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THE GONJA-NAWURI CONFLICT IN RETROSPECT: ACHIEVING
PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN A TROUBLED LAND OF NORTHERN
GHANA

BY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature Date

Name:

Supervisor's Declaration

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

Principal Supervisor's Signature..... Date

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Co-Supervisor's Signature..... Date

Name:

ABSTRACT

This study examined the roles of indigenous actors and the complementary efforts made by Government and Civil Society Organizations to resolve the deadlock between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups in the Kpandai district of Ghana. Classical conflict theories such as primordial, constructionist and instrumentalist were employed to underpin the causes of the conflict. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were employed to obtain data from the respondents, while purposive sampling technique was used to select 96 respondents who had in-depth knowledge of the conflict. The analysis revealed that the government of Ghana employed multiple strategies such as deployment of security personnel, setting up of committees – the Justice Ampiah Committee, and the Permanent Peace Negotiation Team to manage and resolve the conflict but to no avail. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) such as the Nairobi Peace Initiative only succeeded in opening communication between the conflict parties in Kumasi but could not also resolve the conflict. The study also revealed that interveners sidelined indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms and local authorities such as the chiefs, religious leaders, the gerontocratic approach and Tengdana- all embedded in the local culture of resolving conflict. The study further discovered that endogenisation of conflict resolution, where both indigenous knowledge and interveners' roles are combined is best fit to resolve inter-ethnic conflicts. It is recommended, among others, that the government, CSOs, and local actors should complement the roles of each other to find a lasting solution to the conflict.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Hajia Talhatu Issah and Alhaji Muntari Ahamadul-Rufai Yahaya as well as all persons who lost their lives during the conflict in Kpandai and Salaga Districts.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AADR	African Alternative Dispute Resolution
AU	African Union
BNI	Bureau of National Investigation
CDR	Committees of the Defence of the Revolution
CECOTAPS	Centre for Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
DCE	District Chief Executive
EJTCC	Enlarged Joint Togoland Consultative Commission
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GPRTU	Ghana Private Road Transport Union
GYA	Gonjaland Youth Association
JTC	Joint Togoland Council
KOYA	Konkomba Youth Association
KPA	Kumasi Peace Accord
MP	Member of Parliament
NADMO	National Disaster Management Organization
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

NMP	National Mobilization Program
NORRIP	Regional Office of Prospects of Development in Northern Ghana
NPC	National Peace Council
NPI	Nairobi Peace Initiative
NTA	Nawuri Traditional Area
NYA	Nawuri Youth Association
NYEP	National Youth Employment Program
OAU	Organisation of African Union
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
PBWG	Peacebuilding Working Group
PPNT	Permanent Peace Negotiating Team
REGSEC	Northern Regional Security Council
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
VRA	Volta River Authority
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Northern Ghana is ethnically and culturally heterogeneous (Mbowura, 2014). The region consists of more than 16 diverse ethnic groups with different cultural, historical and religious backgrounds. The existence of multi ethnic group identities in a society by itself does not constitute a problem. It however triggers problems when it leads to contradictions, which arise from differences in interests, ideas, ideologies, orientations, perceptions and tendencies. Such contradictions constitute conflict (Agyeman, 2008). Durkheim observes that it is difficult to achieve collective conscience, social integration and peaceful co-existence among people with mixed backgrounds (Durkheim, 1933).

Inter-ethnic conflicts have existed in the Northern region of Ghana involving the Mamprusi, Dagbomba, Nanumba, Gonja kingdoms and the acephalous societies of the Kusasi, Konkomba and Nawuri for a long time. There are several ethnic groups with different histories, culture and languages in the region leading to some extent a lack of sense of oneness and belongingness. The diverse nature of the region hinders social integration and peaceful coexistence among the people as their differences are deep rooted in history, culminating in sporadic conflicts among the chiefly ethnic groups and the stateless ethnic groups. Awedoba (2011) reveals that interventions have been made to resolve the conflicts to no avail. This is because the interventions sidelined indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms and focused mainly on the western approaches to conflict resolution.

According to Amenumey (2011) the immediate problem that confronted the British on assumption of power was restoration of peace, order and confidence among the people, both in the centralised and acephalous societies. The British lacked personnel to administer the new colony and this situation dictated that they appoint indigenes to rule. With this system, the chiefs were seen as part of the machinery of government but the laws that they were asked to enforce, were passed by the British. The success of indirect rule largely depended on the presence of a strong centralized administration (chiefs with absolute authority) with coercive power and necessary institutions to enforce the values.

Awedoba (2011) argues that indirect rule, was the cheapest and simplest way of governing vast areas; relying on a pre existing local government. This policy led to a marriage of convenience between the British colonisers and traditional authorities. The British reinforced the powers of the chiefs and empowered them to rule the non-chiefly peoples placed under them. Indeed, as early as 1898, Lt. Col. Northcott, the first Commissioner and Commandant of the area declared the urgency to utilise the local authority and give them support, if they demonstrate good behaviour. The colonial administration, therefore, restructured power relations between the chiefs and their people in favour of the former. This further entrenched the superordinate and subordinate relationships between the chiefly and acephalous societies, thus entrenching and perpetuating the existing social inequality among them (Mahama, 2009). Another political power that exerted pressure in the East Gonja was the Asante factor. It should be noted that the Asante influence in

East Gonja in the pre-colonial era did not affect the relationships between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups. It rather reinforced it. They fought together as allies against the Asante invasion of Kpembu in 1744-5 (Brukum, 2002, Mbowura, 2012). The only external powers which meddled into their affairs were the Germans and British colonial expeditions.

According to Mahama (2009) between August and October 1911, J. H. Armitage, with permission from Accra, started implementing the indirect rule policy. The non-chiefly groups in modern Upper East Region were amalgamated with the Mamprugu state under the Nayiri, the Overlord of the Mamprugu kingdom. The Dagaaba and Sisala were also put under the Wa Na in the Upper West Region. Similarly, the Konkomba and Chokosi were assigned to the Ya Na, the Overlord of the Dagomba. The Nawuri, Nchumuru and other non-chiefly groups such as the Vagla and Tampulima were submerged into the Gonja kingdom under Yagbonwura, the King of Gonja. In order to authenticate indirect rule, conferences were held to draft constitutions for the recreated states. The most important of these conferences were those held in Gonja in 1930 at Yapei, Dagbon at Yendi in 1930, Kusasi at Bawku in 1931, Mamprusi at Gambaga in 1932 and Wala at Wa in 1933 (Mbowura, 2014; Brukum, 2006 & Awedoba, 2011). By and large, the implementation of indirect rule, led to a situation whereby numerous ethnic groups such as the Nawuri, Nchumuru, Mo and Vagla were made subjects of Gonja chiefs; large segments of Konkomba and Chokosi were put under the Dagomba kingdom; the Grunsi and the B'Moba under the paramount chief of Mamprusi; and the Dagarti and Sisala to the Wala chiefs. In this way, the British hoped to rationalize existing social and political structures for administrative purposes

without regard for the socio-cultural differences of the northern people (Ladouceur, 1979, p. 43).

The ethnic groups are “differentiated by their traditional, cultural, social and political backgrounds but were brought together and forced to live under the colonial administration” without any regard for their autonomy. These colonial practices fomented intermittent social troubles among the ethnic groups (Agyeman, 2008, p. 79). The policy also denied the acephalous tribes of chieftaincy titles and paramountcies. This is because an ethnic group is only qualified to attain paramountcy status, if the said ethnic group possesses land. In retrospect, the problems between the Nawuri and Gonja emanated from the policy of indirect rule which culminated into the subjugation of the Nawuri ethnic group politically under the hegemony of the Gonja ethnic group (Mbowura, 2014).

The violence caused social, economic and political implications. There was depletion of human resources in Kpandai. The youth who were engaged in agriculture, civil servants, teachers and health workers were displaced and deserted the area. Food production suffered as farms were burnt, traders from other places left the area which leading to the devastation of the local economy. The conflict also coincided with the 1992 general election, causing the suspension of the election in Kpandai because of lack of security (Awedoba, 2011)

Statement of the problem

According to Brukum (2006) the Northern Region of Ghana is an ethnically and culturally heterogeneous region, as it consists of several ethnic

groups with diverse languages. The groups differ in many ways culturally, historically and socially. The plurality of ethnic groups poses a challenge to social integration and peaceful co-existence, in the sense that the groups do not share a sense of belonging. The diversity in culture, clash of identity, and ethnicity creates consciousness among the people through which resources are mobilised for inter-ethnic conflicts. Rothschild (1997, p. 3) argues that “interactions between state and society assume a constant engagement of rival interests in the contemporary political arena among various groups that have mobilised to secure public resources from those in authority at the political centre”. The heterogeneous nature of the region allows ethnic entrepreneurs such as leaders of youth associations, politicians contesting elections, chiefs, and local community elites to provide leadership for mobilisation of local people into collective actors. The socio-political inequality manifested in the social structures, creates an avenue for perennial engagement of rival ethnic interests (Mbowura, 2014).

Kendie et al. (2014) and Mbowura (2002) argue that Northern Ghana has been ensnared in all forms of conflicts for several decades. Tsikata and Seini (2004), observed that competition for chieftaincy skins and litigation over the land tenure accounted for the outbreaks of the conflicts. Tonah (2007) holds the view that the struggle for autonomy, litigation over land tenure systems, chieftaincy disputes, competition for power and the demand for representation on local and national government bodies are largely responsible for deepening differences and conflicts among the people. For instance, the Gonja ethnic group was engaged in a series of wars with their neighbours. The Gonja and Nawuri have engaged in protracted and intractable social conflicts

for about nine decades. For instance, they fought in 1935, 1991 and 1992 (Mbowura, 2014). The Nawuri were supported by the Konkomba, Bassari, Kotokoli and Nchumuru ethnic groups against the Gonja during the 1991 and 1992 conflicts as they felt that the rule of the Gonja was tyrannical and unbearable (Awedoba, 2011).

According to Ladouceur (1979) and Awedoba (2011), like most inter-ethnic conflicts in Northern Ghana, the underlining causes of conflicts between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups could be associated with the colonial policy of indirect rule introduced in the Northern Territories in 1932, which integrated the Nawuri into the Gonja kingdom to enhance government's effort of rationalising existing socio-political structures for administrative expediency. Agyeman (2008) and Brukum (2007) observed that all these conflicts were fought because of the desire of the non-centralised ethnic groups to free themselves from the centralised groups.

During the pre-colonial administration, the Chief was responsible only to his people. If his rule became unacceptable to them, he could be deposed, as a result of an elaborate structure of checks and balances, to prevent the ruler from becoming authoritarian. With the colonial policy, a ruler was accountable to the British Colonial master as he could only become a chief upon the agreement of the former. The ruler was compelled to implement policies to please the British officials to the detriment of his people, who lacked the freedom to register their displeasure. This bred hatred and antagonism between the chiefs and their subjects (Mahama, 2009). According to Nnoli (1998) the colonial policy compelled the people to come to terms with foreign ideas and forms of political ideologies such as nationalism, democracy, federalism,

secularism, separation of powers and political leadership. These foreign inputs shaped the perception, goals and relationships between political actors without, however, melting the ethnic groups into a single entity. These subjugated groups did not forget of their past and begun agitating against their domination by the chiefly groups during and after the colonial administration (Agyeman, 2008).

The observation of Awedoba (2011) supports this argument that no ethnic group can be taken for granted because of its numerical strength or, for that matter, its minority status. Subjugated people who once accepted their place, now assert their rights, and demand to be treated as equals through redistribution of land and other leverages. According to Brukum (2002) the acephalous tribes resented the possession and monopoly of land in the hands of the chiefly groups and the tribute they had to pay to them. Some of the acephalous groups, such as the Konkomba and Nawuri, argued that they were the aboriginal people and the chiefdoms came to invade their settlements and consequently imposed their rule on them. In view of this argument, they maintained that the land belonged to them. For instance, the Nawuri protested against the Gonja rule in 1935 (Brukum, 2002).

The Ghanaian democratic evolution from 1957 exacerbated the problems of the ethnic groups as population has become a sensitive issue in politics. It is noted that the population of the acephalous societies had increased tremendously. According to Kirby (2007) the 2000 Population Census recorded a total of 783,000 of non-chiefly peoples in the Northern Region. It also recorded a figure of 772,093 of the chiefly people denoting that the former had more population than the latter, and this means more demand for representation

in national and regional politics. This indeed is a threat to the established traditional authority in the area which is based on ethnicity and control of land (Tonah 2007).

For sometime now, conflict resolution in Ghana has gained prominence with efforts directed towards developing alternative and acceptable mechanisms for dealing with the numerous conflicts (Antwi, 2014). According to Awedoba (2011) several attempts had been made by the state and civil society organisations to resolve the conflict between the Nawuri and Gonja to enhance social integration and peaceful coexistence among them. The roles played by the Inter-NGO Consortium and the Nairobi Peace Initiative under the umbrella of the African Union (AU) are worth mentioning. The AU was charged with the responsibility by government to organise and facilitate a series of peace and reconciliation workshops among the warring groups in Northern Ghana. Five workshops were organised resulting in the Kumasi Accord on March 30, 1996. Some of the conflict parties signed peace accords among themselves resulting into peaceful coexistence in their areas except the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups.

According to Mahama (2003) the inter-ethnic conflicts involving Dagomba against Konkomba, and Nanumba against Konkomba had been relatively resolved by the Kumasi Peace Accord when the primary parties in the conflict signed the peace accord. There had not been an outbreak of violent inter-ethnic conflicts among the signatories to the accord for more than a decade now. The parties to the accord in relation to East Gonja include the Gonja and Nchumuru, Gonja and Konkomba and Gonja and Bassari. The Nawuri have refused to sign any agreement, even though they agreed in

principle that there were several disputes between them and Gonja which required peaceful resolutions (Tonah, 2007). This is evident that the conflict between the two parties is yet to be resolved. The failure by the Gonja and Nawuri to sign a peace accord to end their conflict explains the need for research to explore what can be done differently to resolve the conflict. There had not been any peaceful coexistence between the Nawuri and Gonja in the aftermath of their conflicts since 1992 (Mbowura, 2014).

The conflicts between the Nawuri and Gonja are intractable, persistent and protracted (Mbowura, 2014). In 2006, the two ethnic groups were at the verge of conflict when they encountered a deadlock at the commemoration of the new Kpandai District which was carved out from East Gonja District. The Kpembiwura attended the programme signifying that the land belongs to the Gonja, making the Nawuri to protest against his presence and asked for his exit. The nature of these conflicts was described by Bhaskaran (2003, p. 5) as recurring, 'the end of one conflict is the beginning of another'. Presently, there seems to be a fragile peace in the area as the Gonja are no longer living in Kpandai for fear of being attacked by the Nawuri. However, the Gonja continue to argue that the land of Kpandai and its environs belong to them contrary to the views of the Nawuri.

The Gonja, Konkomba and Bassari signed the peace agreement in 1996 to end hostilities among them. However, the conflict still persists between the Gonja and Nawuri. According to clause 1 (one) of the Accord:

The Nawuri and Gonja recognise that there are several outstanding issues between them that require peaceful resolution. The Kumasi meetings have helped both delegations to articulate and identify these issues (Mahama, 2003, p. 152).

Clause two of the accord states that:

The two delegations (of Gonja and Nawuri) agreed to continue the dialogue that has begun in Kumasi in order to create a conducive environment and understanding that would lead to the resolution of the outstanding issues (Mahama, 2003, p.152).

Clause 4 states that:

The Nawuri agree to assist, in whatever way possible, in resettling the Gonja displaced from Kpandai due to the war between the two ethnic groups in 1991, back in the places from where they were displaced (Mahama, 2003 p. 152).

According to Mahama (2003) implementation of the aforementioned road map to peace, contained in the clauses could have paved the way for peace to return to Kpandai. However, the conflict parties and other interveners including the government were unable to implement these clauses successfully. Therefore, the conflict is not resolved and could recur, despite the fact that there seems to be social interaction among the conflict parties. The current state of the conflict is that the Gonja and Nawuri cannot visit Kpandai and Salaga respectively to transact any business except in day time because of fear of being attacked in the night. None of them is ready to visit and live in each others community. Kendie et al. (2014, p. 50) affirm that the conflicts still persist among the opposing ethnic groups as the substantive issues that caused the conflicts are not addressed. The authors write:

This place is very volatile because there are many ethnic groups with different motives. The conflict between the Gonja and Nawuri is over land ownership which became an ethnic conflict. However, for the Nawuri, it is chieftaincy and access to and control of land. ...the Konkomba here have never challenged any Nawuri man that they own Kpandai. It is rather the Gonja and Nawuri who are fighting over who owns the land.

The need for a paradigm shift in the approach to resolution of the conflicts in the East Gonja Traditional area is inescapable. According to

Abossey (2010) the literature on conflict affirms that disputes will continue to arise irrespective of how humans endeavour to co-habit but conscious efforts are being made by humans to resolve these disputes when they happen, to pave way for peace, social integration and human development. For instance, several efforts have been made by government and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to resolve this inter-ethnic conflict to no avail. It both a human and institutional failure to allow the conflict to proceed and destroy society. Therefore, novel ways and efforts have to be made to explore other means of resolving the deadlock. This study investigates the means whereby the Gonja-Nawuri conflict can be resolved.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to explore how indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms can complement the roles of outsiders in finding solutions to the conflict between the Gonja and the Nawuri ethnic groups in the East Gonja between 1991 and 1994. The specific objectives are to:

1. Assess the causes of the conflict between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups.
2. Assess the effects of the conflict on the Gonja and Nawuri Ethnic groups
3. Assess the intervention mechanisms employed so far to resolve the conflict.
4. Explore indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms that could have been used to resolve the conflict.

Research questions

The objective of this study as stated above could be achieved by obtaining answers to the following questions:

1. What are the causes and effects of the violent conflict between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups in the East Gonja?
2. What interventions have been made to resolve the Gonja-Nawuri conflicts?
3. Why did the interventions fail to resolve the conflict?
4. What are the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in the area?
5. How were these mechanisms utilized to resolve the conflict?

Scope of the study

The study is limited geographically to East Gonja in the Northern Region of Ghana. In terms of scope, concern is on the nature of the Gonja-Nawuri conflicts as well as exploring the efficiency of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms to resolve the conflict. The study covers assessment of what has been done to resolve the conflicts. Theoretically, primordialism, constructionist, instrumentalist, and greed and grievance theories were used to assess the causes of the conflict.

Significance of the study

A lot of work has been done on conflict by Awedoba (2011), Kendie et al (2014) and Brukum (2002); their causes, effects and resolution mechanisms at the international and national levels. The Gonja-Nawuri conflict is a localised conflict attracting the attention of those who are adversely affected by

it but very little has been done on it. This research will reveal the causes and effects of the conflict from the point of view of the respondents to help appreciate what happened in the area. The primordial, colonial policies and institutional injustices in the area that sowed the seeds of discontent in the hearts of the Nawuri and Gonja, pushing them to the use of arms against each other would be explained. The kind of intervention made to resolve the conflict will also come to light.

It is the constitutional mandate of the government to ensure that peace prevails in the country. This research will reveal the kind of interventions made by government and its agencies to resolve the conflict to pave the way for peaceful coexistence among the people. It will also unearth the efforts made by civil society organisations to augment the interventions made by government to end the deadlock between the conflicting parties. The interventions did not resolve the conflict and the area enjoys what can be described as negative peace which refers to relative peace enjoyed by the people as a result of interventions of security agencies and civil society organisations but not by the efforts of the conflict parties. This calls for other approaches to conflict resolution to deal with the stalemate.

The study will propose a conflict resolution model that can be used to resolve the conflicts in the area. This model would emanate from the people. Conflict resolution mechanisms are embedded in all cultures and traditions. The Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups are not an exception. The study will solicit information from the indigenous people on their cultural aspects regarding conflict resolution that could be employed to find solutions to their deadlock.

The study will add to the existing knowledge to conflict management and resolution or come out with new perspectives for ethnic conflict resolution. The work will also be useful to the Salaga and Kpandai District Assemblies to learn methods of handling conflicts whenever a conflict erupts. Additionally, this work will complement the efforts by state actors to resolve conflicts in Northern Ghana.

Organisation of the study

This study is organised into nine chapters. Chapter one is made up of the introductory overview of the study. This includes background to the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study and the significance of the study. This helps the reader to appreciate the main issues to be discussed in the subsequent chapters. Chapter two entirely discusses the theoretical underpinning of the study as well as the conceptual frameworks. Related theories to the work including the conceptual framework are included in chapter two. The third chapter proffers an overview of the conflict among the ethnic groups, categorising the discussions into themes in accordance to objectives specified in chapter one. The fourth chapter focuses on the methodological framework within which the study was conducted. This chapter includes the profile of study area, target population, and methods of data collection. It also explains the research design and justification for using research instruments in pursuing the study.

Chapter five analyses the primary data taking into consideration the objectives of the study. It looks at the causes of the conflict classifying them as social, political and economic. In the same manner, Chapter Six examines the

effects of the ethnic conflict. Additionally, Chapter seven focuses on the interventions made by Government to resolve the conflict. It also include description of the attempts made by the Civil Society Organization to resolve the conflict. The indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms were unearthed in Chapter seven. The conceptualisation of endogenous conflict resolution mechanisms is also discussed in chapter seven while chapter eight examines the theoretical exposition of the findings. Chapter nine provides the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations to the study.

The discussions in each chapter are executed employing themes identified in the data to aid the reader to get an understanding of the topics being discussed by the respondents during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The designation of the ethnic groups is often cited in the course of the analysis, juxtaposing their responses to the secondary data concurrently, to establish the similarities and differences between the primary and the secondary data. This allows the reader at any moment to identify the sources of the responses and which ethnic group is expressing its views in the course of reading.

In conclusion, the chapter entails the background of the study, discussions of the problem, stating the objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, relevance of the study and the organisation of the study. The next discussions focus on the theoretical underpinnings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter reviews research relevant to the theoretical underpinning of the study. The section reviews the theoretical perspectives which pay attention to the understanding of conflict, sociology of peace, primordialist, constructivist and instrumentalist perspectives that are relevant for assessing the causes of the conflict between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups. The chapter also reviews theories of indogenous conflict resolution mechanisms to interpret the roles of culture in conflict management and resolution. In addition, the conceptual framework of the study is constructed using the key concepts in the study to guide the interpretation of the theories. The overview of the inter-ethnic conflict is also highlighted taking into consideration the social, economic and political causes and effects of the conflict as well as the interventions made to resolve the conflict.

Theories of conflict

Awedoba (2011) views conflict as a relationship between two or more parties that centres on differences, disagreement on some issues of interest or concern, divergence, incompatibilities, clash of will and the like; it may involve antagonism and opposition. Coser (1956) perceives conflict as a struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources, in which the aims of conflicting parties are not only to gain the desired values, but also to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals. The nature of the conflicts could be intra or inter group conflicts. In some cases, conflicts are associated with

classification. They operate in the context of differentiation, the articulation of a 'we' and 'they' or distinction of the 'us' and 'them' categorization (Awedoba, 2011). Once humans are inter-related and interdependent, conflicts are unavoidable (Hopson, 2012).

Abossey (2010) argues that some conflicts are non-violent whilst others are violent. The former refers to a disagreement that can be settled or resolved before disagreeing parties resort to the use of injurious arms or physical force. The use of arms to resolve misunderstanding or differences among parties to a conflict is referred to as violent conflict. This definition of violent conflict is adopted for this study. The focal points of conflict theory include inequality, domination, exploitation, oppression, social turmoil, and social change in human societies. Spencer (1982) argues that the conflict perspective includes a variety of approaches; most of which share the view that society contains social forces that make conflict inevitable. The approach perceives that society can be best understood in terms of conflict or tension between competing groups over scarce resources (Schaefer, 2003).

Conflict theorists focus their attention on society as a whole, studying its institutions and structural arrangements. The theories are built on the premise that societies are composed of units that are often engaged in some kind of struggle for power (Kammeyer, Ritzer & Yetman, 1994). The conflict perspective posits that scarcity of socio-economic resources such as wealth, power and prestige and economic valuables are the significant sources of conflict in society. Power is defined by the theorists as the ability to control the behaviour of others against their will. Power determines who will lose and who will gain (Laswell, 1936 as cited in Kroehler, 2005). Power also determines

which group is capable of translating their preferences for behaviour into the operating rules for others to execute. The central thesis of conflict theory is that the differential distribution of power within the society is the major determining factor of systematic social conflicts. Mohammed (2007) observed that academic debate on ethnic conflicts is generally categorised into three schools of thought. These are primordialist, constructivist and instrumentalist theories.

The Primordialist theory of conflict

Primordialism is defined by three minimal propositions: (1) individuals have a single ethnic identity (2) this single identity is by its nature fixed (3) this identity is exogenous to human processes (Chandra, 2012). Isajiw (1993) noted that the ethnic identity of the individual is ascriptive in the sense that membership is assigned at birth and very difficult to alter. The theory posits that ethnic ties are inherent in human beings and they have deep natural connections that connect them to some other people and produce natural divisions with those people whether based on race, religion, language or location (Geertz, 1973, p. 250). The standpoint of the primordialist theory is that the individual's identity is a social fact; individuals are born into it and cannot do anything to change or modify it. Individuals belong to only one ethnic group ascribed to them at birth thus constituting their identity perpetually which is passed down unadulterated across generations. The experiences of those individuals are in many forms and temporal but the ethnic membership of the individual remains the same and intact (Chandra, 2012). Primordialism upholds the view that the fear of domination, expulsion or even

extinction lies at the base of most ethnic conflicts and reveals the attachment to beliefs that provoke a depth of emotion and sheer intensity that drives the violent atrocities committed in these conflicts (Glazer, 1986, p. 429).

For instance, Connor (1994) noted that primordialism explains the passions that led to the annihilation of Bengalis by Assamese in 1971 which was known to be one of the worst genocides committed in history. The 1994 Rwandan genocide was also another case worth mentioning. The perpetration and pervasiveness of rape, genocide, hacking of limbs, mass displacement of the vulnerable, torturing of innocent people, brutal murders of the Middle Ages and several other forms of untold atrocities committed in conflicts like those in Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo can best be described as emotionally driven behaviour ranging from feelings of fear, hatred, and anxiety on the part of perpetrators of the heinous crimes (Bowman, 1994). The primordialist further argues that adversarial relations among ethnic and cultural groups in present times are pre determined by ancient antagonistic relationships among the cultural groups. This school of thought establishes that “the urge to define and reject the other goes back to our remotest human ancestors and indeed beyond them to our animal predecessors” (Lewis, 1992, p. 48).

According to Blagojevic (2009) ethnic groups and nationalities exist because there are traditions of belief and action towards primordial objects such as biological features. Also, Horowitz (1985, p. 57) noted that the kinship ties ‘makes it possible for ethnic groups to think in terms of family resemblances’ which promotes a state of intense and comprehensive solidarity among the people (Hararamos & Holborn, 2004). This perspective posits that

“tendencies toward xenophobia are more natural to human societies than liberal politics of interest” (Crawford, 1998, p. 11). The primordial approach further teaches that ethnic emotions are hereditary and are socially and politically constructed, emanating from historical memories of past injustices and grievances perpetrated by one ethnic group against the other and transferred from one generation to the next like customs and traditions by both opposing ethnic groups (Blagojevic, 2009).

The limitation of the primordialist theory is that it ignores the structural, economic and political contributions to the outbreaks of conflict among belligerents and focuses only on the remotest past events which some of the conflict parties might not be aware to be the causes of the present conflict (Mckay, 2011). The primordialist approach of interpreting conflict and associating with the ancient hatred instead of what causes conflict in current times is also criticised by Akbar (1995, p. 6) when he observed that “ideas and arguments about ethnicity are usually based on the assumption that ethnic identity is a characteristic of primordial and tribal societies...only backward societies cling to the past”. Ganguly (1998) associated himself with Akbar by positing that a proper understanding of the causes of ethnic political mobilisation and conflict is crucial, and we must move beyond simplistic discussions of ‘ancient hatred’ to search for more systematic explanation. The response to this call leads us to the constructionist perspective of interpreting ethnic conflict (Blagojevic, 2009).

The constructionist theory of conflict

The constructivist refutation of the primordialist approach is characterised by three principal assumptions: (1) individuals have many identities rather than only one (2) these identities are not fixed and can undergo change and (3) such change, when it takes place, is the outcome of some human process (Chandra, 2012). It can be deduced from the propositions that Constructivism emanates from historical processes which is characterised by disparate ethnic identities and hostilities among people in present times. According to Blagojevic (2009), the constructionist or institutional approach holds the view that ethnic tensions and conflict are systematically built because of particular ways in which societies are structured and organised. Institutional deficiencies like political and economic exclusion, injustice, poverty, diseases, exploitation, inequity etc. constitute the sources of conflicts in societies (Ademola, 2006).

Crawford (1998) noted that it is the duty and responsibility of institutions to both constrain behaviour and provide incentives for cooperation and compliance to norms, rules, and procedures for allocation, participation, representation, and accountability. Blagojevic (2009) adds that ethnic hatred can be managed by the state to enhance peaceful coexistence among ethnic rival groups. According to Crawford (1998, p. 556) countries whose political institutions are politicised in favour of party fanatics and tribal lines are more vulnerable to cultural ethnic conflict than countries whose political institutions promote social integration of diverse cultural groups. This approach explains that institutions like the colonial administration in Africa, building of nation states in the aftermath of colonisation, the process of democratisation of the

African continent, and forceful overthrow of regimes have all contributed to ethnic tensions and conflict in the sub region.

Colonialism theories derive inspiration from the analysis of the dynamics of the European colonialism in the past. Colonialism is the process by which one nation controls the political and economic activities of the other less strong and less developed country. It is characterised by forceful entry into a territory and subjugation of its population, alteration or destruction of the indigenous population and pattern of social organisation, domination of the administrative system of the subjugated people, and justification of the foreign activities which is exemplified by prejudicial, racist beliefs, and stereotypes (Crawford, 1998).

The constructionist approach can be employed to explain the causes of an impasse between the two ethnic groups. This approach traces the causes of the conflict to the interference of colonial administration into the affairs of the ethnic groups. The British employed indirect rule to administer their colonies including the Gold Coast. To make the system effective, acephalous states were merged with the kingdom states in northern Ghana, resulting into loss of land and sovereignty of the stateless societies. The advantaged groups started clamouring for their independence amid resistance of the kingdoms who wanted the continuity of the status quo because of the advantages accrued from that, leading them to conflicts. The third conflict theory intended to employ by the researcher to expatiate the causes of the conflict is the instrumentalist theory.

The instrumentalist theory of conflict

The theory views ethnicity as fundamental in causing ethnic groups to constitute coalitions in order to seek scarce economic resources or political power. Varshney (2009) observes that this theory perceives ethnicity as ‘neither inherent in human nature nor intrinsically valuable’. Ethnicity is a machinery used to restrict acquisition of scarce resources to a few individuals in society at the expense of majority. The Instrumentalist theory argues that it is rational for individuals to organise themselves along ethnic lines depending upon the benefit the coalition will bring to them. According to Collier (2001, Pp. 26-27) the underlining assumption of this theory is that several ethnic conflicts take place in relation to opportunities to primary commodity predation. This implies that the opportunity cost of participating in violence is small whereas the expected benefit in terms of looting of commodities during escalation of violence is huge. This explains why people participate in conflict after making the cost-benefit analysis (Collier & Hoeffler, 1998).

For instance, Collier and Hoeffler (1998) noted that three main factors were responsible for rebellion activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These are: manipulation of the elites, the failure of the state to fulfil its mandate, and illicit exploitation of mineral resources by the conflict actors and conflict entrepreneurs. Therefore, ethnic conflict is the result of systemic and rational calculation of individual actor’s interest such as desire for prosperity, power and security. The theory also explains why some groups choose to cooperate and avoid violence and why other groups also opt to fight.

The instrumentalist approach presupposes that ethnic groups form alliances to fight an opposing ethnic group after careful calculation of the cost

and benefit of the venture. If the expected benefit outweighs the disadvantage, it will be a motivation for them to fight and gain. However, if the expected outcome is disadvantageous, the allied group may not engage themselves in conflict to incur loss. The selfish and greedy nature of humans also influenced formation of rebellion to fight. The instrumentalist perspective leads us to the greed and grievance theory propounded by Collier (2000) and Collier and Hoeffler (2004).

The Greed theory of conflict

Greed and grievance theories constitute two baseline standpoints advanced by scholars of armed conflict to underpin triggers of civil war, though the argument has been extended to other types of conflicts. Social conflicts are caused as a result of expected economic gains. The society suffers from the pangs of conflict whereas individuals and groups perpetrating the conflict amass wealth from the conflicts. The act of individuals assisting conflict parties to perpetrate violence is described as conflict entrepreneurship. It is often difficult to identify or trace sponsors involved in this venture. This justifies why they are described as shadow stakeholders (Best, 2006 & Collier, 2001). Collier (2000) argues that selfishness and self-centeredness are responsible for such conflicts. He argues that the emergence and endurance of conflict in society is calculated, predicted and executed in the feasibility of predatory activities so that conflict will occur for the benefit conflict parties would derive from it.

Collier (2001) noted that the greed theory of conflict posits that combatants perform a cost-benefit analysis to know the reward of conflict

before they decide whether to join conflict or not. The cornerstone of the argument is that conflicts are caused by combatant's desire to self-enrichment through the control of goods and resources or increased power within a defined territory. Collier (2001) further argues that the 'greed' model also focuses attention on the sources of financing civil war. This is likely to emanate from income realised through the appropriation of natural resources in countries where civil wars had been prolonging and intractable. Examples of natural resources and countries where strife existed are diamonds in Sierra Leone and Angola, timber in Cambodia, cocoa in Colombia, oil in Nigeria, and poppies in Afghanistan. Acquisition of these resources aided rebels to finance wars. This implies that the most critical source of rebel financing is natural resource wealth availability because of its relative significance. Collier explains that countries endowed with natural resources are more prone to civil conflicts or have a higher risk of conflict given the evidence shown in the aforementioned countries.

Collier (2006) argues that civil wars occur where rebel organisations are financially viable. According to him, the Revolutionary Army of Cambodia has a number of 12,000 men and was able to raise an amount of 700 million dollars per year from the sale of drugs, and kidnapping of innocent people, which gave them opportunity to demand for ransom from the victim's families to finance their activities. According to Collier (2006) in addition to finance, other factors that help rebels to make inroads is the fact that the public sees rebels as heroes fighting against injustice such as oppression, unfairness, and perhaps victimisation of some part of the population in societies. A segment of

the population that appreciate these reasons may tend to give their support to the rebels.

According to Collier and Hoeffler (2004) civil wars emanate from the greedy behaviour of a rebel group in organising an insurgency against people in authority or Government. To substantiate this standpoint, greed is about opportunities available that the rebel group can access. The opportunities are categorised into three: financing, recruitment and geography. Appropriation of natural resources is the most common source of rebel financing. Others include donations made by citizens of the country residing abroad who can be termed as Diasporas. Collier (2001) explains that the Diasporas have more advantages than their counterparts at home. They are relatively richer than the population of their own country; they do have a collective conscience or a sense of well-being which promotes collective action. Also, emigrants have a cultural conscience and incentive to create welfare associations to take care of their needs and interests. Deliberations on their home country are held during their meetings including discussions on the implications of those conflicts for their relations at home. The Diasporas, however, do not suffer the immediate consequences of the conflicts as they are afar. Angoustures and Pascal (1996) exemplified this point by pointing out that the Tamil Tiger organisation of Sri Lanka was offered support by the country's emigrants in North America.

Another source of rebel financing are contributions from other countries not on good terms or hostile with the government of the rebels or multinational companies interested in the regions where rebel activities are undertaken. An example was the government of Southern Rhodesia which

proffered financial support to the Renamo rebellion in Mozambique (Collier, 2001).

According to Collier (2001) recruitment is about the opportunity to train fighting man power. This implies that endowment of unskilled labour and the use of guns or weapons against innocent citizens in conflict zones help fighters to extort primary products for export or sale. This is enhancing when there are multiple unemployed people in their prime age in the country, pervasiveness of poverty and poor education. Geography refers to the terrain and topography of the country. If the country is mountainous having hideouts, it encourages insurgencies as fighters can undertake clandestine activities that equip them with their opponent's information and also help them to fight. In a nut shell, greed simply means the "economic opportunity to fight". The discussions so far about the Greed theory portray that rebels are motivated by greed, by lust for power or by grievance to join conflict.

The grievance theory of conflict

The grievance approach to conflict postulates that people rebel over issues of identity which are social in nature rather than economic reasons. Examples are ethnicity, religion, and social class. Collier (2001) noted that social and political scientists revealed that reasons accountable for grievance are inequality, political oppression, ethnic hatred, and religious divisions being the significant sources of conflict in societies. Collier observes that a heterogeneous society with a high incidence of population increases in favour of an ethnic group systematically become the source of higher risk of civil conflicts. He estimated the figures for the imbalance of the population to be

between 45-90 percent tilted in favour of an ethnic group which may result into ethnic dominance of the said group. Collier (2001) postulated that there are three main variables impelling rebels to initiate protests and violence within a state. These are inter-group hatred, political exclusion and vengeance.

Collier (2001) further explains that inter-group or inter-religious hatred are probably the most common explanation for civil conflicts which often happen in societies that are characterised by several ethnic and religious backgrounds. In other words, inter-group hatred is more pervasive in societies that are fractionalised than in those which are homogeneous. However, the source of inter-group tension is not the existence of diversity but polarisation that permeates the society (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004). Polarisation implies the segregation and opposition of two unequal groups at opposite ends of a distribution of resources. It was in this sense that Karl Marx referred to the polarisation of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat (Scott & Marshall, 2005, p. 497).

Political exclusion implies exempting citizens from accessing their fundamental human rights such as participating in decision making of the state. People are excluded from processes of governance starting from exclusion from elections. Citizens are also excluded from political appointment such as Ministers of States, Ambassadors and other dignified public offices on the basis of factors not caused by them. This could occur either through generalised repression or because some particular group is victimised for the reason being that dominant group constitute the majority population (Best, 2006).

In conclusion, Collier and Hoeffler (2004) emphasise the greed model to be the source of rebellion than the grievance theory as the latter seem not to be

the real cause of conflict. They noted that an increase in economic growth expands opportunity costs of joining a rebellion, resulting in a reduction of the risk to join rebels and fight. Also, rebel activities are likely not to be encouraged in countries where there is higher dependence of the state on primary commodities, as the state will tighten security to scare off potential organisation of rebels. According to Best (2006) and Kendie et al. (2014) peace is a necessary condition for development and deliberate effort must be made to resolve violent conflicts. This assertion leads the researcher to explore strategies and mechanisms for resolving conflict, to pave the way for peaceful coexistence among the conflict parties to enhance development. In an attempt to execute this work, concepts such as sociology of peace, ethnic conflict and conflict resolution will be defined.

Understanding peace

Sociologically, peace refers to a condition of social harmony in which there is no social antagonism. In other words, peace is a condition in which there is no social conflict and individuals and groups are able to meet their needs and expectations (Ibeanu, 2006 as cited in Best, 2006). According to Francis (2006) cited in Kendie, et al. (2014, p. 2), “peace is generally seen as an absence of war, fear, conflict, anxiety, suffering and violence and peaceful co-existence. A state of peace does not mean the total absence of any form of conflict. It rather means absence of violence in all its forms and the unfolding of conflict in a constructive way”. Peace therefore exists where people are interacting non-violently and managing their conflict positively with respectful attention to the legitimate needs and interests of all concerned. Peace is

primarily concerned with creating and maintaining a just order in society and the resolution of conflicts by non-violence means (UNDP, 2005). Kendie et al. (2014) opined that there are six ways by which peace can be explained: peace as an absence of war, absence of structural violence, respect and tolerance among social groups in society, peace within oneself and as wholeness.

Peace is associated with the structural functionalist perspective of interpreting society. Structure means a set of interrelated roles necessary for performing a specific function. When structures perform their functions properly there is order and stability in society which are necessary ingredients of peace. According to Zanden (1990) functionalists take a broad view of society and focus on the macro aspects of social life. They hold the view that society or social system comprises several components which are interrelated and interdependent, each contributing its quota towards the functioning and survival of the society or the system as a whole. The components comprise institutions which are social, economic and political in nature. These include family, culture, religion, polity, and economy, and each helps to maintain the system as a whole by contributing its quota. The institutions ensure that the needs of society are to be identified and how the parts satisfy the needs determined, to enhance peace and order in society.

Conflict resolution

Mensa-Bonsu and Effah (2003) postulated that resolution of conflict can be achieved by diagnosing the conflict to identify the underlying factors responsible for emergence of the conflict and address them meticulously. The cause of the conflict may not be the obvious reason for the eruption, but may

be beneath the surface of the problem. Miall et al. (2001, p. 21) posits that conflict resolution means that the deep rooted sources of conflict are addressed and resolved, and a behaviour is no longer violent, nor are attitudes hostile any longer, while the structure of the conflict has been changed. The concept is therefore associated with an approach that focuses on identifying such deep-rooted causes and designing solutions through a process of joint problem solving. However, in many situations it is neither possible, nor even desirable, to find final solution to conflict (UNDP, 2005). Conflict resolution has been understood as consisting of changing reality (by reducing scarcity or by changing the causal links), changing the demands of the actors (by compromise, horse trading, persuasion, or sheer manipulation), such that a distribution of values is found that is subjectively acceptable to all the actors and therefore, can be agreed to. Another author has defined conflict resolution to mean “finding a solution to the basic incompatibility between the relevant parties in such a way that (voluntarily) express their satisfaction with the outcome”. Miller (2003, p. 8) perceives conflict resolution as “a variety of approach aimed at terminating conflict through the constructive solving of problems, distinct from management or transformation of conflict”.

The definitions of conflict resolution give the clue that the needs of the conflict parties must be identified by interveners who attempt to resolve conflict. Those needs must be classified into basic or human needs and secondary needs. This will aid the peace officers to broker peace or resolve the conflict if the needs are secondary and negotiable. In contrast, if the needs are basic and non-negotiable, then a different approach to handling the conflict is requested because until the human needs are restored, the conflict is rarely

resolved because obtaining or losing those needs defines human existence. This research has to do with ethnic conflict, therefore, resolution of ethnic conflict must be conceptualised.

Resolution of Ethnic Conflict

According to Awedoba (2011) there are many mechanisms of dealing with ethnic conflict. The cultural values of every community, society and the nature of the conflict determine which method is appropriate for any specific or particular type of conflict. In relation to this argument, Acquah (2006) recommended the acceptance of the traditional judicial system of conflict resolution mechanism that takes place in the court of chiefs in Ghana. He advocates for the partnership with the modern court system, to resolve conflicts in the communities. Resolution of ethnic conflict is quite difficult since ethnic identity characterizes those conflicts. Addressing cultural, identity, economic, socio-political issues and concerns of conflict parties is crucial and it requires the intervention of a third party who appreciates their culture. This is because getting ethnic groups to negotiate among themselves and reach gain-loose outcome through compromise is difficult.

Awedoba (2011) further observes that there appears to be no quick fixed solution to conflicts; rather the manner of implementation, timing and who the actors and implementers are can all be important factors in achieving successful intervention. Perhaps, a mixture of two or a variety of mechanisms may prove efficacious. The assortment of both traditional and modern mechanisms of conflict resolution could aid to facilitate resolution of the conflict. Sometimes conflict could look traditional in nature at its inception, but

a combination of factors associated with the conflict might contaminate it and give it a modern outlook, thus making it impossible to employ only one method of resolving that conflict. Agyeman (2008) observes that managing ethnic diversity in Ghana entails the application of many factors taking into consideration the dynamics and processes of the conflict. The following postulations are made by Agyeman for implementation in order to achieve results in the management and resolution of ethnic diversity:

- The de-politicisation of ethnic conflict resolution and mechanism process.
- Empowering and strengthening decentralized structures of governance at the local level to deal with conflict.
- Strengthening and empowering the traditional councils, Regional and National Houses of Chiefs in their conflict resolution roles through proper funding.
- Establishing joint consultative committees comprising representatives from the warring factions in their resolution of ethnic conflict.
- The use and involvement of local NGOs in conflict resolution, instead of international organisations.
- The involvement and use of the youth and youth associations in ethnic conflict resolution (Agyeman, 2008, p. 94).

In the next sector, indigenous conflict resolution strategies will be reviewed with the primary objective of using them to partner other methods of interventions such as the court system as well as the exogenous system to

resolve conflict in the sense that the focus of the study is resolution of ethnic conflict.

Lederach (2009, p. 8) argues that “the greatest resource for sustaining peace in the long term is always rooted in the local people and their local culture”. According to him, any conflict resolution mechanism that does not take into consideration the contribution of the local people is too narrow to bring about lasting peace because they are not inclusive. In some cases, the interveners might be aware of the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms but consider them to be obsolete and of no consequence in contemporary times. Hence, conflict interveners strictly adhere to the western strategies of management and resolutions of conflicts. It is significant to note that before colonialism, African societies had their exclusive methods of conflict prevention, management and resolution (Awedoba, 2011). This argument implies that, it is crucial to rethink the conflict resolution strategies as the applications of western methods failed to resolve the intractable and protractible conflicts.

The indigenous (cultural) conflict resolution

According to Schaefer (2002, p. 55) “culture is the totality of learned, socially transmitted customs, knowledge, material objects, and behaviour”. It is that intangible aspect of cultural heritage that sustains the tangible aspects because it is intangible through stories, folktales, proverbs, idioms, taboos, and poetry, that teaches those valuable ideas as dignity, hope, and sense of duty, hard work, faithfulness, accountability, transparency, honour and other human qualities (Isola, 2010). According to Abraham and Morgan (2011, p. 107),

Emile Durkheim defined indigenous society as being characterised by mechanical solidarity where “people are homogeneous, mentally and morally; they feel the same emotions, cherish the same values, and hold the same sacred. Communities are, therefore, uniform and non-atomized”. Durkheim suggested that mechanical solidarity prevailed to the extent that “ideas and tendencies common to all members of the society are greater in number and intensity than those which pertain personally to each member” (Abraham & Morgan, 2011, p. 107). Durkheim noted that this solidarity grows only in inverse ratio to personality. Solidarity, he suggested, which comes from likeness “is at its maximum when the collective conscience completely envelopes our whole conscience and coincides in all points with it” (Abraham & Morgan, 2011, p. 107). Thus, a society having mechanical solidarity is characterized by a strong collective conscience. Since crime is regarded as an offence against common conscience, such a society is also characterized by repressive law which multiplies punishment to show force of common sentiments (Abraham & Morgan 2011; Nukunya, 2003).

According to Brewoo and Abdallah (2015) Mechanical societies in traditional Africa are known to have social systems and structures well suited for conflict resolution and peacemaking. However, the effects of colonization and the influence of modernization seem to have disrupted the functioning of these systems and structures. This is evidence that the culture and tradition of conflict parties are essential elements of conflict resolution (Comaroff, 2013). Lundy and Adjei (2015) affirm that every conflict is local in as much as the local environment sets the stage and the local people endure the debilitating effects of the violence. Lundy and Adjei (2015, p. 1) further observe that some

authors perceive indigenous conflict management and resolution strategies broadly “as a process that utilizes local actors and traditional community-based judicial and legal decision making mechanisms to manage and resolve conflicts within and between communities”. Bombande (2007) noted that there is too much talk about ‘Insider’ and ‘Outsider’ roles in situations of conflict resolution. The basic assumption is that communities must be responsible for thinking of ending conflicts in their own context and transforming their lives whilst the ‘Outsiders’ complement their effort and proffer them support, add value, and push peacebuilding process beyond the expectation of the ‘Insiders’. The ‘Insider’ role remain most critical and most challenging because the absence of it makes it cumbersome for the ‘Outsiders’ to intervene in conflict.

Avruch (2011) asserts that conflict resolution mechanisms in every society is built on cultural foundations of the society with reference to the local context, discrete event or specific milieu. The monopolization of power by the First World nations and their extreme influence was partly responsible for the departure from the indigenous conflict resolutions methods and preference for the Western legal system to resolve conflict and their concept of development agenda (Adebayo, Lundy, Benjamin & Adjei, 2015). Generally, the approaches to conflict resolution in the African cultural context as compared to the Western World differ in many aspects. For example, the African Alternative Dispute Resolution (AADR) combines negotiation, arbitration, adjudication, and other methods put together and executed at the same time when the need arises. It does not have Western features such as confidentiality, the right and freedom to the mediators, flexibility, and emphasis on a win-win outcome, gender sensitivity, trained and professional mediators, and assurance of

neutrality on the part of mediators, tackling emotional issues, and signing of agreements (Best, 2006). It is not in all instances that guilt must be established. Combatants are not asked to give accounts of the conflict and the mediator blaming either of the party but are encouraged to forgive each other and bury their differences (Uwazie, 2000). In Africa, mediation is a community responsibility carried out in the court of the traditional authorities, in the presence of their counsellors and observers especially the young men who learn by observing the process (Best, 2006). The review now moves to assessing the roles the endogenous (traditional institutions) assign to some individuals to execute to help peace reign in mechanical societies.

Osaghe (2000) argues that there are of course other important reasons, traditional systems of conflict management need to be more thoroughly investigated and incorporated into the modern conflict resolution efforts. Lederach (1995) further pointed out that some conflict parties prefer insider partials to outsider neutrals. The combination of insider and outsider roles in conflict resolution in Africa is advocated by Reychler (2001) that to attain sustainable peaceful community, traditional or cultural methods are indispensable in peace building and maintenance, and should be employed when the need arises. Nwolise (2005) noted that the principles guiding western strategies of conflict resolution include impartiality, fairness, accommodation, reciprocity, moderation, compromise, and genuine reconciliation. These characteristics are also embedded in African conflict resolution strategies making it possible to amalgamate the two approaches to resolve conflicts in Africa. Eselebor (2015, p. 241) argues that the following constitute the relevance of conflict settlement in African traditional societies:

- To remove the causes of the conflict;
- To reconcile the conflict parties genuinely;
- To preserve and ensure enduring peace in the society;
- To restore peace, remove fear, and restore social harmony;
- To set the right milieu for societal production and development; and
- To promote good governance, law and order, security of lives and property, collective well-being, and happiness.

The protagonists in traditional conflict resolution include kings and chiefs, council of elders or family heads, ancestral cults or ancestors. Age grades, secret societies or local deities, religious beliefs or taboos, general assembly of the people in the village square and the King's courts. Awedoba (2011) emphasises that it is time to change the situation for the sake of poverty reduction and ensuring that good governance, socio-economic and political development prevail. The use of western methods of conflict resolution frustrates the attainment of peace as those methods did not find lasting solutions to the conflict. This standpoint propels the urgent need to focus on the resolution of Gonja-Nawuri conflicts in the East Gonja of Ghana using other approaches. The area is an amalgam of cultures which precipitate conflicts mainly relating to chieftaincy and land. Numerous violent clashes over several decades are manifestations of the difficulties in reconciling differences and eliminating underlining grievances. Peace accords signed by the protagonists have not been respected. This troubled land yearns for peace because the conflicts retard socio-economic development of the area. Novel ways that investigate the western and the indigenous methods of conflict management

and peace building are required, given the non-response of the protagonists to the former approaches. Chieftaincy is one of endogenous institutions.

Roles of chiefs in resolution of conflicts

Kendie and Akudugu (2010) posited that indigenous institutions are critical in the management and resolution of conflicts. The centrality of traditional authorities, such as chiefs in ensuring effective functioning of indigenous institutions in managing and resolving conflicts cannot be underestimated. The close proximity of chiefs who generally are sensitive to the opinion of their people gives them the advantage of winning their confidence and trust. The chieftaincy institution has been the source of settlement of dispute that is related to traditional governance and its related land issues. Addo-Fening (2008, p. 55) maintained that disputes brought before chiefs on daily basis for settlement include the following:

- Title to land and farms held under customary tenure
- Customary marriage, divorce and *ayefare* (seduction) issues
- Fetish, juju and witchcraft issues, and
- Recovery of debts, pledges of farms and pawning of valuables

According to Addo-Fening (2008) peace, stability and social harmony in the heterogeneous societies of our villages and towns have become necessary conditions for social harmony in the larger society of Ghana. To achieve this peace, rural communities without police stations or resident high-profile political agents of Government see the chief's palace as the first point of call to deal promptly with cases of crime and civil conflict to pave the way for peace and development. It is significant therefore, for government and all

other civil society organisations interested in the social equilibrium of society to assist chiefs to excel in their traditional roles of peace maintenance.

Acquah (2006) made a call to examine how the arbitral tribunal of the chief can be modelled and regulated to handle minor disputes at rural levels. Improvement upon the functions of chieftaincy regarding resolution of conflicts depends largely on the ability of the National House of Chiefs to fulfil its constitutional mandate to undertake an evaluation of traditional customs and usages with a view to eliminate those customs and usages that are outmoded and socially harmful. Brobbey (2008) argued that there are so many ambiguities; uncertainties and obsolescence in what constitutes customary law in Ghana which need to be addressed.

Agyeman (2008) observes that the Traditional, Regional and National House of Chiefs resolved chieftaincy and land disputes successfully where politicians did not interfere in the conflict. He further advocates that the Mediation Committee of Eminent Chiefs and Persons must be maintained and institutionalized and given moral and financial support to operate. Agyeman concluded that there are several chieftaincy and land disputes resolved by the traditional institutions in the country that have not captured media attention. Awedoba (2011, p. 235) observes that Membership of National Houses of Chiefs comprises representatives of paramount chiefs from all the regions of the country. The member chiefs are often experienced persons who have a track record of managing disputes in their various chiefdoms and traditional areas. Some have in fact been themselves victims of chieftaincy disputes in their chiefdoms. In dealing with chieftaincy disputes the parties whose cases

are before the National House of Chiefs can usually be sure that those called upon to handle their case are themselves informed on similar disputes.

Gyimah-Boadi and Markovits (2008) assert that individual Chiefs as well as the National House of Chiefs played a significant political role in minimizing inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts in the country. Examples include the Konkomba-Nanumba wars of 1993-1994, the Accra-Tema conflict in the late 1990s and the crisis of Dagbon which were managed by the traditional house. Agyeman-Duah (2008) also argues that there is a pervasive interference of chiefs during presidential and parliamentary elections in Ghana advocating for peace and order before, during and after elections. The Chiefs embarked upon orchestrated peace campaigns admonishing their subjects, political parties and electoral committee to exhibit good electoral behaviour. Thus, peaceful, free and fair elections should be the hallmark of the electoral year. These are virtues worthy of emulation by other democratic countries where electoral disputes are prevalent. The calls of the traditional authorities were adhered to by the political parties, paving the way for peaceful elections.

According to Antwi (2014) traditional dispute resolution mechanisms are immersed and deep-rooted in the culture, tradition and history of the African people, and took precedence over all other mechanisms in the settlement and management of resource conflicts such as land. Studies revealed the success of land disputes in countries such as Uganda where experienced segments of the community formed an association to resolve land disputes among individuals and groups. He further indicated that in Ghana, the Asantehene made a pronouncement in 2000 that all related land disputes should be withdrawn from state courts and referred to alternative dispute

resolution mechanisms using his traditional court in Kumasi. This initiative verified the significance of traditional institutions in resolving land disputes (Crook, 2008). Boafo-Arthur (2006) observed that great success was achieved by the Asante traditional courts within a month. Nonetheless, chiefs have also been the cause of some land and ethnic chieftaincy succession disputes besides their roles in resolutions of local conflicts (Brobbeey, 2008).

The information gathered by Antwi (2014), Boafo-Arthur (2006), and Agyeman-Duah (2008) acclaimed the success of traditional institutions in the management and resolution of land disputes only among homogenous ethnic groups characterised by common cultures and traditions. The application of it to other cultural groups outside the domain of Asantehene may be impossible because of cultural multiplicity and diversity (Odametey, 2007). The traditional justice system is restricted to the cultural group in question and does not take into consideration other socio-cultural groups with different traditions, norms and customs (Antwi, 2014). Notwithstanding, Adebayo et al. (2015) and Kendie et al. (2014) opined that Ghana enjoyed some stability as compared to other countries in West Africa. This happens because Ghanaians have learned to use their cultural values, traits, and attributes to manage conflicts, the consequence of which is the relative peace and stability in the country since independence.

On the question of traditional rulers, some chiefs are perceived to be more charismatic than others and command respect from their own cohort and the larger society. Some of the chiefs of the kingdom states in the Northern Regions accrue this social standing. They can only be used to mediate conflict among themselves. For instance, the Nayiri and Yagbonwura mediate the-intra

ethnic conflict between Abudu and Andani Dagombas. Unfortunately, those chiefs cannot be used to resolve inter ethnic conflicts between them and the acephalous communities as they consider the latter as inferior. In contrast to this, charismatic chiefs elsewhere like the Asantehene of Asante and Okyenhene of Akyem can be utilised to supplement conflict resolution efforts in the north. They can meet the requirement of impartiality and neutrality when playing a mediatory role as they may not have any vested interest in the differing issues. The role of the earth priest is another traditional institution employed to resolve ethnic conflict in rural communities in the northern Ghana and is considered in the section that follows.

The roles of Tengdana in conflict resolution

The personality of the Tengdana is predominantly male with an earthshrine characterized by clusters of trees, rocks, rivers, etcetera as a focal point and ritual epicentre. The basic role of the Tengdana is the promotion of peace in society, prohibition of human bloodshed as it invites the curse of the ancestors and withdrawal of their benevolence such as good rainfall, good harvest, and absence of locusts, disease, and mishaps, such as snake bites. To prevent these calamities, those who shed human blood are severely sanctioned to saddle the persons and their families with costly ritual burden (Awedoba, 2010). The earth in northern Ghana prohibits human bloodshed which is a consequence of violent interaction among people in the communities. It is believed that those who shed human blood invoke the curse and doom of earth spirits upon the community thereby jeopardising the wellbeing and welfare of the traditional area. The act provokes the earth into withdrawing its

benevolence such as good rainfall, good harvest, and prevention of locusts, disease and mishaps such as reptiles. According to Awedoba (2011) traditionally, those who shed blood were made to undertake elaborate and expensive purificatory rituals, pay compensation to the earth or else be banished from the community. Even the village warriors had to perform these rites on their return from war. This was supported by the belief that if the earth were 'spoiled' by acts of aggression, society would pay the price through drought and diseases inflicted on the community as a whole (Awedoba, 2011).

Awedoba (2011 and 2010) further noted that communities in northern Ghana in the advent of Islam and Christianity largely depended on the earth for their survival. Those who are guilty of bloodshed must therefore atone for their crime through punitive sanctions and ritual reparation that are costly. Such crimes could not be condoned even by kith and kin. The family of the victim was also saddled with the ritual burden. The defying of taboos of the Earthpriest leads to inflicting of calamity upon the society and subsequent sanctions against those who infringe upon the taboos including their families. This goes a long way to promote peaceful coexistence in the communities. People are always conscious of the consequences of their actions regarding the taboos and often refrain from flouting them. The earthpriest is proactive in the prevention of conflict and its resolution in Northern Ghana.

The earthpriests are supposed to be peace loving individuals who abhor violence. The earthpriest is able to stop conflict immediately with the casting of his millet in between combatants which compels them to stop fighting without having a second thought. Chieftaincy disputes are also managed by the Earthpriest. As an agent of a powerful deity, the earthpriest is accorded honour

and respect; as a result, his verdict is accepted during a search for a candidate to fill a vacant skin or during installation of chiefs. The logic is that Lord of the earthpriest will punish him if he defied rules of Kingship and fails to be impartial, fair and just. The Earth priest is influential in the management of border disputes and settlement of witchcraft issues (Kirby, 2007).

Kirby (2007) further explains that the traditional ritual curtails violence from degenerating into absolute chaos among the traditional African society. Without any ritual reconciliation considered as authentic by all the conflict parties, there is no peace; the earth will remain dead, unproductive and unable to sustain life, because the ancestors were not employed into the conflict. Prior to the conflict, previous localised conflicts were being resolved at local shrines by custodians of the traditional Earth shrine. This rich cultural practice was ignored by peace practitioners in the region. However, this conflict cut across ethnic boundaries and each group had exclusive belief in its shrine implying that there is no one particular shrine which is generally accepted by all. With this situation, which shrine could be used to perform the ritual to contain the conflicts? The traditional oath is another tool for conflict resolution strategy in traditional societies.

The role of traditional oaths

Awedoba (2011) also recognized the traditional practices that played significant functions in the resolution of conflict. According to him, it is customary to put a disputed issue to the test by making the contesting parties submit to supernatural arbitration through ordeals, sworn statements and by oaths. The power of the ordeals, and the oath reside in the belief that those who

lie or make claims that they know to be unjustified would be sanctioned personally or through a calamity visited on their family member or dear ones (Awedoba, 2011). Awedoba proceeded further to declare that there were commonly held beliefs that gods and ancestors do not listen to invocations and offer assistance to the living during conflict. In view of this, post-conflict rites are performed to bury conflict to avoid recurrence of hostilities in future. This substantiates the reason why it is faulty to resolve conflicts without considering the culture of the people, which constitutes their absolute ways of doing things including how they resolve conflicts. In such situations, people swear by the earth, the rivers and streams, by lightening, the hills, fetish groves or even by ancestral skins to prove that their evidence is genuine or a claim is just. The point here is that some people, when confronted with the prospect of being summoned to bear false witness in disputes and conflict cases, might not comply, knowing the spiritual consequences of false testimonies. Such non-compliance with an invitation to swear sacred oaths might send the signal to the public that a particular claim lacked merit (Awedoba, 2011) According to Mbagwu (2015, p. 58)

all over Africa, there is the belief that swearing of an oath in resolving disputes is important because it makes the parties in the dispute to speak the truth. Also, the invocation of the ancestors as part of the mediators or arbitrators is widely practiced as they are believed to be part of the living. Parties to the conflict are made to believe that if they tell lies, they could be killed or harmed by the ancestors who were present at the time of the resolution of the conflict.

One other common source of resolving conflict in traditional societies is the role play by children of sisters of the conflict parties who are considered

outsiders by their uncles in case of patrilineal societies but still have social ties to kin of their mothers.

The Sister's son factor in mediation

In a small scale conflict, the intervention of specially positioned individuals might be useful. One of the categories of such special persons is the son of the sister of the conflict parties, who is strategically positioned in a clan of his mother. The son is perceived as a neutral and impartial person as he is not considered as a member of the conflict actors (Awedoba, 2011). According to Nukunya (2003) culturally, when a couple is joined in marriage, their respective lineages and families automatically become affinal relatives while the children of the union are kin to all those mentioned above. It is therefore the institution through which kinship ties are both established and extended. It seems unnatural to be on a war footing with your son-in-law who is also the father of your grandchildren and husband of your daughter. By the same token, to kill your father-in-law is to hurt your wife emotionally and her children who lose a father and grandfather respectively which will go long way to cause tension and division in the family. It is common cultural knowledge that a divided group cannot survive, and it seems logically pointless to try to preserve the group by undermining its integrity by affinal killings. Kinship in Africa has a collective character, hence the understanding or the standpoint should be understood within the context of collectivity rather than individualism. Awedoba (2011, p. 254) argued that

where there is a protracted dispute resulting in wasted hours of litigation and resources, a sister's son may step forward that he wants to mediate the dispute. This factor is used very much in

the Lawra-Nandom areas where inheritance is still very much matrilineal

In the advent of colonialism, affines used to play mediatory roles during inter community and inter ethnic conflicts. The role of the sister's child in the resolution of internal disputes cannot be overlooked. The child is an outsider in the case of patrilineal societies or in the sense of agnatic societies, he is not a core member, though his or her mother is. As an outsider, he or she does not have interest in the outcome of the resolution of conflicts hence remains neutral or impartial during mediation. He is impartial, his motive is unquestionable and his arbitration is not disputed for fear of risking ancestral curse. According to Kalmijin (1998, p. 396) '.... children of mixed marriages are less likely to identify themselves with a single group. Although mixed couples may socialise their children into the culture of a single group, these children are less likely to identify with that group when intermarriage in society is common. Secondly, by intermarriage, individuals may lose the negative attitudes they have toward other groups. Joking relations do happen within an ethnic group or between one particular ethnic group and another as a result of inter-marriage. It is utilised to resolve conflicts in traditional societies through teasing each other and telling each other what is supposed to be done to resolve conflict using jokes.

Joking relations

According to Radcliffe-Brown (1940, p. 195) a joking relation "is a relation between two persons in which one is by custom permitted, and in some instances required to tease or make fun of the other, who is required to take no

offence". People who have such relationships have the right to playfully insult, tease, or provoke each other before and during the aftermath of conflict. It is used to ease tension between enemies and creates an opportunity for conflict parties to dialogue and resolve their differences. Joking relations are valued and recognised in past and present times; a person from an ethnic group does not refuse to assist another person from different ethnic groups with whom he shares joking relations. These relationships can also be invoked to peacefully settle disputes among people who share such relationships (Brewoo & Abdallah, 2015).

Drucker-Brown (1982) refers to joking relations as 'privileged disrespect'. Hammond (1964, p. 264) writes that as 'a means of communication, joking provides a permissive and flexible context in which a grievance can be expressed, thus allowing for its rectification and the restoration of amity'. According to Awedoba (2010) Joking relationships or clanship ties are found within ethnic groups and between ethnic groups. He cited examples of the ties existing between Sisala, Kasena and Gonja; Kasena and Zanberma; Frafra and Dagaba; and lastly Mossi and Dagomba in Northern Ghana. He argues that there is no sufficient evidence to trace how these ties came into being but it was alleged that former enemies during wars of expansions in the pre colonial era have been paired. In some cases, it was people of common origin and similar language that have been paired. A good example was the Mossi and Mole Dagbane people.

According to Jong (2005) joking relationships are a source of mutual assistance for ethnic groups or clan lineages as they offer reciprocity for each other and also symbolise a taboo against any form of treachery against each

other. Galvan (2006) noted that joking relations connote bonds between cousins or quasi-kinship alliances which are meant to redirect historical incidents of past conflicts or reveal the gravity of suffering among ethnic groups emanating from conflict they fought in the past in order to foster an alliance meant to ameliorate or prevent potential conflicts between the ethnic groups in future. The role of the elderly in conflict settlement cannot be underestimated.

Gerontocracy in conflict resolution

The elderly men and women in traditional societies are the custodians of culture and history. This proffers the elderly maximum respect in society. Their involvement in mediation is welcomed by the middle and young aged because of their in-depth life experience and the belief that they are near to joining the ancestors and therefore will not er in their judgment for fear of been rejected by the ancestors after death. According to Mbagwu (2015) Africans believe that the elderly constitute a reservoir of wisdom accumulated through experience, which arrogates to them the right to be custodians of cultural laws and customs. It is also believed that they speak the truth because of fear of being rejected by the ancestors as they get close to their death time. They are also responsible for any wrong doing by members of their family or community. Therefore, the onus falls on the elders to ensure that peace prevails in their communities to save themselves from accusation by other people. The elders are able to execute this socio-cultural responsibility if given the chance to intervene into conflict because they are wiser in the knowledge of traditional

laws and customs. Closely related to gerontocracy is the role of prominent personalities.

Role of prominent personalities in conflict resolution

Prominent personalities with high social, economic and political status could play a role in the resolution of conflict in their communities. Men and women of God who are held in high esteem in societies fall into these categories. Among the Christian groups are the Catholic clergy who command respect in the communities. Other Christian groups equally can boast of high calibre of such men and women of prophetic standing whose word is treated as Gospel truth. The Muslim 'saints', holy men and women, who command large followings can also be influential in the discussions of conflict. This is particularly required in the Kingdom states of Mamprusi, Dagbomba, Nanumba, Gonja and Wala where the majority of the population are Muslims (Awedoba, 2011).

However, the prominent personalities also have the tendency to instigate conflict by virtue of their pronouncements on matters that deepen differences among people in societies. It is worth noting that some of the prophets and saints are subjective, sectarian and compete violently among themselves under the pretext of winning souls for God. Hence, they cause outbreak of conflicts among adherents of religions in the communities. There are also affluent people in society. This group, by virtue of their wealth and generosity assuage the suffering of the needy in society by virtue of the fact that they command a lot of respect and honour from the people. This category of persons can play a vital role in the management and resolution of conflict

(Awedoba, 2011). They usually execute this role during their visit to areas of conflict or during traditional festival activities.

Role of traditional festivals in conflict resolution

Traditional festivals involve converging of people annually, or in some cases, many times within the year (as required by the tradition) where members of a community or society far and near endeavour to congregate. Festivals are upheld to celebrate cultural or historic events that the cultural group hold in high esteem. It may involve fanfare, pageantry and display of jokes. The leaders of the community may gather to perform initiation rituals and to kick off the ceremonies. Many people outside the cultural group may be attracted to festivals to show solidarity to the people or appreciate what is being done by making appearance at the festival grounds. For instance, politicians are attracted to festivals in Ghana as well as people from foreign countries. There are several advantages associated with festivals. For instance, they constitute a platform to reconcile latent deadlock among people before they degenerate into violent conflicts. The philosophy seems to be that a quarrelling community cannot have successful celebrations when people cannot freely communicate among themselves. Festival times are used by the community members in the Diasporas who are distant from the local disputes to exert pressure upon their kinsmen to settle their differences to make hometown peaceful and worth coming during the next festivals (Awedoba, 2010).

Awedoba (2010) further noted that in some societies, festivals are preceded by ceremonies that invite people to bury their differences in order for the performed rituals to have the desired effects. Manifested disagreements will

have to be settled by striking of compromises to pave the way for celebrations to commence. In some cases, festivals play a function of creating opportunity for people to air grudges and grievances. This is classic of the *Apoo* festival of the Techiman people of the Brong Ahafo, in which they organise a forum during which individuals freely speak their minds without any fear of being sanctioned. Citizens are at liberty to criticise people in authority without being sanctioned. Also, among the Nawuri ethnic group who have their Guinea Corn festival (*Kayugi*) which is celebrated in December every year, is the time for community reconciliation and to improve upon inter-ethnic relations. Awedoba (2011, p. 258) made the following observation about festivals

...People love their annual festivals, which can be described as 'total' in character- with historical and commemorative, social, religious, political, economic, psychological and aesthetic aspects. The community, all and sundry, need the entertainment that festival brings about; they derive value from the euphoria of the moment and relish the opportunity to exhibit themselves, and people do feel that they are on exhibit. People are therefore, willing to bury their hatchet, even if temporary, for the benefits of the festivities.

It can be noted from the discussion so far, that festival events are a means for the prevention, management and resolution of ethnic disputes in African societies. However, recounting of antagonistic historical events between or among ethnic groups during festivals can degenerate into lawlessness and conflict. For instance, the Abudu and Andani antagonism is being highlighted annually during the Bugum festival which is celebrated with fire touches and the firing of musketry, is a prime time for arson and destruction of property in a conflict torn-community. Three major religions exist in the Northern Region and each one of them contains principles and guidelines of conflict resolution.

Role of religion in conflict resolution

According to Gyekye (2003) Africans express their sense of dependence on God, who is held to be near and approachable. Multitudes of African converts continue to consult traditional religious shrines and God in times of need or of personal or familial crises in expectation of some mystical way of fulfilling their needs or dealing with the crises. For them, religion must have immediate relevance in coping with the various problems of life on earth. Bombande (2007) argues that peace processes must be designed to encompass training of the mindset, values and attitudes as well as beliefs to ensure that transformation is taking place at personal, relational, cultural, and structural levels. Sulemana (2009) observes that this standpoint could have been executed by religion adequately through its teachings and practice. According to Awedoba (2010, p. 35)

Soothsayers and diviners are from time to time brought in to resolve disputes, because they are agents of the deities and are compelled to speak the truth. They are expected to consult their patron deities before making their determination. They may be invited to divine the wishes of the ancestors in the determination of the candidate most eligible to succeed to a vacant paramountcy title. In the past, their decisions were accepted by all parties and disputes did not continue once they have spoken.

In furtherance of the above argument, Awedoba (2010) explained that the role of sacred or holy men and women among the Christians and Muslims in mediation of conflicts cannot be underrated. They possess wisdom and rich experience by virtue of their close proximity to the people and knowing the dynamics of social interactions through their missionary activities and execution of God's work. Also, the aging men and women who are believed to be credible, given that they are seen to be near to the ancestors and will soon

have to account to them for any misdeeds is worth mentioned. Their views are being respected by many persons including conflict parties and therefore could also mediate conflicts. However, “the same trust and respect cannot be said to exist today for this category of persons” (Awedoba, 2010, p. 35). The last but not the least aspect of traditional conflict resolution worth mentioned and explained is the *ubuntu* which permeates several African countries in terms of its application.

Ubuntu

According to Best (2016) Ubuntu is a concept that is widely used in East, Central, Horn and Southern Africa, but found in different forms in several other African societies. It is a cultural world-view which tries to capture and explain the meaning and essence of what it is to be a human. It constitutes a humanistic and holistic conception of peace and embraces the six dimensions of peace operating at individual, societal, national and regional levels. Jannie Malan observes that “every single human being only becomes a truly human being by means of relationship with other beings” (Malan, 1979 as cited in Best, 2006, p. 26). This philosophy is used as indigenous conflict prevention and peace-building mechanisms in Africa. It embraces the notion of acknowledgment of peace, guilt, showing of remorse and repentance by perpetrators of injustice, asking for and receiving of forgiveness, and paying compensation or reparation as a prelude for reconciliation and peaceful co-existence.

Desmond Tutu observes that Ubuntu is very difficult to render into a Western language. It speaks to every essence of being human. When you want

to give high praise to someone we say *Yu u nobunto*; he or she has *ubuntu*. This means that they are generous, hospitable, friendly, caring and compassionate and they share what they have. It also means that my humanities are caught up, is inextricably bound up, in theirs, we belong to a bundle of life. We say, ‘a person is a person through other people’ (in Xhosa “Ubuntu ungamntu ngabanye abantu” and in Zulu “Umntu ngumntu ngabanye”). I am a human being because I belong, I participate, and I share. A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good; for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes with knowing that he or she belongs to a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are (Tutu, 1999).

Best (2006) argues that the significance of ubuntu is to encourage and promote a culture of peace, tolerance, peaceful co-existence and development. As a conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategy, ubuntu establishes the bedrock and principles of reciprocity, inclusivity, and sense of shared destiny between peoples and communities with homogeneous or heterogeneous background. The ubuntu tradition in a practical sense, enhances reconciliation and building of peace in disputed societies, and about democratic participation. One can decipher from the ubuntu conceptualisation that, peacebuilding in Africa is characterised by getting rid of war, conflict, violence, fear, destruction, and human suffering. It also advocates for eradication of an unequal and unjust treatment of fellow human beings through unjust structures. In addition, it advocates for cultural tolerance, democratic institutions and

participation, respect for human rights, social progress, socio-political and development.

According to Mbagwu (2015) the ubuntu principle argues that we are “human beings through other human beings”. This adage implies that what we do to other humans through social, economic, and political networks and relationships eventually affects our lives in the same ways that we do to them in the immediate or distant future. Therefore, we have to be cautious because we are the beneficiaries of our own actions. The principle of ubuntu sheds light on the importance of peacekeeping through the principles of reciprocity, inclusivity, and a sense of shared destiny between peoples. Mbagwu (2015, p. 59) made the following observation regarding the implications of Ubuntu for human beings: it then provides a value system for giving and receiving forgiveness.

Ubuntu provides a rationale for sacrificing or letting go of the desire to take revenge for past wrongs. It serves as an inspiration and suggests guidelines for societies and their governments on how to legislate and establish laws, which promote reconciliation. In short, ubuntu can culturally re-inform our practical efforts to build peace and heal our traumatised communities in Africa because it calls on the consciousness of the people in dispute to remember that whatever they do during conflict will affect them; so the idea of going all out to destroy is not the best approach, because they will suffer the consequences as well. Rehn and Sirleaf (2002) argue that women are social partners of men and the implications of conflict affect both of them, as a result the vital roles of women in conflict resolution cannot be sidelined.

Women in conflict resolution

“Gender refers to social attributes that are acquired or learned during socialisation and defines activities, responsibilities and needs connected to being male or female and not to biological identity associated with masculinity and femininity” (Mutunga, 2006, p. 365). Men and women are social partners and whatever happens in society affects their lives respectively (Rehn and Sirleaf, 2002). According to Muntuga (2006) women constitute about fifty per cent or more in most war torn countries. Excluding them from peace talks and activities is a serious omission because it constitutes an infringement on the right of the majority to be heard. According to Sharoni (1994) the recognition of women’s role in conflict resolution is vital for establishing the legitimacy for a feminist-based human needs theory. The theory assumes that individuals in society require certain basic needs to be met in the process of conflict resolution, and it is only when women are present during peace talks that they could demand for their needs. Galtung (1996) espouses eight needs necessary for any conflict resolution in society. These include acceptable patterns of social control, maintenance of security of lives and property, ensuring justice for all, positive stimulation of the externalisation of human creative energy, prompt response to grievances, giving meaning to human existence in the society, recognising that all persons are rational human beings, and giving them a sense of esteem (Asogwa, 2015).

The aforesaid necessary conditions for conflict resolution teach that every social group in the community, including women, have the right to strive and give their existence some degree of significance and to identify and defend their role in the process of peace activities during times of conflict. The lessons

accumulated from the review of the theories of indigenous conflict resolutions are explained below:

Observations about the application of the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms

According to Midodzi and Imoro (2011, p. 196) “even though international agencies, governments, and private organisations have entered the ‘businesses of conflict resolution in ever increasing numbers, it is clear that most interventions in African conflicts have done little to prevent the continent from taking the debilitating course it has traversed over the last decade”. The conflicts in the Kpandai District of the Northern Region are not an exception, they have received multiple interventions, yet there is little to show that the deadlock is resolved. This causes one to wonder if the problem lies with the efficacy of the interventions made, or if, without casting an air of pessimism, Kpandai quest for peace, security, and stability is an elusive one. If we are to go for the first, could it then be that the outsiders’ interventions are alien to the continent (in terms of culture, ideas, and values) hence their ineffectiveness? Alternatively, is it that they merely serve as palliatives thereby contributing to the perpetuation of conflict or its chronic recurrence? If these are so, does the panacea then lie in a more African-oriented, indigenous process as a sustainable or viable means of ensuring peace and development in the region? To what end, therefore, would or have such indigenous process proven effective where contemporary Western approaches have seemingly proved ineffective or produced minimal success?

In the event that violent conflicts do occur, if proper conflict management interventions are not applied or are misapplied, the escalation of the conflict is likely to lead to devastating casualties and the wanton destruction of properties and materials. The application of the ‘wrong’ conflict resolution management intervention may also contribute to the protraction or recurrence of conflicts. This is why the issue of effective conflict resolution mechanisms has increasingly emerged as an important subject of discussion (Danso & Osei-Tutu, 2015).

According to Pkalya, Adan, and Masinde (2004, p. 3) the indigenous conflict resolution mechanism means the use of “local actors and traditional community-based judicial and legal decision-making mechanisms to manage and resolve conflicts within or between communities”. Local actors include traditional authorities such as family heads, elders, chiefs, civil society organisations, and local institutions (Pkalya, Adan, & Masinde, 2004). Cultural factors are essentialities that need to be dealt with or incorporated into conflict intervention approaches because “underlining each culture is its own specific though tacit agreement or system that determines how to resolve disputes” (Midodzi & Imoro, 2011, p. 196). Pkalya et al. (2004, p. 94) posit that indigenous mechanisms offer a solid framework for resolving conflicts at the local level, which “helps the community take control over the outcome of the dispute resolution....{Also it} provides a low-cost, empowering means of resolving conflicts within a relatively short timeframe”. Brock-Utne (2001, p. 6) observed that the western approaches are associated with many disadvantages which he summarises as the “potential and actual conflicts are often not understood in their social contents. Values and beliefs, fears and

suspension, interest and needs, attitudes and actions, relationships and networks have to be taken duly into consideration. Origin and root causes of the conflicts need to be explored, so that a shared understanding of the past and present is developed”

In Africa, cultural practices and indigenous third party interventions have contributed in getting conflict parties to agree to negotiate. In the same vein, numerous deadlocks and conflicts have been prevented or avoided through indigenous peacemaking mechanisms. While literature thrives on Western contemporary conflict management strategies and methods, scanty literature exists on indigenous peacemaking approaches. Considering the possibility of these conflict escalating into nationwide civil wars, it is imperative to explore indigenous peacemaking approaches not as an alternative to the western mechanisms but to complement what has so far been done. What does exist needs to be interrogated and the significant portions integrated into the western conflict management styles to obtain an amalgam to enhance peacemaking in the Kpandai District. A conceptual framework is employed to compliment the theoretical underpinnings and expatiate conflict resolution mechanisms (Pkalya, et al., 2004).

Conceptual Framework

Miles and Huberman (1984, p. 18) define a conceptual framework as a visual or written product, one that “explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied-the key factors, concepts, or variable-and the presumed relationships among them”. This implies the broad ideas and beliefs that one holds about something and making attempts to depict them by

the use of figures. It is primarily a conception or model of what is out there that a researcher plans to study and with what is going on with these things and why. It is relevant to note that a conceptual framework is something that is constructed, not found. It incorporates pieces that are borrowed from elsewhere, but the structure, the overall coherence, is something that the researcher builds, not something that exists ready-made (Miles and Huberman, 1984).

Figure 1 seeks to explain the management and conflict resolution mechanisms employed to resolve the conflict between Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups in East Gonja. The intervention agencies are many. These include the state or government, indigenous institutions, civil society organisations, and exogenous institutions. The indigenous institutions comprise the local actors whereas the exogenous refers to intervention of external institutions to resolve the conflict. The civil society organisations imply non-governmental and non-profit organisations who made some efforts to resolve the conflict. Government intervention constitute all efforts made by government agencies to stop the conflict. The collective efforts of these institutions could lead to the resolution of the conflict so as to pave the way for possible peaceful co-existence among the primary actors of the conflict and other settlers in the area.

The conflict resolution strategies in Figure 1 start with the role of the government. The state agents involved in the resolution of the conflict include the security agencies comprising the military, police, Bureau of National Investigation, Committees of Inquiries and National Peace Council (Brukum, 2007). The collective roles of these agencies lead to conflict management.

These institutions do not find lasting solution to conflicts but succeed in keeping the belligerents at bay using various strategies such as curfews, surveillances of the conflict areas and detention of recalcitrant leaders, who resist cessation of war (Mbowura, 2014).

The other component of conflict resolution strategy of the state is the role of the courts. It refers to the intervention of the third neutral party known as the judge appointed by the government and charged with the responsibility of hearing criminal and civil cases, and make a determination or pronounce a verdict. The court system helps in managing conflicts but sometimes breeds subsequent antagonism among the conflict parties. The verdict is interpreted as imposition of justice (Best, 2006). The efforts of the state do not entirely resolve conflicts but contributes immensely to the management in the short times (Essien, 2008).

The second conflict resolution mechanism from Figure 1 is the contribution of the traditional courts managed by the Tengdana in the case of the communities and the chiefs in the centralised administrative systems. The traditional courts employ norms, values and traditions to handle civil conflict and give sanctions. The sanctions could include payment of money, rendering of forced labour on farm lands, excommunication or banishment from the community (Abossey, 2010). In the pre colonial era, determinations of the traditional courts could be execution of the perpetrators of said crimes. In contemporary Ghana, the traditional court system includes the role of the National House of Chiefs and its branches at the national, regional and traditional councils.

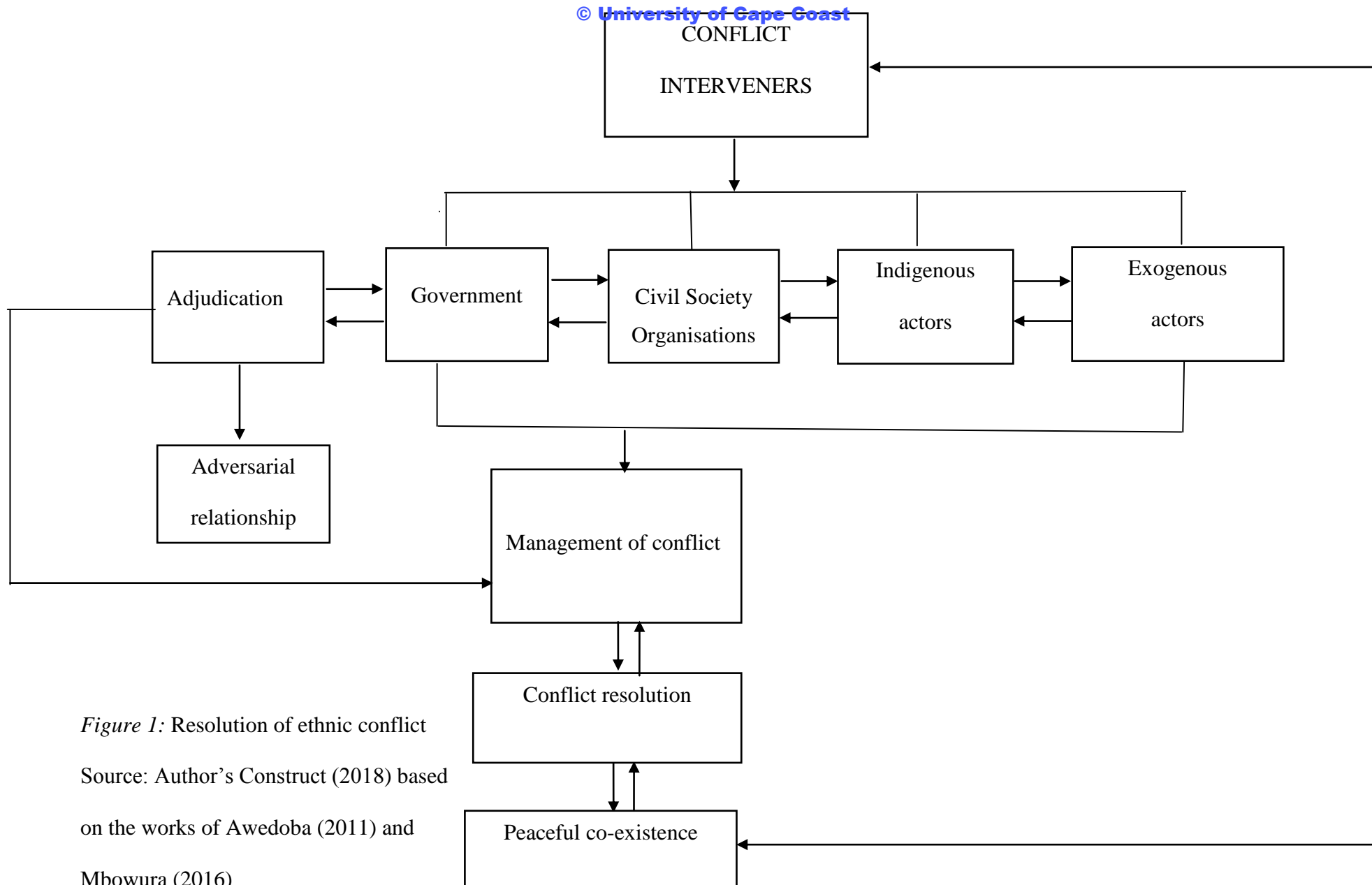


Figure 1: Resolution of ethnic conflict
Source: Author's Construct (2018) based on the works of Awedoba (2011) and Mbowura (2016)

According to Brobbey (2008), the constitution of Ghana gives its backing to chieftaincy institutions in the country and allocates financial support to them in the annual national budget. The activities of the traditional court encompass customary arbitration, mediation, reconciliation and conciliation. Violence is not employed in the traditional court to resolve conflict, it is rather dialogue which permeates the processes until resolution of the conflict is reached, and enhances peaceful coexistence among the conflict parties.

The third component of the conflict resolution mechanism depicted by Figure 1 is the role played by local actors. This refers to significant individual persons of the conflict community. These include women, the aged who are believed to possess reservoir of wisdom and youth activism. Women at individual level counsel their husbands and grownups sons and daughters to avoid conflict. This is because women suffer the pangs of conflict more than perpetrators of conflict as the women have to take care of the injured, children and the aged including themselves when the men are on the battlefield fighting (Yahaya, 2013). However, there could be instances where women themselves become active combatants in conflict times executing violence like helping their men to rape women of their opposing combatants. Women also sell their belongings and make financial contributions to sponsor wars in their communities (Ekeyor, 2002).

The aged in a traditional sense are believed to be sacred as they near their grave to unite with their ancestors and this influences them to do acts that will please the ancestors or risk being rejected. In view of this they are believed by the traditional community to be holy; speak the truth, fair and just. The aged constitute the elders in the traditional courts and their contribution is

recognised. The community often listen to them and act accordingly. This social standing, the aged enjoy in society, contributes towards management and resolution of conflict in traditional African societies and consequently promotes peaceful coexistence in the conflict environment (Awedoba, 2010).

Civil society organisations as depicted in Figure 1 consists of community groups, non-governmental organisation and religious institutions. They do contribute immensely towards resolution of conflict. The activities they execute in an attempt to resolve conflict include promotion of dialogue among conflict parties which may lead to reconciliation and possible resolution of resolution. Sometimes the activities undertaken by the civil society organisation is to ameliorate the suffering of people who are adversely affected by the conflicts (Agyeman-Duah, 2008). The aggregate efforts of the interveners might lead to the resolution of the conflict and subsequently enhance peaceful coexistence among the ethnic groups in the East Gonja districts and their environs.

Figure 1 also shows some relationships among the conflict interveners. This is manifested in the mechanisms they employ to execute their mandate in handling conflicts. All the institutions promote dialogue among the conflict parties and between them and the conflict parties in order to achieve management of the conflict. The institutions also encourage suspension of violence to pave the way for dialogue and negotiation, a situation that can be described as conflict management. The continuity of the interveners' roles after management level, leads to resolution of the conflict and achievement of peaceful co-existence. This is the stage the conflict parties are satisfied with the packages of the interventions. In addition, conflict parties render apologies and

seek forgiveness to those they offended which the offended do not also hesitates to act positively. This gesture enhances peaceful co-existence an outcome of the conflict interveners. The overview of the conflict is discussed in the subsequent section.

CHAPTER THREE

OVERVIEW OF THE GONJA-NAWURI CONFLICT

This chapter explores relevant empirical work on the Gonja-Nawuri conflicts. It takes into consideration the historical, social, economic and political causes and effects of the conflict. An assessment of the efforts made by interveners to resolve the conflicts will also be carried out. They have contributed immensely in keeping the conflict parties at bay and have succeeded in bringing them to the point where they have not engaged each other into violence since 1992.

According to Kendie et al. (2014, p. 50) “the Gonja, Nawuri and the Nchumuru each claim indigene status and regard their respective ethnic group as the indigenous owners of the land in the Kpandai area”. Mbowura (2002) affirms that the question of who owns Alfai (Kpandai and its environs) whether Nawuri or Gonja was the fundamental cause of all the series of violence that broke out between the two ethnic groups in the aftermath of indirect rule since 1932. Each one of them argued that the land belongs to them. The causes of the conflict are categorised into remote and immediate factors.

Immediate causes of the conflict between Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups

Sulemana (2009) observed that violent conflict took place between the two ethnic groups in 1989 over ownership of land leading to several deaths and loss of property. According to Awedoba (2011) the relationship between Gonja and Nawuri continued to deteriorate until in April 1991 when they took arms against each other. This incident marked the beginning of inter-ethnic violence

in Kpandai and its environs. The town was ramshackled in the beginning of the skirmishes by the invading army of Gonja leading to the withdrawal of inhabitants into the bush to save their lives. At this moment, the Kpandai town was entirely occupied by the Gonja. However, the Nawuri marshalled the support of other ethnic groups such as the Konkomba, Bassari and Nchumuru in their neighbourhoods and returned to fight the Gonja in June 1991. The Nawuri gained victory in this second encounter and expelled the Gonja from the area (Brukum, 1992).

According to Linde and Naylor (1998) the third phase of the conflict took place in May 1992 when the Gonja made an unsuccessful attempt to reoccupy Kpandai and consequently encountered casualties at the police station after they were disarmed by the police. The police failed to protect the Gonja warriors in their custody; in the midst of the multitudes, Nawuri warriors fought the Gonja. This resulted into the massacre of about seventy Gonja at the police station. The Gonja blamed the police at post for confiscating their arms and making them empty handed and yet failed to protect them against any aggression. The 1992 violence marked the end of hostilities between the Gonja and Nawuri (Mbowura, 2014). However, the question of ownership of land that caused the conflict is still pending (Kendie et al., 2014; Mbowura, 2014). There are also remote factors that can be employed to expatiate the causes of the conflict.

Remote causes of the conflict

A combination of several factors were responsible for the outbreak of conflict between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups. These include the roles

of colonial administration in East Gonja, controversy over ownership of Kpandai land, overlordship of Gonja over Nawuri and youth fanaticism. These issues are next presented.

Colonial administration and the Gonja-Nawuri conflict

The chieftaincy institution is an old source of governance among the African people before the arrival of colonialism in the Gold Coast. Colonial rule redefined the social and political organisations of the various groups during the colonial times (Darkwa, Attuquayefio & Yakohene, 2012). For instance, the colonial interference in chieftaincy affairs changed the said definition of chief as any person “for the time being recognized by the Government” presupposing that if the chief is recognized by his people but was not recognized by the colonial masters he or she ceased to be a chief. This, paving the way for introduction of a dual system of rule among the people of the northern Nigeria in 1925, Gold Coast in 1932 and other colonies under British influence through legal definition of chief.

The rule of Nawuri by the Germans

According to Mahama (2003) in 1884, Gustav Nachtigal arrived in Cameroun and annexed the Douala Coast. In the same year, he proceeded to Lome with a contingent of Germans and proclaimed a German Protectorate over Togo. The influence of the Germans continued until 1886 and 1888 during which towns in northern Ghana, such as Nanton, Gambaga, Karaga, Savulgu, and Salaga were discovered. By 1900 German’s rule was established in Kpandai and its villages which were settlements of the Nawuri ethnic group

such as Balai, Nkanchina, Kabonwule, Bladjai, Katejeli, Kitare, Njare, Awuratu, Buya, Bayim, Alfai, Oprusai, and Mofukayin. The Gonja was dominant in Kpandai constituting the traditional rulers whereas the Nawuri were acephalous. The Germans persuaded the traditional leaders to accept the German protectorate. In 1913, Mahama Karatu a Gonja was officially recognised by the German to be the Overlord of Kpandai and the entire villages of Nawuri thus confirming the existing status quo (Ladouceur, 1979).

In 1919, Kpandai and its villages were subjugated to the British following the defeat of Germany during the First World War between 1914-1919. The League of Nations compelled Germany to pay war reparation for causing the War. The failure of Germany to have enough money to pay the reparation, made her to pay in kind by handing over her Togoland colony including the Nawuri and Gonja settlements to Britain and France. The introduction of the indirect rule in 1932 made the British to officially amalgamate the acephalous states with the Kingdom states to facilitate the colonial administration (Brukum, 2002). According to Ladouceur (1979) the acephalous states were paying homage to the Kingdom states as their overlord during the precolonial era. This implies that the amalgamation of the Nawuri with the Gonja apparently confirmed and validated the existing relationships among them during the ancient times. Mbowura (2014) and Bkrum (2007) hold a contrary view arguing that the Nawuri were not acephalous, they had their chiefs before the colonial interventions into their affairs. Therefore, the amalgamation of the Nawuri with the Gonja relegated the chieftancy institution of the Nawuri. This contestation of the ethnic groups emanated from colonial policy of indirect rule.

The rule of Nawuri by the Gonja

In addition, Mbowura (2014) argues that the political sovereignty of the Nawuri was lost as the Germans introduced the Warrant system as a basis for investing traditional leaders with supreme power. By the stroke of a pen, a warrant was issued to Kanankulaiwura Mahama Karatu (a Gonja) signed by Dr. Ravon which imposed the rulership of Mahama-Karatu over Kpandai and its surrounding villages. The Nawuri were worried that a non-indigene who had only come to Nawuri (Alfai in German Togoland) a short time before the outbreak of war (World War I) was made a supreme chief over the Nawuri (Mbowura, 2014).

The method of appointing paramount chiefs in the area was also adopted by the British, when they took over German Togoland in 1919. This was required by the League of Nations, in the aftermath of the First World War, when the vanquished lost their overseas occupied territories, including those in the Gold Coast. In 1932, the Kanankulaiwura vacated post and left for Kpembu, leaving the Nawuri in a state of quandary whether to have their own chief as Nawuri or continue to be subjects of another Gonja chief. The introduction of indirect rule in 1932 made Gonja rule over Nawuri irreversible. Thus, in the view of Mahama (2003) the colonial administration sowed the seeds of discontent and conflict between the two ethnic groups, as the policy led to the amalgamation of weak and acephalous tribes with the centralized states of Gonja, Dagomba, Mamprugu and Wala in northern Ghana. Expanding on this issue, Mbowura (2014) concluded that chieftaincy is the main issue that causes conflicts between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups in East Gonja. Mbowura contends that until the imposition of colonial rule,

jurisdictional authority in Nawuri territory was vested in the Nawuriwura, the paramount chief of the Nawuri and assisted by recognized community leaders of the various Nawuri settlements.

Following from this, constructionists hold the view that conflicts in northern Ghana, are the creations of the colonial administration. According to Metcalf (1964), northern Ghana had been administered by the British between 1901 and 1907 with a military regiment followed by the establishment of an interim civilian administration. The first British Commissioner to the area declared that local chiefs would be used as intermediaries between the local people and the colonial administration. This arrangement was in line with the British strategy of indirect rule where some communities were subjugated by others. In view of this, Staniland (1975) stated that Governor Guggisberg outlined the essence of forming very strong states through the unification of the smaller and weaker ones with already existing strong kingdoms to enhance his administration as they did not have sufficient staff to man the countryside. Guggisberg as cited in Staniland (1975, p. 58) stated that “Our policy must be to maintain any Paramount chief that exists and gradually absorb under these any small communities scattered about”.

Political causes of the conflict

The political cause of the conflict was that the Nawuri ethnic group are denied the right to participate in political decisions that affect their lives directly. Imbalance of power relationships existed in favour of the Gonja, depicting a clear dichotomy between super ordinate and subordinate relationships among them. The Gonja perceived themselves as overlords and

demanded for total submission of the Nawuri to their will and authority. This was done through request for tribute rights from the Nawuri and other settler communities within the Alfai (Kpandai). The forms of the tributes included the hind leg of an animal killed either wild or domesticated, the skin of game such as leopard, lion and hyena being used as sitting mat in the palace symbolizing greatness and might of the chief. Also, portions of foodstuffs at the end of the farming season when harvests are made are requested by the chief to take care of the palace and his family (Awedoba, 2011).

Furthermore, during festivals such as Damba, special contribution in the form of money and items such as foodstuffs are advanced to the chief to assist him take care of prominent visitors and the multitudes of people who might travel from far to celebrate the annual event. Fisher folk were also obliged to submit to the chief some of their fish catch on every Friday and during Ramadan (fasting month of Muslims) demonstrating their appreciation for the privilege granted them to fish in the Oti River. The Oti River priest was denied the benefit of proceeds from the river because of the excessive demand of the Kanankulaiwura (chief of Kpandai from the Gonja Ethnic group). The Nawuri considered this arrangement to be exploitative and unjust and argued persistently that these privileges should rather be enjoyed by Nawuri chiefs as they have the allodial right to the land of Kpandai and its environs but not the Gonja (Awedoba, 2011 & Mbowura, 2014).

The consequence of this conflict is that the Gonja lost their positions as chiefs in Kpandai as Kanankulaiwura and his subordinate Gonja chiefs are no longer residents in Kpandai and the surrounding villages (Awedoba, 2011).

Social causes of the Gonja-Nawuri Conflicts

Mbowura (2014) observed that ethnic conflicts account for the wide spread of violence and civil rivalry among the people of Africa causing threats to peace and security in the region. These conflicts thwart the development agenda of the continent and could be blamed for the “underdevelopment of large sections of the population in West Africa” (Tonah, 2007). Ghana is not exempted from the rest of the West African countries as it is further posited that chieftaincy disputes and ethnic conflicts in the northern Region of Ghana are partly to blame for the widespread poverty and the poor state of infrastructure in the area (Tonah, 2007).

Standpoint of Gonja on the ownership of Kpandai land

The second remote cause of the conflict is that the Gonja ethnic group employ historical explanation to claim that they are rightful owners of Kpandai land. Awedoba (2011, p. 179) argues that “the Gonja (Ngbanya) claim to ownership of the land is based on the Gonja position that they have brought the Nawuri to the area and settled them there”. Therefore, they considered Nawuri to be their subjects, hence, the Nawuri do not possess land (Kendie et al., 2014). The reason assigned by Gonja to claim the land is that during the wars of expansion embarked upon by Ndewura Jakpa, the founder of the Gonja Kingdom, he did not use arms to conquer all his subjects, there were situations where he had to establish alliances and collaborations with some ethnic groups to form formidable warrior-groups, after those groups accepted his authority over them. The groups were then integrated into his army and used to make further invasions of other tribes. For Awedoba (2011) the obscure issue is the

question as to whether the Nawuri were collaborators and mercenaries who were rewarded with land for settlement, or were they indigenes who preceded the Gonja and who may not have welcomed them without a fight?

According to Maasole (2006) the Nawuri had already accepted the overlordship of Gonja before arriving in the (Alfai) area and had gone ahead of the main Gonja invasion to drive out the Konkomba inhabitants who sparsely inhabited the area. Braimah and Goody (1967) confirmed the argument of Maasole by postulating that during the civil wars among the Gonja in Kpembu, between 1892 to 1893, about 500 Nawuri lost their lives on the battlefield, when they fought in support of the Lepo Gate (one of the factions in the intra ethnic conflict among the Gonja) as their subjects and collaborators. This collaboration took place in the pre colonial era in the sixteenth century as both ethnic groups have not been able to establish that they had been engaged in conflict against each other in the pre colonial era. In view of this standpoint, the Nawuri advanced several reasons justifying their claim of the Kpandai land. The second remote cause is the perspective of the Nawuri on the ownership of the land.

Standpoint of Nawuri on ownership of Kpandai land

Mbowura (2002) advances four reasons to explain the allodial right of the Nawuri over the land of Kpandai. The first is that the history of the Nawuri did not make any reference to the fact that they had been engaged in any wars with any other ethnic group when they arrived at Kpandai (Alfai) to settle. Secondly, Nawuri did not come to Alfai to meet any ethnic group domiciled there suggesting that it was a virgin land. Thirdly, names of all the settlements

of Nawuri are etymologically derived from Nawuri names and not use the Gonja language. These include Kpandai, Balai, Dodoi, and Bladjai. Others include Nchachina, Mmofokayin, Buya, Kabonwule, Beyim, and Kitare. Mbowura (2002) assessed that each of the settlements of the Nawuri had a political head known as 'eblissa' with juridical office known as 'Wirabu'; a traditional council responsible for dispensation of social justice. Also, deities in Alfai are named in Nawuri language and also owned by them but not the Gonja. These are Nanjulo, Boala, Kachilenten, Nana Esuwele, Kankpe, Buiya. The names of streams are also in the Nawuri language.

In addition, some of the colonial officials acknowledged the fact that the Nawuri are an autochthonous ethnic group. For example, David Asante who was a missionary who visited Salaga in the 1870s, proclaimed that all the tribal lands lying within the Alfai (Kpandai and its environs) settlement of the Nawuri belong to the Nawuri ethnic group and subject to the Wurubu (Chief) of Kpandai. This argument asserts that the land belongs to the Nawuri (Brukum, 2007). In addition, the Gonja did not arrive at Kpandai before the Nawuri and Nchumuru. The Gonja established their kingdom in the 16th century whereas the Nawuri settled in Kpandai in the 14th century. According to Brukum, this evidence implied that the land belonged to the Nawuri and not the Gonja. According to Mbowura (2002) the Ampiah Committee expatiated that the words like Alfai (Kpandai) and Kanankulaiwura are Nawuri words and could have been used only by the Nawuri to describe their land, and that the names of all the rivers, streams, and villages in the Kpandai area are Nawuri names.

According to Awedoba (2011) and Mbowura (2002) the Gonja army conquered the eastern Gonja in the 16th century and established their rule over the autochthones. Some of the Gonja arrived in Kpandai as immigrants in the 17th century. Mbowura argued that it is difficult to show any evidence how the Gonja entered Kpandai whether as warriors or as migrants but evidence confirms the existence of the Nawuri in Alfai before the coming of the Gonja. According to the Ampiah Committee of Inquiry of 1991,

The Gonja met a sizeable number of the Nawuri where the latter ethnic group now live. Although the Gonja claimed that the Nawuri are subject to them, it has not been clearly indicated, how the overlordship was established (Mbowura, 2002, p. 24).

Conquest is one of the reasons being used for justifications in annexation of land and imposition of political will on the conquered people (Mbowura, 2002). He further explained that when the first Gonja immigrants arrived in Alfai, the Nawuri helped them in several ways; the first was to assist the Gonja to establish their farms and houses. Secondly, the Nawuri assisted the Gonja during the Asante invasion of Eastern Gonja in the 1744-45. This explains that the early relations between the two ethnic groups were cordial as there were intermarriages and mutual collaborations among them. In addition, Mbowura (2014, p. 1503) explained that the Nawuri were an indigenous people in Alfai area who had complete autonomy and lived in friendly association with Krachi and Nchumuru. The report further noted that nowhere in the evidence had it been stated that the Nawuri were at any time conquered by the Gonja. The evidence rather suggests that the Nawuri and the Gonja were allies and fought together during the pre colonial era in the sixteenth century. These contradictory narrations on the ownership of the land by the Gonja and Nawuri

ethnic groups constitute the core cause of the conflict between them (Awedoba, 2014). Youth activism in the area from both sides transformed the controversy into violent conflict.

Youth activities contributing to the conflicts

According to Mohammed (2007) in recent times, most able and hard-working youth have become a source of conflicts, as they engage in activities that endanger the lives of people. They are involved in manufacturing their own guns or purchase their own arms not for self-protection but use the weapons to cause threat to security in society. Mohammed further observes that the youth during funerals and festivals display their costumes as warriors while wielding their guns and aptly being ready to unleash their aggression during a crisis

Agyeman (2008, p. 85) argues that Youth Associations all over the country have been in the frontline of conflicts within and between ethnic groups. The activities of the youth affect chieftaincy institutions, land issues, political party disputes, community uprisings, and engagement in conflicts with law enforcement agencies. For instance, the 1991 inter-ethnic conflicts involving Konkomba and their Nanumba Landlords was triggered by the proposal of the Konkomba Youth Association (KOYA) in northern Ghana. The youth made a unilateral decision that every Konkomba community should select their leaders to adjudicate petty disputes among them instead of referring petty disputes to the Nanumba chiefs for settlement. The youth believe that lack of traditional leaders labelled as chiefs and paramountcy are tantamount to

denial of “Traditional Independence”. They made a declaration that the opportune time therefore, has come

for all to reflect over this issue and accord tribes without paramountcies their right to live in a clearly defined traditional area of their own, practicing their own culture and tradition and helping to promote the same culture and tradition for the national good (Sulemana, 2009, p. 119).

This was the petition the youth sent to the National House of Chiefs. Installation of chiefs for Konkomba communities was done by the Dagomba and Nanumba. In contravention, the Konkomba youth influenced installation of chiefs in all the communities and recognized them without the consent of their overlords, who considered the action as an infringement upon their traditional right to install chiefs for the Konkomba. This statement triggered the 1994 conflict in the northern region. A similar incident happened in Gonjaland where the Gonja Youth Association renamed their Association as the Gonja Land Youth Association implying that all the land in East Gonja belonged to Gonja people. This move raised sentiment and antagonism among all ethnic groups in Gonjaland leading them to violent clashes (Brukum, 2002). The conflict between the two ethnic groups has serious repercussions on the social, economic and political lives of people in the East Gonja.

Socially, the conflict led to displacement of people. The Nawuri migrated to Nkwanta district in the Volta Region and temporarily settled in villages namely; Tutukpeni, Ketane, Kecheibi, Damanko, Nkwanta and Kpasa. The number of refugees in the district totalled to about four thousand, five hundred. The majority of the Nawuri refugees were concentrated in Nanumba District which shares a boundary with Kpandai and they lived in villages like

Tampoi, Kajasu, Kpengasei, Jimang, Lungi, Wulensi and Bimbilla. The Gonja also sought refuge at Kpembu and Salaga (Mbowura, 2002).

The economic causes of the conflict

According to Kendie and Akudugu (2010) considering the centrality of land in the traditional, cultural, economic, political, social and legal spheres of Ghanaian society, it is reasonable to argue that most of the chieftaincy and ethnic disputes in Ghana's rural areas are about access to land and the power this confers on owners. This observation is manifested in Kpandai. The Gonja were demanding for labour tax from the Nawuri and other settlers. According to Maasole (2006) and Dixon (1955, p. 28) settlers and Nawuri were coerced to send their people "annually to make a farm for the Kanankulaiwura for the use of his household being part of the tribute owed by the inhabitants to their sovereign, the Kanankulaiwura".

The Nawuri were discontent with this kind of lord-serf relationship. In addition, the claims of allodial right of the land by the Gonja arrogate to them the right to sell parcels of land to settlers including Nawuri, and also, sometimes confiscate their farmland. The Nawuri challenged the Gonja by reselling a parcel of land sold by the Gonja and this act was considered an outright disobedience to their traditional authority and tried to reassert it, thereby leading to the conflict between the two ethnic groups. According to Mbowura (2014, p. 274), the "only open to the Nawuri to exercise the ghost of Gonja's arbitrariness which seemed to be war".

In conclusion, the causes of the conflict between the ethnic groups in question were both immediate and remote. They were further classified into

political, socio-economic factors for the purpose of deliberations. Interveners made some efforts to resolve the conflict which are also worthy of discussion.

Interventions to resolve the Gonja-Nawuri conflicts

According to Agyeman (2008) stakeholders express concern wherever conflict arises in any part of the country by making frantic efforts to manage those conflicts and in some cases strive to find solutions to them through constitutional stipulations, state security agencies, religious bodies, non-governmental organisations and Traditional House of Chiefs. These interveners include government, civil society organisations, endogenous and exogenous.

Role of government

Brukum (2007) argues that in 1991, the Northern Regional Administration abolished all Youth Associations in the Northern Region whose activities could instigate conflict in the region to threaten peace and security. An example was the banning the meeting of the Gonja Youth Association in Kpandai in the midst of Nawuri protest to avoid clashes between the groups. However, when the clash happened in June 1991, government dispatched a peacekeeping force to manage the situation. In addition, the government set up the Justice Ampiah Committee to investigate the causes of the conflict. In December 1991 the committee finished its work but government failed to publish the report probably due to the volatile nature of the region (Brukum, 2007)

Furthermore, the government did not relent in its effort to execute its mandate in the aftermath of the 1994 ethnic conflict in northern Ghana which

engulfed most areas in northern Ghana including Brong-Ahafo and Volta Regions. The government founded a Permanent Peace Negotiating Team (PPNT) on northern conflicts in April 1994 and charged it “with a mandate to find the causes of conflicts, to mediate between the warring groups and to submit reports to government” (Awedoba, 2011, p.185). It was a seven-member Committee under the Chairmanship of Nana Dr. Obiri Yeboah II, the Omanhene of Efutuakwa and Member of the Council of State. The PPNT met the Nawuri and Gonja several times in Kumasi and Accra but were unable to broker permanent peace among them. The team did not get the cooperation of the Nawuri who expressed their misgivings and lack of confidence in the team alleging that they were in favour of the Gonja and therefore boycotted some of the meetings. Jonsson (2007) argued that the Nawuri got the gist of the recommendations to be in support of their claim of the Kpandai land. Paradoxically, the Gonja also rejected the Ampiah Committee Report despite the fact that it was unpublished. On the 9th June 1994, a peace treaty was arranged and signed by the warring factions leading to the uplifting of the state of emergency on the 8th of August 1994. It was however glaring that conflict was imminent due to the fragile peace that characterized the communities.

The team could not achieve peace due to perceived bias, and skills gaps to its strategic approach to tackling the problem. Their failure led to the private sector initiative to deal with the problem (Darkwa, 2012). Carscious (2013) explained that the PPNT adopted a top-down approach by solely focusing on the articulate members (high profile leaders in the region) among the conflict parties neglecting those who were actively engaged in the conflict. Therefore, the attempts to achieve peace could not succeed. Another factor for the failure

was the demand made by the chiefly groups that the acephalous groups should render apology to them before the peace process could begin, which they were reluctant and unwilling to do.

Implications of interventions by governments

Agyeman (2008) observes that a common problem with all government efforts to broker peace is that either the reports are never delivered or the recommendations are not implemented, or the warring factions refuse to accept the terms recommended by the committees. A far more important element and weakness of these Committees and Peace Negotiating Teams is that their composition and approach is 'top-down', thus denying the people at the grassroots of their participation in the process of finding solutions to the conflict. He further believes that a bottom up approach to conflict resolution will aid stakeholders in conflict resolution. In support of this he cited the example of the Alavanyo-Nkonya eight decades' conflict where the people had brokered temporary peace among them. Another problem is timing of intervention by governments. According to Darkwa (2012) right from the Limann regime's management of the 1981 conflict through to the management of the 1984 conflicts in northern Ghana, the government's response has tended towards being reactive and belated. For instance, President Limann dismissed a District Chief Executive from office who was accused of creating panic and tension in the country, especially, in the conflict zone in February 1981, when he alerted government of the possible outbreak of the conflict. It was further noted by Darkwa (2012, p. 123) that "the President did not make up any efforts to intervene until two months after the violence had ended".

Darkwa (2012) further argues that timely intervention in conflict by interveners is a great resource in conflict resolution as it could be used to neutralise tension among the conflict parties by preventing the conflicts from happening or if it happened, stop it from escalating by managing it. Allowing conflict to protract for long periods of time before interference, results in winners and losers and also causes irreparable damage to society. It also makes conflict parties take entrenched positions during the process of conflict resolution, as each side does not want to be perceived as weak. Government intervention is characterized by suspicion and biases. An example was cited by Darkwa that during the recurrence of violence in 1994 in northern Ghana, the government warned various armed Konkomba groups fighting other groups in the northern region to stop their acts of aggression forthwith. This official statement raises questions on whether government is against the Konkomba or not, and if affirmed, how could government be a mediator without disregarding the principle of impartiality and neutrality. Kaye and Beland (2009) noted that state strategies involved targeting of few actors in the conflict and used them to suppress violence only to achieve negative peace through cease-fire agreement. Government's effort to resolve the conflict led to the support of an exogenous institution to resolve the conflict.

Exogenous interventions in the conflict

Civil Society Organisations constitute another group of interveners in the conflicts. According to Wordu (2004, p. 172) "Civil Society Organisations are often categorized as non-state actors and defined as the range of voluntary organisations between the individual or community and the state. By objectives

and activities, they often constitute an opposition to state dominance of public sphere and civil activities” A number of civil society organisations are found operating in Northern Ghana. Their areas of operation include primary health care, water projects, agro-forestry, improving seeds varieties, working in micro credit financing and many others. Most of the development projects put in place by the organisations have been destroyed by the conflicts in the region.

In its further search for peace and social integration, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) government encouraged the formation of an Inter-NGO Consortium and the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI) under the auspices of the then Organisation of African Union (OAU) now AU with the prime aim of organising peace and reconciliation workshops among the belligerents in northern Ghana to facilitate and pave the way for peace and social integration to return to the north.

According to Bombande (2007) to help in the northern conflict, NGOs formed a working group called the Inter-NGO Consortium with the primary aim to contribute towards the peace efforts but realised that their members lacked experience in peacebuilding. Carscious (2013) observes that the consortium emerged as a loose network of NGOs that pooled resources, collectively requested funding assistance, oversaw the coordination of NGO relief efforts, and ultimately facilitated the mediation of a peace accord between the warring factions. The civil society did not possess the requisite knowledge or expertise to manage or resolve conflicts as their principal concern was to provide socio-economic development projects to enhance living conditions of the recipients. They employed extra ordinary measures to deal with the extra ordinary circumstances. Therefore, they contracted an external

consultant, the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI), an organisation based in Kenya responsible for peacebuilding activities in conflict zones.

Intervention of the Nairobi Peace Initiative

Bombande who is experienced in combining conflict mediation and peacebuilding with local knowledge assisted the Inter-NGO Consortium in inviting the NPI to Ghana. The NPI arrived in November 1994 led by Professor Hizkias Assefa to assess the situation and this aided the organisation to devise an appropriate response. They adopted a participatory approach by engaging the principal stakeholders in the conflict; consisting of traditional authorities, articulate members of the communities, youth leaders, women activists, religious groups, and development agencies working in the conflict zones. Other parties Assefa met included the Regional Minister, Government of Ghana Peace negotiators, Inter-NGO Consortium and Permanent Peace Negotiation Team and Security Services in Tamale (Mahama, 2003). Mahama (2003) further argued that the head of the team declared their mission to be rendering assistance to the region to achieve peace through discussions. The agenda was not opposed by any of the parties in the conflict since their mandate and objective is the returning of peace to the communities; the leader therefore, started meeting the stakeholders.

The mediation team visited places like Salaga; the East Gonja district capital, Bimbilla, Yendi, Zabzugu, Saboba, and Gushiegu and had discussions with the parties in the conflict. Between May, 1995 and April, 1996 the NPI and its partner for peace intensified their work for peace. “They aimed at creating consensus on the need for peace and reconciliation, building

confidence among the warring ethnic communities, as well as searching for solutions to the outstanding issues of the conflict underlying the wars” (Darkwa, 2012, p. 117). The team supported existing local initiatives aimed at restoring peace to the area and local associations that continue to consolidate peace in the area in the post conflict times (Awedoba, 2011; Mahama, 2003).

The opening statement of the facilitators during the meeting of the representatives of the conflict in those places they visited was that they were invited to a meeting to discuss how ongoing development projects came to a standstill during conflict times and if those projects could now continue in their communities. With this in mind, the representatives yielded to the desires of the NGOs to return peace to the communities. Bombande (2007, p. 210) noted that the communities welcomed the NGOs initiative to restore peace because these conflicts are the most challenging obstacles to development in northern Ghana.

According to Assefa (2001) upon realization that the belligerents were ready to communicate to each other, the first workshop was held in May 1995 with the invitation of the four principal groups which later expanded to include acephalous or minority groups such as the Bassari, Nawuri and Nchumuru elders. The meeting was held in Kumasi, a neutral ground supposedly to provide advice to development NGOs operating in the war-ravaged areas on how they could continue with their development work. This was the first time the conflict parties sat face to face to each other. The peace process started using a negotiation technique searching for fundamental issues that instigated them to resort to violence. Five workshops were successfully organised which chalked some success. The signing of peace treaties among the conflict parties

was achieved and was labelled as the Kumasi Peace Accord which the delegates of ethnic groups signed on the 30th March, 1996 (Mahama, 2003).

The signing of the Accord involved Konkomba and Nanumba, between Konkomba and Gonja, between Dagomba on one hand and Konkomba and Bassari on the other. Mahama (2003) observes that the parties to the accord are seven and includes the Konkomba, Bassari, Dagomba, Gonja, Nanumba, Nawuri, and Nchumuru. The Nawuri declined to sign any agreement with the Gonja but recognized and acknowledged the fact that conflict exists between the two of them and needed a resolution which they believed was found in the Justice Ampiah recommendations of 1991. The rejection of the Nawuri to engage their rival Gonja, perhaps explained why conflict did not break out among them for some time (Brukum, 2007). Mahama (2003) stated that in the preamble to the Accord, the signatories of the Accord acknowledged the significant roles of all the conflicting parties, towards bringing peace and development to the area and therefore emphasized their commitment to the peace process.

Mahama (2003) observes that on 29th February, 1996, the five workshops produced a drafted document which was called the Kumasi Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation between the various ethnic groups in the Northern Region of Ghana. The representatives were allowed to carry home the document for further perusal and make recommendations for amendment when necessary. On the 30th March 1996, the delegates reassembled in Kumasi and voluntarily signed the Kumasi Accord. This marked the end of spontaneous, simultaneous and pervasive ethnic hostilities in northern Ghana. The conflict parties were convinced that peaceful environment was a “sine qua

non” for enhancing social mobility, social integration, sustenance of the local economy, and development for the benefit of all parties. The culture of forgiveness, moderation, compromise and cooperation were also inculcated in the hearts and minds of the respondents of the workshops (Mahama, 2003). According to Sulemana (2009) some of the observations made by the delegates were that peaceful environment creates social integration, easy mobility, economic cooperation and development of both individuals and groups. They inculcated in themselves the spirit of forgiveness, moderation, compromise, and cooperation among themselves. The NPI deserves the praise of all Ghanaians for the tremendous success they achieved in bringing a relative peace in the Northern Region through the Kumasi Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation. The religious institution also contributed towards restoration of peace to the conflict areas.

Intervention by religious institutions

According to Gyekye (2003) Africans express their sense of dependence on God, who is held to be near and approachable. In view of this many African converts continue to consult traditional religious shrines in times of need or of personal or familial crises in expectation of some mystical way of fulfilling their needs or dealing with the crises. For them, religion must have immediate relevance in coping with the various problems of life on earth.

Bombande (2007) associates himself with this argument explaining that peace processes must be designed to encompass training of the mindset, values and attitudes, as well as beliefs to ensure that transformation is taking place at personal, relational, cultural, and structural levels. Sulemana (2009) observes

that this standpoint could have been executed by religion adequately through their teachings and practices, but the two dominant monotheistic religious groups; Islam and Christianity and the polytheistic traditional African religion have performed insignificant roles to promote peace among the combatants. Religion could bridge the ethnic and cultural differences among the people to pave the way for social integration and peaceful coexistence through training of the mind and inculcation of cherished values. They rather became a hurdle to cross to attain peace. Some of the religious leaders expressed the views that meaningful agreement with those who did not share faiths was not possible (Assefa, 2001).

According to Kirby (2007) rituals curtail violence from degenerating into absolute chaos among the traditional African society. Without any ritual of reconciliation considered as authentic by all the conflict parties, there is no peace; the earth will remain dead, unproductive and unable to sustain life because the ancestors were not employed into the conflict. Prior to the conflict, previous localized conflicts were being resolved at local shrines by custodians of the traditional earth shrine. These rich cultural practices were ignored by peace practitioners in the region. However, this conflict cut across ethnic boundaries and each group had exclusive belief in its shrine implying that there is no one particular shrine which is generally accepted by all. With this situation, which shrine could be used to perform the ritual to contain the conflicts? Nevertheless, some attempts had been made by the Catholic Relief Service. They “introduced peace education programmes into the various Catholic Church dioceses in nine districts” of northern Ghana.

Observations about the interventions

The review of literature discussed a range of issues on the Gonja-Nawuri Conflicts as well as other conflicts in the Northern Region. It highlighted the economic, social and political sources of the conflicts as well as intervention mechanisms employed to resolve the deadlock in the past.

It was revealed in the literature that the controversy over allodial right to land disrupted the relationships between the Gonja and Nawuri and led them to conflict, a phenomenon that could be traced to the pre colonial era. One school of thought is of the view that the Nawuri were subjects of Ndewura Jakpa, a founder of the Gonja Kingdom in the sixteenth century. These scholars alleged that the founder conquered the Nawuri and annexed their land, and also integrated them into his army after they had absolutely paid homage to him and accepted a subservient position, before they were used to conquer other people. This class of scholars argued that the Nawuri do not have allodial right to the land of Kpandai, supporting their standpoint, using this historical explanation.

The other school of thought such as Brukum (2007) and Mbowura (2016) also argued that the Nawuri own the land of Kpandai as they were the first to settle there in the 14th century before the Gonja embarked upon their wars of conquests. According to them there was no any evidence of the Gonja and Nawuri engagement into a conflict leading to the conquest by the other. They rather collaborated to fight other ethnic groups such as the war against the Asante in 1744-45. The school of thought further argued that the Gonja visited Kpandai for the first time seeking for an asylum during an intra-ethnic conflict among them in Kpembu and the Nawuri were kind and hospitable to them which encouraged them to live in Kpandai as settlers.

The literature also dealt with conflict resolution mechanisms employed to resolve the conflict. These include the roles of the State and Civil Society Organisations. It discussed the utterances made by former Presidents of Ghana during efforts made to mediate the conflicts, the role played by Committee of Inquiry headed by Justice Ampiah, a Judge of the Supreme Court, deployment of the security and the roles played by the Northern Regional Security Councils in collaboration with other stakeholders. Others who attempted to resolve the conflict include the National Peace Council (NPC), PPNT, Inter-NGO Consortium and the NPI under the supervision of the African Union with the prime aim of organising peace and reconciliation workshops for conflict parties in northern Ghana to facilitate and pave the way for social integration and peaceful coexistence among the conflict parties. The efforts made by these groups yielded some good results but did not absolutely resolve the conflicts.

The gap in the related literature is that the indigenous institutions and their role in conflict resolution is not considered. The conflicts are local ones and therefore, have some cultural implications. If the indigenous knowledge of the conflict parties is not explored and employed to resolve the conflicts, the parties, perhaps would continue to perceive interveners as outsiders who do not know their culture and effects of the conflict on them, trying to impose peace upon them. Perhaps, the combatants do not believe in the impartiality and neutrality of the outsiders, making it difficult for them to accept their judgement on the issues. In addition, all the efforts made by the outsiders are tantamount to negative peace, where the conflict parties coexist with the conflict and any deep differences among them could trigger the conflict.

This study intends to address the deficiency in the literature by interacting with the ethnic groups to interrogate them on the causes, effects and their indigenous knowledge of conflict resolution. The main focus of the study is to explore indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms and how they can be applied to complement what external interveners have done to resolve the conflicts. This is intended to find lasting solutions to the deadlock which will promote peaceful coexistence and true reconciliation among the feuding parties.

CHAPTER FOUR

STUDY AREA, POULATION AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter gives a detailed explanation of the research methodology. The various techniques and methods that were used to select respondents in the study have also been outlined. It describes the study area, research philosophy, study design, study population and sampling. Also, the sources of data, data collection instruments, data processing and analysis, ethical considerations, as well as challenges from the field have been discussed.

Location and size of the study area:

The East Gonja district used to include Kpandai district and shares boundaries with Nanumba district, Kete-Krachi District, Atebubu District, central Gonja and Tamale Metropolis. In the aftermath of the conflict in 2006, the Kpandai District was carved out of East Gonja District making Kpandai district independent of the East Gonja. Therefore, the data was collected in the two districts.

Kpandai

This Nawuri settlement lies approximately between latitude $8^{\circ} 28'$ and about $8^{\circ} 28'$ North, and stretches from longitude $0^{\circ} 05'W$ to $0^{\circ} 15'E$ on the map of the republic of Ghana. Around 1922, other ethnic groups such as the Konkomba, Bassari and Kotokoli became domiciled in the area (Mbowura, 2014). They were followed by waves of other immigrant groups making the

area heterogeneous. Kpandai district obtained the status of district capital in 2008 with the division of the East Gonja District into two districts with Kpandai town being the district capital. It is the second largest town in East Gonja area after Salaga. According to Awedoba (2011) the Nawuri land consists of many villages in the region of Kpandai. The town shares a border with the northern part of Volta Region, to the east, with the Achode/Chanla, west with Nchumuru, south with the Krachi and north with Nanumba District as shown in Figure 2. Kpandai has a market, clinic, primary, Junior and Senior High Schools. It is a commercial and farming town about 48 miles to the South-East of Salaga. Kpandai district comprises Gonja, Nawuri, Kotokoli, Ewe, Bassari, Nchumuru and Konkomba ethnic groups with the Konkomba being the dominant group (Kendie, et al. 2014).

According to Mbowura (2014) the Nawuri traced their origin to the Afram Plains. From there, they migrated to Larteh Akuapem together with other Guan speaking groups such as Lateh, Anum, Nkonya, Krachi, Nchumuru, and Achode in about 14th century. The Nawuri moved through Anum, Dwan in present day Brong Ahafo region and Otisu in Kete territory and crossed the Oti river. They settled in the adjoining lands and founded settlements in present day Nawuri territory of the Kpandai district in the Northern Region. Some of the villages founded by the Nawuri are Kpandai, Balai, Nkanchina, Bayim, Dodai, Ketejali, Buya, Kabonwule, Bladjai and Kitare.

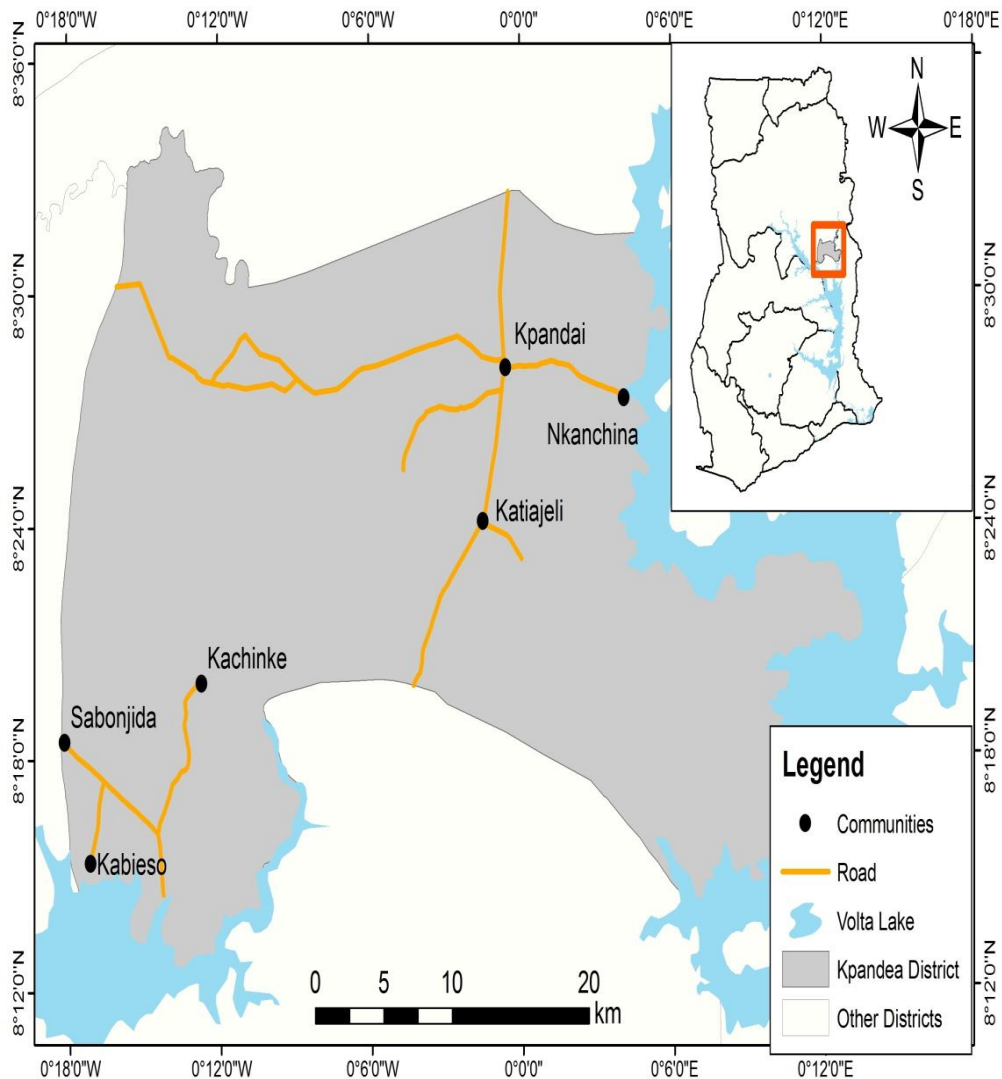


Figure 2: Map of Kpandai District in Northern Ghana.

Source: Cartography Unit, UCC (2018).

Aboriginality of Nawuri

Mbowura (2014) indicates that the Nawuri migrated from the Afram Plains and settled in Kpandai area in the 14th century, whereas the founder of the Gonja Kingdom started his wars of conquest in the 16th century, inferring that the Nawuri occupied Kpandai two centuries before their contact with the Gonja. The Nawuri assert that they did not engage in any inter ethnic conflict

with the Gonja in the 16th century leading to the conquest of one by the other. They are emphatic that the Gonja visited Kpandai as strangers and the Nawuri provided them with shelter. Mbowura attributed the cause of the Gonja migration to Kpandai to total insecurity in Salaga from 1744 to 1745 due to Asante invasion of the area. In addition, Braimah (1967) stated that between the period 1892 to 1893, the Gonja was engaged in a power struggle, posing danger and insecurity to human life. This triggered the migration of the Lepo gate from which the Kanankulaiwura royal family emanate to Kete-Krachi and Kpandai. The Nawuri conclude that they and the Gonja were collaborators and supported each other to fight common enemies. For instance, they fought on the side of Gonja during the Asante invasion of East Gonja in 1744-45. This assertion was doubted by Awedoba (2011) that one cannot categorically state the status of the Gonja when they entered Kpandai. However, the Gonja and the Nawuri differed on the aboriginality of Kpandai because of historical contradictions and distortions.

The Gonja postulate that the founder of their kingdom did so through wars of conquests and Kpandai was one of the places he invaded and annexed to the Gonja kingdom and was placed under the supervision of the Kpembiwura. Since then, the people in that area were subjugated to the rule of the Gonja as they lost their independency and autonomy. This standpoint is upheld by Goody and Braimah (1967), as well as Ladouceur (1979). These writers claim that the Nawuri were under the rule of the Gonja before the colonial adventure in northern Ghana in the 19th century. Goody and Braimah (1967) proceeded to argue that the Nawuri acted as head porters of the Gonja warriors from Brong Ahafo, where they started with their expeditions to the

Kpandai area thus given another dimension of the history. Perhaps, this explains why the Nawuri upheld the view that the two were collaborators fighting other enemy groups together.

Maasole (2006, p. 52) argues that “the Alfai area of Eastern Gonja was originally inhabited by Konkomba who were driven out by the Gonja; and that when Jakpa was in that part of the country moving towards Bassari, he left one of the Gonja princes to take charge of the headquarters of Alfai. The ruins of it could be found about seven and half kilometers north east of Kpandai...”. This assertion validates the claim of Goody and Braimah (1967) that Ndewura Jakpa brought the Nawuri to Kpandai and stationed them there under the supervision of his son Djoro. These contradictions in literature and narratives of the respondents made the issues clumsy and difficult to comprehend; whether the Gonja conquered the Nawuri and made them their subjects or if the Gonja travelled to Kpandai as strangers to settle with the Nawuri, or the Nawuri were slaves of the Jakpa, or whether the two were collaborators and fighting other enemy tribes characterized the Gonja-Nawuri deadlock, precipitating conflict among them (Awedoba, 2011).

Political organisation of Nawuri

Brukum (2006) posits that the chieftaincy institution existed among the Nawuri people before the advent of the colonial administration. The Annual Report for the Krachi District in 1926 stated among other things that there are five divisions or tribal areas: Krachi, Nawuri, Nchumuru, Adjuati and Adele. Each is governed by its own head that is chief and sub-chiefs who are assisted by counsellors. These chiefs are not nominated and elected by their subjects

but are appointed among other chiefs by a system of rotation. Such chiefs are blood related in each division as they emanated from a common lineage. The chiefs used different titles which include: Krachi is governed by Omanhene, Nawuri is governed by Wurubon, Adjuati is governed by Asawura, Adele is governed by Ejudele, Nchumuru is governed by Owure. This implies that the chieftaincy institution was not foreign to the Nawuri. They were not acephalous as they belong to the Guan groups who emigrated from their place of origin where the chieftaincy institution was prevalent and popular (Brukum, 2007).

The aboriginality of the Gonja

Gonja is one of the Guan people in Ghana. According to Maasole (2006) an account of Gonja tradition reveals that the King of Mali sent an expeditionary force against the emir of Begho, a vassal of Mali to bring him to order for refusing to pay tribute to the King. At the head of the expedition were Umar and Nabaga who defeated Begho and continued with the expedition until Buna, west of the Black Volta and conquered the area. Jakpa was said to cross the Black Volta and established himself at Nyanga where he was confronted with opposing neighbours such as the Akan chiefdoms of Bono Manso as well as Dagbon and the chiefdom of Wa and Buna.

The Gonja invaders permitted the existence of a parallel system of chiefs of the subject people, to represent their interests in the councils of the Gonja Overlords, and at the same time, provided an administrative chain of command. The invaders intermarried with the indigenous Guan people and adopted the local languages, which they mixed with the Mande language to

produce the *Agbanyato* language which is currently spoken in Gonja land. The descendants of the Malian invaders known as the Njanya came to form a princely group dispersed throughout the state (Amenumey, 2011).

The political structure of Gonja

The political structure of the Gonja includes the core Gonja area where Njanya cultural norms and language apply, and the communities that have come under the jurisdiction of the Gonja King, the Yagbonwura, as a result of conquest or alliance in the pre-colonial area (Awedoba, 2011). According to Awedoba (2011) and Amenumey (2011) Yagbonwura (title of the overlord of Gonja traditional area) is the head and supreme chief of all Gonja. Under him are the divisional chiefs, each of whom were descendants of Jakpa. The position of the supreme or paramount chief was held in turn by chiefs of major divisions. The divisional chiefs accepted the primacy and paid tribute even if it is a nominal one, to the Yagbonwura.

The divisional chiefs on their part collected tribute from the sub chiefs and conquered people (Brukum, 2006). The original gates to the paramountcy - the skin of Yagbon- were Bole, Wasipe, Kong, Kusawgu, Tulewe, and Kpembi chiefdoms. Brukum (2006) held the view that originally the divisional gates were fifteen, by the 19th century; some of them were eliminated and perhaps for misconduct and real power lay in the six mentioned. For instance, Kong lost their rights to ascend to Yagbon since the aftermath of Samori's invasion of western Gonja as they were accused of their involvement in the invasion in support of Samory Toury, the enemy of Gonja. This was interpreted by the Gonja to be treason against the Gonja state hence their banishment to

ascend to the highest office of the Kingdom. Awedoba (2011, p. 140) made the following observation with regard to elimination of Kong Gate from the Gonja chieftaincy institution:

“Kong (not Kpong) lost their position and have since remained ineligible, the main reason being that the then Kong chief joined Babatu and Samori to fight Gonja. The people of Kong are negotiating to get back on BoardAs an initial step the Kong chief lobbied for the traditional council meeting to take place in Kong. The answer to his request was to give the Gonja state time to think about it”.

The paramountcy rotates among the six divisional gates implying that any one of them is eligible to ascend to Yagbonwura. “The system which allows rotation and promotion allows a person with right pedigree to rise from being a relative nobody to the paramountcy through a number of steps. From a village level, he can rise to sub-divisional and divisional levels, and ultimately to the paramountcy” (Awedoba, 2011, Pp. 138-139).

Gonja history attests that the founder appointed his sons and loyalists as divisional chiefs of the provinces making the state a monarchy but was not able to establish a centralized system to unify the vast state. The counsellors of the paramount chief are the divisional chiefs who could not ascend to the position of Yagbonwura. The unification of Gonjaland seems to have been initiated and carried through by the British in their quest for larger units that would be easier to administer through their policy of indirect rule that is ruling Africans through their chiefs. The unification process started in the 1930s with a meeting- the ‘Enquiry into the Constitution and Organisation of the Gonja Kingdom’. According to Braimah et al. (1997), the meeting was the actual starting point of the unification of the people of Gonja traditional areas as it is

today. The order of succession, formation of traditional council and how memberships are formed had been agreed upon and the approved document serves as a reference constitution of Gonjaland (Awedoba, 2011).

Social organisation of the Gonja

According to Goody and Goody (1967) socially, the Gonja are divided into three distinct social groups. They comprised the royal class; the direct descendant of Jakpa, called the *Nbanya*. These groups are spread throughout the Gonja state. Being a royal is associated with pride as “patrimonialism continues to be the mode applicable in the allocation of chieftaincy and related titles as well as access to land” (Awedoba, 2011, p. 138). The subjects are known as the *Nyanmasi*. This group was conquered by the newly established Kingdom. Even though this group of people pay loyalty to the Yagbonwura, it maintained its original identities as Vagala, Auga, Tampolensi and retained the culture and identity especially in the performance of the functions as earth priest. Control over the Nyanmase was perpetuated by validating the pre-existing Nyanmase boundaries and creating some chiefship offices for them to act as middlemen in Gonja administration. These chiefs were responsible for collection of taxes and also performing a vital function in the selection of Gonja divisional chiefs but were continuously debarred from final power (Brukum, 2006). The third group, the local Muslim communities were largely settled in the commercial towns of Gonja state such as the salt mining area of Daboya and the former slave trade centre of Salaga.

The majority of the Muslims were *Dyula* traders who were persuaded by the invaders in the seventeenth century to settle with them perhaps because

they both emanated from western Sudan and shared almost the same culture. They were appointed as Imams of the Yagbon in the divisional capitals and allowed to play significant roles in the communal life of Gonja. The intermarriages especially between a commoner and royal allow the offspring of such couple to relate to both royals and commoners, thus bridging the differences among them.

Territorial boundary of Gonja

The Gonjaland emerged in the area to the west and south-west of the Mole-Dagbani states. The Gonja kingdom includes the Western Gonja (Bole Damango), Central Gonja (Buipe) and Eastern Gonja (Salaga) which stretched further east to encompass Kpandai which is the focus of this study. The Gonjaland is heterogeneous in nature. It is a home of numerous people including Safalba, Hanga, Nawuri, Konkomba, Vagala, Tampulma, Nchumuru and the Zongo communities who differ on several backgrounds in terms of language, social organisation and cultural norms.

Amenumey (2011) writes that according to the oral narration of the Gonja people, a group of invaders comprising Wangara, Bambara, Sonnike background and others riding horses under the leadership of the legendary Ndewura Jakpa migrated from Mande in Mali a western Sudanese state with well-organised disciplined army, superior weapons, and the prayers of Mallam Fati Marukpe who tenaciously invoked the assistance of God for the army. Ndewura Jakpa ruthlessly invaded the aboriginal people and established the present day Gonja kingdom. Braimah (1967) opined that the invasion took place in the mid seventeenth century. Amenumey (2011) has a contrary view to

that of Braimah (1967). According to the former, “it was during the second half of sixteenth century that Gonja was created by Mande invaders. From a base at Yagbon, Ndewura Jakpa created an empire that stretched across the confluence of the Black and White Voltas and straddled the trade routes to Hausaland in the east, Mossi in the south and Mande in the west” (Amenumey, 2011, p. 25).

According to Maasole (2006) one account of Gonja tradition reveals that the King of Mali sent an army expedition against the Emir of Begho a vassal of Mali to bring him to his knees for refusing to pay tribute to him. At the head of the expedition were Umar and Nabaga. After Begho was defeated, the expedition continued until Buna west of the Black Volta was conquered. Jakpa was said to cross the Black Volta and established himself at Nyanga where he was confronted with severe opposing neighbours such as the Akan chiefdom of Bono Manso, Dagbon and chiefdom of Wa and Buna during its formative stages. The expansion of Gonja implied attenuation of these states. However, Gonja was able to stand the resistance of these organised states. For instance, Gonja fiercely fought and expanded at the expense of Dagbon and seized the salt mine of Daboya including west of the White Volta. Other areas conquered included the Nawuri, Nchumuru, and Vagla.

This culminated into establishment of the Gonja kingdom which stretched from Bole in the West to Sansane Mango in the East. The empire was divided among his sons, brothers and loyalists. Presently, the empire has six divisional chiefs; consisting of Bole, Daboya, Kpembu, Buipe, Tuluwe and Kusawgu and they are also the original gates to the paramountcy- the skin of Yagbon (Ladouceur, 1979). These chiefs pay tribute to the Yagbonwura,

Overlord of the Kingdom, and also collect taxes on his behalf for the development of the state.

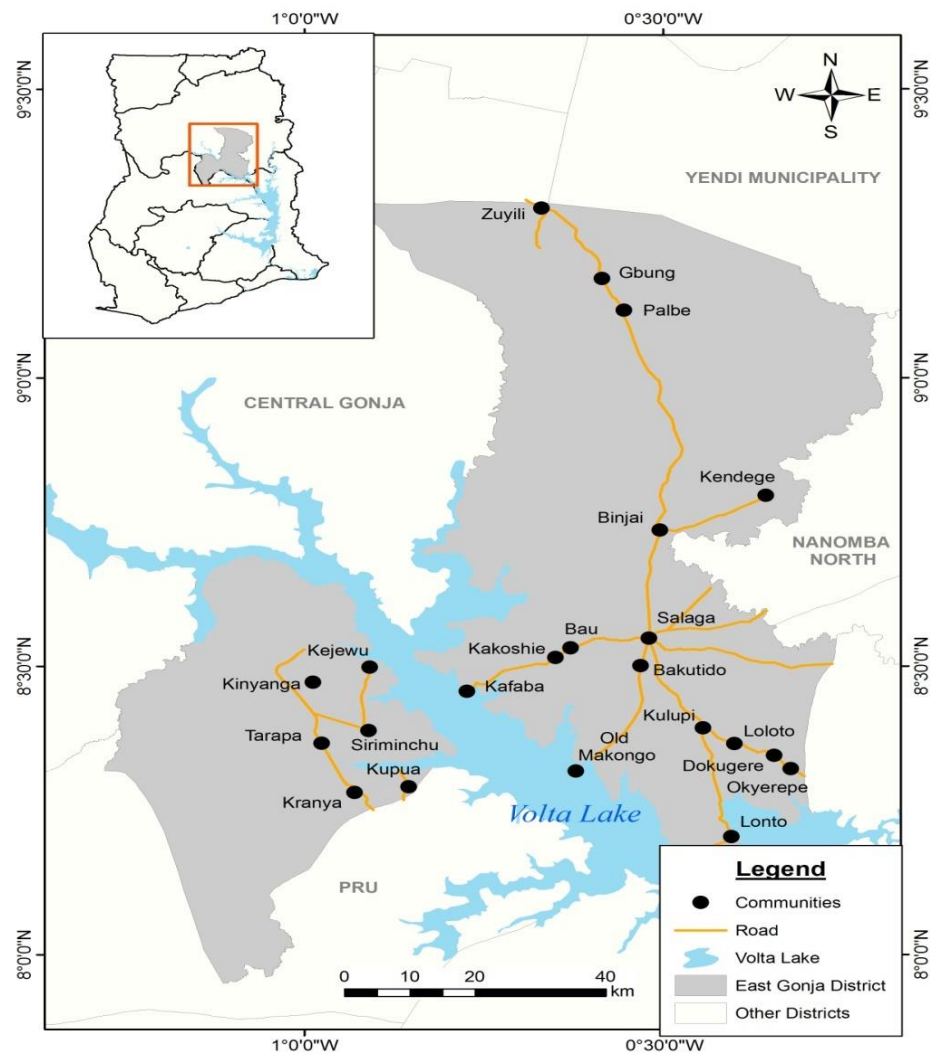


Figure: 3 Map of Salaga District of Northern Ghana

Source: Cartography Unit, UCC (2018).

Research philosophy

Research philosophy deals with the source, nature, and development of knowledge. It implies a belief about the ways in which data about a phenomenon should be gathered, analysed and used. There are two main types

of research philosophy in the social sciences namely positivism and interpretivism.

Positivist Philosophy

According to Neuman (1997, p. 63) positivism sees social science as an organised method for combining deductive logic with precise empirical observations of individual behaviour in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human activity. Sarantakos (1998) outlined advantages and disadvantages of positivist approach to research in the following:

Advantages of Positivist Philosophy

To begin with the advantages, positivist philosophy allows representativeness and generalisation of the findings to the population as probability sample is utilised. Money and time may not be used to replicate the research on the same topic at the same area to see whether the findings affect the rest of the population that had not participated in the study because of using probability sample.

It also avoids the risk of collecting meaningless and useless data. The instrument of data collection is structured and does not allow respondents to deviate from the instrument that was rigidly prepared by the researcher.

The problem of ethics is upheld. There is no encroachment of the respondents' personal sphere of subjects. The questionnaires are given to the respondents to fill and if uneducated an educated person may assist the

respondent, following strictly the questionnaires. There are also disadvantages associated with the positivist philosophy.

Disadvantages of Positivist Philosophy

Social phenomena exist in the minds of people and only they can make interpretation of it for others to know what exist in their minds. The positivist researcher predetermined what respondents have in their mind without having access to what is in their mind.

Secondly, the positivists lay emphasis on quantitative measurement which cannot take into account the real meaning of social behaviour. Quantification provides meanings that can only be closed to the beliefs and perception of the researcher than to those of the respondents.

Also, the use of hypothesis is problematic as it determines the course of the study from the beginning and restricts options of asking questions by respondents thus compelling the respondents to answer questions in a way they would not have done if given allowance for them to express their views freely without restrictions. Positivist approach is a highly structured research design which imposes pre-arranged limits and boundaries to research (Sarantakos, 1998).

It further explains that positivist methodology fails to differentiate between appearance and essence of social events; it neglects the essence of life, they only study what they see or appearance and assumes that appearance is reality which might not be the case.

It also wastes time, finances and energy of the researcher, as large sample of data had to be collected in order to allow generalisation of the findings to the population.

It also fails to answer questions such as why and how social events are happening as answers to those questions require detailed descriptions which is not within the area of positivist paradigm. They also assume that the researcher is perfect and can absolutely be objective. However, the values and interest of the researcher can influence the approach. According to Turner (1992, p. 1511) “positivism no longer has clear referent, but it is evident that, for many, being a positivist is not a good thing”. The shortcoming of positivists approach to research persuades me to adopt the interpretive approach to execute this studies.

Interpretive Philosophy

In contrast to the positivist philosophy, an interpretive approach is the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds (Neuman, 1997, p. 68). There are several types of interpretive social science. These include hermeneutics, cognitive, idealist, phenomenological, subjectivist, and qualitative method of sociological reserach. Interpretive philosophy prefers a humanistic qualitative method in undertaking research.

This approach is associated with certain advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages of Interpretive Philosophy

The first strength of the interpretive philosophy is capturing of reality as it is, namely as seen and experienced by the respondents. It assumes that the social world is always a human creation and not a discovery.

Researching people in natural setting. The investigator is very active in the process of research such as data collection and analysis. This allows the researcher to achieve deeper understanding of the respondents' world through observation of the locality and the flow of conversation with the respondents.

The researcher grounds a theoretical understanding of the contexts and people he or she is studying in the language, meanings, and perspectives that form their world. The researcher then comes to a social scientific account of the social world as seen from those perspective without distorting the voices that provide data.

The interpretive also creates physical interaction between the researcher and the respondents allowing them to probe each other during data collection. This eliminates wrong answers which emanates from misunderstanding of the questions by respondents. It also humanises the research process by encouraging the role of the researched. It allows the respondents to be active in the research, particularly during data collection when interrogation is being done by the researcher and responses given by the respondents. The interpretive philosophy goes with qualitative research design.

Disadvantages of Interpretive Philosophy

The first shortcoming is the inability of the researcher to generalise the findings at the completion of the studies as purposive sampling is used as against non probability sampling which gives every person in the population an equal chance of being selected to partake in the studies. If this is done, it makes generalisation of the finding possible.

It also provides a chance for bias by the researcher as he could manipulate the data collected using his personal views. Therefore, reliability and representativeness of data is undermined to certain extent thus raising problems of ethics.

Other disadvantages include too much waste of time during data collection because respondents ask excessive questions to seek clearance on the questions posed to them and the interviewer also making attempts to clarify issues for them.

Cleansing of the data and writing of field report is also time consuming. The risk of gathering data that are meaningless and useless is also a disadvantage. The respondents may be verbose and it is difficult to shorten their conversation promptly if they deviate from answering the questions as they may think the researcher is harsh on them. Nonetheless, the strengths of the interpretive philosophy compensate for the shortcomings, justifying my choice of interpretive research over the positivist philosophy in undertaking this study.

I adopt the interpretative philosophy in the sense that the study is descriptive in nature. The use of figures to undertake this research is undermined as quantitative data was not gathered. The conflict happened in

about three decades ago and only few growned up repondents present in Kpandai and alife during data collection could provide answeres to the questions by making a recall. A purposive sample had to be utilised to reach the respondents who proffered narrative and descriptive data. The respondents were also saddled with intricate and emotional feelings which could also be accessed by the researcher through narrations but not any statistical data and predictions.

Research Design

The research design used for the gathering and collection of data was a qualitative approach. This approach tends to be inductive, implying that Personal in-depth interviews were used with the aid of an interview guide. The questions were opened-ended to allow the respondents to speak out without interruptions. Silverman (2005, p. 6) argues that “qualitative method avoids or downplays statistical techniques and mechanics of kinds of quantitative methods used in, say survey research or epidemiology”. It comprises of the analysis of words and images rather than numbers, observation rather than experiment, meaning rather than behaviour and hypothesis generating research rather than hypothesis testing (Silverman (2006). Holiday (2002) also observes that it is insufficient to rely on quantitative survey and statistics to understand human affairs. It has become important to attempt to delve deep into the subjective qualities that govern human behaviour. The qualitative method helps to identify invisible features such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity and religion, whose role in the research issue may not be readily apparent.

Qualitative research seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves. In addition, with the qualitative method, the relationship between the researcher and the respondents is often less formal than in quantitative research. Respondents have the opportunity to respond more elaborately and in greater detail, than is typically the case with quantitative methods. Researchers in turn, have the opportunity to respond immediately to what respondents say by tailoring subsequent questions to the information the respondent has provided (Mack, et al., 2005). The qualitative approach can also be used to obtain the intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conventional methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The main reason why the researcher undertook qualitative research was that, the intended research does not depend upon official figures to do analysis of conflict resolution mechanisms best fit for resolving the conflicts. The issues involved in the conflict, the assessment of conflict resolution mechanisms executed in the area and how the conflict could be resolved, required interviewing respondents who have knowledge about how the conflict was handled and not any other person who could be reached by chance to interview, who might not have relevant information needed for the study.

The issues involved in the conflict are historical in nature which demands narratives and descriptions of events. Causes of the conflict include primordial and colonial administrative factors which were specific past events that numerals cannot sufficiently explain without narrations. The conflict itself happened about three decades ago and only adult people during that time could

presently talk about the causes, effects and interventions made to resolve the conflict.

To comprehend the sources of the conflict, its prolonged nature and how it could be resolved, it was imperative to ask respondents questions such as ‘why’, ‘how’, and ‘in what ways’, which are qualitative in nature. Employing questions such as how much, how many, how often, or to what extent was not found to be appropriate to this study as they seek to provide answers with the aid of figures. The relationship between the researcher and respondents is also less formal. The respondents got an opportunity of responding to questions elaborately. The researcher had the chance to respond immediately to the questions bothering the respondents and made issues clear to them. The qualitative approach, assisted to get more intricate information about phenomenon, such as feelings and thought processes which were difficult to extract or learn (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The in-depth interviews and groups discussions could not have been successful without an interview guide.

Sources of data

The sources of data were primary and secondary. The primary sources included information gathered from traditional authorities, conflict parties, civil society organisations and individuals occupying key positions in the area, who are concerned about management and resolution of the conflicts. The secondary data comprised information from published texts such as documents on the Kpandai district conflict, academic periodicals, research journals, government publications, past dissertations and Internet resources were used to

compliment the primary data. Public documents such as census statistics, committees of inquiry reports, newspapers and other reports that were significant to the study were relied upon to collect secondary materials on the subject matter. It was significant for me to read related work on the topic, in the sense that knowledge accumulates, and that we learn and build on what others have done. Scientific research is not an activity of isolated hermits who ignore other's findings. Rather it is the collective effort of many researchers who share their results with one another and who pursue knowledge as a community (Neuman, 1997). The research findings were two fold. The first was a replica and confirmation of existing literature. The second was novel, making additions to the knowledge of conflict resolution in the area. The data was processed to make the analysis more efficient.

Target population

The target population for the study included all interveners in the conflict areas interested in finding lasting solutions to the protracted conflict in the area. They included chiefs, opinion leaders, youth leaders, governmental and non-government agencies. The target population included Assembly persons, traditional leadership, National Peace Council (NPC), the Northern Regional Security Council (REGSEC), and the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP-Ghana), an NGO. The custodians of the Gonja and Nawuri history were also interviewed to obtain in-depth knowledge about the history of their migration and the kind of relationships that existed among them in the pre-colonial era. The NPC indicated that they came into existence in 2010 and they did not get involved into the conflict. REGSEC was visited in

Tamale but they were unable to find document regarding the conflict for me. The officers who were in charge of the conflict either died or on retirement and they could not be reached. WANEPA-Ghana office was visited and Country Director was interviewed. Center for Conflict Transformation and Research (CECOTAPS) was visited in Damango to interview the Director of the Centre. The representative of the Centre who is also a Catholic Father granted me an interview in Tamale, explaining the roles they played in the area. The population constituted persons who were always involved directly in the conflict management and resolution process. They are abreast with relevant information and knowledge in conflict issues within the study area. This is the basis for which the researcher targeted them for information. The size of the population was huge for the researcher to interact with all of them. In view of this a sample was considered for the study.

Sample Size

With regard to the sample size, a total number of interviewees in the study was 96, out of which 52 were respondents in Kpandai district; comprising 48 men and 4 women. In Kpandai district (Figure 2), combatants travelled from 8 villages to Kpandai to fight. Some of them were visited and their views on the conflict were solicited. These villages were Kumdi (15 respondents), Nkanchina (3 respondents), Tangilanto (2 respondent), Kabonwule (3 respondents), Kitare (9 respondents), Bladjai (2 respondents), Blai (6 respondents) and Kpandai (12 respondents). A total number of 10 chiefs were interviewed. In Kpandai district, 3 focus grouped discussions were conducted. The first consisted of 8 respondents, 3 of them were Odikuro, 3

chiefs and two queen mothers. The second consisted of 6 Konkomba men in Kpandai who participated in the conflict in support of the Nawuri. The third was in Kumdi made up of eight respondents, 4 of whom were Nchumuru, two Konkomba and two Bassari.

In East Gonja district (Figure 3), 30 respondents who migrated from Kpandai as a result of the conflict were interviewed in Kpembu. These include the paramount chief who was then in Kpandai, 10 divisional chiefs, five queen mothers and 14 elders. In Salaga, 14 respondents who were living in Kpandai when the conflict broke out were also interviewed. A focus group discussion was conducted in Salaga comprising 8 respondents consisting of two elderly chiefs and six respondents who were living in Kpandai comprising 4 males and 2 females, and participated in the conflict as combatants. The CECOTAPS office was visited in Damango the capital of West Gonja district to interview their Director. The representative of the organisation was also interviewed in Tamale at the catholic regional office. The NPI is an international organisation based in Kenya, Nairobi and did not have office in Ghana. However, 5 participants in their workshop in Kumasi were inclusive in the sample size. The government agencies thus REGSEC and DISEC in present times were not in office when the conflict erupted. Therefore, none of them could provide relevant information on the subject matter during interviews. Also, an attempt made to retrieve the document on the conflict from them was futile. The officers contacted in Salaga and Tamale explained that the document were burnt.

Sarantakos (1998) argues that in qualitative studies, theoretical sampling does not resort to numerical boundaries to determine the size of

sample, instead, subject selection will cease after saturation has been reached. Also, when the purposive sampling or accidental sampling procedures are used, the researcher has the choice to decide the number of respondents sufficient for the study. This viewpoint was confirmed by Bamberger (2000) who states that the number of respondents do not matter when undertaking qualitative research but the quality of the work is the important factor. This gave me the allowance to determine the number of respondents to engage in the research especially when the saturation point was reached.

Sampling Procedure

The study employed a purposive sampling technique to select the respondents. The rationale for the choice of this sample technique was to select respondents who were abreast with relevant information and knowledge in the issue under study. In this case, it was only persons who were present in Kpandai and in most instances participated in the conflict, who were selected. Sarantakos (1998) indicates that the process of purposive sampling involved identification of key informants and arranging time to meet them. There were also some respondents who were incidentally interviewed because the researcher came into contact with them and upon interrogating them and stating the purpose of the study, they accepted to be interviewed constituting what Sarantakos (1998) referred to as convenient sample.

Data collection instrument

An interview guide was prepared with open-ended questions for questioning of respondents. The structure of the questions was flexible to allow

the researcher freedom to review the questions during interview, making additions of relevant questions or subtracted questions found to be insignificant. A focus group discussion guide was administered to complement the in-depth interviews.

Pre-test and Reconnaissance Survey

Prior to the commencement of the field work, a visit to the villages of Kpandai was done to ascertain the distances of the villages from the district capital and the terrain of the area. The objective of it also was to contact the gatekeepers and opinion leaders to discuss with them about the intended work and sought for their co-operation and participation in the studies. They were also requested to suggest the days and times appropriate for engaging them. Some profiles of the villages and relevant information were gathered during this reconnaissance survey. The reliability and validity of the research questions were ascertained through a pre-test study of some members and stakeholders who had information related to the study in Makango, a village of Salaga as some of the combatants migrated to that place to seek for greener pastures. This was aimed at identifying the inconsistencies and imprecisions in the responses with regard to certain questions. It aided the revision of some questions that were seen to pose difficulty and understanding to the respondents. This led to increasing the validity and reliability of the instruments for data collection and findings of the study. Ten respondents were engaged in the pre-test.

Data collection Procedures

Data collection in qualitative studies usually involves techniques such as interviews, focus group discussions and observation. With this study, primary data was collected by conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The interview comprised face-to-face interactions between the interviewer and the interviewee with the researcher asking questions and anticipating answers from the latter. It was flexible as the questions were reframed in some instances to help the respondents understand intentions of the researcher. This was recommended by McMillan and Schumacher (1993). The standpoints of Leedy and Ormrod (2005) were also taken into account by the researcher by allowing the respondents to seek for clarifications where they found questions to be blurred. The research guide was prepared in advance by the researcher, meant for the data collection, taking into consideration the objectives and research questions of the study.

The actual field work begun in Kpandai by making contacts with the gate keepers; the Assembly persons, opinion leaders and chiefs to explain to them the purpose of the research and sought permission to reach respondents. The in-depth interviews were conducted at places preferred by the respondents. These included their houses, working places and places of worship. The respondents also decided who should be present at the location of the interviews. Some of the respondents demanded for the research guide to read before interviewing them. Majority of respondents in the focus group discussions were not in-depth interviewed in order to compare their responses and that of the in-depth interviewees to obtain the similarities and differences among them. The respondents unanimously agreed and proposed the venues

of the focus group discussions. The services of two research assistants were solicited who were properly trained by rehearsing the questions with them and allowing them to ask questions if they did not understand any question. The two of them pursued masters programmes and conducted research. This implies that they have experience in data collection. The two of them were also with me during pre-testing of the instrument before collecting data. They were conversant with the research guide before data collection began.

Data processing and analysis

The research assistants and the researcher were taken notes during the interrogations. Recording devices were used with the consent of the interviewees to record their voices during interviews. Immediately after the day's work, transcription was done by listening to the recording device carefully and repeatedly and writing down the responses verbatim. Manual sorting was done on prepared notes of the field which generated verbose data but did not overwhelm the researcher. The primary data obtained was cross-checked and edited to ensure that all mistakes were eliminated before the accurate information was used for the analysis

The respondents were allowed to express their views freely without hesitations or entertaining fears of the researcher using their responses against them in the future. They were asked to substantiate their views if they were found to be clumsy instead of assigning meaning to what they indicated and making conclusions for them. The researcher also responded to their questions appropriately when they sought clarification to the questions posted to them if

they were found difficult to understand. This minimised or prevented distortions of facts.

The research guide was administered in the field with the consent of the respondents prior to the data collection during the reconnaissance survey and the time of the field work itself. The respondents were allowed to ask questions to understand them before they replied. The data was cleansed to eliminate duplications, spelling mistakes of notes taking and reconciled contradictions during discussions of the data. Information that deviated from the objectives of the studies were eliminated remaining the true data. The substantive issues and their meanings were not altered during cleansing of the data and discussions.

The study was structured using themes such as the causes and effects of the conflict, roles of government, civil society organisation, indigenous institutions and endogenisation approach to resolve the conflict. The responses were organised into chapters, containing major and sub themes as described by the respondents. Some of the responses were paraphrased without changing the meaning. In most cases, the responses were italicized to indicate direct quotations of their voices and to differentiate them from quotations in the literature reviews which were put into quotation marks.

Method of analysing the conflict

According to Fisher et al. (2000) as stated by Best (2006, p. 62) describes conflict analyses as those activities that are undertaken by any person doing anything, either directly or indirectly, to know as much as possible about what is going on in a given conflict. An analysis is key to opening up the problem being studied, and should help towards providing more clarity to both

professionals and lay persons about what is happening in that particular conflict. The assumption is that without proper understanding of the conflict, it will be quite difficult to proffer any solution to it. In other words, conflict management will be in jeopardy if we are unable to carefully and correctly analyse the conflicts we deal with. Best (2006) indicates that conflict analysis is done in different ways, namely: case studies, fact finding and analysis meeting.

Case study

A case study entails detailed study of a particular conflict. It is subjected to the rigour, methodology and procedure of conflict research. Such a study will reveal many and varied peculiar features of the conflict, stakeholders in the conflict, needs and interests of conflict parties, causes and effects of the conflict and suggest methods of interventions among other things. The rationale with case studies is that without proper grasping of the conflict situation, intervention and other attempts at peacebuilding and transformation could be a fatal mistake.

Best (2006) indicates that fact finding is another method of conflict analysis which entails finding information about conflict and analysing it. Fact finding are less thorough and could be done over a short period of time than case study researches. They are meant to give a quick information to interveners, to clarify areas of doubt, and to assist them to have some understanding about what is happening in the conflict, the parties to the conflict and who exactly to deal with in the bid to de-escalate and transform the conflict. It also implies seeking clarification on data already collected in order

to help do analysis of the conflict. Analysis meetings constitute another method of conflict analysis. Many interveners such as civil society organisations organise workshops and seminars to discuss into details about some conflict situations with the intention to identify the details about a conflict before interventions are made.

The case studies and fact finding approaches were used in this study. The case study involved identifying the problem; the Gonja and Nawuri conflict, setting out the objectives, reviewing secondary literature, preparing research guide, and visiting Kpandai and East Gonja districts to conduct interviews and focus group discussions. The data analysis revealed the remote and immediate causes of the conflict, effects of the conflict, stakeholders in the conflict, their needs and interest, and intervention made by government, civil society organisations and the indigenous institutions to resolve the conflict. Through the case study, it was revealed that the interventions failed to resolve the conflict as they sidelined or ignored the indigenous conflict resolution strategies. Perhaps because the interveners were outsiders who did not hail from the conflict enclave. The case studies allowed us to identify the fact that the conflict could only be resolved if the interventions were all embracing. This implies using the endogenising approach to resolve the conflict.

Fact finding

In addition to the case study, a fact finding was executed by making another visit to the study area to seek clarification from the chiefs and elders on the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms that can be employed to resolve inter-ethnic conflict. The researcher realised that the information gathered on

indigenous conflict resolutions can basically be used to resolve internal or intra ethnic conflict among themselves. However, this study focuses on inter-ethnic conflict involving Gonja and Nawuri. In view of this another visit to Kpandai and Salaga districts to make further investigations on the indigenous mechanisms they employ to resolve external conflict was carried out. Management of the data was crucial before the commencement of the analysis.

Field challenges

One of the challenges encountered on the field was the background of the interview. The majority of the respondents were met at places close to markets and beer bars as they made the option of choosing those venues. Some of them were also met at locations close to funerals, mosques and churches having interviews amid their activities. Those places were characterised by noise at the time of the interviews but the researcher had no option than to continue with the exercise at the convenience of the respondents though the researcher could not hear clearly the voices of the respondents. It was also during the time of the electioneering campaign where loud public address systems were used by political parties to conduct campaigns, noise in the communities was pervasive in Salaga and Kpandai. There were instances where respondents intermittently stopped answering questions to partake in political discussions and returned to the interviewer to continue with the exercise thus slowing down the interview process. Such interruptions delayed time spent with correspondents but did not disrupt the exercise.

Secondly, some of the appointments were cancelled because the interviewees were engaged in political campaigns, festivities like Christmas,

New Year celebrations and funeral ceremonies and presidential inauguration. Some interviews were interrupted by severe harmattan winds and deaths of respondents. For instance, nine of the aged pencilled down as interviewees died before the time of interview. This problem was surmounted by searching for more interviewees through the snowballing technique.

There was also a non-cooperative attitude among the respondents towards the researcher. For instance, an interview was cut short in Kpandai because the daughter of the respondent protested against her mother's involvement in the middle of the interview for fear of being arrested by the police, despite the fact that an effort was made to explain the issue of confidentiality to them and purpose of the study. All efforts to convince the daughter and the mother to continue answering the questions proved futile.

The conflict occurred in 1991 whereas the study was conducted 25 years later. This means that respondents relied on their memories to recall what happened to them during the conflict. Interviewees had difficulty in remembering some of the answers to the questions posed. For instance, the respondents who had attained the ages of 90 and above had difficulty in remembering the issues of the conflict. The survey is based on recollection; it might not be possible for respondents to remember everything that had happened to them in the past. The reliability of the data might therefore be affected once data was based on recollection.

The building block of every research starts with data gathering. The whole process started on the 20th of October 2016 when I made my journey from Cape Coast to Kpandai district, the Nawuri Traditional Area. In this area, there are a total number of nine major Nawuri Communities, the exercise was

undertaken in eight of these communities; Kitare, Kabonwule, Bladjai, Katejeli, Kpandai, Nkanchina, Balai, and Lasenai. The exercise commenced on 22nd of October 2016 to 25th January 2017. The exercise started in a village of Kpandai known as Kitare; the historical village of the Nawuri. The total number of respondents interviewed in this community was eight. In fact, every interview went on successfully; the respondents collaborated well and gave out information willingly. They participated in the exercise without any reservation. Few observations were made in this town; the mention of the name Gonja sounded like a threat to them (mostly the Nawuri, and the Bassari). According to them, they had suffered much under the Gonja lordship and also the conflict which they believed was ignited by the Gonja, with the attendant damage to their lives and properties. As a result, they did not want to have anything to do with Gonja. Although, they and the Gonja, do interrelate with each other on some basic grounds such as funeral rites and some other occasions.

The only challenge faced in this community was with the Kotokoli leader, who refused to talk to me because he feared I might be a secret agent sent by the Gonja. Upon explaining the purpose of the exercise, he gave me little information about what he saw during the conflict. He pleaded with me to bear with his action because the whole act happened when they were just starting up in life and due to that he still fears the Gonja, remembering what they have done to him and his family. He explained further that he is a stranger in that community although has been there for more than 50 years. He said, he did not want to offend anyone in the place, so he would not like to go deeper

into every question posed. He rather advised me to see the land owners for detailed information about the conflict.

The conflict happened in 1991 whereas Kpandai District was created in 2006 implying that they do not have any document on the conflict. An attempt to obtain documents on the conflict made the researcher travel to Salaga District Assembly. Upon interrogation of some officers present and after a search into the archives, the researcher was told that the documents related to the conflict could not be found because it was burnt a decade ago. The researcher contacted the office of WANEP, the Regional Office of Prospects of Development in Northern Ghana (NORRIP), the office of the Catholic Relief Services and the Peace Centre at Damango to inquire about the documents on the conflict. But to the surprise of the researcher, there was no any trace of documents in those offices. However, the absence of this information did not disrupt the research as there were respondents to contribute to the study. The Gonja respondents could only be found in East Gonja district as a result of their evacuation from Kpandai by the security personnel.

Ethical Considerations

It was imperative to protect information gathered from the respondents in the course of the research. Before the study was carried out, the researcher sought the consent of the respondents by explaining to them the purpose of the study and assuring them of confidentiality. This made respondents feel free to express their candid opinions as much as possible. The researcher ensured that responses given by respondents could not be traced back to the respondents in the analysis, by avoiding the use of their names and identities. The privacy of

the respondents was duly respected by allowing them to determine venue and time of the interview and to decide who should not be present or absent when the interviews were carried out. The opposing combatants were not brought together during focus group discussions. Only persons of the same tribe or allied group participated. The well-being, rights, safety and privacy of respondents were of primary concern to the researcher. This was done to comply with Neuman's (1997, p. 443) exposition that "the ethical issues are the concerns, dilemmas, and conflicts that arise over the proper way to conduct research. Ethics define what is or is not legitimate to do or what moral research procedure involves". The following considerations were employed in order to uphold ethical concerns espoused by Neuman (1997).

The researcher had clearance from the Institutional Review Board as well as the Department of Sociology and Anthropology collect data. Also, the consent of the respondents was sought before the commencement of the study. All the stakeholders and the respondents were informed about the aims, purposes, likely publication of the findings of the study. Assurance was given to the respondents that a copy of the final work would be made available to them upon their request. The respondents in the study were assured of anonymity and confidentiality in terms of how the findings were revealed. In view of this pseudonyms were used during the data collection. However, reference was made to the communities or individuals because the data was not collected at only one place, as respondents were scattered at different places. For instance, the Nawuri and their alies lived in Kpandai and its surrounding villages during the time of the study. It took the researcher time to visit those areas to conduct the interviews. The study remained focused on the important

matters and neglected trivial issues. Although the researcher was confronted with a lot of challenges during the field work, the success of the study cannot be dismissed. The study considers discussions of the standpoints of respondents according to chapters and thematic areas in the next sections.

CHAPTER FIVE

CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF THE CONFLICT

Introduction

This chapter analyses the causes of the conflict, categorizing them into remote and immediate, taking into consideration the historical antecedents, political, social and economic lives of the conflict actors. The chapter also discusses the effects of the conflict on the lives of the people. It takes into account the disruption of academic calendar, health difficulties, displacement, loss of job opportunities and insecurity in the area.

Background of Kpandai people

The field study reveals that the Gonja and Nawuri are distinct ethnic groups living together in the Kpandai township and its environs since the 16th century. Respondents were asked during in-depth interview and focus group discussions to narrate how they came together as a people living in the same geographical area and also describe how social interactions among them were enhanced. A respondent among the Gonja reveals that the Nawuri are the aborigines of Kpandai. This is inferred from the following responses:

I must say that they are the aborigines, they were there before the Gonja went there...all the names of Nawuri villages can attest to this. But because of their lack of leadership knowledge that was how come the Gonja became dominant ...if you know the Gonja history, wherever Ndewura Japka conquered, he appointed his nephew or somebody loyal to him to oversee the administration of the community, so that is how come the Gonja became the Chiefs. The Kpembiwura was supervising all the land the founder conquered (in East Gonja) including Kpandai area (48 year old male farmer from Salaga).

This response implies that the first people to settle in the area were the Nawuri but were conquered during the wars of conquest and expansions of the Gonja kingdom by its founder. A respondent in Kpandai among the Nawuri gave the following historical narration to complement the narration above:

The Gonja came here and met our ancestors. There was one Gonja man by name Alfa who was a trader selling beads... we started taking our disputes to him in order to mediate as a neutral person to resolve our differences and when he made judgment we accept it. Anyone who goes for hunting and kills an animal cuts a piece of meat for him as a form of gift. This was how come they started calling him Kanankulaiwura (slice of meat chief). When his people found out the joyous life their brother was having here, they all started trooping here till they dominated us (70 year old male retired teacher from Kumdi).

A retired clergyman gave his perspective on the aboriginality of the Kpandai area by saying that “for me the cause of the conflict is about history...the first Gonja man to settle in Kpandai came and met a Nawuri man. But the Gonja move were powerful than the Nawuri. So they submitted everything of theirs to the Gonja and were seen as slaves to them” (68 year old retired Konkomba clergy from Kpandai). Another Konkomba respondent says that “when we the Konkomba were coming from Saboba, we said that we were coming to Nawuri, we didn’t know any people called Gonja, we only knew the Nawuri” (67 year old male Konkomba farmer from Kpandai).

The responses indicated that the Konkomba ethnic group migrated to the Kpandai area in 1921 as espoused by Mbowura (2012) in search of greener pastures. Awedoba (2011) observed that the tyrannical nature of the Dagomba chiefs triggered the migration of the Konkomba from the Dagomba land to avert obnoxious taxes to the Kpandai area to look for fertile farm land. At this time, the Konkomba were only aware of the Nawuri but not the Gonja ethnic

group. According to the respondents, there are several other ethnic groups in Kpandai such as the Mossi, Kotokoli and Bassari making the area heterogenous. This makes social integration difficult and also constitutes a recipe for conflict as described by Durkheim (1933). The causes of the conflict are classified into remote and immediate.

The remote causes of the conflict

The remote causes refer to the distant events that led to the outbreak of the conflict. The events were unfolding steadily and affecting the lives of the people undesirably but did not trigger violence among the ethnic groups. These events are categorised as social, economic and political.

Social causes of the conflict

The forced recruitment of labour was considered the first social cause of the conflict. According to the Nawuri respondents the Kanankulaiwura used to forcefully recruit labour from the Nawuri to work on his farm in rotation among the Nawuri settlements without any compensation in monetary terms or in kind. Failure to respond to the chief's request of forced labour led to execution of the deviants in public. The kind of work done for the chief on the farm include raising of farm mounds and harvesting of farm produce. A Nawuri respondent claims that the chief could declare that the following is done:

...measure a very vast area and give a command, that today is Kitare's term to raise farm mounds or weed in the farm, the next community follow suit until all the communities had their turn. Even the yam seeds, we have to look for it for the chief to plant,

clear the land, weed the farm, and harvest it for him (79 year old male farmer from Balai).

The Nawuri respondents lamented that during the Second World War the colonial masters recruited an army in their colonies through the warrant chiefs to assist them fight their enemies. The Nawuri asserted that the population of the Gonja was insignificant and also since they saw themselves as royals, they debarred themselves from the recruitment. This was stated during FGDs in the Nawuri communities:

The Gonja chiefs came to the Nawuri villages, as soon as they saw your body structure was good, they would take you away. My father was a victim. Meanwhile some sort of allowances was given and the Nawuri were not seeing the monies, everything was paid to the Gonja. So our people started consulting their gods making promises to them such as god, my son is over there, if you are able to make the white man to dismiss him and come back, I will give you either a sheep or a goat. They prayed that no Nawuri should be accepted by any white man to do any job. So all the soldiers were rejected and run back (70 year old carpenter during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

The Nawuri respondents indicated that their elders turned down the subsequent request of the chiefs to give men for further recruitment. In replacement, they were made to pay monies for hiring of Gurisi tribes' men for the British army. According to the Nawuri their people contributed this money to the chief but still their men were arrested for the British. An attempt to stop the exploitation proved futile. This made the Nawuri to emigrate to other places such as Nanumbaland, Dagombaland, Krachiland to seek for refuge in 1940. A Nawuri respondent argued that:

Kitare people left to Kitare-desane, Kpandai Nawuri left to Krachi, Nkanchina Nawuri left to Banda. At a point some of us saw it that if you leave your land for somebody, won't he take it forever? That prompted us to come back. Now as I speak with you, some people from Nkanchina are still residing at Banda as

a result of their disturbances (52 year old retired teacher from Kpandai).

In protest to the Gonja chiefs, the Nawuri stayed in their new destinations for more than a decade until they were advised by a man to return to their birth land, otherwise their children will suffer in future. The man also advised that the Nawuri should install their own chiefs and avoid the Gonja chiefs whom they perceived to be tyrants. The Nawuri respondents claimed that it was this advice that made them to re-migrate to Kpandai in 1950. This narration was confirmed by an old Muslim cleric in the Zongo or settlement of the Muslim community. The respondents also indicated that they were making derogatory statements against each other and this cause contributed to the outbreak of the conflict.

Another social cause of the conflict was casting of insults on each other. Respondents narrated that inflammatory language or expensive jokes also contributed to the impasse. According to a Gonja respondent:

before the conflict started, the Nawuri have been telling us that; they will shoot us, they will send us out of Kpandai to our hometown Kpembi. They have been telling us that we the people of Menpeasem will be the first people they will kill should there be a war between us, because, the rest were cheap to kill (58 year old food vendor from Kpembi).

The Gonja alleged that there were two key informants in Kpandai who were giving the Gonja information on the clandestine and sinister plans of the Nawuri to attack them but they never took them serious:

There were 2 drunkards called Akulbewa and Nana Chonchon. Anytime they went for meeting and came back, the kids will tease him and say Nana Chonchon speak Gonja and he will tell them 'you Gonja, we will kill you, we are just coming from a meeting and they said every Nawuri should buy a gun, so that we kill you and take your wives' (70 year old retired educationist from Salaga).

In other occasions, Nana Chonchon after collecting money or food from the Gonja, would tell them that “when we went to meeting yesternight, Nana Atorsah said, they will shoot you people, they bought a lot of guns” (60 year old farmer from Salaga). According to the Gonja respondents they had never taken the informants seriously because of his state of mental illness until they were attacked by the Nawuri in 1991 before reality dawned upon them that the mad young man had been telling them the truth but it was too late. The Gonja respondents also said that debasing words denoting arrogance and pride were used to describe them by the Nawuri from Bladjai, Kitare and Kabonwule whenever they visited Kpandai in the advent of the conflict. Some of the Gonja respondents associated the remote cause of the conflict with envy and jealousy against them by the Nawuri. The Gonja narrated the following during FGDs:

The Nawuri feel they are being cheated by the Gonja, because the Gonja are always ahead of the Nawuri in anything they do. Even in educational performance, the Gonja have to take lead before the Nawuri. Hatred and envy against us because we were Chiefs controlling and dictating the affairs of Kpandai, and the perception that we were worrying them, and cheating them. With these, the Nawuri youth thought that we had cheated their fathers for long and attempted to resist any of those perceived acts (60 year old civil servant during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).

According to the respondents, misinformation, rumors, and false spread of information also contributed to the outbreak of the conflicts. Respondents lamented that there was wide spread of rumors about the conflict and it became very difficult to identify which one was right or wrong. This created panic and unnecessary tension among them. The result was that they deepened suspicion

against each other in Kpandai and its environs. The Gonja respondents observed that

.....lies caused the conflict, someone can just lie, this person said this and that which wasn't the case, they exaggerated things and it became a problem. Nawuri could be seated and someone will go and tell them that Gonja had prepared with arms to fight them and another time we will also be seated and someone will also come and tell us that the Nawuri had also prepared to fight us (72 year old male retired educationist from Salaga).

Furthermore, western education and civilization was considered by the respondents as a key contributor to the outbreak of the conflict. The introduction of western education opened windows of opportunities, such as principles and ideas of democracy; freedom, self-rule, liberalism, right to association which were upheld by the people in the area. The respondents among the Gonja revealed that “it was civilization that came and everybody is saying he wants freedom, so the Nawuri are saying that they are also civilized and therefore, they will no longer allow someone to own and rule them, implying that they also want independence” (59 year old male teacher from Salaga). The Nawuri also asserted during FGDs that:

We realized that we now have what it takes to govern our own selves so we demanded our power back and they said no! That was the main issue, to them because we used not to bother ourselves with chieftaincy, there is no need now. Finally, we thought that we cannot continue staying with these people while they cheat us, they have their place, so is good they go back

The standpoints of respondents corroborated with Agyeman (2008) who argues that western education exposed its beneficiaries to foreign culture such as liberalism, independence, freedom and critical thinking. The possession of weapons in Kpandai became common and were used to execute the conflict.

Spread of weapons in Kpandai

The illegal spread of weapons in Kpandai also contributed to the deadlock. Also, the proliferation of weapons and formation of alliances contributed to the Gonja-Nawuri conflict. The ethnic groups in Kpandai purchased and stocked ammunition awaiting circumstances leading to conflict. They started having meetings in the night and devising strategies to fight each other. The respondents asserted that Kpandai and its environs was characterized by suspicion of each other and damaging of cordial relationships. Thus, the area seemed to be sitting on a time-bomb as there were pervasive indicators of violence. According to Gonja respondents “the Nawuri were attending meetings in Kitare where they were told that every Nawuri should buy a gun but we didn’t know that they were preparing to fight us” (56 year old male trader from Kpembu).

The Nawuri also reported that the police failed to search and seize weapons brought into Kpandai by the Gonja in the night, despite tipoffs from individuals in the town. This was confirmed by Mbowura (2014) in his work that the police ordered the Gonja to surrender their weapons. The compliance led to their assault by the combined forces of Nawuri and their allies at the police station because the police failed to provide protection as they did not repel the combined forces of Nawuri, Konkomba and Bassari.

The two ethnic groups also intensified youth activism and formation of alliances with near and far people to assist them to fight. The Nawuri had the support of the Bassari and Konkomba ethnic groups in the area as stated above. The Gonja also marshalled support from their fellow Gonja in Western Gonja and Central Gonja as well as their fellow tribesmen who are migrants in the

southern regions of Ghana. According to Mbowura (2014) the Ampiah Committee of Inquiry raised question marks about security arrangements put in place that failed to detect crossing of security posts or barriers of warriors with their weapons from other places to Kpandai to fight. Perhaps, they averted the security and walked in the bushes to Kpandai. Traditional religion, Christianity and Islam contributed their quota to the outbreak of the conflict.

The roles of religious leaders in fueling the conflict

Religion played a role in causing the conflict. The Gonja respondents blamed the church for their engagement in the conflict on the side of the Nawuri. According to them, Nawuri were convening meetings in the house of the Reverend Father to strategise how to fight the Gonja. A respondent indicates that:

They teamed up with the Reverend father, my house was just by the Reverend father's house, so I saw whatever they did, when I told our chiefs, they told me to go away with my lies, who is a Nawuri to fight us. The Catholic Church was behind it otherwise that wouldn't have happened. The Roman Fathers supported them because they wanted that land to build a church and the Nawuri were those attending their church (71 year old male farmer from Salaga).

The respondents unanimously attributed the immediate cause of the conflict in 1991 to the attempt made by the Catholic Church to construct a church on a controversial plot of land which was sold to a Gonja for commercial purposes. The same plot was also given to the Church by Nana Atorsah for the purpose of Church construction. The double sale of the land led to a deadlock between the Gonja on one hand, Nawuri and the Catholic Church on the other. The contribution of the Catholic Church to the conflict was

enormous as it was involved in the purchase of land that was already sold to a Gonja known as Alhaji Yakubu (Mbowura, 2014). The start of construction on the land was the straw that broke the camel's back. The Gonja explained that "the matter went to the police station, and Atorsah banged his hands on the police desk and pronounced that there will be a war in Kpandai and truly it happened" (57 year old male Teacher from Kpembu).

Another dimension of religious contribution to the conflict is manifested in the annual sacrifice in the vicinity of a fish pond in Kpandai. There was an annual tradition of hunting around a pond in Kpandai amid performance of sacrifices by the Nawuri after a collection of fowls and goat meat for the sacrifice from the chief. The Gonja respondents expressed the views that it came to a time when some of the Nawuri led by one Atorsah claimed that they were the owners of the land simply because they were in charge of pacifying the land and the gods. Meanwhile, anytime they wanted to perform any sacrifice, it was the Kanankulaiwura who provided the sacrificial items; fowls and all other things needed for the traditional practice. A spiritual battle between the Kanankulaiwura and the Nawuri ensued for three years which built tension between them and further marred their relationships. A Gonja respondent narrated that;

There is a particular tradition in Kpandai around a certain pond known as 'kuwo' where we go to hunt on a particular market day after pacifying the gods by the fetish priest. The Kanankulaiwura would give the Nawuri fowls and a sheep. According to the tradition, after performing the pacification, any animal killed first from the bush belong to the Kanankulaiwura it can even be a bush cow but after the first animal, whatever you kill belongs to you (60 year old civil servant from Salaga).

The Nawuri defied the authority of the chief for three consecutive years and went for the hunting without informing him nor the collection of the sacrificial items. Even though a section of the Nawuri apologized to the chief when they realized their failure to catch any animal for three succeeding years. They attributed the hard luck to their refusal to inform the chief of the traditional practice. They also felt that the chief might have invoked a curse upon them and became afraid of possible calamity befalling them. The chief accepted the plea and pardoned them but the skirmishes further deteriorated their cordial relationship.

According to another Gonja respondent “it came to a time when the year comes and they wanted to go to the bush, they don’t inform the Kanankulaiwura again. They organised themselves and went to the bush on three occasions or three years for the hunting and never had anything. They themselves sensed danger, so they came to the Kanankulaiwura to plead...” (52 year old chief and a teacher from Salaga).

A Gonja respondent claimed that the Nawuri came to fight and started invoking the assistance of their gods and ancestors,

the Nawuri never slept after that incident. They were going round in the midnight, making a lot of sacrifices to their gods to grant them powers to be able to fight us. I personally informed our chiefs and elders about what I saw and they told me, it cannot be possible, because, they had been beating them several times in the past and therefore they can’t do anything (73 year old Queen Mother from Kpembi).

The Nawuri respondents reported that their ancestors and God answered their prayers, fought and aided them to obtain victory over the Gonja. The role of religion cannot be undermined as narrated by the respondents who

believed that the help of God to the conflict parties to succeed in war, was one of the factors that sparked the conflict. It gave the combatants surety that they would emerge victorious during the conflict and this influenced their attitude to fight. A Nawuri respondent also revealed the role of Muslim clerics in helping the Gonja to perpetrate social injustice against them in the following response:

When the Nawuri are on the farm of the Gonja chief working, it was the duty of the Gonja chief to feed them but you know they are very close to the Muslims, so they will go to the Mallams to write those things on the slate, so that they wash it into the food of the Nawuri, so that they cannot say no to anything concerning their lordship, this was what they were doing to our people (80 year old farmer from Kpandai).

Paradoxically, the spiritual leaders who were reported to be involved in curtailing the conflict through prayers and admonitions, were the same people who were also praying for the victory of their adherents against their enemies. This indeed is a double-standard and pursuance of their parochial interests, perhaps against the teachings and practices of their religious doctrine. The responses vindicated Awedoba's (2010) observation that the role of sacred or holy men and women among the Christians and Muslims in mediation of conflicts cannot be underrated. They possess wisdom and rich experience by virtue of their close proximity to the people and also know the dynamics of social interactions through the execution of God's work. Their views are respected by many persons including conflict parties and therefore could also mediate conflicts. "Unfortunately, the same trust and respect cannot be said to exist today for this category of person" (Awedoba, 2010, p. 35). These postulations by Awedoba were validated by the responses of the respondents in the study who hold the view that the religious bodies play a role in fueling

conflicts. This truncated the trust and respect from the cross sections of the conflict parties.

A Gonja respondent narrated the experience of a Pastor who was to have alleged wrongly participated in the conflict and lost his life. It was reported that:

*The religious leaders didn't do anything helpful, they rather worsen our situation, the reason why I am saying so is, there was one pastor on the hill over there, he himself was holding a gun and shooting at us. He being a leader, if there is a problem, he is to advise both sides, he was rather shooting.
... we are pacifying our gods to give us strength to go to war - and kill. We raise the water to God Almighty above and say God, help us, give us the strength to go to war and have victory, (57 year old teacher during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).*

Another respondent among the Nawuri confirms the above assertion, stating that “the Muslim leaders in Kpandai at that time were the Kotokolis and Bassari... Those Muslim leaders in Kpandai were hypocritical and even fuelled the conflict” (69 year old man from Kpandai). This was because the Bassari ethnic group formed an alliance with the Nawuri who are mainly Christians whilst a majority of the Kotokoli ethnic group claimed to be neutral but seemed to be tilted towards the Gonja who are also principally Muslims. The Gonja are skeptical about the position of the Kotokolis and Bassari Mallams by making this pronouncement: “we can perform our own prayers, so we should look for our own Mallams like Sakpari people to lead us but if you take an outside religious leader or spiritualist to lead us, he or she will get all your secrets and use that to destroy us” (54 year old blacksmith from Salaga). The *Sakpari* people, according to the Gonja respondents, are segments or class of Muslim cleric or spiritualist among the Gonja who are responsible for the spiritual

upliftment of the Gonja and are believed to have been with the founder of the Gonja kingdom in the seventeenth century, accomplishing prayers for him to achieve victories during the creation and expansionist wars of the Gonja kingdom.

The responses supported the view of Rasul (2009) that religious men and women have the capacity of being the source of conflict as well as its resolution. The Muslims and Christians within the Gonja ethnic group or Nawuri ethnic group could not supplant their differences and come together. If the Christians and the Muslims leaders had reasoned to come together to form inter-religious peace dialogue despite their differences, they could form a unified body to preach peace and subvert the escalating conflict. In addition, youthful exuberance contributed to the deadlock. The conflict has some economic connotations.

Economic causes of the conflict

According to the respondents there were several economic factors that caused the conflict. One of them was the sale of land by the wife of the Gonja Chief. This angered the Nawuri who did not understand why they should buy land for any purpose from a non-indigene because they trusted that they are the true indigenes of Kpandai and all other people including Gonja were settlers. The Gonja respondents also noted that the sale of land was a new idea to them and was responsible for the conflict. "It was when Gonja started selling lands to them, which they didn't understand and therefore resisted, meanwhile Gonja were also buying the land" (40 year old male farmer from Tangilanto). Another economic factor of the violence was dominance of Gonja in the Ghana Private

Road Transport Union (GPRTU) association of Kpandai. The Gonja participants illuminated that: “The GPRTU was in the hands of the Gonja and taking moneys that come from it. You know money always creates problems. The Nawuri believe that if Gonja go away, some of these things will come under their control” (63 year old male retired educationist from Salaga). Another Gonja respondent stated that:

There are stories about the GPRTU Chairman and the secretary are Gonja and before you have access to anything at the station, you will have to meet these two people which the Nawuri didn't understand. The GPRTU had its own conditions and policies: you will have to be a driver or have a vehicle before you can become an executive member of the union and qualify to hold a position. Unfortunately, none of the Nawuri possessed a vehicle, few Gonja had vehicles in the station and that made them to become executive members but the myopic mind of some people is that Gonja had confiscated everything (52 year old farmer and a vulcanizer from Salaga).

Another issue that angered the Nawuri was that government paid compensation to the inhabitants of the areas affected by the Volta River Authority (VRA) water project. The money was collected by the Gonja and squandered to the anger of the Nawuri who were equally affected by the excesses of the Volta River construction. Respondents among the Nawuri asserted that;

Gonja were literates and they had the power, so they took the money and shared it among themselves. The Jawula family just cashed the money and bought brand new vehicles..... any latest vehicle here in Kpandai belonged to them. So, the sharing of money and power among the Gonja has affected Nawuri settlement villages such as Nkanchina, Baladjai, Kitare (65 year old male retired teacher from Nkanchina)

According to the Nawuri respondents, the Gonja chiefs were excessively collecting taxes from them and other settlers for the upkeep of the

palace and their families which they found to be obnoxious. The Nawuri stated the following during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions:

There is a dam here, when you go and catch fish, the Gonja will come and select the best ones for themselves. When you go to the forest and kill grasscutters, they will sometimes come and confiscate everything from you. There was a time we went for hunting and killed a lot of grasscutters, the Gonja came and seized everything from us and sent them to their chief. This was one of the starting points of the conflict. Because, when the animals were taken from us, we also marched to their palace and picked our things back but they did not agree, so it became a fight.... They took us to the court but the verdict was in our favour. How can I go to the bush and catch my animals and you the police man and the chief will come and beat me and collect the animals, am I your dog? Sometimes they could bring two sacks for us to fill them with corn (79 year old farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

According to the Nawuri respondents, other forms of labour demanded from the Nawuri was harvesting thatch that was used in roofing the chief's palace, working on the chiefs' farm and so forth. They argue that we are in a modern world, everybody has been to school and read books so they don't see the reason why the Gonja should be ruling them harshly. They also lamented how the conflict distressed their economic lives.

The remote economic causes of the conflict stated by the respondents were many. These included sale of land they considered to be theirs by the wives of the Kanankulaiwura, free compulsory labour on the farms of the Gonja chiefs, seizure of some game killed by the Nawuri and obnoxious taxation imposed on them by the chiefs of the Gonja. The political factors worsened the agitation of the Nawuri and were waiting for an opportunity to liberate themselves.

Political causes of the conflict

The first political cause of the conflict between the two ethnic groups is the determination for self-rule and self-reliance on the part of the Nawuri and the resistance of the Gonja to remain overlords of the Nawuri. The Nawuri agreed to the fact that they did not have interest in chieftaincy issues in the primordial times as they are egalitarian tribes. This is manifested in the responses of the two ethnic groups. A Nawuri respondent asserted that:

Those days we the Nawuri did not tie ourselves much with chieftaincy. We did not also value the chieftaincy as an institution as it does not come with much respect and recognition from own people, so there was nobody ready for the position. That time Kanankulaiwura was supposed to be a Nawuri position but we gave it to the Gonja man who later on capitalized on this and made it as if we are obliged to serve him as his slaves (66 year old retired teacher from Katejeli).

A Gonja respondent was of the view that their failure to recognize the Nawuri chiefs was largely responsible for the conflict. This was revealed during in-depth interview:

The Gonja failed to grant some autonomy to the Nawuri to control their affairs to a point. It was this current Atorsah's grandfather's time that all these agitations started, seeking for recognition, and we refused. And that brought about anger and mistrust between us (49 year old male farmer from Salaga).

In the aftermath of the conflict, the Gonja still reject the request of the Nawuri for self-rule and self-determination by turning down their demand to be gazetted as chiefs of their people so that they gain the recognition of the government as the chieftaincy law stipulates. During the Gonja traditional meeting in Kpembi, it was deliberated and concluded that the Nawuri shall not be given chieftaincy title as that will mean supplanting the traditional authority of the Kanankulaiwura and subsequently the Kpembiwura. The Gonja

respondents asserted that “this man is a Nawuri, if we gazette him as a paramount chief of Nawuri, what shall happen to the Kanankulaiwura who is the paramount chief of Kpandai traditional area?” (60 year old retired educationist and a farmer from Salaga). The majority of the Gonja rejected the proposal. But the Nawuri insisted that they deserve to rule Kpandai and its environs more than the Gonja because they are the indigenes of that area. The Nawuri affirmed their position by telling Gonja that “the land is not for you people (Gonja) you came and met us here. It was respect we Nawuri were giving you, we are not your slaves”. Focus group discussions among the Nawuri unearth the following responses:

The dominance of Gonja over Nawuri triggered the Gonja-Nawuri conflict because the Gonja have subordinated us for long. They sat on our grandparents’ interest for long and still sit on the interest of the present generation. To explain this, anything that the government wants to do, they will have to see the Gonja before something is done, this was what we saw and decided to fight them (80 year old Imam during focus group discussion conducted at Kpandai).

The aggregate of the social, economic and political causes mounted tensions among the ethnic groups but did not trigger violence. The groups were tolerant of each other despite the fact that there were occasional skirmishes among them which were resolved by themselves. The straw that broke the camel’s back was the impending Gonjaland Youth Association Congress and the double sale of a plot of land to an individual and the Catholic Church in 1991. These two incidents which happened at the same time constitute the immediate causes of the conflict in Kpandai.

The immediate causes of the conflict

According to the respondents during indepth-interviews and focus group discussions, a severe tension reached its peak in Kpandai between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups in 1991 over the decision of the Gonjaland Youth Association to hold their annual congress which rotates among the major towns of Gonjaland. The Nawuri were served with a letter of notification and invitation to the congress. They detested the idea arguing that the conference should be dubbed Gonja Youth Association as they contested that Kpandai and its environs belonged to the Nawuri and not Gonja. The wording of the title of the congress by the Gonja youth suggested that the land is rather for Gonja. This proposal was turned down by the Gonja, claiming that the land is theirs, therefore, they would execute their intention. The Northern Regional Security Council meddled with the deadlock and banned the impending congress and subsequently abolished the activities of all youth associations in the region. With this proactive decision, relative peace was achieved in Kpandai, even though their relationships became fragile.

According to the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the Nawuri respondents indicated the following as the immediate causes of the conflict:

it started on Sunday morning when we saw the Gonja selling a land closer to the Catholic father's house, so some of our people around did not agree. This led to the two sides throwing stones at each other, which finally ended up in the unfortunate conflict around 2 to 3 o' clock in the evening. But on Monday, we saw a cargo truck brought warriors at a close-by village (Tangilen). So we began defending our people but because we did not plan for any conflict, we were easily defeated. We have to run and leave the area for them. We stayed in the bush for months till we decided to return back and fight for our land. We also battled

them for a numbers of days till finally they also flew from here (50 year old male teacher from Kumdi).

The focus group discussions conducted in Kpandai among the Nawuri revealed the following responses confirming the in-depth interviews stated above:

Now, the immediate cause of the conflict in 1991 happened when the Gonja planned to hold their Gonjaland Youth Association Congress in Kpandai, but we thought that if they are allowed to hold such a meeting here, indirectly Nawuriland will become Gonjaland, so we said no!.... In reaction to that the congress was banned from coming on. The conflict started with the shooting of Aneku to death by a Gonja over a plot of land our chief sold to the Catholic Church, which one Alhaji Yakubu claimed to also buy from the Chief of Gonja. We struggled with them for the whole day. We were finally ejected from our villages as we never planned for anything like this. We struggled for three good days until they run to the police for refuge. Fortunately for them, cars came from Salaga and took them away. A year later, they came back to attack and we` fought them until they run to the police where we killed them except very few who fled the police station (73 year old church leader during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

The responses of the Gonja respondents on the immediate cause of the conflict are similar to the views of the Nawuri ethnic group. Focus group discussions among the Gonja in Kpembi revealed the following responses:

In 1991, the Nawuri's Youth resisted a move to hold the congress of Gonjaland Youth Association in Kpandai on the basis that the land belongs to the Nawuri and not Gonja. They said it rather be Gonja Youth Association Congress because the land wasn't for Gonja, so if we remove Gonjaland they would agree to it being hosted in Kpandai . One man was also returning from the farm with the wife and they were fired and killed, so that was when the fighting started

It is noted that several combatants among the Gonja during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions gave similar responses to answer the questions on the immediate causes of the conflict and were almost similar to

the Nawuri' responses. For instance, a Gonja combatant narrated his experience in the following:

It was Alhaji Yakubu's plot that the Nawuri gave to one Church, he went to the plot and saw the Church's members clearing that land, so he reported the case to the Kanankulaiwura. The Kanankulaiwura told them not to develop the plot because it belongs to that Alhaji Yakubu but the Nawuri insisted and continued with the project.... We were called from farm and told that there was a tension in town, so we gathered at the palace of the then Kanankulaiwura Adamu whilst the Nawuri were with their Knives and other weapons chanting.... So I shot their leader and the rest dispersed but returned later... they set fire on my brother's house, not knowing that he hide his gun in it because of police, so I went there to pick the gun... (56 year old trader from Salaga).

The Nawuri sent messages of war to all their villages inviting them to Kpandai to execute it. They congregated in multitudes, outnumbering their adversaries. The Gonja also requested for warriors from Kpembu and beyond to assist them fight the Nawuri. In the first encounter, the Gonja solicited refuge at the Kpandai police station. The intervention of government led to their evacuation from Kpandai to Salaga. Some months later, they prepared and returned to Kpandai and inflicted severe violence against the Nawuri, who were seemed to be defeated as they sought asylum from the neighbouring communities in Volta Region. Whilst in exile, the Nawuri organised themselves and sought alliance with the Bassari, Konkomba, and Nchumuris ethnic groups and waged a severe assault on the Gonja and attained a victory due to their multitude and formidable allied forces. The narration on the Gonjaland Youth Association congress as the cause of the conflict, corroborated with the views of Brukum (2002) and Awedoba (2011).

The Gonja warriors sought asylum at the Kpandai police station and were disarmed before granting them a shelter. The Nawuri and their allies

marched to the police station amid chanting war songs and threatening the lives of the police at post, compelling them to abandon the Gonja warriors in their custody. This resulted into massacring them with the exception of the few who rejected seeking refuge at the police station. The responses vindicated Mbowura (2014) in making attempts to expatiate what happened to the Gonja warriors at the police station. This marked the end of a protracted violence between the ethnic groups. The opposing parties do not live and interact with each other in Kpandai; the Gonja live in Salaga district whereas the Nawuri live in Kpandai district. This might be the reason for suspension of violence between the two of them for about two decades. Their relationships could not be described as cordial and peaceful as the root causes of the conflict had not been addressed. Each of them persist and insist that the land belongs to them.

Discussion on the causes of the conflict

The chapter examined causes of the conflict between 1991 and 1992 in Kpandai which were categorised as being social, economic and political. The social causes included forceful recruitment of labour; the proliferation of weapons and formation of alliances; western education and civilization; misinformation, rumours, and false spread of information; verbal alterations; the role of religion and Youth vigilantism. Also, factors such as determination for self-rule and self-reliance were considered the political causes of conflict while the sale of land was accounted as the economic causes of the Gonja-Nawuri conflict. The government did not fold its arms watching the violence, rather a frantic effort was made to achieve negative peace as exemplified in the next chapter.

The essence of the findings on causes of the conflict is that the main issues characterizing the conflict have been revealed. The primordial, constructionist and instrumentalist nature of the conflict are examined. Also, the interests, needs positions and fears of the conflict parties are discovered. In addition, the chronology of the conflict had been unearthed and one could predict the times and season that the conflict erupts. The evidences unearthed in this chapter could help interveners to undertake analysis of the conflict to give them an insight about the interventions they could execute to resolve the conflict. Conflict resolution can only be successful if the root causes of the conflict are known to interveners as the knowledge assists them to address the main issues meticulously until the conflict parties are satisfied and are able to reach consensus not to embark upon conflict again. The violent conflict inflicted dire consequences on the social, economic and political lives of the ethnic groups which is the focus of the next section.

Effects of the conflict:

Social effects of the conflict

The social effects of the conflict affect all aspect of life. It includes health issues, displacement and general insecurity. The respondents were asked to describe the effects of the conflict on their lives and the community. A respondent among the Nawuri mentioned that the conflict affected all aspects of their lives. “As for the conflict it affected everybody. As some people say that war has no profit and it has no winner, once there is bloodshed everybody is going to suffer it. So the Gonja, Nawuri, and the Bassari suffered it” (65 year old retired teacher from Kpandai).

Loss of work opportunities

Socially, the Nawuri respondents are unanimous on the effects of the conflict on their work because of the general insecurity in the area. The responses during in-depth interviews reveal the following:

I lost my job through the conflict. I was a pupil teacher, and the same time working as a militia. I received salary and allowances respectively from these two sources. I was at Tamale, but I struggled and took a transfer home to serve my people. Unfortunately, that was the year the conflict started. I was accused of training the Nawuri youth to fight due to my militia skills... Oh! One particular month I came to Bimbila to take my salary, unfortunately the cashier told me that there was an embargo on my salary. I went to Tamale to seek for relocation to the regional capital to continue with the militia work but I was told that government has abolished that service and rather enlisted them into immigration and police service. I was not given the opportunity because my invitation letter came to Salaga when the conflict was on going and the district education office then terminated the appointment of all the Nawuri pupil teachers (55 year old rival chief from Kpandai).

According to the respondents, formal education was curtailed during the time of the conflict. Schools were shut down, teachers rejected postings to the area, and parents were displaced together with pupils and students. Some of the school facilities became targets of combatants as they served as hideouts for their enemies. Students in Kpandai had to travel far to continue with their education at cost of their parents who were unemployed as a result of the conflict which destroyed the economy of the area. The Nawuri students who were in Salaga Secondary School, the town of their enemy had to flee for their lives. The combatants outrightly rejected to teach the children of their enemies both in Salaga as well as in Kpandai. The Nawuri respondents expressed the following standpoints:

The conflict affected education in this community, about two years, no teacher came here, so we have sent our children to

different schools far from our community. Some of us started volunteering to teach because if teachers were posted, they wouldn't come. Initially it was difficult to get teachers and other workers to come to this area because they were misinformed that Kpandai the area is a blood bath so people feared to come. It was few who gathered courage but they saw the opposite. This has affected the area greatly; teachers, nurses, even the police didn't want to come here. For a very long time, our schools were closed down, they stopped paying us our wages, because, we said we will no longer teach Gonja children on our land. (65 year old trader during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai)

The responses on education corroborate the views of Awedoba (2011) on the implication of the conflict for education of the Nawuri children. Teachers on usual posting had to vacate their station, both newly trained and experienced teachers resisted postings to the area and children had to be relocated to far places where peace existed thus creating discontinuity which eventually affected the academic performance of students and pupils in the area. The respondents confirmed the views of Mbowura (2002) that Nawuri and others in Kpandai lamented that their children in Senior Secondary School in Salaga in the final year could not write their examinations and the Ghana Education Service in Salaga disregarded their predicament. Respondents also lamented the failure to access medical services during the time of the conflict.

Effects of the conflict on Health of the people

The Nawuri lamented during focus group discussions that during the time of the conflict, Kpandai was totally chaotic; people were found running in a disorderly manner without knowing where they were going to, causing them to sustain injuries. Pregnant women labored in the bush without medical care. A Nawuri respondent narrated that

Women were running helter-skelter for their lives while others were in labour. My uncle was shot dead because there was no medicine for him. Many children were dying as there was no clinic or hospital to send them for medical care. I trekked bare footed. One of my brother's son's called Kwabene was killed in the conflict due to injury. My sister's son and a mad man were also killed in the conflict of serious injuries. The Gonja warriors killed three of my family members in Baladjai. My brother from Kabonwule by name Bayanfue was beaten to death. After the conflict, a total number of 12 Nawuri were killed in this village. So if you see what we have gone through and things are still the way they are, I will tell you, life is worthless (101 year old Nchumuru woman from Kumdi)

Another Nawuri respondent exclaimed and said: “see that my brother sitting there he was strong like a lion but today he is left with one leg”. Awedoba (2011) assessed the health situation in Kpandai and declared that the social and psychological implications for children caught in-between the intermarriages are not hard to fathom. The Gonja respondents also expressed that medical officers vacated post and others refused postings to Salaga. This caused sick people to travel to Tamale in order to access medical services whilst others were forcefully displaced to other places.

Displacement

According to the respondents, internal displacement was one of the significant effects of the conflict. Both Gonja and Nawuri vacated their abode and sought refuge during the violence. The Nawuri run into the bush and to the surrounding villages for safety. Some of them worked on peoples' farms for wages in order to meet their basic needs. It was during this time that they made financial savings for the purchase and accumulation of ammunition to launch severe attack on the Gonja in Kpandai which led to the evacuation of the Gonja

to Salaga by the military. The return of the Gonja to Kpandai three months later to retaliate, led to the displacement of the Nawuri for the second time.

This second encounter was brutal as the Gonja were massacred at the Police station paving the way for the Nawuri to return to Kpandai and lived in their homes. The Gonja also suffered displacement in the sense that they were evacuated from Kpandai during the first encounter by the security to Salaga to join their fellow Gonja. Thus the security personnel failed to provide security for the Gonja in Kpandai to coexist with the Nawuri. It became eminent that the two ethnic groups could not live together harmoniously without presence of the security. The situation demanded for the establishment of a security post in the area to protect every ethnic group during the outbreak of the violence.

The Gonja perceived their evacuation by the security to be a betrayal, considering the fact that they are convinced and certain that they are the royals and indigenes of Kpandai. The decision of the security frustrated the subsequent attempt of Gonja to return to Kpandai they consider as birth place. During interview and focus group discussions, respondents from both ethnic groups gave the following responses with regard to question on displacement:

The Nawuri run away from their towns. They were chased from their villages and wandering on foreign lands. The Gonja were asked to leave Kpandai to Salaga and Kpembu without taking personal effects including their farms. This is the reason why the Gonja have been displaced. The effects are numerous that I can't count. Imagine how you will feel carrying your bag from Makango to Salaga and keep it in someone's room you don't know? It is really very difficult situation because leaving your hometown where you have your own house, farm, and work. How do you eat and get clothes, where do you sleep? The conflict has scattered all of us, some of our people are all over the country; Bimbilla, Tamale, Wa, Kumasi, Accra and other places. I am here, it was the conflict that brought me here.

A Gonja woman narrated her experience during the time of displacement in Kpembu as follows:

If it had not affected us, we wouldn't have been with you people in Kpembu where we are being beating and insulted, it is just that we have courage. You know when you join someone, what the person wants is what he does to you. For the men they never had any problem with their colleagues but we the women had problems with our fellow women as some of them are calling us Yakoro (house terminology implying refugees), it was the late Kpembuwura Doshi who intervened and they stopped it. He told them that anybody who called us Yakoro again, will pay a fine of a cow and 1000 old Ghana cedis. Also, when we were in Kpandai, I was selling fufu but I had to stop because of the conflict and am now begging for alms to survive (73 year old woman displaced from Kpembu)

The responses of the Gonja reveal that they left Kpandai to Salaga unprepared and against their will. Presently, they are more interested in returning to Kpandai if there is an opportunity to do so. Comparatively, they prefer Kpandai to their current abode in Salaga and Kpembu because of the leverages in their former abode which could not be accessed in their present place. According to the respondents, the land in Kpandai area is more fertile for agricultural purposes, brisk business and the Oti River serves as a source of revenue for fishermen. In addition, the Gonja constitute royalty in Kpandai and enjoyed numerous social advantages. The displaced Gonja chiefs in Kpembu who were in charge of Kpandai do not enjoy those facilities any longer.

The Nawuri on the other hand are glad that the Gonja are no longer living in Kpandai. Politically, they have been liberated as they have the opportunity to install their own chiefs and taking orders from the Gonja has become a thing of the past. It was revealed that both the Gonja and Nawuri suffered the same faith with regard to displacement during the time of the conflict. However, the Nawuri have resettled in Kpandai whilst the Gonja are

still in Kpembɔ envisaging to return to Kpandai in future. The Nawuri respondents validate the views of Mbowura (2002) on internal displacement. Mbowura observed that the Nawuri were displaced and compelled to migrate to places such as Nkwanta, Banda, and Kete-Kratchi in the Volta Region. The majority of the displaced Nawuri were also living in Nanumba District and in villages such as Tampoia, Kajasu, Kpengasei, Jimang, Lungni, Wulensi, and Bimbila. The Nkwanta district alone became the temporal abode of about four thousand, five hundred refugees in the villages of Kecheibi, Tutukpene, Ketane, and Kpasa. Due to displacement and forced migration, the final year students in Salaga Senior Secondary School could not write their examinations in Salaga and no arrangement had been made for them to write elsewhere.

The responses also revealed issues of divorce and separation which confirms the observation of Mbowura (2002) and Awedoba (2011) that the war disrupted social cohesion and integration among the Nawuri and Gonja as they do not enjoy principles of reciprocal labour system where they interacted for mutual benefit. Most of the inter-ethnic marriages and familial ties between the two ethnic groups were broken as animosities and questions of identity displaced love, erotic relationships among couples and effective communication.

The social effects also included disintegration of families. According to the respondents, marriages have broken and spouses separated as marital relationships are characterized by suspicion and lack of trust for each other with couples coming from different factions. Mbowura (2002) made an observation that social cohesion and the spirit of living together with people

from different cultural backgrounds in the area have been eroded. This affected inter ethnic marriages and familial ties between the two ethnic groups as animosities and question of identity supplanted love, romance and rapport. “The social and psychological implications for children caught in between are not hard to fathom” (Awedoba, 2011, p. 184). The conflict also instigated interpersonal or intra ethnic conflicts in Kpandai among the Nawuri regarding claim of ownership of Gonja houses and other property considered by the Nawuri to be war booty when the Gonja migrated to Salaga and Kpembu to settle (Mbowura, 2002).

The effect of the conflict on academic performance in the area is overwhelming. The participants lamented that teachers at post fled for their lives, schools were closed down as learning in the area became impossible and the students had to be relocated. Nawuri students attending Secondary Schools in Salaga fled the town to avoid Gonja controlled locality at the expense of their final year examinations and no contingency arrangement was made for them by the East Gonja Assembly to write their examinations elsewhere (Mbowura, 2002). In addition, the teachers were refusing postings to the area for a long period of time because of fear of reoccurrence of the conflict. Mbowura (2014, p. 113) observes that “in the wake of the insecurity and desertions, schools were closed down indefinitely. This destabilized the academic calendar and jeopardized academic aspirations of pupils and students”. The death toll of the conflict was also alarming. Many primary and secondary stakeholders lost their lives including animals during the wars (Awedoba, 2011). Sulemana (2009) elaborated the effects of the conflict on

education in the area to include mass exodus of teachers, increased dropout rate among school children, and a general drop in academic performance.

The conflict worsened depletion of human resources through loss of productive lives in the area. According to Assefa (2001) by the time the government intervened to deploy military forces to stop the carnage, about 150 persons were killed and about 21,000 people displaced. Victims of previous wars who made an effort to rehabilitate themselves became victims again. Brukum (2001, p. 1) also recorded that “the tolls in terms of lives lost, injuries to residents, destruction of property including loss of critical social and economic infrastructure that the conflicts have caused have been staggering”. Linde and Naylor (1998, p. 35) affirmed this assertion by highlighting the total number of death noticed for the three-year conflict period to be seventy-eight in the post 1992 hostilities. The losses of lives have serious implications for human resource development in the country (Tonah, 2007). The narrations of the respondents corroborated the secondary data on how the conflict destroyed the local economy and social network of Kpandai due to failure of the security to maintain peace and order.

General insecurity

According to the respondents, weapons were pervasive in Kpandai for the purpose of destroying enemies and self-defense. Kpandai was characterized by insecurity because of sporadic shooting of guns and mistrust of each other. The following are some of the voices of respondents during focus group discussions in an attempt to answer questions on security in the area:

The ethnic groups became alerted because you don't know where you would go to and be caught in the web. People couldn't go to their farms, there was no peace of mind because whenever they hear that the Gonja are coming everybody will flee the town, children couldn't go to school, and traders couldn't sell their items... this has retrogressed our community because a Gonja cannot go back to Kpandai to do what he wants for the fear of being killed. We have relatives in both communities but because of this war, we don't share common ideas. Like am saying, the land in Kpandai is very fertile, if I go to Kpandai to farm, they won't agree. Also, if a Nawuri man comes here and say I should give him a land to build I won't give him (71 year old male farmer from Salaga).

The respondents unanimously abhorred the state of insecurity in Kpandai given example of the inability of the police to prevent the annihilation of lives and property between 1991 and 2004. There was excessive proliferation and illegal possession of weapons in the hands of the conflict parties as there was no evidence of confiscating them. Mbowura (2014) observed that insecurity in Kpandai is prevalent up to date. He cited the instance of the Regional Security Council's failure to stop the Nawuri from confiscating abandoned houses of Gonja in Kpandai, despite the fact that the late Gonja chief (Kpembiwura) issued a security threat that war is imminent in the event of the Government's inability to stop the Nawuri from continuing to occupy the houses of the Gonja. This demand of the Gonja has not yet been fulfilled by Government, implying that the Gonja will attempt to get their houses back and this might lead to conflict.

Economic effects of the conflict

The focus group discussions and in-depth interviews among the Nawuri and the Gonja revealed the following responses on the situation of the local economy in Kpandai:

It has affected business, agriculture, education, and individuals. After the conflict, most people left Kpandai, the town that used to be like small London, because of conflict has become a ghost town, all businesses have closed down. In Kitare a lot of properties were destroyed. There was a Kotokoli man by name Fitter, all his life sweat was destroyed within a day, his house, warehouse and other properties belonging to his customers were burnt by the Gonja. Again, our farms got damaged, unknown settlers harvested our yam, many bags of groundnut hoarded were lost, our animals were stolen, and our properties were looted. If you want to count the items stolen, someone might think you are lying.

I managed to purchase three packets of roofing sheets and have some animals, we did not carry our belongings with us, so they took some away and destroyed the rest (88 year old ex-farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

A focus group discussion in Salaga among the Gonja revealed the following responses, confirming the views of the Nawuri that the conflict destroyed the people and properties:

I am no more there to see how Kpandai was affected by the conflict but I personally lost a lot of relatives, properties and problem of resettling. I saw my house burnt upon my return from the farm. I returned to Kpembu with only the clothing that I wore to the farm and not even a pin. Also my father's twelve houses were destroyed, imagine losing such big, big houses. ...For the devastating effects on the community, the least talked about, the better; my husband lost about three of his stores in Chamba, Kojoboni, and Kumdi ((75 year old housewife during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).

A Gonja respondent articulate the following experiences during the time of the conflict:

I gave my animals to my Nawuri uncles to take care of them for me but after the conflict I did ask for them and they did not give me anything. I also lost my relatives, for instance, Desowura is my own son and he lost his life... when I remember them I weep and so am not comfortable talking about them. My Desowura was everything to me but unfortunately he didn't return. For Kpembu, we don't sleep with hunger so we are grateful to the people of Kpembu (75 year old elderly woman from Salaga).

Respondents confirm postulations of Mbowura (2002) that some farmers could not prepare land for the cultivation of food amid insecurity. Obviously in the short and long run, this affected agricultural activities in the area due to lack of planting materials and incentives such as subsidies on agricultural inputs and absenteeism from farms because of absolute insecurity. Accidentally, the three phases of the conflict happened during the farming season in Kpandai thus distracting the attention of the farmers and making them focus on security issues and safety measures. The responses also affirm the conviction of Awedoba (2011) who observes that because the area is conducive for yam production the results were bound to have repercussions beyond the area, especially in parts of southern Ghana where yam has become a popular dietary item. Revenue of the Salaga District Assembly declined because of the defiance to pay taxes by the Nawuri for the reasons that the monies were used by the Assembly to help their enemy Gonja to fight them. The Nawuri also alleged that Gonja refugees were taken care of with the revenue accrued from Kpandai. Therefore, there was no need to contribute towards the survival of their enemies in Kpembu and Salaga.

The Gonja respondents during FGDs stated the following to justify the retrogressive nature of Kpandai in the aftermath of the conflict:

In terms of development, it affected education, economic activities and social relationships negatively. Now, their

children are trying to promote themselves by going to school as they lagged behind. Economic activities and infrastructure that used to be very brisk, you don't see them any longer, and if I go to Kpandai town, I don't see it as the district capital. Even though we lost a lot, we are okay because, any Nawuri from Kpandai who comes to Salaga to see us expresses shock over our life. There was a day some of them met me at the office with my car and they were arguing among themselves whether or not, I was really the one and they had to approach me to confirm. We have grown in Islamic faith when we came here, if not, our revenge wouldn't be easy for them ((63 year old retired educationist during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).

The respondents indicated that the conflict triggered retrogression in the development of the area. The losses of lives and property have not been quantified but the responses indicated that they were not able to get them back as they were lost forever.

CHAPTER SIX

INTERVENTIONS TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT

Introduction

This chapter assesses the interventions made by government since 1991 to resolve the conflict. The government utilized its institutions and agencies such as the district and regional Security Council, police, military, Committee of Inquiry and the direct involvement of the Head of State to resolve conflict.

The roles of government:

Deployment of the security

Respondents were asked during in-depth and focus group discussions to narrate the roles government played during the time of the conflict. An overwhelming majority of the respondents interviewed consistently argued that government intervened in the conflicts in diverse ways. The Nawuri ethnic group explained that the government of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) headed by Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings deployed the security apparatus to the conflict areas to maintain peace and order. A Konkomba respondent at Kumdi narrated that:

the first thing the government did was to bring security personnel comprising the police and the military who pledged to us that they will protect everybody. Also, government sent the Bureau of National Investigation (BNI) people and other intelligence bodies to meet traditional authorities to find out the causes of the conflict. I remember a helicopter or a jet fighter was all over the place, when we saw it, we quickly run and sought refuge somewhere, it was believed that the helicopter could see every little thing on the ground and just drop the bomb and fire was all over. At least, with that message alone, it put fear into some of the people, so they had to run, and this brought a cease fire to some extent (70 year old elderly man from Kumdi).

From the responses, the researcher could observe that the security personnel deployed undertook several activities in order to enforce peace and order. Respondents in the study, narrated that the government announced imposition of a curfew in the East Gonja District including Kpandai to frustrate the conflict parties from undertaking clandestine activities that could exacerbate the fragile peace of the area. A respondent among the Nawuri asserted that “the curfew was imposed on us from 6:00pm to 6:00am. After three months, the hours were reduced gradually until it was scrapped finally” (59 year old teacher in Kpandai). Another elderly Gonja woman respondent narrated that

the security people did well, aside the imposition of curfew, they also patrolled areas of the community; after six o'clock in the evening, no one was allowed to move out of his room. People were made to sleep early, so that if you have any bad plans, you could not execute them (73 year old elderly woman from Salaga).

To prevent the proliferation of weapons into the conflict zones, barriers were mounted at the outskirts of Kpandai. The barriers were perhaps meant to restrict conflict parties from exiting Kpandai to other areas to fight. In the same vein, the Gonja could not trespass the checkpoints to launch an assault on the Nawuri and their allies. According to a respondent in Kpandai;

the police erected several barriers on the outskirts of Kpandai; one in Tangilanto, the others were in Lasenai village. We could not go out and attack our enemy, neither could they also come here to fight us. I remember when we wanted to destroy Kpembu and Salaga, we dodged the barrier and passed through the bush. When we got to the Kpembu dam, unfortunately armoured cars came to drive us back. If not because of their intervention at the barrier, Kpembu and Salaga would have been destroyed (76 year old ex-farmer from Kpandai).

Another strategy the security executed was disarmament. A respondent among the Bassari in Kpandai, narrated that the police invaded their homes and confiscated their weapons to disable them. This strategy was interpreted to imply that the security was working against them. According to the respondent, “initially the police took sides, they supported the Gonja by disarming the Nawuri....They went to some places to disarm them by seizing their arms, arrows and bows” (85 year old ex-farmer in Kitare). Another respondent in Kumdi observed that the soldiers

were firing into the air, not targeted at people but to scare everybody. The way the bullets were flying, the youth were scared away. The soldiers told us that this one there is no juju for it. Those people deceiving themselves with juju all run away because the bullets can chop off your flesh (61 year old farmer from Kumdi).

Besides the contributions of security personnel to ensuring peace, the study further revealed that they pose some challenges or harm to the people in the communities. They arbitrarily killed some people and injured others. A typical example was at Kumdi, a Konkomba community where some of them were killed by the army. They also set several houses ablaze and thus destroyed personal effects. Focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai revealed that

I believe that the first group of soldiers were sent by my grandfathers (Gonja). Can you imagine this, how come two parties are fighting, you killed one party in support of the other and still call yourself a security man? What boggled my mind was that they used armoured car, jet, guns and were shooting at us anyhow including our animals. While some were on the ground shooting at us, the jet was also on top firing at us. Military troops went round the conflict zones burning and destroying buildings. The surrounding communities such as Kumdi were all destroyed; a man by name Okoni was even killed in the process, because he refused to run away. I think they were bribed to kill us, burnt our houses, food, and drove us into the bush ((69 year old retired custom officer during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai)

Majority of the respondents agreed that the soldiers caused a lot of harm through burning of their houses and destroying their properties, but a few of the respondents also hold a contrasting view, as they expressed appreciation for the deployment of the police and the military. According to this group of respondents, the security performed creditably by ensuring that peace and security returned to the area. The following responses were voiced out during focus group discussions in Kpandai:

The police and military provided us with security and played advisory roles. Any noise that was likely to erupt was easily calmed down. They stayed with us for a while, before leaving the area. The military protected us and prevented the conflict from reemerging. You will go to bed and be hearing at dawn that the enemies are coming to attack and quickly they will go and block them, stop them and drag them to a far place. Actually, they also became our witnesses during the exercise of the committee of inquiry. They told the truth about what they saw. They patrolled on a daily basis from Kpandai to Kitare. The military also intervened by stopping some angry Gonja youth who started vandalizing properties in Lugni from reaching Kpandai. They also imposed a curfew on us in order to enforce peace ((55 year old farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai)

The responses revealed that some of the Nawuri and their allies who were government workers in Salaga, were denied formal services such as banking, health services and education as the district offices were in the district capital (Salaga) where they could not visit. This implies that it was forbidden for the Nawuri to visit the town, especially the salary earners, to obtain their monthly salary amid insecurity. Government had to intervene to enable them secure banking facilities elsewhere. According to a respondent among the Nawuri;

Government intervened in several ways: workers with the education service were transferred from Salaga office to Bimbila District Office. So all activities were done at Bimbila instead of Salaga as we couldn't go there to take salary from the Commercial Bank (62 year old retired teacher from Kabonwule).

The responses also revealed that Government made an effort to reintegrate the Gonja into the Kpandai town but to no avail. A respondent indicated that:

Gonja agitated to come back to Kpandai, and government made attempts to bring them here (Kpandai), but the unfortunate thing was that they could not bear the tension, so they pleaded with the government to go back to Salaga (70 year old carpenter from Bladjai).

Another Nawuri respondent observed that “the security brought back the Gonja to see how we could interact and integrate but they saw that it was a useless venture, so finally they advised the government to take them back” (68 year old farmer from Kumdi). The Northern Regional Security Council (REGSEC) also played a role to contain the conflict.

The views of respondents corroborate the narration of Mbowura (2014) that in 1992, the REGSEC and the District Security Council collaborated and strategized to return displaced Gonja to Kpandai but to no avail. The returnees were accommodated in Nkanchina Primary Schools as their houses were destroyed in Kpandai by the Nawuri. They later declined to socially interact and integrate with the Gonja and in some cases made attempts to attack them at the school. This led to the re-evacuation of the returnees to Salaga amid insecurity in the Kpandai area. Government did not make any further attempt to return the Gonja until 1999, which was also unsuccessful. If the resettlement scheme had been successfully implemented, perhaps, it could have enhanced

social integration and peaceful coexistence among the conflicting parties and eventually resolve the conflict. The government also realised that dividing the district into two and minimising the interactions between the two ethnic groups could also help to resolve the conflict.

The creation of Kpandai district

The Nawuri respondents stated that they were glad government had carved out the Kpandai district out of the East Gonja district to minimize interactions between them and the Gonja which might gradually build up tension and conflict. They have also interpreted the division of the district to imply that Government had taken their land from the Gonja and given it to them, hoping that this would resolve the conflict. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions among the Nawuri gathered the following information:

the government has done well, it had moved the Gonja to their home and we are now in our home. We have our District now, we have our land now, what again? As for me, the only thing I saw the government do was...taking the Gonja to their hometown and allowing us to also stay on our land. After some years, Rawlings' government came here to give us a sub-district which we refused because it was still going to be linked with the Gonja district. Later, Kuffour came and gave us our own district (Kpandai District) this is what I saw the governments do (66 year old teacher during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

The convictions of the respondents are that the creation of the new district out of East Gonja district was done to separate the Nawuri or reduced interactions between the two of them and subsequently resolve the conflict. This was one of the recommendations the committee of inquiry made to the government, with utmost trust that it would help resolve the conflict.

Committee of Inquiry

According to the respondents in Kpandai, the government had established a committee known as the Justice Ampiah Committee to investigate the circumstances that led to the outbreak of the conflict among the ethnic groups in Kpandai. Both in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were unanimous on the formation and interrogation of the committee in Tamale. The responses were as follows:

Government set up that committee to investigate into the causes of the Nawuri-Gonja conflict. The findings of the committee showed that the Gonja had no case. Now what is left for the government to do is to issue a White Paper. Each party submitted their report to the government and actually what have come out of the report I can't tell. Maybe it was as a result of the report that the government now set up a peace body to meet all the groups and talk of peace and see if there is the need for us to come together.

When we went to the committee, we were asked why we were fighting and we said, we are fighting because of our land. The court again asked us to give evidence of our ownership, we did by telling the court our traditional names of streams, rivers, villages, gods and others. But when the Gonja were asked to give evidence, they could not give any, they could not say anything about the rivers, streams and the gods. The court ruled in our favour; that this place is actually ours (65 year old retired teacher during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

In the following responses, the Gonja expressed mixed feelings in their narration of the roles the Committee of Inquiry played during the era of the conflict. They agreed that the committee interacted with them in Salaga and subsequently invited their leadership to Tamale and undertook a futile exercise. According to them, the committee was unable to make a determination on the conflict to achieve lasting peaceful coexistence among them and the Nawuri. The respondents narrated that:

The Justice Ampiah Committee actually played their role, they interviewed both sides including the refugees, people living in and outside the area and made a report which was presented to the government. I didn't have access to the report, so I don't know the content of it.... I heard some of the recommendations were very good but the government never implemented them. One of the recommendations was to return the Gonja refugees to Kpandai and also give Kpandai a traditional council but the government refused to fulfil that..... (42 year old civil servant during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).

This is in line with Agyeman-Duah's (2008) position that in the context of power politics, governance was more about securing the state, regardless of the type of political system or framework, whether the government was elected democratically or self-imposed through a military coup. What was important was the competence and efficiency with which the state provided citizens, with the necessities of life-protection from foreign attack, internal security and other basic needs. In connection with the internal security indicated by respondents, Abdulai (2003) observes that military and security forces refer to forces under the control of the state as the means of exercising the state's monopoly of force at all levels. They include the Armed Forces, Special Forces and Border Guards. Under the military regime of Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana, it included the Committees of the Defence of the Revolution (CDRs). Security is the absence of threats to the physical, social, economic and psychological quality of life of a polity and her people. Security includes 'hard' matters such as the military and the 'police' and 'soft' issues such as tensions arising from cultural and religious differences. Security involves a perception of safety from such threats among the leadership and its people, and is thus more than just territorial defense. There is a gradual movement from 'state security' to human security (Abdulai, 2003).

The respondents confirmed the statements by Mbowura (2014) and Brukum (2006) that the Justice Ampiah Committee of Inquiry was inaugurated in October 1991 in Tamale, with the powers of High Court, charged with the responsibility of investigating the sources of the Gonja-Nawuri conflicts and proffered recommendations to the government. The committee submitted its report but the implementations of the findings became problematic. The responses also confirmed the observation of Agyeman (2008) that committees of inquiry sometimes failed to submit their reports to the governments that establish them. In the event that they submit the report to government, the government also hesitates to publish them.

The conflict parties reported that they never knew the outcome of investigations on the conflict. The Nawuri agitated for its implementation, believing that it is in their favour as they got the gist of it (Jonsson, 2007). For instance, Mbowura (2014) stated that the committee conferred autochthonous and allodial land rights in the Kpandai area to the Nawuri and also established that the Nawuri were independent people in primordial epoch until the indirect rule, which subdued the Nawuri to the Gonja. Therefore, the government should recognize the Nawuri as the owners of the Kpandai land. Ironically, the same Nawuri rejected possibility of implementing the Justice Lamptey Committee report which was also established by government because of the belief that the findings were against their interest. This suggests that conflict parties only accept committee of inquiry's recommendations if they are in their favour.

The Gonja on the other hand appreciated the report of Justice Lamptey's committee and rejected that of the Justice Ampiah committee

report. The rhetorical and worrying question is, how did the conflict parties manage to obtain the details of the committee's findings and act the way they did when the reports were not published? This implies that the oath of secrecy had been defied by members of the committee. The attitude of the ethnic groups towards the committee of inquiry influenced their subsequent behaviour towards any attempt by any organisation to resolve the stand-off in the future. For instance, during the interventions in Kumasi by the Nairobi Peace Initiative headed by Assefa, both ethnic groups continuously referred to the perceived findings of the committee in the past, leading them to a deadlock (Mahama, 2003 & Awedoba, 2011). The outcomes of the committee of inquiry were associated with some limitations.

Limitations of the Committee of Inquiry

The respondents critically examined the work of the committee and concluded that even though they did well by showing interest in the welfare of the conflict parties, they did not fulfil their work creditably. The respondents assigned reasons to this as their inability to bring the matter to conclusion. Both the ethnic groups argued that they do not know the rightful owner of the land. Secondly, they made the conflict parties incur financial loss by hiring the services of lawyers and also, travelled many times to participate in the deliberations of the committee.

However, respondents seemed to be ignorant about the mandate of the committee as they expected them to pass judgment in the aftermath of the proceedings. Respondents lost sight of the fact that the committee constituted an investigatory body having the single right to make recommendations

without a license to make a verdict or a determination. This indeed is the exclusive right of government. The issue of the White Paper was a unanimous concern by respondents. Some of them believe that the Committee failed to publicize a White Paper, making a categorical statement or a declaration on the ownership of the land. Respondents in Kpandai made the following observations about the committee of inquiry:

... they did the right thing at the wrong time. If they had started earlier at the time that there was no shooting, they could have achieved their aim. But unfortunately, they waited until the end of the conflict, after people have died and so they have done zero work. I would say they didn't do anything. They couldn't tell whether the land belongs to the Gonja or the Nawuri. They couldn't assist to bring the ring leaders to book. With all the meetings between leaders of both Nawuri and Gonja and the hiring of lawyers, the issue still looked unresolved. Up till now, no any outcome from it, where is the report that indicates Nawuri are right or Gonja are right, so government killed the people. The God of all our people who died will question the government. If government had been truthful about the matter all these wouldn't have happened. The issues that the committee came out with also recommended the return of the people to Kpandai which the government didn't implement. The government just wasted time and energy to interview a lot of people (52 year old vulcanizer during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga)

The issue of the White Paper resonated throughout the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions among the Gonja and Nawuri respondents. They firmly believed that the issuance of the White Paper by government deciding on the rightful ownership of the land could have perpetually resolved the deadlock. Both parties blamed the government for the failure to do so and perceived it as the one exacerbating the impasse. Their responses vindicated Mbowura (2014) who argued that lack of political will of successive governments to implement the findings of the committee

undermined the work of the committee and also imperilled efforts to resolve the conflicts between the two parties. Mbowura (2014) noted further that resettlement of the Gonja at Kpandai was also one of the key recommendations of the committee which has never been fulfilled. This, perhaps, could have paved the way for social integration and gradually resolved the conflict. It is also likely that the absence of the Gonja from Kpandai is a panacea to the natural resolution of the conflict as it provided the Nawuri with the opportunity to arrogate to themselves the ownership of the land. There is also a relative peace and absence of violence between the two parties for over two decades because of the fact that they are not living together.

Some of the respondents among the Nawuri and Gonja misinterpreted the Justice Ampiah Committee to be a committee or a court and therefore they are used in this work interchangeably. The respondents among the Gonja intimated the following responses:

The court was part of those who caused the conflict, because it didn't tell the truth, so that is what is killing us these days. Today, if you send a matter to court, they will continuously tell you to go and come, knowing the truth. The court didn't help us, not us alone but the Nawuri too (54 year old male artisan from Salaga).

The court couldn't even punish the ring leaders of the conflict and even when they aid they were interested in finding out the owner of the land they couldn't do it. As far as I am concerned, the court did not do anything reasonable. Both sides were heard on the matter by the court but up till now, I have not heard the court's decision (50 year old male farmer and trader from Salaga).

This implies that sensitization was not carried out effectively in the advent of the committee for the leaderships of both parties to understand its mandate and modus operandi. Both parties sought the services of lawyers to

assist in the process and were expecting the court to pass judgement and punish wrongdoers. They were dismayed that this did not happen, hence, the disappointment led to the adverse criticism of the 'court'. The use of several approaches are employed to resolve the conflict for several reasons.

The roles government executed in this conflict demonstrate its commitment towards fulfilling the social contract between the citizenry and the state where the former is required to pay taxes and the latter using the revenue to provide social and physical amenities for the benefit of the citizenry. The deployment of the security, formation of committee of inquiry, PPNT and support for the NPI contributed immensely towards attainment of negative peace in Kpandai and constituted the first attempt made to resolve the conflict. It served as a springboard for other interveners to use and descend upon the conflict parties to start with dialogue to resolve the deadlock. Government's intervention also ameliorated the pangs of the vulnerable by providing them with support such as food, building materials and clothing. This might influence conflict parties to bestow some confidence in the government and served as a beginning in paving the way for other interventions such as the role of the civil society organisation. This research will be flawed without a consideration of the government's intervention.

Community Civil Society Groups in resolving the Gonja-Nawuri conflict:

Introduction

This section discusses the roles of some civil society organisations both local and external engaged in the resolution of conflict. The local comprise the

women, youth and religious leaders. Other well organized institutions involved in the peace process are the Permanent Peace Negotiation Team, the African Union and the Nairobi Peace Initiative.

The roles of religious leaders in the resolution of the conflict

This section examines the roles performed by various religious groups to resolve the conflict between Gonja and Nawuri. Respondents were asked to narrate the roles religious groups performed to resolve the conflict. The responses are unanimous. There are three main religious groups existing in Kpandai; the Traditional African Religion, Christianity and Islam and the conflict parties were divided among the religions. Other respondents profess multiple religions like Christianity and traditional religion as well as Islam and traditional religion. The respondents indicated that religious heads played several functions in their lives during the time of the conflict. These include offering prayers for their adherents to gain success over their enemies in their encounters and counselling them to refrain from conflict and forgive each to attain peace. A respondent says that

....in fact, they even help spread the peace message faster than any other organisation during sermons in their churches, mosques and during festivals and rituals by the adherents of the traditional religion (79 year old farmer from Kumdi).

According to the Muslim respondents “we have seen our Muslim group praying on every Friday” (40 year old farmer from Kpembi). They alleged that prayers said by the Mallams nullified the evil intentions of the trouble makers. According to the Gonja respondents, as result of prayers, presently the Nawuri do not get bumper harvest, or fertile land to farm because the fertile lands had

been seized by the Konkomba in compensation for assisting Nawuri to fight the Gonja. They explained that the rich among the Nawuri have been inflicted with poverty. The post-conflict era is also characterized by sharp division among the rank and file of the Nawuri. For instance, one of the warlords, who was a chief and very rich, could no longer get food to feed the family. Another Nawuri person used to own eight vehicles but could not account for any one of them today. The Gonja believed that this was the way God dealt with their enemies. The Gonja respondents declared that “If you look critically at all those who were having money when we were in Kpandai and were causing trouble, have all lost their wealth because of the prayers by our Mallams” (78 year old farmer from Salaga). The responses indicate that religion plays double standard roles. The respondents unanimously voiced out that all the spiritual leaders admonished them to avoid conflict. The respondents among the Gonja narrated the following to support their claims on the nature of counselling their spiritual heads offered them:

During sermons on Friday prayers, sometimes, the Imams would intentionally or consciously prepare a sermon that has to do with conflict resolution, consequences of conflict, according to how Allah said about the topic in the Quran.

I am a Christian, the Men of God are those who know the Bible and worship God most. If we go to church even up to now and till thy kingdom come, they preach about the conflicts and their effects.

I am a traditionalist and an Earth priest, we do tell our people that the god of Kpandai land and our ancestors abhor bloodshed. If we don't stop fighting and they get angry, the rain will stop falling, our rivers will dry, our animal will die and diseases will inflict us to cleanse us of our sins. However, people don't want to listen and that is why we are suffering (70 year old retired educationist during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).

The responses confirmed the assertion of Gyekye (2003) that multitudes of African Christians, Muslims and indigenous religious persons continue to pray to supernatural beings in times of need or of personal or familiar crises. Considering the assertion above, the Gonja and Nawuri, during the conflict believe in the intervention of religious men and women to be imperative for resolving the conflict in the troubled land. Despite the fact that, prayer sessions were organised and peace messages were also preached to conflict parties to lay down their weapons and let peace prevail, the conflict still exists. A respondent stated that “they offered prayers to God for peace which we are currently enjoying” (43 year old teacher from Kpembibi). The study revealed the contributions of women during the times of the conflict.

Roles of women in conflict resolution

This section assesses the contribution of women to the resolution of Gonja-Nawuri conflicts. Respondents comprising women among the conflict actors during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, specified that the women’s participations in making attempts to resolve the deadlock are many and varied. These include financial contributions, advisory roles, advocacy of peace and spiritual function. The socio-cultural role of women among the ethnic groups needs to be discussed to enhance understanding and appreciation of their contribution to peacemaking.

Gonja women in conflict resolution

The respondents were interrogated to describe the traditional status of women during the conflict in their society. A Gonja respondent stated that

“women do not partake in decisions making during peace time let alone during the period of conflict resolution” (56 year old male trader from Salaga). The women respondents among the Gonja explained that:

In Gonja tradition, I must be truthful with you, the queen mothers are just there by titles, they are not recognized. The main ones are Kayansewurché, Lepowurché, Singunwurché representing three gates of Kanyase, Lepo and Singbun respectively. They existed alright but they were not involved in decision making at the palace. What are they coming to do? You know that women's and men's thinking cannot be the same. The Queen Mothers only take care of the chiefs and whatever the chiefs say or do, that is what the Queen mothers follow. The chiefs don't even give them chance to participate in decision making, it is this current Kpembiwura that we don't know what he will do about it but the previous chiefs didn't even call us to the palace. If we decide to be present on our own, they don't seek our views on anything, we only go there to sit and watch proceedings. The only thing we do is, when women quarrel or fight each other and even between couples, we call them and resolve the problem and reconcile them (85 year old Gonja woman from Salaga)

However, during focus group discussions comprising men, the responses differed from the articulation of the old woman above. The men stated the following to indicate the roles women play during conflict:

In our traditional setting, queenmothers are responsible for the organisation of their colleague women and cautioning them about the need for peace. Queen mothers play much better roles than their male counterparts in conflict resolution because they have sympathy and are ready to undertake duty assigned them. However, women are sometimes the triggers of conflict in society. Therefore, anytime there is a problem, they listen to the queen mother because of the respect they have for them thereby facilitating easy resolution. Women teach children the virtues of peace during socialization. The effects of these teachings transcends their adolescent period and manifest strongly in their adulthood which help them understand their environment and nature of fellow humans. This eventually culminate into peace in the community (85 year old elderly woman during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).

The responses imply that even though the ethnic groups are patrilineal societies, where patriarchy is often entrenched, the women have some space to contribute their quota to conflict resolution. The influence of their men did not permeate all the institutions exclusively.

Nawuri women in conflict resolution

The respondents among the Nawuri who are an acephalous society were at variance with the Gonja in terms of treating women. The Nawuri did not have chieftaincy structures like the Gonja where power is concentrated in hands of the chiefs who are principally men. The Nawuri adore the contribution of women in all facets of life more than the Gonja. The respondents were interviewed to specify the roles the women perform towards resolving the impasse among the ethnic groups. The Gonja stated that in their tradition, women play a critical role in prevention of conflict in the sense that men cannot go against women's objection to conflict for fear of being killed in the battle field. Another tool Gonja women possess for truncating ethnic violence if they are determined to stop violent conflict is that they could strip naked and raise up their hands signifying that belligerents must stop fighting and negotiate settlement. Rejection of this conduct by any of the conflict parties or persons will incur the wrath of the ancestors and lose the battle. A Gonja respondent stated that

It is also in our tradition that when women want ceasefire, they come out naked to walk through the town and when you see them naked with their hands up agitating for peace, as a man whether you like it or not, you will have to stop fighting or you fall. So women have power and have roles to play in conflict resolution (60 years old male farmer from Salaga).

Consistent to the Gonja tradition of women's ability to stop conflict, the Nawuri also described that their tradition has recognized the role of women in conflict resolution. The women pacified the gods by pouring libation and invoking the assistance of gods and ancestors to restore peace. According to women respondents during focus group discussions:

the women did something, they called on their women gods known as Okuu to intercede for peace. We don't have queen mothers, formally we used to have an association of traditional women having a shrine or cult (known as Okuu) who were acting as queen mothers but now because of education, no one wants to join them. They are controlling all the women because of the powers from the gods so everybody feared them but now, it is no more (66 year old retired teacher during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

The traditions of both Gonja and Nawuri forbid the killing of women during ethnic violence. This allows women to interact without fear with their opponents to undertake micro economic activities to sustain the local economy. The significance of this is that it allows them to solicit information about the conflict and feed their ethnic group respectively to help them assess the nature of the conflict and if possible to undertake processes of peacebuilding. The respondents specified the following responses during FGDs and in-depth interviews:

In Gonja tradition, when we are in a war or conflict situation, the woman is always not killed or maltreated. When a man is going to war and a woman declines that he should not go, he cannot object to her suggestion, it is believed that when he refuses and goes he will be killed. This means that when the queen mothers tell the men not fight, they cannot fight so women employ this method to prevent conflict.

Actually in our tradition, women are peacemakers, that's why even in war, we don't kill women. During the conflict between Gonja and Nawuri, women were moving round and nobody asked them of anything, so it is simple for a woman to resolve

differences among conflict parties but the only problem is that they don't have economic power to bring people together and talk to them, nobody will listen to you when you are poor.....other than that women would have been the best people to resolve the conflict (75 year old elderly woman during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).

In the same vein, a Nawuri respondent also stated that “traditionally, we involve women because behind every successful man there is a woman, if not because of the women we would have been stranded in the process” (70 year old ex-farmer in Kitare). The women among the Nawuri worked towards pecebuilding more than their Gonja counterparts. Perhaps, because, they seemed to obtain the support of their men more than the Gonja men proffer their women. According to the Nawuri respondents, their women did a lot in struggling to restore peace in Kpandai.

They supported the men by contributing monies that they had from their farm produce such as gari processing and others for the men to attend peace talks in Tamale and Salaga and resolving other minor problems. At the peak of the conflict they did not sleep, they stood by us day and night, they offered their last pesewa to help us (79 year old farmer from Kumdi)

Another role the women performed to resolve the conflict is granting of advice upon consultation of their men. The Gonja respondents acknowledged that there is a wind of social change and women have now become increasingly significant in settlement of disputes. They stated during in-depth interviews and FGDs that “now the tradition is changing, we believe in all-inclusiveness. We are now recognizing women, they also take part in discussions, offer suggestions and we assess them and see how we can use them to resolve the conflict”.

The Nawuri respondents narrated that women formed an organisation known as Women Peace Animators in Kpandai and received training and supervision to do peace advocacy by the Catholic Church. They monitored and managed indicators of conflict and resolved inter-personal and intra-ethnic conflicts. They also assembled articulate members of the society and disseminated information on the need for peace. Their activities made immense contribution to management of conflict in our society.

When the conflict got to a certain point women mobilized and pleaded with the men to stop the conflict. For instance, one conflict resolution initiative by Fr. Timothy invited a lot of women from the various communities, especially those women who are very vocal. A group of women peace seekers was set, going round to seek for peace between ourselves and with the Gonja. They advised us that the conflict was affecting our children's education because the monies that could have been used to cater for their education were what we are giving to the lawyers and judges.

We also have Queen Mothers, when there was an impasse at the Odikuro's palace, we call on them to also participate in the discussion and settlement of the problems. You know most women are very knowledgeable about our cultures and traditions, so sometimes they use tradition as references to aid in the resolution (54 year old teacher during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

The Gonja also have similar approaches to management of peace executed by their women. The Gonja respondents reported the following during focus group discussions:

You know that a woman doesn't cut the snake's head after killing it, so ours is to advise the men to exercise patience and stop the fighting because we have children. The queen mothers also organise their female counterparts and addressing them on the necessities of peaceful coexistence. For example, I could remember in the night at times my mother talking to my father that they should try and see what things can be done to help resolve the conflict. The advice is given behind the scenes without hearing of others.

The exact role the women played was the process of trading with their rival tribes at the time even the men were afraid to venture in such moves. It was through this that, the women allayed the fears of their husbands that, there is peace and the men were okay to move into the territory of their rival tribes. (73 year old elderly woman during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga)

In most African societies women still occupy inferior positions within the family and society at large because of pervasive discrimination against them in terms of participation in decision making in all social endeavours including conflict situations (Benardatte & Poipoi, 2015). The assertions of respondents indicated that traditions entrenched marginalization of women's roles in resolving conflict. Respondents expressed that it is modernity that influences the approaches implemented to resolve conflicts by permitting women to play passive roles in the case of the Gonja ethnic groups. The role of women in resolving the conflicts are more illustrious than their women counterparts. In the case of the Nawuri, women made financial contributions from the sale of their farm produce to help their colleagues to travel and participate in discussions aimed at resolving the conflicts in Tamale and Salaga. Women are trapped in a vicious paradox: they are vulnerable during ethnic violence because of the cultural roles assigned to them and yet the worst marginalized in post-conflict reconstruction thus management, resolution, and reconciliation (Goldstein, 2001). The respondents expressed that women only organise women and talk to them about peace whereas in the case of the men they could talk to both sexes. The advisory roles women perform are largely restricted to their fellow women, husbands and children behind the scenes instead of publicly pronouncing their minds on issues of resolving the conflict.

The UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) (2009) made a clarion call on the involvement of women in peacemaking processes. The Report of the Security Council in 2009 discussed the impact of armed conflict on women, solidification of women's participation in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding. Recognition and harnessing the participation of women by planners in decision-making as a source of contributing their quota to conflict prevention and peacebuilding is significant. It is recorded that the fact that 11 women received the Nobel prize award will be a source of inspiration and role models to women in conflict zones. In addition, between the period 1981 and 2006, six women obtained the UNESCO peace prize. In 1999, the UN established and launched ten Messengers of Peace of programme 3 out of this number were women. The UN recognition of the ability and capability of women's role in conflict management and resolution and given them the opportunity to execute their talent successfully, is an indication that women can perform better in the area of peacebuilding when given the chance to do so (Kotite, 2012).

Galtung (1996) argues that there are attempts to restore fundamental human rights in the aftermath of conflict which affect every social groups including women justifying the need for women to have voice and speak for themselves. The provision of feminist-based human needs is critical in conflict situation and also, establishment of feminist related conflict theory. Hence active participation of women in conflict and conflict resolution (Sharoni 1994). This explains why the gender dimension of conflict resolution cannot be undermined by this work. The respondents demonstrate that women are indeed

capable of involving into peace peacebuilding successfully as achieved in other parts of the world. The youth of the ethnic groups played varied roles during the time of the conflict. They were responsible for executing the violence. However, they also made contributions towards achieving peacebuilding in the area.

The roles of Youth in conflict resolution

This section examines the roles youth executed in order to attain resolution of the conflict. According to Felice and Wisler (2007) the concept of youth is particularly indefinable. It is a heterogeneous group consisting of persons from several backgrounds including religion, race, gender, ethnicity, and class. Some academicians employ biological factors and posit that youth is the period between puberty and parenthood while others look at socio-demographic considerations to define youth as distinct social status with accompanying roles, rituals, and relationships. According to them, several youths are rejecting violence and participating in peacebuilding activities at the local, national and international level but the media is reticent on their roles and concentrating on other civil society organisations that are elite in character.

It is a time when a person is neither a child nor adult. This definition is made by Prisca, Kandagor, and Kiprono (2012). To be specific, this study is focusing on the period between 39 and 46 years of person's life in the study area.

Gonja youth in conflict resolution

The respondents were interrogated to describe the roles the youth performed in management of the conflict, to pave the way for peacebuilding

and resolution of the conflict. The responses indicate that the youth made financial contributions, submitted to the will of the elders to resolve the conflict, surrender of weapons, and embarked on civic education. In the first place, respondents classified the youth into two types and the roles each of them played during the conflict. The first category is violent in nature and individuals within this category are ready to fight until their objective is attained. The other is the peace-loving youth. They are peaceful in nature and perceive violence as the enemy of progress in their society. The views of the respondents on this issue gathered during in-depth interviews are as follow:

We have two different categories of youth; violent and non-violent. Those who are violent were at the war front and they advocate for fighting until we achieve our aim. The non-violent preach peace, advocate for seizure of fire and trying to resolve the conflict. This group are peaceful, sober and always preach peace. They know that we need to stop fighting and start thinking of ourselves. They are holding meetings in Kumasi, Tamale and Accra. Some of them are here and others afar, determining the fate of the conflict (46 year old male farmer from Salaga).

The respondents also articulated that the youth engaged in economic activity to earn revenue to enable them make financial contributions to their elderly relations, assisting them to partake actively in enhancing conflict resolution processes in Salaga, Tamale and Kumasi. The responses of the respondents during focus group discussions are as follows:

The youth who love peace believe that if we want to come together, then we should stop the fighting and engage in dialogue and farming. Those who started farming and have seen the gains, they realized that if there is conflict, they will lose everything.

It was Justice Ampiah Committee who probed into the conflict in Tamale, we contributed in many ways. We contributed monies towards every cause. Payment of the lawyer was difficult

for us because of poverty. We used to labor on people's farms for wages to raise monies to help our elders during the interrogation process by the committee (59 year old development worker during focus group discussions conducted at salaga).

Gonja youth engaging in peace education

The youth are involved in peace education voluntarily to create awareness that ethnic violence is not a good substitute to peace and a panacea to the problem ahead of them. The pragmatic among them organised meetings or fora in the communities and invited people from far and near to attend, to carry out deliberations on peacebuilding and resolution of the conflict. In an attempt to breach the gap between Gonja and their adversaries, the Gonja Youth Association, whose membership was exclusively Gonja have been changed to Gonjaland Youth Association to allow other ethnic groups inhabiting Gonjaland participate in all discussions pertaining to the conflict and matters affecting Gonjaland in general. They articulated the following views:

After we had come to terms with the fact that the conflict is not good, we are now listening to the elders and chiefs but we still have some of us who are difficult to instill the peace message into them, but those of us who would listen and take the advice, are more than them in terms of population. So I think we are gradually winning them, especially, during our conversations. We started meeting small, small groups, we realized that it is time for us to reason and give peace a chance and bring our people together. After some time, the Gonjaland Youth Association and the Konkomba Youth Association also started with their meetings to discuss peace (43 year old carpenter during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).

The terminologies respondents used in their responses to connote peaceful coexistence during the in-depth interviews and FGDs are peace, reconciliation, understanding, visitations and absence of violence. Their understanding of peace implies absence of violence, good relationships,

calmness, peace of mind, and understanding of each other through visitations without assault, calmness and freedom of association with either fellow ethnic groups or adversarial groups. This corroborated with the postulations of Prisca, et al. (2012) and Kendie, et al. (2014) who state that peace is where there is no physical harm to people and property which normally happens when there is riot, wars, and murder, executed by social beings in society. It also implies maintenance of law and order, pursuit of stability, and relatively safe socio-political order which constitute the basic needs of peace in any defined society.

Also, the understanding of reconciliation by the respondents includes forgetting of the past and concentration on the future, restoration of peace and unity, compensating losses, playing games together, attending Gonjaland Youth Association's programs, return of Gonja to Kpandai to live without fear of being attacked, cross-cultural marriages, attending each other's funerals and festivals and respect for each other. These features of peace and reconciliation mentioned by the respondents were stated by Prisca, et al (2012), Hessel (1967) and Locheng (2009) in their debate that reconciliation is to live in peace, forgives and acceptance of each other. The roles performed by some of the youth to broker peace among them was to educate their peers on the need of peaceful coexistence to pave way for development. This supports the standpoint of Felice and Wisler (2007) that efforts made by the youth to restore peace and reconciliation in areas engulfed by armed violence are enormous but are not noticed by the media to make them public. The respondents were also interrogated on the roles played by NGOs to resolve the conflict. Majority of them were of the view that NGOs were not available in the East Gonja district in the wake up of the conflict.

Nawuri youth in conflict resolution

The obedient nature of the youth translated into facilitation of the resolution processes to restore peace in the area. According to the respondents, they were taking instructions from the elderly on whether to fight or not. The instructions given by the chiefs to postpone violence were duly obeyed by the youth. The respondents expressed the following responses:

The youth take advice from the elders. So whatever we tell them is what they do; if we ask them to fight, they will do so and if we ask them to stop they will stop. But with conflict resolution, it is we the elders alone that meet and discuss the issue. In the resolution process, the interveners only invite some key people, they don't involve the youth. It was only the District Secretary (Mr. Jerry) who was a Gonja but did well as he was always coming to meet the youth and advising them that conflict will not help either of us. They did their homework by trying to get the government, chiefs and elders to resolve the matter. They have laid down their weapons, listened to the chiefs and elders in order to employ dialogue. The youth leaders among the Nawuri were Oklas, Nana Obinpe and the late Balai chief who did almost everything on behalf of the youth (focus groups discussions among the Nawuri).

The youth did not relent in their efforts to restore peace in Kpandai. They did so by submitting their arms and migrating to other places in search of greener pastures.

ROLES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN RESOLVING THE CONFLICT

The respondents were asked to explain the roles civil society organizations played to resolve the conflict. They revealed during focus group discussions and in-depth interviews that interveners visited the conflict parties and interrogated them on the possible solutions to the conflict. Respondents stated that government officials, research officers, groups of religious

practitioners, and development partners like the German Development Cooperation, came to the area and conducted interviews. In the FGDs and in-depth interviews, the Nawuri respondents stated that:

They just came here and advised us to put down our weapons and that government is in the process of restoring peace in the area, so we should wait for government's remark. Some came and took records as you (the researchers) are doing; they took photographs of everything that went on. That was what even informed the formation of the Justice Ampiah Committee of Inquiry. They were those who sent correct information about the situation because the government officials such as the Regional Minister and others were not sending the right information to the government. We can also remember that the German people brought some relief items to support, which I think is because of their involvement in the area as colonial masters (61 year old farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

According to the respondents among the Konkomba and Nchumuru community in Kumdi, interveners played some roles to resolve the conflict.

According to them:

...we could remember a reconciliation meeting was held in Salaga which was attended by all the ethnic groups except the Nawuri. I don't know whether it was organised by the NGOs or government but I believe that it was any of them. The NGOs are unable to resolve the conflict because the other ethnic groups didn't want to participate in the peace process. The protagonists, the Nawuri and their allied Chumbuluns and Bassari refused to participate in the reconciliation process including the peace concert organised in Salaga (70 year old retired teacher during focus group discussions conducted at kumdi)

The Nawuri said “how can we attend meetings with our enemies on the land of Gonja? They too cannot come to our land and talk with us those hot days” (70 year old farmer in Kitare). The roles of shadow stakeholders also frustrated the efforts of interveners to broker peace among the conflict actors.

The responses revealed that some NGOs owned by religious groups such as the Catholic Relief Service engaged in humanitarian services. They provided the vulnerables with materials such as used clothing, food items and domestic facilities to mitigate their suffering. Respondents narrated that these religious organisations did not mainly have an objective of resolving the conflict but to ensure that they alleviate the suffering of the vulnerable. However, they added advisory roles to their activities. “The role they played was to give items and advised us to suspend fighting and start to dialogue with our enemies, if we do that God will give us a way out” (60 year old woman from Salaga). A Gonja respondent observed that:

the Kumasi Muslims from the Zongo communities also came here and supported us with the second hand clothing, advised us to stop fighting and make peace with the Nawuri (70 year old retired educationist from Salaga).

In the same vein, a focus group discussion carried out in Kpandai revealed the following:

the only NGOs we saw were those that brought us food and other relief items. There was no NGO that purposively came to help resolve the conflict but they combined the humanitarian service of giving physical aids and peacemaking by spreading the word of peace through activities such as counselling and preaching. They helped a lot of people especially by supplying their needs and they also talked to people on peace, health issues and how they should come together as one people. The pieces of advice they rendered helped us greatly to suspend the fighting and started talking to each other (68 year old trader during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai)

The Muslim respondents in the Zongo community indicated that “the Catholic Father came and gave second hand clothing to the Nawuri and cautioned that wars cannot resolve our problems, so we should stop fighting”

(78 year old farmer in Zongo, Kpandai). The majority of the respondents interviewed expressed that the activities of local religious groups added up to the relative peace enjoyed by the conflict actors. This corroborated the work of Kendie et al (2014) and Adebayo et al (2015) that the people of Ghana achieved some peace and harmony, emanating from their ability to use local values in management of conflict in their communities.

The principal organisation that visited the area with the primary aim of finding solutions to the conflicts were the Permanent Peace Negotiation Team which was National in character and an international NGO known as Nairobi Peace Initiative which also visited the area under the auspices and sponsorship of inter-NGOs Consortium in northern Ghana. The consortium of NGOs engaged in development projects in the Northern Region. Upon realizing that the ethnic violence was pervasive in northern Ghana and a hindrance to their operations because of general insecurity, they decided to intervene in the conflict.

Role of Centre for Conflict Transformation and Peace Studies (CECOTAPS) in conflict resolution

The respondents revealed that a representative from the CECOTAPS situated in Damango in the name of Catholic Father Thaddeus Kuusah visited Kpandai and interacted with them. According to them, he met the leadership and asked them questions about the conflict. During an interview conducted with Father Thadeous in Tamale on Monday 7th November, he indicated that the Catholic Father organised 'Peace Animators' (Peace Team), comprising women and men numbering ten including the Parish Priest. Kpandai was

divided into five zones and the 'Peace Animators' were charged with the responsibility of organising meetings and resolving petty disputes among the people of Kpandai. They have been convening meetings monthly to brief members on their activities and also wrote reports on indicators of conflict to the office of Father Thaddeus Kuusah in Tamale. It should be noted that CECOTAPS came into existence in 2003 whereas the conflict happened in 1991 and 1992. Therefore, all activities of the organisation in Kpandai and Salaga started in the post conflict era. Nevertheless, their activities contributed immensely towards peacebuilding in the area (Ateng & Abazaami, 2016). This view is indicated in the following:

we have received training on how to stop conflict from coming out and how to solve it when it happens by the catholic church. We meet monthly to tell each other what we normally do and how we can improve our work. We solve marriage conflict, conflict between person and person in our community, we try to withdraw cases from court and handle them at home. But we still have problems on land disputes, chieftaincy problem among our chiefs and petty quarrels in the community. We never saw National Peace Council in our villages (72 year old farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

A Konkomba respondent in Kumdi during in-depth interview stated the following which corroborates the discussions above:

our blood was cold because of fear of being killed when we went to Salaga for the training. It was ok for other tribes like the Konkomba and Bassari. The Nawuri did not trust the Gonja. However, when the training started, we became fearless (70 year old retired teacher from Kumdi)

A Gonja respondent indicated during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions that they received some training in Salaga by the Catholic Church but could not mention CECOTAPS. According to the respondents during focus group discussions:

The catholic church brought the Nawuri, Gonja, Bassari and Konkomba together and trained them on how to resolve conflict in Salaga. Everybody was happy with their work. After that we hear that they are working with Nawuri and others ((85 year old labourer during focus group discussion conducted at Salaga)

The efforts of the NGOs to broker peace among the conflict parties, did pave the way for peaceful coexistence as confirmed by Mahama (2003).

Role of Permanent Peace Negotiating Team (PPNT)

The role of this team was superfluous as they did not really descend to the conflict areas to interact with the conflict parties extensively. The respondents were innocent about their presence. The team visited the conflict parties to ascertain the the extent of damage to lives and properties and advised the ethnic groups stop fighting and co-exist peacefully. The team ran into difficulty as leaders of the chiefly ethnic groups demanded for rendering of an apology from the Konkomba and Nawuri before dialogue could start. This approach avoided the principle of neutrality and impartiality in mediation of conflict (Best, 2006). This marked the beginning of PPNT's failure to broker peace in the region. The team briefly descend to Kpandai to interact with the Nawuri and Gonja in Salaga. It was only the literature that highlighted the role of the PPNT in resolution of conflict in northern Ghana and how they failed to achieve success. The primary data was reticent about the PPNT as their presence in the region was not felt by the primary conflict parties. This happened perhaps because the team did not disclose their identity as the members of PPNT upon arrival in Salaga and Kpandai.

Exogenous intervention to resolve the conflict

Following the failure to resolve the deadlock by PPNT, the Ghana government rendered its support to the inter-NGO consortium initiative to hire the service of Nairobi Peace Initiative, an overseas organisation based in Kenya, Nairobi to resolve the conflict. A retired worker at NORRIP who was part of the activities of the NPI in the northern Region and Kumasi was interviewed about the operation of the NPI. He stated the following;

The NPI did very well. They did not look for people who were wright or wrong. They were rather interested in helping the conflict parties to talk to each other. He did not blame anyone for the outbreak of the conflict. He advised that everybody should be honest, sincere, to tell what he did and believe it is right or wrong. He asked every group to assess themselves objectively. It was stated by us the participants that we did something wright and also did something wrong during the conflict. The meetings helped the conflict parties to stop fighting for long in the northern region. For example, the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups are not killing each other again, but they did not fully participate in the meetings in Kumasi (68 year old retired civil servant in Tamale)

The Nawuri respondents articulated the following responses on the roles of the NGOs in the area during FGDs and in-depth interviews:

They (NPI) came and asked us a lot of questions, about the causes of the conflict. We explained to them the causes as well as how the situation was calmed. After that they advised us to let go the conflict and make peace with our brothers, the Gonja because we are one people. But they did not bring the people together to talk. They only keep on saying, you keep peace, maintain peace, stop fighting and they did not go inside the conflicts to address the causes of them.

They came to Nawuri on our land and met the Gonja on their land and advised us to lay down our weapons and stop fighting. They organised a peace workshop in Salaga which the Gonja and Konkomba attended but the Nawuri, Bassari and Nchumuru did not attend. This is because Salaga is a town of Gonja and not a neutral place. They also sent us to Kumasi, a neutral town where both the Nawuri and their allies on the one hand and the Gonja on the other, to discuss the conflict and its resolution (66

year old farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

The respondents described the meeting in Kumasi as a good initiative towards resolving the conflict. They explained that even though they did not reach any agreement on the ownership of Kpandai land in Kumasi, it was a cornerstone in the efforts made by interveners to promote peace. Deliberations were made, leading them to accept the fact that in principle, there are issues that need resolution between Nawuri and Gonja (Mahama, 2003). According to the Nawuri, the Justice Ampiah Committee Report provided enough evidence about the true ownership of the land, hence they are not ready to have further discussions on the matter. They referred the Nairobi Peace Initiative to the report of the Justice Ampiah Committee and asked for the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report which they are emphatic, will resolve the conflict. The Nawuri respondents were asked if the committee's report was published, and if not, how they obtained the information on the recommendations. The representatives of the Nawuri emphatically stated that:

the way the deliberations were held in Tamale; we believe that the recommendations are in our favour, we have been able to answer all our questions correctly but the Gonja could not do that. We heard the Government was ready to issue a White Paper on the matter in our favour but the overlord of the Gonja, the Yagbon Wura, warned that President Rawlings would lose elections and that made government to withhold the White Paper up to date (62 year old retired teacher during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai)

The Gonja respondents expressed disappointment at the refusal of the Nawuri to cooperate with the NPI in Kumasi to have a successful dialogue. They stated that:

as far as we are concerned, we are not aware that the Justice Ampiah Committee's Report favored them (Nawuri). Because, we submitted the Dixon Report prepared during the German Colonial administration which stated unequivocally that the land is for Gonja. Therefore, the committee cannot make a determination that the land is for the Nawuri (78 year old divisional chief from Salaga).

The deadlock between the two ethnic groups was heightened by entrenched positions taken by the parties in conflict which did not allow the NPI to continue with the mediation process between the two parties. They rather advised the belligerents that they should engage in dialogue upon a return to their respective places, until a time that they are able to resolve the conflict. In essence, the Kumasi Peace Accord was signed by other ethnic groups involved in the conflicts in the northern region excluding the Gonja and Nawuri (Mahama, 2003). The reference to the report of the Justice Ampiah Committee by the parties, instead of focusing on the mediation process, truncated the mediation exercise. This explains why the conflicts between the two ethnic groups have not been resolved. There and then bequeathing the East Gonja with suspicions, lamentations, and social disintegration among others. The respondents explained that the meeting in Kumasi was the first instance, the Gonja and Nawuri met each other face to face to engage in a dialogue. Even though they did not reach consensus to resolve the conflict, the meeting opened an opportunity for them to continue to engage in dialogue, practice visitations and attendance of each other's festivals subsequently. It also restored some hope and confidence in them to appreciate the fact that the impasse is not beyond resolution.

However, the Konkomba ethnic group which allied with the Nawuri to fight Gonja signed the peace accord with the Gonja which stipulated that

hostilities between the two of them had ended and that they will not fight the Gonja any longer. According to the Konkomba ethnic group they are aware that the land is not for Konkomba. The Gonja also agreed to respect their fundamental human rights to live in peace and harmony with them (Mahama, 2003). The prevailing relative peace obtained in the Kpandai area and its environs, as a result of the contribution of the NGOs to peacebuilding was confirmed by the proposition of Agyeman (2008) that NGOs could play crucial roles in the management of conflict in Ghana if they are allowed to intervene into management of conflict. This is because the conflict parties may perceive them as outsiders who may not have interest in the outcome of the interventions.

The following are some of the comments that were expressed by the respondents during interactions with them:

They talked to us but we didn't heed to their words. The NGOs, Muslim and Christian organisations and government intervened but we didn't take their talks seriously. I can remember when I was in Katejeli, one soldier commander came and organised us and told us that he is a soldier man so we must be careful. That he has been hearing of conflict and that was what brought him to our village. He cautioned that we should never attempt to fight this conflict but if we do, it will take us over twenty-five years to rebuild our lives but we refused to listen. Haven't we experienced it? His observations and studies have come to pass. It is over twenty years today; I am unable to meet all that I dream of (50 year old farmer during focus group discussions among the Konkomba conducted at Kumdi).

The respondents lamented that the interveners performed creditably by coming to advise them to stop fighting and give peace a chance, but to no avail. This explains why they are suffering as they have not been able to recover from the

debilitating effects of the conflict. The factors responsible for the execution of good work by the NPI are worth mentioning.

Outcome of NPI'S interventions

The respondents were asked to express their views on the causes accountable for the failure of the NGOs to resolve the conflict. According to them, the NGOs were seen as Christian organisations whereas the conflict area was religiously heterogeneous. So the other religious groups; Muslims and Traditionalists were suspicious about their neutrality. This affirms the proposition of Best (2006) that impartiality and neutrality are key to success of mediation. The question of multiplicity of religions in the area contributed to the difficulty encountered in the efforts made to resolve the conflict (Assefa, 2005). The question is, which religion's method of conflict resolution is applicable and acceptable in resolving the conflict by all the conflict parties. This raises the question of triangulation in ethnic conflict resolution in heterogeneous society. This entails working out the points of convergence in resolving the conflict by all professed religions existing in the area and applies the hybrid. This kind of approach is suggested by Awedoba (2011) who stipulated that combination and application of several methods aimed at achieving peace is commendable. This allows the respondents to accept the method because of its spiritual endorsement by their religious faith.

The failure to define ownership of land is another factor that truncated the efforts of the NGOs to resolve the conflict. According to a Gonja respondent:

Master, that is what we have been telling you, unless the ownership of the land is determined, if they bring all the chiefs

together and send them to outside for dialogue, they can't resolve it. If government is able to say the land is for Gonja and therefore warn that, it will deal with anybody including the Gonja who cause trouble again. But if not this, no reconciliation attempts will resolve the conflict (60 year old farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).

The Nawuri also declared that “the land is ours, the Gonja are strangers on the land. The government should issue a White Paper on that and establish military camp here to prevent any chaos” (70 year old farmer in Kitare). The UNDP (2005) attested that human needs are non-negotiable during any exercise to resolve conflict because they defined human's existence and survival without which life become unattainable and unbearable. Implying that combatants continue to fight until they possess their needs. This explained why the conflict between the two ethnic groups becomes intractable and protracted. Lack of cooperation between the NGOs and the conflict parties added to the factors explaining their inability to mediate the conflict appreciably.

The respondents unanimously stated the following responses on the question of people who assisted the conflict parties to fight:

There were unable to resolve the conflict because there were some people underground using the conflict to benefit themselves. These people are sometimes our opinion leaders, so they have a lot of influence on the people fighting against the NGOs. As the NGOs were going round to ensure peace prevails, those people were also on the ground trying to destroy the efforts of the NGOs (66 year old retired Nawuri teacher from Kpandai).

This confirms the standpoint of Best (2006) that some conflicts are associated with conflict entrepreneurs. This connotes assisting conflict parties to fight for the purpose of obtaining benefit from the conflict. The conflict entrepreneurs are sometimes invisible and difficult to trace. Their activities

involve financing the conflict parties to perpetrate violence whilst they extort their benefits. The stakeholders in some cases live outside the area of the conflicts but proffer their support from a distance. Respondents attested to the fact that they received assistance from their own relations; from Tamale and some southern cities in the form of weapons, money, food and second hand clothing. The scarcity of NGOs in the area contributed to the setbacks in resolving the conflicts. The respondents in Salaga and Kpandai were unanimous that there were no NGOs operating in their communities in the advent of the conflict:

We had few NGOs in this area and sometimes too NGOs come when you don't even write to inform them that you need them, or when government do not give them direction, it is difficult for them to just jump into conflict to resolve it. Also, every NGO has its direction, those who resolve conflict are far from us and only come and go, therefore, they are aliens (41 year old farmer from Salaga)

The respondents corroborated the literature that NGOs operating in northern Ghana formed an inter-NGO consortium and hired the service of the Nairobi Peace Initiative to assist in building peace in the area. The conflict parties participated in a series of workshops organised by the NPI in Kumasi which led to the suspension of conflict in northern Ghana for about two decades (Awedoba, 2011 & Mahama, 2003). The respondents failed to understand that those workshops they attended in Kumasi was a form of participation of the NGOs in resolution of the conflict. The government rendered its support to the NGOs and performed other interventions to resolve the conflict.

Reasons for the success of the NPI

The success was not achieved on a silver platter. Factors responsible for this success are many. The first is the willingness and readiness of the Inter-NGOs and the NPI to sponsor this project. They also sacrificed their lives and time to visit the conflict communities at the time when perfect peace was not entirely achieved. The bottom-up approach employed, by allowing the parties to communicate among themselves and lobby one another was also a factor worth mentioning. The holding of the workshops in Kumasi far away from the Northern Region was also a contributory factor because delegates were not under pressure from their respective fanatics to avoid compromises. The fact that the workshops were facilitated by unfamiliar faces erased any doubt in the minds of conflict parties that an enemy might gain favour against others. Lastly, the rich experience, skilfulness and expertise of the team cannot be overlooked. They were professionals who understood what they were doing and prepared adequately for the planning and execution of their mission meticulously (Mahama, 2003).

Darkwa (2012) expressed the view that the NGOs set up a Peacebuilding Working Group (PBWG) to help give feedback to the NPI to evaluate process and progress of their work as it went along. This was done through monitoring and coordinating the peacebuilding workshops. To integrate all the persons involved in the conflict into the peacebuilding process, the representatives were advised at the close of every meeting to share information and their experiences with their people when they got back to their communities on recess, so that they could participate vicariously through their delegates. This made the outcome of the workshops their own. To sustain

peace in the region during and the aftermath of the NPI is completion of work, a Peace and Reconciliation Follow-Up Committee as an element of the peacebuilding strategy was established to continue the peace process started in Kumasi (Darkwa, 2012).

The NPI had been able to achieve successes because of extensive strategies they adopted including strenuous consultations with all stakeholders and existing pre-conditions as aforementioned. In the first place, the security personnel were deployed in the conflict zone to enforce peace and order in the region. The presence of the security, high level delegation of the government and other high stratified personalities, and the imposition of curfews also helped to neutralize escalation of violence in the region. The basic needs of the primary stakeholders in the conflict such as food, shelter, and sanitation had been provided impartially by the NGOs. This implied that they genuinely had interest in the welfare and wellbeing of the victims and this paved the way for the collaboration of the Inter-NGOs consortium and NPI to work out peace formula and its implementation possible.

The government was not only basically interested in quashing the conflict but also interested in finding solutions to the impasse. It was aware of the existence of the NGOs in the region yet could not make use of them because of the belief that they were only experts in humanitarian relief services and lacked skills in resolution of conflict, “thereby making the prospect of a non-intrusive process, a welcome option”. The PPNT also objected to government’s possible decision to use the NGOs as they had a reservation regarding their competency. The work was therefore assigned to them by government to no avail. However, the work of the PPNT also contributed to the

success of the NPI. Mahama (2003, p. 152) observes that “the Nairobi Peace Initiative and its partner, the Inter-NGO Consortium, undoubtedly deserved the praise of the parties in the conflict and all peace lovers...” However, other scholars expressed the views that the end of hostilities had not been achieved by the NPI alone. Some work towards achieving peace had been executed before their arrival in Ghana and the NPI only came to continue with unfinished work. Even though the NPI did well to end large scale ethnic hostilities in northern Ghana, they failed to resolve the conflict between the Gonja and Nawuri (Mahama, 2003).

To conclude, the civil society played diverse roles in their attempts to resolve the conflict. These included embarking upon fact finding missions to identify the root causes of the conflict, advisory roles and financial contributions. They also hired the services of an international organisation to help resolve the conflict. The next chapter deals with the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms to resolve the conflict.

CHAPTER SEVEN

INDIGENOUS CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the role of local actors in the management and resolution of the conflict. These actors include chiefs, elders, and religious leaders. The chapter utilizes narrations of the respondents during interviews and focus group discussions.

Traditional authority in resolving an intra-ethnic conflict among the Gonja

In this section, respondents were asked to narrate the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in their traditional area. During in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, respondents described stages of the conflict resolution mechanisms in their communities starting from the family heads, elderly individuals, clan heads and the chief's palace. The following narrations constitute the voices of the Gonja respondents:

Gonja have their own ways of resolving conflicts. We have chiefs and kingmakers who are responsible for peacekeeping.

We have three clans in Kpembi; Singbon, Kanyanse, and Lepo. If there is a trouble among the people of Lepo, the elders within the clan will help to do dialogue and advice them on what to do, If they fail, then it will go to the Lepowura, he is the clan head in charge of that gate. He will try and resolve it but if it becomes futile, then it has to go to Kpembiwura the overlord. The same procedure happens among the Sigbun and Kanyase gates.

The chief of Kafaba, a village west of Salaga is traditionally responsible for resolution of chieftaincy conflicts. If it is the conflict is not resolved (sic), it is referred to the Kpembiwura for review. If it does not work, a report is written and forwarded to the Yagbonwura who will then pass his judgment and then give sanctions. If the Yagbonwura passed his judgment, whoever causes another problem could be sacked from the land (59 year old contractor during focus group discussions among Gonja conducted at Salaga).

The above opinions are applicable to chieftaincy disputes among royals who are prospective candidates, struggling to obtain a chieftaincy title when the skins are vacant. The division of Kpembu into three gates or clans mentioned by the respondents affirms the standpoint of Braimah (1967). The narrations of respondents on how disputes are resolved as corroborated with the work of Brobbey (2008), Agyeman (2008) and Awedoba (2011) who asserted that the chieftaincy institutions in Ghana are intensely involved in resolution of conflict in the country. The execution of this function is recognized by the 1992 constitution, proffering them the legal backing and recognition to perform such roles. Kendie et al. (2014) accepted the fact that the relative peace enjoyed by Ghanaians is attributed to the role of the traditional authority in the management and resolution of conflict without which there will not be mutual social interaction among the people. Conflicts among individuals are also resolved traditionally.

Practice of gerontocracy in resolving conflict among the Gonja

Another system of conflict settlement in the Gonja traditional communities was revealed to be within a family settlement. The voices of the respondents declared the following:

When there is a conflict at the family level, it is put before the family head. The family head then meets both parties and hear them and try to resolve it. If he is unable, he can bring in a respected Mallam or an elderly person in the community to talk to the parties and ask the offender to apologize and also the other party to accept the apology and forgive the offender. However, if it is not resolved at that level, it may be sent to the chiefs or the police station and finally to the court. These days because of the implications of being arrested by police, it was

easier to resolve conflict by threat of involving the police. There was a lot of stigma for being arrested; if you are a royal and were arrested once in your lifetime, you could not become a chief, so offenders easily give up and accept guilt and that facilitates conflict resolution process. But if at that level they are not able to resolve it, it goes to the sectional level or clan level, it is then sent to the chief's palace for amicable resolution. I believe that by the time it reaches Kpembiwura, it would have been resolved (56 year old trader during focus group discussions among Gonja conducted at Salaga).

Respondents explain that in the event that the conflict involves individual subjects who are either royals or ordinary people, the resolution of the conflict takes a different dimension. They expressed the following views in order to explain the mechanisms of handling such conflicts:

When there is conflict, a complaint is lodged at the palace of the sectional chief who then calls the people involved in the conflict, both sides are interrogated regarding the conflict for assessment to be done, after which the sectional chief will go on his 'knees' to plead with the victim to forgive the offender. However, in present times, conflict parties sometimes reject the plea of the offender and the matter then will get to the Kpembiwura, especially if there is blood shed, for him to resolve it (78 year old farmer during focus group discussions among Gonja conducted at Salaga).

From the voices of the respondents, it is noted that when conflict happens between two individuals within a family, the first stage of intervention is the head of the family who interrogates the conflict parties and makes attempts to resolve it. If the conflict parties accept his determination, the conflict ends there. This involves rendering of apology by the offender and acceptance of it by the victim to foster true reconciliation. In some cases, the victim rejects the plea or the offender refuses to render the apology, implying that the conflict is unresolved. This precipitates the head of the family to invite an elderly person to intervene in the conflict by further interrogating the

conflict parties to accept the judgment of the family head or review the decision of the family head. In the event that the elderly person fails to resolve and reconcile them, the next stage is to report the impasse to the head of the clan who is likely to be Lepowura in the case of the Lepo clan or gate, Kanyasewura in the case of Kanyase clan or gate and Singbuwura in the case of Singbun clan or gate.

At this stage, the clan will invite the conflict actors, family head and the elderly person who attempted to resolve the conflict but failed. A review of the earlier decision is made by interrogating the conflict parties and if possible seek the input of the family head, the elderly persons and the clan head, after which a judgment is made. The conflict is most likely to settle at this stage but in the event that agreement is not reached, the clan head will refer the case to the Kpembiwura, the Paramount chief.

The Kpembiwura starts the process after making the analysis of the conflict and inviting the stakeholders in the conflict to the palace including the Imam of the community. When the assembly of the traditional council is gathered on the day of the hearing the case, the linguist enters the room of the chief to inform him that the assembly is ready for the process to commence. The chief then comes out walking majestically into the sitting room. Upon seeing him, the gathering removes their head covers and place their left hands to the ground until they touch the skins on which they are sitting, demonstrating their greetings, loyalty and homage to him. It is only the Imam who does not remove his head cover during the process. The linguist now introduces the agenda of the day or the topic of discussion to the gathering.

According to the respondents, the process of the conflict resolution begins by asking the Imam to seek God's interference; guidance, wisdom for the interveners and successful settlement of the impasse. The conflict parties are asked to narrate their protests one after the other whilst the assembly listens to them and taking notes of relevant points. After their narrations, they are asked to provide their evidences and witnesses, and in some cases allowed to cross examine each other to unearth the root causes and implications of the deadlock. The elders examine them by asking questions until everybody present is satisfied that the details of the conflict are absolutely discussed to appreciate the needs, interests and fears of the conflict parties as espoused by Best (2006). The elders consult each other briefly to compare and contrast notes gathered during the deliberations until they reach a consensus on the conclusion to be made.

Thereafter, the determination is made publicly. The conflict parties are then asked, if they have accepted the decision of the traditional authority. If they affirm the decision, the guilty person is cautioned to render apology to the victim and the latter is also admonished to accept the plea. In some cases, the offender is charged an amount of money or animal to compensate the victim for the losses made. A percentage of the money paid is reserved to remunerate the interveners for their ability to spend time and energy to resolve the conflict. Some of the fine could also be reserved for maintenance of the palace. The aged in the Gonja communities are also responsible for resolution of conflict.

The respondents among the Gonja ethnic group indicated the role of elderly persons in resolving conflict in their communities. They illustrated that they have trust and believe in the sincerity of their elders and often use them to resolve conflicts. The following responses were gathered to that effect:

In Gonja tradition, whenever there is a misunderstanding, the elders will sit down and think about it together, if it is a spiritual evil, they will drive it out bringing the Mallams, the custodians of the Gonja culture and the land priests to pray and have some drink to signify that the conflict is resolved. The use of prayers is to ensure that it does not bring problems. Because, the evil's antidote is prayers. In the past, if the panel is a relation of a conflict party, the latter is compelled to accept the verdict because the elders are impartial (71 year old farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga).

The above narrations of the respondents substantiate the roles of the council of elders in prevention and management of conflicts in the Gonja communities. The chief cannot adjudicate any conflict without the presence of his cabinet including the elderly. The respondents explained that the elderly involved themselves in mediation and arbitration to resolve deadlocks. By virtue of their age and rich wisdom, they are arrogated with a high social status by their kinsmen. Their judgments are upheld in high esteem by conflict actors and by everybody with utmost conviction and satisfaction thereby resolving conflicts, to pave the way for peaceful coexistence. According to the respondents, these adults seldom defy the principle of fairness, justice and impartiality. Hence, their views are not contested by conflict parties. These constitute features of meditation and arbitration as indicated by Best (2006).

The responses reveal that in some cases, the role of the elderly, comprises counselling and persuasions of the offenders to render apology when they are guilty and urging the victims to accept the apology and forgive the

offenders. When this is adhered to by the conflict parties, it implies that the conflicts are resolved. This approach of conflict resolution indicated by the respondents confirmed the standpoint of Uwazie (2000) that mediation in the African context is a combination of several mechanisms. The council of elders are inspired by the fact that they are closer to death and risk the rejection of their ancestors, if they faulted in speaking the truth in their daily social interactions with their kinsmen. This is because they constitute the intermediaries between their kinsfolk and the dead (Awedoba, 2011).

The roles of the elders in conflict resolution are indispensable in the sense that they are involved in all stages of conflict management and resolution. They act as independent mediators who are either consulted by conflict actors or see it as their social responsibility and are duty bound to approach conflict parties to initiate the process of resolution as espoused by respondents. They are also working with divisional and paramount chiefs partaking in conflict management and resolution processes. The chiefs could not function effectively in their daily tasks without the elders around them. It was also revealed by the responses that the interventions executed by the elderly is considered as rendering community services thus they are not paid for the job done, except that their motivation is derived from rendering of gratitude by conflict actors by saying to them “thank you and may God bless you”. In some instances, conflict parties are made to swear an oath to establish their sincerity and speaking of truth during dialogue to resolve conflicts.

Swearing of an oath to resolve conflict among the Gonja

The swearing of an oath is administered in pre conflict resolution process to compel conflict parties not to adulterate truth during communication to resolve conflict. A respondent among the Gonja asserted that:

If the conflict parties are stubborn, you make them swear an oath and whoever is right, judgment is done in the person's favour and the guilty person is charged to pay a ram which will be slaughtered to pacify the wrong doer so that he would not do that again. It is the oath that Gonja use in resolving conflicts because, if you make them take an oath, no matter how stubborn they are, they will stop the fight or calamity befalls them (73 year old female farmer from Kpembu).

Another Gonja respondent stated that “the parties are made to take Ndewura Jakpa’s oath by following the chief’s and his Quran’s words in administering the oath to resolve it” (65 year old retired teacher from Salaga). The respondents indicated that swearing of an oath by conflict parties is pervasive among the ethnic groups involved in the conflict as it runs through their responses. With the Gonja, they swear by the Ndewura Japka’s sword that what they say or do is the truth, if it is otherwise calamity befalls them. In some cases, they swear using their chieftaincy skin or ancestors depending upon the intensity of the contesting matter as indicated by Awedoba (2011). The use of traditional authority in resolving conflict among the Nawuri is discussed in the next section.

Traditional authority and resolving an intra-ethnic conflict among the Nawuri

The tradition of the Nawuri ethnic group contains conflict resolution methods which have some similarity and differences juxtaposing them with that of the Gonja ethnic group. According to the Nawuri respondents *Odikuro*

(head of clans of Nawuri) was responsible for the resolution of their conflict.

This was stated during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in

Kpandai:

In the past when we did not have chiefs, we take it to the Odikuros, each party is given the chance to narrate his or her side of the issue. Whosoever is guilty, the person is told the truth. If the resolution demands that you buy drink for libation to be poured or give a ram per the magnitude of the wrongdoing for pacification, you are told to do so. Those days, cases were resolved by the Odikuros, but presently this is done by the chiefs. At the Odikuros' palace, money is not involved. Unlike the chief's palace, anyone at fault is fined. The Odikuro's approach is preferred, to the chief's one because wounds are healed faster than that of the chief where money is involved (80 year old ex-farmer during focus group discussions among Nawuri conducted at Kpandai).

The respondents narrated that they used to be egalitarian people ruled by their family heads, clan heads and earthpriests. These persons were responsible for resolving conflicts among them but they lost trust in them and began to employ the services of the Gonja mediators as they were considered to be neutral and impartial. They labelled their leaders as bias and rejected their judgment during the primordial era. The oral tradition of the Nawuri contradict the assertion of Brukum (2007, 2006) that the Nawuri used to have a chieftaincy institution which was assisted by the *Wurubon* (council of elders). However, in modern times, the Nawuri felt that they were excessively oppressed by the Gonja chiefs and this caused them to fight a series of wars including the 1991 and 1992 conflicts, in order to gain their independence (Brukum, 2007). In the post conflict times, the Nawuri introduced chieftaincy institution into their culture to emulate the rule of their former Gonja masters.

Resolution of conflict by modern Nawuri chiefs

According to the Nawuri respondents, currently, they have a chieftaincy arrangement and one of their functions is to resolve conflict. One of the chiefs made the following responses regarding the role of chiefs in resolving conflict during in-depth interviews:

Here, in those days, conflict resolution was done at the Odikuro's palace, but now conflicts are resolved locally at the chiefs' palace. Traditionally, in case you are summoned here in my palace, the first thing I will do is to send for you. When you come, I will assemble my elders, after that we allow you the fighting parties to narrate your side of the story, then we ask you questions. The one at fault, will be told and given a fine, but this fine is not any huge sums of money. What we normally take is alcohol. When you are fined an animal it means, probably you have defiled the land; you have shed blood, rape a woman, or slept with someone (woman) in the bush. This is how we resolve our internal conflicts. We prefer this system to any other one because we end up understanding one another better (one of the rival Nawuri chief interviewed in his house in Kpandai)

The newly established chieftaincy institution of the Nawuri is characterised with problems, perhaps because of their inexperience in the matters of chieftaincy as it had not been part of their culture before their encounters with the Gonja. A Nawuri respondent revealed the challenges confronting them with regard to using their new chiefs to resolve conflicts during in-depth interview:

Currently, just that our chiefs are in a way corrupt, but they are in charge of resolving conflicts. When we take our problems to the chief palace, he would not come or mind you. In Bladjai here, our chief is residing in Kpandai, so when you take issues to his palace he would not even come. Sometimes it is the Okyeami who will try what he can. When I was the Okyeami, whenever issues were brought to me, I will have to send them to the chief's palace, even though, he wasn't here, his regent was permanently there for him. But this current Okyeami is doing what pleases him. He presides over issues alone without even consulting his elders in the absence of the chief... We need to

come together and see how we can make our Kingdom develop. The late Nana Obimpeh echoed this but we did not listen. He told us after his death we will suffer, truly after his death things are really happening as he predicted, we are suffering. Sometimes, I wish this was not my hometown (88 year old male retired farmer from Kitare).

The responses indicated that the Nawuri used to be governed by clan heads who were responsible for resolving their conflicts. Despite these challenges, conflict among individuals are managed and resolved among them. Some of the Nawuri respondents also described the nature of resolving conflict in the palace of a Nawuri chief during focus group discussions in the following:

Here, what we do is that when there is conflict between two parties, the issues come to my outfit, then you will be given the chance to state your case. Anyone found guilty is told the truth, after which we settle their differences and advise them. If you and I begrudge each other, I will go and summon you at the chief's palace requesting some amount of money, sometimes a maximum of about GHS 50 and drink, as a fine to be paid to me by you. The chief will then send a messenger to invite you, if you want to challenge the case, you will go and pay such an amount as challenge fee, and when one is found faulty, he or she is charged some amount, depending on the magnitude of the crime to indemnify the other. But if you do not want to challenge the summon, you will send an elderly person to plead on your behalf and seek out of chief palace settlement. But it is only the violent ones that we summon. Moderate dispute comes in the form of complaints which we easily resolve (66 year old retired teacher during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

The local resolution of conflict among the Nawuri differs from the Gonja. This is because the Gonja constitute a chiefly ethnic group as explained by respondents and corroborated with Awedoba (2011) and Braimah (1967). The works of these writers explained that the chiefly community utilize their chiefs in management of conflict as espoused by respondents in their

deliberations during interviews. Amenumey (2011) and Prah & Yeboah (2011), in their postulations, declared two types of societies existing in simple or traditional societies thus chiefly and egalitarian societies. The Nawuri respondents expressed that they used not to have chiefs in the primordial and post independence era, until the post conflict era between them and the Gonja in 1992 which led to the resettlement of Gonja in Salaga and Kpembu amid insecurity in Kpandai. Therefore, the Nawuri were challenged to install chiefs in their communities to fill the chieftaincy vacuum. The respondents indicated that the newly installed chiefs are not yet recognized by law and the National House of Chiefs. According to the responses of Nawuri and Gonja, the former have now installed chiefs in Kpandai and in all their villages, performing the functions of chiefs after the conflict. However, they are yet to be gazetted with the consent of the Gonja chiefs.

The efforts made by the chiefs to resolve conflict in their localities are in consonance with the provision of the 1992 Ghanaian Republican Constitution which arrogates to chiefs, the right to resolve disputes in their traditional area (Brobby, 2008). The responses also support Addo-Fening's (2008) postulation that the palaces in the traditional communities are the first point of call in the event of civil disputes. Interventions of the chiefs into resolution of conflict contributed immensely towards relative peaceful coexistence in the heterogeneous societies of Ghana, especially in the East Gonja traditional area (Kendie, 2010 & Agyeman, 2008). However, the responses suggested that the relative peace enjoyed in the area is homogeneous. This implies that existence of relative peace in Kpandai only exists among the Nawuri and their allies. Likewise, there is relative peace among the Gonja in

Salaga but the same peace cannot be said to exist between the Gonja and Nawuri. The Nawuri indicated that some of them are afraid of visiting Salaga. In the same vein, Gonja respondents stated that they are not ready to visit and live in Kpandai for fear of being killed. The efforts of chiefs in Kpandai to resolve conflict are supported by the elderly persons.

Practice of gerontocracy in resolving conflict among the Nawuri

The practice of gerontocracy is common among the Nawuri communities than the Gonja in the sense that the former are more egalitarian people and are being ruled by their family and clan heads before the conflict. The respondents asserted that they used not to have chiefs and the Odikuro (an assembly of clan heads). In view of that most of the elderly amongst them were responsible for settling their disputes. A woman respondent revealed the roles of the aged in conflict resolution:

just like the way my husband is there like this when there is a conflict between two persons, one can come to my husband to go and ask him to go and apologize on his behalf. He will sometimes go to the other party early morning and resolve the conflict (68 year old elderly woman from Kumdi).

The view of this woman was confirmed by FGDs among the Nawuri respondents:

If in case you and I have an issue against each other, I can invite you to any trusted elderly person in this community to look into the matter and reconcile us. Traditionally, if two persons are in a dispute with each other, the elders will find out from both parties what the problem is, and anyone found at fault will be told on the face you are at fault, but in this modern time, people do not want to accept their faults. This breeds continuous struggle; conflict parties become angry with each other, even if the one found right does not take the issue further at all, he or she is peeved awaiting to do

anything wrong in future (70 year old farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

A Kotokoli respondent was asked to recount the role of the elderly persons in the community in resolution of conflict. His voice was stated in the following:

Sometimes, I will go to the house of the other person and beg him or her that it is this person who has asked me to come and apologize on his behalf, about what had happened between the two of you, he says he is sorry, so please he is asking for your forgiveness. If it is say between a Konkomba and Nawuri, I sometimes intercede, if it is between Kotokoli and Kotokoli I can still intercede, if it is between a Nawuri and his/her colleague Nawuri, I do the same. If any of we the strangers should intercede the conflict will cool like water (69 year old male retired customs officer from Kpandai).

The responses revealed that the communities invested their trust in the elderly persons who they believe to be the epitome of wisdom because of their rich experiences, as a result of their age, thus cases of conflict are reported to them for intervention. According to the majority of the respondents, gerontocracy is vividly expressed in the homes, communities and in the palaces. The respondents willingly shoulder the responsibility of ensuring that they mediate conflicts between individuals either they are invited to intervene or not. The aged take the initiative on their own to embark upon mediation or arbitration at the family, community, clan or in their homes. It was revealed during in-depth interviews that there are occasions where the elderly persons have to visit conflict parties in their homes to mediate conflict for the sake of peace, despite the fact that they could be older than the conflict parties. An oath swearing is part of conflict resolution process of the Nawuri.

Swearing of an oath in resolving conflict among the Nawuri

The Nawuri respondents were asked if they administer an oath during resolution of conflict and the responses were affirmative. A focus group discussion conducted at Kpandai revealed that:

When there is a disagreement between two or more parties, what the elders do is to look out for a lasting solution. The conflict parties are made to swear an oath that the conflict in question would not be continued in any way again. After the wearing of the oath, there would be a curse and punishment on any person who breaks the oath by igniting the conflict again (50 year old teacher during focus group discussion conducted at Kpandai)

A respondent revealed that the Nawuri fear the consequences of an oath if it is broken intentionally by conflict parties. The following are the responses

Swearing of oath help us to resolve conflict but it is very dangerous. If you do it and break it, it can cause your downfall in life, so those who agree to swear it, have to believe that they will never fight to abuse it. We swear an oath mentioning the names of our ancestors and our gods, inviting them to help us resolve the conflict. They always help us on condition that we will respect them to keep the oath (79 year old farmer from Kumdi).

It can be observed that this method of conflict resolution is common among the conflict parties and it is usable if they build a consensus to come together to resolve the conflict. It could augment other methods that are applicable to resolve the deadlock. The responses corroborated the standpoint of Awedoba (2011) and Kirby (2007) that swearing of an oath is an integral part of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms and can be used in both internal and external conflict by interveners to resolve impasse. The indigenous knowledge of conflict resolution of the ethnic groups discussed constituted their internal or an intra-ethnic method of conflict resolution that are being

employed to resolve conflict among themselves. The question is if the conflict is an inter-ethnic conflict, what mechanism do they utilize to resolve the conflict? The responses indicated that their indigenous knowledge takes care of both internal and external conflict. The following intends to explain inter ethnic conflict resolution strategy of the Nawuri.

Observations about the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms

The review of the literature revealed that every ethnic group has conflict resolution mechanisms embedded in their culture and tradition which are being used to resolve their internal and external conflicts. This data prompted the researcher to explore methods of conflict resolution strategies of the conflict parties and also find whether they had been used to resolve the deadlock among them. The findings indicated that the ethnic groups are not of exception as the responses unearthed their indigenous strategies of conflict resolutions. These include the use of Tengdana, gerontocracy, chieftaincy institution, administering of oaths and pacification of conflict.

The study indicated that these mechanisms are effective in resolving ethnic conflict. However, they were utilised in the Kpandai and Salaga districts effectively to resolve intra-ethnic conflicts. This implies, using them to resolve inter-personal or intra-ethnic conflict among the Nawuri or among the Gonja is possible. The respondents indicated that they utilised traditional methods to resolve conflicts among their ownelves, suggesting the same ethnic group. However, they seldom utilised them to resolve the conflict across ethnic groups. Also, the government and the civil society organisation did not factor

the use of the indigenous knowledge of conflict resolution in their operations. The interveners imposed their own strategies on the conflict parties which is unacceptable. At this juncture, the study proposes an endogenisation of the conflict resolution to resolve the conflict.

CONCEPTUALISING CONFLICT RESOLUTION- AN ENDOGENISING APPROACH

This section discusses endogenising conflict resolution to resolve Gonja-Nawuri conflict. It summarises the indigenous ways of resolving inter-ethnic conflict taking into consideration the indigenous knowledge of the Nawuri, Gonja, Bassari, Konkomba and Ncumuru. This is to differ between using local culture to resolve intra-ethnic conflict as presented in the previous chapter from inter-ethnic conflict. It went further to describe amalgamation of local mechanisms where each group will participate in the exercise employing their culture. To be able to resolve the conflict, given the multiplicity of actors and traditions, it is important to seek to include both the indigenous method of resolving inter-ethnic conflict and external (exogenous) methods.

Summary of Gonja indigenous ways of resolving inter-ethnic conflicts

To reiterate the responses of the Gonja respondents, conflict resolution practices are embedded in their culture and tradition. These comprise pouring of libation, sacrificing of animals and invitation of ancestors to participate in the process. In the case of violent conflict between different ethnic groups, or inter ethnic conflict, a ram is slaughtered to appease the ancestors to accept

the peace process and to cleanse the land of the blood shed. The focus group discussions among the Gonja in Salaga revealed the following:

In case of conflict between two ethnic groups, a compromise day is fixed where the conflict parties converge and each group swear an oath using their tradition or culture to end the conflict and that any person who revisits the conflict either his family or ethnic group will perish in the conflict. For instance, the Gonja will swear with the sword of Ndewura Jakpa implying that the spear will kill and eat up the person or his group in the course of fighting or that they will never prosper in life or that their secrets will always be in the public. It is also mentioned during the swearing of the oath that they will always reveal persons among them who are planning to ignite the conflict again. In some cases, the Gonja swear by their gods especially the father of Gonja gods known as Sonyor situated near Bole town. When the process is complete, a ram is slaughtered and the meat shared among them. If you eat the meat and revisit the conflict, a calamity will befall your tribe. In modern times, the agreement is documented at the court for future reference. After the parties returned to their communities, the paramount chief will send a delegation who are accompanied with traditional singers and drummers to visit their former enemies to dance together and thanked them for participating in the traditional peace process. The opponent group reciprocate the visit and at this juncture cross or an inter-ethnic marriage is proposed to make each other in laws (76 year old farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga)

It is noted that there is a difference between internal resolution of conflict and external resolution of conflict among the Gonja. With the internal, a ram is not slaughtered to appease the ancestors. If the offender is charged to pay a ram, it is not for the purpose of pacification of the gods or cleansing of the land, it is either food for the chiefs or compensation for the victim. In the case of external conflict such as the Gonja and Nawuri conflict, the blood of the ram is used for the pacification of the land and appeasement of the ancestors. The meat is then distributed among the conflict parties with the understanding that any one of them who reverts to the conflict after consuming the meat, will be subjected to danger from the ancestors and the gods. The fear

of the expected calamity in future makes conflict parties to participate in the resolution of the conflict.

Summary of Nawuri indigenous ways of resolving inter-ethnic conflicts

The Nawuri respondents stipulated that conflict resolution begins with the elderly who invite the conflict parties to have a dialogue. If agreement is reached, a token amount of money and drink requested from the guilty person to pour libation to appease the ancestors to bless the peace reached. If there is bloodshed a cock is slaughtered to wash off the blood and cleanse the land. Some incantations are made to invoke the curses and calamity from the ancestors upon any of the conflict parties who will revisit the conflict in future. The respondents indicated that if they fight with a different ethnic group like the large scale violent conflict with the Gonja where they shed blood, a ram is used to pacify the gods and the ancestors. They are invited to witness and participate in the agreement to end the violence and invoke curses upon any persons who will ignite the conflict in future. The following responses were revealed by respondents in Kpandai:

Any conflict that leads to blood shed, we use or collect fowls and sheep from the parties and use their blood, after the parties have come together and agreed on the terms and outcome of the resolution (sic). If the conflict parties can not submit the animals, the elders sometimes volunteer for the sake of peace. When the third party presents the animals on behalf of the conflict parties, it means they have brought the conflict parties together. The elders would use a ram (always it has to do with a ram). They (elders) would slaughter the ram. The blood of the ram is used to purify and reunite or bind the parties. It is further used to clean away the misunderstanding that had happened between the parties. One of the penalties is that, after the resolution, any party who revisits or reignites the conflict pays double the animals and drinks used in the purification exercise (60 year old farmer from Kitare).

It was also indicated during focus group discussions that the process of sacrificing the animal is preceded by citations by the officials executing the exercise:

The first thing the elders would do is that they would pour libation to the ancestors. During the process, elders would ask conflict parties to forgive each member's fault. They sometimes use words such as "the devil that came in between you and led to the shedding of blood, we use the blood of animals to wash it off, and use this water to clean you from that dirt, never should this conflict be repeated" After this was done, the elders (mediators) would let the parties hold each other's hand to symbolize reunion.

The elders would state that these two clans or tribes have had a disagreement but we are now settling them to forget and forgive each other what had happened, so they are asking the gods to witness this process so that the parties can live together again in peace.

Yes, during the resolution some conditions are stated and anyone who breaks the terms, they would be made to pay the fine.

Most at times those ones are only used to scare the parties from going to fight again. However, sometimes we mention the gods of the particular town, with that the gods are made witnesses of the resolution, so that anyone who revisits the conflict would now have to face the wrath of the gods (70 year old farmer during focus group discussions conducted at Kpandai).

The fear of calamity inflicted upon them truncates or neutralizes any effort by the conflict parties to revisit the conflict thereby resolving the conflict.

Summary of Bassari and the Konkomba indigenous ways of resolving inter-ethnic conflicts

The Bassari and Konkomba ethnic groups were allies of the Nawuri but not principal protagonists in the conflict. It is worthy to find out their traditional methods of conflict resolution and to involve them in the pacification process to resolve the conflict. The Bassari respondents expressed

the view that their traditional practice of conflict resolution involves the use of their elders as the first step, who broker peace between the conflict parties after which libation is poured to invoke the intervention of their ancestors to spiritually end the conflict. A dog is also sacrificed to the ancestors, if it is a violent conflict characterized by bloodshed. Any party that rejects the dialogue and agreement reached will be saddled with calamities in future. The fear of the consequences compels the conflict parties to accept the peace processes to pave the way for resolution of the conflict.

In case of the Konkomba ethnic group, the process starts with the intervention of the elderly and pouring of libation with a local drink known as 'pito' appease the ancestors. In addition, a goat is slaughtered believing that the blood shed will wash off the spiritual causes of the conflict and to deter parties from revisiting the conflict in future for fear of calamity or curse on the family.

The Konkomba revealed during focus group discussion that:

Gonja chief should give a ram, the Nawuri should also give a ram, Konkomba a goat and the Bassari a dog. They will slaughter them together. But traditionally, the chiefs and the opinion leaders did not sit together to understand themselves that enough is enough, so let us come together, take the oath, pour the libation, purify the land with blood, and start life again. The chiefs and elders of Gonja, Nchumuru chiefs and the Konkomba and Bassari chiefs all should come together to resolve the conflict. We get a sheep, then we just sacrifice it to the ancestors, then we say this time we are now one (80 year old ex-carpenter during focus group discussions among the Konkomba and Nchumuru conducted at Kumdi).

It can be deduced from the processes of traditional pacification of conflict that major similarities exist among them. These include slaughtering of animals to appease their ancestors who will witness the conflict resolution process. The ancestors are also invoked through libation and animal sacrifice to

punish any transgressed individuals or groups who unjustifiably reignite the conflict in future. They also believed that calamity befalls any person or his family who breaches the tradition after its execution. The conflict parties also uphold the philosophy of gerontocracy to resolve conflict. This implies that a convergence can be reached to execute the traditional methods to resolve the conflict.

The Nawuri and Konkomba also revealed that they do swear an oath just as the Gonja do to compel them speak the truth or incur the displeasure of their ancestors and gods who may cause calamity to befall them and their family if they are not speaking the truth internationally. The responses corroborated the statement of Mbagwu (2015) that parties to a dispute are made to believe that if they tell lies in pre conflict resolution after swearing an oath they could be harmed or devastated by ancestors who visit the conflict resolution process to witness it. Due to the fact that conflict involved many ethnic groups, whose ritual will be performed to resolve the conflict as there are differences amongst them in terms of culture and traditional practices.

Sidelining traditional conflict resolution methods of the ethnic groups by Interveners

It is noted that the indigenous or traditional mechanisms of the conflict resolution have been sidelined. The cause of this is that the interventions were championed by outsiders who do not hail from Kpandai or East Gonja. Bombande (2007) and Brewoo & Abdallah (2015) however argue that mechanisms of resolving conflicts showed he integrated into the cultures of the

African people. The mechanisms are exposed to the risk of modernity such as the use of the court system (Avruch, 2011).

According to the respondents from Gonja and Nawuri, their traditional methods of conflict resolution were not used to resolve the conflict. They stated that there was a ceremony in Salaga where the conflict parties were invited by Flt. Lt. (rtd) Jerry John Rawlings to broker peace among them. The Gonja and Konkomba responded to the invitation and agreed to perform the traditional ceremony to end the conflict but the Nawuri and Bassari did not attend thus suspending the traditional conflict resolution till date. According to one of the Nawuri chiefs in Kpandai, an attempt was made by a section of the Nawuri and Gonja to resolve the conflict in Salaga when some Nawuri leadership visited the Gonja, but the process was truncated by some hypocrites. The response was as follows:

There was a time we had a meeting with them (Gonja) to resolve our differences, we came to a conclusion that the lost souls in the conflict should be pacified, so we sent a bull for that exercise. Unfortunately, some hypocrites went to say a different thing and rose up and kicked against the process, leading to government placing an injunction on the case (69 retired custom officer and a rival paramount from Kpandai).

The Gonja respondents also stated the following which corroborates the responses of the Nawuri on the failure to utilize their indigenous conflict resolution method during a focus discussion:

The Nawuri came and apologized to us during Kpembiwura Kebasibi's time. Unfortunately, some of us (Gonja) said they would not agree to that kind of arrangement whilst the Nawuri were there in Kibasibi palace witnessing all this. This brought about some kind of misunderstanding and the spiritual cleansing of the land was not made possible. If the animal had been slaughtered, it would have marked the beginning of the journey towards reconciliation and permanent peace (85 year

old labourer during focus group discussions conducted at Salaga among the Gonja)

The responses on the issues of sacrifice in traditional communities corroborated Awedoba's (2011) views. According to him, post conflict rites are performed to bury conflict and prevent it from recurring. This aspect of culture should not be sidelined during exercises to resolve local conflicts. The responses strongly supported the persuasion of Kirby (2007) that peace can never be attained without ritual reconciliation unanimously accepted by all the conflict parties as it is an integral part of their culture. Their ancestors have to be invited into the conflict resolution platform through performance of rituals. The question to be addressed was that the conflict cut across ethnic boundaries thus Nawuri and her allies who are differentiated in their cultures and tradition on one hand and Gonja on the other. Which shrine, ancestor or type of animal will be used to bury the conflict and it will be acceptable to all of them? And who also administers the process of the reconciliation? The Konkomba participants alleged during a focus group discussion that the most important thing is to slaughter the animal. When this is done, the conflict is buried. This gives a clue that the ritual can be performed as all the traditions contain the use of rituals using animals.

In addition, Christianity and Islam played advisory roles aimed at finding solution to the impasse. However, these are monotheistic religions which frown upon worshipping of idols, ancestors and making sacrifices in the form of bloodshed to the objects of worship or deities. These depict resistance of the foreign religion in encouraging use of tradition and culture to resolve the

conflict. The religious leaders rather focused on the support of the vulnerable by giving food and materials to mitigate their suffering.

The endogenizing approach

Finding durable solutions to conflict in the endogenous context requires novel strategies that seek to combine the indigenous methods with the external (exogenous) methods. The challenges are many given the adoption of modern religions (Islam and Christianity) and the general modernisation of society through education and exposure to other cultures. Those explain the general tendency to neglect the indigenous methods although there are several lessons to be learnt from them as Kirby (2007) has pointed out.

External interventions include the deployment of the security services, establishment of the Committee of Inquiry, establishment of the PPNT and the Regional Coordinating Council to work towards restoring peace to the area. The role of the government was largely fire-fighting to keep the conflict parties apart constituting negative peace. Other institutions that are involved in the resolution of the conflict are CSOs comprising religious leaders, the youth, inter-NGO consortium, Business and Development Consulting Centre, WANEP and Integrated Social Development Centre which pulled resources together to hire the services of the NPI to intervene in the conflict. The intervention resulted into a relative peace in the area.

The external interventions succeeded only in managing the conflict. This is because since the evacuation of the Gonja from Kpandai to Salaga, there has not been any attempt to reunite them with the Nawuri. The Gonja can only visit their Nawuri relations in Kpandai only during festivals and funerals.

In the same vein, the Nawuri also expressed fears of living in Salaga. One of the chiefs in Kpandai indicated that he can never visit Salaga for fear of being killed.

However, the endogenization approach being advocated comes up against several challenges, the most important of which is the determination of whose cultural imperatives should be followed – the Gonja or the Nawuri. This is where a great chance was lost by both the NPI and the NGO consortium. Is it not possible to convince both parties to provide the items and at a selected date, place and time, the sacrifices are performed for the pacification? The District Security Committees (DISEC) and the Regional Security Committee (RECSEC) should be in the position together with the NPC (as external agents) to work with the ethnic youth groups and the chiefs and elders to enable a final determination of this question.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THEORETICAL EXPOSITION

Introduction

This chapter examines the synergies between the findings and theories underpinning the study. The theories include primordial, constructionist, and instrumentalist espoused by Blagojevic (2004). These theories underpin the causes of the conflict between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups. In addition, the chapter compares the linkages between the findings on resolution strategies. These include the roles of the indigenous and exogenous institutions, civil society organisation and government.

Rationale for underpinning the study with theories

The primordialist approach to conflict points out that contemporary adversarial relationships among ethnic groups have synergies with their past. The kind of relationship people experience in the present-day is predetermined by their cultural and ancestral relationships which have taken place centuries ago. This implies that the decision to accept or reject a person or group goes back to our remotest ancestors (Lewis, 1992). In this context, the Nawuri respondents explained that their grandfathers were exploited and punished severely by the Gonja chiefs to an extent that they had to embark upon self-exile to places like Banda and Krachi in the Volta Region and beyond. The Nawuri continued to hold the fears and anticipating that if they did nothing about the super-ordinate and subordinate relationships between them and the Gonja, their future generation would be in perpetual bondage in its worst form than what they experience in present times. Glazer (1986) observes that the

feeling of domination, and expulsion by the weaker tribe can trigger violence emanating from the disadvantaged group.

The Gonja respondents explained that key informants from the Nawuri volunteered information to them of the several clandestine meetings the Nawuri were convening to discuss how to expel the Gonja from Kpandai. The sequence of protests by the Nawuri against the Gonja also explains the possibility of outbreak of violence among them (Mbowura, 2014). The primordial theory also portrays that ethnic emotions are transferrable from generation to the next through historical memories and teaching the young ones the brutal experiences of the past perpetrated by an ethnic group against the other. The narrations of the respondents took into consideration what had happened against their ancestors. Indeed, this unpleasant information was obtained from their custodians of cultural history. The respondents were able to narrate the ancient stories of the socio-political relationships between the Gonja and Nawuri which did not favour the latter. According to the respondents, the political arrangement in Kpandai favoured the Gonja more than the Nawuri. The former enjoyed privileges during the pre-colonial era and this became institutionalized by the German in 1913 and the British in 1932 for political expediency of the British. The indirect rule perpetrated the existing social inequality by upholding the Warrant System established by the Germans in Kpandai (Ladouceur, 1979).

The social structure concentrated absolute power in the Gonja chiefs which made it excessively difficult for Nawuri to defy orders of the chiefs. This led to deepening of social inequality between the Nawuri and the Gonja chiefs. Any attempt by the subjects to demand for fairness was met with brutal

reaction from the chiefs and supported by the colonialists. For instance, the establishment of the Police known as *Nanakana* in 1935 by the British who were absolutely loyal to the chiefs made it practically impossible for the subordinates to contest the instructions of the chiefs. The Germans severely punished a Nawuri from Nkanchina who campaigned against the rule of Gonja in Kpandai among his colleagues and was eventually betrayed by them when the matter was subjected to election by the German governor in Kete-Krachi. The Nawuri indeed never declined in their struggle against the Gonja dominance in Kpandai and these were manifested in the sporadic conflicts between them and Gonja until 1991 and 1992 (Brukum 2007, Awedoba 2011, Mbowura 2014 & Yahaya, 2016).

The Instrumentalist theory of conflict views ethnic coalition intended to seek economic or political power as the basic cause of ethnic collision in society. The collision sometimes is aimed at monopolizing the resources at the expense of individuals or groups (Varshney, 2009). The respondents unanimously revealed that the Nawuri entered into alliance with the Konkomba and Bassari to fight the Gonja to liberate themselves as they felt that the Gonja rule was repressive. The respondents narrated that the Nawuri had been to school and achieved enough social knowledge to govern themselves instead of been under the supremacy of the Gonja. The Gonja disagreed with them leading to an impasse and violence among them. Another prime agenda of the Nawuri was to snatch the land from the Gonja as they believed that they are true aborigines of Kpandai and therefore had a birth right to own what they believed is theirs. These two main factors were responsible for the Gonja-Nawuri encounter (Tonah, 2007, Brukum, 2006, & Mbowura, 2014). The

Gonja on the other hand have similar grievances with that of the Nawuri. They believe that they are the aboriginal people and also the only royals with exclusive right to own and rule Kpandai.

The respondents stated that the Kpandai District is composed of several ethnic groups speaking different dialects. There is pervasiveness of cultural diversity and traditions in the area. This hardly promote social integration among the social groups as social interaction is marginal. It is also cumbersome for the groups to relate to one another because of strong feeling of “we” and “they” as espoused by Awedoba (2011). Such a society is highly restless and dynamic; the responses confirm the description of northern Ghana by Mbowura (2014) that the region is heterogeneous in nature as it is a medley of more than sixteen groups characterized by differences in culture, religion and history. The plurality of social groups in the area enhances ethnocentrism and creates an avenue for “ethnic entrepreneurs” like political fanatics, chiefs, youth leaders and articulate members of the society to provide divisive leadership that nurses formation of conflict actors.

Respondents confirm the view of Blagojevic (2009) that this kind of ethnic mixture results into an ethnic competition for scarce resources such as power and rights, which is accompanied by a reconstruction of social classes of inclusion and exclusion, ethnification and ethnic intolerance. Blagojevic (2009) further observes that ethnically diverse societies are characterized by several degrees of conflict potential and ethnic emotions, rooted in historical memories of grievances, are at the core of conflict potential. Horowitz (1985, p. 59) also postulated that ethnicity “embodies an element of emotional intensity that can be readily aroused when the group’s interests are thought to be at stake”. These

scholarly observations on ethnic diversity is a semblance of what happened in Kpandai District. Respondents stated that several ethnic groups with distinct culture, customs and traditions were living in Kpandai. They speak different languages and are engaged in different economic activities. The responses affirm Agyeman's (2008) observation that multiplicity of ethnic groups living together closely discourages social integration and peaceful coexistence and in some cases trigger conflict among them. The greed theory expatiates the attitude of conflict parties by evaluating the benefit and losses of conflict before taking a decision to participate or not.

The greed theory of conflict informs the Gonja-Nawuri skirmishes. The protagonist of the theory was Collier (2001) who postulated that conflict parties execute a cost-benefit analysis of conflict before deciding to fight or not. If they anticipate the reward of the conflict to be higher than its disadvantage, then they are motivated to participate because of the benefit. The Nawuri respondents explained that they took the risk to fight for the purpose of claiming the land because of its numerous uses. The control of land by the Gonja subjected the Nawuri to a lot of economic difficulties which they seek to correct. They used to buy land, paid taxes and render compulsory services to the Gonja who they perceived to be settlers whilst they are indigenes. The Gonja respondents on the other hand believed that they were justified for selling land in Kpandai as they are the true owners advancing an argument that it was bequeathed to them by Ndewura Jakpa, the founder of the Kingdom in the sixteenth century (Amenumey, 2011). This historical account arrogated to them the right to the economic and social leverages they enjoyed over the

Nawuri and served as a motivation factor for their involvement in the conflict to maintain the status quo.

Another motivating factor for the Nawuri to fight was seeking for self-rule by cutting political ties with the Gonja. According to the Nawuri respondents, their ancestors had suffered under the Gonja rule and they are unwilling and not ready to countenance such treatment in contemporary times. From the point of view of grievance theory espoused by Collier and Hoeffler (2004), people are ready to fight against perceived social injustices such as inequality, political oppression, ethnic hatred, and marginalization. The Nawuri reported that modern politicians visit Kpandai and only paid courtesy calls on Kanankulaiwura and his elders neglecting the Nawuri. Meanwhile, the land belongs to the Nawuri. They also lamented that decisions that affect the Nawuri are planned and executed by the Gonja without consulting them. The economic exploitation as postulated by the Nawuri respondents were the significant causes of the conflict between them and Gonja ethnic group.

To conclude this section, the chapter expatiated the immediate and remote causes of the conflict between the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups addressing one of the purposes of the study. Theories of conflict such as primordialist, constructionist and Instrumentalist that sought to interpret the causes of the conflict were employed to underpin the objective of the study. An attempt was also made to address the question of linking the findings and the theories underpinning the causes of the conflict. The study now considers interventions employed to resolve the conflict, beginning with the endogenous conflict resolution strategies.

Underpinning the study with conflict resolution theories

The main theme of the work is to explore indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms to complement efforts made by government and civil society organisations in the past to resolve the conflict, to pave the way for peaceful coexistence among the ethnic groups in Kpandai. In relation to this, the study explored indigenous conflict resolution methods. These include the roles of the chiefs, Tengdana, traditional oath, joking relations, gerontocracy, traditional festivals, and religion. The use of these varieties of approaches is supported by Miller (2003). It also follows the views of Awedoba (2011) and Acquah (2006).

According to the respondents, chiefs performed several roles to resolve the conflict. These include allowing interveners to interview them on the details of the conflict, answering the invitation of the Ampiah Committee of Inquiry in Tamale which was quite far from their traditional areas, interactions with their adversaries during festivals and funeral ceremonies without causing harm to each other, counselling the youth to suspend violence and cooperation with government and civil society organisations to manage and resolve the conflict. The Nawuri respondents revealed that they were acephalous societies and did not have chiefs during the time of the conflict but they had the institution of Odikuro (an assembly of clan heads responsible for managing the affairs of the Nawuri). Their duties and responsibilities are similar to the mandate of the Gonja chiefs in terms of management and resolution of conflict. Therefore, their respondents claimed that the Odikuro performed roles that were performed by the Gonja chiefs to resolve the conflict between them and the Gonja.

The work of the chiefs as narrated by Agyeman (2008) and Awedoba (2011) indicates that traditional leaders have the capacity to resolve ethnic conflicts. The responses also corroborated the standpoints of Gyimah-Boadi and Markovits (2008) in their observation of the significant roles individual chiefs and National House of Chiefs performed in management and resolution of inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts in Ghana. The roles are in consonance with article 274 clause 3(d) and (e) of 1992 Republican constitution which arrogates to the chiefs the privileges of resolving disputes in their traditional enclave (Addo-Fening, 2008 and Brobbey, 2008). There is no doubt that traditional conflict resolution methods are deeply rooted in the culture, tradition and history of the African people and overshadow other methods of resolving local conflicts (Antwi, 2014). The East Gonja enjoyed some relative peace and stability as indicated by the respondents because, the indigenes successfully employ cultural values to manage ethnic conflicts (Kendie et al., 2014). The second method of indigenous conflict mechanism is the role of Tengdana.

The respondents stated that the earth priests poured libation and chanted, soliciting the assistance of the idols and ancestors to help them defeat their adversaries during the time of the conflict. Paradoxically, respondents stated that their ancestors abhor bloodshed suggesting that they have to cleanse the land of the bloodshed and to atone the souls of those who were killed during the conflict in order to neutralize or avert the wrath of the ancestors. Respondents believe that until all of them come together to slaughter animals as prescribed by their culture to connote the resolution of the conflict, it can recur in the future because they sought the aid of the ancestors to fight.

Therefore, they have to be invited to be part of the resolution process. The rationale behind the shedding of the blood is that they are inviting their ancestors to be part of the resolution and witness the commitment of the respondents to peace during the exercise, so that any of the parties who defies the agreement, will incur the curse of the ancestors and loose future battles. This view is supported by the postulation of Awedoba (2011) that those who shed blood are instructed by the land priests, to pay compensation to the earth by performing some rituals in order to avoid or prevent drought and diseases afflicting the people.

Also, the respondents affirmed the view of Kirby (2007) that violence can only be curbed by the performance of traditional rituals. If this is failed, there is the likelihood of the occurrence of natural disasters such as barrenness of the land and anger, because the ancestors who assisted the combatants to fight have not been invited to authenticate the process of resolution of the conflict and reconciliation. In connection with this, Kirby (2007) raised a concern that the conflict involved different ethnic groups with different rituals, which creates a dilemma of selecting a ritual that would please all the ancestors in question. The Konkomba respondents indicated that what the ancestors need is the blood of animals, hence, all the ethnic groups will come together with their different species of animals and kill all of them at a time, to please all the ancestors to resolve the conflict. The traditional rituals in resolving conflict is officiated by the Tengdana.

The Tengdana or land priest administers the rituals to resolve conflict, he instructs conflict parties to swear a traditional oath stating the names of their ancestors or idols of the traditional area. It implies that if any of the conflict

parties who participate in the process of peace-making, revisit the conflict and shed the blood of their adversaries, he will incur the wrath of the ancestors or idols mentioned during the process (Awedoba, 2011 & Kirby, 2007). Some of the Nawuri respondents indicated that when they visited the palace of Kpembiwura Kibasibi to discuss peace, he swore by the skin he was sitting on symbolizing the validation of his chieftaincy, that the shedding of the blood of Nawuri is henceforth forbidden on Gonjaland. Therefore, any Gonja who kills a Nawuri will be cursed by the ancestors of the Gonjaland. This gave the Nawuri present in the palace, some assurance that they could freely associate with the Gonja without fears.

Ironically, some respondents among the Nawuri and Gonja indicated that there are some few Gonja who are afraid to visit Nawuri communities and the same with the Nawuri visiting Gonja because of their extreme involvement in perpetration of violence. The narration of the respondents on the swearing of a traditional oath to resolve conflict is affirmed by Mbagwu (2015) who states that swearing of an oath in resolving disputes is relevant in Africa because it compels combatants to speak the truth during the mediation process and the truth constitutes the root causes of the conflict. Parties to a conflict are made to appreciate that if they tell lies, the ancestors who were present and witnessed the process during the time of performing rituals to resolve the conflict, will destroy them. The earth priest's role and swearing of oaths and religion are interconnected (Nukunya, 2003).

The respondents stated that Catholic Fathers and Muslim Imams performed remarkable roles to resolve the conflict. They prayed for peace in their homes, churches, mosques and during every socio-political festival. They

also preached to their adherents to stop violence and coexist peacefully. The roles they performed support the views of Nukunya (2003) that African converts consult their object of worship for intervention during crisis. Awedoba (2011) also stated that religious leaders and women are engaged in mediation daily in their homes and churches by virtue of the fact that they are very close to their followers.

One cannot underrate the wisdom and experience of religious leaders in mediation because of the skills they have acquired over the years in their involvement in settlement of disputes. According to the respondents, the limitation of the work of the religious leaders in the arena of conflict resolution is that the religious leaders have not been able to collaborate or form a union to deal with the conflict. In line with this, Bombande (2007) proposed the training of the mind and the use of culture to resolve conflict. Sulemana (2009) applauded this view and suggested that it is the religions that are qualified and well positioned to execute that responsibility during sermons and preaching in the mosques and churches. Sometimes, the Muslim respondents perceived the NGOs to be Christians coming to support the Nawuri who are predominantly Christians and vice versa.

The respondents stated that the non-governmental organisations made relevant efforts to resolve the conflict. According to them, some dignitaries came to meet them separately and asked them questions about the conflict, and counselled them to stop fighting and reconcile with each other, for the benefit of all of them in the area. The respondents were however not able to mention the names of the organisation that visited the area on three different occasions. Awedoba (2011) and Mahama (2003) vindicated the declarations of the

respondents by indicating that the Permanent Peace Negotiating Team (PPNT) visited the area and interacted with the opinion leaders of the conflict parties in Kpembu and Kpandai to discuss the causes and possible solution to the conflict. Another NGO that went to the area to ascertain the conflict and how it could be resolved was the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI) following the failure of PPNT to resolve the conflict. Respondents confirmed that they were invited to Kumasi on several occasions to discuss issues related to the conflict. According to them, this was the first time all the combatants sat together face-to-face to resolve the conflict. Even though the conflict was not resolved in Kumasi the meetings succeeded in suspending violence for about two decades (Mahama, 2003).

The respondents commended the neutrality and impartiality of the NPI during their mediation process. This corroborated Agyeman's (2008) observation that if NGOs are supported to involve mediation to resolve conflicts in Ghana, it will enhance resolution of many deadlocks in the sense that conflict parties perceive them to be outsiders who will not be interested in the outcome of the resolution. This motivates the NGOs to adopt the principles of mediation like neutrality and impartiality (Best, 2006). The NGOs in some cases depend upon the support of government to undertake their peacebuilding activities. Mahama (2003) and Awedoba (2011) indicated that the NPI worked in collaboration with government, the West African Network for Peacebuilding and the African Union.

The respondents stated that the most significant intervention made by government to resolve the conflict was the suspension of ethnic youth vigilantism in Kpandai, when the Gonjaland Youth Association annual

conference was slated to take place. The Nawuri contested holding such a meeting in a town believed to be in the Nawuri traditional area. In response to their protest, the Northern Regional Administration obliterated all Youth Associations in the Northern region that could trigger violence (Brukum, 2007). The respondents also indicated that the District Chief Executive was interacting with them and advising them to stop the violence as it causes disadvantages such as death and burning of their farms. The respondents also specified that government established a Committee of Inquiry which they variously referred to as Court or Committee in Tamale, to interrogate the cause of the conflict and make recommendations to curtail the conflict. This assertion is confirmed by Mbowura (2014), Awedoba (2011) and Brukum (2002).

The respondents indicated that the report of the committee had not been published to establish the true ownership of the land which was the principal cause of the conflict. Respondents further stated that government deployed military and police personnel to maintain peace and order in the area. Darkwa (2012) rather observed that governments' intervention in ethnic conflicts are reactionary and belated. In some cases, government selected few actors among the conflict parties, side-lining the majority of the perpetrators of the violence in making effort to contain the conflict. According to respondents, government was only meeting the chiefs and dialoguing with them on behalf of the perpetrators of the violence and this slowed down the conflict resolution process. Conjugal relations were some of the tools that worked on the combatants to think of peacebuilding.

Women are social partners of men and are both affected by the implications of conflict (Rhine and Sirleaf, 2002). Therefore, they also play

some roles in resolving conflict. Women respondents stated that they have performed several roles to resolve the conflict. The youth in particular are advised by the women to stop fighting to restore peace in the area. Respondents indicated that women are not killed in conflict and any combatant who defies this norm incurs the wrath of the ancestors. The dictates of their culture allow the women to undertake retailing across cultural territorial boundaries of their adversaries and their own people. Women undertake clandestine activities in addition to their profession to inform their kinsmen the readiness or otherwise of their enemies to smoke the peace pipe, thereby persuading their men to avoid conflict. Respondents stated that the women were involved in peacebuilding, performing advisory roles to the men not to resort to violence because, the results of it could inflict severe pressure on them. The cultural roles of women during peace times, continue during violence as other roles such as nursing the injured, burying the dead, and taking care of the aged and orphans are added. Women who married across cultural boundaries are more at risk as they are likely to lose their husbands and children as well as broken marriages as consequences of the conflict. Children of these marriages are perceived as neutral and impartial and could be used to do mediation and resolve the conflict as espoused by Awedoba (2011).

According to the respondents, children of their sisters do appeal to their uncles to dialogue and resolve conflict. The respondents confirmed the observations of Nukunya (2003) that culturally when a couple is joined in marriage, their respective lineages and families automatically become affinal relatives while the children of the marriage are related by blood to the patrilineal and matrilineal families making it impossible to wage war against

each other. Awedoba (2011) further expatiates that children of sisters can mediate to resolve conflict between the affinal relations and upholds principles of neutrality and impartiality effectively. In patrilineal society, cross cousins enjoy joking relations. Brewoo and Abdallah (2015) as well as Radcliffe-Brown (1940) explained joking relations as a relation between two or more persons approved by tradition and customs in which one teases and provokes the other who is required to take no offence. The Gonja and Nawuri respondents narrated that because of inter marriages, they are playmates. They also call themselves brothers and sisters because of blood relations through marriages. Even though they fought each other, they still share expensive jokes between them. Historically, the Gonja perceive the Nawuri as their slaves and used that stigma to share jokes with them. This kind of relationship is also manifested in the responses of the Nawuri that they and the Gonja were collaborators in all conflicts that the Gonja fought especially during the war between Gonja and Asantes in 1744. They share jokes because of these kinds of relationships to reduce tension among themselves, which contributes to the management of the conflict.

According to the majority of the respondents between the ages of forty and fifty, the youth executed several roles to resolve the conflict. They labored to raise monies for their elders to participate in the peace process of the Committee of Inquiry in Tamale. It was also the youth who sponsored their representatives to attend the workshop organised by the Nairobi Peace Initiative in Kumasi, the outcome of which suspended hostilities in Kpandai for more than two decades. The obedient nature of the youth to listen to the chiefs and elders to stop fighting and their involvement in peace education is worth

mentioning. The effort of the respondents was in line with Hessel's (1967) viewpoint that reconciliation implies forgiveness and readiness and willingness of conflict parties to coexist with each other peacefully. The respondents indicated that these are the results of the peace education embarked upon by the youth. The respondents also indicated the roles of traditional festivals in the management and resolution of conflict.

The respondents narrated that they have annual festivals during which they invite significant personalities from far and near to grace the occasions. They stated that the Nawuri celebrate guinea corn festival (*Kayugi*) and damba festival in the case of the Gonja. According to them, august invited guests such as politicians and their own kinsmen abroad utilize these seasons to caution them about the implications of the conflict and how they think peaceful coexistence could affect their lives positively. They also indicated that in some few cases, the personalities visited Kpandai and Salaga without being invited, to console them and caution them to stop fighting. Respondents mentioned some high profile catholic persons and prominent Muslim leaders who visited them and advised them to avoid conflict. They also mentioned that the chief of Bimbila Naa Adabraka mediated the conflict to no avail. All these interventions contributed immensely towards containment of the conflict. These responses confirmed the observation of Awedoba (2011) that personalities of high social and political standing are capable of interfering in conflict to resolve them. In relation to the use of important personalities to resolve conflict is the philosophy of gerontocracy.

The respondents stated explicitly that their elderly people played significant roles in management and resolution of the conflict. Centenarians

among the Muslim and Konkomba communities stated that they have been advising the Gonja and Nawuri against the use of arms to address their grievances that was why the conflict did not arise again. Respondents stated that they revere their elderly people and therefore listen to them. The responses revealed that the elderly persons are responsible for settlement of disputes at the household level and the community at large. Their judgment is respected because they are neutral and impartial as they near their death and aspire to be accepted by the ancestors. The roles of the elderly are in line with the postulation of Mbagwu (2015) that Africans invest their trust and believe in the wisdom and experience of the elderly which arrogate to the elders the right to be custodians of culture, norms and customs. They are experts in the traditional laws and customs hence if given the opportunity they will contribute immensely towards the resolution of conflict in the African societies.

This chapter revealed that two typologies of theories were employed to underpin the study. The first was the theory used to interpret the causes of the conflict between the ethnic groups. These were primordial, constructionist and instrumentalist. The second typology discussed the interventions made to indigenous interventions involve the internal mechanisms whereas the exogenous ones entail the external interventions employed to resolve the conflict. The endogenous refers to the amalgamation of all the interventions to resolve the conflict.

Rationale for using multiple theories to underpin the study

Multiple theories are utilised to underpin the study because of the nature of the studies. The historical account constituted the background of the

conflict, demanding for primordial theory to explain issues in the conflict predating colonial endeavours in the area. The consequences of colonial expediency in the East Gonja was also appropriately discussed within the context of constructionist theory. The institutional imbalances in favour of the Gonja against the Nawuri which was one of the factors responsible for deadlock was also expatiated with the utilisation of the instrumentalist perspective. It could be observed that the causes of the conflict alone demanded for three different theories to expatiate them. The greed and grievance theories espoused Collier and Hoeffler (2004) also revealed the social and economic motivations influencing the decisions of the conflict parties to engage into the conflict. The principal focus of the research was to examine interventions made to resolve the conflict and what could be done differently to resolve the conflict.

The interventions also required the explorations of perspectives to expound them. In response to this, concepts on indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms espoused by Awedoba (2011) to interpret conflict resolutions strategies among the ethnic groups of northern Ghana were employed. These include the roles of traditional authority, gerontocracy, swearing of an oath, and religious institution, and tengdana were also adopted in this study. Other interventions such as the roles of government and civil society organisations were also examined with the utilisation of concepts. This explains the concern of using many theories and concepts to undertake this study. The following discussions consider the utilisation of each theory.

Contributions of the theories to the study

The primordial, constructionist and interpretive theories aided in interpreting the historical dimension of the conflict. The first looked at the social dynamics of the conflict in the 16th century a period characterised by wars of conquests and territorial expansions of the Gonja Kingdom. It explained the nature of relationships that existed between the Gonja and Nawuri, the time this controversy started, whether the Gonja conquered the Nawuri and annexed their land and made them subservient to them or whether it was a collaboration that existed among them. The second made the researcher and the reader appreciate the dynamics of indirect rule the British which amalgamated weaker states with the Kingdom states in northern Ghana including the merger of the Nawuri and Gonja. This policy led to the loss of sovereignty and land of the weaker states leading to their struggle of independence and repossession of land at displeasure and resistance of the chiefly ethnic groups. The instrumentalist approach helped in explaining the institutional imbalances affecting the Nawuri negatively which made them to fight the Gonja in order to surmount them. The greed and grievance theories illuminated the socio-economic motivations influencing the conflict parties to use arms against each other. Theories of conflict resolution also allowed the researcher to interpret the intervention made to resolve the conflict.

The activities of civil society organisations and government are practical in nature which may not be sufficient to convey the meaning and implications of research findings. The concepts utilised bridge this gap. They allow the researcher to interpret the manifested activities of the interveners for the readers to understand the possibility of combining theory and practice. The

indigenous mechanisms espoused by Awedoba using concepts such as role of the Tengdana, Swearing of an oath, role of traditional authorities allow the researcher the cultural practices of the local people that assist in resolution of the conflict. The elucidation of findings utilising the theories and concepts led us to propose the endogenisation of conflict resolution following the failure of the practice so far to resolve the conflict. This perhaps becomes another theory subsequently if tested and replicated in other conflicts and yields required results.

A conceptual framework was also designed to augment the theories of the conflict.

The link between the conceptual framework and findings

The conceptual framework is derived from the institutions used in the literature to explain conflict resolution mechanisms in the study. The indigenous entails local actors and civil society organisations. The exogenous entails the role of the international organisation like the Nairobi Peace Initiative. Government also comprises the agencies assigned responsibilities to execute during the time of the conflict. The conceptual framework complements the discussions between the theories and major findings of the study.

The respondents revealed government executed many roles to resolve the conflict. These include deployment of the security; the military, police personnel, the Bureau of National Investigation, district and regional peace security council, the Justice Ampiah Committee of Inquiries, and deployment of the National Disaster Management Organisation to provide life enhancing

materials to support victims of the conflict. Other institutions employed by the government to resolve the conflict include, establishment of Permanent Peace Negotiation Team and collaboration with the Nairobi Peace Initiative. The findings revealed that all these agencies and organisations executed vital roles to resolve the conflict as confirmed by Awedoba (2011), Mbowura (2002) and Brukum (2002).

The second institution used in the framework is the indigenous actors. These include the chieftaincy institution in the case of the Gonja as the responses indicated. Respondents stated that the Nawuri did not have chieftaincy institution at the advent of the conflict but had *Odikuro* a council of elders representing the clans responsible for running the affairs of the Nawuri. There was also the use of gerontocracy, Tengdana, swearing of an oath, use of august personalities, joking relations and role of sister's son in mediation. Others, include the role of the religious institution thus Traditional, Christian and Islamic holy men and women and the youth. According to the respondents all these local actors or institutions contributed their quota towards the resolution of the conflict.

The third was the exogenous approach. The inter NGOs consortium operating in northern Ghana collaborated and sourced resources to hire the service of the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI) to intervene in all ethnic conflicts in the northern Region including the Gonja and Nawuri conflict to resolve them (Awedoba, 2011 & Mahama, 2003). The members of the inter NGO Consortium comprised Action Aid Ghana, Action on Disability and Development, Amaschina Self-help Association, Assemblies of God Development and Relief Services, Business Advisory Development and

Consultancy Centre, Catholic Relief Services, Oxfam, Red Cross, Tiyumba Development Association, and World Vision. This was done following the failure of the PPNT established by government to find the causes of the conflict and find solutions to them. Respondents indicated that the NPI held a series of meetings to resolve the conflict. The work of the international NGO resulted in suspension of conflicts in northern Ghana for about three decades. It is noted that the interventions of the aforementioned institutions constituted the efforts made towards the resolution of the conflict which corroborated with the conceptual framework. The findings contradict the framework in terms of the role the court played to resolve conflict. The framework indicated that conflict does not get resolved with the pronouncement of a verdict in the court. It rather yields adversarial relationships among conflict parties as indicated by the diagram.

Contribution of the conceptual framework to the study

The conceptual framework helped to guide the study especially during the preparation of the research guide to collect primary data. It also gave an insight on conflict resolution mechanisms to be employed to resolve conflict. In addition, it enhances the understanding of the reader to appreciate the fact that conflict resolution, is not an event rather an iterative process. It involves a series of activities executed by government, local actors and Civil Society Organisations. The collective efforts of all the actors lead to the management of the conflict. It could also lead to adversarial relationships if the court as an arm of government participates in the process. The framework also reveals

that the civil society organisations and local actors could resolve the conflict, if they continue with their interventions after the conflict had been managed.

This is also the stage where the findings contradict the framework because the NGOs, chiefs and elders, women and youth continued to work to resolve the conflict to no avail. Their contribution should have contributed towards resolution of the conflict and peaceful coexistence but the findings defy what the framework seeks to do. Notwithstanding, the framework gives an insight that multiplicity of approaches were employed to resolve the conflict and gave a clue of what needs to be done to resolve the deadlock.

Limitations of the conceptual framework

The framework indicated that interventions of the indigenous actors complement the roles of the institutions to manage the conflict and subsequently enhance peaceful coexistence among the conflict parties. However, the respondents indicated that the indigenous (local actors) institution comprising women, youth, chiefs, religious leaders, and Tengdana had performed their roles to resolve the conflict to no avail. Respondents stated that the conflict is not yet resolved, arguing that one of the principal causes of the conflict is ownership of land. However, both the Gonja and the Nawuri still claim that they own the land. Another basic demand of the Nawuri is the recognition and gazetting of their newly installed chiefs and queen mothers in Kpandai which have not been done. The constitution requires that the chiefs can only obtain recognition and a gazette with the aid and consent of the Gonja. However, the Gonja are not ready and willing to do so as they claim that they are the land owners and also the royalty in Kpandai belong to them.

In conclusion, the theories and the conceptual framework were used to underpin the study. The institutions indicated in the framework were elaborate in the discussions of the concepts. The framework reinforces the theories by giving a pictorial view to enhance the understanding of readers. At this juncture, the summary, conclusions and recommendations for policy implementers and further research will be pursued.

CHAPTER NINE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This section highlights the inter-ethnic conflict between Gonja on one hand and Nawuri and their allies on the other in Kpandai between 1991 and 1992 which remains unresolved. It comprises remote and immediate factors responsible for the outbreak of conflict, theories unepinning the study, methodology, interventions of government, roles of civil society organisation and indigenous knowledge of resolving inter-ethnic conflict. The chapter also proffers concluding remarks of the study, recommendations and contributions of the research to development of knowledge.

Summary

Historically, respondents stated that the Gonja referred to Ndewura Jakpa as the founder of Gonjaland to encompass the Nawuri settlement. Secondly, the Gonja argued that the Nawuri were their head porters or slaves, serving the infantry of the Gonja during expansionist wars by Ndewura Jakpa. In view of this historical narration, the Gonja argued that the land of Kpandai belonged to them. In contrast, the Nawuri advanced an argument to expatiate that they were the first ethnic group to settle in the area in the 14th century, whereas the Gonja founded their kingdom in the 17th century. They further argued that they never had any encounter with the Gonja in any battle in which either of them was defeated. In addition, they indicated that Gonja came to Kpandai as strangers and they (Nawuri) were very hospitable to them as their guests and aided them to settle with them. The Nawuri allowed Gonja to

determine their civil cases and made judgement for them which they applauded. These favours bestowed on the Gonja, eventually transformed them into chiefs over Nawuri as they (Nawuri) were acephalous. The bone of contention was, did the Gonja enter Kpandai as mercenaries and occupy Nawuri land and made them their subjects or they entered as strangers as argued by the Nawuri? These historical discrepancies are among the factors that are responsible for the deadlock between the two ethnic groups that is yet to resolve. The meddling of the colonial administration into chieftaincy affairs also contributed to the remote causes of ethnic conflict.

The interpretative philosophy guided the research, using qualitative research design with the aid of research guide, containing open-ended questions to obtain primary data which was narrative in nature. The sample size of 96 respondents interviewed in addition to four focus group discussions conducted in Salaga and Kpandai districts, all emanating from the target population. A purposive sampling procedure was utilised to reach respondents who have detailed information about the conflict. A tape recorder was used to record the voices of respondents with their consent and transcribed immediately after daly's exercise with the aid of field assistants. The verbose data was classified into themes taking into consideration, the objectives of the study. The data was cleansed to remove ambiguities. The field problems included the death of 9 persons slated for interview which was corrected by conducting focus group discussions and getting more respondents through snowballing.

The study revealed that contestation over land ownership and chieftaincy tittle among other factors were responsible for the conflict between

Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups. The effects of the conflict on the lives of people living in Kpandai and its enclave were devastating. These included social disintegration, broken homes, displacement, and disruption of education. Economically, the local economy such as retail trade, sustaining the people was in disarray; the market was closed down and farms were deserted abandoned because of insecurity. Politically, the conflict led to the emergence of Nawuri chiefs and the displacement of Gonja chiefs because of evacuation exercise to Kpembu executed by government at the climax of the conflict. It also led to the rise of Konkomba hegemony as they have majority population in the area to win elections. It was also revealed that there was interventions of government which included deployment of security to the area to maintain law and order and establishment of committee of inquiry with the mandate to investigate the conflict and give recommendations to government to guide the wayforward. The study also discovered the role of PPNT, NPI and CECOTAPS in management of the conflict. The study also unearthed both intra and inter ethnic methods of resolving ethnic conflict which were sidelined by government and civil society organisation in their attempts to resolve the conflict. This led to the conceptualisation of endogenising conflict resolution.

The constructionist theory explains the contribution of the colonial administration to the conflict between the Gonja and the Nawuri ethnic groups. The Nawuri stated that they were autonomous people, governed by their family heads, clan heads and earthpriests until the advent of British indirect rule in northern Ghana; a system of ruling indigenous people through their chiefs. To make it efficient, the Nawuri did not have chiefs and therefore were amalgamated with the Gonja paramount chief, Kpembiwura in 1932.

According to the Nawuri, this was the first successful attempt to bring them under the Gonja hegemony amid several protests. The Gonja respondents expelled this argument by stating that there existed superordinate-subordinate relationships between the Gonja and Nawuri in the 17th century before the colonial masters set foot on Kpandai soil. The colonial masters only confirmed the social arrangement for political expediency in 1932. Therefore, the colonial administration cannot be accused by the Nawuri in order to gain a deceitful point. The study also revealed that injustices in the institutions in Kpandai also added to the causes of the conflict.

The instrumentalist perspective underpins the prevalence of social injustices in the Kpandai district because of the unequal power relations in favour of the Gonja. Respondents stated that the Gonja chiefs always demanded for free compulsory labour and exorbitant taxes. In addition, a portion of any game caught by the Nawuri, had to be sent to the Gonja chiefs and sometimes was confiscated with utmost disrespect. According to the Nawuri, these acts were unbearable but they could not challenge the Gonja for fear of expulsion from their homes until their gods and ancestors liberated them. The Gonja respondents contrasted the Nawuri by stating that there were inclusive in the administration of the area and used to perform their functions as the land priests. They were in charge of representing the Gonja in parliament and also occupied all political positions in Kpandai, suggesting that the Nawuri had not been marginalised. If the argument of the Nawuri is justified, it implies that the instrumentalist perspective is appropriate in interpreting the aspects of the structure of the conflict. Other theories were employed to underpin the strategies used to resolve the conflict.

The respondents indicated that government interceded to manage and resolve the conflict by deploying the security agents to the area. The security achieved negative peace; implying that peace was imposed on the conflict parties by the police, and the military through execution of activities such as seizure of weapons, imposition of curfew, mounting of barriers, and disciplining of recalcitrant persons in Kpandai. The area achieved negative peace in the sense that absence of the security persons could invigorate the conflict. The government also established permanent PPNT to explore avenues for resolving the conflict to no avail. This paved the way for the exogenous approach to the resolution of the conflict.

The failure of the PPNT inspired government to support the consortium of the NGOs operating in northern Ghana to hire the services of the NPI, which held a series of meetings in Kumasi and concluded with signing peace pacts among the ethnic groups involved in conflicts in the northern Region. The organisation achieved some relative peace in the region for about two decades. There had been no any incident of violent conflict since the peace accord was signed by the ethnic groups. The respondents also stated that government established committees of inquiries like the Justice Ampiah Committee. This committee interacted with the conflict actors in Tamale to interrogate them in order to unearth the causes and possible solutions to the conflict. However, the findings of the committee have not been pronounced by government, perhaps because of security implications.

Both the Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups elaborated the roles of the Muslim clerks and Pastors to resolve the conflict. They helped in providing counselling, praying for peaceful coexistence, preaching of forgiveness and

reconciliations during their sermons on Fridays and Sundays. The respondents indicated that contribution of religious persons towards peacemaking is credible. Women and youth did not exempt themselves from the management and resolution processes of the conflict. The women stated that they performed advisory roles by asking their husbands to avoid conflict. Some of them did not break their marriages with the adversaries of their kinsmen and used their social status as wives, sisters, daughters and mother in-laws to talk about forgiveness and reconciliation to the conflict actors. They also played the role of sustaining the local economy through retailing in the enemy communities without being harmed. According to them, this offered them the opportunity to spread peaceful messages across ethnic boundaries of conflict parties. It was also noted that the interveners sidelined indigenous knowledge of conflict resolution such pacification of the conflict. In view of this endogenisation of the conflict is required. The respondents offered suggestions on how to manage or resolve the conflict in the future.

Conclusions

The research examined conflict between Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups in 1991 and 1992 in Kpandai. The responses revealed that the causes of the conflict were due to political, economic and social differences among the ethnic groups. The consequences of the conflict included social disintegration, psychological ossification, institutional deformity, displacement and breaking of families. The local economy was disrupted as retailing could not be carried out. A lot of food items got rotten on the farms as owners could not visit them amid insecurity. The health situation of the area was precarious. Many

combatants and innocent people lost their lives and several others injured. The human resource was depleted as civil and public servants were displaced and refused to return to post and new ones rejected postings to the area. Politically, there was displacement of Gonja chiefs and emergence of Nawuri chiefs who cannot be gazzeted without the consent of the Gonja chiefs. The Konkomba took advantage of the absence of the Gonja in the area to assume political leadership positions using their majority population as an advantage.

The government exercised its mandate by intervening to manage and resolve the conflict. The Regional Security Council responded to the crisis by deploying security personnel to the area to contain the situation. The committee of inquiry was established and given the mandate to investigate the causes and effects of the conflict. The report was submitted to government but was not published. The Kpandai district was carved out of Salaga district to minimise intercourse between the two ethnic groups that could lead to violence. The NPI was supported by government to help resolve northern conflicts including the Gonja-Nawuri conflict. Workshops and seminars were organised in Kumasi leading to the signing of Peace Accord by all conflict parties in northern Ghana. This suspended inter-ethnic conflicts in the region for about three decades. However, the Gonja and Nawuri refused to sign any peace accord suggesting that the conflict is not yet resolved.

It was revealed that indigenous knowledge of resolving inter-ethnic conflict exist in the area. However, they have been side-lined by interveners. To resolve the conflict, endogenisation of conflict resolution can be appropriate. This involves the merger of government and civil society roles together with the indigenous knowledge to resolve the conflict.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were derived from the findings, in the consideration that if they are implemented by interveners, both internal and external, they would play significant roles in the resolution of the conflict between Gonja and Nawuri ethnic groups:

- The government should establish a temporary military post in the East Gonja to maintain peace and order in the two districts. Mobility of the conflict interveners to execute their assignments intended to resolve the conflict should be carried out amid security to avoid harming or killing them in the course of executing their duties.
- The government should issue a White Paper declaring the true owners of the land. The principal protagonists; Gonja and Nawuri are loud on the pronouncement of White Paper by government to determine the true ownership of the land.
- The government should carefully study and publish Committee of Inquiry's recommendations to serve as blueprint to guide the interveners in their analysis of the conflict and develop a peacebuilding framework for implementation.
- The regional and district security councils should monitor and regulate the youth associations; Konkomba Youth Association, Gonjaland Youth Association and Nawuri Youth Association to disallow them making inflammatory statements that could trigger conflict in the area.
- The district assemblies should sponsor women to attend workshops, seminars, and conferences on peacebuilding to acquire requisite skills,

to help them execute peacebuilding activities in the area. Women sustain the local economy by engaging in retail trading across ethnic boundaries without being harmed by enemy combatants. This creates an opportunity for them to spread messages on peaceful coexistence during their interactions with the conflict parties whilst undertaking their retailing activities.

- The Civil Society Organisations such as WANEP, NPC and CECOTAPS should organise workshops, seminars, conflict analysis meetings to engage the local people to train them on methods of peacebuilding. This will allow them to handle early sign warnings to prevent outbreak of armed conflict in their localities.
- The WANEP, CECOTAPS, NPC, Consortium of NGOs in the northern Region, indigenous people and Assemblies in East Gonja and Kpandai districts should put resources together and organise stakeholder's meetings to discuss the way forward. This novelty will help conflict parties to sit together and participate in discussions that affect them together with outsiders. It will also pave way for cordial relationships and dialogue among them leading to consensus that is mutually beneficial to the conflict parties.

Limitations of the study

This study has some limitations in relation to the literature, methodology and findings.

The evidence indicated the dearth of literature on the causes and effects of conflict and methods of resolving conflicts in different areas which have varied culture and tradition from East Gonja and Kpandai districts. Hence, the researcher had to adopt the literature to fix the context of this research.

Secondly, the study utilized purposive sampling, which did not proffer the members of the population an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study to enable the researcher to generalise the research findings to the population.

Contribution of the research to knowledge

The first is in the area of theoretical perspective. In the study, conflict resolution model termed as the endogenisation of conflict resolution was developed by the researcher. This model starts with the premise that a single method cannot be used to resolve inter-ethnic conflict. It propels the amalgamation of several strategies. This involves the use of indigenous actors, government and Civil Society Organisations; each institution playing its roles, upholding the same objective of resolving the conflict in their minds.

In addition, an analytical framework from the work of Mbowura (2016) and Awedoba (2011) was developed to guide the discussion of the findings. The authors themselves did not develop any figure known as conceptual framework but the concepts they utilised in discussing the intervention made to resolved the conflict were used to develop a conceptual framework to guide this study.

A lot of work has been done on conflict; their causes, effects and resolution mechanisms at the international and national levels. The Gonja-

Nawuri conflict is a small scale conflict where light weapons were utilized to execute the violence. Therefore, attention of academicians and acclaimed international communities have not been largely drawn to it. The outsiders such as the media, government and Civil Society Organisations who were privileged to the information about the conflict seem to have forgotten of it as it happened in about 3 decades ago, yet the conflict needs to be resolved. It was only the primary parties who are adversely affected, who are contemplating of its resolution. Perhaps, this work brings the problem to light to attract interveners who would show interest in resolving it.

It is the constitutional mandate of the government to ensure that peace prevails in the country. This research revealed the kind of interventions made by government and its agencies, Civil Society Organisation and indigenous actors to resolve the conflict to no avail. The findings serve as a lesson notes and a reference document for the interveners to revise to know what was done appropriately and what they did wrong to cause failure of resolving the conflict. The interveners are taught lessons that will enable them refrain from repeating strategies that did not help in the past and utilise recommendations of this study that could assist them to resolve the conflict in present times.

The findings are useful to the East Gonja and Kpandai District Assemblies to learn methods of handling conflicts and how to apply them whenever a conflict erupts. Additionally, this work would supplement the knowledge of state actors to resolve similar conflicts in the Northern Ghana and beyond.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH GUIDE

Introduction

These opened ended questions in this protocol are meant to guide the researcher to seek information from chiefs and elders of the conflict areas as they constitute the pivot of the impasse. The nature of the questions allows them to express their views freely and without limitations. Respect is accorded to respondents who answer the questions as well as those who decline to do so. Pseudo names will be used in order to shield respondents who reveal confidential issues.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

1. Sex: Male [] Female []
2. Age.....
3. Level of education.....
4. Traditional area.....
5. Occupation.....

SECTION A: ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN EAST GONJA

6. What is your knowledge of ethnic groups in Kpandai?
7. What are the present nature of relationships between the Gonja and Nawuri?
8. What is the nature of Kingship in Kpandai?
9. What is the mode of communication in the area?
10. What is nature of marriage among the ethnic groups?

SECTION B: ROLES OF TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN
RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT

11. In your view, what are the causes of the conflicts between Gonja and Nawuri?
12. How did the conflict affect the community?
12. What are the conflict resolution mechanisms in your tradition?
13. Do you think we could use only the traditional methods to resolve the conflict?
14. What roles did the chiefs and elders of the community play to resolve the conflict?
15. Why did the chiefs and elders unable to resolve the conflict?
16. What do you think the chiefs and elders could have done to resolve the conflict?
17. What do you think the chiefs and elders can do to resolve the conflicts?
18. Do the chiefs and elders need the help of NGOs and government to resolve the conflict?
19. What other kind of support do the chiefs and elders need to resolve the conflict?

SECTION C: ROLES OF WOMEN IN THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION

20. What are the roles of Queen Mothers in conflict resolution in your tradition?
21. What roles could Queen Mothers play to resolve the conflict?
22. What are the roles women play in the resolution of conflicts in your community?
23. What roles did women play to resolve the conflict?

24. Why were the women unable to resolve the conflicts?
25. What do you think women could have done to resolve the conflict?

SECTION D: ROLES OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN THE RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT

26. What roles did your religious group play to resolve the conflict?
27. Why was your religious group unable to resolve the conflict?
28. What do you think your religious group can do to resolve the conflict?
29. Could you mention any other religious group that intervened to resolve the conflict?
30. What roles did that religious groups play to resolve the conflict?
31. Why was that religious group unable to resolve the conflict?
32. What do you think the religious groups could have done to resolve the conflicts?
34. What roles do you think your religious group can play to resolve the conflict?
35. What is the importance of religious intervention in conflict resolution?
36. What kind of support do the religious groups need to resolve the conflict?

SECTION E: ROLES OF NGOs IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

37. Can you mention some NGOs that intervened in the conflict?
38. What roles did NGO play during the time of the conflict?
39. Do you think it is necessary for NGO to intervene and resolve the conflict?
40. Why was the NGO unable to resolve the conflict?
41. What do you think the NGOs could have done to resolve the conflict?

42. What kind of support do the NGOs need to resolve the conflict?

SECTION F: ROLE OF THE YOUTH IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

43. What roles did the youth play in the conflict?

44. What are roles did the youth play to resolve the conflict?

45. Why are the youth unable to resolve the conflict?

46. What do you think the youth could have done to resolve the conflict?

47. What do you think the youth can do resolve the conflict?

48. What kind of support do the youth need to resolve the conflict?

SECTION G: ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE RESOLUTION OF GONJA-NAWURI CONFLICT

49. What kind of intervention did the government make during the conflict?

50. What roles did the police and military play in the conflict?

51. What role did the Court play in the conflict?

52. What role did the Committee of Inquiry play in the conflict?

53. What role did NADMO play in the conflict?

54. Why was government unable to resolve the conflict?

55. What do you think government could have done to resolve the conflict?

56. What do you think government can do to resolve the conflict?

57. Do you think government alone can resolve the conflict?

58. What kind of support does government need to resolve the conflict?

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS GUIDE

The following questions serve as a guide for conducting focus groups discussions to solicit information from respondents to achieve objectives of the study. The responses obtained will supplement data collected from in-depth interviews.

1. What are the causes of the Gonja-Nawuri conflict in Kpandai?
2. What are the effects of the Gonja-Nawuri conflicts on the community?
3. What is the nature of the relationships between you and the Gonja?
4. What are the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in your community?
5. What roles did you play to resolve the conflict?
6. What can you do to resolve the conflict?
7. What roles did women play to resolve the conflict?
8. What can women do to resolve the conflict?
9. What roles did civil society organisations play to resolve the conflict?
10. What can civil society organisations do to resolve the conflict?
11. What role did government play to resolve the conflict?
12. What do you think government can do to resolve the conflict?
13. What roles did the youth play to resolve the conflict?
14. What can the youth do to resolve the conflict?
15. Do you think that the conflict can be resolved? If Yes, why? and if No, why?....