

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE: A CASE
STUDY OF THE JIRAPA TRADITIONAL AREA**

BY

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT
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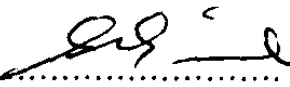
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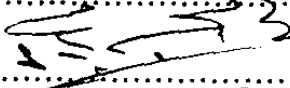
I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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ABSTRACT

The term "development" which used to be equated with economic wellbeing is now given a human face. It is now measured in terms of how the governed or a people within a particular location and or a common identity are satisfied economically, socially and politically. Nevertheless, an often overlooked dimension has been the role traditional authorities play in the governance process.

The role of traditional authorities in local governance in the Jirapa traditional area was the subject of the study. The research design consisted of various methods of data collection, including in-depth face-to-face interviews, document reviews and observation. A purposive sample of local development actors were selected for the study. The population was made up of opinion leaders, settlers, chiefs, fetish priests, identified group leaders, landlords, family heads and local government staff. The instruments were pre-tested for reliability.

The study found that traditional authorities were very important in the promotion of democratic practices. However, traditional authorities were limited in performing these roles because the District Assembly saw them to be important in the traditional setting and not in the work of the District Assembly. Traditional authorities were found to empower people, resolve conflicts and promote sustainable development. They also promote accountability, participation, equity and transparency. It emerged from the study that the District Assembly had not critically assessed these potentials in traditional

authorities and only dwelt on their different ideological perspectives rather than the common goals the two parties were working to achieve.

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DEDICATION

To My Family

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

The word development has attracted many definitions. No matter the definition given to it, the critical theme is socio-economic and political upliftment of a people within a particular geographical location. So many strategies have been proposed as means of attaining development. With the current realisation that development is not economic well-being alone, but has a social and political dimension, the well-being of people has become central to the development discourse. As a result of the human face development has taken, strategies to attain development are also changing. Good governance which has the attributes of participation, equity, accountability, transparency and responsiveness to the needs of people, is now seen as a critical element of development.

One of the strategies used by successive governments in Ghana to achieve good governance is the decentralisation system where power is delegated to government officials for local level administration. Traditional authorities who took care of people at the local level before the decentralisation programme of 1988 have to a greater extent been marginalised since they are only allowed minimal participation in the work of the District Assemblies. As a

result, traditional authorities see local government staff as usurping their powers. Instead of working for the common goal of the local area, these two groups of people, traditional authorities and the district assembly staff, work on parallel lines at the local level.

If governance must be done in a context, then traditional authorities are indispensable. Unfortunately, however, according to Millar and Bonye (2005), traditional institutions, which are structures within which traditional authorities work, have been marginalised socially, economically and politically. Will marginalisation of traditional institutions be advantageous to local governance? How do we deal with traditional institutions to suit our development purpose in local governance? If traditional institutions are a disadvantage, how do we overturn the disadvantage? The reality is that traditional authorities, whether they influence local governance positively or negatively, have a part to play in local governance but this seems to have been ignored by development planners and practitioners.

The word tradition has been given various definitions. The British philosopher, Acton (1952) defined it as “a belief or practice transmitted from generation to another and accepted as authoritative, or referred to without argument”. According to Gyekye (1997), “it may be said from the point of view of a deep and fundamental conception that every society in our modern world is traditional inasmuch as it maintains and cherishes values, practices, outlooks and institutions bequeathed to it by previous generations”. One may therefore say that tradition is the way of life of a people, transferred from generations, which

is produced and reproduced to fit contemporary demands. Traditional authorities, therefore, include such instruments of political organisations such as chiefs, and clan leaders. The structures within which traditional authorities work are referred to as traditional institutions. They include accountability structures and system of dispensing justice.

Democratic decentralisation and participatory governance are considered attributes of good governance and have dominated the development discourse in recent times. This is due to a growing sense of disillusionment with centralised governance. It is now widely believed that modern governance should be spread across many levels and across multiple contents of authority. The move towards decentralised form of governance is to achieve full participation of the hitherto marginalised, through local governance. Citizens' participation in local governance is now seen as an essential pre-condition for effective and good governance (Manor, 1995).

Stoker (1996:19) defined local governance as a process in which governing outcomes depend on the interaction of a complex set of institutions and actors drawn from, but also beyond local government. This definition neatly encapsulates two key features of governance. First, it interprets governance as a process and not an end state, thereby capturing the dynamics of change implicit in governance. Second, it hints on the growth of networks, partnership and other organisations within civil society that are involved in conveying governance. This socio-centric viewpoint emphasises the pervasiveness of networks and

partnerships within civil society that are capable of governing themselves free from state control.

Local government with some local level administrative functions in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) is traced back to 1878 when the British colonial administration introduced Indirect Rule. This was set up to provide a legal basis for chiefs to carry out some limited local government functions (including judicial, legislative and rating activities) within the so called Native Authorities (or chiefdoms) under the direction and control of the British government (Korkor, 1999). In 1988 the government of Ghana introduced the decentralisation policy which was enshrined in PNDC Law 207. The thrust of the policy has been to promote popular participation and ownership of the machinery of government by shifting the process of governance from command to consultative processes, and by devolving power, competence and resource/means to the district level.

Ananthpur (2002) indicates that in the face of modernity, traditional institutions have stood the test of time. Contrary to popular belief, there has not been a displacement of traditional institutions by modern local governance structures, rather there is some evidence to suggest that customary institutions themselves both influence and adapt the existence of formal governance structures.

Despite the extensive research on local governance over many decades, there are enormous gaps in our understanding of the contemporary reality of local governance as seen in the fact that there are many failed projects due to

failure to recognise local/indigenous practices. According to Kendie and Guri (2004), this is a warning that development practitioners need to rethink development practices.

Again, in the mid-1970s when a young doctoral student named Donald Ray was studying rural settlement schemes in Zambia, all of a sudden, one of the schemes ground to a halt when the local chief showed up and told them to stop because he controlled the land and had not been consulted (Ray and Redy, 2003]. Several years later, while conducting a research in Ghana, Dr. Ray was struck by the power of chiefs in Northern Ghana. During the December 31 revolution of 1981, which brought Ft. Lt. Jerry Rawlings to power, he saw examples where, according to him, the grassroots revolutionary cadet was unable to overcome resistance from the chiefs. According to Dr. Ray if chiefs continue to have such influence and if there are still problems in carrying out development projects, one way of aiding the process of development could be to involve chiefs (Ray and Reddy, 2003).

It is well known that one cannot deal with a people aside their culture, that is, people are dealt with within their cultural context. This was what Kendie and Guri (2004:10) meant when they wrote that “the development of a people and their institutions ought to be contextualised, embedded in norms, rules, governance and traditional institutions”. According to the authors, “for development efforts to be sustained over the long haul, strong indigenous institutions are required...locally grounded organisations are indispensable for durable initiatives to improve the quality of life-wherever in the world those

initiatives might be” (Kendie and Guri 2004). If local governance is near the people, then planners tend to come into confrontation with traditional institutions which are better defined in rural areas, what development workers do with these institutions can affect local governance positively or negatively. The development worker can manipulate this to suit his/her purpose. On the contrary however, these institutions within which traditional authorities work have been neglected in the face of so-called modernity. The reality of the matter, however, is that, these institutions are resilient and the earlier development workers accepted these facts the better it is for the development process.

What is happening in Yendi and Wa in the Northern and Upper West Regions of Ghana respectively are clear indications that the people of Ghana are largely traditional. In April 2002, the Ya-Naa (the paramount chief of the Dagomba traditional area) was assassinated. For four years he could not be buried and no new king could be enstooled because the people of Dagbon thought that tradition must be followed. The New Patriotic Party Government formed several committees but all to no avail. Though there are still reports of conflicts, it was the intervention of the traditional council that the Ya-Naa was finally buried.

Again, since the death of the Wa Naa (paramount chief of the Wa traditional area), there have been succession disputes because the people think tradition must be followed. On the other hand, when political figures (example, members of parliament) die, they are replaced without much fanfare. It is easier for a dispute in election result to be resolved than a dispute over the choice of a

traditional leader or a land dispute. It is also easier for the murder of a political figure to be handled than that of a chief. That the murder of a Ya-Naa could influence the voting pattern in Dagbon shows how superior and influential tradition is. Considering the traditional inclinations of Ghanaians, it would be difficult to administer such a people at the local level without giving consideration to the institutions that embody their culture.

Problem statement

In Ghana, chiefs may serve on the institutions of local government which have been made non-partisan by the 1992 constitution. The District Assembly may have 30% of its membership appointed by the President in consultation with traditional authorities and other groups in the district. Chiefs have thus formed a good percentage of presidential nominees on District Assemblies enabling them to be heard in matters of development related to their areas of dominion. Considering the central role chiefs play in national and local development, the National Democratic Congress's government (1992 – 2000) appointed a presidential advisor on chieftaincy affairs, who advised on matters of tradition and state protocol.

Apart from the fact that the arrangements made for traditional authorities in the constitution are not enough, in actualising the provisions made for chiefs to play their roles at the local level, there have been a lot of conflicts militating against local governance. Kendie and Guri (2004) have indicated that there is an increasing erosion of traditional institutions by state structures and this is

creating tensions between these institutions and the formal governmental structures. This problem may be due to the fact that there is inadequate knowledge about existing traditional institutions, their functions and their roles that would provide a clue to making both traditional authorities and formal government officials work in cooperation at the local level. Though scholars are creating awareness, a major task ahead, according to Millar and Bonye (2005) is how to reconstruct and open traditional institutions up for the demands of modern governance.

Research questions

The research questions to guide the study were:

- Who are the traditional authorities in the study area?
- What is the role of traditional authorities in contributing to good governance at the local level?
- What is the level of interaction between traditional authorities and government actors?
- What is the perception of people about traditional authorities in local governance?
- How can traditional authorities contribute to local governance?

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to examine the role of traditional authorities in the Jirapa traditional area with regard to local governance.

The specific objectives of the study

- To identify the various traditional authorities in the study area.
- To examine the role of traditional authorities in promoting good governance.
- To ascertain the level of interaction between traditional authorities and government actors.
- To ascertain the views of people on the importance of traditional authorities in local governance.
- To suggest ways formal local governance can be fitted into the traditional context and vice versa.

Significance of the study

This work looks at the possibility of fitting development plans into our traditional institutions in order to allow full participation of traditional authorities in local governance. Traditional institutions have stood the test of time, while theories of development continue to change portraying the uncertain nature of these theories and hence development plans. This makes them (traditional institutions) reliable. So instead of the views of the so-called advanced nations, this study wants to look at local governance within the local context and not that which is borrowed. The term "local" attached to "governance" suggests that local governance should be in conformity with the inclination of the people concerned. Again the Jirapa traditional area, where the study was conducted has experienced conflicts due to misunderstanding between

officials of local governance and traditional authorities. At present, there is little work on traditional authorities and local governance. It is hoped that this work would be an eye-opener to development practitioners in the area.

Organisation of the study

The write up is divided into six chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction of the study. This includes background issues of governance; development in general, good governance and its rationale and local governance with regards to traditional authorities. The second chapter is devoted to a review of relevant literature; it includes conceptual and theoretical issues on local governance and traditional authorities. The third chapter presents the research methodology, that is, the study area, target population, sampling procedures, data collection techniques, data analysis, other issues concerning data and methods that were employed in the study. Chapter Four analyses data from the field while Chapter Five discusses the results. Chapter Six discusses policy implications, suggestions and conclusion. Answers to the main research questions are also considered.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter examines theories, perspectives, conceptions and models on development, good governance, democracy, traditional authorities and local governance. It ends with a discussion of the conceptual framework adapted for the study.

Meaning of development

The word development has no definite definition because it is perceptual and subjective. No matter its definition, it connotes socio-economic growth of an individual, community, region, or country. In terms of origin and use, the word made its appearance in the period immediately after the Second World War. President Truman of the United States in his inaugural address on 20th January, 1949, had referred to the southern hemisphere as "underdeveloped" in contrast with the northern hemisphere (Bekye, 1998). The twin terms "developed" and "underdeveloped" became standardised economic reference terms to describe, in a rather contrasting manner, the two hemispheres: the "developed North" and the "underdeveloped South".

The post-war use of the term emphasised economic growth. While some scholars maintain that development is a steady increase in GDP (gross domestic product) or GNP (gross national product) of a country, others define development in terms of increase in per capita products of the country in tune with the increase in population. Still others define development in terms of an equitable distribution of wealth and income.

Until the 1960s the term development was often used as synonym of economic growth. However, as a result of the failure and environmental damage wrought by the economic growth paradigm, there is a shift towards alternative development strategies (Kendie, 2002). Now development is no longer considered identical with economic growth. It is taken to mean growth plus progressive changes in certain crucial variables which determine the well-being of the people. According to Bekye (1998), there are qualitative dimensions in the development process which may be missing in the growth of an economy expressed in terms of an increase in the national product or the product per capita. As a result, development planners are no longer impressed by the growth performance of a country which gets reflected in the rise in its GDP or GNP; they now concentrate more directly on the development process. The shift in the development discourse is what has brought into the development discourse “good governance”.

Good governance

Governance is somewhat an elastic concept. It has been interpreted in many different ways so as to encompass many different aspects of social organisation and the institutional framework within which social and economic activities are performed. Governance could therefore be defined as the strategies and plans that a government adopts to achieve the socio-economic upliftment (development) of a society, district, region or nation (World Bank, 1992).

The realisation of the human (social, political and cultural) aspect of development is what has brought good governance into the development discourse. It is being increasingly argued that without an appropriate governance structure, the developing countries would not be able to generate either sustained growth or momentum towards rapid poverty reduction.

In the view of Darko (2003), good governance refers to the sustenance of democratic institutions; that is, an independent and respectable judiciary, the practice of free and fair elections, a representative parliament, a free vibrant and responsible press, and traditional rulers who ably advise government in matters relating to chieftaincy and tradition. In a nutshell, good governance in his view is governance according to the rule of law.

According to the World Bank (1992), good governance is synonymous with sound development management which is central to creating and sustaining an environment which fosters strong and equitable development and it is an essential compliment to good economic policies. Serageldin and Landell-Mills (1991) on the other hand define good governance as encompassing the nature of

fixing of a state's institutional and structural arrangements, decision-making processes, policy formulation, implementing capacity, information flows, effectiveness of leadership and the nature of the relationship between rulers and ruled.

It can be said from the above definitions that while the World Bank does not go further to throw more light on what it means by sound development management, Serageldin and Landell-Mills (1991) go further to explain what is meant by sound economic management. The two definitions therefore compliment each other. It is obvious from the above definitions that good governance involves the strategies, plans and structures which a government puts in place to achieve development.

Accountability, transparency and the rule of law are considered elements of good governance. In short, good governance means adopting democratic ideas as a strategy in development planning. This has come about because there is a growing conviction that an efficient government is a "sine qua non", for sustainable development.

Amoako (2004) is of the view that, there is no question that the world has a right to pass judgment on the state of Africa's governance. But it is Africans themselves who bear the responsibility for action, including the tailoring of their own approaches to their problems. According to him, some experts of good governance suggest that Africa adopts the discipline and firm stance of certain countries in Asia. Some advise Africans to emulate the openness and liberal nature of the western democracies, because in certain

respects, Africans are last in the line of development. He reiterates that, as much as Africa can gain lots of experiences elsewhere, these so-called concerned people should know that Africa has its own experiences, its own best cases, and its own storehouse of culture and governance to draw on. In addition, Africa faces a unique country - by country challenges, each reflecting a history of complex political and cultural dynamics. Thus, according to him, "there is no cookie-cutter solution to development". This statement has a lot of implications for this study. It implies that, governance is contextual, cultural, and unique.

The World Bank (1994) identifies four essential components of good governance-equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment.

If development is to enlarge people's choices, people must enjoy equitable access to opportunities. Equity in access to opportunities demands restructuring of power in many societies and changes along the following lines: Change in distribution of productive assets especially through land reforms. It also demands major restructuring in the distribution of income through progressive fiscal policy aimed at transferring income from the rich to the poor. This means overhauling of credit systems so that the credit requirements of the people are satisfactorily met. Again, it requires ensuring equity in political opportunities through voting rights reforms, financial reform, and other actions aimed at limiting the excessive political power of a feudal minority and undertaking steps to remove social and legal barriers that limit access to women or other minorities to some of the key social and political opportunities.

The next generation deserves the opportunity to enjoy the same well being that we now enjoy and this right makes sustainability an essential component of the human development paradigm. At times, the concept of sustainability is confused with the renewal of natural resources, which is just one aspect of sustainable development. In our present context, it is the sustainability of human opportunities that is of concern. This in turn requires sustaining all forms of capital-human, physical, financial and environmental. Sustainability is a matter of distributional equity, of sharing developmental opportunities between present and future generations and ensuring intergenerational worthwhile life opportunities. Thus, an unjust world is inherently unsustainable. This concept also implies removing the disparities, both political and economic, between various nations of the world.

Governance envisages full empowerment of the people. Empowerment means that people are in a position to exercise choices of their own free will. Empowerment also implies a political democracy in which people can influence decisions about their lives. It requires economic liberalism so that people are free from excessive controls and regulations. It means decentralisation of power so that real governance is brought to the door step of every person. It also means that all the members of a civil society, particularly non-governmental organisations join in the development process.

Participation is an essential ingredient in good governance. Indeed, it has been argued that, participatory development can be seen as a local level reflection of good governance. In order to improve the effectiveness and

efficiency of government, there is the need to involve the people in the decision making process, so as to ensure that the people who are going to be affected by development plans would know the options available to them so that they would indeed participate.

Actualising good governance in Ghana

In a bid to achieve the attributes of good governance in Ghana, the ruling Provincial National Defence Council (PNDC) introduced the decentralisation programme in 1988 where power was devolved to the local areas for local governance. In other words, local governance simply means bringing governance to the door steps of the beneficiaries of governance so that they can participate in decision taking, and its implementation, and enjoy its impact. Decentralisation then has become an inevitable component of local governance since without it there cannot be any meaningful local governance.

Article 240 (Chapter 20) of the constitution of Ghana provides the framework for local governance in Ghana. The key provision is: "Ghana shall have a system of local government and administration which shall as far as practical be decentralised". Essential features of the local government system are given in Article 240 (2) which states that:

- Functions, powers, responsibilities and resources should be transferred from the central government to local government unit.

- Measures should be taken to enhance the capacity of local government authorities to plan, initiate and co-ordinate management and executive policies in respect of matters affecting the local people.
- Local government units should have sound financial basis with adequate and reliable sources of revenue. Local government staff must be controlled by local authorities.

According to Korkor (1999), decentralisation could be viewed in two dimensions, namely functional decentralisation and territorial decentralisation. Functional decentralisation refers to the transfer of authority and responsibility to a territorially defined locality while territorial decentralisation refers to the transfer of resources to a territorially defined locality. The Ghanaian experience could be referred to as a combination of the functional and territorial decentralisation; the transfer of power, authority and resources from the capital to the grassroots level for local administration.

“Power to the people” was the popular slogan, or fundamental political-social agenda which eventually gave birth to the decentralisation policy and establishment of the 110 (now 136) metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies in 1988. “Power to the people” epitomises an expression in the respect of the people, whoever they are, not to be dominated by others in the definition of their own specific ways of life and management of their own affairs (Korkor 1999). Human rights notions like equality, freedom, self-realisation, individual and community progress, dignity, justice, peace and so on are translated into definite social norms which require definite policies and

programmes and institutional framework, a link provided by the decentralisation system to promote them at the community and social levels (Korkor 1999).

The above seem to emphasise that local government officials are just to ensure that structures are put in place within the cultural context of the people concerned so that democratic ideas would be fitted in. It means identifying these institutions, understanding the way they work and making it viable for development planning.

“The type of development being promoted by Ghana government’s decentralisation programme is centred on people, on where people live (locality) and share their lives together and, on satisfying their needs” (Korkor, 1999). The relevant issue drawn from the above is local, if locality is where people live, as indicated by Korkor, then local refers to people’s environment, this environment being made up of everything surrounding a people including their values, norms and practices. This therefore means that, development in Ghana means “locational” development which is not different from traditional area development. This is proven by the fact that all the various districts created by the decentralisation process are based on a people of the same identity. In that case then, it is almost impossible for the government to do without traditional authorities since they are the oldest local government.

This therefore means that one cannot import democratic ideas from a so-called modern society and fit it wholesale into a so-called traditional society. That action would be undemocratic in itself so that at the end of the day in promoting democracy, the society rather gets undemocratic.

Structure of Ghana's decentralisation system

The structure of the decentralisation process (as adopted from Korkor, 1999) in Ghana can be best presented by discussing the key components and the core institutions and processes involved. The key components are: Decision making and policy administration, development planning and control, and fiscal and financial management.

To enhance decision-making and policy administration, which focus on local development considerations and expectations, three main tiers of development administration were set up. The tiers are national, regional and district. The national tier, which includes the cabinet, the various ministries and civil service at that level, is concerned with the development of general policy guidelines and the formulation of long-term perspectives for policy administration. The regional level is basically to co-ordinate and harmonise the policies and development activities of the districts. A Regional Co-ordinating Council with representatives from the districts and the regional level are constituted to serve as a forum for co-ordination of district activities.

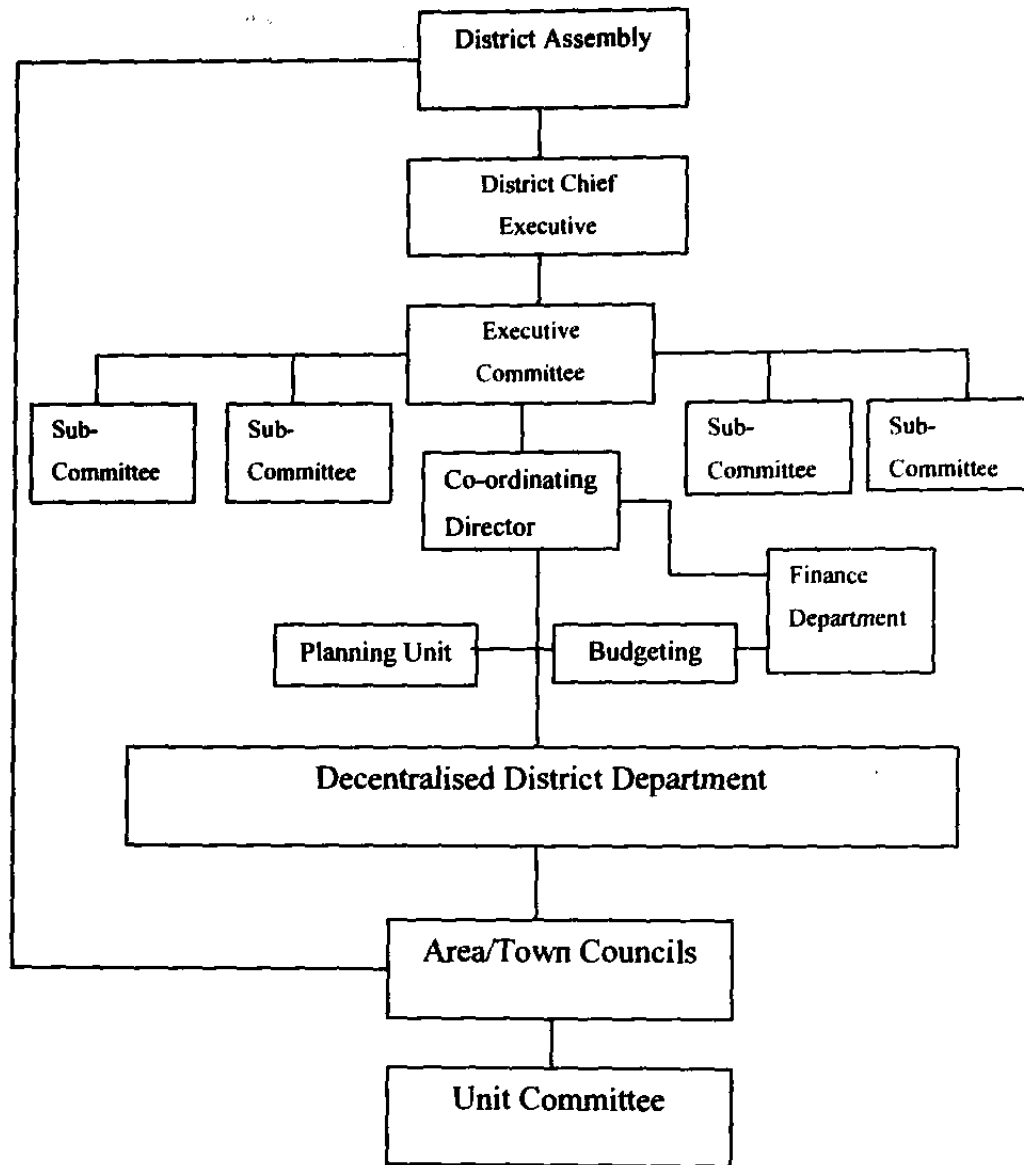


Figure 1: Structure of Ghana's Decentralisation System at the District Level

Source: Korkor, 1999

Figure 1 shows that, the District Assembly is the focus of local decision-making and policy administration. The Assembly is to debate, pass bye-laws and control the general development of their respective districts. To give the technical support for policy decision and implementation at the district level, 11

decentralised departments were established for District Assemblies, 13 for Municipal Assemblies and 16 for Metropolitan Assemblies (Act 462, First Schedule). These departments were to be departments of the Assembly giving technical inputs to decision making and undertaking the implementation of decisions of the Assembly.

The institutional structure shows that the District Assembly is directly linked to the national level and only collaborates with the regional tier for harmonisation of plans and co-ordination of policies. The institutional relationship at the district level goes to reinforce the formulation and implementation of local policy decisions with an established co-ordination outfit and a legislative and administrative linkage with sub-district institutional structures, which were established by LI 1589.

Development planning and control

The structure of the decentralisation process as depicted in Figure 1 consciously set up a defined framework for planning and development control. The National Development Planning Commission Act, 1994 (Act 479), and the National Development Planning (System) Act, 1994 (Act 480), set out the framework for decentralised planning in Ghana. Three major levels of planning were thus established with the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) and the Ministries, Departments and agencies at the national level; the Regional Co-ordinating Councils (RCCs) and sector agencies at the regional level and the District Planning Authorities (DPA) at the district level.

The district planning authority is vested in the District Assembly and it has the authority to initiate and prepare district development plans and settlement structure plans, carry out studies on development planning matter, integrate and ensure that sector and spatial policies, plans and programmes and projects of the district are compatible, and monitor and evaluate development policies, programmes and projects. The District Planning and Co-ordinating Unit technically carries out these functions. The district planning authority is also enjoined to conduct a public hearing on any proposed district development plan and consider views expressed before adoption. This is one area where the influence of civil society organisations may be of prime importance.

The key issue here is that all the activities of the respective sectoral units at the district are to be integrated as part of the district development plan, which is sent to the NDPC through the RCC. The RCC is also to provide the district with the necessary information for plan formulation, co-ordinate the district plans and harmonise them with national development policies and priorities, and monitor and evaluate district development activities. The RCC is also technically supported by the Regional Planning and Co-ordinating Unit (Kokor, 1999).

According to the Civil Service Law, 1993 (PNDCL 327) the national level ministries are to undertake development planning functions which should be based on the formulation of national development goals and sectoral development guidelines as determined by the NDPC. The ministry or sector

agency shall also monitor the implementation of NDPC approved plans and submit a monitoring report.

At the apex of the decentralised planning process is the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC). It is to prescribe and format the content of development plans for the districts, ministries and sector agencies, co-ordinate district development plans and issue approved development policies as directed by the President.

The process indicates that the structure of the planning process focuses on the district level. In a more practical sense, the NDPC provides broad policy guidelines and the districts determine the development aspirations, wishes and programmes of their constituents through the sub-district structures to formulate "coherent and comprehensive" district plans. This process thus enhances "planning from the bottom", which the decentralised structure seeks to establish.

The implementation of the plan and the realisation of the aspirations and wishes of the people however depend on the resources available and the ability to mobilise each resource. The structure of decentralisation in Ghana thus took into consideration decentralisation of resource mobilisation and disbursement.

Fiscal and financial management

This involves the ability to plan for resources (budgeting), the ability to mobilise these resources and establish control over these sources and the ability to spend and account for it. To a very large extent the structure of the

decentralisation process facilitates these tenets of decentralised fiscal and financial management.

The Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462) Section 92 enjoins the districts to prepare an annual budget, which includes the aggregate revenue and expenditure of all the departments and organisations under the District Assembly and the District Co-ordinating Directorate, including the annual development plans and programmes under the Assembly. This implies that the District Assemblies have the opportunity to transform their own development plans into annual financial plans for implementation. To have relative control over the implementation of plans and running of the budgets, the District Assemblies were given varied fiscal authority and expanded funding sources. The Assembly could “levy sufficient rates” to provide for part of its total expenditure. The district also had the right to fix fees and collect same for certain specified activities under the fifth and sixth schedules of Act 462. The district has the opportunity to establish their own revenue collection offices and employ collectors for the administration.

To supplement this internally raised revenue, Article 252 of the Constitution established the District Assemblies Common Fund with the implementation modalities provided by the District Assemblies Common Fund Act, 1993 (Act 455). The Act stipulates that not less than five percent of the total revenues from foreign grants and levies be lodged in the fund annually for disbursement to the District Assemblies for development projects. The districts also have decentralised finance departments that are responsible for spending

and controlling of district finance. The districts in the decentralised structure thus have all the three necessary financial authority to plan, raise and spend money.

The structure of the decentralisation process as presented in Figure 1 shows that, to a large extent, the necessary institutional framework has been set for the management of the country. Local government now has the responsibility of designing strategies that meets the aspirations of the people. However, a critical look at the practicality of the decentralisation system reveals that despite the requirement to include traditional authorities, there is no practical provision for them to play a role in local governance. The reality of the matter is that traditional authorities also operate at the local level, and the people have confidence in them since they have met their needs since time immemorial.

Traditional institutions

Al-Yasha (2003) uses the term traditional institutions to denote indigenous forms of cultural identity formation and nation-state governance. He contrasts this with the “modern” African nation state which retains vestiges of European colonialism in land distribution, amalgamated cultural / linguistic groupings and political structure. Fleishchaker (1994: 45) defines tradition as “a set of customs passed down over generations, and a set of beliefs and values endorsing those customs”. Kendie, et al (2004) use the term to refer to, for instance, chieftaincy rule, customary law, healing or religious practices. The

term traditional, consequently, bears the connotation of social arrangements, strongly rooted in a locality.

The point of interest is how the various writers agree on the meaning of the word “tradition”. To them, tradition does not mean uncontaminated norms, values and beliefs but rather practices of both past and present. This could mean past beliefs, values and norms that have evolved with time but currently cherished by the people. Tradition is continuously produced and reproduced by several layers of influences and through struggle over the years. Within a locality, there are practices and discourses which may be inherited from the past but which are influenced by various exogenous forces and given meaning by “locals” according to the prevailing social, political and local conditions and power struggles. In this case agitation to include traditional institutions in local governance does not imply going back to one’s roots but rather taking both the values of the past and present of the people and adopting those that can push good governance forward for development purpose.

How democratic are traditional institutions? The three sided view

Democracy is a system of government based on the consent of the people and one in which the mandate to rule is subject to periodic renewal. Modern democratic governance also entails citizens’ representation (Centre for Democratic Development, 2001).

Increasingly, African scholars insist that whereas Western ideas about democracy are specifically rooted in the notion of political and social rights for

individuals, the reality in Africa is still one in which “collectives” or ethnic “groups” rather than individuals are demanding social justice. In this context, what matters is respect for African culture and languages and ethnic concerns in the distribution of the country’s or world’s resources.

Tangwa (1996) argues that traditional African leadership and authority systems might be understood as “the harmonious marriage between autocratic dictatorship and popular democracy”. Specified formal practices positioned the citizenry to critique, authorise and sanction their rulers; their continued reign and the selection and ascension of their successors. Ritzenthaler and Ritzenthaler (1964) describe the king making procedure of the Bafut kingdom of Cameroon as the exercise of democracy in traditional institutions where, when the new ruler has been installed, he is presented to the Bafut population for “stoning”. The ceremonial stoning may consist of tiny, harmless pebbles in the case of an approved and respected new leader, or of large, injurious rocks hurled so as to maim, chase or kill the undesired incumbent. In either case, it reminds the new ruler what could happen if his rule becomes illegitimate.

There are special festivals such as “Apor” celebrated in Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana during which the chief can be publicly criticised, even insulted by ordinary citizens. A similar opportunity is afforded in the Ga traditional system during the annual Homowo festival. More importantly, citizens have a constitutional right to destool their chiefs if they are found to have committed serious crimes or broken a taboo. Crimes such as murder, and theft; misdemeanours such as taking someone’s wife, or in the old days not producing

a child, were automatic grounds for destoolment in the Akan political system. Chiefs could also jeopardise their stools if they were seen as violating their oath – not consulting on decisions, not being available to the people, being despotic and so on (Centre for Democratic Development, 2001).

Among the people of the Upper West Region, in order to ensure transparency, a chief goes no where alone, there is always a witness. Again, there are customary codes that underline the limited power of the chief and the power relations between the chief and his subjects such as the following: “If a chief reprimands you for doing something, he does so by the authority of the citizens”; “There are no bad chiefs, only bad advisors”; “It is when the state kills you that the chief kills you”. One gold-embossed emblem on top of the staff held by the chief’s spokesman during public ceremonies depicts an egg in the hand; the symbol likens power to an egg. Held too firmly, the egg breaks; held too loosely, the egg falls out of the hand (CDD, 2001).

Again, Dake (1996) holds the view that traditional African authorities are autocratic and that has been transferred to modern democratic ideas, making governance undemocratic. Ajei (2001), in an attempt to prove the existence of democracy in African traditional systems, outlines the political system of Ashanti. Ajei thinks the Ashanti traditional system is democratic while for Dake, traditional African institutions are autocratic. Appiah (1993), on the other hand, contends that the democratic aspects of traditional leadership were weakened by the colonial processes, and queens and kings did not generally allow the lay citizens’ interests to take priority in national response to colonial

invasion. Thus, if the king did not suffer much during colonialism, a number of his subjects clearly did.

The role of traditional authorities in democratic governance in Africa

Some African scholars contend that there were traditional forms of democracy, autocracy, monarchy and oligarchy in state-organised societies as well as stateless societies in pre-colonial times. They assert that the African political systems functioned, not because of their form, but because they fulfilled felt needs in the societies. The current opportunities for democratic participation and good governance in most African states seem unprecedented, yet there have been many failures. A significant part of this lies in the overlooked traditional relationship between the contemporary African state and traditional authority (Skinner, 1970). By implication, traditional institutions are crucial in achieving the purpose of local governance.

To Skinner (1970), the expected benefits of decentralisation are clearly depended on whether local government and, more broadly speaking, local institutions are up to the job. He indicates that in the context of governance of a modern state, an important issue is the extent to which the chiefs and other traditional authorities may be involved in local governance. For instance, in Swaziland, chiefs are responsible for all local government functions including crime prevention and taxes, and states are challenged by the traditional authority because the institution of chieftaincy is the centre of local political life in many areas in that country. According to Assimeng (2001: 93):

The role of traditional leaders in local government in Ghana has undergone significant changes since colonial days. The 1992 constitution and the various legislation on local government gives the traditional authorities minimal responsibilities with little or no recognition of their leadership in central and local government decision making processes. It is our responsibility as local government planners to establish or re-establish legitimate structures that will provide for the empowerment of traditional leaders to assume greater responsibility for local development and provide checks and balances for good governance.

Once upon a time, the traditional ruler was supreme at the level of local governance. He combined the positions of military leader, spiritual head, administrator of justice and the over lord of peace and order in his domain. Now, however, colonialism, Christian and Islamic evangelisation, formal western education and economy, have all worked to whittle down the powers and fame once wielded by traditional rulers. Even then, the chief remains the primary focus of local level loyalty and cultural expression. In the modern era of socio - economic development, chiefs are expected to create and sustain favourable environments for such development. In Kyeremeh's (1995) view, since the social, political, economic and security ramifications of the institutions are wide-ranging, it is unwise to leave them without some monitoring, collaboration, and a show of interest by the government. This implies that in several aspects of life, traditional authorities are relevant to the democratic move.

A past Minister for Local Government and Rural Development in Ghana, Honourable Kwadwo Baah Wiredu, in a keynote address to chiefs saw traditional authorities as being positively correlated to local governance. He saw chiefs as very necessary element of local governance who have very important roles to play (Assimeng 2001). Odenehu Oduro Numapau, the Paramount chief of Essumja in Asante, Ghana, in the same publication indicates that before colonisation, chieftaincy was the fulcrum of society in Ghana. It gave unity and direction to the people and mobilised them for common purposes.

In Nabilla's (2001) view, based on their individual expertise and experiences chiefs continue to contribute in various non-partisan positions to the development of the nation. The deliberations at the various Houses of Chiefs, which are held in an open and transparent manner with recording of minutes, can all be a useful tool for good governance if only they are fed into the government machinery. This goes to support Assimeng's suggestion that since chiefs are an embodiment of tradition, norms and values of the people they represent, their activities should be very crucial for local governance planning.

Joining the debate, Miller (1970: 190), in a study conducted into the role of traditional authorities in Tanzanian development, warned about the need to harmonise the role of Tanzanian traditional rulers in development and governance so as to avoid conflict. He wrote that:

Viewed from the higher areas of government in the new nations, the rural leader is an insignificant individual who goes about managing his local affairs and carrying out-with varying degrees of success-the

policies and hopes of the government. Viewed from below, from the inner recesses of the village, the leader is a man of authority, a man who has used wealth, hereditary or personal magnetism to gain a position of influence.

He argued that rural leaders were the key to development planning in the areas, and worried that “any lack of initiative... would entrench the status quo and doom the modernisation plans before they begin it”. In Miller’s opinion, peace and order are essential prerequisites for meaningful socio-economic development; so also are clarities in the customs and practices which are embedded in the institutions. Thus a “hands-off” policy on the institutions is not entirely possible. Nor is it possible, or even worthwhile, to “return” the institution to the pristine pomp and power of pre-colonial days.

Therefore chiefs can play a role of clarifying customs and norms to government, where practices that offer opportunities for development would be sifted from those that do not. In Assimeng’s (2001) view, even if these institutions are not good, leaving them untouched is more dangerous. Kendie et al (2004) are of the view that traditional institutions, as long as they are not immoral can be built upon. The authors cite the philosophy of allegiance, for example, as a value that can be a premise for modern democratic ideas.

Chieftaincy and resource management

Traditional authorities play indispensable roles in the economic activities of their people, thus ensuring that sustenance and reproduction continue

unhindered. Several of the conflicts in Ghana are centred on claims to economic resources. The issue surrounding land ownership and use conflicts are well known and have often resulted in widespread conflicts sometimes engulfing whole families and ethnic groups.

One of the major areas of resource management by traditional institutions is in land administration and acquisition. There are various views concerning traditional institutions and land administration. Myrdal (1974) asserts that there are many inhibitions and obstacles in the path of agricultural productivity, but the main obstacles are undoubtedly rooted in systems of land ownership and tenancy. In the view of Elkan (1959), forms of traditional tenure no matter their differences resist the opportunities for obtaining and parting with land. In Mifsuf's (1967) view, customary tenure is not simply a type of land holding but also has wide ramifications for the social systems, way of life and beliefs of the people. These beliefs have serious implications for rural development. Land is valued not for itself alone, its possession is a form of security, a symbol of prestige and a source of poverty (Gadalla, 1970).

Despite the inhibiting nature of land tenure in Ghana, in Ware's (1975) view, traditional authorities have been steadfast in their defence of existing tenurial systems within each community. Traditional systems of land tenure guarantee each member, the right access to land for farming and housing. It also accepts and recognises the need of the general public and through institutionalised government, land is made available for projects.

The views presented above on traditional institutions and land administration as usual represent contrasting views on traditional institutions. While some think the traditional system of land acquisition limits development, others like Ware (1975) think that traditional authorities have been steadfast in their defence of the land and should rather be applauded.

Kyeremeh (1995) has indicated that traditional authorities have a mobilisation power. This view is also supported by Assimeng (2001: 23) when he says, "as force for mobilisation of our people for productive efforts, chiefs should be in the fore front of our development process. Traditional authorities are the focus of mobilisation and participation in decision making at the grassroots level".

Millar (2002: 26), in a study conducted in the Wenchi traditional area, states that:

Indigenous structures and systems exist for natural resource management. It was important to also note that spirituality is a part of this structure and is evoked to instil fear or punish those who are considered to have performed acts contrary to the dictates of sound environmental management.

It can be perfectly understood that Millar sees in traditional institutions the potential of environmental management. Again, the issue of spirituality can also be used to manage crises. According to him, it all depends on how "change agents" are able to reconstruct this rich culture and take advantage of its strong points of entry for their development activities.

Kendie et al (2004) found out that apart from certain weaknesses associated with traditional institutions there are good aspects that have the potential to move good governance. They cite the function of the asafo groups as mobilising agents, serving as security guards and also being there for the general protection of the community.

Role of chiefs in conflict resolution

Chiefs have been most active in dispute resolution both in Africa generally and in Ghana particularly where parties, disenchanted with the procedures of the formal courts, have clamoured for traditional modes of resolution. Indeed dispute resolution would have been impossible without the active involvement of chiefs in all parts of Ghana.

According to Seyonjo (2002), even though excluding chiefs from local government is consistent with theories of political development in downplaying ascriptive rights, the implication is great since there are still areas in Africa where no development is possible unless it is routed through and backed by traditional leaders.

Theoretical framework-modernisation theory

Modernisation Theory places emphasis on values and norms that operate in “modern” and “traditional” societies. The theory as adapted from Webster (1990) sees traditional institutions as primitive that must be replaced by modern ones for society to move forward. It argues that traditional institutions do not

promote democratic ideas (Bauer, 1976:41). In the sense, for example, that in a traditional society:

- The value of traditionalism itself is dominant; that is, people are oriented to the past and they lack the cultural ability to adjust to new circumstances;
- The kinship system is the desired reference point for all social practices, being the primary means through which economic, political, and legal relationships are controlled.
- One's position in society is determined by the kinship system and hence is ascribed, not achieved - that is, it is a reflection of the status of the family, clan or tribe into which one is born; one's position only changes as one moves up the family hierarchy.
- Status is then not earned or achieved but conferred by virtue of the kin relationships. Members of the traditional society have an emotional superstitious and fatalistic approach to the world.

McClelland (1961) and Hagen (1962) claim that the level of achievement in a society is expressed in terms of the level of innovation and entrepreneurship which to them are at exceptionally low level in a traditional institution. Lerner (1964: 50) also asserts that "traditional society is non-participant – it deploys people by kinship into communities isolated from each and from a centre... interdependence, people's horizons are limited by locale".

Three important points are worthy of note in the above assertions:

- Values, norms and beliefs of a people determine the sort of society they create:
- Traditionalism means underdevelopment, while modernism means development
- Development occurs only along western lines.

Modernisation theorists have been criticised especially by a group of people who espoused the radical Marxist theory. It is argued that the principal terms this theory uses (tradition verses modernity) to group society is vague, considering the heterogeneous nature of society. Again, according to critics, modernity and tradition are not mutually exclusive as suggested by this theory. The claim of modernisation theory is that, as societies develop, the traditional world gets squeezed out by the forces of modern values and attitudes. Yet, there is a wealth of evidence to indicate that economic growth and the advent of modernity do not necessarily mean the abandonment of so-called "traditional" patterns of actions, values and beliefs (Webster, 1990). For example, Gusfield (1973) points out that the traditional religion of Islam has been reinforced by the diffusion of modern technology, particularly transport that makes the visit to the shrine of Mecca a much more practicable proposition for so many people than has been true in the past. In Java, the Organisation of Muslim Movement not only values austerity but also insists on the duty of making the pilgrimage to Mecca. "It was that duty, a costly one, which drove the members of this sect to thrift" (Webster, 1990: 25). In this case then, in order to sustain traditional religious practices, the Muslims engage in activities typically associated with

capitalist investment and economic growth similar in character to those identified by Weber (1971) in his study of protestant ethics.

There is also evidence to show that in “modern” industrial society, “traditional values” not only persist but actually play an important role in keeping it going. Frank (1969: 26) shows how the norm of ascription, for example, plays an important role in allocating reward in Japanese industry.

Penn (1986) and Willmount and Young (1971) have shown that while it would be foolish to suggest that urbanisation does not change kinship relationships, it would be wrong to claim that it completely undermines kinship relationships.

According to critics of modernisation theory, people may be able to use their traditional roles and expectations (such as those associated with kingship) as a resource that can be drawn upon to serve their social and material needs. This has been demonstrated by De Wilde (1967) and Ortiz (1970), who examined the impact of a Mexican government development scheme on a northern community, Tzintzuntzan, whose villagers produced pottery. The government wanted potters to develop higher quality items for sale in a wider market, but after the failure of the initial attempt to do this through the installation of more sophisticated techniques, the project was abandoned. Subsequently, however, pottery production and sales increased dramatically. Ortiz argues that this was due to growth of local urban market for domestic cooking pots and the construction of a much better road for the potters to take their wares to town. What is of interest here is that, this expanded business

enterprise relied on the traditional personal ties of friends, kinship and immediate family; so rather than being an obstacle to commercial growth, these ties were harnessed in such a way as to promote entrepreneurial productivity and success. Commenting on this survey, Long (1977: 50), in an excellent summary of similar case studies posits:

It is difficult in the light of this example to accept the view that peasant culture is a major brake on change. On the contrary, once a viable set of opportunities presented themselves, the peasants showed willingness to increase production and become involved in the market economy.

Modern political ideas of democracy in Europe emanated from traditional European institutions with their system of thought, organisation and belief. Through constant re-examination and refinement of received European traditions by philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, John Locke, Adam Smith, Hobbes, Karl Marx, Engels, John Stuart Mills, and Machiavelli among others, modern ideas of democracy, justice, and efficient governance were devised.

The development of democratic political institutions in Britain, most probably the oldest democracy, began with the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215. But it took many centuries for that institution to evolve into present forms, an evolution process that was guided by the compass of a historical and cultural circumstance. The process had to jump or knock down such hurdles as autocracies, military dictatorships, and claims to divine right of power, enlightened or benevolent ideas, positions, strong and unyielding monarchical systems and other impediments to the establishment of democracy.

It is perfectly understood from Donnelly (1984) that post colonial leaders did not understand this fact. They adopted colonial institutions wholesale irrespective of the fact that the traditional institutions had alternative approaches to governance. These alternative approaches could form an intellectual reference point for the transition to new system. These institutions represented indigenous evolution systems of governance which people related to socially, emotionally and intellectually. They were legitimate by nature in terms of history, experience and the fact that they were indigenously conceived and had a force of wisdom of the people. To Seyonjo (2002), the proper approach to governance would have been to borrow ideas from the western political systems, modify the political system with their assistance, and in partnership with indigenous traditional leaders come up with a hybrid of local legitimacy.

In a nutshell it can be deduced that instead of taking all western ideas of governance, those ideas should rather be of assistance in shaping traditional institutions to fit developmental purpose of the nation concerned. In which case development planning would be based on the people, their norms, values, and beliefs, which is a true reflection of democracy.

Kendie et al (2004) acknowledge that there are great strengths as much as there are weaknesses in traditional institutions and that there exist great potentials in them for development. They amply demonstrate the ability of traditional authorities in supplementing government's efforts at elimination and control of child-streetism, support for education, successful fund raising, scholarship grants for needy children, provision of educational infrastructure,

social services (including village electrification), support for health delivery and funerals and cultural development and economic assistance to townsfolk in the form of capital mobilisation and provision of credit.

Conceptual framework

It can be concluded that while development is the goal of every country, good governance with its democratic attributes is the strategy universally accepted to achieve development. Local governance in this context could mean adopting relevant methods to achieve local level development. According to Fekade (1994:47), Local refers to,

Spatial delineation of a limited size in which its inhabitants share problems, threats/constraints and resources. The inhabitants are routinely interlinked by common identity (language, history, culture, physical patterns such as settlements, roads, shared service centres and commonly felt needs and appreciation of problems and mobilisable potentials.

Thus "local" has a cultural and geographical connotation. Local governance therefore means governance of a people in a particular place and of a certain culture. If governance is the strategy to attain development, then local governance can mean strategies used to administer a people of a particular place and of a certain culture in order to attain development. Traditional institutions then become very necessary in the strategies adopted to achieve local level development. This is because, development strategies must be situated in a context. It is therefore very necessary that traditional authorities and government

/ modern development actors work together to achieve local level development instead of the one-sided view of the modernisation theory.

Model of local level development

Local level development is noted by Fekade (1994:46) as emanating from the following attributes:

- Community/Locality.**
- Meeting of the basic needs of the population.**
- Environmental sustainability.**
- Access to resources and opportunity to employ one's energy.**
- Accommodating external processes.**

In his view, the intervention of external agents in local level development is very relevant if it is mediated through local institutions. The local institutions facilitate the organisation of the local people to undertake active part in the development process. In this direction, it is the local institutions that control and define the terms under which external agents operate. External agents then become partners in development, playing supportive roles and not substantive roles (Fekade, 1994:49). This means external agents are only to offer advice and suggestions but it is local institutions that determine the pace of development.

Fekade's model fits into this study since it expresses the relevance of the interaction between external agents and local agents which may be likened to government actors and traditional authorities respectively in this study.

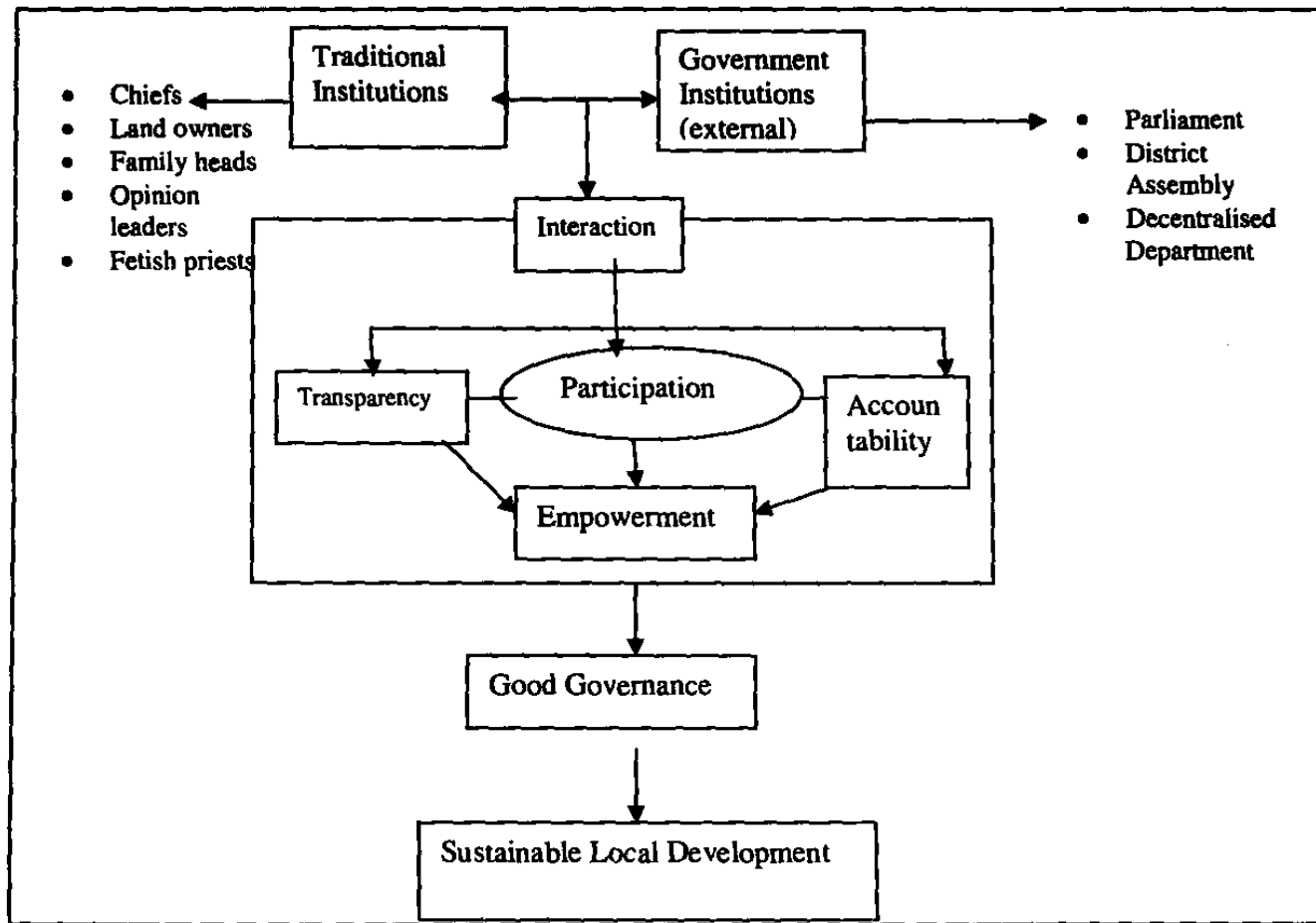


Figure 2: Determining Factors for Sustainable Local Level Development

Source: Adapted From Fekade 1994:48

External actors are very important in promoting good governance at the local level if they mediate through traditional authorities. Traditional authorities and external actors, as depicted in figure 3, facilitate organisation of the local people to take active part in the development process. Government officials (external agents) then become partners in development playing supportive roles and not substantive roles (Fekade, 1994:49). This means government officials are only to offer advice and suggestions but it is local people that determine the pace of development.

As a force for mobilising people for productive efforts, traditional authorities are conduits through which the purpose to empower people at the local level can be achieved. Traditional authorities and external actors as shown in figure 2 are partners in development. This realisation should lead to collaboration between the two. Government officials are only to offer advice and suggestions but it is the local people that should determine the pace of development. Interaction between traditional and government authorities leads to efficient governance since both parties learn from each other; while traditional authorities learn more about democracy, government officials learn about the people. As a result there is a proper fitting of modern democratic ideas into the traditional (local) context.

In their interaction, local government (traditional authorities and government officials) should as much as possible be transparent and accountable to the people. In this case, people are put in the knowledge of choices available and state of affairs, with feedbacks in all cases, regarding legitimate concerns

and explanations on all matters, that is, knowledge for understanding and knowledge for action.

Empowering the people means the flow of power from the District Assembly, through traditional authorities to the people. Local people may exercise choices of their own free will, decide on what they need and not government officials providing what they think the people need. As a result, people are involved in the choice of what development ventures to undertake, plan and implement. In short, government officials at the local level are to help establish structures that would provide for the empowerment of traditional leaders to assume greater responsibility for local development (Kyeremeh, 1995).

Through local participation, community members express their needs, problems and priorities without which development programmes and projects are likely to fail (Adarkwa and Diaw, 1999:2). While participation has been recognised as essential in the development process in Ghana, this is not likely to happen without the following conditions (Kendie, 1997:15):

- Real commitment of politicians and administrators to allow communities to control critical decision-making issues such as needs assessment.
- Strong civil society organisations able to mobilise the people to demand both participation and the rendering of quality services by state institutions.
- Open political structures at all levels.
- Participation not being only instrumental but also an end in itself.

The inter-play of these factors is to create conditions that will enable each human being to realise his/her potential for social, economic and political fulfilment (*empowerment*) in a manner that will lead to the achievement of sustainable development.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION AND ISSUES FROM THE FIELD

Introduction

This chapter describes the study area, data and sources as well as the methods employed in the data collection. It also covers the structure of questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions and problems encountered in the field and how they were solved.

Study area

The Jirapa-Lambussie district (as shown in figure 3) is located in the North-Western corner of the Upper West Region of Ghana. It is the fourth largest district in the region and covers an area of 1, 667. 6 sq. km, constituting about 9% of the region's total land area of 18, 476sq km. The district was created from the former Lawra District Council of the Upper West by L.I 1436 of 1988 as part of Ghana's decentralisation programme initiated in the same year. It is bordered to the South by the Nadowli District, to the North by Ghana's boundary with Burkina Faso, to the West by Lawra District and to the East by the Sissala District (McCoy, 1988).

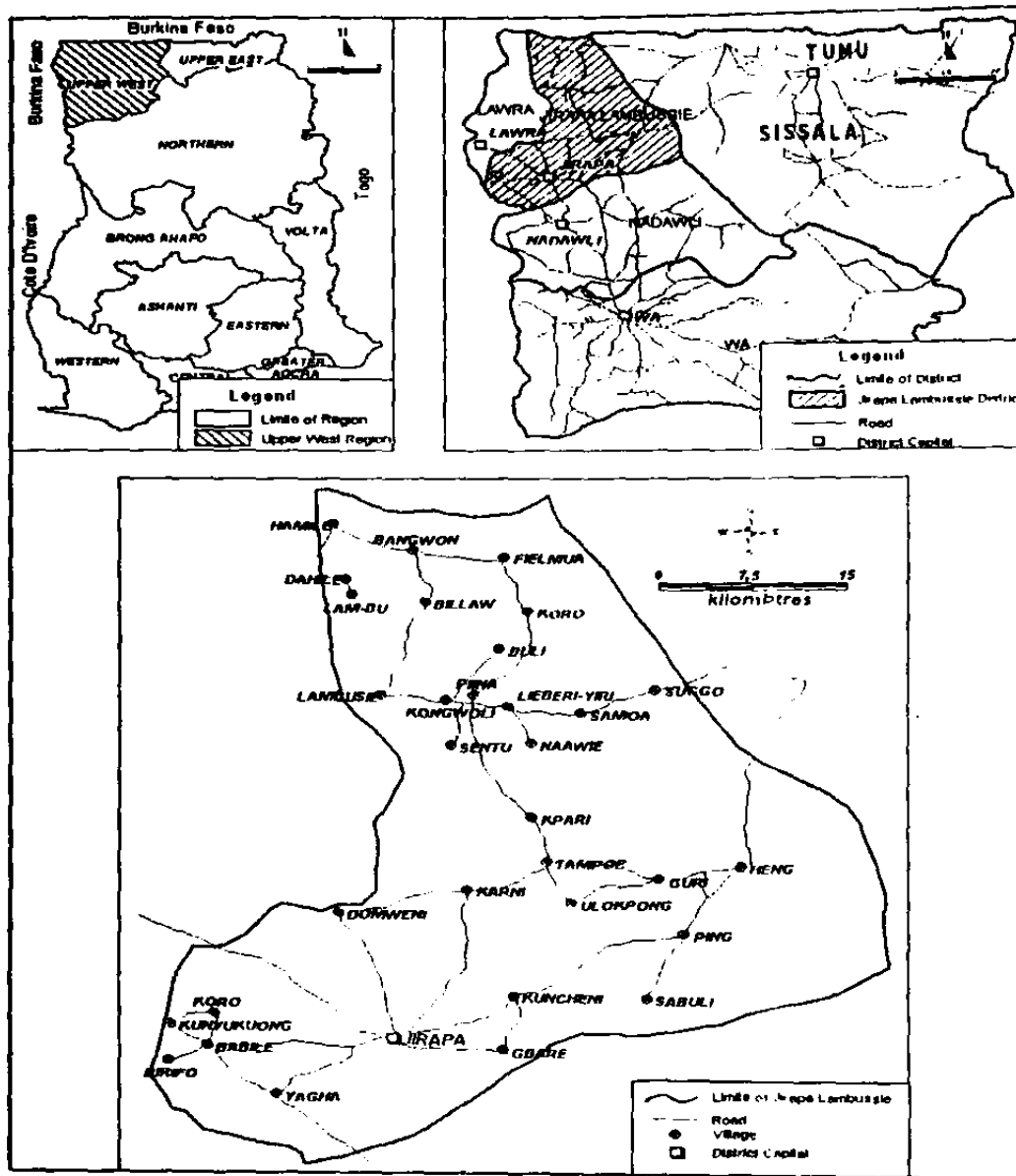


Figure 3: Map of the Jirapa-Lambussie District

Source: Geographic Information System Unit, University of Cape Coast, 2006

Religion

People who profess to be Christians dominate the population in the district. They constitute about 70% even though the actual number that practices the religion may be a little lower. The major Christian denominations in the district include the Roman Catholic, Baptist, Pentecost, Deeper Life, Assemblies of God and Seventh-Day Adventist Church. The rest of the people practice traditional religion and Islam.

Human settlement and traditional political structure

The total population of the area as at the 2000 census is 8,060, consisting of 3,637 females and 4,423 males distributed among 188 settlements of varying sizes. Most of the communities are small and dispersed in rural areas with population sizes ranging between 500 and 1000 people (Ghana Statistical Service, 2002). The spatial distribution of settlement (as shown in figure 1) reveals a dispersed type of population distribution. This is as a result of the settlement pattern, which in itself has to do with land ownership. There is only one town in the district, that is, Jirapa; smaller towns include Han, Piina, Lambussie, Ullo and Tizza.

At the helm of affairs in the traditional setting is the paramount chief followed by divisional chiefs, sub-divisional chiefs and then sub-chiefs. Family heads perform roles similar to chiefs at the family level. At every level of the traditional structure are land lords and fetish priests.

Justification for choice of study area

It is a known fact that people do not easily give out information regarding their traditions unless the person is known and trusted. The main reason for the choice of the Jirapa-Lambusie District as the study area is the fact of comparatively easy access to data because the researcher/student is a native of the place and speaks the language of the people.

Target population

The study required the views of local actors and as such, they constituted the target population. This refers to the District Chief Executive, the Member of Parliament, Traditional Authorities, Presiding Member of the District Assembly, Heads of Decentralised Departments, Assembly Members, Unit Committee Members, Opinion Leaders, Executives of Political Parties, Non-overnmental Organisations and the people who are the ultimate beneficiaries of governance outputs.

The target population for data collection was categorised into three; government officials, traditional authorities and settlers of the area whose opinions were supposed to confirm data from the traditional authorities. The government officials constituted the District Chief Executive, the Member of Parliament, Presiding Member, Heads of Decentralised Departments and Area Council Chair Persons, Executives of Political Parties, and Non-Governmental Organisations. The second group constituted traditional authorities: chiefs, land custodians, women leaders, youth leaders, fetish priests, landlords, opinion

leaders and so on. The third group was made up of settlers, a group of people considered neutral in the study because they do not hail from the study area but have lived with people and known them for long.

Data and sources

Data was sought from both secondary and primary sources.

Secondary sources of data

Secondary data sources for this study were reports, minutes, journals and proceedings of workshops by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, District Assemblies, Non – Governmental Organisations and Decentralised Departments. Related works of scholars in the field were also a source of secondary data.

Primary sources of data

Primary data sources for this study were the District Chief Executive, the Member of Parliament, Traditional Authorities, Presiding Member, Heads of Decentralised Departments, Assembly Members, Opinion Leaders, Executives of Political Parties, Non-Governmental Organisations and settlers of the Jirapa traditional area.

Sampling techniques and sample size

Generally the purposive sampling procedure was employed. The purposive sampling procedure was the best option for all categories of the target population. However, in cases where the researcher had to choose instead of targeting a whole population (e.g. 8 assemblymen out of 30), the lottery method was employed in the selection of respondents. The resident population of local development actors was 638. Researcher/student ensured that at least half of the total population of each target group was interviewed. However, all persons in target groups that were considered critical to the study were interviewed. For example, while landlords were chosen based on the eight divisional areas of the traditional area, all heads of departments, divisional and sub-divisional chiefs were interviewed because of their unique experiences and the position they occupy.

Instruments used

For the collection of primary data, four different sets of questionnaires were developed; one each for government officials, opinion leaders, settlers and chiefs. The questionnaires for both settlers and opinion leaders covered both government actors and traditional authorities and their roles in local level development. The questionnaire for chiefs covered the role of chiefs and their interaction with government actors in promoting good governance. The questionnaires for government officials sought to find out their views on traditional authorities in facilitating good governance in the Jirapa traditional

area. The questionnaires were mostly open ended. The questionnaire for opinion leaders and settlers comprised seven sections. Section A assessed the knowledge and interaction level of traditional authorities and government actors, Section B covered the understanding and importance of traditional authorities in local governance; Section C considered the role of traditional authorities at the local level and how these roles facilitate or limit the work of government officials / development actors, including areas of collaboration. Section D considered the role of traditional authorities in promoting democratic elements at the local level. Section E sought for recommendations and suggestions while Section F considered the background characteristics of respondents.

The questionnaire for chiefs and government officials comprised seven sections. Section A. assessed the knowledge and interaction level of traditional authorities and government actors, Section B. covered the understanding and importance of traditional authorities in local governance, Section C. considered the role of traditional authorities and government actors at the local level and how these two compliment each other's work. Section D. covered the role of traditional authorities in promoting democratic elements at the local level. Section E. sought recommendations and suggestions while Section F. considered the background characteristics of respondents.

Structured interviews were used as a data collection tool for the paramount chief and elders, fetish priests and identified group leaders. Focus group discussions remained the best tool of data collection for land lords.

Family heads, women leaders, and some sub-chiefs were also interviewed by this method.

Focus group discussion is a data collection technique widely used in Africa. Focus groups are recruited to discuss a particular topic. The purpose of the traditional governance focus group discussion was to consider the roles traditional authorities play in societies today and the necessary changes and compromises underway to incorporate democratic principles in a quest to modernise and improve governance and make it more participatory for all citizens. However one of the major problems with focus group discussion is that it may not be representative due to the fact that some people, in an attempt to gain favour from traditional leaders, may tow a certain line, which may not be the actual case. Again in group discussions, some people for several reasons may not air their views while others may also dominate the whole session. For example, women among men may not be able to say certain things. However in a situation like this where the sample, in most cases, depended on roles instead of age, sex or background there was likely to be some biases. To increase the reliability of data collected, a third group who are settlers and do not play any traditional role were interviewed to crosscheck data from traditional role players.

Questionnaires were administered personally to the third category of the target population (the settlers), government officials, opinion leaders, divisional chiefs, sub divisional chiefs and most sub-chiefs. Unstructured interviews and observation were employed in addition to focus group discussions for collecting

data from traditional role- players aside scheduled periods. In general the last technique was aimed at maximising the potential of the study in at least two ways, by allowing the discussion to go beyond originally planned themes and topics, and by encouraging respondents to talk on as many issues as possible.

Pre-test

Preliminary visits were made to divisional areas in the Jirapa traditional area in order to assess the feasibility of the study and to establish a rapport with respondents before the actual study. The information obtained about traditional authorities in the eight divisional areas was very useful in the actual study. For instance, the research targeted clan leaders but the preliminary visits revealed that there were nothing like clan heads in the Jirapa traditional area because the settlement is based on clans and each divisional chief represents a clan.

Three field assistants were recruited in Jirapa and after two days' training on the correct translation of the instruments into the Dagaare dialect, the questionnaires were pre-tested on thirty respondents made up of eight settlers, twelve opinion leaders and ten chiefs. During the pre-test of instruments, it was noted that the options provided for some questions were not enough. For example, a column had to be created in Section A for explanation to answers given. All the necessary corrections were made before embarking on the actual fieldwork.

The field work

The fieldwork began on 27th November, 2005 and ended on 3rd January, 2006. A list of opinion leaders was obtained from the youth leader and the Traditional Council and used to administer questionnaires. Chiefs were located through the office of the Traditional Council and interviewed. Generally, traditional role players were reached through the snowball technique.

Three focus group discussions, made up of eight landlords in each group according to age, and educational status were organised. Again, three focus group discussions were organised for family heads based on age and educational status. A focus group discussion each was organised for identified women leaders and twelve chiefs. All discussions were written, tape-recorded and transcribed later.

Issues from the field

Data collection was quite tedious due to the calibre of people targeted for the study. Divisional and sub-divisional areas had to be visited and prior arrangements made. Absentee traditional role players were difficult to find. Fetish priests were very suspicious and did not want to come out for interview. This problem was solved when Dagaare was spoken and the moral of traditional authorities was boosted.

Another problem had to do with the tradition of not visiting a traditional ruler empty handed; the researcher/student had to spend money on cola, drinks and giving out cash to those who claimed they did not drink. A major problem

was that respondents complained that questionnaires were packed and time consuming. This problem was resolved by booking appointments with respondents at their convenient time. This delayed the fieldwork that was initially scheduled to finish by 24th December, 2005. The work finally was completed on 3rd January, 2006.

Out of the 383 people targeted, 381 respondents were interviewed, a total of 269 respondents were interviewed using questionnaires while 112 were interviewed using group interviews, discussions and observation. This gave a response rate of 99.26% of the 383 respondents expected.

Table 1: Respondents and Response Rate

Category	Chiefs	Opinion leaders	Settlers	Government actors	Total
Proposed sample size	52	150	50	19	271
Total respondents	52	150	50	17	269
Response rate (%)	100	100	100	89.4	99.26

Source: Field Survey, 2006

CHAPTER FOUR

TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Introduction

This chapter reports on the views of development actors on traditional authorities in relation to modern democratic elements. The chapter consists of six sections. The first section deals with the demographic and socio-economic profile of respondents. The second section gives an outline of identified traditional authorities in the study area. The third section uses frequency distributions of response items to ascertain the importance attached to the role of traditional authorities in local governance. In the fourth, interaction between traditional authorities and government officials is also considered. In the fifth section, frequencies are used to determine the role of traditional authorities in local governance; empowerment, participation, equity, conflict resolution, accountability, sustainability and transparency. (All calculations on the role of traditional authorities in promoting democracy are done without the opinions of chiefs, though their opinions are presented. This is done to ensure some reliability in data. The chapter ends with a summary of what has been discussed.

Background characteristics of respondents

The data summarised in Table 2 shows that chiefs in the area are all males. This confirms what the chief of Gbari said about the chieftaincy institution: "when it comes to matters of chieftaincy, women and children are not part". In an age where good governance has become a measure of development and the issue of women's representation is high on the development discourse, one may say the chieftaincy institution in itself does not promote good governance. In the words of the chief of Ulo,

Even in the so-called modern democratic institutions, there are areas that are solely occupied by men, even those that are representative, we have women being greatly outnumbered. Until recently most responsible positions were occupied by men. Have you ever seen a male queen before?

What the chief of Ulo said is admissible, since only one out of the 17 government officials is a female (Table 2). This goes to suggest that it is not only with the traditional systems but even in modern systems, women participation is low. According to the chief of Ulo, traditional systems have their own form of governance which might not be the same as in the modern institutions. To him, the fact that women are not chiefs does not mean they are not part of the decision making process.

Table 2: Sex of Respondents

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
Male	52	100	112	74.7	38	76	16	94.1	216	80.2
Female	0	0	38	25.3	12	24	1	5.9	51	18.9
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	269	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Age of respondents

Table 3 reveals that most chiefs are above 50 years. This could be a pointer that in choosing chiefs, the elderly are more preferred to the younger ones. This stemmed from the general belief that any one above 50 years is old and is full of experience. Most opinion leaders and settlers are below 45 years (40% and 38% respectively). The data on opinion leaders may indicate some degree of merit in that position since the age range is that of the active youth who might have worked hard to attain their status.

Table 3: Age of Respondents

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
25-34	1	1.9	54	36	18	36	3	17.6	76	28.3
35-44	9	17.3	60	40	19	38	4	23.5	92	34.2
45-54	12	23.1	30	20	11	22	9	52.9	62	23
55-64	17	32.7	6	4	2	4	1	5.9	26	9.7
65-74	6	11.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5
75-84	5	9.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1.8
85-94	2	3.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.7
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	269	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2005

Occupation of respondents

Table 4 shows that chiefs in the Jirapa traditional area are mostly farmers (84.6 percent) while opinion leaders and settlers in the study area are predominantly teachers. If opinion leaders are people respected in the community by community members, either as a result of upright life, social standing, wealth or educational status, then the data regarding the opinion leaders indicates that the people of the Jirapa traditional area accord respect to teachers. Most (82.4%) of the local government officials are civil servants.

Table 4: Occupation of Respondents

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
None	1	1.9	20	13.3	7	14	0	0	28	10.4
Civil servant	1	1.9	6	4	2	4	14	82.4	23	8.5
Farmer	44	84.6	25	16.7	8	16	0	0	77	28.6
Teacher	3	5.8	64	42.7	23	46	3	17.6	93	34.5
Nurse	1	1.9	6	4	4	8	0	0	11	4
Brewer	0	0	6	4	0	0	0	0	6	2.2
Mechanic	0	0	6	4	0	0	0	0	6	2.2
Tailor	1	1.9	11	7.3	6	12	0	0	18	6.7
Pastor	1	1.9	6	4	0	0	0	0	7	2.6
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	269	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2005

Educational attainment of respondents

Table 5 reveals that chiefs are the least educated in the Jirapa traditional area while government officials are the highest educated people followed by opinion leaders.

Table 5: Educational Attainment of Respondents

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
None	28	53.8	6	4	3	6	0	0	37	13.7
Primary	9	17.3	15	10	4	8	0	0	28	10.4
Middle/ J.S.S	11	21.2	30	20	12	24	0	0	53	19.7
Secondary	3	5.8	23	15.3	6	12	3	17.6	35	13
Higher	1	1.9	76	50.7	25	50	14	82.4	116	43.1
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	269	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Table 6 presents the religious affiliation of respondents. The table shows that most of the respondents were mostly Christians and Catholics.

Table 6: Religious Affiliation of Respondents

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
Catholic	31	59.6	110	76	40	80	14	82	199	73.9
Protestant	1	1.9	14	9.3	3	6	0	0	18	6.7
Charismatic	1	1.9	11	7.3	4	8	1	5.9	17	6.3
Muslim	2	3.8	5	3.3	2	4	1	5.9	10	3.7
Traditional	16	30.8	5	3.3	1	2	1	5.9	23	8.5
Other	0	0	5	0.7	0	0	0	0	1	0.4
No Religion	1	1.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.4
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	269	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Summary of background trends

The background trend of respondents reveals that traditional authorities and government officials are a little different. While chiefs in the Jirapa area have been found to be mostly illiterates and farmers, government officials are either civil servants or public servants and have attained higher education. One may think that since the two seem to be opposites, it might be impossible to collaborate. The answer to this can be partially found in what the chief of Nyene said:

You people think education is the ultimate. The fact that somebody has not been to your school does not mean the fellow has no knowledge. You have created what you call school and you think anybody who has not been there does not deserve to live; we have our form of acquiring knowledge and wisdom which is not called school. Traditional authorities are knowledgeable and wise as your so – called professors.

An opinion leader pointed to the same fact when he said that “the two are the same but different ideological perspectives”.

Chiefs are at the lowest status if one wants to measure them in modern terms. That was what Miller (1970:190) meant, when he said:

Viewed from the higher places of government in the new nations, the rural leader is an insignificant individual who goes about managing his local affairs and carrying out with varying degrees of success-the policies and hopes of the government. Viewed from below, from the inner recesses of the village, the leader is a man of authority, a man who has used wealth, hereditary or personal magnetism to gain a position of influence.

Traditional authorities in the Jirapa traditional area

The following were identified as traditional authorities in the Jirapa traditional area:

- Chiefs
- Landlords

- Family heads
- Fetish priests

Perception/views of local governance

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the following they accepted as the definition of local governance.

- Interaction of a complex set of institutions within but also beyond local level.
- The process of bringing governance to the door steps of the beneficiaries of governance
- Strategies put in place to achieve local level development.
- Governance at the grassroots level.

One realises from Table 7 that, with the exception of chiefs, most respondents (51.2%) defined local governance as governance at the grassroots level. Most chiefs defined local governance as an interaction of a complex set of institutions at the local level and also beyond the local level. Some chiefs (19.2%) thought that all the four definitions fitted local governance. It is possible that chiefs, being the representatives of the beneficiaries of local governance, looked at the definition from the practical point of view whereas settlers, opinion leaders and government actors gave the book definition.

Table 7: Perceptions/Views on Local Governance

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
Complex set of institutions	16	30.8	33	22	11	22	3	17.6	63	23.4
Governance at the door steps	8	15.4	56	37.3	17	34	3	17.6	84	31.2
Strategies for local level development	11	21.2	31	20.6	8	16	5	29.4	55	20.4
Governance at the grassroots level	7	13.5	30	20	14	28	3	17.6	54	20
All	10	19.2	0	0	0	0	3	17.6	13	4.8
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	296	100

Source: Field Survey 2005

Aim of local governance

Table 8 shows that, to most people, local governance aims at enhancing rural development.

Table 8: Aim of Local Governance

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
Enhance development	23	44.2	29	19.3	23	46	7	41.2	82	30.4
Promote democracy	10	19.2	50	33.3	12	24	3	17.6	75	27.9
Ensure fairness	8	15.3	29	19.3	15	30	3	17.6	55	20.4
All	11	21.1	42	28	0	0	4	23.5	57	21.1
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	269	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Importance of traditional authorities in local governance

Table 9 reveals that government officials acknowledge the importance of traditional authorities in local governance. There was a hundred percent response for the view that traditional authorities are important in local governance by local government officials though the degree of importance varied amongst them. If this is the case, why would Millar and Bonye (2005) claim that traditional authorities have been marginalised? A head of department said, "they are very important at the community level, but they have no knowledge in what am doing in the office since their role is purely traditional".

This view was shared by a divisional chief when he said, "I do not see how the two can come together since they operate at separate and different levels".

The view of government officials on the importance of traditional authorities in local governance could be a pointer to the problem that was investigated. Government officials see themselves as being able to do without traditional authorities and so though they acknowledged the importance of traditional authorities, they felt they (traditional authorities) were not very relevant to the work of local government because their role was more traditional and should be left as such. On the other hand, most chiefs thought that before the decentralisation programme, they were important; it is the introduction of decentralisation that had rendered them less important in the development process. One chief was of the view that traditional authorities were no longer important in local governance: "the work of these people has been usurped by the Assembly, so I think the chief has no importance in local governance".

Naturally, one would have thought that most chiefs should have been in the category that gave the highest rating to traditional authorities in local governance but this was not the case in the study. This attitude could be explained by the comment of the chief who thought that, traditional authorities were no longer important because their roles had been usurped. According to Karni Naah (the divisional chief of Karni), "decentralisation has come to lower our status, they have taken over what we used to do perfectly and they are not even doing it well". To chiefs, what was the point if their role was being performed by government officials? Opinion leaders thought that no rural

development could take place without traditional authorities, thus, until government officials acknowledged this fact there would not be any meaningful development. As a result, more than half of opinion leaders rated traditional authorities as very important. Again, this confirms Kendie and Guri's (2004) observation that, there is confusion at the local level between traditional authorities and government actors.

Table 9: Importance of Traditional Authorities in Local Governance

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
Very Important	24	46.2	86	58	28	56	8	41.2	122	56
Important	27	51.9	57	38	16	32	9	58.8	82	37.7
Not Important	1	1.9	6	4	6	12	0	0	12	5.5
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Reasons for the importance of traditional authorities in local governance

In explaining their ratings of traditional authorities in local governance, most government officials and settlers who worked with the people said traditional authorities were highly respected. What is of particular interest about this data is that, the categories that registered the highest response were not

traditional authorities themselves, hence a lot more weight could be attached to this data. It goes to confirm Kendie and Guri's (2004) statement that most development projects have failed due to failure to recognise these institutions and that there cannot be meaningful rural development if they are sidelined because these institutions are highly respected at the local level.

The data reveals that, not only do traditional authorities play the above roles but that the roles are ordered. The following is the order of importance of the role of traditional authorities in local governance.

- Help local government in revenue mobilisation-47 %.
- Traditional authorities are focal point for disseminating information-33.1%.
- Ensure peace -10.1%.
- Compliment government's efforts-1.8%

The reasons given by respondents for the rating of traditional authorities are not much different from the findings of a study conducted in South Africa for a White Paper on traditional leaders and institutions (2000). The study found that traditional authorities' roles included, acting as head of traditional society and as such exercise limited legislative power and certain executive and administrative powers. They preside over customary law courts and make law and order through consultations with traditional councils. Again, they assist members of the community in their dealings with the state and convey meetings to consult with their people on their needs and priorities. They also provide information and protect cultural values and instil a sense of communality in their areas. This may be a pointer to the fact that traditional institutions, irrespective

of what they are, have similar characteristics and roles. The data also confirms literature by Kyeremeh (1995) on traditional authorities as mobilising agents.

Table 10: Reasons for Importance of Traditional Authorities in Local Governance

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
Compliment government's efforts	7	13.5	0	0	0	0	4	23.5	4	1.8
Revenue mobilisation	45	86.6	54	36	37	74	13	76.5	104	47
Ensure peace	0	0	15	10	7	14	0	0	22	10.1
Limit development	0	0	9	6	6	12	0	0	15	6.9
Disseminate information	0	0	72	48	0	0	0	0	72	33.1
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field work, 2005

Interaction among some local actors

There is a higher interaction between government officials and traditional authorities (Table 11). How does one then explain the assertion that the two groups work on parallel lines at the local level? The nature of interaction, thus, becomes relevant to the study.

Table 11: Interaction among Some Local Actors

	Responses	Chiefs	Opinion leaders	Government actors
Chiefs	Yes	52	66	14
	No	0	84	3
Opinion leaders	Yes	26	91	6
	No	24	59	11
Government actors	Yes	51	72	17
	No	1	78	0

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Nature of interaction between traditional authorities and local government actors

Table 12 shows that a majority of those who said they interacted with traditional authorities said they did so because traditional authorities are part of the community. About 85% of government officials, who said yes, said they interacted with traditional authorities just as community members, none consulted with them in his work except at the community level. One head of department said "I do not consult them but I use them at the community level. As a veterinary officer, when I go to the community, they help mobilise the people. After that I have nothing to do with them". Meanwhile, Table 12 shows that about 85% of chiefs said they consulted with government officials.

What is interesting in this data is that while a greater number of chiefs said they consulted with local government officials, local government officials said they did not consult them but merely interacted with them. One may say that while traditional authorities consult local government officials, local government officials do not consult traditional authorities. This confirms what the chief of Kungkyene said: “we see them as collaborators, and they see us as illiterates, poor and nothing good coming from us. Sometimes they by-pass us to undertake community projects. They only return to us when they encounter problems”.

This could be the explanation for top officials of the Bawku West District Assembly not regarding traditional authorities as having a role to play in the Assembly’s revenue mobilisation effort (ActionAid, 2002). It also goes to confirm the notion that government officials see traditional role players as important in the performance of certain traditional functions but not in local governance and so in actualisation of development plans they work on parallel lines. However, what the chief of Nyene said goes to question this stand. He said: “I collaborated with the Assembly to build a school”. The chief of Baazu also said that “the Assembly supplemented contributions we made to undertake an animal rearing project that was intended to empower women in the community”.

Why would local government officials say they and traditional authorities are not collaborators? This may suggest that local government officials see themselves as superior and more powerful and are not ready to

share the power given to them with traditional authorities, confirming what Donir, a community key informant said, "local government officials are selfishly withholding the power that was freely given to them by the central government. The power has remained at the Assembly level". As a result, local government officials see themselves as being at the local level to execute the plans of the central government and not the people being represented by their chiefs. There is therefore a situation where the people as represented by their chiefs approach local government officials and not the two approaching each other.

The answer given by the heads of department also indicate that they only deal with traditional authorities when it comes to policy implementation and not planning. The provisions made for traditional authorities to take part in development activities may never be realised unless the two see themselves as two groups with different ideological perspectives but at the same level, and working for a common goal. It is important, therefore, that the necessary structures are put in place to make the collaboration of the two groups a reality.

Table 12: Nature of Interaction between Traditional Authorities, Local Government Officials and other Development Actors

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq	Per.
Neighbours	8	15.4	60	40	22	46	14	82.4	104	38.7
Consult each other	44	84.6	6	4	0	0	0	0	50	18.6
No interaction	0	0	84	56	28	64	3	17.6	115	42.8
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	269	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Traditional authorities and the promotion of democratic elements –

Empowerment

Empowerment in the context of the study is defined as enablement, enhancement, and upliftment of a people, politically, socially and economically. Empowerment means the flow of power from traditional authorities to the people to exercise choices of their own free will. It also involves taking measures to protect the rights of the vulnerable in society. Table 13 shows that all categories of respondents recognise the role of traditional authorities in empowering people through the following ways:

- Initiate development activities such as the building of schools, clinics and boreholes (28%).

- Preach against acts that undermine women's upliftment such as female genital mutilation and widowhood rites (13.4 %).
- Educate people on their basic rights and responsibilities (13.7).
- Hold meetings to explain actions and inactions (10 %).

Table 13: Traditional Authorities and the Promotion of Empowerment

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
Nothing	3	5.8	45	30	15	30	1	5.9	61	28
Explain actions	9	17.3	15	10	5	10	2	11.8	22	10
Discourage acts that undermine women	0	0	11	2	18	36	0	0	29	13.4
Educate on rights	15	28.6	30	25.3	12	24	3	17.6	45	20.5
Initiate development activities	25	48.1	49	32.7	0	0	11	64.7	60	28
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2005

Traditional authorities and the limitation of empowerment

The point for analysis is the difference between the percentages of people who did not comment on traditional authorities. While 28% percent of respondents said they had nothing to say on how traditional authorities promote empowerment, implying that they had not so far seen any limitation or they were not satisfied with the performance of traditional authorities in that respect, 80% (from Table 14) said they had nothing to say on how traditional authorities limit empowerment. What this implies is that people are not able to let-out their views on how traditional authorities limit empowerment. This could be as a result of the reverence associated with the power of traditional authorities as indicated by the data; more people talked on the positive side and declined to comment on the negative side. One may say this characteristic of traditional authorities does not empower the people since they cannot easily air their views. On the other hand, if traditional authorities are educated on democracy, this is a characteristic that could be overturned to promote development.

Table 14: Traditional Authorities and the Limitation of Empowerment

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	48	92.3	122	81.3	37	74	14	82.4	173	80
Limit progress	4	7.7	28	18.7	13	26	3	17.6	44	20
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	269	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Traditional authorities and the promotion of participation

Participation means inclusion or involvement of the people by traditional authorities in the social, political and economic decision making processes, implementation and benefits. Table 15 shows various responses. Some said before a decision is taken, there is a deliberation by elders who represent the people. Others said there is no partiality in decision taking where some people's views are considered more vital than others. Again, another group of respondents said the people are represented by the chiefs in decision making. According to them, before any decision is taken by the traditional council, chiefs meet with elders and present their views at the traditional council.

Most of the government officials (76.5 %) said there is free deliberation and judgement in the decision making system. This adds some credibility to the chiefs' response (76 %) that there is no partiality in decision making. Government actors and traditional authorities seem to agree on this point. Again, about 29% of respondents, a majority of whom are settlers and opinion leaders, declined to comment. This goes to confirm the earlier assertion that people are not able to air their views on traditional authorities because of the reverence associated with their power. However, government actors are able to comment because of the relative power they have retained. According to Table 15, the role of traditional authorities in promoting participation is ordered as follows:

- There is free deliberation of issues and judgement in the decision making process (52.9%).

- No partiality in decision taking (14.2%).
- People are represented by chiefs (3.2 %).

Table 15: Traditional Authorities and the Promotion of Participation

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	8	15.4	45	30	15	30	4	23.5	64	29.4
Free deliberation of issues	0	0	77	51	25	50	13	76.5	115	52.9
No partiality in decision	40	76	21	14	10	12	0	0	31	14.2
People are represented by chiefs	4	7.6	7	4.6	0	0	0	0	7	3.2
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	150	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Traditional authorities and limitation of participation

Table 16 reveals that 32.2% of chiefs said traditional authorities are selective. Naturally one would not expect this attitude from chiefs. This suggests how rampant the issue is. It also questions the earlier claim by chiefs that, there is no partiality in decision making process. It is therefore possible that there is a provision in the traditional law for people to participate in decision making. However when it comes to practicalising it, some chiefs are selective. Also,

61.5% of respondents declined to comment on how traditional authorities limit participation. This time it is government actors who constitute the majority. This category rated traditional authorities highest in the promotion of participation. One may therefore say that the silence is a sign of contentment. However, the fact that chiefs themselves are saying some of them are selective means the information is genuine. What the chief of Kungkyeni, Naah Kobieh said confirms limitation of participation by traditional authorities. He said, "if what the traditional council decides conflicts with the decision of my people, I have to stick to that of the traditional council. Who am I to go against the wishes of the elders"?

Again, weighing the limitations of traditional authorities in participation and that of its enhancement, it is realised that though traditional authorities have elements that limit participation, it has as much as twice the elements that promote participation. The fact that the number of respondents (71.6) who commented in favour of traditional authorities far exceeds those who declined to talk, suggests that traditional authorities promote participation than they limit it.

Table 16: Traditional Authorities and Limitation of Participation

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
Nothing to say	32	61.5	95	63.3	32	64	13	76.5	140	65
Limit progress	3	5.8	39	26	13	26	0	0	52	24
Are selective	17	32.7	1	0.7	0	0	4	23.5	5	2
Limit women	0	0	15	10	5	10	0	0	20	9
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Traditional authorities and the promotion of equity

Equity means according the same rights and opportunities to the people economically, politically and socially. It implies undertaking steps to remove all social, political and economic factors that limit access to opportunities. Respondents said traditional authorities give people the same opportunities in decision taking, not being partial in judgement, according women the same opportunities like men, ensuring equitable distribution of resources and treating people fairly irrespective of background. One opinion leader said traditional authorities rule by traditional laws, which generally ensure fairness.

Table 17: Traditional Authorities and the Promotion of Equity

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	1	1.9	44	29.3	15	30	6	35.3	65	30
Same opportunities	51	98	105	90	35	70	11	64.7	151	69.5
Rule by laws	0	0	1	0.7	0	0	0	0	1	0.3
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Ninety eight percent (98%) of chiefs said traditional authorities accord people the same opportunities. The credibility of this response is ascertained by the response of opinion leaders (90 %) who from the previous data have been among the categories that mostly declined to comment on how traditional authorities limit democracy. The fact that only one opinion leader said traditional authorities rule by laws shows that this is not a dominant feature of traditional authorities. Thirty percent (30%), majority of whom are government actors declined to comment on traditional authorities and how they promote equity. For government actors this may indicate lack of knowledge in that respect. For settlers and opinion leaders it indicates the reverence they associate with the power of traditional authorities. Ordering the role of traditional authorities in promoting equity, one gets the following:

- Accord everyone the same recognition and opportunities (69.5%).

- Rule by laws (0.3%).

Traditional authorities and the limitation of equity

Table 18 reveals that traditional authorities limit equity by being partial in their dealings. Example, settlers and indigenes are not treated on equal grounds in land acquisition, the youth and elderly are not treated equally when it comes to distribution of resources. Again, some traditional authorities judge cases in favour of the elderly. One other major response to this question was that women's access to certain opportunities is limited. For example, married women are limited in land acquisition since they need the approval of their husbands. Male children are more recognised than female children.. This was confirmed by Ayuolee, a settler who remarked that: "Family heads prefer sending male children to school than females. Again in homes where bed nets are limited, family heads prefer male children to sleep under nets than female children".

Table 18: Traditional Authorities and the Limitation of Equity

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	51	98.1	109	72.7	36	72	11	64.7	156	71.8
Limit women	1	1.9	3	2	14	28	0	0	17	7.8
Partial	0	0	38	25.3	0	0	6	35.3	44	20.2
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

About 71% of respondents did not comment on traditional authorities and how they limit equity. Again this shows the reverence attached to the power of traditional authorities. Ninety eight percent (98%) of chiefs did not comment on this. The attitude is not surprising since it is natural that one projects his or her positive side and overlook the negative side. It was only one chief, the chief of Gbari who said women have limited access to certain opportunities but he was trying in his community to give equal opportunities to both sexes. A critical look at the two tables on equity shows traditional authorities' potential to promote equity than limit it.

Traditional authorities and promotion of accountability

Accountability in the context of the study means how politically, socially, and economically responsible traditional authorities are towards the people. It also includes being responsive to the needs of the people. In short, it

means the recognition by traditional authorities that power belongs to the people. Table 19 shows that traditional authorities are accountable in the following ways: Hold land in trust for the people. As such, traditional authorities see themselves as accountable to their ancestors, the present and future generations for land bequeathed to all by their ancestors. According to Dam, an opinion leader “the measure traditional authorities use is whether they can match the high standards set by their predecessors or have lived up to expectation”. Again, traditional authorities report back to the people on important meetings attended and important assignments. Report is also given on how resources are used. Also, the table reveals that another way traditional authorities account to the people is to explain actions and inactions.

An overwhelming majority of government actors (88%) said traditional authorities promote accountability by holding land in trust for the people. This adds credibility to the response most chiefs gave. Only one person (0.4%) out of the 217 respondents said traditional authorities rule by laws of the land. In a way, this query’s the credibility of the response. Again, 29% of the respondents, most of whom are settlers declined to comment. This may be attributed to inability of settlers to air their views because of the feeling that they are not indigenes and so traditional authorities in the traditional area do not have to account to them. Table 19 reveals the role of traditional authorities in promoting accountability in the following order:

- Hold land in trust for the people (57.6%).
- Hold forums to explain actions and inactions (13%).

- Rule by the laws of the land (0.4%).

Table 19: Traditional Authorities and the Promotion of Accountability

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	6	11.5	44	29.3	17	34	2	11.8	63	29
Hold land in trust for the people	45	86.5	105	70	5	10	15	88.2	125	57.6
Feed back to the people	1	1.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.4
Explain actions	0	0	1	0.7	28	56.1	0	0	29	13
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2005

Traditional authorities and the limitation of accountability

Table 20 shows the various responses to how traditional authorities limit accountability. While some respondents said traditional authorities do not account to the people in all cases, others said they are selective in who to account to, and according to the Gender Desk Officer of the District Assembly, women, the youth and settlers are some of the people they discriminate against. It is therefore not surprising that out of those who did not comment on this issue,

settlers constituted the most (74%). An indication of their reservation on this issue because they do not see themselves as supposed to be accounted to by traditional authorities, probably as a result of the impression traditional authorities have given them. This confirms the earlier assertion that settlers declined to comment on how traditional authorities gave account of their stewardship because they saw themselves as not the people to judge traditional authorities.

Despite the limitations of traditional authorities in promoting accountability, the two tables (19 and 20), reveal that traditional authorities' potential in promoting accountability far outweighs their potential to limit it. About 34% of respondents spoke against accountability while 71% spoke in favour of accountability.

Table 20: Traditional Authorities and the Limitation of Accountability

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	50	96.2	93	62	37	74	13	76.5	143	65.8
Do not account	2	3.8	57	38	13	26	0	0	70	32.2
Discriminate in who to account to	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	23.5	4	1.4
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Traditional authorities and promotion of conflict management

Conflict management means the ability of traditional authorities to ensure peace and order. It also means the ability of traditional authorities to nip conflicts in the bud before they escalate into crisis. Table 21 shows that traditional authorities manage conflicts by ensuring that disputes such as those regarding land are resolved amicably, according people equal opportunities such as fair distribution of resources and being impartial, and explaining actions like a ban on bush burning and reasons behind certain decisions. Government actors (100%) said traditional authorities amicably resolve disputes such as those concerning marriages, land, leadership and other social issues. This shows how well traditional authorities perform in this regard. In all, 79% of respondents commented on how traditional authorities manage conflict. Comparatively, the number of people who did not comment on how traditional authorities manage conflicts is low. This may indicate general contentment. The table reveals that traditional authorities' role in managing conflicts is in the following order:

- Amicable resolution of disputes (73.2%).
- Accord everyone the same opportunity (3.2%).
- Hold meetings to explain actions and inactions (2.8%).

Table 21: Traditional Authorities and Promotion of Conflict Management

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	2	3.8	33	22	12	24	0	0	45	20.7
Dispute resolution	50	96.2	105	62	37	74	17	100	159	73.2
Offer same opportunities	0	0	6	4.2	1	2	0	0	7	3.2
Explain actions	0	0	6	4	0	0	0	0	6	2.8
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Traditional authorities and the limitation of conflict management

It can be realised from Table 22 that most people (84%) did not comment on how traditional authorities limit conflict management. This clearly is an indication of general satisfaction. It is shown in the fact that only 16% of respondents spoke against traditional authorities and conflict management. After giving a 100% vote to traditional authorities for solving disputes amicably, 17.6% of government actors said they can sometimes be a source of conflict. This attitude is not different from that of the chiefs themselves.

Table 22: Traditional Authorities and the Limitation of Conflict Management

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	50	96.2	126	84	42	84	14	82.4	182	84
Source of conflict	2	3.8	24	16	8	16	3	17.6	35	16
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Traditional authorities and the promotion of sustainable development

Sustainability in development means how traditional authorities are able to ensure continuity of the benefits derived from available resources. It is the recognition on the part of traditional authorities that, the next generation deserves the opportunity to enjoy the same wellbeing that the present generation now enjoys. Respondents said traditional authorities protect resources such as dams, economic trees, farmlands, wild life, wells, animals and human resources through the enactment of laws, sensitisation programmes and taboos.

Again, some respondents said that traditional authorities ensure sustainable development through periodic maintenance of facilities such as roads, youth centres, clinics, schools and market places through levies to replace facilities, organisation of communal labour to repair facilities and constant

supervision to ensure judicious use of facilities. In this respect, the chief of Nyene said that people are trained in the community to repair bore holes anytime there is a breakdown. Some chiefs such as the chief of Gbari sensitises his people on the need to bequeath a legacy for future generation. Also, in ensuring sustainability in human resources, people are trained by traditional authorities to take up the mantle of leadership when they are not there. The chief of Kungkyeni said he constantly calls on the veterinary office to check the health of all animals in his community. Most government actors (about 94%) said traditional authorities maintain resources. The response rate is not different from that of chiefs indicating an appreciable level of credibility in the response of chiefs. Settlers and opinion leaders constituted a greater proportion of those who declined to comment. This may indicate reservations which settlers and opinion leaders have about traditional authorities and resource management, bearing in mind the fact that traditional authorities are regarded as custodians of the land and especially natural resources.

Interestingly, government actors gave the highest response (94.1 percent) regarding the potential of traditional authorities to promote sustainable development. It is, therefore, surprising that local government staff do not collaborate with traditional authorities in this respect.

Table 23: Traditional authorities and their promotion of sustainable development

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	3	5.8	51	34	17	34	1	5.9	69	31
Protect resources	49	94.2	99	66	32	64	0	0	131	60.3
Maintain resources	0	0	0	0	1	2	16	94.1	17	7.8
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Traditional authorities and their limitation on sustainable development

Table 24 reveals that settlers and opinion leaders seem to have the same attitude about traditional authorities' role in sustainable development. This attitude is shown when they registered the same response rate on those who did not comment. This attitude as earlier indicated, could be attributed to the spirituality associated with the power of traditional authorities regarding natural resources especially. A majority of government actors (94%) said they had no comment in this regard. This is a clear indication of satisfaction of government actors on traditional authorities regarding promotion of continuity in the benefits derived from available resources for local development.

Table 24: Traditional Authorities and their Limitation on Sustainable Development

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	47	90.4	117	78	39	78	16	94.1	172	79.2
Do not ensure continuity	5	9.6	0	0	11	22	1	5.9	12	5.5
Do not maintain resources	0	0	33	22	0	0	0	0	33	15.2
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Traditional authorities and the promotion of transparency

Transparency means traditional authorities being open, making things clear and laying things bare for all to see. Like accountability, it implies explaining actions to the understanding of people and encouraging their participation. Respondents indicated various ways by which traditional authorities promote transparency.

They said traditional authorities hold periodic meetings with council of elders to explain actions and inactions and sometimes to the community at large. People are educated on issues to open up their understanding for critical decisions, for example, educating people on their basic rights and

responsibilities such as awareness creation among women that they have a right to live. Also issues are deliberated by the council of elders for consensus.

One striking thing about the data presented in Table 25 is the response rate of government actors. A majority of them (88.2%), the highest in the response rates regarding traditional authorities' promotion of transparency, agreed that traditional authorities promote transparency. This attitude could be attributed to what they meant by transparency. The table shows that, to them, transparency means educating people on their basic rights and responsibilities. Another striking thing about the table is the number of chiefs who did not comment on how traditional authorities promote transparency. So far this is the highest response rate among chiefs who did not comment on traditional authorities and promotion of democratic elements. This indicates that there is a problem with traditional authorities when it comes to transparency. According to Table 25, the following is the order in which traditional authorities promote transparency:

- Educate people on their basic rights (19.8%).**
- Hold meetings to explain actions and inactions (17.5%).**
- Free deliberation of issues (12.3%).**

Table 25: Traditional Authorities and the Promotion of Transparency

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	7	13.5	81	54	27	54	1	5.9	109	50.2
Explain actions	0	0	27	18	10	20	1	5.9	38	17.5
Free deliberation	1	1.9	21	8	6	12	0	0	28	12.3
Education	44	84	21	14	7	14	15	88.2	43	19.8
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Traditional authorities and their limitation on transparency

Table 26 reveals that most government officials (88.2%) did not comment on how traditional authorities limit transparency. This indicates their satisfaction in this respect. Again settlers and opinion leaders reveal similar attitudes in their response.

Table 26: Traditional Authorities and their Limitation on Transparency

Responses	Chiefs		Opinion leaders		Settlers		Government actors		Total	
	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.	Freq.	Per.
No comment	48	92.3	69	46	23	46	15	88.2	107	49
The are secretive	4	7.7	81	54	27	54	2	11.8	110	51
Total	52	100	150	100	50	100	17	100	217	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

This may suggest a common characteristic between the two groups. These two groups could be said to reserve their comments based on their status in the traditional setting. The background characteristics data on respondents reveals that most of the people in these two categories of respondents are young teachers. Their attitude towards traditional authorities' promotion of democratic elements could be as a result of the general respect associated with age since most traditional authorities are elderly. This confirms Dake's (1996) statement that, the value of age is undermining democracy in Africa.

From the various tables presented on traditional authorities and promotion or limitation of democratic elements, the order of promotion of democratic elements by traditional authorities could be ranked as follows:

- Empowerment (82%)
- Conflict management (79 %)

- **Accountability (71%)**
- **Participation (70.1%)**
- **Equity (69.5)**
- **Sustainability (69%)**
- **Transparency (48%)**

Thus, traditional authorities have been seen to be important instrument for good governance of their communities.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ACTUAL ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Introduction

Promoting democracy and strengthening good governance have become core components of the development discourse. Nevertheless, an often overlooked dimension has been the role traditional authorities play in the decentralisation process which is designed to achieve good governance. As demonstrated earlier, traditional authorities in the Jirapa traditional area have democratic elements that are consistent with modern governance systems. Considering the fact that these institutions meet the socio-economic demands of the people at the grassroots level, it will be unwise to leave them out of the development process. This chapter highlights the specific role of traditional authorities at the local level.

The role of chiefs

Chiefs were found to be administrative heads of their communities, empowering people by protecting land and making it available for development activities and sensitising people on their basic rights and responsibilities through talks. The chief of Gbari, for example, organised women in his community to

process shear fruits into butter. In this regard, the Paramount Chief of the area has started a borehole drilling project.

Chiefs were found to promote participation by ensuring that decisions are taken with elders' support, allowing free deliberation of issues and preaching equality. Commenting on participation, a 52 year old opinion leader said:

In the dagaare tradition, our form of participation is different. We are represented by our elders who serve as our spokespeople just as members of parliament are the spokesmen of their people in parliament. It is not possible for all to be present at certain deliberations, however in certain meetings everybody is invited to attend irrespective of background. Even you researchers, don't you sample?

A 49 year old head of department (who wants to remain anonymous) said, "traditional authorities do not encourage participation because of the spirituality of their role".

The views presented show the usual controversy surrounding traditional authorities and democracy. It shows that people's views concerning traditional authorities and democracy are to a large extent influenced by their background. While the opinion leader, who hails from the place, thought traditional authorities promote participation, the head of department who does not hail from the study area thought otherwise. In any case both responses were confirmed by the survey where some respondents thought traditional authorities lacked certain democratic elements while others thought traditional authorities were democratic in the exercise of their powers. Chiefs were found to rule by

traditional laws, according everyone the same opportunity, inspiring justice and ensuring free deliberation of issues thereby promoting equity in the process.

Traditional authorities in general and chiefs in particular were applauded by most respondents (69%) for enacting laws to protect all resources, making financial contributions to maintain facilities, mobilising labour to repair facilities and educating people on the need for sustainable development for future generation. Seventy nine percent (79%) of respondents agreed that traditional authorities managed conflicts by ensuring that disputes are resolved amicably, maintaining law and order, allowing free deliberation and judgment of issues and ensuring fair treatment of people.

The Paramount Chief of Jirapa was reported to have put all political relationships aside and resolved a conflict between the past District Chief Executive (2000-2004) and the youth of the area after which the demonstrating youth left the streets of Jirapa. This demonstrates the ability of chiefs to nip conflicts in the bud. Again the Paramount Chief resolved a problem between the Assemblies of God church and traditional authorities, when one of the pastors burnt some shrines in the area. But for the timely intervention of the Paramount Chief who promised the traditional authorities that he would provide a cow to appease the gods, the whole Jirapa traditional area would have been plunged into crisis with the Assemblies of God church.

According to a head of department, "chiefs have been very instrumental in resolving complex cases that would have sparked crisis". An opinion leader was of the view that, "apart from being the most effective people in resolving

conflicts, they can throw a whole community into chaos through succession disputes and discrimination". According to Tutu (2004), "applying the norms of customary law, recognised under the constitution of Ghana, the chief settles all disputes that come before him".

In connection with accountability, a 78 year old chief of Nyenevaare commented, "it is the people who put me here, if I do not satisfy them, they have the power to remove me". However, a 58 year old Chief of Tizza said "when the elders talk it supersedes what the people say". What the views on the role of chiefs in promoting accountability indicate is that, as much as there are democratic elements, there are also autocratic tendencies; it depends on what angle one views traditional authorities.

An opinion leader indicated that, transparency is minimal among traditional authorities since the nature of their roles demand that certain things are kept in secret. To him, it is in the interest of good governance since too much openness can in itself promote conflict which does not auger well for development. Therefore, according to him, "it is in the interest of development that certain things are kept secret. This explains why, women do not play certain sensitive roles in certain key positions such as soothsaying". What this implies is that traditional practices themselves have philosophical underpinnings that need to be understood before conclusions are drawn. Again, commenting on transparency, the chief of Douri said, "there is a proverbial saying and belief that one man is a thief, so I go no where alone and my witness reports to the people who sent me". According to a 44 year old settler:

Traditional authorities are sometimes transparent, but can be very secretive at certain times, especially in spiritual issues concerning the land. Mostly we do not know why certain rituals which we contribute towards are done. The phrase they normally use is, 'ti buoro ka tie e buma mine' (we want to do some things).

A 40 year old Magazia, madam Amina of Kaarni, said, "Women are not represented at the traditional council".

It is clear from the discussions that the chieftaincy institution has a mixture of democratic and autocratic tendencies, which have great implications such as understanding their ideological underpinnings for the development planner.

The role of landlords

Landlords, who are traditionally referred to as "tengdamba" because of their position as custodians of land and all that is on it, could be said to be an important group when it comes to actualising development plans at the local level. However, some of their practices limit development. In empowering people, landlords support development activities like building of schools, clinics, market places and boreholes. They also sensitise people on their basic rights and responsibilities, ensure the general welfare of people in the community, help to disseminate information, and maintain law and order. The responsibility of landlords is believed to be spiritual and in the words of a 62 year old landlord (who wants to remain anonymous), "the landlord dies on the

day he refuses to take up his responsibilities. It is his major responsibility to lease out land for the people, act as a soldier in times of war and ensure the general welfare of society both spiritually and physically”.

According to a 44 year old opinion leader (who wants to remain anonymous), “The landlord’s work is to promote development while rejecting things that hinder development”. To him, it is wrong for the District Assembly workers to sideline them since they also work to ensure the progress of the area which is consistent with the functions and objectives of the Assembly.

Even though nice things were said about landlords in promoting empowerment, there were some limitations. Landlords were found to limit women’s access to land. “If a woman does not come with her husband, I do not give her land” (Mathias Tengan, a landlord). However, in explaining his point, the respondent said “the reason is that, land issued to married women has created land disputes”. He further indicated that, “single women are treated on equal grounds with men when it comes to allocating land”. Again, the intention here is not to disempower women but to ensure that in empowering women there is peace in their matrimonial homes.

Allegations levelled against landlords were that, they retard progress by instilling unnecessary fear in people, they could be a source of land disputes, and that they charged high prices for land. According to a 73 year old settler (who wants to remain anonymous), fear is a strategy used to control and promote acts that auger well for development while discouraging acts that do not auger well for development. He cited for example that, landlords have

successfully managed resources through this strategy. For example, rags, believed to be charms are hanged on economic trees to ensure that they remain intact until they are due for harvesting. It is therefore difficult to judge landlords in this regard since the intention behind these actions are to promote development. However, as a human institution it is possible that some excesses arise in the performance of their functions. For example, a man was reported to have died in the bush out of thirst for water. He went round the bush looking for water. When he finally got to a well, he realised that a pot containing some concoction was by the well, an indication that the well was for the gods of the land. Out of frustration he lay by the well and died (Bawa Zaato, an opinion leader).

In the promotion of participation, landlords were found to have ensured free deliberation in decision making while women were given a say in decision taking. However, they were found to limit participation by concealing certain information such as reasons behind certain perceived spiritual occurrences of the land. On women's participation in decision taking, Nuobe Kumase, a landlord, said, "I can point to you here some of my colleagues, who will not give out seeds for farming unless they have consulted with their wives".

On equity, whereas some respondents said landlords are sometimes biased regarding land issues, a majority of them including landlords said they lease out land for development activities irrespective of a person's background. On equity, a landlord of Wuoyiri, had this to say: "Landlords have a

responsibility of ensuring fair treatment, and equitable distribution of resources.

The day the landlord violates this rule, he ceases to be a landlord”.

Landlords were found to be very instrumental in settling disputes by virtue of their recognition as custodians of the land and its resources and the spiritual powers they are believed to wield. Landlords are feared even more than chiefs in the Jirapa traditional area. When there are succession disputes, the one the landlords enstool is the one recognised by all. The landlord of Konkuo reported that:

During the installation of the present Paramount Chief, the Jirapa traditional area would have been plunged into conflicts as a result of succession disputes but for the timely intervention of the landlords. The candidate who was enstooled by the landlords was automatically accepted by all, and this silenced the other competing party.

Commenting on conflict management, the landlord of Jirapa-Tampoi said,

These days the role of the landlord has been usurped by the District Assembly and they are causing a lot of conflicts among family members since they do not do enough investigation to ensure that land, being given out, is not family property which an individual family member wants to sell. Before the decentralisation system, we knew every land and its legitimate owner.

It is therefore very necessary that the District Assembly works in collaboration with the landlords in issuing out land in order to control land disputes.

In exercising their traditional duty in managing conflicts, one realises how the issue of spirituality and fear help in solving conflicts. For example, because of the fear associated with the spiritual power of the landlords, they were able to restore peace in the Jirapa traditional area. What this implies is that, traditional beliefs and practices that seem not to auger well for development could be overturned to promote local level development. It all depends on the creativity and understanding of the development planner.

In their effort to promote accountability and transparency, landlords were observed to give account of monies realised from the sale of land and welfare contributions to elders who represent the people. They declare intentions to sell land to community members to ensure that land being sold out does not belong to any one. Landlords also promote accountability by holding meetings to discuss issues of land to community members.

To a very large extent, landlords could be said to be the acclaimed promoters of sustainable development, since all their actions, despite their weaknesses, are geared towards this goal. Like chiefs, they enact laws to protect economic trees, organise communal labour to repair resources, ensure continuity of production through pacification. They use fear to prevent acts that are contrary to the dictates of sound environmental practices. Commenting on landlords in the work of the Assembly District, a landlord said:

We play similar roles, like the Assembly, so I do not understand why we have been marginalised; the work of landlords is what is performed by the District Assembly. If a dead body is found anywhere, it is the landlord and not the sanitary inspector who would be called to dispose of it. Likewise, if someone is found hanging on a tree now, it is the landlord who would be called and not the District Assembly.

If landlords are so crucial in the society, why does the District Assembly sideline them? It is possible that these issues have not been looked at critically by the Assembly or they are ignorant about their role. It then demonstrates the inadequacy in the decentralisation process by not making arrangements for government officials to understand the people. It means that the people because of whom power has been delegated to local government staff are not even understood by formal government staff. These are serious issues that should be taken into consideration by development planners.

The role of the landlords in the Jirapa traditional area is consistent with that of the Asafo as revealed by Kendie et al (2004) in a study conducted at the Mankessim Nkwanta traditional area, and that of Millar (2002) in the Wenchi traditional area. This confirms the assertion made earlier that traditional institutions, no matter what they may be, have the same philosophy behind them.

The role of family heads

According to a 46 year old settler, family heads represent chiefs at the family level. They are administrative heads of their families, empowering them by mobilising them for development activities, ensuring their general welfare, supporting marketing activities and agricultural growth in the area, serving as custodians of family property, leasing out land for development activities, sacrificing to the gods to clear spiritual hurdles on behalf of family members, serving as custodians of cultural practices, serving as counsellors and sensitising family members on their civic rights and responsibilities.

Family heads ensure participation by allowing free deliberation and judgment of issues, constantly dialoguing with household heads who represent members of the households and consulting women on issues concerning them.

Their role in ensuring equity is seen when all family members are given equal opportunities and recognition, distribute family resources evenly, and treating family members fairly. In avoiding and managing conflicts, meetings are held where family members explain actions and inactions. Again family members are dealt with according to the code and conduct of traditional laws, issues are resolved amicably and family heads collaborate with the security agencies to discipline recalcitrant family members.

Family headship goes with being responsible to family members. Heads are responsible to family members for any action, reporting back to family members on outcomes of meetings attended, and holding land in trust for family members. An 80 year old family head commented "I cannot sell or give out

family property without seeking the consent of the people, if I do that, they will remove me". This same respondent, commenting on transparency said "it is a religious duty to be clear in all matters except that, it will lead to something bad". What is implied here is that, it is in the interest of good governance that some family heads conceal certain things. However, a 41 year old family head thought that, "one of the headaches with traditional institutions is lack of transparency". What is implied here is that family headship has some amount of openness while at the same time can be secretive. Family heads were found to have contributed to keeping cultural heritage intact, protecting family property by mobilising family members to repair facilities and educating family members on the need for sustainable development as part of their effort in promoting sustainability in development.

Despite their potential in promoting development, Family heads were found to sometimes, undermine good governance by using children of school going age as herders for cows. They promote cultural practices that hinder development, being corrupt, forcing girls into early marriages, exempting women in taking certain decisions concerning them, promoting conflict through sale of family property and being dictators. Like any other traditional institution, the family headship has weaknesses and strengths that could be overturned and capitalised on respectively for development planning.

The role of fetish priests

The fetish institution, made up of traditional healers and soothsayers, plays various roles in enhancing development at the local level. The study found out, however, that there were certain weaknesses of the fetish institution that hampered development.

Fetish priests empower people by clearing perceived spiritual hurdles that hinder economic activities, curing complex diseases, and ensuring the general welfare of the society. "I would say that fetish priests help girls, especially to rise up in life by preventing spells and charms working on them. We also teach customs that will enable the youth to do what they can do to be successful in the community" (Achilles Ziendong Dabine, a soothsayer).

To ensure that everybody participates in rituals, sacrificial animals are shared for all to eat irrespective of age. Again, all persons are consulted before taking spiritual decisions concerning their lives. In the words of a traditional healer, "if somebody is sick and the hospital cannot treat the person, the relatives, have to inform the person whether or not the person will like to visit the herbalist before he or she is sent there" (Kofi Sabaalong, an opinion leader).

Commenting on equity, a 45 year old opinion leader was of the view that, "Traditional leaders do not discriminate, they treat all people equally. In case of married women, however, the consent of their husbands needs to be sought". This means that women's access to traditional healing and sooth saying is limited. Fetish priests were also observed to be very instrumental in settling disputes because of their recognition as spiritual heads. To this effect a 42 year

old settler, Calistus Dery commented that “sanctions are given to those who cause confusion and this has led to people being good citizens”.

Fetish priests are regarded as sacred and when they talk it is believed to be coming from the gods of the land. Though this seems to be undemocratic a 79 year old soothsayer (who wants to remain anonymous) thought that:

Spirituality is used to resolve conflicts, tame thieves, and bring general peace to the community. Modern democracy is rather creating problems because every one has a say and that rather generates lots of conflicts. Democratic elements exist but in a different dimension. To impose western democracy is rather undemocratic. Democratic indicators in the traditional setting are different and it would be unfair to use western indicators to judge how democratic traditional authorities in the Jirapa traditional area are.

What this means is that democracy is the same everywhere but there are various ways to achieve it. In this case then, it means traditional practices that seem not to auger well for development may not be bad, but that the philosophy behind them has not been well understood.

Fetish priests owe community members explanations for perceived events that do not auger well for development. They are accountable to the people for strange deaths, drought, fire outbreaks, strange diseases, conflicts and so on. They hold periodic meetings to explain strange happenings as indicated by a 32 year widow, “my husband died of a strange sickness which I did not understand so I went to the Kontobuuro at Tizza for explanation”. Because

fetish priests are accountable to members of the community, they seriously guard against actions that might not enhance the development process.

On sustainability, fetish priests were found to work hand in hand with the landlords on environmental issues to achieve development. Apart from serving as custodians of resources, they enact sacred laws to protect economic trees, use charms to protect environmental resources to prevent their misuse and ensure continuity.

On the other hand, some acts of fetish priests were found not to auger well for good governance. They were accused of promoting certain beliefs that infringe on the right of people, an example being the belief that some people are divine children and so are not supposed to go to school. They defend obnoxious practices that do not enhance development; for example, widowhood rites such as stripping women naked. Again, some fetish priests use their spiritual powers to abuse vulnerable people, cause unnecessary scare that can limit development activities, make poisonous substances that are injurious to human beings, promote conflict by, for example, telling lies that some one is a witch or wizard, and charge fees for treatment and consultations. "A fetish priest can make a person unable to do something beneficial. For instance, a child divined to serve the gods who goes to school against the wish of the soothsayer might go mad in the course of his schooling" (Achilles Ziendong Dabine, a soothsayer).

Certain practices of fetish priests, such as giving preferential treatment and being discriminative hinder people's participation in matters concerning the institution. They also limit accountability and transparency by withholding

certain information from the public. Again most of them operate independent of the will of the people because in most cases, the wishes of the deities are paramount and so according to a head of decentralised department (who wants to remain anonymous):

Most of them are dictators and very secretive. In fact, there is no democracy in the fetish institution, that institution must be abolished, and those who refuse should be prosecuted. They are the people promoting all the bad practices including female genital mutilation.

Concerning the issue of fear, there were instances where people were afraid to talk ill of soothsayers in particular. A 38 year old settler commented "I do not want to comment on those people". An opinion leader commented "I decline to say anything concerning them". Such tendencies do not promote democracy. On the other hand, the issue of fear could be overturned to promote development.

The possibility of collaboration between traditional authorities and government actors

Most government actors (88.2%) said traditional authorities help them in mobilising resources such as communal labour and revenue. In this regard, the Area Council Chairperson for Hamile said, without the help of some chiefs, revenue collection would have been very difficult for him. On the part of chiefs, 76.9% said government actors have assisted in the provision of social amenities such as KVIP's, schools and clinics. A few chiefs (5.8%) said the activities of

government officials such as discrimination in favour of party members, looking down on the culture of the people and not including them in the development planning process tend to limit their work. One government actor said traditional authorities are not co-operative.

Tables 27 and 28 reveal that though there are a few complaints, the potential for government actors and traditional authorities to work together is greater than their potential to work on parallel lines. What is left are the structures to make this partnership a reality.

Table 27: How Government Actors Aid the Work of Traditional Authorities

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
No comment	1	1.9
Has neither aided nor limited our work	8	15.4
They have provided social amenities	40	76.9
Their activities tend to limit our work	3	5.8
Total	52	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Table 28: How Traditional Authorities Aid the Work of Government actors

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
No Comment	1	5.9
Not Cooperative	1	5.9
Aided in Mobilising Resources	15	88.2
Total	17	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Comments of chiefs concerning traditional authorities and government actors

Most chiefs (57.7 %) complained that government officials do not put them in the picture when planning for development activities. The chief of Duori said “there would be effective work at the local level if traditional authorities are put in the picture”.

Table 29: Comments of Chiefs Concerning Traditional Authorities and Government Actors

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Do not put us in the picture	30	57.7
We are partners in development	13	25.0
Our status have been lowered by government actors	9	17.3
Total	52	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

Table 30: Comments of Government Actors Concerning Traditional Authorities and the Work of the Assembly

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
No comment	1	5.9
Lack of education limit their performance	2	11.8
They are good assistants	14	82.4
Total	17	100

Source: Field Survey, 2005

To conclude, one may say that to a large extent, traditional authorities are relevant in the promotion of democracy at the local level despite their inadequacies, short comings, or imperfections. These can be attributed to the limitations of human intelligence, foresight, and experience (Ford, 1954). The task ahead now is how the creative development planner will design structures that will ensure the effective participation of traditional rulers in local governance to achieve good governance.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Good governance, which can simply be defined as democratic governance, is now considered as the measure of a country's development. The issues of empowerment, participation, equity, conflict resolution/management, accountability, sustainability and transparency have dominated development dialogue. In others words, the interest of the governed has become more paramount than any economic indicator. The human dimension has necessitated the reconsideration of traditional institutions.

Summary of findings

The main objective of the study was to examine the role of traditional authorities in local governance. The rationale of the study was to produce a document that will highlight the potentials of traditional authorities to promote local level development. This will in turn serve as an eye opener to development actors in development planning considering the fact that local level development is almost impossible without traditional authorities. In all, 381 people including chiefs, opinion leaders and government officials were interviewed using questionnaires. Focus group discussions were organised for landlords, family

heads, fetish priests, identified women leaders, and identified group leaders. An in-depth interview was used to solicit information from the Paramount Chief and his elders. The sampling procedure was generally purposive.

Apart from a few weaknesses, there are aspects of traditional institutions that can push development forward (Kendie et al, 2004). As the present study reveals, there are more elements that promote development than their limitations.

Conclusion and policy implications of the findings

So many development projects have failed due to failure to recognise the role of traditional institutions (Kendie and Guri 2004). This problem might continue if structures are not put in place to make the provision to include traditional authorities in development planning practicable. The perception that traditional authorities are backward and so do not promote development have been allayed by the findings of this study that, the democratic elements outweigh the undemocratic aspects. Thus, traditional roles are consistent with modern government roles. Government needs to pursue a more pragmatic and integrated local development planning, implementation and assessment.

The study also found that traditional authorities, despite their lack of formal education are highly respected by the people. Therefore if people are now the target of governance, then it suggests that the government must formulate policies that will empower traditional authorities to maximise their full potential. This implies that government needs to train/educate traditional

authorities on good governance to make them more relevant to modern governance. About 85% of chiefs said they consulted with local government staff, meanwhile local government staff said they only need their help when they are operating within the community. This suggests that, in order to actualise the plans for chiefs to contribute their quota to the development process, a conscious effort should be made at joint planning between government officials and traditional authorities where the two will operate as the same people seeking a common goal but with different background, consulting each other for the good of the local area.

The study found that there was a low level of consultation. Government officials thought they were there to execute the plans of the central government and so though they acknowledged the importance of traditional institutions, in the traditional setting, they did not see their need in the work of the District Assembly. This suggests that government should encourage more research into traditional institutions, and disseminate the findings to enhance the understanding of government officials on traditional institutions. There is also the need for government to define roles and responsibilities, and to encourage a positive attitude of local government staff towards traditional authorities through constant dialogue.

The study found that traditional authorities perform roles that are similar to that of the government staff at the local level. Chiefs are the administrative and political heads of their communities, ensuring the general welfare of everyone under them by doing things that will satisfy them socially,

economically and politically. The landlords are considered the traditional security guards of their communities, faithfully guarding against any harmful thing that will affect the environment or members of the communities both spiritually and physically. "It looks like the work of the landlord is what has been lifted and put in the assembly" (Charles Gandie, a landlord).

Family heads perform the same role as chiefs but at the family level. This suggests that family heads could be agents for disseminating government policies down to the root of the local level. So far, it appears one of the agents responsible for bringing governance to the door steps of people was being ignored. It is recommended that government identifies and sensitises this important group in the decentralisation process.

Fetish priests, comprising traditional healers and soothsayers are the traditional doctors, healing complex diseases, instilling fear in people through taboos to enforce traditional laws that are meant for sustainable development. All these traditional authorities jointly resolve disputes amicably before they escalate into crisis, promote acts that conform to the dictates of sound environmental management and see it as a spiritual responsibility to treat people equally.

It was observed that, traditional authorities have more elements that enhance good governance than limitation, though these elements were in degrees. The number one democratic element found was empowerment, the number two being conflict management. Accountability was 3rd, participation 4th, equity 5th, sustainability 6th while transparency was 7th.

The study also found that traditional authorities promote two very important democratic ingredients; these are conflict resolution and sustainability. This is evidenced in the Dagbon (the Dagomba traditional area) crisis, where for four years the government had been struggling to settle disputes, until the traditional council came in to do what for so many years government committees have not been able to do. This suggests the need to formally empower traditional authorities to settle traditional disputes like land disputes, chieftaincy disputes and marriage disputes.

One other major observation of the study was that when it comes to actual work on the ground, it is the landlords who really work, chiefs play administrative role in harmonising the various traditional authorities and acting as a unifying factor. It is the landlord who installs the chief, he resolves chieftaincy disputes in consultation with other chiefs, he takes care of the people and is responsible to them but under the supervision of the chief, he is the environmental protectionist, and so on. The chief's role is to ensure that the landlord has done his work. It is therefore, strongly recommended that landlord should be given attention in the decentralisation process.

Another important observation of the study was that, democratic elements or elements of good governance were present in traditional institutions long before the decentralisation process of 1988. This suggests that traditional institutions are the foundation stone of local government, therefore the claim that these modern ideas are not compatible with traditional institutions are not right, it only portrays the ignorance of the modern man about traditional

institutions and confirms the intelligence of the traditional man in conceiving ideas of governance that have withstood the test of time and conforming with modern ideas. This implies that there is the need to learn from traditional authorities, compare it with the ideas coming from the West and make compromises that will suit our culture instead of adopting these things wholesale. Importing ideas into a culture that are not compatible with it will produce blunders and more conflicts which will in the end undermine good governance.

The study observed that, in sustaining resources, traditional authorities have been steadfast in their defence of land and its resources (Ware, 1975). What this suggests to government is that, as much as traditional authorities have their shortfalls when it comes to land issues, there is the need for government to dialogue with them and reach compromises and plan to achieve sustainable development.

Another observation of the study was that, women's participation in traditional governance is low. There is the need for government to make a conscious effort to step up the position of women in the traditional council. There are women, traditionally recognised as virtuous women, mobilising their fellow women, serving as councillors, role models, resolving marriage issues and sensitising their colleagues on their civic rights. It is recommended that such people should be formally recognised by the traditional council and included in their deliberations.

The Jirapa-Lambussie District Assembly including Non-Governmental Organisations should occasionally organise workshops, seminars, talks and so on to educate traditional authorities on the need to promote development by promoting practices that enhance good governance and discarding those that limit development.

Recommendations:

Government

To ensure an effective collaboration between traditional authorities and government officials at the local level, it is recommended that government considers the following:

- Ensure that all development actors include traditional authorities in the planning and implementation of development activities/projects.
- Identify and define roles of development actors at the local level.
- Encourage constant dialogue between traditional authorities and district assembly staff.
- Encourage more research and information dissemination on traditional institutions including the chieftaincy institution at the local level.
- Empower chiefs and use them in revenue mobilisation.

Traditional authorities

Traditional authorities can also ensure effective collaboration between government officials and traditional authorities by considering the following:

- **Abolishing all traditional practices that do not auger well for development.**
- **Constantly dialoguing with local government officials.**
- **Ensuring that women are represented in the traditional council.**
- **Availing themselves to be educated on good governance.**
- **Educating local government officials on the tradition of the people.**

The study does not cover all aspect of traditional institutions in local governance, areas such as, festivals, installation of chiefs, marriage ceremonies and good governance remain unresearched. Indeed, more research on traditional institutions is still needed to enhance our understanding of traditional institutions and good governance and provide adequate literature on the topic.

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APPENDIX 1
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHIEFS
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
RESEARCH ON TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN LOCAL
GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF THE JIRAPA TRADITIONAL AREA.

I am Christiana Kangsangbata, a Master of Philosophy student in Development Studies at the Centre for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast. I am conducting a study and would like to solicit your views on issues related to the above topic. The study seeks to find out the role of traditional authorities in local governance; empowerment, participation, transparency, equity, sustainability, conflict management and accountability and general development. I will also seek your suggestions on how to fuse traditional roles and modern democratic structures to make good governance a reality.

Consent of Respondent.....

(Signature/Thump print)

(Date)

Date..... Time of Interview.....

Section A: Background Information

No.	Question	Response Options
A1.	Name of Authority	<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

A2	Knowledge of any traditional authority?	1. Adequate knowledge 2. Fair knowledge 3. No knowledge
A2b	Explain Answer	..... .....
A3	Knowledge of government actors?	1. Adequate knowledge 2. Fair knowledge 3. No knowledge
A3b	Explain Answer	..... .....
A4a	Do you have any relationship with any traditional authority? (Tick as appropriate)	Yes [] No []
A4b	Explain Answer	.....
A5a	Have you ever collaborated with any traditional authority?(Tick as appropriate)	Yes [] No []
A5b	Explain answer	..... .....

A6a	Do you have any relationship with any government actor? (Tick as appropriate)	Yes [] No []
A6b	Explain Answer	..........
A7a	Do you collaborate with any government institution? (Tick as appropriate)	Yes [] No []
A7b	Explain Answer	...............

Section B: Definition and Importance of Traditional Authorities in Local Governance

B1. Which of the following will you accept as the definition of local governance? (Tick as appropriate)

1. The process in which governing outcomes depend on the interaction of a complex set of institutions and actors drawn from but also beyond local government.....[]

2. The process of bringing governance to the doorsteps of the beneficiaries of governance
.....[]

3. The strategies put in place to achieve local level development
.....[]

4. Governance at the grass root level

..... []

0. None of the above

B2. Which of the following will you say is the aim of local governance? (Tick as appropriate)

1. To enhance rural development

2. To promote Democracy

3. To ensure fair distribution of resources

0. None of the above

3a. How will you rate the importance of traditional authorities in local governance? (Tick as appropriate).

1. Very important

2. Important

3. Not important

B3b. Explain your

answer.....

Section C: Role of Traditional Authorities in Local Level Development.

C1. What role do you play as a chief?

.....

C1b. How does this role facilitate development in this traditional area?

Economic.....

Political.....

Social.....

.....

C2. How has any of the government institutions so far aided or limited your progress in this traditional area?

.....

C3. What general comment do you have on traditional authorities in relation to your work in this traditional area?

.....

C4. How are you affected by the roles of the following government officials?

Title	Positive Effect	Negative effect	Explain
Member of Parliament			Positive.....
District Chief Executive			Positive.....
Presiding Member			Positive.....
Assemblymen			Positive.....

Area Council			Positive.....
Chair Persons			
Other			Positive..... Negative

Section D: Traditional Authorities and Democracy

In what ways will you say any of the traditional authorities you are familiar with promote or limit the following democratic elements?

D1. Empowerment

Response options.....1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?.....

How they promote

.....

How they limit

.....

D1. Participation

Response options.....1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?.....

How they promote?

.....

How they limit?

.....

D1. Equity

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional

authorities.....

How they promote?

.....

How they limit?

.....

D1. Conflict resolution

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authority?

.....

How they promote?

.....

How they limit?

.....

Sustainability

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?

.....
How they Promote?

.....
.....
How they limit?

.....
Transparency

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?

.....
How they promote?

.....
How they limit?

.....
Accountability

Response options.....1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?

.....
How they promote?

.....
How they limit?

.....
Resource Management

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?
.....

.How they promote?
.....

How they limit?
.....

Section E: Recommendations

E1. With an example state how you will fuse any traditional values which you think promote democratic ideas into modern institutions to achieve development?
.....

E2. Any comment you have on traditional authorities and democracy.....

E3. What should be done to traditional practices that do not auger well for development (illustrate with an example, using a negative traditional practice.

Section F: Background Information

No.	Question	Response Option
F1	Sex	Male.....1 Female.....2
F2	Age	[].....
F3	Occupation	[].....
F4	Highest level of education attained	None..... Primary.....2 Middle/JSS.....3 Secondary/SSS.....4 Higher.....5
F5	Religion	No Religion.....1 Catholic.....2 Protestant.....3 Charismatic.....4 Muslim.....
F6	Name of Compound	.....
F7	Section	.....
F8	Name of respondent	

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

**RESEARCH ON TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN LOCAL
GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF THE JIRAPA TRADITIONAL AREA.**

I am Christiana Kangsangbata, a Master of Philosophy student in Development Studies at the Centre for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast. I am conducting a study and would like to solicit your views on issues related to the above topic. The study seeks to find out the role of traditional authorities in local governance; empowerment, participation, transparency, equity, sustainability, resource management, conflict management, accountability and general development. I will also seek your suggestions on how to fuse traditional authorities and modern democratic structures to make good governance a reality.

Consent of Respondent.....

(Signature/Thump print)

(Date)

Date.....Time of Interview

Section A: Background Issues on Traditional Authorities and Local Governance

No.	Question	Response Options
A1.	Name of Institution	.....
A2	Knowledge of traditional authorities	4. Adequate knowledge 5. Fair knowledge 6. No knowledge
A2 b	Explain	.....
A3	Knowledge of formal institutions	1. Adequate knowledge 2. Fair knowledge 3. No knowledge
A3 b	Explain	.....
A4 a	Relationship with any Traditional authority (Tick as appropriate)	Yes [] No []
A4 b	Explain Answer	.....

A5	Collaboration	Yes []
a	with traditional authority? (Tick as appropriate)	No []
A5	Explain answer	.....
b		
A6	Relationship	Yes[]
a	with any formal institution(Tick as appropriate)	No []
A6	Explain Answer	.....
b		
A7	Collaboration	Yes []
a	with any formal institution(Tick as appropriate)	No []
A7	Explain Answer	.....
b		

Section B: Definition and of Traditional Authorities in Local Governance

B1. Which of the following will you accept as the definition of local governance? (Tick as appropriate)

1. The process in which governing outcomes depend on the interaction of a complex set of institutions and actors drawn from but also beyond local government.....[]

2. The process of bringing governance to the doorsteps of the beneficiaries of governance
.....[]

3. The strategies put in place to achieve local level development
.....[]

4. Governance at the grass root level
.....[]

0. None of the above []

B2. Which of the following will you say is the aim of local governance (Tick as appropriate)

- 1. To enhance rural development
- 2. To promote Democracy
- 3. To ensure fair distribution of resources
- 4. Any other?

.....

3a. How will you rate the importance of traditional authorities in local governance? (Thick as appropriate)

- 1. Very important
- 2. Important

3. Not important

B3b. Explain your

answer.....

Section C: Role of Government Actors in Local Level Development.

C1. What role do you play as a local government actor

.....

C1b. How does this role facilitate development in this traditional area?

Economic.....

Political.....

Social.....

C2. How has any of the traditional authority so far aided or limited your progress in this traditional area?

.....

C3. What general comment do you have on traditional authorities in relation to your work in this traditional area?

.....

C4. How are you affected by the roles of the following traditional authorities?

Authority	Positive	Negative	Explain
	Effect	effect	

Chiefs			Positive.....
Tengdamba			Positive.....
Family heads			Positive.....
Opinion leaders			Positive.....
Fetish priests			Positive.....
Other			Positive.....

Section D: Traditional Authority and Democracy

In what ways will you say any of the traditional authorities you are familiar with promote or limit the following democratic elements?

D1. Empowerment

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?

.....
How they promote?

.....
How they limit?

.....
D1. Participation

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional

authorities.....

How they promote?

.....
How they limit?

.....
D1. Equity

Response options..... Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional

authorities?.....

How they promote?

.....
How they limit?

.....
D1. Conflict resolution

Response options.....1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?

.....

How they promote?

.....

.....

How they limit?

.....

.....

Sustainability

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?.....

How they promote?

.....

How they limit?

.....

Transparency

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?

.....

How they promote?

.....

How they limit?

.....
Accountability

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?
.....

How they promote?
.....

How they limit?
.....

Resource Management

Response options..... Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?
.....

How they promote?
.....

How they limit?
.....

Section E: Recommendations

E1. With an example state how you will fuse any of the traditional values which you think promote democratic ideas into modern institutions to achieve development?

.....

E2. Any comment you have on traditional authorities and democracy.....

E3. What should be done to traditional values that do not auger well for development (illustrate with an example, using a negative traditional practice.

.....

Section F: Background Information

No.	Question	Response Option
F1	Sex	Male.....1 Female.....2
F2	Age	[].....
F3	Occupation	[].....
F4	Highest level of education attained	None.....1 Primary.....2 Middle/JSS.....3 Secondary/SSS.....4 Higher.....5

F5	Religion	No Religion.....1 Catholic.....2 Protestant.....3 Charismatic.....4 Muslim
F6	Name of Compound	.....
F7	Section	.....
F8	Name of respondent	

APPENDIX 3

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR OPINION LEADERS AND SETTLERS

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

RESEARCH ON TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN LOCAL

GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF THE JIRAPA TRADITIONAL AREA.

I am Christiana Kangsangbata, a Master of Philosophy student in Development Studies at the Centre for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast. I am conducting a study and would like to solicit your views on issues related to the above topic. The study seeks to find out the role of traditional authorities in local governance; empowerment, participation, transparency, equity, sustainability, conflict management and accountability, and general development. I will also seek your suggestions on how to fuse traditional authorities and modern democratic structures to make good governance a reality.

Consent of Respondent.....

(Signature/Thump print)

Date.....Time of Interview.....

Section A: Background Issues on Traditional Authorities and Local Governance

No.	Question	Response Options
A1.	Name of Institution?	.....
A2	Knowledge of traditional authorities?	1.adequate knowledge 2. Fair knowledge 3. No knowledge
A2b	Explain Answer	.....
A3	Knowledge of government Actors? (Tick as appropriate)	1.Adequate knowledge 2.Fair knowledge 3. No knowledge
A3b	Explain Answer	.....
A4a	Relationship with any traditional authority? (Tick as appropriate)	Yes[] No []
A4b	Explain Answer	.....

A5a	Collaboration with any traditional authority? (Tick as appropriate)	Yes [] No []
A5b	Explain answer	..........
A6a	Do you have any relationship with any government actor? (Tick as appropriate)	Yes [] No []
A6b	Explain Answer	..........
A7a	Collaboration with any government institution? (Tick as appropriate)	Yes [] No []
A7b	Explain Answer	..........

Section B: Definition and importance of traditional authorities in local governance

B1. Which of the following will you accept as the definition of local governance? (Tick as appropriate)

1. The process in which governing outcomes depend on the interaction of a complex set of institutions and actors drawn from but also beyond local government.....[]

2. The process of bringing governance to the doorsteps of the beneficiaries of governance.
.....[]

3. The strategies put in place to achieve local level development
.....[]

4. Governance at the grass root level
.....[]

0. None of the above

B2. Which of the following will you say is the aim of local governance? (Tick as appropriate)

1. To enhance rural development

2. To promote Democracy

3. To ensure fair distribution of resources

0. None of the above

3a. How will you rate the importance of traditional institutions in local governance? (Thick as appropriate).

1. Very important

2. Important

3. Not important

B3b. Explain your

answer.....

Section C: Role of traditional authorities in local level development.

C1. How are you affected by the roles of the following traditional authorities?

Authority	Positive Effect	Negative effect	Explain
Chiefs			Positive.....
Tengdamba			Positive.....
Family Heads			Positive.....
Opinion Leaders			Positive.....
Fetish Priests			Positive..... Negative.....
Other			Positive..... Negative.....

C2. What role do traditional authorities play in this traditional area?

.....

C3. How do these roles or positions facilitate development in this traditional area?

Chiefs

Economic.....

Political.....

Social.....

Tengdamba

Economic.....

Political.....

Social.....

Family Heads

Economic.....

Political.....

Social.....

Fetish Priests

Economic.....

Political.....

Social.....

Opinion Leaders

Economic.....

Political.....

Social.....

C3. How has any of the government institutions so far aided or limited your progress in this traditional area?

.....

C4. What general comment do you have on traditional authorities in relation to your work in this traditional area?.....

C5. How are you affected by the roles of the following government officials?

title	Positive Effect	Negative effect	Explain
Member of Parliament			Positive.....
District Chief Executive			Positive.....
Presiding Member			Positive.....
Assemblymen			Positive.....

Area Council Chair Persons			Positive.....
Other			Positive.....

Section D: Traditional Authorities and Democracy

In what ways will you say any of the traditional authorities you are familiar with promote or limit the following democratic elements?

D1. Empowerment

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?.....

How they promote?

.....

How they limit?

.....

D1. Participation

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?.....

How they promote?

.....

How they limit?

.....
D1. Equity

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?.....

How they promote?
.....

How they limit?
.....

D1. Conflict resolution

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?
.....

How they promote?
.....

How they limit?
.....

Sustainability

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?
.....

How they promote?
.....

How they limit?

.....

Transparency

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?

.....

How they promote?

.....

How they limit?

.....

Accountability

Response options..... Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?

.....

How they promote?

.....

How they limit?

.....

Resource Management

Response options..... 1. Yes [] 2. No []

Name of traditional authorities?

.....

How they promote?

.....

How they limit?

.....

Section E: Recommendations

E1. With an example state how you will fuse any of the traditional values which you think promote democratic ideas into modern institutions to achieve development?

.....

E2. Any comment you have on traditional authorities and democracy

.....

E3. What should be done to traditional practices that do not auger well for development (illustrate with an example, using a negative traditional practice.

Section F: Background Information

No.	Question	Response Option
F1	Sex	Male.....1 Female.....2
F2	Age[]
F3	Occupation[]

F4	Highest level of education attained	None.....2 Middle/JSS.....3 Secondary/SSS.....4 Higher.....5
F5	Religion	No religion.....1 Catholic.....2 Protestant.....3 Charismatic.....4 Muslim.....5 Traditional.....6
F6	Name of Compound	.....
F7	Section	.....
F8	Name of respondent	

Thank you

APPENDIX 4

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ASSEMBLYMEN/WOMEN

Section A

Introduction: Self – introduction of respondents, which include age, occupation, sex, ethnic background religion and educational status.

Section B

Identifying Traditional Authorities and Their Role in the Traditional Setting

1. Please mention traditional institutions that exist in the Jirapa traditional area?
2. Who are the leaders or those involved of these institutions?
3. Can you please tell me the role of these authorities in the Jirapa traditional area? (Pick one traditional title at a time)
4. What specifically do they do in the traditional setting (Pick one item at a time for discussion)?
5. Could you please tell me how these authorities facilitate community development?

Section C

Role of traditional authorities in local governance

6. What do you like about traditional authorities and what do you not like about them? (Check for consistency with earlier questions).

7. In what ways does/do any of the traditional roles conform to your role in the Jirapa traditional area?

8. How have the traditional authorities you mentioned so far aided or limited your performance?

9. What general comment do you have on traditional authorities in the Jirapa traditional area and your work in this district?

10. How do you see the traditional authorities in promoting/limiting participation, equity, empowerment, sustainability, transparency, resource creation/management and accountability? (pick one item at a time with one traditional institution and probe for the potential of traditional authorities in either promoting or hindering these)?

11. Has the discussion so far reminded you of any traditional practice that can hinder or promote any of the variables under discussion but which you forgot to mention (probe further for roles in traditional authorities)?

Section D

Suggestions

12. Please tell me what you would do to the above-mentioned traditional practices/values, which you think, promote democratic ideas and modern institutions to achieve democracy?

13. How about those you think do not promote democratic ideas (probe for the possibility of turning the weakness into strength)

14. What don't you like about any of the institutions and why (again, pick one institution after the other and check for consistency on the same issue by the respondent).

15. Generally, what can you say about traditional authorities and local governance? (Probe for more information on issues raised by respondents that are relevant to the study, seek clarifications and explanations)

16. Apart from the issues raised above, what would you say about traditional authorities and general development? (Probe for more information on traditional authorities and development indicators that might have not been mentioned in this interview guide)

Thank you.

APPENDIX 5

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES

Section A

Introduction: Self – introduction of respondents, which include age, occupation, sex, ethnic background educational status and religion.

Section B

Assessment of respondents' understanding of local governance

1. Please tell me your view about good governance?
- 2a. Generally, what is your view about local government staff?
- 2b. In what ways do they interact with you?
3. On what occasions? (Probe to know the level of interaction)

Section C

Role of traditional authorities in the Traditional Setting

4. What are your roles? (Pick one item at a time)
5. Which of these would you say enhances development and which ones do not (probe to know why)
6. Could you please tell me how your work facilitates community development?
7. Please tell me the relevance of your role to modern governance (probe for how and why)?
8. Which ones do you think are relevant, which ones hinder development (probe further to know reasons for answer given)?

Section D

Role of traditional authorities in local governance

9. What do you like about the modern local governance systems and what do you not like about them?
- 10 In what ways does/do any of the government official roles conform to your role in the Jirapa traditional area?
11. How does your role promote/limit Participation, Equity, Empowerment, Sustainability, Transparency, Resource creation/management, Accountability and Conflict resolution/ management (pick one item at a time with traditional system and probe for the potential of traditional systems in either promoting or hindering these)?
12. Has the discussion so far reminded you of any role that can hinder or promote any of the variables under discussion but which you forgot to mention (Probe further for roles of traditional authorities)?
13. How have any of the roles of government officials aided or limited your performance?
14. Given the opportunity what would you do to the government structures that conform to your roles and those that do not?

Section E: Suggestions

15. What do you have to say about the roles of your sector, which you think do not promote development in general, and modern governance in particular?
16. How about those that promote development and modern governance?

17. What general comment do you have on modern local government in the district and traditional authorities (find from respondents the possibility of merging the two)?

19. Any other comment on these issues?

Thank you