group discussion in Ho that only a few people were involved in the management of the conflict. During a focus group discussion with the selected members from WANEP, a respondent also stated that efforts at managing the conflict involved the participation of a few citizens. There was no integration of the belligerents to bring to bear their interest, values and goals. Such management mechanism does not result in a win-win situation. Perhaps this is the reason why one conflict writer (Olowu, 2001) argues that integrative solutions are the best solutions. Previous efforts at management of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict did not recognise this important point of a win-win situation.

The Alavanyo Youth Association in 1997 called for a high powered committee to look into the dispute and resolve it once and for all instead of waiting for hostilities to begin and arresting culprits (*Ghanaian Times*, November 15, 1997). Government efforts at resolving the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict have been ad-hoc. The efforts were uncoordinated and different governments introduced their own doses of ad-hoc measures rather than building on the efforts of their predecessors.

In an interview with youth leaders, some of these respondents claimed that they were not recognised as important and as such were not involved in the committees set up. Other respondents from the women group leaders also commented that they were not in favour of the members in the committee. This agrees with Azar (1991), who opines that identity groups, whether formed around

shared religious, ethnic, racial, cultural, or other characteristics, will act to achieve and insure their distinctive identity within a society. When they are denied physical and economic security, political participation, and recognition from other groups, their distinctive identity is lost, and they will do whatever is in their power to regain it. Since the groups were not identified and involved in the committee, they fight for recognition hence making the conflict intractable which may not be readily amenable to resolution.

Government

The military was also employed. Their presence heightened tension in the area which resulted in peace enforcement. This did not tackle the root cause of the conflict and immediately the military was gone the conflict was bound to recur. Thus military presence only created negative peace and not resolution. The frequent search for guns in the communities was not a conflict management mechanism because cutlasses could be used as weapons in communal or ethnic conflict. This management mechanism was inherently defective.

According to one respondent from an with the Assembly men in an interview revealed that the focus of the military was diverted from enforcing peace to tapping into the economic gains. This may explain the offer made by the Conflict Research Consortium of the University of Colorado (1999), diplomats or the military sent to enforce peace are committed to representing their state's interests, which may not always include a strong interest in quickly resolving a conflict. This management mechanism tends to encourage competitiveness and positional bargaining.

The effects of the conflict

The people of Nkonya -Alavanyo have been affected by the conflict. The Chief of Alavanyo Kpeme whom the researcher visited at his palace during the interview, made a statement that:

“Nothing positive has ever occurred from the conflict, rather sporadic violence, killings and maiming, fear, insecurity and bitterness has been our lot”.

The deduction from the statement shows that the conflict has had terrifying effects in that many people have been displaced as houses and farms were burnt. This confirms the finding by Aganah (2008) that violent conflict increases crime rates such as looting, arson, killings, armed robbery and firing of guns.

A youth leader who was a farmer at Nkonya Ahenkro who said he could not cultivate his kola for some time since the constant review of the curfew and frequent violence made it difficult for him to engage in his farming. An assembly man in Alavanyo who also had a farm at Deme responded during the interview that “I could not cultivate my vegetables because of fear of going to my farm due to the violence.” Another you leader who owned a palm nut farm also mentioned that about six acres of his palm nut trees in his farm located at Ntumuda (Nkonya area) was completely set on fire in 2003.

Economic activities became stagnant as it was difficult to trade and social life was disrupted as students were not able to go to school. The benefits

associated with a thriving and vibrant commercial area was eroded as a result of the continuous violent clashes in the traditional area. Trade and education virtually came to a standstill. Though the two communities were just one kilometre apart, every form of economic interactions was difficult. To this end, the protracted social conflict theory states that the effects of such conflicts are often pervasive, affecting all aspects of a person or community's social, political and economic life and tend to also affect institutions such as education and health (Coleman, 2000). This factor was stressed by a key informant who admitted that it was though an 'iron curtain' had been erected between the two communities. This confirms Justino's (2008) assertion that violent conflict prevents people from engaging in buying and selling and also results in economic shocks such as price changes and the collapse of businesses. To this end, the protracted social conflict theory states that the effects of such conflicts are often pervasive, affecting all aspects of a person or community's social, political and economic life and tend to also affect essential services such as education and health (Coleman, 2000).

The people of Nkonya and Alavanyo co-existed and lived by bonds of inter-marriage before the outbreak of the conflict. Both communities learnt and spoke each other's language. This presupposed that there are people in Alavanyo who have been blood relations such as fathers, mothers, nephews, nieces, uncles, aunties children, grandchildren and cousins in Nkonya towns and vice versa.. However, years of conflict have broken those relationships. In an interview, a Mediation Committee Member described how a woman from Nkonya sought the assistance of the Mediation Committee to see her child who was living in

Alavanyo. As observed by the Protracted Social Conflict theory, protracted conflicts affect many aspects of a society's social life affecting social relations, intense hatred, suspicion and mistrust, fragmentation and polarization of the conflict producing continuous violence which becomes difficult to resolve (Azar, 1990). The conflict has culminated in separations and divorce amongst couples with backgrounds in Nkonya and Alavanyo. This was confirmed in an interview with a queen mother in her home who said that:

There have been divorces among Nkonya and Alavanyo. Women who were married from the other tribe have been divorced because of the conflict. There is often the belief that the women would not be trustworthy and faithful to their husbands and may leak information to their kinsmen.

The nature of the Nkonya –Alavanyo conflict

The first objective of this study was to describe the nature of the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict. The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict continued in a sporadic manner since the first recorded outbreak of hostilities in 1923. The late 1990s saw several escalations of tension between the two communities.

One key informant who was a chief said at his palace in an interview that the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict was not ending not because the two main feuding parties did not want it to end, but because of the continuous interference from people within and outside the traditional area who kept supporting the two factions with both arms and money so that in the midst of the ensuing confusion

they have a field day to harvest timber, bamboo, cola nuts and cocoa, fell palm trees for palm wine and also engage in the wild and ruthless looting of food crops to satisfy their basic economic needs.

According to a mediation committee member, following the training sessions of the belligerents by the mediation committee, one participant confessed to, how he personally supplied money and other forms of support to fuel the conflict. In the process, some of his family members lost their lives. He declared “I used to be Saul” but now “I am Paul”. This is a figurative way of saying that he has changed and was ready for peace. This confirms Collier’s (2006) greed thesis/theory of conflict in society as resulting from human greed and the desire of some people, called conflict entrepreneurs, to benefit from conflict that propels them to go to war.

The nature of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict was such that it was accorded spiritual implication. In the current study, some chiefs mentioned that since 1923, the conflict resurfaced every ten years with severe bloody consequences being recorded in 1983, 1993, and 2003. This gave a spiritual connotation to the conflict. Both the Nkonya and Alavanyo people believed that the gods were angry and therefore revisit them every ten years so they needed to be pacified. This makes it difficult for the attainment of peace despite efforts made to resolve the conflicts.

This is supported by Azar’s (1990) protracted social conflict theory and Coleman’s (2000) description of protracted social conflict which identify a plethora of structural, cultural, ethnic, political, economic, religious and human

needs as well as social factors which hinders conflict resolution. In this way the least rumour of war resulted in re-escalation. The superstitious belief has been one factor which fuelled the conflict for many years.

The Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict was perceived as intractable according to a member of the Volta Regional Coordinating Council. He asserted that besides being a resource-based conflict, it has with time become a struggle for ethnic identity as both sides were indoctrinating their youth to see people from the opposing side as enemies that could not be tolerated. This affirms Best (2006) relational theory of conflict where a number of conflicts grow out of a past history of conflict between groups that lead to the development of negative stereotypes, intolerance and discrimination. Such negative exchanges between groups may make it difficult for efforts to integrate different ethnic groups within the society to succeed because past interactions make it difficult for them to trust one another.

Evidence, however, suggested that a conflict that is over 80 years old has the tendency of handing down information about the conflict from one generation to another, giving reasons why each group has to see the other as an intruder hence, resulting in the conflict being intractable. Therefore, the root cause of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict took another turn and became an identity-based conflict which takes a long time to settle. From the facts outlined above, it can be deduced that the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict is protracted in nature.

The selection process of the mediation committee members

The second objective of the study was to examine the factors that influenced the selection of the mediation committee members for the management of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict. The Mediation Committee was formed and subsequently inaugurated at the Volta Region House of Chiefs (VRHC) in July 2004 at the request of the chiefs and people of Nkonya and Alavanyo.

In a press statement in September 2003, the chiefs and queen mothers of Nkonya and Alavanyo traditional areas “petitioned the Volta Regional Coordinating Council (VRCC) to intervene in resolving the age-old conflict that has disrupted life and living in our communities”. Following from the request, the VRCC adopted a novel approach to manage the conflict.

The approach placed the burden of management on the belligerents. They were required to make a proposal on how they wanted the conflict to be managed. Their suggestion was that a committee should be formed to help them manage the conflict themselves through dialogue. They were to select or propose names of individuals who they wished to intervene as committee members.

One major factor revealed by respondents which influenced the selection of the conflict management committee members was the persistence request of the two feuding communities to form a committee to help resolve the conflict. Since members who requested for a committee to handle the conflict were citizens of both communities, it presupposes that a committee’s report will not be seen as imposition but rather a welcome one.

During an interview with the mediation committee members, a respondent among them said that the VRCC members requested the feuding parties to propose names that were to be neutral and mutually acceptable. This agrees with Agyeman's (2008) proposal that the establishment of joint consultative committees comprising mutually acceptable representatives in ethnic conflicts is crucial in their resolution.

The respondent again said that seven names were finally listed out of many names outlined, to form a seven member committee which was known as the Nkonya-Alavanyo Conflict Mediation Committee. The committee members involved three clergymen including Right Reverend Dr Buama, who was the chairman; Right Reverend Francis Lodonu, Bishop of Ho Diocese of the Catholic Church as vice chairman; Right Reverend Gabriel Mantey, Bishop of the Jasikan Diocese of the Catholic Church as member; The three clergymen were the leaders of the two dominant churches in the traditional areas. Their selection was influenced by the fact that the churches had been involved in peace initiatives in the area for a long time. Two traditional rulers, Nana Mprah Besemuna, Krachiwura; Nana Adokua Asigbe, Queen mother of Tefle who were members of the Volta Regional House of Chiefs and Mrs Hilary Gbedemah and Mrs Felicia Okyere-Danso were legal practitioners who were also selected as members . Mr Evans Kanfra of the VRCC as Member Secretary was to provide briefing to the Regional Administration on the work of the committee.

Thus, according to the members of the mediation committee, the principles used in selecting the mediation committee members were neutrality and

acceptability to the two feuding communities. This is in agreement with both Azar's (1990) position that neutrality and status are required to enable a state perform its conflict resolution, management and mediation roles properly in a protracted social conflict and Ndegwa's (2001) claim that the composition of representatives of conflict parties (mainly elders), local government officials, religious leaders, and members of different community-based organisations may be a valid strategy to mediate and de-escalate longstanding violence over natural resources at the community-level. A number of names were considered in the selection process. However, those names that were contentious which the belligerents did not mutually agree upon were deleted from the list so as to follow the conditions guiding selection process which was neutrality and mutual acceptability.

Procedures used by the mediation committee in the management of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict.

The third objective of the study was to examine the procedures used by the mediation committee in the management of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict. The mediation committee organised activities and initiatives which were carried out concurrently and in a procedural manner which affirms conflict management as a process. According to the responses given by the members of the mediation committee in an interview, revealed that the mediation committee collaborated with the Ho Catholic Diocesan Peace Building Team (HCDPBT) whose efforts in 2005 caused the mediation committee to be supported financially by the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) which enabled them to begin work. Work began in earnest

with various strategies adopted by the committee in the management process in February 2005. This supports Montville's (1982), assertion that it is only through a collaborative effort among all societal sectors and power structures that real change is possible in resolving conflict.

According to the chairman of the mediation committee in an interview, said that the committee established structures that enabled the members to be in regular touch with the two conflicting parties. Members of these structures were representatives from the feuding communities. This explains Agyeman's (2008) idea that the establishment of joint consultative committees comprising representatives from warring factions in ethnic conflicts is crucial in their resolution. One of the structures was the joint consultative committee (JCC). According to a respondent from the mediation committee, the JCC was made up of ten members; five from each traditional area. The JCC was later known as the Consultative Committee (CC). The CC was constituted to discuss strategies for managing the conflict. Because the members of the CC were resident citizens in the various communities, they were given the role of interacting with the people in their communities on daily basis. The membership of the CC included leaders of the communities and as such their views were complied with, by their people. They were responsible for educating their people on the need to embrace peace and use dialogue in managing the conflict.

Another structure established was the Consultative Community Peace Setters (CCPS). This involved all the clergymen resident in the Nkonya/Alavanyo area. According to one chief, all the clergymen of the various churches in the area

were recognised to be part of the CCPS. The assignment given them was to educate the members of their churches on the need to shun violence and embrace peace. Their responsibility was in agreement with Richardson Jr. and Wang (1993) position that without effective communication and trust, conflict resolution was not possible. The Community Peace Setters were basically used as agents of peace to their members as they impart virtue in the lives of their members.

The third structure established by the Nkonya/Alavanyo mediation committee was Catholic Diocese Peace Building Team (CDPBT) which played the role of a strategic planning committee. Thus, in the words of Bishop Lodonu, “*the CDPBT was ‘the Strategic Planning Committee’* because it provided various forms of technical direction to the work of the Mediation Committee to ensure that things were not left to chance”. CDPBT was identified as a key ally. An ally may come with very useful tips to facilitate the process. This agrees with Kendie and Akudugu (2010) who affirm that conflict resolution was only possible through cooperation and negotiation and the elimination of suspicion through transparent negotiations where all actors are seen as equal partners.

The CDPBT had two Catholic Reverend Fathers who had been previously trained in Peace Building and Conflict Resolution. Thus, they became useful resource persons to the management process. The duties of the CDPBT included; the development of proposals, programmes and activities, provision of technical direction and to source for funding for the Mediation Committee. Moreover, it was the CDPBT that brought the Mediation Committee in contact with the West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP). Hence, the CDPBT was the master

planner of the conflict management work which was done by the Mediation Committee in the Nkonya/Alavanyo area. They implemented 'Peace Plans' and decisions of the Mediation Committee.

Capacity building was the third stage of the management procedure of the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict. The various structures lacked the skills and the technical know-how to manage conflict and therefore needed training in that regard. The training was designed to provide professional approach to expose them to basic skills in conflict management and the understanding that conflict management was delicate and multi-dimensional. The training was supposed to make the members of the committees skilled negotiators. As a result, the training of the various structures and the main mediation committee itself was provided by WANEP. The training equipped the committee members and the members of the various structures with basic professional competencies in conflict management.

The training covered different areas for different groups of people. For instance, women leaders from Nkonya/Alavanyo traditional area were trained in conflict transformation; the chiefs, queen mothers, council of elders and opinion leaders were trained in Peace Building Initiatives and conflict management whereas the youth leaders of Nkonya/Alavanyo were trained in conflict management, mediation and development.

In order to ensure that the various stakeholders were committed to the attainment of a lasting peace in the Nkonya/Alavanyo area, follow-up training sessions were organised. The commitment of the committee according to some

respondents was thus rooted in the words *'Dialogue is more powerful than violence'*.

The chairman and the mediation committee secretary indicated that the committee continued to direct the attention of both communities to the fact that violence was powerful but dialogue was more powerful. This appeal made significant impact because the belligerents realised that they could not achieve their stated goals in the conflict even after over 80 years of warfare. The belligerents were therefore encouraged to co-operate for peace to prevail. The collaborative efforts of the stakeholders helped the belligerents to build trust and embraced each other's values. The end result was a friendly relationship developed by both communities. In this vein, Kendie and Akudugu (2010) believe that conflict resolution is only possible through cooperation and negotiation and the elimination of suspicion through transparent negotiations where all actors are seen as equal partners

The next step in the management process of the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict was to appraise the success of previous workshops, evaluate the work of the structures and to determine the extent to which significant transformation of attitudes had been achieved overtime by the mediation committee. The appraisal exercise was facilitated by WANEP in a performance review on the peace initiatives in the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict and briefing and sensitisation forum for Nkonya/Alavanyo residents in Accra and its environs.

At the end of the training workshop, the youth bemoaned the dark period of violence and war and pledged to become emissaries of peace, and work tirelessly for peaceful coexistence. Since conflict management was multi-dimensional, it is believed that every interest group was to be included. An Alavanyo youth leader, during an interview also remarked that “it made more sense to spend money on peace than war” and urged all to stop the waste of resources on war.

Content of the training and its effects

The respondents generally stated that workshops and seminars organised by the mediation committee were very essential to the success of the committee. It is important that there is a brief look at the content of the training programmes. This is necessary to explain the effects produced. A respondent from the mediation committee said that during the initial stages of the workshops, there were hatred and anger portrayed by the belligerents as such various steps were put in place to address the fears entertained by the various groups. The respondent also mentioned that participants to the training workshops were taken through exercise in group dynamics to help the various parties gain confidence and trust in one another. This brought them out of bitterness into a positive relationship.

Another component which a mediation committee member commented on was the allowance given to the various groups to share their experiences during the conflict. A youth leader affirmed that those meetings were characterized by emotions of vengeance, anger, hatred and revolting words as the belligerents met face to face. Issues about the conflict and its implications were discussed, with the

aim of helping participants to realize and understand the cost of the conflict. Discussions that informed the participants that true justice can only be achieved if victims, offenders and the entire community accept responsibility and engage in efforts to put things right were tackled and this was stated by a youth leader of Deme. The aim of the workshop was to help participants to develop interest and cultivate a desire for conflict management.

Following the training sessions, respondents claimed that shedding of tears and a great feeling of guilt replaced anger and vengeance. One participant confessed how he personally provided money and other forms of support to fuel the conflict. In the process, some of his family members lost their lives. He declared “I used to be Saul” but now “I am Paul”. This was a figurative way of saying that he had changed and was ready for peace. It was such people who worked to influence the attitudes and perceptions of their own community members to urge them to work for lasting peace. Thus, there was community ownership of the management process.

Location of the training

Another significant aspect of the work of the committee was the location for the workshop and training sessions. All the meetings and training sessions were held in Ho, the regional capital, for residents of the two communities. Other meetings were held in Accra for the paramount Chiefs and those in the local Diasporas as claimed by the general respondents.

One significant aspect of the location of the meetings was the religious touch. Respondents from the mediation committee during an interview said that the meetings were not only held at Ho but at a Diocesan centre of the Catholic Church. This was meant to assure the disputants that there was no intention for fear of the other because the Catholic Church had members from both Nkonya and Alavanyo. One committee member narrated the scenes at the first face-to-face meeting of the two groups thus:

There was gross mistrust, pain and anger during meetings. People were unwilling to sleep in the same premises with the opposing groups. They felt trapped by their adversaries.

From the statement, it was obvious that the meeting would have been a failure if it was held in any of the belligerent communities. In any case, the opposing group members who were expected to go there would not have gone at all. If they did so it would have resulted in clashes. The mediation committee member again claimed that the composition of the Mediation Committee was largely clerical as it involved three high profile clergymen. As a result, prayers were said at the beginning of each meeting so that God could intervene. The prayers also had another motive. To assure the belligerents that the committee members were people interested in peace as God would wish they live in peace.

The success of the Ho meeting had a rippling effect. A sub-chief from Alavanyo said for instance, the Alavanyo and Nkonya citizens in North America held a joint meeting concurrently in Toronto and New York City, USA on 22nd

January 2006. The meeting, according to the (*Ghanaian Times*, 4th February 2006) was designed to “toast the Chiefs of the two traditional areas on the historic four day meeting for a peace agreement”, the neutrality of the venues (foreign countries and cities) made it more assuring for belligerents to attend. The implication for conflict management was obvious. A mediation committee member however, said that it must be noted that, the mere fact that a neutral venue is chosen does not mean successful outcome. The character of the mediation team was also paramount. The membership and neutrality of the committee commanded the respect of the belligerents.

Threats to the work of the committee and how they were handled

Every conflict has threats that act as trigger factors. According to a newspaper (*The Heritage*, September 6, 2006) “a conflict is always associated with some trigger factors”. In the words of a member of the Centre of Security Studies “In every conflict, there is a peculiar problem. The Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict has its own pressures that were generated to threaten the work of the Mediation Committee”. However, the Mediation Committee had to find ways to deal with those trigger factors. The triggers included:

Finance and logistics

During the researcher’s interview with the committee members it was realised that funds from the government was a major problem with the management process. Finance and logistics were the main threat to the work of the committee. For instance, though the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict mediation

committee was formed in July 2004, it never did any work until February 2005 when the committee was supported financially by the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) through the Ho Catholic Diocesan Peace Building Team (CDPBT).

During the focus group discussion, respondents from the Catholic Relief Services affirmed that the Mediation Committee entreated the government of the day to save the mediation process which was about crushing due to lack of funds and logistics. It was not surprising that while the Mediation Committee was inadequately prepared for funds to start its work, hostilities continued. A member of parliament for the area noted that “there was the need for the government to provide funds to the committees because they were facing a lot of financial and logistical problem”.

Politics

The chiefs of Nkonya maintained that the Biakoye constituency that was predominantly Nkonya suffered the dangers of ethnic politics, in that Biakoye had been in disarray in 2004. It was realised from the general respondents that a Member of Parliament accused the then Volta Regional Minister of using divide and rule tactics as he was alleged to have expressed anti-Nkonya sentiments. However, the Regional Minister said in a dejected manner that “the allegations against him are meant to create disaffection to him, the government and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) among the Nkonya people”. According to a member of the VRCC member in a focus group discussion made mention that an Nkonya citizen

who was the sitting Member of Parliament had complained about a plot to assassinate him as part of the fratricidal killings.

The Alavanyo paramountcy quickly denied any knowledge of the plot and gave a two weeks ultimatum to the Member of Parliament to prove his allegation or face their wrath. Fortunately, the politics did not degenerate into party divisions. However, it significantly threatened the fragile relationship between the two communities. This made politics a danger to the work of the committee.

Beneficiaries and financiers of the conflict

According to the youth leaders of both Nkonya and Alavanyo communities, there were some individuals who benefitted from the conflict between the two ethnic groups by giving supports to a faction to precipitate the fighting so that in the midst of the fight, they will loot other people properties. This supports Tsikata and Seni's (2004) assertion that there was a strong perception that the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict has remained insoluble because some people benefited from the dispute. This view indicated that some people were doing business with the conflict. It is not surprising, because the disputed piece of land is believed to be rich in forest resources and minerals.

The District Chief Executive of Jasikan, explained that "some people always try to create confusion so that they can make ends meet, deceiving others to live in darkness". When such people want to re-ignite the conflict, they use the ignorant ones and then bulldozed their way out to do business. A member of parliament affirmed this in a statement that there was a call for the identification

of the financiers and beneficiaries of the illegal operations in the Kpeyitor forest immediately in order to prevent opportunities for financiers to conduct illegal timber operations on the disputed land.

A reverend father from the mediation committee declared how one man financed the conflict. According the reverend, after attending series of training sessions one participant narrated how much he contributed to that conflict. The participant said that “I personally supplied monies and other material support to my faction to precipitate the fighting” but having participated in the Peace Training Workshop, he declared that he is a changed person and will fight for peace and not violence. This agrees with the greed thesis of Collier (2006) which sees conflict in society as resulting from human greed and the desire of some people, called conflict entrepreneurs, to benefit from conflict that propels them to go to war. The committee appealed to all Nkonya and Alavanyo citizens resident at home and abroad, after this statement to embrace peace.

The committee therefore adopted this funding group (Catholic Relief Services) as strategic allies to re-double their resolve for peace said a committee member in an interview. They were briefed on peace process and encouraged that the best support to send home was not arms but development. A prominent Nkonya citizen, a chief for that matter noted that people with economic interest should be watched, because when they gained economic interest, they lost focus and become part of the problem. The then Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre donated two hundred cedis towards the peace

process. A respondent mentioned that how effective the mediation committee was able to liaise and integrate those who had interest in the land into conflict management was a serious challenge.

Rumours

Rumours threaten the peace building process and both feuding parties agreed that all must guard against it. This concern was expressed by a member of the Consultative Committee in an interview. According to the member, “the greatest challenge to the work of the Mediation Committee is the management of rumours”. Tsikata and Seni (2004) described the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict as one of Ghana’s most intractable communal conflict which created fear, mistrust and violence with attendant pain and suffering. This description was based on the fact that the least rumour is taken seriously by the belligerents. The issue of rumours is so delicate that its effects are never under estimated by even neighbouring groups. Rumours have fuelled the conflict for long. This shows how important information management is to conflict resolution.

According to a youth leader in an interview, rumours thrive because of the lack of any effective communication network between the two groups. The area has become closed and isolated. The road network in the area is very bad so it hinders communication between the two communities. If the road network was opened up and the street lights provided in the area, the lingering fear among the people that prevented them from moving and interacting with each other would be removed.

The committee has its own strategy to deal with rumour said a member of the committee. He expressed that the committee was concerned with trust and confidence building. The strategy was to impress on the belligerents to resolve that even in the event of the most extreme provocation they would not retaliate. Accordingly, the Mediation Committee organised a Peace March. The Mediation Committee and the members of the CC led a group of traditional rulers and youth of the two communities to walk from Nkonya to Alavanyo. This was to signify that it was now safe to commute between the two communities at no risk.

Damaged relationship

The Nkonya / Alavanyo conflict is an intractable one that normally leads to killing and socio-economic damage. However, one way or effect that has been identified by respondents has been the nature of the relationship between the two communities. This agrees with the explanation of Burgess (2005) that damage to relationship is almost inevitable in intractable conflict. This was exactly the case in the Nkonya /Alavanyo conflict. Relationship that were friendly, open and built on trust deteriorated. Marriages broke up and families were separated. Walls of division went up as the conflict escalated according to a queen mother in an interview. There was little communication between the two factions (Nkonya/Alavanyo). A joint press statement issued by the chiefs and queen mother of the two communities when the two groups met for the first face- to-face at a workshop to begin the management process captured the strained relationship in these words:

Our traditional areas exist as though an iron curtain has been erected between us. This is the plight of our communities who otherwise are closely related by blood ties out of many years of inter-marriages and used to visit relations and interact freely; joining in common festivities and celebrations, could no longer do so.

The two previously friendly communities became adversaries. They became very hostile to each other. This is normal with intractable conflicts. As Burgess (2005) puts it, parties to intractable conflicts often demonize the other developing group 'enemy in ages' or even 'dehumanizing the other side'. In fact, a committee member indicated that the two communities engaged in indoctrinating and brainwashing their youth against the opposing party.

The Mediation Committee dealt with this challenge in very pragmatic ways. According to a respondent, through the peace march and community visits, confidence was restored in both sides and friendly relations re-established. The chiefs and people of the two communities were encouraged to work together through the instrumentality of the CC. The secretary of the Mediation Committee told the researcher that the paramount chief of Nkonya comes to meetings in the same car with the paramount chief of Alavanyo. This friendly relationship has encouraged other citizens of the two communities to co-operate and work together. This agrees with Richardson Jr. and Wang's (1993) assertion that without effective communication and trust, conflict resolution is not possible. Again, the fact is that the CC members from both communities continue to work

together to significantly encourage other members in their communities to open up for friendly interactions to begin.

The secretary of the Mediation Committee asserted that ‘the mediation efforts were organised at the convenience of the belligerents and that the solution was not imposed on the people. Thus, the efforts of the mediation committee were integrative’. The Mediation Committee only acted as a facilitating agency using various strategies to help the people of Nkonya and Alavanyo to manage the age-old conflict.

A summary of the mediation process is shown in Figure 6

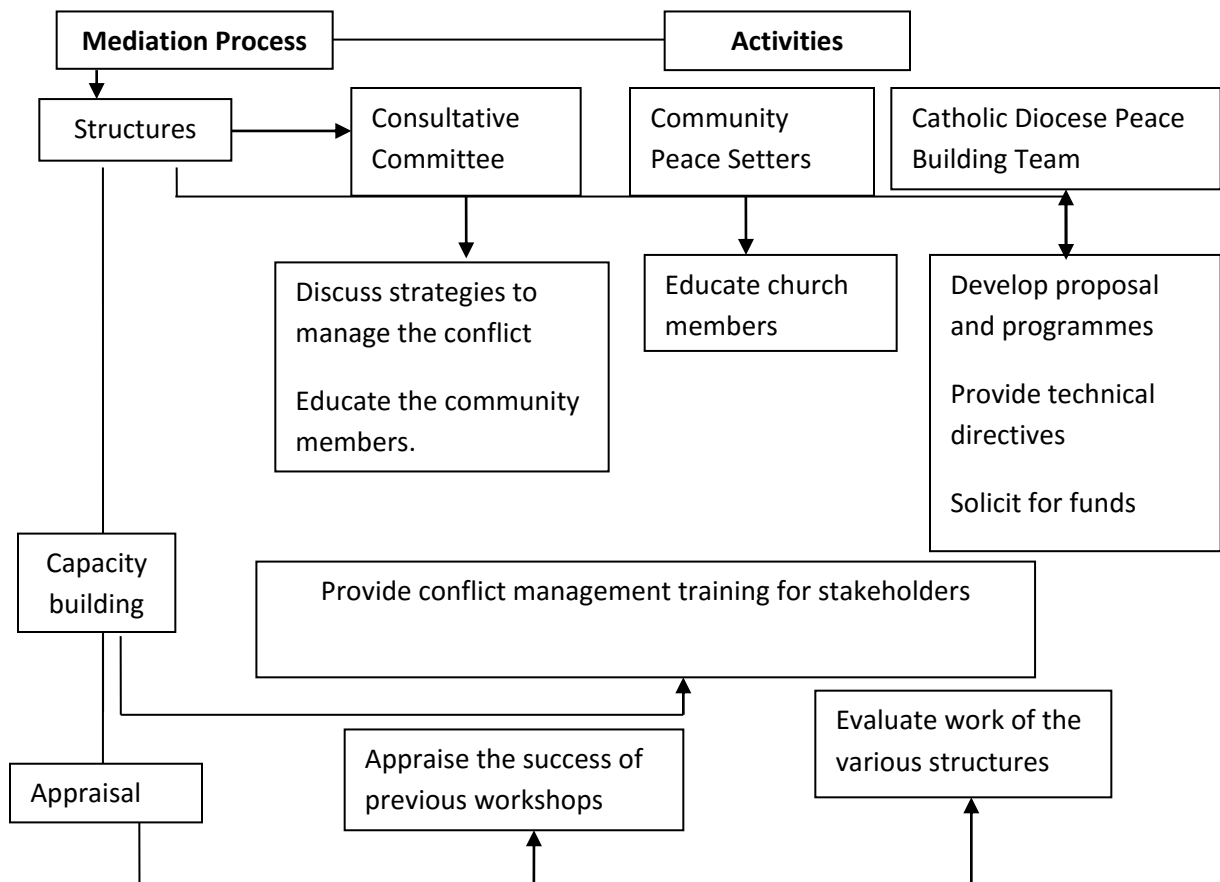


Figure 6: The mediation process

Source: author’s construct

Approaches used in the management of Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict

The fourth objective set out in the current study was to assess the approaches adopted by the mediation committee in the management of Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. The mediation committee placed the burden of management of the conflict on the belligerents. In an interview with one assembly man, he said that the belligerents were required to make a proposal on how they wanted the conflict to be managed. Their suggestion was that a committee should be formed to help them manage the conflict themselves through dialogue. This supports the assertion by Ury (2007) that citizens or civil society can constructively contribute to conflict management acting as provider, bridge builder, equalizer, mediator, healer, witnesses and peacekeepers as they move through and within the field of the conflict management. The committee did not conclude that the management of the conflict will be successful on the suggestion of the belligerents. However, various approaches were adopted:

1. Monthly review meetings were organized by the mediation committee to assess the progress of the management process and the extent to which the chiefs and the people of both communities abide by the concessions they were making at each stage of the management process. This supports what Agyeman (2008) proposed that conflicts can be resolved by strengthening and empowering the Traditional Councils, Regional and National Houses of Chiefs in their conflict resolution role. Mediation activities were regularly organised for chiefs, queen mothers, council of elders and opinion leaders of

Nkonya/Alavanyo citizens. During the mediation process, up and coming issues were discussed and updates received. The monthly review ensured that the momentum gained by the conflict resolution process was sustained.

2. The closed road linking the two communities was opened through the intervention of the mediation committee: The people of Nkonya and Alavanyo were engaged in communal labour to construct the road. The Nkonya and the Alavanyo people worked side by side to accomplish this.
3. The Mediation Committee members walked with a cross section of citizens of both communities to signify the beginning of friendly relations and interactions between the Nkonya and Alavanyo people. According to a district chief executive, the people made peace deal and organised peace march to celebrate the end of hostilities and to open the gate for authentic dialogue and peaceful existence in Nkonya Alavanyo communities.
4. Trust and confidence visits to the communities were organized at regular intervals. A respondent claimed that for each visit, the Mediation Committee was sure that the structures and the chiefs had had to work to prepare the people for the visits. These visits were used to obtain permission to resolve the conflict through dialogue and not violence. This resulted in improved communication between the two communities.

The respondents commented that the committee operated under the guidance that every individual or group who was connected directly or indirectly

to the conflict was regarded as a strategic ally for the Mediation Committee and the belligerent communities were socialised to accept that violence was powerful but dialogue is more powerful. This explains the assumption of Ury (2007) that citizens or civil society can constructively contribute to conflict management acting as providers, bridge builders, equalizers, mediators, healers, witnesses and peacekeepers as they moved through and within the field of conflict management.

The Mediation Committee identified all interest groups and segmented them as target groups including the youth leaders, women leaders, chiefs, queen mother and those citizens who were in the diaspora. The mediation committee worked in collaboration with other groups such as the Alavanyo youth group. Basically, the mediation committee controlled the management process by ensuring that all other groups who were interested in working to resolve the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict were brought under one umbrella. This ensured the proper co-ordination of activities.

5. Management Strategies for Africa (MSA), a Non-Governmental Organisation which had programmes for capacity building in post conflict communities worked in collaboration with the Mediation Committee in the Nkonya/Alavanyo area. The Mediation Committee ensured that the activities of the MSA and its broad strategies were mainstreamed. The MSA ensured that the two communities were constantly in touch with each other. They kept talking to both communities which facilitated the strengthening of friendly relations. It also helped the Mediation Committee to become abreast with emerging issues and to re-strategise.

A summary of the approach has been depicted in Figure 7.

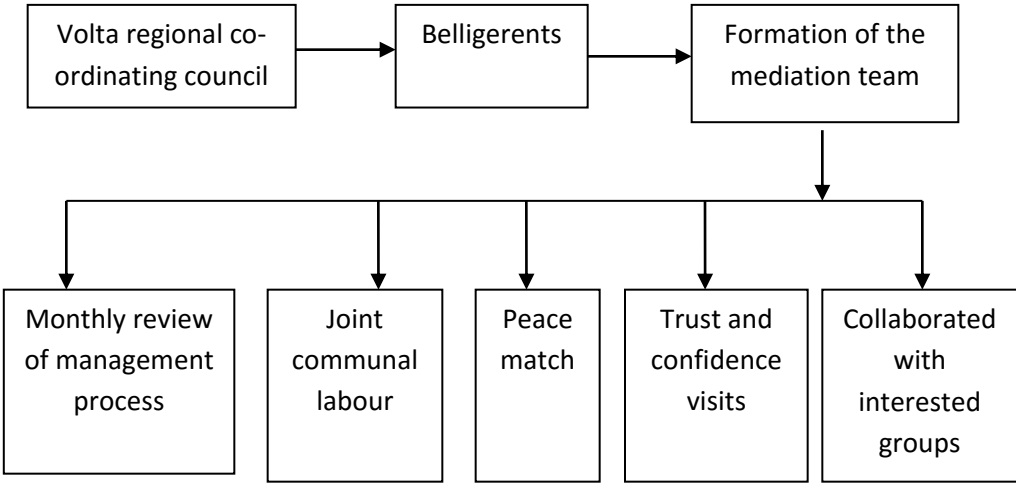


Figure 7: Approaches used by the management Team

Source: author’s construct

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The dynamic nature of conflict sometimes makes it pervasive and violent with many consequences. The study of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict indicates that continuous violence in the area poses negative impacts on development in the traditional area. When matters about the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict are firmly settled, many are those who will come to learn about how that feat was attained. This research was undertaken with the purpose of examining the processes involved in the management of the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict.

Summary of findings

Based on the study objectives, the study employed qualitative procedures to analyse the data collected by interviewing and having focus group discussion with respondents. The study employed the descriptive case study design in undertaking the research, and selected the key respondents using the purposive sampling technique. In all, a total of 66 respondents were involved in the study. The data was analysed using content analysis of information and documents on the conflict and presented under themes.

Nature of the conflict

1. The first lesson drawn from the management process of the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict is that The Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict (over land dispute) has raged intermittently for over 80 years. It was found from the study that the nature of the conflict is intractable. The conflict existed for almost a century and despite the mechanisms put in place, it still recurs. This was seen in the continuous interference from people within and outside the traditional area who kept supporting the two factions with both arms and money so that in the midst of the ensuing confusion they have a field day to harvest timber, bamboo, cola nuts and cocoa, fell palm trees for palm wine and also engage in the wild and ruthless looting of food crops to satisfy their basic economic needs.
2. The root cause of the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict is dynamic in nature. Historical account shows that the root cause of the conflict was resource-based. From the study, it was realised that besides the conflict being a resource-based conflict, it has with time become a struggle for ethnic identity as both sides were indoctrinating their youth to see people from the opposing side as enemies that could not be tolerated.

Selection process of the mediation committee members

1. The lesson learnt from the management of the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict was that the youth were mostly the fighters in the conflict so they should never be left out in any conflict management efforts. The burden of managing the conflict was placed on the belligerents. The youth were required to take ownership of the conflict and make a proposal on how they wanted the

conflict to be managed. The collective decision by the youth from both communities that their energies were only available henceforth for development and not for war was very essential to peace.

2. The feuding parties were requested to propose names that were to be neutral and mutually acceptable. The study points out that comprising neutrality and mutually acceptable representatives in ethnic conflicts management are crucial in their resolution. When belligerents recommend mutually acceptable solutions, particularly when it is carried out by a joint group from the feuding communities it works well. This gives the committee a good status and mutual respect

Procedures adopted by the committee

1. There is the need for collaboration with teams that can be identified as key ally. An ally may come with very useful tips to facilitate the process The mediation committee collaborated with the Ho Catholic Diocesan Peace Building Team (HCDPBT) whose efforts caused the mediation committee to be supported financially by the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) which enabled them to begin work. Through a collaborative effort among all societal sectors and power structures, real change is possible in managing conflict.
2. The mediation committee established structures that enabled them to be in regular touch with the two feuding parties. Members of these structures were representatives from the feuding communities. The establishment of joint consultative committees comprising representatives from warring factions in ethnic conflicts is crucial in their resolution. Conflict resolution is possible

through cooperation and negotiation and the elimination of suspicion through transparent negotiations where all actors are seen as equal partners.

3. Capacity building is relevant in the management procedure of the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict. The various structures may lack the skills and the technical know-how to manage conflict and therefore needed training in that regard. This is why from the study; the Mediation Committee employed the services of West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP) which designed training sessions to provide professional approach to expose them to basic skills in conflict management and the understanding that conflict management was delicate and multi-dimensional..
4. The need for appraisal and evaluation of the work of the structures and to determine the extent to which significant transformation of attitudes had been achieved overtime. These were seen from the study that appraisal exercise was facilitated by WANEP in a performance review on the peace initiatives, and briefing and sensitisation forum for Nkonya/Alavanyo residents and its environs.

Approaches adopted by the committee

1. Strengthening and empowering the traditional rulers in their conflict resolution role is essential in managing a conflict. Thus, monthly review meetings were organized by the mediation committee to assess the progress of the management process and the extent to which the chiefs and the people of both communities abide by the concessions they were making at each stage of

the management process. The monthly review ensured that the momentum gained by the conflict resolution process was sustained.

2. Peace deals were organised to celebrate the end of hostilities and to open the gate for authentic dialogue and peaceful existence in Nkonya Alavanyo communities. From the study, the Mediation Committee members walked with a cross section of citizens of both communities to signify the beginning of friendly relations and interactions between the Nkonya and Alavanyo people.
3. Communication and trust between the two communities must be improved. Trust and confidence visits to the communities were organized at regular intervals. These visits were used to obtain permission to resolve the conflict through dialogue and not violence. The study shows that the Mediation Committee was sure that the structures and the chiefs had had to work to prepare the people for the visits which results in trust. Also, the Management Strategies for Africa (MSA), ensured that the two communities were constantly in touch with each other. They kept talking to both communities which facilitated the strengthening of friendly relations. It also helped the Mediation Committee to become abreast with emerging issues and to re-strategise.

In conclusion, the Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict management process has revealed that war is never a solution to any conflict in general. It rather creates a cyclic process which fuels impoverishment, hatred, slaughtering of people and bleak future. It raises a divide between groups and damages friendly relationships.

War gives belligerent communities a humiliating label as killers in the eyes of other people. This creates a stigma around people from the belligerent communities and as a result, such communities suffer an undeclared social isolation.

The management of conflict is not a simple calculation but involves a careful mapping of the conflict in order to identify the dynamics involved. The use of the Track One and Track Two Diplomacy of conflict management in resolving the conflict were followed by violence. The Multi-Track Diplomacy was realised to be the best management mechanism in this conflict.

In the nutshell, all stakeholders need to be identified and engaged in the process as strategic allies. Structures must be established and the belligerents should be made to take ownership of the process. Belligerents should select a mutually accepted mediation team and have the declared intension to support the team to succeed. The youth and citizens in the diaspora contribute a lot to conflict escalation and so must be engaged to contribute to the management process.

Regular funding and communication are essential elements for any effective conflict management, also because the Mediation Committee which was charged with that task, adopted a facilitation approach to the process. The process was participatory and involved all segments of society. The management team did not depend on government for funding. It stresses the importance of managing conflict through community structures.

Conclusions

It is evident from the study that continuous violence in the Nkonya-Alavanyo area negatively affects the livelihood of the people in the area. As a result various conflict management mechanisms have been employed in the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict. One of the mechanisms used by government in this conflict was the Track One Diplomacy theory of conflict management. This theory asserts that conflict can be resolved through imposition or sanction made on the belligerents where conditions such as mutual agreement and mutual benefits are impossible. An example of the implementation of this mechanism was when soldiers were deployed to the area to enforce peace. Though this may work under certain conditions, it could not resolve the root cause of the conflict.

Many years of rulings by the courts in the past rather served as a cause for the re-escalation of conflict in the Nkonya/Alavanyo area. This is an example of the Track Two Diplomacy theory of conflict management mechanism where only a small number of representatives are involved in the management process. This theory works under conditions where the conflict is not protracted and the root cause of the conflict is not dynamic. Therefore, conflict over land, interest and identity are not effectively resolved through court actions.

The Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict management processes imparted knowledge which gave more credibility to the Multi-Track Diplomacy theory in conflict management. This theory requires the involvement of all stakeholders in the conflict in its management process. One important realisation from the

Nkonya/Alavanyo process is that conflict management is only possible when all stakeholders are actively involved in the management process. For instance various groups, experts in conflict management and resources were relied on. The youth and citizens in the diaspora constituted important blocks that should never be ignored in any inter communal conflict management process.

Belligerents were acting on rumours because the conflict created communication barriers. Therefore information dissemination was crucial in averting the spread and threat of rumours and the attendant effect. The Nkonya/Alavanyo conflict management process has shown that spreading of information was essential in paving the way for dialogue and this communication factor is not ignored by the Multi Track Diplomacy theory of conflict management.

Despite all processes and factors employed, the Multi-Track Diplomacy Theory of conflict management process has practically proven to be appropriate in managing intractable conflict. The collective willingness of the parties to embrace peace was the strongest pillar which carried the management. Hence, the mediation committee did not impose peace on the belligerent but rather the cry for peace was done out of the volition of the communities themselves.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to help in building peace and resolving the conflict. The recommendations also aim at transforming the conflict

from its negativity into long lasting, enduring positive change in individuals, communities and structures. Based on the conclusions, the researcher recommends the following measures, if adopted, would help in the process of conflict management.

Government

1. This study recommends the need for intensive peace education and campaigns by government in the traditional area, in schools, at community levels and in the media by sensitizing people especially the youth on peace issues. This must be continuous and not just for a few times because building peace is a process and not an event. By this, peace education should be part of the larger Ghanaian society through its inclusion in our school curricular beginning from the basic level. The root cause of a conflict can be dynamic. For instance, the root cause of a conflict can be resource-based. However, with time, the struggle for ethnic identity could become the stake for the conflict.

Mediation efforts

2. Conflict management committees' effort must be participatory, multi-faceted, all inclusive, all-embracing and acceptable to all the parties. Committees must ensure that all the feuding parties trust their resolution efforts to enable them corporate fully with mediation efforts. Mediation committees' efforts must also deal with the underlying issues in the conflict. Thus their efforts must get to the roots of the conflict by not only focusing on only the facial issues of the dispute. The committees must build the capacities of the parties in the conflict

towards self-negotiation to help resolve conflict and build peace. Feuding factions in the conflict need to be encouraged and empowered to negotiate among themselves to reach a compromise.

Court

3. The use of the court system (arbitration and adjudication) tends to polarize conflict areas further and does not bring resolution to a conflict. The ruling of the court is mostly a zero-sum result. The zero-sum is a condition where the winner takes all. In this situation, the loser will always bounce back since deprivation and denial of access has set in. This win-lose ruling never resolve a conflict but rather re-escalates the conflict. Parties to the conflict must recognize the need to engage in dialogue rather than resorting to the court system for redress. There is the need for a proper stakeholder analysis of actual parties in the conflict to engage them in the negotiation and mediation process. Very often, key stakeholders are not involved in the conflict resolution process but all need to be identified and brought on board in the resolution process.

Conflict researchers

4. One set of issues that is closely related to conflict work is post conflict reconstruction and peace building. These issues are relevant for future research in the Nkonya / Alavanyo area. Conflict management is one process and post conflict reconstruction is needed to consolidate peace. Conflict researchers need to focus on how post conflict reconstruction work is carried out in the Nkonya/Alavanyo area.

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Ghanaian Chronicle, 14th February, 2003

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Ghanaian Times, 4th February, 2006

Ghanaian Times, 15th February, 1997

Ghanaian Times, 15th November, 1997

The Heritage, 6th September, 2006

APPENDIX 1

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE NKONYA – ALAVANYO COMMUNITY
KEY INFORMANTS (D.C.E, ASSEMBLY MEN AND WOMEN, AND MPs)**

SECTION A: Background Information

1a. Age Sex: Male []

Female []

1b. Level of Education:

1bi. No formal education [] Basic education []

1bii. Secondary/Technical/ Vocational [] Teacher /Nurse Training []

1biii. Polytechnic/Diploma [] University/Degree []

1c. Marital Status:

1ci. Single [] Married [] Divorced [] Separated []

1d. Religious Affiliation:

Christian [] Moslem [] Traditionalist [] Others

(Specify).....

1e. Occupation.....

SECTION B: The nature of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict

2a. What is the nature of the Nkonya / Alavanyo conflict?

2b. What are the specific claims of the Nkonya people?

2c. What were the specific claims of the Alavanyo people?

2d. What is actually responsible for the protraction of the conflict and the frequent eruption of violence in Nkonya / Alavanyo area.

SECTION C: The selection process of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

3a. What was the composition of the committee?

3b. What factors influence the selection of the members?

3bi. Were there some objections to the membership of the committee?

3bii. If yes, what were some of the objections?

3c. Was the committee's work voluntary or did the members receive emoluments?

SECTION D: What management procedure was adopted by the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

4a. What efforts at management were made in the past before the mediation committee came into existence?

4b. Mention the challenges that made those mechanisms difficult to attain peace?

4c. What management mechanisms did the committee adopt?

4d. What are the strengths of the management mechanisms adopted?

4e. What are the weaknesses of the management mechanisms adopted?

4f. How effective were the management mechanisms during the management process?

SECTION E: The approach adopted by the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

5a. How did the management committee go about the management mechanisms?

5b. How successful was the approach?

5c. What were the challenges faced by the committee with the approach?

SECTION F: Ways of resolving the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict

6a. Do you believe that the conflict is totally resolved?

6b. If not, what should be done to resolve the conflict totally? Mention specific measures to be taken to effectively resolve the conflict?

6c. Any general comment on the work of the committee?

APPENDIX 2

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR VRCC, WANEP AND CRS
WHICH FACILITATED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE NKONYA –
ALAVANYO CONFLICT**

SECTION A: Background Information

1. Date of Meeting.....
2. Specific Position.....

SECTION B: The nature of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict

- 2a. What is the nature of the Nkonya / Alavanyo conflict?
- 2b. What are the specific claims of the Nkonya people?
- 2c. What were the specific claims of the Alavanyo people?
- 2d. What is actually responsible for the protraction of the conflict and the frequent eruption of violence in Nkonya / Alavanyo area? (Discuss how the issues raised in detail).

SECTION C: The selection process of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

- 3a. What was the composition of the committee?
- 3b. What factors influence the selection of the members?
 - 3bi. Were there some objections to the membership of the committee?
 - 3bii. If yes, what were some of the objections?
- 3c. Was the committee’s work voluntary or did the members receive emoluments?

SECTION D: The management procedure adopted by the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

- 4a. What efforts at management were made in the past before the mediation committee came into existence?
- 4b. Mention the challenges that made those mechanisms difficult to attain peace?
- 4c. What management mechanisms did the committee adopt?
- 4d. What are the strengths of the management mechanisms adopted?
- 4e. What are the weaknesses of the management mechanisms adopted?
- 4f. How effective were the management mechanisms during the management process?

SECTION E: The approach adopted by the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

- 5a. How did the management committee go about the management mechanisms?
- 5b. How successful was the approach?
- 5c. What were the challenges faced by the committee with the approach?

SECTION F: Ways of resolving the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict

- 6a. Do you believe that the conflict is totally resolved?
- 6b. If not, what should be done to resolve the conflict totally? Mention specific measures to be taken to effectively resolve the conflict?
- 6c. Any general comment on the work of the committee?

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE NKONYA – ALAVANYO CONFLICT

MEDIATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

SECTION A: Background Information

1. Date of Interview.....
2. Specific Position.....

SECTION B: The nature of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict

- 2a. What is the nature of the Nkonya / Alavanyo conflict?
- 2b. What are the specific claims of the Nkonya people?
- 2c. What were the specific claims of the Alavanyo people?
- 2d. What is actually responsible for the protraction of the conflict and the frequent eruption of violence in Nkonya / Alavanyo area?

SECTION C: The selection process of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

- 3a. What was the composition of the committee?
- 3b. How did you become a member of the committee?
- 3c. What factors influence the selection of the members?
- 3ci. Were there some objections to the membership of the committee?
- 3cii. If yes, what were some of the objections?
- 3d. Was the committee’s work voluntary or did the members receive emoluments?

3e. What factors motivated you to work in the mediation committee? 2

3f. What was the task assigned to the committee? 3

SECTION D: The management procedure adopted by the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

4a. What efforts at management were made in the past before the mediation committee came into existence?

4b. Mention the challenges that made those mechanisms difficult to attain peace?

4c. What management mechanisms did the committee adopt?

4d. What are the strengths of the management mechanisms adopted?

4e. What are the weaknesses of the management mechanisms adopted?

4f. How effective were the management mechanisms during the management process?

4g. Did you work with some other groups and why?

4h. If yes, what groups were they and why did you choose to work with them?

SECTION E: The approach adopted by the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

5a. How did the management committee go about the management mechanisms?

5b. How did you manage to bring the belligerents to the negotiation table?

5c. Was it difficult working to with the belligerents?

5d. How successful was the approach?

5e. What were the challenges faced by the committee with the approach?

SECTION F: Ways of resolving the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict

6a. In your opinion did the committee achieve its goals?

6b. As a member of the committee are you satisfied with the committees work?

6c. If not, what should be done to resolve the conflict totally? Mention specific measures to be taken to effectively resolve the conflict?

6d. Any general comment on the work of the committee?

APPENDIX 4

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES OF
NKONYA – ALAVANYO TRADITIONAL AREA**

SECTION A: Background Information

1. Date of Interview.....
2. Specific Position.....

SECTION B: The nature of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict

- 2a. What is the nature of the Nkonya / Alavanyo conflict?
- 2b. What are the specific claims of your people?
- 2c. Did your people deserve what they claim to be theirs?

**SECTION C: The selection process of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict
mediation committee**

- 3a. What was the composition of the committee?
- 3b. what factors influence the selection of the members of the committee?
- 3c. Did you have any objections to the composition of the committee?
- 3d. If yes, what were some of the objections?
- 3e. Was the committee’s work voluntary or did the members receive emoluments?

**SECTION D: The management procedure adopted by the Nkonya –
Alavanyo conflict mediation committee**

- 4a. What efforts at management were made in the past before the mediation
committee came into existence?

4b. Nobody is happy with war. Why could your people not co- operate with earlier efforts at management?

4c. why did you choose to appoint a committee?

4d. what management mechanisms did the committee adopt?

4e. What are the strengths of the management mechanisms adopted by the committee?

4f. what are the weaknesses of the management mechanisms adopted?

4g. What is the nature of the agreement between the two groups?

4h. Are your people satisfied with the terms of the agreement?

4i. What convinces you that your people will abide by the terms of the agreement?

4j. In the past some terms of agreement were violated. Do you trust that the opposing faction will abide by the agreements?

4k. What will be the reaction of your people in case of any violation of the terms of the current agreement by the other faction?

4l. What will you do as an opinion leader to ensure that your people respect the terms of the agreement?

4m. In your opinion, is the committee's work satisfactory to your people?

4n. any general comment on the work of the committee?

SECTION E: The approach adopted by the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

5a. How did the management committee go about the management mechanisms?

5b. How successful was the approach in the management process?

5c. What were the challenges faced by the committee with the approach?

SECTION F: Ways of resolving the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict

6a. Do you believe that the conflict is totally resolved?

6b. If not, what should be done to resolve the conflict totally? Mention specific measures to be taken to effectively resolve the conflict?

APPENDIX 5

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE YOUTH AND WOMEN GROUP
LEADERS OF THE NKONYA – ALAVANYO TRADITIONAL AREA**

SECTION A: Background Information

1. Age Sex: Male []

Female []

2. Level of Education:

I. No formal education [] Basic education []

II. Secondary/Technical/ Vocational [] Teacher /Nurse Training []

III. Polytechnic/Diploma [] University/Degree []

3. Marital Status:

I. Single [] Married [] Divorced [] Separated []

4. Religious Affiliation:

I. Christian [] Moslem [] Traditionalist [] Others

(Specify).....

5. Occupation.....

SECTION B. The nature of the Nkonya - Alavanyo conflict

2a. What is actually responsible for the protraction of the conflict and the

frequent eruption of violence in Nkonya-Alavanyo area?

2b. What were the claims of your people?

2c. Did your traditional area really deserve your claim?

SECTION C: The selection process of the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

- 2d. How did you identify the members for the committee?
- 2e. What was the composition of the mediation committee?
- 2f. Did you have any objections to the composition of the committee?
- 2g. If yes, what were some of the objections?

SECTION C: The management mechanisms adopted by the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

- 3a. What efforts at management were made in the past before the mediation committee came into existence?
- 3b. Mention strengths/weaknesses of the various resolution approaches that are being used in the conflict?
- 3c. What did your group actually do? (Ask for their aims, achievements, challenges and prospects for the future).
- 3d. What challenges confront the group from attainment peace?
- 3e. Why did you choose to appoint a committee?
- 3f. Was there any agreement between you and the mediation committee?
- 3g. What challenge did you face in working with the committee for attainment of peace?
- 3h. Did you like the work of the mediation committee?

SECTION D: The approach adopted by the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict mediation committee

- 4a. How did the management committee go about the management mechanisms?
- 4b. How successful was the approach in the management process?
- 4c. What were the challenges faced by the committee with the approach?

SECTION E: Ways of resolving the Nkonya – Alavanyo conflict

- 5a. Do you believe that the conflict is totally resolved?
- 5b. Nobody is happy with war. Why could your people not co- operate with earlier efforts at management?
- 5c. In the past some terms of agreement were violated. Do you trust that the opposing faction will abide by the agreements?
- 5d. What will be the reaction of your people in case of any violation of the terms of the current agreement by the other faction?
- 5e. Any general comment on the work of the committee?