UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

CONFLICTS AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS IN

SELECTED DISTRICTS IN THE NORTHERN REGION, GHANA

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2018

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SELECTED DISTRICTS IN THE NORTHERN REGION, GHANA

BY

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Thesis submitted to the Department of Integrated Development Studies of the
School for Development Studies, College of Humanities and Legal Studies,
University of Cape Coast, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Award of Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Development Studies

NOVEMBER 2018

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:...

Supervisors' Declaration

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

Principal Supervisor's Signature.....................................Date............................

Name:...

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

Name:...

ABSTRACT

The Northern Region is witnessing protracted and relapsed conflicts and attempts at restoring enduring peace, largely, through Western models, particularly, the formal court system, have not been successful. This study analyses conflicts and conflict management mechanisms in the Northern Region of Ghana towards a comprehensive and sustainable management of the conflicts. The study is purely qualitative, employing the multiple case study design. Sixty-two participants were, purposively, selected for the study. Interview guide, focus group discussion guide and observation checklist were the instruments used for data collection. Data were analysed using thematic and cross-site analysis. The study found that each faction constructs a kind of mythical history mingling elements of truth about the olden days. Different versions of the history, while not held by all members of the community, tend to provide a continuing rationale for rejecting pragmatic compromises. Besides, the procedural structure and adversarial nature of the court system produced unsatisfactory outcomes, which do not create opportunities for peacebuilding initiatives. Indigenous mechanisms were, also, reliant on unwritten and flexible precedents, which lead to an abuse of the mechanisms by the traditional leaders. The study concludes, among others, that indigenous processes are currently inconsistent and, sometimes, discriminatory. Nonetheless, the mechanisms have proven to be meaningful, accessible, and affordable. Therefore, Peace Councils should develop a comprehensive programme to incorporate aspects of both the indigenous and Western-centred judicial structures for the purposes of legitimacy.

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KEYWORDS

Conflict

Conflict Management

Development

Indigenous Mechanisms

Protracted Conflicts

Western-centred Mechanisms

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To my lovely family

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
BEWDA	Bawku East Women's Association
BNI	Bureau of National Investigations
CBOs	Community Base Organizations
CDD	Centre for Democratic Development
CEPS	Customs, Excise, and Preventive Services
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DISEC	District Security Council
DCT	Dual Concern Theory
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West Africa States
EIU	Economic Intelligence Unit
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAF	Ghana Armed Forces
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GPS	Ghana Police Service
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
HOC	House of Chiefs
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NHC	National House of Chiefs

NPC   National Peace Council

NPI   Nairobi Peace Initiative

OPEC   Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

PSC   Protracted Social Conflict

RHC   Regional House of Chiefs

RPC   Regional Peace Council

SNC   Swazi National Court

UN   United Nations

WACSI   West Africa Civil Society Institute

WANEP   West Africa Network for Peace Building

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Northern Region of Ghana is replete with relapsed and protracted inter and intra ethnic conflicts regarding issues of chieftaincy succession and land ownership (Awedoba, 2010; Brukum, 2004; Kendie, 2010; Lund, 2003). This situation poses a great threat to human security and is, of course, a concern for the region's development. Though many conflict resolution and management approaches have been adopted, the conflicts are protracted and at best, can be said to relapse. The concern, here, is to find the most effective way of managing the conflicts. Notably, studies on the conflict situation in the region such as Hippolyt, (2003), Brukum, (2007), Awedoba, (2009), Kangsangbata, (2009), Kendie, (2010), and Bukari et al (2017) have focused on the conflict actors, causes of conflicts, its effect on livelihood and providing solutions to mitigate the conflicts in the areas where they occur.

Few empirical studies, also, exist on the holistic diagnosis of the relapsed and protracted conflict situation, taking into account the origin, level, and nature of the conflicts as well as the type of mechanism employed by whom and at what time to manage the conflicts. This has motivated me to analyse the relapsed and protracted nature of conflicts in the Northern Region of Ghana as well as assess the conflict management mechanisms in order to manage conflicts in the Region in a more comprehensive way, contextually, and on a sustainable basis to pave way for development.

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Background to the Study

Conflicts date back to the beginning of human history (Sarpong-Anane, 2014). They occur frequently in daily public and private lives of individuals and groups. They may be triggered by a gamut of factors, especially political, ethnic, racial or economic differences; or may arise from differences in values, beliefs, and attitudes regarding issues (Best, 2006). For as long as people, groups, and nations pursue conflicting interests, there will always be disagreements, disputes, and conflict. Thus, conflict is inescapable, inherent, and inevitable in social existence and social progress (Onwuzuruigbo, 2011).

Conflict defies a single definition. One school, dominant in North America, defines conflict in terms of a clash of interest between two parties (Rassul, 2010). Boulding (1963, p. 23), for instance, states that "conflicts over interests are situations in which some change makes at least one party better off and the other party, worse off, each in their own estimation". Galtung (1969) who represents another school maintains that injustice and structural violence mark a conflict situation. To him, the absence of physical violence and direct confrontation between actors does not necessarily mean that structural violence is totally absent.

Deutsch (1973) presents a broader definition in which conflict is viewed as existing whenever incompatible activities occur; one party is interfering, disrupting, obstructing, or in some other way, making another party's actions less effective. However, the widely-used definition is by Coser (1956) who defines conflict as the struggle over values, claims to status, power, and scarce resources

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in which the aim of the belligerents are not only to gain the desired objective but also to neutralize, injure or eliminate rivals. A common element found in these definitions is the divergent goals and interest of actors or parties who resort to various means in pursuit of achieving their objectives. It should be recognized that in order for conflict to occur, it has to exceed the threshold level of intensity, creating the awareness of the parties involved (Felati, 2006). Hence, in this work, conflict is understood using the definition by Coser (1956) which maintains that conflicts occur whenever incompatible interests occur, leading to struggles over values, claims to status, power, and scarce resources in which the aim of the belligerents are not only to gain the desired objectives but also to neutralize, injure or eliminate rivals.

The results of conflicts are not predetermined. Conflicts might escalate and lead to non-productive results or be beneficially resolved to lead to quality final products (Nnoli, 2006). Conflicts inflict serious human, social, and economic mutilation on the people and countries involved (Collier and Hoeffler, 2002; Francis, 2008). Conflict has become one of the most important causes of poverty due to the displacement of people and destruction of communities' livelihoods (Brukum, 2007). People have, also, suffered death and injuries and indirect consequences of famine and epidemic diseases that have followed in the wake of conflicts (Bercovitch, 2003; Best, 2006). It is for this reason that the early approach to conflict presumed that conflict is a negative thing and, therefore, had to be suppressed or avoided (Verma, 1998). This traditional view espouses that conflict is harmful, always has a negative impact, and leads to a decline in the

standard of living of adversaries and interest groups as the level of conflict increases (Alao, 2012; James & Ryals, 2010).

However, with continuous researches regarding the perception of conflict as something harmful and evitable, the traditional view began to fade. It is argued that conflict is a natural and inevitable phenomenon with either a negative or a positive effect depending on how the conflict is managed (Alao, 2012; Bogoro, 2007; Finke, 2003). Lerche (1998), for instance, argues that conflicts contribute to social change, ensuring both interpersonal and intergroup dynamics to remain fresh and reflective of current interests and realities. Conflicts, also, strengthen intragroup unity by providing an outlet for group members to discuss and negotiate their interests within the group. Without intragroup conflict, the health of the group typically declines (Bercovitch et al., 2009).

Finally, a conflict in communities produces intragroup unity and cooperation while working towards the group's common goal for the conflict's outcome (Baron, 1997; Van Halema & Rassul, 2013). These positive results can only be achieved through what has become known as "conflict management" (Bodtker & Jameson, 2001; James & Ryals, 2010; Thomas, 1976). However, since conflicts are inevitable and inherent with varying causes and can lead to devastating effects, robust and appropriate mechanisms are required for their management.

The conflict management process entails an adoption of various measures including the establishment of communication links and personal interactions between the adversaries, setting up of mechanisms to end or minimise violence,

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and seeking the commitment of the parties to a solution to their problem (James & Ryals, 2010). Conflict management does not necessarily imply avoidance, reduction or termination of conflict. It involves designing effective strategies to minimize the dysfunctions of conflict and enhancing the constructive functions of conflict (Crocker et al., 2001; Williams, 2011). It is a generic term used to cover the whole gamut of positive conflict handling through the fostering of communication between and among disputants and drafting of agreements that meet underlying needs (Gellman, 2007). The goal of conflict management is, therefore, to intervene in ways that make an on-going conflict more beneficial and less damaging to all parties.

Bercovitch and Regan (2004) note that for conflict management to achieve its purpose, parties should have the bargaining power to influence decisions or institutions concerned must have adequate knowledge and negotiation skills. Second, there should be a degree and quality of communication between the parties which include their perceptions and understanding of the situation and their ability to receive and communicate information. Third, if there is a third party involved, they should possess high degrees of decision-making power, degrees of neutrality, and high levels of analytical skills.

Conflict management is replete at the international level. References can be made to the end of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, the end of colonisation, and the end of the oil crisis of 1974, which subsequently led to the development of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [OPEC] (Raiffa, 2002). These and similar accomplishments have

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proved the validity of conflict management as a realistic goal for policymakers to changing attitudes and solving conflicts.

After the Cold War, conflict management was grounded in a universalistic conflict management model with standard formula for peace negotiations and accords, which sometimes underestimate the uniqueness of conflicts (Williams, 2011). International peacemakers have assumed that the imposition of Western liberal democracy and neoliberal economic reforms are the best, if not the only chance, for peace (Bercovitch & Regan, 2004). Up to date, international organizations like the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), African Union (AU), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have centred conflict management policy mainly on "Western-centred conflict management mechanisms" (Adjei & Adebayo, 2014).

Western-centred conflict management mechanisms in this context refer to the formal approaches to conflict management which, among others, include diplomatic and economic instruments, the issuance of ceasefire directives, peacekeeping operations, and enforcement measures such as trade embargoes, the formal court system and tribunals, mediation efforts, and bilateral and multilateral negotiations (Ahmad, 2008; Marshall, 2009; Van Halema & Rassul, 2013). This is in line with the theory of formal conflict management mechanisms that has its assumptions underpinned by human rights issues and the rule of law and retributive justice. The word "formal" is used to qualify these mechanisms because it is these mechanisms that scholars have written much on, so there is, available, extensive literature in their use in managing conflicts. In addition, state

institutions and agencies have adopted these conflict management mechanisms, making them universal in nature (Adjei, & Adebayo, 2014).

There is no doubt that formal conflict management mechanisms have achieved some results in responding and dealing with interstate and large-scale conflicts in Africa (Daley, 2006). Formal conflict management activities have been used to reduce manifest tensions and/or prevent the outbreak or recurrence of violent conflicts in Sudan, Angola, Libya, Uganda, Cote d'Ivoire, among others (Nader & Grande, 2002). Once a violent conflict begins, conflict management activities become a priority to prevent its escalation, reduce its intensity or geographical extent, and bring confrontations to an end to limit the negative effects of intractable and enduring conflicts on the continent (Williams, 2011).

Notwithstanding the use of "modern" conventional Western mechanisms to managing conflicts in Africa, the continent is still replete with conflicts (Alabi, 2006). Since the 1960s, the continent has had a series of civil wars. References can be made to Chad (1965-1985), Nigeria (1967-1970), Angola (1974), Liberia (1980-2003), Sudan (1995-1990), Somalia (1988-1990) and Burundi, Rwanda and Sierra Leone (1991-2001) (Francis, 2008). The continent has also witnessed a series of inter-state conflicts. Among these conflicts are the Nigeria-Cameroon disputes over the Bakassi peninsula, Algeria-Morocco conflict over the Atlas Mountains area, Eritrea-Ethiopian crisis, Somalia-Ethiopia dispute over the Ugandan desert region, Kenya-Somalia border war, and Tanzania-Uganda crisis (Barkindo et al., 1994; Cocodia, 2008; Kinni, 2013; Ngomba-Roth, 2008).

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In recent times, Libya, Guinea-Bissau, Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria have been beleaguered with and destabilized by violent intra-conflicts. The relapsed nature of conflicts in Africa is a sign of the ineffectiveness of formal conflict management mechanisms, especially with community-based traditional (ethnic, chieftaincy, and/or land) conflicts. Even where formal mechanisms have succeeded in places such as Sudan, Angola, Libya, Uganda, and Cote d'Ivoire, the societies have been left with a fragile peace (Adjei & Adebayo, 2014). According to Boege (2006), who criticised these formal mechanisms too, universalistic approaches tend to apply the same solution to all conflicts; meanwhile, no two conflicts are the same and there is no one-size-fits-all solution to global and local conflicts.

Kirby (2006), for instance, criticised the formal conflict management mechanisms as only aiming at securing the rights of individuals, which do not fit into indigenous settings where relationships and families are interconnected with stronger bonds. This argument is supported by the indigenous wholistic theory (Absolon, 2010) which states that the society is wholistic and multi-layered and encompasses the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical elements of being. Each level of being is affected by the historical, social, political, and economic elements. Indigenous wholism considers the connections, and the concept – "we are all related" begins to make sense as each aspect is perceived in relation to the whole. That is, the dynamics of our realities are created because of the relationships and experiences of these interrelationships and interconnections.

This means sorting out conflicts towards resolving immediate disputes can be time-consuming and unsustainable.

Before colonization in Africa, many societies had their own "indigenous conflict management mechanisms" (Adjei & Adebayo, 2014). These mechanisms utilised local actors and traditional community-based judicial and legal decision making bodies to manage conflicts. The term "indigenous" often implies marginalised groups who are dominated politically by another cultural group (Woodley, 2002). In this thesis, however, the term indigenous conflict management mechanisms is used in particular reference to the study area's first settlers (people historically linked by genealogy to a geographical area) and the dominant groups' traditional mechanisms for managing conflicts. These mechanisms often seek to involve local authority structures such as chiefs, spiritual leaders, opinion leaders, women's movements, local associations, and other professional groups in managing conflicts (Osi, 2008).

Based on the culture and customs of a group of people, indigenous mechanisms focus on the restoration of order, harmony, and the sense of the community (Osaghae, 2000). The prime objective of these mechanisms is to keep social cohesion and co-existence intact. This is done by searching for a common ground, optimising each actor's position, integrating the interest of the weaker side into the compromise and persuading the victors and victims to accept an integrated solution which is mutually binding (Dahal, 2008).

The relevance of indigenous conflict management mechanisms in managing localised or community-based conflicts cannot be overemphasised.

Boege (2006) asserts that indigenous mechanisms provide for inclusion and participation. Parties to a conflict are enjoined to adopt an integrative (win-win) approach, with each having the opportunity to present their case without recourse to counsel as found in adversarial systems. This consequently makes the approach affordable and cheaper. Menkhause (2000), in the same vein, notes that "indigenous mechanisms tend to be process-oriented and not product-oriented. That is, they go beyond resolution to managing. In this sense, they are somewhat more realistic than the standard international diplomacy which emphasises peace treaties that definitely end a conflict" (p.198).

Indigenous conflict management mechanisms are, usually, better attuned to the needs of local communities (Kwesi, 2013). This is because they use the inquisitorial and restorative approaches to conflict management instead of the adversarial, winner-looser approach of litigation (Isike & Uzodike, 2011; Kah, 2011; Kwesi, 2013). A very strong argument that heightens the relevance of indigenous mechanisms is the fact that it employs indigenous language or dialects that are understood by all parties. The strength in this is that the tendency to translate or interpret, which in most cases is prone to creating semantic barriers and misconstrued deliberations, is avoided (Adjei & Adebayo, 2014).

In the wake of colonialism, new political, social, and economic structures have not only changed the dynamics of conflict management in Africa, but have also usurped the power and relevance of indigenous institutions (practices, beliefs, and norms) opening its ideals to criticisms (Ney, Borteletto & Maloney, 2013). Indigenous conflict management mechanisms have been criticized and replaced

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with new legal regimes and law courts. According to the critics, they violate universal standards of human rights and democracy, reflect issues of discrimination against women and lack a voice for children (Boege, 2006).

Indigenous conflict management mechanisms have been challenged as only applicable to and useful in managing simple disputes – matrimonial disputes, intra-family quarrels, land disputes, among others which are not as complex or threatening as conflicts of national proportions (Osaghae, 2000). Another criticism is that indigenous conflict management mechanisms are limited to space, that is, they are confined to a relatively small community context, such as a clan, village, or neighbouring communities. The customary laws applied may evolve from such small societies and may not be applicable to other societies (Zartman, 2000a). The weaknesses associated with indigenous conflict management mechanisms sums up to the challenges confronting their use in managing conflicts.

Notwithstanding this, scholars have found "homegrown" conflict management strategies based on indigenous foundation in Africa that have worked to the perfection in a conflict situation (Adjei & Adebayo, 2014; Afisi, 2009; Bell& Kahane, 2004; Boege, 2006; Brock-Utne, 2001; Faure, 2000; Kirby, 2006). The Gacaca of Rwanda, Mato Oput of Northern Uganda, Gadaa, Michu and Lubabasa of Ethiopia, and the Guuirt of Somaliland among other indigenous mechanisms point to this fact (Isike & Uzodike, 2011; Kah, 2011; Myers & Shinn, 2010). Adjei and Adebayo (2014) emphasized that every conflict is local inasmuch as the local environment sets the stage and the local people endure the

consequences. Adjei and Adebayo added that approaches to conflict management should, therefore, be built on a carefully constructed indigenous foundation, particular to a local context, discrete event or specific situation. Hornborg (2001) notes that the process of realizing indigenous mechanisms based on local knowledge that occurs with social transformation changes the ontology and epistemology of that knowledge that will eventually lead to the destruction of the ecosystem.

In the globalized world today, Western-dominated international agencies have pushed democratization and other neo-liberal economic reforms on the African continent. A system of free and competitive elections, a multi-party system, a free press and judiciary (court system), the rule of law, and the guarantee of other liberal rights and freedoms are dominant (Sapong-Anane, 2014). Indigenous people are now confronted with the two options of either using their local systems or the Western systems to manage their conflicts. The ways in which communities and their members respond to conflicts (in terms of management) now vary considerably (Castro & Ettenger, 1996; Collins, 2008; Roe, Nelson & Sandbrook, 2009; Tsega, 2004).

Significant diversity exists in terms of knowledge, opinion, material wealth, power, and status (Tsega, 2004). Community members involved in disputes and conflicts take courses of action based on their preferences, their knowledge about the options available to them, their perceived likelihood of success, and their relationship with an opponent (Castro & Ettenger, 1996). Castro and Ettenger (1996) further state that not all people have equal access to all

options; class, gender, age, and other factors may restrict which avenues are open to certain individuals or groups. These motivations are in line with the dual concern theory, sometimes referred to as the two-dimensional approach (Thomas, 1976), which suggests that individuals adopt conflict management behaviours based on their perceived self-interests and those of others, i.e. a concern for self (competitive behaviours) versus a concern for other (accommodating behaviours) (James & Ryals, 2010).

James and Ryals (2010) argue that contextual factors also affect conflict management processes. These include the typology, the nature of a conflict, and the internal characteristics of the actors involved. Typology attempts to classify conflicts into predictable groups or patterns – structural, interest-based, value, or relationship conflicts. A typology of conflict is useful when the issues in a conflict are centralized in one of the categories. When issue focus occurs, different responses to conflicts are required. The levels of conflicts put conflicts into interpersonal, intergroup, and inter-community conflicts. Under nature, conflicts may be classified into violent and nonviolent conflicts or into constructive and destructive conflicts (Collins, 2008). All of these conflict characteristics are informative if conflict management mechanisms are to achieve the desired results.

A conflict cannot be viewed as a unitary phenomenon. There are different dimensions and different degrees of amenability to conflict management. Common strategies or approaches that might be applicable in some conflicts may be quite inapplicable in others (Bercovitch, 2003). If we are to bridge the gap between the scholarly community and policy-makers, we should, at the very least,

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suggest prescriptions regarding the efficacy of different methods and strategies of conflict management and how they may be used to affect the termination of enduring or intractable conflicts.

Ghana is accorded with the image of a relative peace and stable country. This image is reflected in Ghana being the third peaceful country in Africa and the role the country has played in past peace-building processes in many of the conflicts in the sub-region (Economic Intelligence Unit [EIU], 2010). Despite this praise as a politically stable country, the country has been witnessing a series of long-standing ethnic and communal conflicts, some of which have resulted in violent confrontations leading to loss of lives and properties (Brukum, 2007; Tsikata & Seini, 2004). Almost every region in Ghana has witnessed violent conflicts of some type, inter/intra-ethnic conflicts, most of which are over land and chieftaincy.

The Northern Region of Ghana has experienced and is still battling with devastating protracted ethnic, land, and chieftaincy conflicts. For example, the Nawuri suspicion of and resistance to attempts by Gonjas to lay claim to the Kpandai area led to violence between the two ethnic groups (Mahama, 2003). Similarly, the Konkomba and Dagombas in 1994/1995 had violent clashes over customary land tenure arrangements when the Konkombas expressed their dissatisfaction over it (Brukum, 2007; Tsikata & Seini, 2004). More recently, land conflicts between the Konkombas and Bimobas have claimed lives and properties in Nakpanduri, Kpamele, Teima, and Jimbale, all in the Bunkurugu/Yonyon District. Besides, the intra-conflict between the Abudus and Adanis in Yendi

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claimed lives. References can, also, be made to the dispute over the legitimate chief of Kpandai, the chieftaincy succession dispute in Bimbilla, and the Buipe chieftaincy conflict (Kendie, Kufour & Boakye, 2014).

Both Western-centred and indigenous mechanisms have been employed either differently or together at different times to address these conflicts; yet, conflicts in the area are relapsed and protracted in nature. This serves as the foundation for this thesis. The core argument of this thesis is that, conflicts in the Northern Region could be managed sustainably through a comprehensive diagnosis of the conflict situation taking into consideration not only the type of mechanism but also the type of third parties (management team), timing of initiating the management process, and the conflict characteristics (origin, level, and nature). This will inform the type of conflict management mechanism to be employed, by whom, and at what time to achieve positive results.

Problem Statement

In the Northern Region of Ghana, the National Peace Council (NPC), the formal court, the Chieftaincy Tribunal of the House of Chiefs, and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have all based conflict management processes on Western-centred means (Kwesi, 2013; Bukari, 2013). These Western-centred ideals are underpinned by the theory of formal conflict management. Its main assumptions are that conflicts should be managed with key emphasis on human right issues and rule of law; formal grievance procedures, right arbitrations, and litigation as well as issues of equity, which captures concerns such as fairness, justice, and due

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process to prevent arbitrary or capricious decision-making and distributive and procedural justice (United Nations University, 2007).

The theory of formal conflict management, however, fails to note that community-based conflicts are rooted in cultural, political, social, and historical elements. Embedded, also, in these conflicts are spiritual, emotional, and mental relationships. This means for any mechanism to be successful in the management process, it must take into consideration the indigenous underpinnings of the conflicts. The theory, equally, does not take into consideration the types of third parties, the timing of interventions, as well as the origin, level, and nature of the conflicts. As a result, this study attempts to bridge these theoretical gaps.

In the Bunkprugu/Yunyon District, for instance, the imposition of curfews, the deployment of military personnel, forming committees of enquiries, and the call for peace by State officials (Kendie et al., 2014) which are all Western-centred mechanisms have been used to terminate conflicts. There is no doubt that these mechanisms have limited the destructive capacity of conflicts since they are able to keep adversaries apart for some time. This notwithstanding, the conflict between the chiefs of Sanbilouk and Sayeegu in the district over who has authority over a parcel of land between the two communities has not been resolved since 2007 (DISEC, 2016).

In Bimbilla, the long-standing inter-ethnic conflict between the Nanumbas and Konkombas alongside the reoccurring intra-ethnic succession conflict among the Nanumbas (the Andani gate and Nakpa Naa gate) has still not been addressed since the year 2003 (Kendie et al., 2014). In 2014, the paramount chief of the

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Nanung traditional area (Naa Dasana Andani from the Andani gate) was murdered alongside three other family members (DISEC, 2016). Litigation is on-going and a Committee of Enquiry tasked to investigate and identify the culprits has promised a GH¢ 100,000.00 reward for information about the perpetrators at the time of this study. The committee applied western-centred approaches; yet, the conflicts persist.

Similarly, although indigenous conflict management mechanisms have also been used in managing some conflicts, they have not been successful in all the cases. While the mechanisms were successfully applied in the Buipe chieftaincy conflict in the Northern Region (Godwin, 2015), they failed with the Bimbilla intra-chieftaincy (Andani gate and NakpaNaa gate) conflict and the Nakpanduri land conflict. In the same region, however, both western-centred and indigenous mechanisms have been used together to successfully manage some conflicts. The two were used to end the many years of inter-ethnic conflict between Gbankoni and the Kambatiak communities. In that approach, WANEP and the Catholic Church undertook peace education activities (western-centred) which led to the blood burial (indigenous) signifying unity between the adversaries (District Security Council, 2016). However, using the same approach has not been successful in the chieftaincy succession conflicts in Dagbon and Bimbilla, and the land conflicts in Nakpanduri and Bunkpurugu.

These examples evoke probing questions as to why each of the mechanisms as well as a combination of them worked in some conflicts but not in others. These questions become sharper when viewed against the fact that there

has been no focused research on this area of study in the Northern Region. Studies on the conflict situation in the region, such as Hippolyt (2003), Brukum (2007), Awedoba (2009), Kangsangbata (2009), Kendie (2010), and Bukari et al. (2017) have mainly focused on the conflict actors, causes of conflicts, their effects on livelihood and providing solutions to mitigate the conflicts in the areas where they occur.

To date, few empirical studies exist on the holistic diagnosis of the relapse and protracted conflict situation taking into account the origin, the type of mechanisms employed, the nature of actors, and the time and duration of the management processes. The inability to recognize these important factors in works looking at conflicts in the Northern Region has created a gap that has resulted in the many protracted conflicts that have bedecked the place. This study, therefore, set out to fill this gap by conducting an analysis of the relapsed and protracted conflict situations in selected districts in the Northern Region of Ghana. This took into account the origin/history, level, and nature of conflicts as well as the type of mechanism employed by whom and at what time in order to manage conflicts in the Northern Region in a more comprehensive way, contextually, and on a sustainable basis.

Research Objectives

The general objective of this study was to analyse conflicts and conflict management mechanisms in selected districts in the Northern Region.

Specifically, the study sought to:

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1. Examine the conflicts' characteristics (origin, level, actors, and nature).

2. Assess the indigenous conflict management mechanisms used in the management of conflicts.

3. Assess the Western-centred conflict management mechanisms in the management of conflicts.

4. Examine the motivation of conflict actors for their choice of conflict management mechanisms.

5. Make policy recommendations towards the sustainable management of conflicts.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the conflict characteristics (origin, level, and nature) in the selected districts in the Northern Region?

2. How effective are the indigenous conflict management mechanisms used in the management of conflicts?

3. How effective are the western-centred conflict management mechanisms employed in the management of conflicts?

4. What are the motivations of conflict actors for their choice of conflict management mechanisms?

Significance of the Study

The negative impact of conflicts in the Northern Region cannot be underestimated. Conflicts pose a great threat to human security and, consequently, to development. They inflict human and economic mutilations on the people involved. The slow pace of development in the Northern Region has been attributed to the rampant nature of conflicts. Conflicts are relapsed and protracted since mechanisms for their management seem not to be achieving desired results. This research aims at analysing conflicts and conflict management mechanisms to identify and address the loopholes and contribute to more comprehensive and effective measures towards attaining a sustainable peace in the region.

The study will also contribute to existing knowledge and literature on the management of conflicts in Ghana. The research will inform traditional authorities, conflict resolution experts, peace educators, CSOs, and NGOs among others in the country regarding the management of conflicts sustainably. The research will provide information about alternative mechanisms to conflict management as an evidence of their use and success may convince communities embroiled in long-standing conflicts to adopt new approaches. This research will serve as a source of reference to students, academics, and researchers in future research. The outcomes of the study will be a useful source to policy makers dealing with conflict management in the country.

Limitations

The researcher is not indigenous to the study areas and therefore presented a non-indigenous perspective of local processes. Personal interpretations, as well as the influence that the researcher's presence has on community activities, are both recognized as factors that may influence research results. Thus, it was realized that validity is an issue in community-based qualitative research. The question of validity was addressed by ensuring research transparency and triangulation of methods. In addition, where appropriate, direct quotes were used to reflect what was actually said and to maintain some of the richness of the inquiry.

Lack of fluency in the indigenous language created a barrier to full understanding of community dynamics since language is seen to be the expression of a culture. Furthermore, the researcher can never fully represent the emic perspective of human-ecosystem interactions since the researcher is always an outsider and does not have a shared history with the community. These facts could possibly tamper with information provided to the researcher.

Another limitation was the terminology used which may be a source of confusion because of pre-conceptions. The term "indigenous" (already discussed above) often implies marginalized groups who are dominated politically by another cultural group. The term is, however, used here to describe the descendants of the people who first settled in the area and the dominant groups' traditional methods of conflict management. It is used to differentiate between the

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multiple cultural groups in the study areas, a distinction that is very prominent in the locality and consciousness of the study areas themselves.

Finally, this study is contextual. Conditions particular to the study areas are specific and data cannot be exported to similar situations in other indigenous subsistence societies. The intention, however, is not to take the relativist position to the extent that the local worldview cannot be useful within a meta-discourse about local and indigenous systems. It is intended that the approach and conceptual framework is broadly applicable to other situations.

Organisation of the Study

The study has nine chapters. The first chapter introduced the study by discussing the background to the study, problem statement, research objectives and questions, limitations, and the significance of the study. Chapter two reviewed related literature on the theoretical underpinnings, conceptual issues, and the empirical studies. The conceptual framework of the study was, also, discussed under this chapter. Chapter three focused on the nature and scope of conflicts in the Northern Region while chapter four presented the methodology; that is, the research design, study area, data sources, target population, sampling procedures, data collection instruments, data processing and analysis, ethical consideration and fieldwork challenges.

Further, chapter five examined the contextual issues of conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana and is followed by chapters six and seven, which analysed indigenous conflict management mechanisms and western-centred

mechanisms in the Northern Region of Ghana respectively. Chapter eight captured the motivation of conflict actors for their choice of conflict management mechanisms in the region. The final chapter, chapter nine, summarized, drew conclusions and gave recommendations on the way forward to sustainable management of conflicts in the Northern Region.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher justified the need for this study by outlining the background, the problem under study, objectives, research questions, and significance of the study. In this chapter, the theoretical and conceptual issues underpinning the study are discussed. Various conflict and conflict management theories and concepts as well as issues arising from conflict management, particularly, in Africa, where conflicts are relapsed and intractable with numerous casual factors, were discussed. Literature is reviewed on conflict management mechanisms and their implication for conflict and development, culture and conflict management, and indigenous and formal institutions in conflict management. The chapter also captured empirical studies that are associated with this study. The conceptual framework of the study was also discussed to complete the chapter.

Theoretical Review

The importance of a theoretical framework in research cannot be overemphasised. The theoretical framework provides the plan for a study without which the research would not be contextualized and focused (Kumar, 2011). Lysaght (2011) notes that a theoretical framework offers the structure that supports the research rationale, the statement of the problem, the purpose, and significance of the study in addition to the basis for employing specific methods

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for data collection and analysis. In simple terms, it forms the basis for knowledge construction in research (Neuman, 2011).

Conflict and its analysis have engaged various scholarly opinions, particularly, in the sociocultural, economic, and political fields as a universal phenomenon. Protagonists of the field include early scholars such as Karl Marx and Max Weber whose works, among others, have generated a body of thought generally referred to as conflict theory (Stark, 2007). The origins of the conflict perspective can be traced to the classic works of Karl Marx who suggested that industrialization leads to the development of two classes of people —the "haves" (bourgeoisie) and the "have-nots" (proletariat). The proletariats who may earn only subsistence wages are denied access to the many resources available to the bourgeoisie for which reason Marx concluded that antagonism, alienation and the necessity of ideological revolution are pre-requisite conditions for the occurrence of conflict (Conley & Dahan, 2013).

Max Weber revises Marx's idea of class to refer to those who face the same market conditions and adds status and power as crucial variables in the occurrence of conflict. Coser (1956) analysed conflict in terms of interactive processes among groups and individuals in society and depicts conflict as a form of socialization. Coser contends that conflict is instinctual for humans and as such, is inevitable and somewhat necessary for social cohesion as no group or society can be entirely harmonious; for then it will lose process and structure. Thus, social life is characterised by conflict, and it, inevitability, is because norms

and values are not evenly distributed or accepted (Demmers, 2012; Dempsay, 2010; Tonah, 2007).

According to Felati (2006), "conflict" is a fluid and infinitely elastic concept, which can be twisted into different shapes. As a concept, conflict has become an issue over which scholars find themselves sharply divided. Opinions of scholars differ on the nature, causes, impact, and management of conflicts, which partly is a reflection of the fact that there is no single widely accepted theory on which scholars agree. The variety of approaches of enquiry in the field has led to a proliferation of theories through which conflict scholars try to make sense of the phenomenon.

The different perspectives presented by these theorists are all instructive in understanding the nature and causes of conflict and provide insights into how the different forms of conflict may be managed or resolved. The theories offer sociological, political and economic explanations for the occurrence of conflict in society (Collier, 2003). Though they do not exhaust the range of possible sources of conflict between individuals and groups, they provide relevant perspectives that may be applicable to the management of conflicts in Ghana.

The theoretical framework of this study is informed by realist theory of conflict, theory of formal management of conflicts, indigenous wholistic theory, and dual concern theory of conflict management. These theories laid the foundation for this study. The combination of these theories is necessary, as each one of them is insufficient in justifying the phenomena under study. They, therefore, complement each other in explaining the study.

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Realist Theory of Conflict

Realist ideologies have been prominent in guiding much of global security policy. Modern realist thinkers such as Jervis, Waltz, and Mearsheimer evolved traditional theories of realism that were first crafted by Hobbes, Machiavelli, and Thucididyes (Demmers, 2012; Dempsay, 2010; Donnelly, 2000; Forde, 1992). Each thinker's conception of realism varies, but they have a common view that the prime source of insecurity is human nature, which is viewed as inherently violent and aggressive (Cozette, 2008; Donnelly, 2000; Glaser, 2010; Williams, 2007). Thus, the starting point for the explanation of conflict is the individual level. Realism highlights inherency and traces the root of conflict to the flaw in human nature that is seen to be selfish and engaging in the pursuit of personalized self-interest defined as power (Ashworth, 2002; Behr, 2010).

They believe "competitive process" between actors, primarily defined as states, is a natural expression of conflict by which parties engage in the pursuit of scarce and competitive interests (Molloy, 2003; Morton, 1971). This theory has three component parts: Descriptive Realism, Explanatory Realism, and Prescriptive Realism. Descriptive Realism sees the world as an arena of conflict while the Explanatory Realism seeks to show that there are genetic defects that push humankind into behaving negatively (Koestler, 1967; Molloy, 2006) and that, wars become inevitable because there is no mechanism to stop them from occurring (Donnelly, 2000; Waltz, 1959; Williams, 2007).

The prescriptive realism builds on the arguments of descriptive and explanatory realism to say that decision makers (individuals, groups, or nations)

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have a moral justification to defend their basic interest and ensure self-preservation using any means necessary. Morgenthau (1973) presented an argument that realism is a departure from idealism, a theory he accuses of believing in a moral and rational political order based on universally valid abstract principles. It faults idealism for believing that human nature is malleable and good. Hence, the theory presented by Morgenthau and structural realists after him like Waltz, argue that the imperfection in the world, named conflict, has its root forces inherent in human nature – that human nature is selfish, individualistic and naturally conflictive; that such interest will always pursue their national interests defined as power, and that such interest will come into conflict with those of others leading to the inevitability of conflict (Behr & Amelia, 2009; Best, 2006; Jackson & Georg, 2003).

The theory has been accused of elevating power and state to the status of an ideology (Keohane, 1986; Linklater, 1990; Wendt, 1992). Realism tends to be too state-centric; too much attention is accorded to states and inter-state competition with too little attention to the autonomous role of transnational and local actors (local and sub-national communities seeking to gain control of their own activities). These critics argue that it is this multifaceted and nuanced interaction between the transnational, national, and local which is often left out of realist-inspired accounts (Roland, 2010).

A further common criticism is that realism tends to be overly deterministic (Ashworth, 2002). The assumption that resources are scarce and that inter-state conflict is inevitable is generally taken as given in these accounts. The role of

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technological innovation in relieving scarcity and the potential for substitutability dimensions are rarely articulated in realist analyses (Lentin & Titley, 2011). The role of international markets and regional and international institutions in managing and diffusing conflicts are discounted. The prospect that countries might seek to avoid war and are not driven inexorably towards conflict due either to natural aggression or the inexorable logic of the "security dilemma" are also similarly often ignored (Baderin, 2013; Honig, & Stears, 2011)

Regardless of the above critiques of the realist theory of conflicts, it is often seen historically as the dominant theory, and this is certainly correct in terms of the study of security, conflict, and war (Molloy, 2006; Vasquez, 1998). Since the realist theory forms the theoretical underpinnings of the existence of conflicts in human existence and social progress, this study situates conflicts in Ghana, particularly the Northern Region, in this framework. That is the apparent weakness and individualism inherent in human nature and engaging in the pursuit of personalized self-interest.

Additionally, prescriptive realism posits that decision makers (individuals, groups, or nations) have a moral justification to defend their basic interest and ensure self-preservation using any means necessary. This is reflective of conflicts in the Northern Region, as parties to conflicts have taken entrenched positions to secure their interest. Reference can be made to Bunkprugu and Bimbilla chieftaincy conflicts, as well as the Nakpanduri and Kpamale land conflicts.

In conclusion, the theory suggests actors should prepare to deal with the outcome and consequences of conflict since it is inevitable, rather than wish there

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were none. This justifies the need for conflict management. The theory justifies the militarisation of international relations and the arms race and also helped the emergence of other theories like the deterrent theory and the balance of terror. Suffice it to say, however, that realism has had a tremendous impact on conflicts at the international level (Best, 2006).

Indigenous Wholistic Theory

The indigenous wholistic theory uses the medicine wheel, four directions, and circles as an effective and appropriate means and tools for developing healing strategies (Marsden, 2005). It offers a multi-level strategy that is circular in nature and has been practised for thousands of years by lineages (Absolon, 1993; Graveline, 2004; Nabigon, 2006). The following diagram (Figure 1) of concentric circles represents a level of being and illustrates the reciprocal interconnections of self, individual, family, community, nation, society, and creation. At the centre is a tiny circle representing the "Self".

The next circle represents family, then the community, nation, society, and outward, to the ecology of creation. Inclusive of all the levels are the infants, youth, young adults, adults, and Elders. Each level of being is affected by the historical, social, political, and economic as each layer has a spiritual, emotional, mental and physical element. Indigenous wholism considers the connections, and the concept, "we are all related", begins to make sense as we perceive each aspect in relation to the whole (Poonwassie & Charter, 2005). The dynamics of our realities are created because of the relationships and experiences of these

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interrelationships and interconnections. Absolon (2010) used the Medicine Wheel (Figure 1) as a tool to depict Indigenous wholistic theory, which helps us to understand our realities and experiences by considering the influences of all elements of the whole on our individual and collective being.

Physical realm

Economic factors

Mental realm

Political factors

Spiritual realm

Historical factors

Emotional realm

Social factors
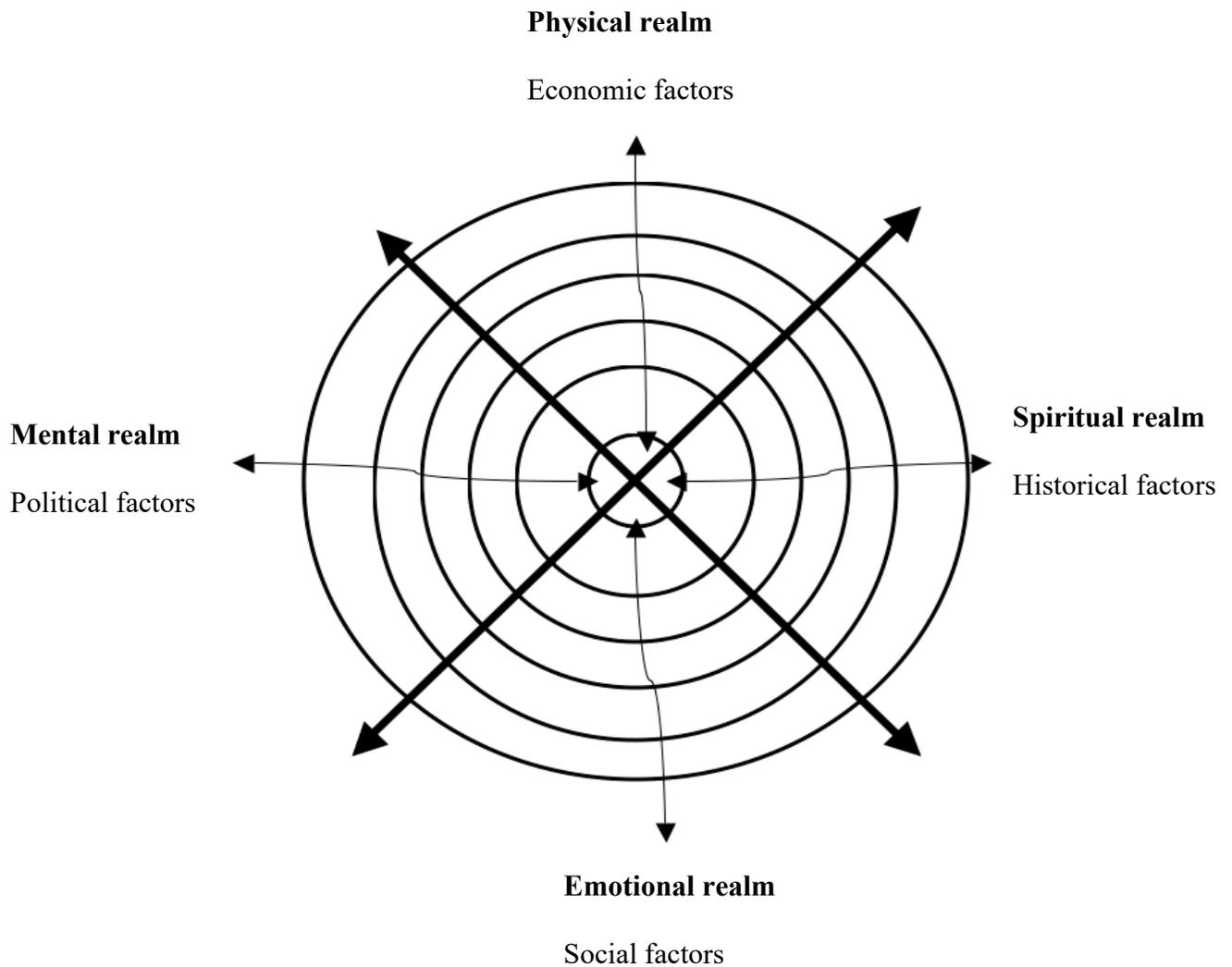
Figure 1: Medicinal Wheel

Source: Adapted from Absolon (2010, p.76)

Indigenous people's experiences can be understood, initially, within such a wholistic framework. The above illustrates how indigenous people's

experiences can be framed and contextualized within a historical, social, political and economic framework. Such a wholistic framework provides a concrete tool for understanding the nature of balance and harmony (Absolon & Willett, 2005). It acknowledges the factors that contribute toward achieving that sense of peace and balance. Colonizing agents and mechanisms of colonization such as welfare authorities and land dispossessions have all contributed to the personal and familial imbalance in many areas of functioning (Duran & Duran, 1995; Graveline, 2004; Hart, 2002; Nabigon, 2006).

Internalization of colonialism contributes to internal violence and lateral oppression. As earth-based and earth centred people, a forced disconnection from land would naturally create imbalance and conflicts among the people (Absolon, 2010). As this study is interested in understanding the indigenous people to serve some traditional/cultural demands in the quest to manage conflicts, the indigenous wholistic theory is pre-requisite in this agenda. According to the theory, the indigenous people can only be well understood through the levels of being which are the historical, social, political, and economic. While each level is affected by spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical elements, the theory considers the connections in making a group or a community stable.

Figure 2 is a more specific representation illustrating theoretical underpinnings using the four directions and the spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical elements. Within each element are some specific theoretical factors that warrant consideration in indigenous based practice. The explanation of the diagram starts from the eastern door and follow the directions to the south, west

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and north doorways. These directions are not mutually exclusive; in fact, they interrelate, interconnect and are interdependent. Any change or movement in one area will affect the whole. The arrows in the diagram illustrate the interrelationships and interdependence between all the components.

Physical Method Action

NORTH

Figure 2: Indigenous Wholistic Theory

Source: Adapted from Absolon (2010, p.77)

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The Eastern doorway brings forth teachings of visioning, beginning, and rebirth. Beginning denotes recognition that indigenous people are in a state of resurgence and revitalization, and at this time in our long history, we are recovering, re-emerging, and reclaiming our knowledge base. The context of our past has vastly changed; yet, we remain. Aspects of indigenous wholism that proceed through the eastern doorway are spirit, identity, and history. According to McCormick (2005), the role of spirituality must be considered within healing practices and processes because spiritual knowledge entails awareness and understanding of aboriginal epistemology and a respectful consciousness of the sacred world to indigenous peoples. One key feature of this doorway is that indigenous people have a cultural history that predates colonization (McCormick, 2005).

The southern doorway encompasses the emotional and relational realms. It brings forth teachings of life, relationships, people, and growth. The theoretical elements of indigenous wholistic theory through the southern doorway acknowledge the emotional aspects of the whole where relationships and sociological contexts are understood. This doorway, specifically, integrates understandings of diverse relationships, understands kinship systems as moving beyond genetics, collaborates with the community to foster healing relationships, utilises methods that support healthy relationship building, and contextualizes issues within a socio-political analysis of social problems facing indigenous people today.

The western doorway brings forth teachings of the ancestors, the mind, and respect. It relates to respect of knowledge and knowledge of creation and calls for mental strength and reason. This doorway specifically recognises ancestors, ancestral knowledge, and power, and develops critiques of the mechanisms of colonialism as it engages in critical literacy and critical education with indigenous communities. It is anti-colonial in practice and works to counter colonial ideologies.

The northern doorway brings forth teachings of healing, doing, and movement. In this realm, the physical elements are acknowledged and physical action and movement are located. When all the other three directions are in place, the teachings of the northern doorway are operationalised and it is with consciousness of all the doorways that action occurs in a conscious and healing way. This doorway specifically recognizes the healing in being and doing, acknowledges the collective work, addresses methodologies of practice from indigenous frameworks such as sharing or teaching circles, ceremonies, the use of nature and process-oriented action, and healing as a restoration of balance. It, also, encourages a socio-economic analysis of contemporary conditions.

The centre is where the fire exists and where all four doorways intersect and interrelate. It is where balance and harmony exist when all aspects are living in harmony and balance. The centre fire could also represent self in relation to all others. It is the essence of self and the manifestation of the whole. Utilizing a wholistic analysis enables practitioners to understand people better in their whole context as the centre really represents the cumulative aspects of all four doorways.

A major critique against the indigenous wholistic theory is that there are many more elements so this representation is, by no means, exhaustive. Circle teachings are diverse and representations of such can look different depending on the context, teacher, and nation. Furthermore, indignity risks to overlap with the category of autochthony, which serves as the basis for many contested political claims and economic cleavages (Bayart, Geschiere & Nyamnjoh, 2001; Ceuppens & Geschiere, 2005; Cutolo, 2008); or, in contrast, it can come at odds with local perceptions of who the locals and who the strangers are and produce paradoxical results.

Formal Management of Conflicts Theory

Formal conflict management theory has its assumptions underpinned by human rights issues, the rule of law, and retributive justice. The theory postulates that every conflict management mechanism must be grounded into the Universal Standard of Human Rights [1948] (Raiffa, 2002). These include human right issues and rule of law; formal grievance procedures, right arbitrations, and litigation; issues of equity and due process; and distributive and procedural justice (Williams, 2011).

International organizations like the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), African Union (AU), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have centred conflict management policy mainly on this theory (Stivachtis, 2007). Diplomatic and economic instruments, the issuance of ceasefire directives, peacekeeping operations, and enforcement measures such as

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trade embargoes, the formal court system and tribunals, mediation efforts, and bilateral and multilateral negotiations are mostly used(Ahmad, 2008; Marshall, 2009; Van Halema & Rassul, 2013). International peacemakers have assumed that the imposition of Western liberal democracy and neoliberal economic reforms are the best if not the only chance for peace (Bercovitch & Regan, 2004). Within the Westphalian state model, the responsibility for conflict management lies with the state and its judicial branches.

Formal conflict management theory has been employed to prevent and mitigate the outbreak of violent conflicts in some African countries. Sudan, Angola, Libya, Uganda, and Cote d'Ivoire are examples of where this theory has worked (Nader & Grande, 2002). To prevent the escalation of violent conflict, reduce its intensity or geographical extent, and bring confrontations to an end, international organisations, CSOs, and NGOs have used the formal conflict management theory (Williams, 2011).

The theory has been criticized for ignoring deep-rooted cultural issues in its quest to manage community-based conflicts (Marshall, 2009). The argument is that conflicts are rooted in cultural, political, social, and historical elements. Embedded also in these conflicts are spiritual, emotional, and mental relationships. This means for a conflict management mechanism to be successful, it should capture these issues in the management process; this, the formal conflict management theory lacks.

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Dual Concern Theory

The dual concern theory (DCT) has several variations, all of which assume that individuals or groups choose different modes, strategies, or styles for handling conflict based on some variations of two primary concerns/interests – "concern for self" and "concern for other". The DCT, proposed by Pruitt and Rubin (1986), is the most often cited theory in conflict management literature (Chou & Yeh, 2007). However, according to Desivilya, Somech, and Lidgoster (2010), the conceptual foundation of dual concern theory was laid by Blake and Mouton (1964).

Thomas (1976) extended this theory by proposing that a party's desire to satisfy his or her own concerns (i.e., the level of assertiveness the party employs), as well as the desire to satisfy the other's (i.e., the level of cooperation the party employs), will determine the behaviours used to pursue those concerns. Evolving from Blake and Mouton (1964) and Thomas (1976), the dual concern model (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986) predicts conflict behaviour based on whether a person has high or low concern for one's own outcomes and high or low concern for the other person's outcomes.

The DCT argues that conflict management can be effectively done by considering the behaviour as a meaning of high or low concern for self, combined with high or low concern for others (Chou & Yeh, 2007). The effective use of conflict management styles in DCT means there is a degree to which dual concern theory is successfully used to control and decrease conflicts in such a way that they never become a disturbance or destructive to the people involved.

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The dual concern model has been used by researchers to represent individual differences in conflict style [i.e., the tendency of an individual to handle conflicts of different types in the same way] (Rubin, Pruitt & Kim, 1994; Ruble & Thomas, 1976; van de Vliert & Kabanoff, 1990). However, Pruitt and Rubin (1986) emphasize that the decision to use one style or another is a strategic choice based on the likelihood that a style will be successful in a given situation. This perspective suggests that a party's concern for one's own outcomes and the other's outcomes will vary depending on contextual features of the conflict.

According to Chou and Yeh (2007), there are five conflict management styles in DCT, namely: problem-solving style, obliging style, forcing style, avoiding style and compromising style. The dual concern model (Figure 3) predicts that when an individual or a group has high concern for one's own interests combined with a high concern for the other's interests, that individual or group is more likely to engage in problem-solving and use an *integrating* style. Integrating is characterized by a willingness to exchange information openly, to address differences constructively, and to make every effort to pursue a solution that will be mutually acceptable (Gray, 1989; Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993; Rahim, 1992). The conflict literature suggests that this mode of handling conflict is preferred over others because it is most likely to yield win-win solutions. That is, a high concern for others is most likely to occur when there is an expectation of a long-term dependency on the other party (Pruitt & Carnevale, 1993).

Conflict management styles
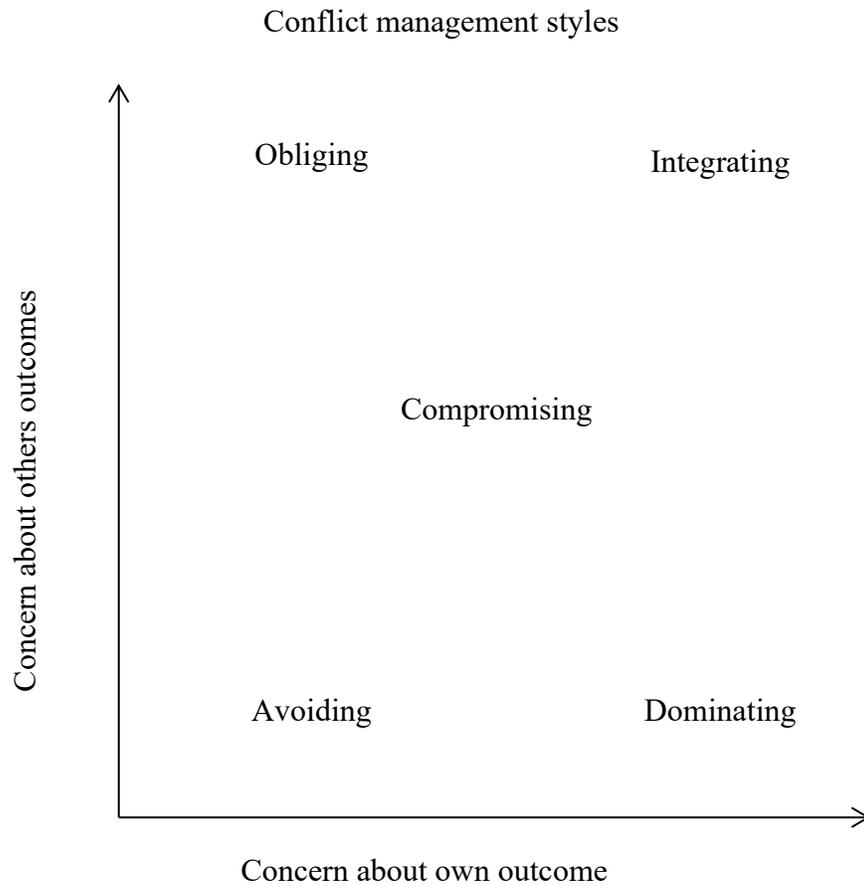
Figure 3: The Dual Concern Theory

Source: Adapted from Pruitt and Carnevale (1993 p. 69)

If concern for one's own interests is low and concern for the other person's interests is high, the dual concern model predicts that the person or group will use an *obliging* conflict style. This non-confrontational style emphasizes preserving the relationship with the other person or group rather than pursuing an outcome that only meets an individual's own concerns. In this situation, the similarities between the two parties are emphasized and the differences are downplayed. There is a tendency to give in to the other's concerns while giving up one's own needs and interests. Rubin et al. (1994) suggest that some

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conditions (e.g., the presence of time pressure) may encourage obliging. In addition, this style is unlikely to be employed if a party fears appearing weak.

The most confrontational style is *dominating,* which is predicted to result from a high concern for one's own interests and a low concern for the other's interests. This mode of conflict management is characterized by the use of forceful tactics such as threats and put-downs, an unwillingness to move from one's initial position, and a focus on defeating the opponent. Dominating is more likely to result in a solution in which one person or group wins and the other loses. Desivilya et al. (2010) note that context is likely to affect the use of this style. For example, it is more likely to be used when the other party seems willing to yield, and it is less likely to be used if there is a risk of alienating the other party.

The fourth conflict style in the dual concern model is *avoiding*. Avoiding is a non-confrontational style that, according to the model, results from having little concern for either one's own or the other's interests. Avoiding, supposedly, occurs either because the benefit in pursuing the conflict is small or because the other party to the conflict is unlikely to make satisfactory concessions. The person or group engaged in the conflict may hope that, if left alone, the conflict will somehow go away (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986).

The last style according to the dual concern model is *compromising,* which reflects a moderate concern for one's own interests and a moderate concern for the other party's interests. This style represents a modest effort to pursue an outcome that is mutually acceptable but without making a concerted effort to

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reach a Pareto optimal outcome through problem-solving. The compromising style is generally characterized as dividing resources in some equitable fashion without pursuing alternative solutions that may meet each party's interests more satisfactorily. When aspirations are not high enough to affect problem-solving or when pressures such as time limitations or high costs of protracted conflicts exist, conflict parties are often willing to compromise (Chou & Yeh, 2007; Desivilya et al., 2010; Friedman, Tidd, Currall & Tsai, 2000; Fisher, 2000; Rubin et al., 1994).

Notwithstanding the theory's strengths and capacity to envisage, the dual concern theory has drawn some criticism. The first criticism is that its predictions are limited to situations in which negotiators have the same bargaining orientation (Chou & Yeh, 2007). The model does not specify the nature of the problem-solving that occurs under high self-concern and high other-concern (Desivilya et al., 2010). The model ignores important negotiator goals such as the desire to reach a fair outcome. The model was designed as a heuristic device rather than as a comprehensive theory, and there are many relevant phenomena it does not cover (Chou & Yeh, 2007; Desivilya et al., 2010; Friedman, Tidd, Currall & Tsai, 2000). For example, the model ignores the competitive motive altogether. Evidence from prisoner's dilemma research (Kuhlman & Marshello, 1975) suggests that this orientation encourages a contentious strategy.

Conceptual Review

This section defines and discusses the concepts that drive the study. The central concepts reviewed include contextual issues in conflict, conflict

management, western-centred and indigenous conflict management mechanisms, motivations of conflict actors, and culture and conflict management. These concepts are discussed in detail in the subsequent sub-sections.

Contextual Issues in Conflict

Conflicts are regarded as inherent phenomena in both nature and society (Rassul, 2010). Latent or violent social confrontations have long been considered as the premium mobile avenue for social changes and transformations. Arguments to support this proposition are that conflicts are inevitable and ubiquitous in all societies at all times. Individuals or groups of people get involved in violent conflicts either because their interests or values are challenged or because their needs are not met (Nnoli, 2006). The deprivation of any important value induces fear, a sense of threat, and unhappiness that leads to conflicts.

Whether contending groups in a particular society are defined by ethnicity, religion, ideology, gender, or class identities, they have different needs, interests, values, and access to power and resources. Undoubtedly, such differences necessarily generate conflicts (Onwuzuruigbo, 2011). It is, therefore, pre-requisite to manage conflicts before they degenerate into violent expressions and massive destruction. However, conflict entails a number of fundamentals that must be taken into consideration if management is to be successful. These include "why" and "how" conflict erupts in its particular context, what exacerbates and sustains it, and what conditions lead to its becoming violent, destructive and costly. Practitioners also need to understand the best ways of handling conflict and the

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appropriate mechanisms needed to end it (Rogers, Bordone, Sander & McEwen, 2013).

Every conflict has certain basic elements that permit researchers or practitioners to produce a tentative roadmap. The mapper, first, gathers information about the history of the conflict and its physical and organizational settings. The second stage is to examine the parties in a conflict. Parties in a conflict differ in the directness of their involvement and the importance of its outcome (Rogers et al., 2013). Generally, the contextual issues of conflict have been grouped into the origin, typology, nature of a conflict, and the internal characteristics of the actors involved (Schulze, Stade & Netzel, 2014; Bercovitch & Diehl, 1995; Mei-Yu Yang & Aichia, 2015).
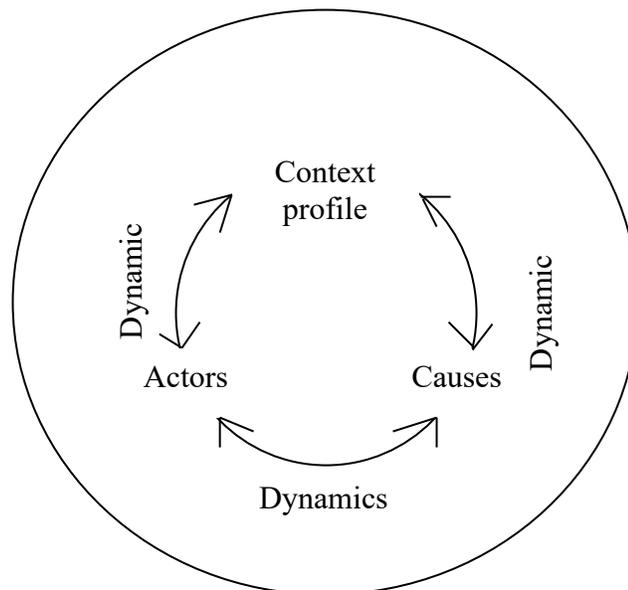
Figure 4: Conflict Analysis Structure

Source: Adapted from Goodhand, Vaux, & Walker (2002, p.3)

Origin of conflicts

Conflicts do not emerge in a vacuum; they have an origin or a cause. Perceived goals and interest incompatibility is perhaps the most basic cause of conflicts. Identity defence is also common, particularly in the contemporary world where group awareness and rights have assumed high visibility (Rugumamu, 2002). Collins (2008), also, sees identity as a major cause of conflicts. Conflicts over identity arise when group members feel that their sense of self is threatened or that they are denied legitimacy and respect. Because identity is integral to one's self-esteem and how one interprets the rest of the world, any threat to identity is likely to produce a strong response. Typically, this response is both aggressive and defensive and can escalate quickly into an intractable conflict. Since threats to identity are not easily put aside, such conflicts tend to persist.

For Maeise (2003), assertions of injustice are the origin of conflicts. The desire for justice is one that people tend to be unwilling to compromise on. An individual's sense of justice is connected to the norms, rights, and entitlements that are thought to underlie decent human treatment. Directly related to the issue of injustice is the argument by the Human needs theorists that many conflicts are caused by the lack of provision of fundamental human needs (Burton, 1990; Rosati, Carroll & Coate, 1990; Rothman, 1997). These include basic needs of food, water, and shelter as well as the more complex needs of safety, security, self-esteem, and personal fulfilment. These more complex needs centre on the capacity to exercise choice in all aspects of one's life and to have one's identity and cultural values accepted as legitimate.

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The final major origin of conflict has to do with high-stake distributional issues (Coleman, 2003; Coleman & Deutsch, 2012). Conflicts surrounding who gets what and how much they get, also, tend to be intractable. The items to be distributed include tangible resources such as money, land, or better jobs, as well as intangible resources such as social status. Under this cause, we have boundary conflicts, natural resource conflicts, governance conflicts, economic development conflicts, and conflicts resulting from militarisation of the society (Coleman & Deutsch, 2012).

The information on the origin or cause of a conflict is pre-requisite to handling or managing the conflict (Fisher, 2000; Garrett & Piccinni, 2012; Hammill & Bescançon, 2010). The cause of the conflict sometimes suggests the management mechanisms to employ, and the actors or stakeholders to engage to limit the destructive capacity of the conflict. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish a cause of a conflict from its consequences. In fact, as a conflict emerges, cause and consequence tend to blend. Hostility might be a consequence of one phase of a conflict and a cause of the next. However, identifying the origin or the root causes of the conflict is important to the management processes.

Typology of conflicts

The types of conflicts are, also, intrinsic to conflict management processes. Previous conflict research has identified four main levels of conflict in the context of human behaviour and relationships as summarized by Lewecki et al. (2003):

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- Intergroup conflicts between groups of individuals which can range in size and complexity due to the many relationships involved, including international conflict between nations.

- Intragroup or intra-organisational conflicts arising within smaller groups which comprise the organisation.

- Interpersonal conflict; that is conflict at an individual level, conflict between individuals, or conflict between an individual and a group.

- Intrapersonal conflict on a personal level where the conflict occurs in one's own mind.

Moore (2005) classifies conflicts based on predictable groups or patterns of the conflict. The core elements or idea supporting such classification is to begin to find out and to understand the root causes of a conflict in order to propose management strategies that will have a higher probability of success (EU-UN, 2012; Moore, 1996). This typology is guided by the core elements of conflict. In Moore (2005), cited in James and Ryals (2010), conflicts are categorised into five types. These are:

- Data conflict – this arises when information is lacking, differently interpreted or withheld by one party from the other party

- Interest conflict – this occurs when there are actual or perceived scarce resources such as physical assets (money or other tangible things), procedural issues (how decisions should be made) or psychological issues (who is in the wrong emotionally).

- Value conflict – this erupts when people have different ways of life, deeply rooted goals or varying criteria on how to evaluate behaviours.

- Relationship conflict – this type prospers in environments of strong emotions, stereotypes, poor communication and historic negative patterns.

- Structural conflict – this arises from structural inequalities in control, ownership, power, authority or geographic separation.

Oyeniyi (2011) also produced a typology of conflicts identifiable by sectors. The first typology is the elite conflicts. They are conflicts within the political leadership and are among the most common form of political strife. Elite conflict is normally of a low intensity but it does significantly affect the polity. The second typology is functional conflicts, which involves the determination of who rules in a given political centre. The third typology is communal and mass conflicts, which are, basically, to challenge the existing distribution of power. The final typology by Oyeniyi (2011) is revolutionary conflicts which pose a basic threat to the validity of the authority of leaders and offer alternative political visions guided by a clearly defined set of organising principles.

A typology of conflict is useful when the issues in a conflict are centralized in one of the above categories (typology). When issue focus occurs, different mechanisms or responses to conflicts are required. For example, if a conflict is primarily a data conflict, sharing information and being sure that each party is interpreting the facts the same way is useful. However, if the conflict primarily is about values, sharing factual data alone will be of little or no use.

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Nature of conflicts

Concerning nature, conflicts may be classified into violent and nonviolent conflict or into constructive and destructive conflicts (Bercovitch, Kremenyuk & Zartman, 2008; Collins, 2008). The destructive conflicts are characterized by verbal and nonverbal insults, ego attacks, inflexibility, a mindset of retaliation, and an exchange of negative emotion (Collins, 2008; Eric et al. 2015). These conflicts are also known as affective or personalised conflicts in the literature because they are personal in nature and are characterised by negative emotions, tension, personality clashes, and defensiveness (Ayivor, et al, 2013). In a particular case, there can be a combination of acts of omission and acts of commission. Berghof Foundation (2012) defines violence as consisting of actions, words, attitudes, structures or systems that cause physical, psychological, social or environmental damage and or prevent people from reaching their full human potential. The outcomes of these conflicts are often a damaged relationship.

The focus on managing conflict has given way to the notion that conflict can be constructive and there is an optimal level of conflict in a community that is better than no conflict at all (Collins, 2008). According to Collins (2008), constructive conflicts are characterized by arguments about facts, information, ideas, or plans. The benefits of optimal levels of constructive conflict include better decisions and innovative approaches to solving problems.

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Actors in conflicts

People are central when thinking about conflict analysis. The term "actors" is used to refer to all those engaged in or are being affected by conflict (Greta. 2005; Krishnarayan, 2005; Ramírez, 1999). These include individuals, groups, and institutions contributing to conflict or affected by it in a positive or negative manner, as well as those engaged in dealing with the conflict. Actors differ as to their goals and interests, their positions, capacities to realise their interests, and relationships with other actors (United States Institute of Peace, 2007).

Some approaches distinguish actors according to the level at which they are active (grassroots, middle level, top level). In particular, conflict transformation theory attaches great importance to middle-level leaders, as they may assume a catalytic role through their linkages to both the top and the grassroots (Collins, 2008). In any case, it is important to consider the relationships between actors or groups at various levels and how they affect the conflict dynamics (Wyman, 2013).

Particular attention should be paid to spoilers or conflict entrepreneurs, i.e. specific groups with an interest in the maintenance of the negative status quo (Collier & Hoeffler, 2002). If not adequately addressed within the framework of preventive strategies, they may become an obstacle to peace initiatives. Similarly, it is important to identify existing institutional capacities for peace in order to further, define entry points to address causes of violent conflict (Lewis, 2004). Capacities for peace typically refer to institutions, organisations, mechanisms, and

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procedures in a society for dealing with conflict and differences of interest. In particular, such actors need to be assessed in relation to their capacity for conflict management, their legitimacy, the likelihood of their engagement, and the possible roles they can adopt.

Kendie et al. (2014) note that, understanding the context of a conflict will not be complete if there are no indicators to gauge progress. In addition to mapping out the contextual issues, that is, the origin of the conflicts, the typology, the nature, and the characteristics of the actors, conflict sensitive approaches require conflict sensitive indicators to monitor and measure. These indicators are the context and its changes over time and the interaction between the context and the intervention. Conflict analysis provides just a snapshot of a highly fluid situation. It is, therefore, important to combine an in-depth analysis with more dynamic and continuous forms of monitoring to provide up-to-date information from which to measure the interaction between the context and the intervention. Indicators are useful in this respect as they help reduce a complex reality to a few concrete dimensions and represent valuable pointers to monitor change (Chou & Yeh, 2007; Fabiola, 2014; Zelalem & Endalcachew, 2014).

Conflict Analysis Models

This aspect focused attention on particular aspects of a conflict to bring order into a confused conflict perception. Simon and Rychard (2005) maintain that conflict analysis is not an "objective" art. It is influenced by different world-views. The Harvard approach, the human needs theory, and the conflict

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transformation approach are frequently used, according to Simon and Rychard (2005). The Harvard Approach emphasises the difference between positions (what people say they want) and interests (why people want what they say they want). It argues that conflicts can be resolved when actors focus on interests instead of positions and when they develop jointly accepted criteria to deal with these differences (Lederach, 2005; Simon & Rychard, 2005).

The human needs theory argues that conflicts are caused by basic universal human needs that are not satisfied (Marker, 2003). The needs should be analysed, communicated and satisfied for the conflict to be resolved. The conflict transformation approach sees conflicts as destructive or constructive interactions depending on how conflicts are dealt with or are transformed (Burton, 1997). Conflicts are viewed as an interaction of energies. Emphasis is laid on the different perceptions and the social and cultural context in which reality is constructed. Constructive conflict transformation seeks to empower actors and support recognition between them. This study aligns with this last approach to understanding the issues in the study areas.

After setting the conflict system boundaries, one has to use an analytical tool to deepen the insight of the various aspects of the conflict. The tools can be categorized according to their focus on dynamics, actors, causation, structures, issues and options/strategies. The Conflict Wheel summarizes all the tools and helps in deciding which tool to use for which aspect (Figure 5). The conflict wheel is a "meta" conflict analysis tool, introducing the others tools. Each of the six sections of the wheel can be further analysed using tools presented below

(Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Research: http://www. berghof-center.org/english.htm no date; Simon and Rychard, 2005). The Wheel gives a first overview of a conflict before analysing specific aspects. The Wheel symbolizes wholeness and movement. Once the various aspects have been examined, they need to be brought together again to get the conflict analysis "rolling".

CPA

Needs-Fear Mapping

Needs-Fears Mapping

CPA

Conflict Mapping

Conflict Tree

Glasl's Escalation Model

Multi-causal Role Model

2. Issues

1. Actors/ Relations

3. Dynamics

6. Options Strategies

4. Context Structures

5. Causation

Needs-Fear Mapping

Glasl's Escalation Model

Conflict Tree

Multi-Causal Role Model
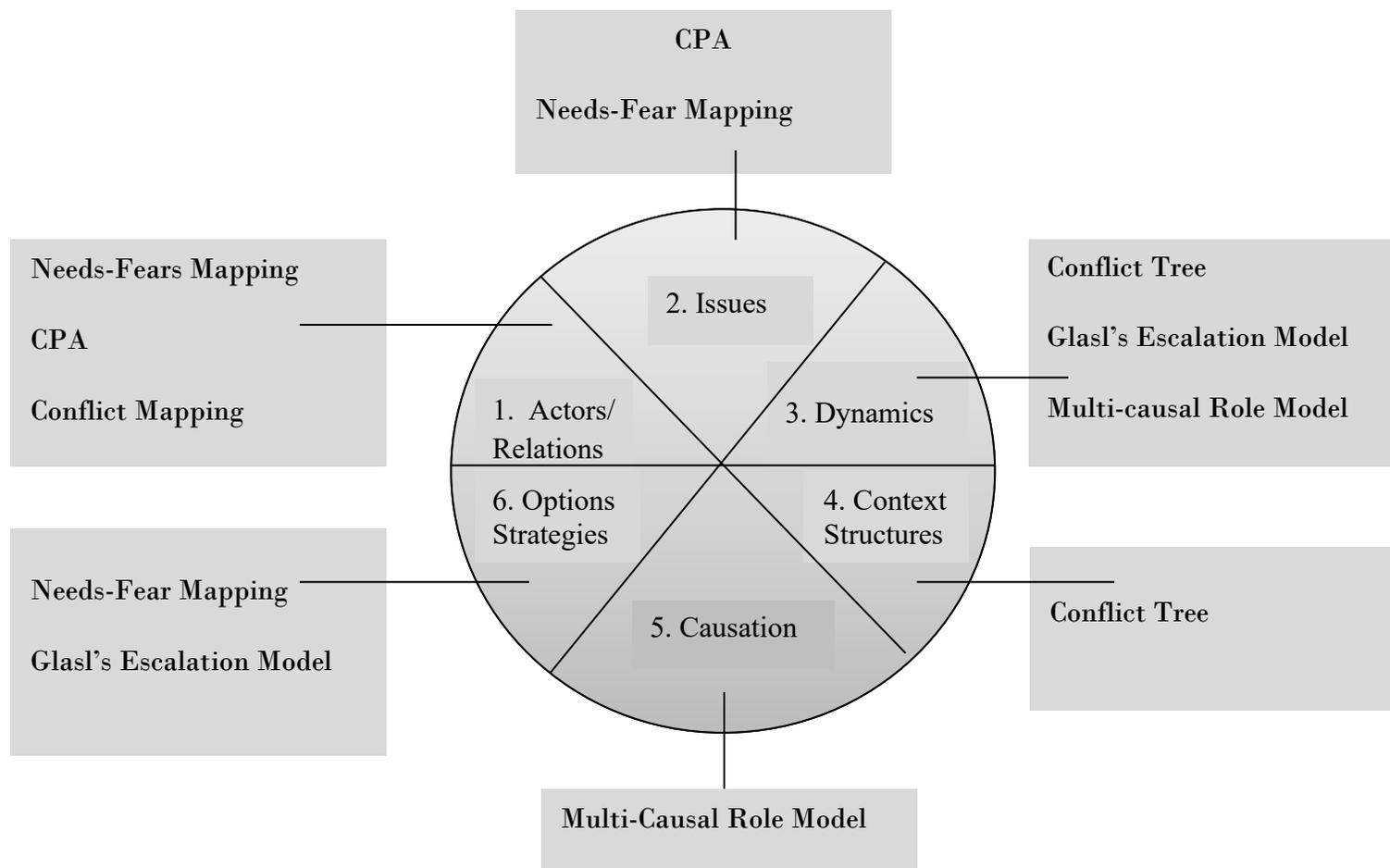
Figure 5: The Conflict Wheel

Source: Adapted from Mason and Rychard (2005, p. 3)

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The Multi-Causal Role Model

This study from the on-set suggested that the protracted and relapsed nature of conflicts in the Northern Region is due to several factors including the mechanisms used in their management processes. From the conflict wheel, it is clear that the multi-causal role model will best fit the analysis of the conflicts. The model differentiates structural from actor-oriented factors by synthesising system and actor approaches (Lederach, 2005). Disputes have their roots in psycho-sociological, socioeconomic, political, and international conditions. Normally, a "syndrome of factors" causes violence (Mason & Rychard, 2005).

Using the model to analyse conflict, the first step is to differentiate between the following factors:

- Reasons – the basic or root causes and structural factors of the conflict perceived by the actor as "historical problems". Reasons are related to conflict parties' interests and needs, but also to their perception of history, trauma, injustice etc.

- Targets – these are the aims of the conflict parties. That is, what the conflict parties say they are fighting about, the positions and expressed interests of the conflict parties.

- Channels – these are lines of political, social, economic or national cleavage that bring people together to form group-identity. The channels are often not directly related to the root cause of the conflict.

- Triggers – these initiate a new level of conflict. In violent conflicts, for example, a trigger causes an actor who previously preferred non-violent

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solutions to tend to favour violent actions. Triggers are hard to identify in advance and are not easily influenced by a third party.

- Catalysts – these influence the rate, intensity, and duration of a conflict once the conflict is underway, affecting the content and dynamics of a conflict. Catalysts and channels together may transform reasons over time, for example when two groups begin by fighting over resources and end up by fighting over ethnicity (Fisher, Abdi, Ludin, Smith, Williams & Williams, 2000; Mason & Rychard, 2005).

Once the various factors have been identified, the next step is to situate the reasons, triggers, channels, catalysts, and targets in a graph and link them with arrows. Finally, on separate cards, identify which conflict transformation efforts are addressing which factors and where there is a need for a change or further efforts.
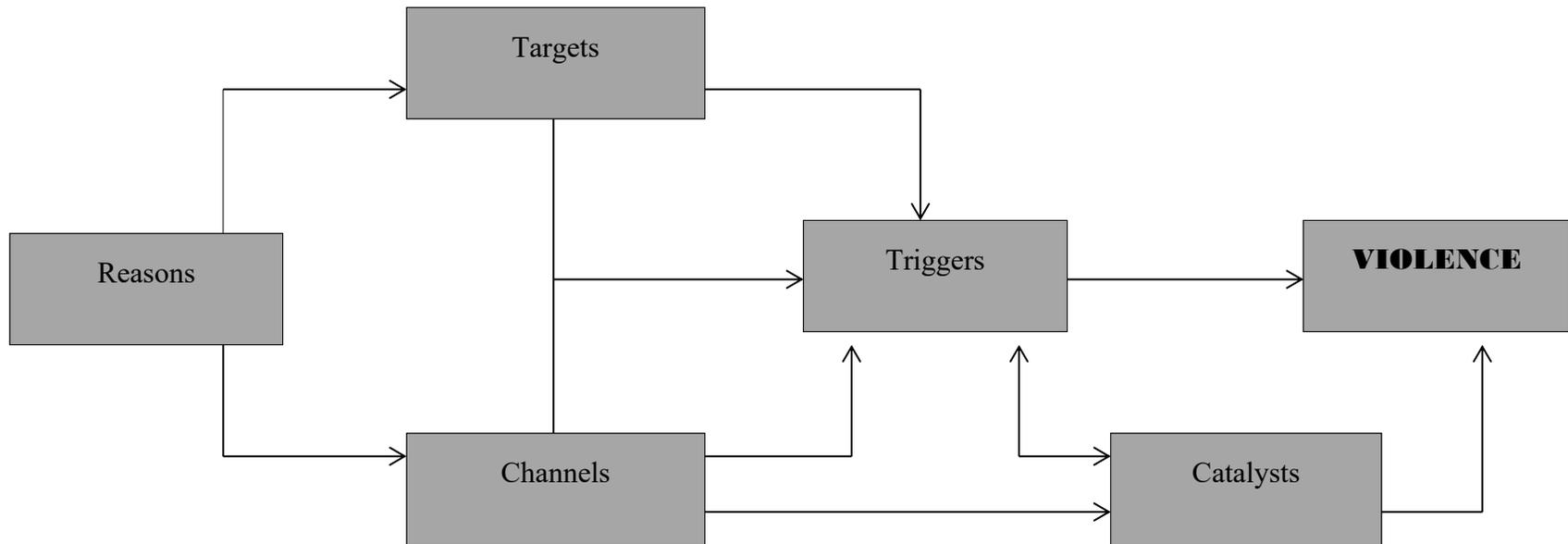
Figure 6: The Multi-Causal Role Model for Conflict Analysis

Source: Adapted from Mason and Rychard (2005, p.11)

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Conflict Management

Conflict has caused tremendous harm to civilians, particularly women and children, and increased the numbers of internally displaced persons in most countries (Mei-Yu Y. & Aichia, 2015). In areas where conflicts prevail, development programmes have been disrupted or obstructed and resources re-directed to less productive uses (McCormick, 2005). There has been deterioration in the quality of life, the weakening of political and economic institutions and the discouragement of investment in areas where conflicts triumph (Adan & Pkalya, 2006). In response to emerging global trends and the need to make concerted and coordinated efforts to address the negative elements of conflict, conflict management has come to the fore.

A conflict management process entails the adoption of various measures including the establishment of communication links and personal interactions between the adversaries, setting up of mechanisms to end or minimise violence, and seeking the commitment of the parties to a solution to their problem (James & Ryals, 2010). According to Rahim (2001), conflict management does not necessarily imply avoidance, reduction or termination of conflict but rather designing effective approaches or strategies to minimize the dysfunctions of conflict and enhancing the constructive functions of conflict (Crocker, Hampson & Aall, 2001; Warner, 2000; Williams, 2011). Bercovitch (2004) also notes that the purpose of effective conflict management is to minimize disruption arising from the existence of a conflict, and contain structural conflicts such that they do

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not impinge on the equitable, efficient, and sustainable management of project activities.

The prime objective of conflict management is to keep social cohesion and co-existence intact by searching for a common ground, optimizing each actor's position, integrating the interest of the weaker side into the compromise and persuading the victors and victims to accept integrated solutions mutually binding. Alternatively, in an ethnically and ideologically charged conflict where sources are deep, it is possible to moderate disagreement, rather than seek immediate resolution. Beyond the implication of reduced hostility levels, conflict management often seems to refer to both the efforts to control the relationship as well as the success of such efforts (James & Ryals, 2010).

Conflict is a highly complex concept. It is also dynamic, yet, highly contextualized. Interventions to address conflict, necessarily, reflect similar complexities and dynamics (Adan & Pkalya, 2006). In this regard, conflict management involves designing effective strategies within a chosen mechanism or approach to minimize the dysfunctions of conflict and enhance the constructive functions of conflict (Crocker et al., 2001; Williams, 2011). Conflicts are managed using the formal or western-centred mechanism, indigenous mechanism, or a hybrid involving both western-centred and indigenous mechanisms.

Western-centred Conflict Management Mechanisms

Western-centred conflict management mechanisms are formal mechanisms that are underpinned by human right issues, the rule of law, and

retributive justice (Marshall, 2009). On a broad scale, they include diplomatic and economic instruments, the issuance of ceasefire directives, peacekeeping operations, bilateral and multilateral negotiations, and enforcement measures such as trade embargoes (Van Halema & Rassul, 2013). Internally, these mechanisms include the formal court system and tribunals, mediation efforts, and peace education efforts (Ahmad, 2008; Marshall, 2009; Van Halema & Rassul, 2013).

With this form of conflict management, much emphasis is put on formal grievance procedures, right arbitrations, and litigation; issues of equity which captures concerns such as fairness, justice, and due process to prevent arbitrary or capricious decision-making and distributive and procedural justice (Fabiola, 2014). For this reason, the formal court system, military peacekeeping operations, and commission of enquiries are generally dominant in Africa and particularly, in Ghana, since most of the conflicts are rooted in issues of justice (Primm, 2014; United Nations, 2004).

The formal court system

The most predominant method of conflict management recognized under the law in Ghana, currently, is adjudication (Kwesi, 2013). Countries like Ghana, having been ruled by the British, had the English common law imposed on them. It is widely acknowledged that only half-hearted measures were made to retain certain African customs and, even then, under very stringent conditions. To ensure that the law performs its role in conflict resolution and management, the western legal system laid great emphasis on the courts. Courts are seen as the

arbiters of disputes either between the citizen and the state and/or between citizens themselves. Courts are deciders of disputes authorized to involve socially endorsed force to carry out officially-recognised conflict resolution and management.

In Ghana, the judiciary (court) is the branch of government given the authority to interpret, apply and enforce the laws of the country. The judiciary is divided into Superior Courts made up of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, High Court and Regional Tribunals and Lower Courts such as Circuit Courts, Districts Courts, and the Juvenile Courts (Atuguba, Agyebeng & Dedey, 2006; Kwesi, 2013).

Conflict management through the judicial system is difficult because the population is poorly informed of its legal rights and responsibilities and there are high costs and complex procedures involved. Other causes may include inadequate staffing of the judiciary, strong links between the executive and judiciary and the manipulation and selective application of the law in certain instances (Kwesi, 2013). Perhaps or even more importantly, the judicial structure inherited from the British does not accurately and adequately reflect Ghana's demographic dynamics, social values, and socio-political organisation. These circumstances add to the burden of legal complications in the ever-increasing traditional (land, chieftaincy, and ethnic) conflicts (Bukari, 2013).

The common citizen's perception of the court is a highly technical and sophisticated place that one should avoid as much as possible (Kwesi, 2013). Indeed, most citizens would rather let their disputes go unresolved than resort to

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courts (Bukari, 2013). The rigid procedural structure of adjudication and its adversarial nature are viewed as unsatisfactory for the resolution and management of certain conflicts. In instances of conflicts involving communities, the formal justice system may have some deterrent impact through the criminal justice system; but, they are not always successful for a number of reasons relating to the nature of the conflict and the relationships between the parties involved (Hammill & Bescançon, 2010). While civil courts offer some flexibility on solutions, their remedies such as compensation have yet to be tailored to particular conflict situations and the social and cultural environments that they are embedded in.

The formal justice institutions have proven to be inadequate in responding not only to the outbreak of violence but in addressing the underlying causes and facilitating peacebuilding and reconciliation of communities (Hammill & Bescançon, 2010). The result has been the growth of mistrust by communities in these structures and, hence, the rejection of their application, which further escalates instability in conflict situations (Bukari, 2013; Kwesi, 2013).

Military interventions and peacekeeping

Hauss (2003) examined that military intervention and conflict management would almost never have been uttered in the same breath. The field of conflict management has its roots in the peace movements that dotted the 20th century, most of whose members found the use of force abhorrent. Until the last decade or so, military force was used most often to achieve a state's geopolitical

goals of protecting and/or enhancing its territory, population, and other critical resources.

Peacekeeping is quite another thing, it generally entails supporting a peace process with what it needs and can include peacekeeping soldiers, police and civilian personnel (Annan, 2013). There is no doubt that the use of force by the international community in such places as Kosovo and Somalia was an important part of the development of peacebuilding in the 1990s. There is also little doubt that the failure to intervene effectively in Rwanda, Chechnya, and elsewhere made conflicts worse than they otherwise would have been (Brigg, 2008). Finally, there is little doubt that the international community has a lot to learn about how to conduct such operations.

The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) has collaborated with the police to keep peace through curfews, patrols, and disarming of the people. These operations are aimed at assisting the civil authorities to maintain peace in the Northern Region and some other parts of the country. The GONGONG operation as it is named by the GAF was initially aimed at restoring peace in the Dagbon, Nanumba, and Konkomba areas of the Northern Region (Kendie, et al, 2014). With the eruption of conflict between the Mamprusis and Kusasis in Bawku in December 2008, it became necessary to deploy the military to assist the police because of the level of atrocities that were committed.

Currently, there are approximately 472 troops deployed in Yendi, Gushiegu, Bawku, Nakpanduri, Bimbila, Wa, Bole, Bunkpurugu, Buipe, Kpatinga and Kete Krachi. The situation in these areas has been relatively calm since 2009

with very few recorded incidents (GAF, 2016). Although militaries have intervened in the domestic affairs of communities in Ghana to reduce the impact of confrontations, rarely have they done so in an attempt to end intractable or protracted conflicts.

Commission of enquiry

A commission of inquiry is one of many bodies available to the government to inquire into various issues. Commissions report findings, give advice and make recommendations. While their findings are not legally binding, they can be highly influential. Commissions of enquiry are independent of the government and act strictly within their terms of reference to ensure their processes are within the law. Commissions are a remarkably flexible means of looking into a wide range of situations. As part of the government process, they provide a unique channel through which interested parties can directly participate in decision-making.

Commissions of enquiry have become a means of conflict management in Ghana. The government sets up committees and commissions of enquiries to take evidence and make recommendations for resolving conflicts. Awedoba (2009) argues that these committees/commissions are post-dated in the sense that it is after the conflict has taken place and the damage has been caused that they are set up to do a post-mortem. They rarely find solutions to the problem; some never come out with any report and if they do, their reports are never made public (Awedoba, 2009). It must be added that sometimes, the government chooses

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which recommendation(s) to accept or implement. In the case of the Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict, a number of committees and commissions were set up with the prominent one being the Wuaku commission. The findings of these committees, however, have not resolved the conflict (Issifu, 2015).

The above discussed western-centred conflict management mechanisms, that is, the formal court system, the military peacekeeping operations, and the commission of enquiries have been applied to conflicts in the Northern Region; but, there are a number of conflicts still pending in the area and in Ghana as a whole. These Western legal mechanisms emphasise the establishment of guilt and execution of retribution and punishment without reference to victims or the wider families or a future reincorporation of the offender into the community. They are adversarial, and evidence must be direct and specific.

The overwhelming emphasis on formal mechanisms by the state and its institutions to manage conflicts has not been productive. In a particular instance, although all the western-centred mechanisms have been used in the Bunkprugu, Nakpanduri, and Bimbilla conflicts, there seems to be no end in sight, a gap this study seeks to fill. Lundy (2014) note that conflict management mechanisms mostly based on the Western agenda of "liberal peace" do not, necessarily, provide the best solutions to conflict and sustaining peacebuilding, particularly in societies which have parallel systems of governance and whose societal structures differ substantially from Western statehood. This has led to most conflict management experts advocating for the use of indigenous mechanisms based,

mostly, on the cultural values of the people (Boege, 2006; Brock-Utne, 2001; Osaghae, 2000; Osi, 2008; Zartman, 2000b).

Indigenous Conflict Management Mechanisms

Before colonization in Africa, many societies had their own "indigenous conflict management mechanisms" (Adjei & Adebayo, 2014). These mechanisms, based on the culture and customs of a group of people, utilized local actors and traditional community-based judicial and legal decision making to manage conflicts. Based on indigenous institutions such as values, beliefs, customs, etc., they are focused on the restoration of order, harmony, and the sense of the "community" (D'Saouza, 2011; Osaghae, 2000).

Utilizing indigenous community-based justice mechanisms in conflict management is not new, especially in Africa. Their importance was echoed in 1999 when an international conference was held in Ethiopia. Ofuho (1999), in that conference, brought to light the experiences of grassroots peacemaking efforts among the communities in Kidepo Valley where cattle rustling was prevalent. According to Ofuho, the people used rituals, symbols, interpretation of myths, and curses to bring conflicts to an end. Indigenous justice systems have been hailed in other African nations as laudable local alternatives for restorative justice (Afako, 2002). Most notable are the post-genocide Rwanda's traditional Gacaca and post-war Uganda's Mato Oput.

Gacaca of Rwanda

The *Gacaca* court is a system of community justice inspired by Rwandan tradition where *gacaca* can be loosely translated to mean "justice amongst the grass". This traditional communal justice was adapted in 2001 to fit the needs of Rwanda in the wake of the 1994 Rwandan genocide where an estimated 800,000 people were killed, tortured, and raped. To address the fact that there were thousands of accused still awaiting trial in the national court system, and to bring about justice and reconciliation at the grassroots level, the Rwandan government in 2001 re-established the traditional community court system called "Gacaca" (D'Saouza, 2011).

In the Gacaca system, communities at the local level elected judges to hear the trials of genocide suspects accused of all crimes except planning of genocide. The courts gave lower sentences if the person was repentant and sought reconciliation with the community. Often, confessing prisoners returned home without further penalty or received community service orders. More than 12,000 community-based courts tried more than 1.2 million cases throughout the country. The Gacaca trials also served to promote reconciliation by providing a means for victims to learn the truth about the death of their family members and relatives. They also gave perpetrators the opportunity to confess their crimes, show remorse, and ask for forgiveness in front of their community. The Gacaca courts officially closed on 4th May 2012.

Many Rwandans agree that it has shed light on what happened in their local communities during the genocide even if not all of the truth was revealed

(Brouneus, 2008). Notwithstanding, there were some criticisms against the gacaca court. The "truths" shared were contested, the interpretations of justice disputed, and the reconciliation unattained (Retting, 2008). Ingelaere (2009) suggested that the trials created an "us" and "them" dynamic between Hutus and Tutsis, and that, if anything, worsened inter-group relations rather than improve them. Furthermore, critics say the gacaca court lacked legal representation. Gacaca functions used "people of integrity" as judges, lawyers, and the jury which affected the credibility of pronouncements.

Mato Oput of Uganda

One of the mechanisms for forgiveness and reconciliation among the Acholi of Uganda is the Mato Oput (Afako, 2002). Mato Oput, which means drinking the bitter herb, is both a process and ritual ceremony that aims at restoring relationships between clans that would have been affected by either an intentional murder or accidental killing. It helps to bring together the two conflicting parties with the aim of promoting forgiveness and restoration rather than revenge. The Acholi conduct the *Mato Oput* ceremony because they believe that after the ceremony, the hearts of the offender and the offended will be free from holding any grudge.

A common characteristics include the slaughtering of a sheep (provided by the offender) and a goat (provided by the victim's relatives), the two animals are cut into halves and then exchanged by the two clans. This is followed by the drinking of the bitter herb by both clans to wash away bitterness (Afako, 2002;

Ochola, 2007; Onyango, 2001). The drinking of the bitter herb means that the two conflicting parties accept the bitterness of the past and promise never to taste such bitterness again. It is believed by many Acholi that *Mato Oput* can bring true healing in a way that a formal justice system cannot. Although the Mato Oput plays a significant role in the reintegration of the returnees after the war, the traditional approach to justice is inadequate in dealing with cases that involve the violation of International Humanitarian Law (Ochola, 2007; Onyango, 2001).

Indigenous conflict management mechanisms in managing localized or community-based conflicts cannot be overemphasized. Just like the strengths associated with the Gacaca, Mato Oput, Gadaa, and Guuit, Boege (2006) asserts that indigenous mechanisms provide for inclusion and participation. Parties to a conflict are enjoined to adopt an integrative (win-win) approach, with each having the opportunity to present its case without recourse to counsel as found in adversarial systems. This consequently makes the approach affordable and cheaper. Menkhause (2000) in the same vein notes that indigenous mechanisms tend to be process-oriented and not product-oriented. That is, they focus on managing rather than resolution.

Indigenous conflict management mechanisms are usually better attuned to the needs of local communities (Kwesi, 2013). This is because they use the inquisitorial and restorative approaches to conflict management instead of the adversarial and winner-looser approach of litigation (Isike & Uzodike, 2011; Kah, 2011; Kwesi, 2013). In destabilised states where conflict management institutions like the police, law courts, and civil society are absent, indigenous conflict

management institutions provide the best alternative since they are found in all societies (Kah, 2011).

In spite of this relevance, indigenous conflict management mechanisms have been associated with a few problems. Indigenous conflict management mechanisms are limited to space; that is, they are confined to a relatively small community context: clan, village, or neighbouring communities (Bercovitch, 2004). The customary laws applied may evolve from such small societies and may not be applicable to other societies (Zartman, 2000a). They have also been challenged as only applicable to and useful in managing simple disputes: matrimonial disputes, intra-family quarrels, land disputes, among others, which are not as complex or threatening as conflicts of national proportions (Osaghae, 2000). A major argument against indigenous mechanisms is that they violate universal standards of human rights and democracy, reflect issues of discrimination against women, and lack a voice for children (Boege, 2006).

Like other conflicts in the country, efforts at managing conflicts in the Northern Region have focused, usually, on Western democratic ideals and legal processes (Kendie et al., 2014). These are the state initiated and directed, the state initiated but not led, and private entity initiated interventions. The interventions are also classified into three broad subdivisions: military force, legal processes and, negotiation/education. The state initiated interventions include military/ police engagement to stop the hostilities and, afterward, stationed personnel at the conflict zones to keep peace through curfews, patrols, and disarming of the people (Kendie et al., 2014).

The legal methods have centred on court actions – injunctions as well as prosecutorial activity. The non-state activities are mostly negotiation and mediation efforts by CSOs like WANEP. All these efforts are western-centred mechanisms. Sarpong-Anane (2014) asserts that these mechanisms address the symptoms rather than the root causes of the conflicts. By inflicting physical and material penalties, reconciliation becomes impossible or short-lived. Against this backdrop, scholars like Sen (2006), Adjei and Adebayo (2014), Fabiola (2014), Primm (2014) and Sarpong-Anane (2014) have argued for a complementarity between the western-centred and indigenous mechanisms to offset each other's limitations and strengths in addressing conflicts.

Motivations for Conflict Actors in Choosing Conflict Management Mechanisms

In the globalised world today, western-dominated international agencies have pushed democratisation and other neo-liberal economic reforms on the African continent (Adjei & Adebayo, 2014). A system of free and competitive elections, a multi-party system, a free press and judiciary (court system), the rule of law, and the guarantee of other liberal rights and freedoms are dominant (Sapong-Anane, 2014). Indigenous people are now confronted with the two options of either formal (western-centred) or informal (indigenous) systems for managing their conflicts.

Community members involved in conflicts take courses of action based on certain motivations. Conflict actors' motivations are mostly based on their

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knowledge, opinion, material wealth, power, and status (Castro & Ettenger, 1996). Similarly, Tsega (2004) identifies the motivational factors for choosing a management mechanism as including awareness of the options available, opinions on how effective mechanisms are, cost involved in the use of a particular option, and the valued nature of the option which has to do with the perceived likelihood of success and their relationship with an opponent.

In Collins' (2008) view, not all people have equal access to all options; class, gender, age, and other factors may restrict which avenues are open to certain individuals or groups. Based on factors like age and gender, community members might prefer the western-centred mechanisms since most of the indigenous mechanisms barred the young and women from their use. In line with the assertion by Collins (2008), Roe, Nelson, and Sandbrook (2009) suggest that the nature of the dispute/conflict itself may prescribe the use of certain legal procedures. In situations where the conflict is between or within families or is communal or even violent or non-violent, some mechanisms may be preferred to others.

Lipsky and Avgar (2010) assert that culture plays a crucial role in conflict management. Attempts to include indigenous perspectives and practices pose important challenges to Western understanding of conflict and rational-legal forms of conflict management. These challenges are often addressed by foregrounding "culture" as a crucial variable in comprehending conflict. On that account, the next immediate section presents a discussion on culture and conflict management.

Culture and Conflict Management

Culture is an essential part of conflict and conflict management (Schweithelm, Kanaan & Yonzon, 2006). According to LeBaron (2003), cultures are like underground rivers that run through our lives and relationships, giving us messages that shape our perceptions, attributions, judgments, and ideas of self and other. Though cultures are powerful, they are often unconscious, influencing conflicts and attempts to resolve conflicts in imperceptible ways (LeBaron, 2003). Cultures are more than language, dress, and food customs. Cultural groups may share race, ethnicity, or nationality, but they also arise from cleavages of generation, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, ability and disability, political and religious affiliation, language, and gender (Rasch, 2011).

Docherty (2004) argues that practices in conflict management should be based on a reconceptualization of the idea of culture that accounts for historical and political-economic trajectories of communities. In order to enable the transformational changes in conflict management, what is required is a much-nuanced understanding of indigenous cultures in diverse contexts (Basu, 2012; Hodgson, 2011). A complex understanding of the history and emerging modalities of indigenous communities in a global world would enable a more robust paradigm shift in the field of conflict management instead of merely paying lip services to the celebration of diverse conflict management mechanisms (Lipsky & Avgar, 2010).

While a good understanding of a particular culture is critical for responsive conflict management mechanisms, it is significant to note that culture

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is not an essential or inherent category, but that any indigenous culture is constantly undergoing modifications. Docherty (2004) points out that the elements of culture are not necessarily shared perfectly among all groups since individuals selectively adopt and adapt their multiple cultures; as such, the assumption that one will necessarily act in a specific manner does not fit reality. Instead of externalising standardised conflict management mechanisms, Docherty (2004) admonishes conflict interveners to pay attention to the community within these concepts in a single group.

Cultures are embedded in every conflict because conflicts arise in human relationships (Akande, 2002; Earley & Mosakowski, 2004; Kilmann, 2007). Cultures affect the ways we name, frame, blame and attempt to tame conflicts (LeBaron, 2003). Culture is always a factor in conflict; it plays a central role or influences it subtly and gently (Bercovitch & Ole, 2001). For any conflict that touches us where it matters, where we make meaning and hold our identities, there is always a cultural component (Bullen, 2013). Intractable conflicts like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or the India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir are not just about territorial, boundary, and sovereignty issues, they are also about acknowledgement, representation, and legitimisation of different identities and ways of living (Bullen, 2013). Culture is inextricable from conflict, though it does not cause it. When differences surface in families or communities, culture is always present, shaping perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, and outcomes (Faure & Gunnar, 1993)

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Given culture's important role in conflicts, LeBaron (2003) asserts that unless we develop comfort with culture as an integral part of conflict, we may find ourselves tangled in its net of complexity limited by our own cultural lenses. Cultural fluency is a key tool for disentangling and managing multi-layered, cultural conflicts. Culture is not the only factor in conflicts that is problematic, ignoring culture and its management in the conflicts in local communities is too. It is one of the reasons some conflicts are difficult to manage. Another cause of concern, according to Basu (2012), is that in spite of the sensitivity to culture in conflict management mechanisms, western-centred conflict management mechanisms see the world from a bureaucratic and formal-legal vantage point. Such an optic privileges the state and marginalises the role played by indigenous mechanisms (Adebayo, Benjamin & Lundy, 2014).

Empirical Reviews

This section concentrates on the empirical studies that are associated with this study. The empirical studies would provide rich and deep contextual data to help understand the phenomenon of conflicts and conflict management mechanisms in Africa and in Ghana. In all, six empirical studies were reviewed; these include Sackey's (2010); Yonas's (2012); Kendie et al.'s (2012); Bukari's (2013); Primm's (2014); and Kungu et al.'s (2015).

Sackey (2010) investigated the justice system in land conflict management in Kinondoni Municipality, Tanzania. The study examined the different justice systems available for resolving land conflicts and analysed why disputants prefer

a particular system. The study was based on a case study approach. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods including interviews, households' survey, observation, and literature survey was used to collect and analyse data on the type of conflicts and how these conflicts were resolved. Data were sought from relevant government agencies, tribunals, and Non-governmental Organizations. The units of analysis were the behaviour of disputants as well as the mechanisms that were employed in land conflict management. Finally, the interpretative and statistical analyses were done on the data collected.

The study found that many land disputes were not resolved or settled because of over-reliance on formal mechanisms; rather, they evolved into other types of conflicts. Besides, the study revealed that disputants preferred using informal justice systems to established "best practice" systems because of their flexibility for negotiations. However, disputants were somehow coerced to use the formal systems because their preferred systems are not recognised by law. The study concluded that there is the need for alternative justice systems with flexible mechanisms to adapt to the preferences of the modern and dynamic societies.

Similarly, a study by Yonas (2012) assessed the Mezard indigenous conflict resolution mechanism in rural Alamata woreda Tigray region of Ethiopia. The study also explored the sustainability of the institution, its enforceability, strengths and weaknesses, and role in maintaining peace and stability in the area. The study was qualitative in nature and employed the case study design as well. A total sample size of 24 participants was purposively selected for the study. Its composition was indigenous judges and court leaders. Unstructured interviews

and focus group discussions were the main data collection methods. Data were analysed using content analysis.

The study found that the sustainability of the institution is faced with formidable challenges; this is mainly because of its less attention on transferring the practice to the young generation and some forces of modernisation. With regard to enforceability, the decisions passed by the institution are found to be highly accepted by the community of the study area. In order to integrate the Mezard indigenous conflict resolution mechanism with the formal court, legalising their role and defining their jurisdiction was so important. The study concluded that advancing affirmative action, increasing the income of women by creating new job opportunities, giving chance to the youth to decide on their matters continually, and generating funds from the community can help the sustainability of the Mezard institution of conflict resolution.

The findings of both Sackey (2010) and Yonas (2012) concurred as they all highlight the relevance of indigenous institutions or mechanisms in conflict management. The two studies also found some challenges associated with the use of these indigenous mechanisms in conflict management. However, the two studies did not indicate the contextual issues (actors, origin, nature, etc.) of the conflicts and whether they had any influence on the effectiveness of the indigenous methods. Also, the studies did not indicate what types of conflicts these indigenous mechanisms were suitable for and at what times they should be employed.

Kendie et al. (2012) studied the dynamics of conflicts to enable a mapping of the trouble spots in Ghana. In the first phase of their research, the main objective was to map conflict zones in Northern Ghana. The structural, transformative, and psycho-cultural theories of conflict underpinned the study. The study adopted a multi-layered method in collecting and analysing data. After acquiring data from secondary sources in the state-owned media, a mop-up activity was conducted to validate the data from the regional peace council (and district peace councils where they exist), the regional and district security committees, religious bodies, and chiefs. In-depth interviews and survey instruments were used to elicit the relevant information from the sampled stakeholders and key actors.

The study found that the underlying causes had deep historical roots stemming from the colonial policy of putting acephalous societies under the centralised states. Other major causes include succession to skins and political differences. The study revealed that mediation efforts in the Northern Region can be best described as yielding short-term calm but not guaranteeing long-lasting and sustainable peace. All the interventions (especially the military ones) tend to achieve short-term stability but fail to eradicate the root cause of the conflict. Although indigenous ways of resolving conflicts exist in the various societies, many of the conflicts were in the courts, principally because the indigenous mechanisms were not allowed to work. The study suggested that government should take steps to codify customs, practices, and usages in all the traditional

areas including who is or can become chief, kingmaker or tendanba (earthpriests or landowners) and their respective roles.

Unlike Sackey (2010) and Yonas (2012), Kendie et al. (2012) analysed the contextual issues of the conflicts in Northern Ghana taking into consideration the types of conflicts, the origins of the conflicts, the actors involved, and the nature of the conflicts. However, little was done on the mechanisms employed in relations to who the interveners were, the times of the interventions, and the general analysis of the stakeholders who need to be involved in any management process.

Bukari (2013) examined the mechanisms used by both government and CSOs/NGOs to resolve the ethnic conflict in the Bawku Traditional Area of the Upper East Region of Ghana conflict. The study highlights the effectiveness and challenges of these mechanisms. The theory that underpinned this study was the protracted social conflict (PSC) theory. The study adopted mixed methods in both data collection and analysis. That is both quantitative and qualitative methods. A descriptive case study approach was used for the study.

A total of 220 respondents were used for the study. While the simple random sampling technique was used to select 110 residents, the study purposively sampled the remaining 110 participants comprising chiefs, community leaders, youth leaders, women groups, the Bawku Municipal Chief Executive (MCE), members of parliament, the security agencies, assembly members and heads of CSOs. The main instruments used for the data collection were interview schedules, interview guides and focus group discussions. Data

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were analysed using interviews of respondents through descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and content analysis of transcribed interviews and documents on the conflict.

The study found that the mechanisms used by government in the management of the conflict were peacekeeping which involved deploying security agencies (police and the Rapid Deployment Force) to the area and the imposition of curfews. There was, also, the use of arbitrations through the house of chiefs and the formal court systems. Other mechanisms were mediation efforts through Civil Society Organisations and Non-governmental Organisations. Bukari found that although these mechanisms maintained law and order, 80 percent of respondents believed that the mechanisms used have not been effective in managing the conflict since they were temporary, ad-hoc, had no early warning systems and did not provide permanent solutions to the conflict.

The study concluded that the use of the court system (arbitration and adjudication) tends to polarize the area further and does not bring a resolution to the conflict. It is important to adopt traditional approaches which are acceptable and culture-sensitive to all the tribes. There is, also, the need for a proper stakeholder analysis of actual parties in the conflict towards engaging them in the negotiation and mediation processes. Finally, the study unearthed power sharing as a possible way forward to managing the protracted conflict.

Primm (2014) examined Swazi National Courts in order to understand how traditional indigenous conflict management strategies can successfully intersect with the Western legal philosophy. The study adopted the mixed

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research design and was multi-layered in nature. A thorough literature analysis was conducted in the Swaziland library while interviews with various court personnel, observation of Swazi National court cases, and a survey of 100 local Swazis in five different regions was carried out. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used whereas interviews and observation were the main data collection methods. Content analysis and descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data.

The study found that the Swazi National Court (SNC) benefits the entire judicial structure of Swaziland. SNCs help alleviate the crippling backlog of cases in Swaziland's western-style Magistrate court. Swazi citizens view the SNCs as favourable because these courts are particularly accessible due to their low cost and decentralised locations. The study found some criticisms against the SNC. The court was cited for lacking fairness due to a bias against accused persons. The court president was also criticized as being unknowledgeable in human right protection or due process. The study concluded that although there were some criticisms against the SNCs, they were seen as legitimate and effective within the communities they serve.

Bukari (2013) and Primm's (2014) studies highlight the weaknesses of the western-centred conflict management mechanisms. In both cases, the western methods have proven to be ineffective in managing local people's conflicts which have traditional underpinnings. Primm (2014), however, did not bring to light the nature of conflicts the SNCs handled. Whether they were community, family or clan-based and whether the origins of conflicts were proximate or structural were

all not clarified. Bukari's (2013) study did not delve much into the nature of the traditional or indigenous approaches advocated for. The question of whether that will be acceptable to all parties is another issue for discussion.

Kungu et al. (2015) sought to analyse the Abakuria indigenous systems of conflict management used in managing intra-ethnic conflicts. The study employed the mixed method approach and used descriptive survey, ethnography and explanatory research designs. A sample size of 638 respondents was drawn using purposive sampling, stratified sampling, and snowballing techniques from a target population of members of the indigenous conflict management systems, members of provincial administration, local and international Non-governmental Organisations, Community Based Organisations, Faith Based Organisations, community policing members, members of the peace committees, civic leaders, District security team, warriors and community members/victims of the conflict.

The data were collected using questionnaires, in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. Quantitative data generated from the study were analysed descriptively while qualitative data were analysed following the five steps of thematic data analysis: transcription, open coding, axial coding, selecting codes and forming of themes. The study found that there were five key institutions of managing conflicts between the Abakuria clans, which were *Inchama, Avaragoli, Iritongo, Sungusungu,* and *Ihama.* The main role played by these arms in conflict management includes protecting the community against evil spirits, administering oaths, ex-communicating errant members, imposing fines, holding reconciliatory meetings and making traditional rules.

The study also found that the activities undertaken by members of these same institutions led to conflicts. Kungu et al. found that oaths were administered by using a vessel that was a human skull. In addition, preparation of oaths was done using human body parts such as breasts, private parts, and at some point, human blood. This served as a recipe for conflicts between clans and other communities. They concluded that the dual role of the institutions could be the reason for the persistent and recurring nature of the conflict between the Abakuria clans. Kungu et al.'s (2015) study, just like Primm's (2014), Yonas' (2012) and Sackey's (2010), failed to deal with the contextual issues of the conflicts and the management mechanisms employed.

Table 1 shows a summary of the empirical studies considered in this study.

Table 1 : Summary of Empirical Reviews

No.	Author(s)	Year of publication	Topic	Location	Research Design	Study population	Sampling	Instruments for data collection	Findings
1	Sackey	2010	Investigating Justice System in land conflict Resolution: A case study of Kinondoni Municipality, Tanzania	Tanzania	mixed	Government agencies, Tribunals, NGOs, Households	Purposive and simple random	Interview guide, FGD guide, and Observation checklist	-disputants prefer to use the informal justice systems -system is not recognised by law
2	Yonas	2012	An Assessment of Indigenous Conflict Resolution Mechanism of Mezard in Rural Alamata Woreda, Tigray National Regional State, Ethiopia	Ethiopia	Qualitative	Indigenous judges, Court leaders	Purposive	Interview guide FGD guide	-legalising their role and defining their jurisdiction is so important -sustainability possible
3	Kendie et al.	2012	Mapping conflict zones in Ghana-Northern	Ghana	Qualitative	CSOs House of chiefs, Peace Council REGSEC	Purposive	Interview guide, FGD guide	- causes include succession to skins and political differences -Indigenous mechanisms not allowed to work

Source: Author's Compilation (2017)

Table 1, continued

No.	Author(s)	Year of publication	Topic	Location	Research Design	Study population	Sampling	Instruments for data collection	Findings
4	Bukari	2013	The peace process in the Bawku conflict in Ghana: Challenges and prospects	Ghana	Mixed	Chiefs, MCE security agencies, Assembly members and Heads of CSOs	Purposive and simple random	Interview guide FGD guide	-Mechanisms used have not been effective -Court not appropriate
5	Primm	2014	Successful Integration of Western and Indigenous conflict management mechanisms	Swaziland	Mixed	Judges, Court clerks, Law professional	Purposive and simple random	Interview guide FGD guide	-Favourable SNCs due to cost and accessibility -Alleviate the Crippling backlog of cases
6	Kungu et al.	2015	A journey into the indigenous conflict Management mechanisms among the Abakuria community, Kenya: "the Beauty and the beast"	Kenya	Mixed	Indigenous people NGOs, CBOs, FBOs,	Purposive, Stratified and Snowball	Interview guide FGD guide	-Five key institutions identified- weakness associated with indigenous methods

Source: Author's Compilation (2017)

Lessons Learnt

It emerged from the various empirical studies that the qualitative and mixed method research designs were mostly employed in studying issues of conflict and conflict management. These methods came in handy because of the quality of data needed for analysis of issues of conflict. It became evident that the case study design was used mostly in line with the qualitative research design. This design allowed for in-depth examination of the conflict management mechanisms. The review showed that purposive sampling technique was mostly employed when adopting the qualitative method. It was normally applied to select key informants: traditional authorities, court personnel, CSOs, NGOs, members of House of Chiefs, and security personnel.

The methods of data collection were predominantly interviews (in-depth) and focus group discussions with the interview guide and the focus group discussion guide as the corresponding instruments. The use of the two methods enabled triangulation in data collection to facilitate comparison and ensure validity. The content analysis was predominantly employed to analyse data in all the reviews.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework creates a synergy between the main variables of a study. The framework that informs this research seeks to explain the connection between the various concepts of conflict and conflict management mechanisms. It shows how their interaction could lead to sustainable conflict management.

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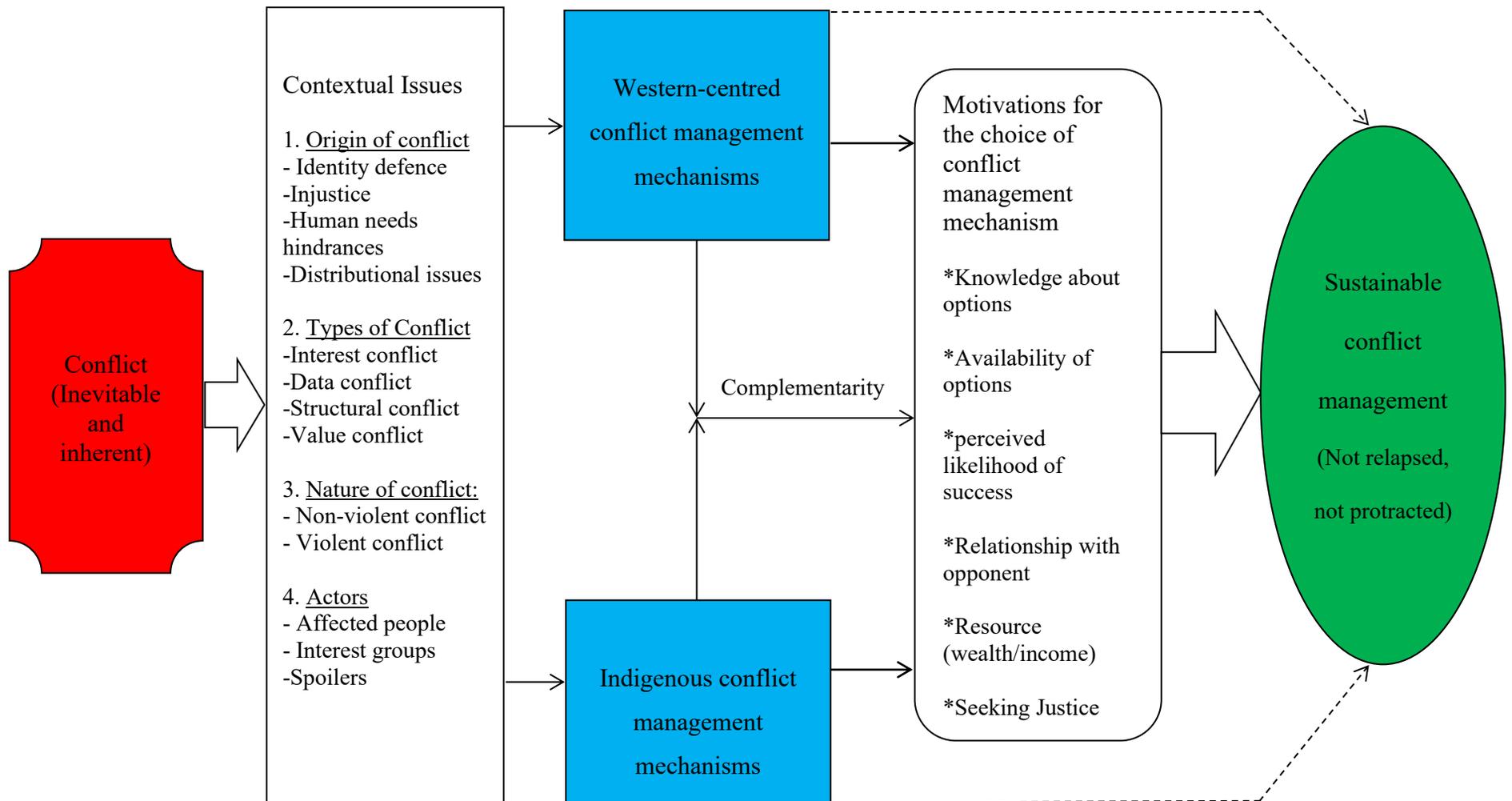
Figure 7: Conceptual Framework of Conflict Management

Source: Author's Construct (2017)

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As illustrated in Figure 7, at the extreme right of the framework is conflict, which is seen as inescapable, inevitable, and inherent in human existence and social progress. This is driven by the realist theory of conflict. The nexuses suggest that when conflict ensues, contextual issues in the conflict are pre-requisite to determining the success or failure of a management process. The ultimate way to sustainable conflict management is the analysis of these contextual issues in their respective contexts. The contextual issues of a conflict consist of the origin/structural causes, the typology, nature, and the actors involved with particular attention to interest groups and spoilers.

Two main conflict management mechanisms are available: indigenous and western-centred or formal mechanisms. The framework suggests that complementarity is the better option. This method is seen as a paradigm shift that can also help bridge the schism between indigenous and western-centred mechanisms as well as the burgeoning concerns of the limitation of either of the mechanisms. However, a group's choice of a management mechanism is guided by certain motivations. These motivations include their knowledge about the options, availability of the options, perceived likelihood of success, relationships and the resources available to the group. Although complementing the mechanisms is necessary to managing local people's conflicts, it is not sufficient if the motivations are not taken into consideration.

When the motivations of the primary actors are ignored, it results in weak management processes, making conflicts relapse as they get protracted. This is indicated in the framework with the broken lines, suggesting weak management

processes. On the other hand, when they are factored in management processes, sustainable conflict results are achieved; that is, conflicts are not relapsed and protracted.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF CONFLICTS IN THE NORTHERN

REGION

Introduction

The Northern Region of Ghana has experienced a disturbing phenomenon of intermittent intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflicts with chieftaincy and land being the major causes. Indeed, there have been a countless number of such conflicts between 1980 and 2012 (Awedoba, 2006; Kendie et al., 2012; Mahama, 2003). There have been wars between the Nanumba and the Konkomba in 1981, 1994 and 1995; between the Bimoba and the Konkomba in 1984, 1986 and 1989; between the Nawuri and the Gonja in 1991 and 1992; and between the Konkomba, the Nawuri, the Bassari and the Nchumuru, on the one hand and the Gonja on the other, in 1992 (Mbowura, 2014).

Tsikata and Seini (2004) classified conflicts in Northern Region into inter-ethnic conflicts over land and political power, intra-ethnic disputes usually over succession to traditional political office, boundary disputes and religious disputes. According to Kendie et al. (2012), the current context of conflicts in the Northern Region shows that four distinct types of conflicts are dominant. These are chieftaincy succession conflicts (mostly intra-ethnic), political conflicts (usually between the supporters of NDC and the NPP), resource-based conflicts (normally between different ethnic groups over land) and religious conflicts (between Tijaniya and Alusuna Muslim groups). With the exception of the violent political conflicts that were episodic in nature and had to do with election-related

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activities, all the other conflicts were noted to be cyclical as well as ethnic in nature (Kendie et al., 2012). This is consistent with the observation made by Tsikata and Seini (2004).

Causes of Conflicts in the Northern Region

The causes of conflicts in the Northern Region are closely related to the type or nature of conflict. Some of the factors include competition for scarce resources such as land or territories, jobs and income, and housing (Mahama, 2003; Sulemana, 2009). Conflicts may also arise due to oppressive or infamous leadership; religious and political beliefs and the ethnic divide (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2014d). Kendie et al. (2012) traced the roots of conflicts to succession to skins, land ownership, superiority and inferiority complexes, pride and discrimination against perceived ethnic minority groups. One of the many factors accounting for conflicts in Ghana is economic reasons.

Similarly, Ibrahim (2013) found that the conflicts between farmers and Fulani pastoralists in the Gushiegu District of the Northern region were because of the destruction of food crops by cattle. Furthermore, Awedoba (2009) points out that land and boundary disputes are other common sources of conflict in the Northern part of Ghana. They occur over the right of ownership to land on which a communal resource stands or is to be sited (Carscious, 2013). For instance, the Gonja and the Nawuri conflict was over allodial land rights (Asamoah, 2014; Mbowura, 2014). The GSS (2014d) discovered that at the national level, 28.4 percent of conflicts were attributed to land disputes. Yelyang (2016) indicated that

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the control over resources and territory was one of the main causes of the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo conflicts, which is between the Konkombas and the Bimobas at Kpemale in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo district of the Northern Region of Ghana.

Another cause of conflicts in Ghana is competition for chieftaincy positions (Tonah, 2005; Tsikata & Seini 2004). For instance, the Northern Region has witnessed protracted conflicts over chieftaincy such as the succession dispute between the Abudu and Andani royal families of the Dagbon Kingdom (Carscious, 2013; Kendie et al., 2012). This conflict revolves around the two royal family lines or "gates" to the kingship: the Abudu and Andani families which have pitched children from the same royal ancestry against each other in an internecine conflict for well over one hundred (100) years (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011). Reference can also be made to the Bimbilla chieftaincy succession struggle between the Nakpa Naa and Andani Dasana families.

Issues of identity have also emerged as a cause of conflict in Ghana (Kendie et al., 2014; Sulemana, 2009; Tonah, 2005; Yelyang, 2016). Tonah (2005) claims that the struggle for autonomy and the demand for representation on local and national government bodies has accounted for conflict in Ghana. Similarly, Brukum (1995) has described the conflicts between the Konkombas and the traditional kingdoms of Northern Ghana as wars of emancipation with one group determined to maintain the status quo and the other, fighting to overthrow it. Yelyang (2016) also argues that the lack of mutual respect between the Bimobas and the Konkombas was a cause of their conflict. The Bimobas consider

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the Konkombas as nomadic, uncivilised/"bush" people and so stereotyped them as people who are aimless in life, live in hamlets, and lack leadership potential (Sulemana, 2009; Yelyang, 2016).

In addition, Tsikata and Seini (2004) have noted that migrant Konkombas in Nanun were discontent as they were compelled to put in some days' free labour each year on the farms of Nanumba chiefs. The chiefs, also, intermittently collected tribute in the form of foodstuff and livestock from their Konkomba tenants and made it compulsory that they donate the hind leg of any big animal killed, whether wild or domesticated, to Nanum chiefs during funerals. This triggered the conflict with the Nanumba. Possibly, the most problematic aspect of the settler/host relationship was the fact that the Konkombas were not allowed to settle disputes among themselves, including matrimonial and other interpersonal conflicts (Tsikata & Seini, 2004).

Religious difference is also a factor that accounts for conflicts in the Northern Region (Awedoba, 2009; van Dijk, 2001; Kendie et al., 2012). Kendie et al. (2012) cited the conflict at Mpaha-Kpabuso as an inter-religious conflict resulting from religious intolerance among the Gonjas of Kpabuso (between Al-suna and Tijjaniya Islamic sects), the Pentecostal churches and the adherents of traditional religion in some parts of the North.

Effects of Conflict in the Northern Region

Positive Effects

The outcome of a conflict may be beneficial to the conflicting parties. Bukari, Kendie, Sulemana, and Galaa (2017) found that the political freedom won by the Mo resulted from the conflict with the Gonja. The conflict's outcome is explained by the fact that the Bole Wura (Chief of Bole) no longer rules the Mo people of Bamboi (Bukari et al., 2017). In addition, Bukari et al. noted that the constant pressure from the Konkomba and the assessment of the destructive effects of the 1994 Dagomba/Konkomba war caused the Ya Naa of Dagbon to grant the Konkomba their request for paramountcy. Thus, today, the Konkombas are represented in both the National and Northern Regional House of Chiefs and participate in decision making with their previously antagonistic majority rulers in matters that affect the interests of all ethnic groups in the region (Bukari et al., 2017; Sulemana, 2009). This probably may not have occurred if there was no conflict between them.

Negative Effects

One of the effects of conflicts in Northern Region is the loss of lives and injuries of combatants and innocent citizens (Brukum 2001; Mbowura, 2014). National Commission for Civic Education [NCCE] (2011) claims that conflicts in the region have recorded high tolls of loss of lives and physical injuries since 1980. Bukari et al. (2017) indicate that these conflicts have led to death or injuries

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caused to people, including innocent children, women and the aged relatives of combatants as well as military personnel sent out to maintain peace.

Literature reveals that between February 1994 and March 1996, the Konkomba fought the Dagomba, Nanumba and the Gonja, resulting in the death of 2000 people (Kangsangbata, 2009; Mahama, 2003). In particular, the Gonja and the Nawuri war of 1991/92 led to the loss of human lives (Mbowura, 2014). Ampiah (1991) points out that in the first and second phases of the Gonja-Nawuri conflict, the death toll was put at twenty, eleven of whom were Gonja, six Nawuri and three, from other ethnic groups. The number increased to seventy-eight when hostilities resumed in 1992 (Linde & Naylor, 1998). There are suggestions that the death toll is higher than reported as some sources peg it at one hundred (Mahama, 2003).

Conflicts in the region have resulted in the displacement of people as well (Mbowura, 2014; Yahaya & Tinab, 2015). According to Mbowura (2014), the Gonja and the Nawuri conflict caused internal displacement of people. Mbowura pointed out that most of the Nawuri fled from their settlements and sought refuge in Nkwanta and Nanumba Districts. The Nkwanta District alone harboured about four thousand, five hundred refugees in Kecheibi, Tutukpene, Ketane, and Kpasa. A few others were found in Nkwanta and Damanko (Mbowura, 2014). Similarly, Yahaya and Tinab (2015) suggest that the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo conflicts have resulted in the displacement of residents.

In addition, conflicts in the region led to the destruction of property (Ampiah 1991; Bukari et al., 2017; Mbowura, 2014). Bukari et al. (2017) posit

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that conflicts result in damages to buildings, farmlands and other properties such as vehicles. For example, Mbowura (2014) indicates that the Gonja and the Nawuri conflict led to the burning or looting of property such as houses, physical cash, motorbikes, bicycles and vehicles among others, belonging to both factions. Similarly, Ampiah (1991) pointed out that the Gonja and the Nawuri conflict led to the destruction of tractors, a corn mill, a flour mill, two old Bed Ford trucks, one Mercedes Benz car, a tractor, and a cargo vehicle belonging to the Nawuri and the Gonjas. He added that three hundred and twenty-three (323) houses in the Kpandai area were burnt down in the wake of the Gonja and the Nawuri conflict.

Furthermore, conflicts in the Northern Region created insecurity (Asamoah, 2014; NCCE, 2011; Opoku, 2014; Yelyang, 2016). Asamoah (2014) had stated that the constant reoccurrence of ethnic conflicts poses a threat to the peace and stability of Ghana. For instance, as Yelyang (2016) points out, the Bimobas and the Konkombas conflict breed a culture of violence at Kpemale. The situation is often exacerbated by the frequent imposition of curfews by government forces in attempts to manage the violence (Bukari et al., 2017; NCCE, 2011). An essential ingredient for a community to develop is for its citizens to be assured of peace and the absence of violence so that they can go about their gainful activities (GSS, 2014d); but, this seems to be lacking in the conflict areas in the Northern Region.

Moreover, the conflicts in Ghana have economic consequences (Kendie & Akudugu, 2010; Tonah, 2005). One of such effects of conflicts is that it leads to using scarce national resources to maintain peace (Brukum, 2006). Brukum notes

that in 1994 alone, the government of Ghana claims to have spent six hundred thousand Ghana cedis (GH₵600,000) in maintaining peace when the most devastating of the conflicts broke out. Bukari et al. (2017) posit that huge sums of money are spent on ammunition and other equipment, which could have been used for education, health, and other developmental needs.

It is claimed that chieftaincy and ethnic conflicts in the Northern part of Ghana are, partially, to blame for the widespread poverty and the poor state of infrastructure in the area (Bukari et al., 2017; Kendie & Akudugu, 2010; Tonah, 2005). Yelyang (2016) cites unemployment as an effect of the economic impact of the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo conflicts which resulted in the loss of jobs, especially among the youth in the communities. Directly related to the unemployment issue is a high cost of living.

Conflicts equally have a social impact. Bukari et al. (2017) have noted that within a conflict environment, nothing works and people and organisations are reluctant to enter the community or work with the group. Bukari et al. stated that Kpandai, a district capital, remained for more than a decade without government's development assistance and new development projects following the Gonja-Konkomba War of 1994 (Mahama, 2010). This has affected education since trained teachers either seek transfer or refuse postings to the area. It, also, impedes access to health services due to insecurities in traveling to health facilities. Besides, it had crippled the local economy through declining businesses and other livelihood activities such as farming, leading to an out-migration of the youth (Kendie & Bukari, 2012).

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Mediation Efforts and Actors of Conflicts in the Northern Region

Conflicts in Ghana have two actors: state and non-state actors (Kendie et al., 2014; Noagah, 2013). According to Kendie et al. (2014), state and non-state actors can play complementary roles in addressing the causes of conflicts.

The state is a major player in conflicts in Ghana (Aning & Lartey, 2009; Linde & Naylor 1998; Mbowura, 2014). Ghana's internal security experience shows that peacekeeping in conflict-torn areas has been the burden of the state (Mbowura, 2014). Constitutionally, the Ghana Police Service (GPS), Ghana Armed Forces (GAF), Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), Prisons Service, Customs, Excise, and Preventive Service (CEPS), the judiciary and the Bureau of National Investigation (BNI) are the state institutions mandated to provide security and justice when there is conflict within and around the borders of the country (Aning & Lartey, 2009).

Largely, government's response to conflicts in Northern Ghana took the form of the creation of a military and a police task force to maintain security, law, and order; but in some instances, it was done belatedly (Mbowura, 2014). For example, in 1994 when inter-ethnic conflicts broke out in seven districts in the Northern Region of Ghana, the government got to intervene after ten days of fighting (Linde & Naylor, 1998). Linde and Naylor noted that the government of Ghana declared a state of emergency, and peacekeeping troops were deployed to the conflict districts.

The non-state actors equally play a critical role in conflicts in Ghana (Bukari et al., 2017; Galaa & Bukari, 2014). Annan (2013) points out that, non-

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state actors include but are not limited to chiefs and community leaders, community watch groups, religious bodies and civil society organizations. In Ghana, the National House of Chiefs and religious leaders serve as mediators in conflicts (Galaa & Bukari, 2014). Bukari et al. (2017) have indicated that the House of Chiefs in Ghana is an assembly of traditional rulers, which has traditional legislative and advisory functions with branch offices at the district, regional and national levels.

Annan (2013) notes that civil society groups and institutions such as the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI) provide, among other things, training in conflict prevention, management and resolution as well as in advocacy campaigns. For instance, WANEP has been engaged in the resolution of the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute and the Bawku crisis (Badong, 2009).

In Northern Ghana, mediation efforts by both state and non-state actors are normally towards addressing the causes of conflicts (CDD, 2003). Some of the mediation efforts have been successful at ending the conflicts permanently while others have not. The Konkomba and Nanumba/Dagomba in 1994/95, which claimed over 2000 lives, was resolved through the joint mediation and reconciliation efforts of the Permanent Negotiation Team made up of several CSOs and government representatives as well as the Nairobi Peace Initiative [NPI] (Mahama, 2003). In addition, the desire for freedom from Gonja rule by the Mo in the Bole District of the Northern Region led to conflict between the two groups, but that was resolved by adjudication to give the Mo their traditional

political freedom from the Gonja to own and exercise political control over their own land (Hippolyt, 2003).

Noagah (2013) found that many residents of Bawku knew the measures that were used to resolve the conflict. Bukari (2013) and Noagah (2013) claimed that the approaches used over the years in resolving the Bawku conflict include mediation, reconciliation, peacekeeping, and arbitration. Bukari (2013) indicates that government, over the years, had deployed security agencies made up of the police and the Rapid Deployment Force (the army) to the area to maintain peace during violence. Bukari also noted that governments use imposition of curfews whenever violence occurs to mitigate the effects of the conflicts.

The CSOs (i.e., Action Aid Ghana, the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), Advocacy Peace Group - IBIS (Ghana), the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the Christian Council of Ghana and the Bawku East Women's Development Association [BEWDA]) have also been using mediation, peace dialogues, and peace education and sensitisations to address the Bawku conflict. These efforts have, however, not resulted in lasting peace in the area. Nonetheless, Yelyang (2016) indicates that force, dialogue, and mediation are strategies that were helpfully employed to de-escalate the conflict at Kpemale in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District.

Table 2 gives the summary of the type and origin or cause, and the actors of conflicts in the Northern Region.

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Table 2 : Conflict Type, Origins, and Actors in the Northern Region

Type and form of Conflict	Location	Actors	Motivation	Interests	Structural causes (Origin)
Chieftaincy succession (intra-ethnic)	Bimbilla	Andani gate and Nakpa Naa gate	To become the ruling class in the community	To occupy the skin and take control over resources in the community	Legitimacy/Succession to throne
Long-standing ethnic conflict	Bimbilla	Nanumbas and Konkombas	Nanumbas-to be accorded the needed recognition from the Konkombas Konkombas-to liberate themselves from the oppressed rule of the Nanumbas	Nanumbas - to have control over land and resources Konkombas - to get to land and control of resources, recognition	Konkombas-Resisting oppressed rule and sense of being marginalised Nanumbas-Trying to maintain status quo as overlords and indigenes
Inter-ethnic	Kpandai	Nawuris-Gonjas	To take control of land and resources	To get access to and control over land	Contestation over land ownership
Intra-ethnic (chieftaincy)	Kpandai	Raymond Assuo (Kpandai) - Felix Atosah (Balai)	To become the ruling class in the community	To occupy the skin and take control over land and resources in the community	Access to and control of land Power and authority in order to be recognised and accorded the needed respect and prestige
Chieftaincy recurring one	Buipe	Jinapor's gate and Bawah Awusi's gate	Quest for power and to be recognised	To rule the community	To get access to and control of resources/prestige
NPP NDC clashes	Tamale (Gumbihini, Choggu, Changli)	NPP and NDC activists	NPP -Release the people in jail NDC - jailing of the murderers of Ya Naa.	NPP - Political dominance NDC - Political dominance	Abudu, Andani chieftaincy conflict in Dagbon, politics

Source: Adapted from Kendie et al. (2012)

Table 2, continued

NPP/NDC clashes (not recurring)	Gusheigu	NPP and NDC activists	NPP - the NPP supporters want to release their jailed members NDC - The NDC actors main motivation is to jail all the murderers of the Ya Naa	NPP - Political dominance with the hope of getting their people released from jail NDC - Political dominance with the hope of jailing those who murdered the Ya Naa	Abudu, Andani chieftaincy conflict in Dagbon and politics as the base
Dagbon Chieftaincy conflict (recurring and having spillover effecs on all other areas of the Dagomba traditional area)	Yendi	Abudu and Adani gates	Recognition and power to control land and its related resources	succession to the chieftaincy (overlord) title	Power, Recognition, and Control over land and its resources by the two feuding gates (Abudus and Adanis)
Land conflict	Bunkprugu Yooyuo (Nakpan Kuri, Kpamele, Teima, Jimbale	Mamprusi, Bimoba, and Konkomba	To acquire more farmlands and other land resource like the dawadawa trees	Control over land and resources in Bunkprugu Yooyuo traditional area	control over land by the Mamprusi, Bimoba, and Konkomba ethnic groups

Source: Adapted from Kendie et al. (2012)

Nature of Conflicts in the Northern Region

Carscious (2013) asserts that there has been a disturbing phenomenon in the political landscape of Northern Ghana during the last several decades. There were twenty-two conflicts between 1980 and 2002 (Table 3). Within the period under review, Gonja attacked and destroyed a Battor village at Kafaba in 1980 and destroyed Tuna in the same year. Gonja was involved in wars with the Nawuris and Nchumurus in 1991, 1992 and 1994 (Carscious, 2013). Carscious further notes that the Gonjas fought among themselves at Yapei and Kusawgu in 1992 and at Daboya in 1994 while the Nanumbas fought against the Konkombas in 1980, 1994, and 1995. However, Bukari et al. (2017) indicate that the Gonja and Mo conflict, as well as the Dagaaba and Sisala conflict, were not violent in nature. In most cases, nonetheless, these conflicts were violent, resulting in the loss of lives and property.

In 1991, Dagombas fought among themselves at Voggu and Zabzugu and fought the Konkombas in 1995 (Carscious, 2013). Between 1980 and 1986, the Mamprusis and Kusasis fought three times in the Bawku area. Carscious, also, points out that in 1988 and 1994, the Bimoba went to war with the Konkombas. Between 1999 and 2001, the Konkombas fought twice among themselves. In March 2002, Dagombas fought among themselves at Yendi during which Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II, the overlord of Dagbon, and some 40 others lost their lives (Brukum, 2006). Even though the immediate causes of these conflicts differ, the remote ones are similar if not the same. Brukum remarks that they stem from several decades of relegating certain ethnic groups, the so-called "minority

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groups", to second rate citizens in the traditional and political administration of the Region or attempts to by-pass some "gates" in the system of rotation to chieftaincy.

Tsikata and Seini (2004) and Opoku (2015) indicate that the Nkonya and Alavanyo, Ga State and Churches, and the Farmers and Fulani herdsmen conflicts, which occurred in the southern part of Ghana were all violent. They involved the use of weapons and resulted in injuries, death, and destruction of property.

Table 3 : Violent and Non-Violent Conflicts in Ghana

Region of Ghana	Conflict Parties	Conflict Type	Reason for conflict
Northern	Gonja & Vagla	Violent	Chieftaincy
Northern	Gonja & Mo	Non-violent	Chieftaincy
Northern	Nanumba & Konkomba	Violent	Chieftaincy/Land
Northern	Dagomba & Konkomba	Violent	Chieftaincy/Land
Northern	Gonja & Konkomba	Violent	Chieftaincy/Land
Upper East	Mamprusi & Kusasi	Violent	Chieftaincy
Upper West	Dagaaba & Sisala	Non-violent	Chieftaincy/Land
Volta Region	Nkonya & Alavanyo	Violent	Land
Greater Accra	Ga State & Churches	Violent	Noise levels
Ashanti	Farmers & Fulani herdsmen	Violent	Grazing and use of water

Source: Adapted from Tsikata and Seini (2004), Opoku (2015) and Bukari et al. (2017)

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlines research methods and techniques that guided the data gathering and analysis. The chapter does not only present how to apply particular research methods but also justifies the appropriateness and relevance of the methods to the study. The chapter begins by describing the research design, continues with profiling the study areas, data sources, target population, sampling procedure, methods of data collection, data collection instruments, data processing and analysis and ends with the ethical considerations for the research work.

Research Design

The methodological approach followed in pursuing a research project is closely connected to the ontological and epistemological assumptions we hold about reality. The three-dominant perspectives in social science research are positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism (Bryman, 2001; Sarantakos, 2005; Scotland, 2012). These paradigms serve as drivers of the entire research process.

Positivism philosophy is based upon highly structured methodology to enable generalisation and quantifiable observations and evaluate the result with the help of statistical methods. Positivism views mostly prefer working in an observable social reality and have an end product research similar to those produced by a natural scientist (Breen & Darlaston, 2008). Positivists assume that

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reality is fixed, directly measurable, and knowable and that there is just one truth, one external reality. As a philosophy, positivism is in accordance with the empiricist view that knowledge stems from human experience. It has an atomistic, ontological view of the world as comprising discrete, observable elements and events that interact in an observable, determined and regular manner (Collins, 2010).

Crowther and Lancaster (2008) explained that, as a general rule, positivist studies usually adopt a deductive approach using the quantitative research strategy. The deductive approach moves towards hypothesis testing after which a principle is confirmed, refuted or modified. These hypotheses present an assertion about two or more concepts with an attempt to explain the relationship between them. The study designs adopted in this paradigm include survey, experimental and quasi-experimental designs (Creswell, 2003; Krauss, 2005). Positivists collect data using questionnaire, interview schedules, and observation (Neuman, 2007). Data is analysed using statistical methods such as descriptive statistics and parametric and non-parametric methods (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

Positivism has the ability to study relationships, facilitate the generalisation and replicability of studies and present value free findings. However, there have been several debates on the issue of whether or not this positivist paradigm is entirely suitable for the social sciences. Positivism is critiqued because studying social life is considered, in many ways, to be different from studying chemicals in a laboratory. For example, the social research is imbued with values, experiences, and politics that cannot be separated from the

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data that the research produces. In addition, there are many questions raised about the nature of social reality – is there a "real" reality (facts) that we can objectively know? Critics, also, argue that positivism is not value-free as some of its proponents suggest because no one can be fully detached from any type of research (Silverman, 2000).

Interpretivists, on the other hand, believe that reality is multiple and relative (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988; Leitch et al., 2010). The knowledge acquired in this discipline is socially constructed rather than objectively determined (Carson et al., 2001). Interpretivists contend that it is only through the subjective interpretation of and intervention in reality that such reality can be understood fully. Epistemologically, qualitative research rests upon interpretivist philosophical tradition using methods of data collection which are flexible and sensitive to the social context in which the data are being produced (De Villiers, 2005; Leitch et al., 2010).

Study designs under this paradigm include case studies, phenomenology, hermeneutics, grounded theory, and ethnography. Interpretive approaches rely heavily on naturalistic methods such as interviewing, focus group discussion, observation and analysis of existing texts. These methods ensure an adequate dialog between the researchers and those with whom they interact in order to collaboratively construct a meaningful reality (Creswell, 2003; De Villiers, 2005).

Interpretivist research is to understand and interpret the meanings in human behaviour rather than to generalise and predict causes and effects. To an interpretivist researcher, it is important to understand motives, meanings, reasons

and other subjective experiences, which are time and context bound (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988; Neuman, 2000). Under this philosophy, research is focused more on understanding what has happened in a specific circumstance than on trying to predict what will happen next. This paradigm has been criticised as being unable to uphold objectivity and produce generalizable results (Mack, 2010).

Pragmatism is not bound to any one system of philosophy and reality. For pragmatists, the truth is what works at the time (Creswell, 2003). The pragmatists believe in an external world independent of the mind as well as that embedded in the mind (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Research conducted within this philosophy uses the mixed method approach since the investigators draw freely from both quantitative and qualitative assumptions (Yin, 2003).

Pragmatism promotes methodological pluralism since researchers have the right to select the methods and procedures of investigation that appropriately address issues of concern in the study. In addition, the study designs for both positivism and interpretivism are applicable under pragmatism. It also allows for the use of statistical methods that sanction generalisation of findings as well as non-statistical methods in data analysis (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Against the thrust of this study, the assumptions of interpretivism seem to align more with the study. The choice of the qualitative methods is informed by two reasons. Firstly, the study was meant to achieve a deeper understanding and appreciation of conflict and conflict management mechanisms with the view to developing theories for sustainable management of conflicts. The study sought to

build a holistic narrative and description of conflict management mechanisms to inform their understanding.

Secondly, since this research is on behavioural traits and allows the use of methods such as in-depth interviews, participant observation, and focus group discussions, the qualitative method gave me an advantage of getting closer to the phenomenon to be studied and having an in-depth insight and exposure to its deep structure. This enabled a right description. On this account, the study embraced the interpretivism paradigm as its philosophical underpinning.

Study Design

The study design adopted for this research is the multiple case study design. A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary issue within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2003). This system of inquiry seeks to build a holistic, largely narrative description to inform the understanding of a phenomenon. A case study approach allows the employment of a variety of evidence through interviews, artefacts, direct observations, discussions and documents. When research is on contemporary issues, when behavioural events within the research questions are explanatory, and when a researcher has little control over events, the case study approach is the best strategy (Yin, 2003). In the same way, Cavaye (1996) states that this approach has the advantage of getting closer to the phenomenon to be studied and gives an in-depth insight and exposure to its deep structure, enabling a right description.

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Case studies have been described as being able to provide little basis for scientific generalisation. The frequently heard question is how can you generalize from a single case? Yin (2003) assess that scientific facts are usually based on a multiple set of experiments that have replicated the same phenomenon under different conditions. The same approach can be used with multiple-case studies; but, this requires a different concept of the appropriate research designs. Simply, case studies, unlike experiments, are generalisable to theoretical prepositions and not to populations or universes.

In this study, the multiple case study design was used to produce detailed descriptions of conflicts and conflict management mechanisms using constructs to order the data and relate to earlier literature. Yin (2003) emphasised that multiple cases strengthen the results by replicating the patterns, thereby, increasing the robustness of the findings. Literal replications (where the cases are designed to corroborate each other) and theoretical replications (where the cases are designed to cover different theoretical conditions) are two approaches to establish replication logic. Since case studies rely on analytical rather than statistical generalisations, relying on replication logic as per Yin (2003) provided external validation to the findings. Each case (Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo, Nanumba North, and Central Gonja) will serve to confirm or disconfirm the conclusions drawn from the others.

Study Areas

Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo is located at the north-eastern corner of the Northern Region of Ghana. It shares boundaries in the north with the Garu-Tempane; to the east, with Togo; west, with East Mamprusi and to the south, with Gushiegu and Chereponi Districts (Figure 8). Bunkpurugu is the administrative capital of the District. The District is a heterogeneous society with many ethnic groups. The major ethnic groups are Bimobas, Konkombas (Kombas), and Mamprusis.

In the Bunkprugu-Yunyoo District, settlements or villages are made up of a combination of either Mamprusi and Bimoba or Mamprusi and Konkombas. However, Nankpanduri has members of the minority settler group – Bimobas and Konkombas – as the inhabitants. The Mamprusis see themselves as owners of the traditional areas and, as such, claim access to and control over the land.
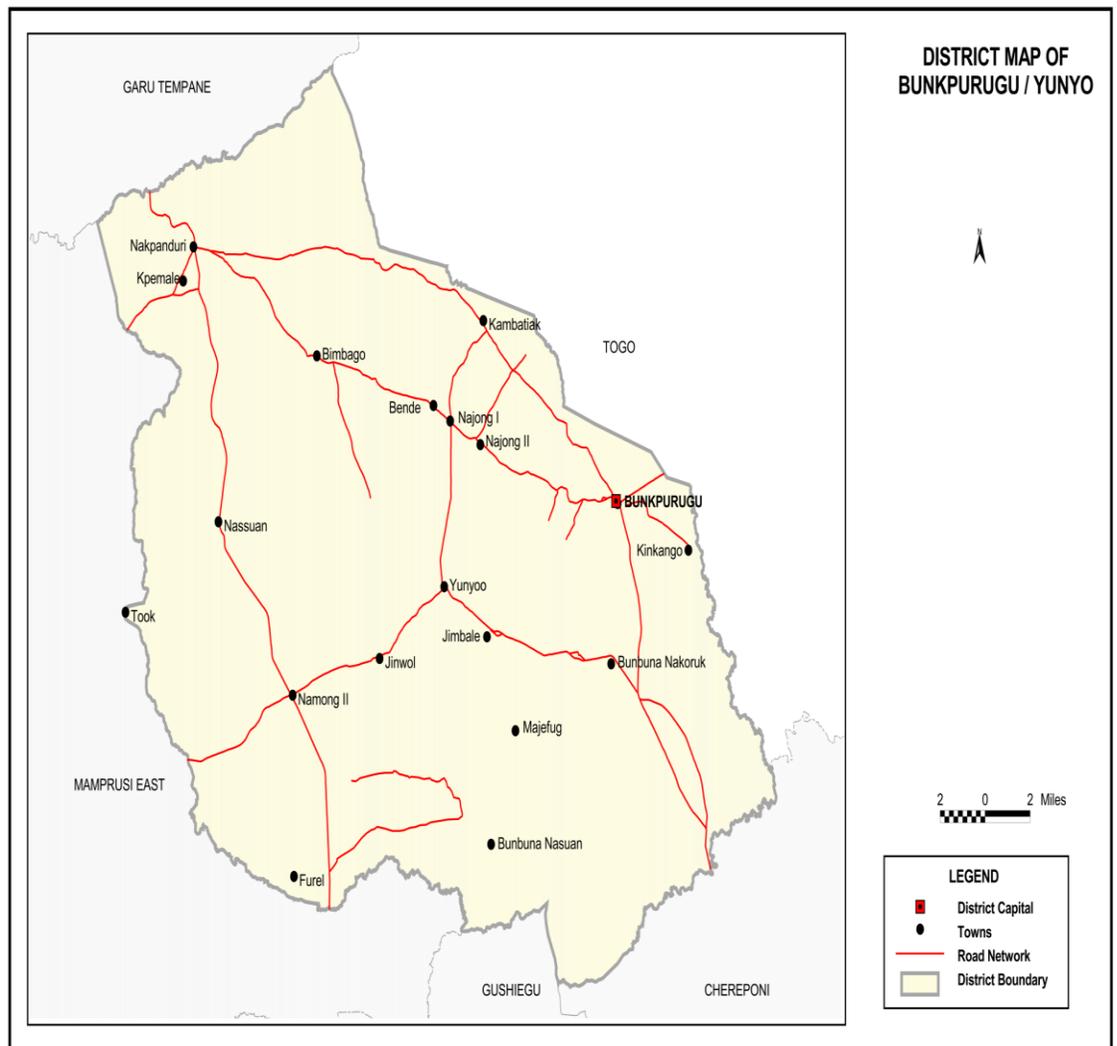
Figure 8: Map of Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District

Source: Adopted from GSS (2014a, p.2)

The ethnic conflict in Bunkprugu Yonyuo District occurred in Nankpanduri, Kpamele, Teima, and Jimbale. The conflict manifested in reprisal attacks between the Konkomba and Bimoba ethnic groups. The proximate cause of the violent conflict that occurred was a misunderstanding between two individuals, a Konkomba man and a Bimoba man over a piece of land meant for the construction of a school. Both the Konkombas and the Bimobas rallied around

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their kinsmen to claim ownership over the particular piece of land that was meant for a communal project. The misunderstanding degenerated into violence, which was characterised by sporadic shootings and the burning down of houses.

Civil Society Organisations such as WANEP and Novrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese are present in the District and are involved in activities that will end these confrontations. Notwithstanding this, the many years old intra-chieftaincy succession conflict between the Jamong and the Jafouk gate is on-going. Nanpkanduri, Teima, Jimbale, Kpamele, and Bunkpurugu, all in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District, are faced with on-going land and chieftaincy conflicts (DISEC, 2016).

The Nanumba North District is found in the eastern part of the Northern Region and shares boundaries with East Gonja to the west, Yendi Municipal to the north, Zabzugu to the east, Kpandai to the south and Nanumba South Districts to the south-east (Figure 9). The administrative district capital is Bimbilla. The District has a heterogeneous population in terms of ethnicity though populated by two major ethnic groups: the Konkonba [60.6%], Nanumba [31.0%] and a few other minority tribes including the Chokosis [1.3%] (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). The Nanumbas are perceived to be the indigenes while the Konkombas are seen as settlers.
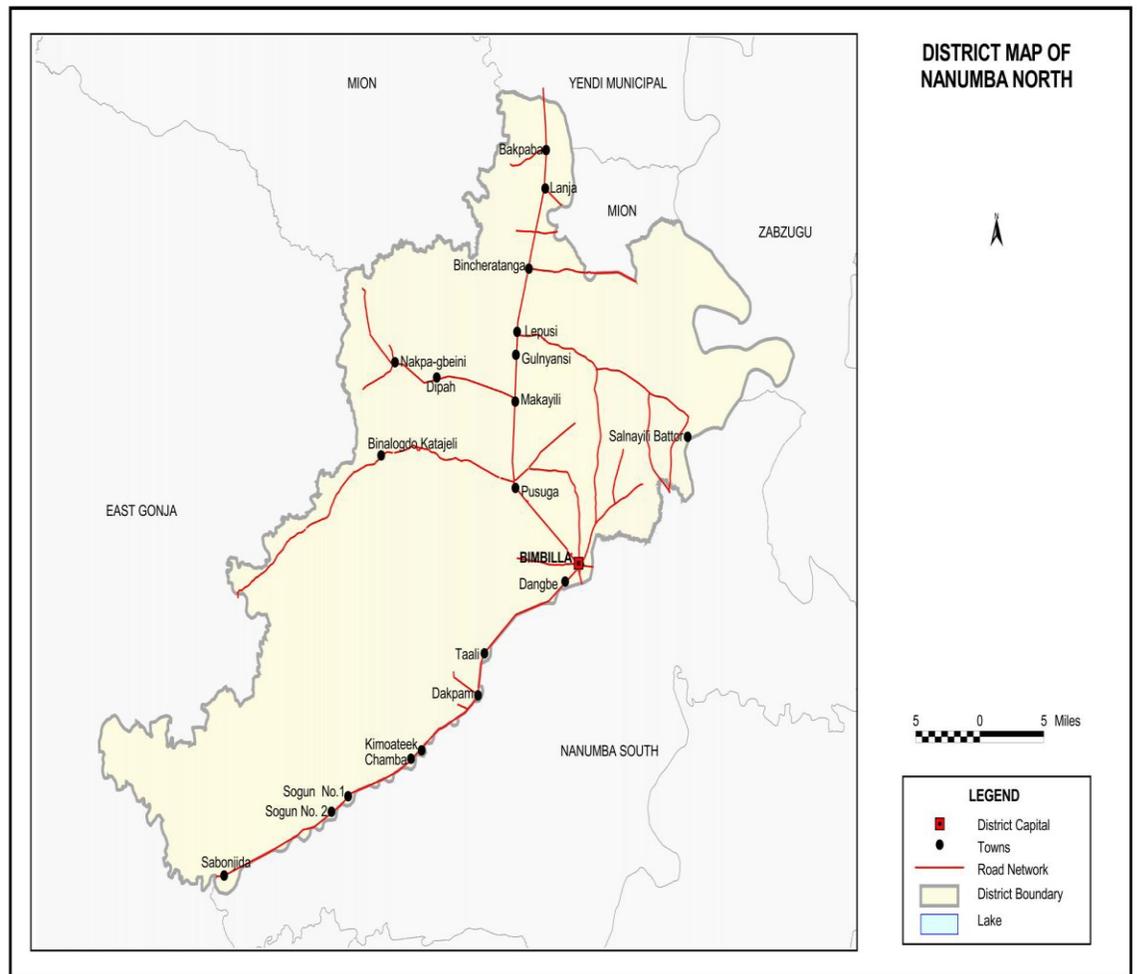
Figure 9: Map of Nanumba North District

Source: Adopted from GSS (2014b, p.2)

The Nanumba North district cannot be left out in the discussion of conflicts in Northern Region due to the disastrous chieftaincy and ethnic conflicts in the area. In Bimbilla, there is a long-standing inter-ethnic conflict between the Nanumbas and Konkombas alongside the reoccurring intra-ethnic succession conflict among the Nanumbas. According to Kendie et al. (2012), the consciousness of the Konkombas to struggle for emancipation (in this case having their own chief) was shaped by their opposition to their subordinate status and

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exploitation by the Nanumbas. This is the major cause of the ethnic conflict between the Nanumbas and the Konkombas.

The chieftaincy succession conflict occurred after the death of the Bimbilla chief, Naa Abarika in 1999. There is, thus, an intra-ethnic struggle as to who becomes the paramount chief among the Nanumba ethnic group. In addition, there is a relapsed conflict between the Andani gate and Nakpa Naa gate. In 2014, the contested chief of Bimbilla and 12 people lost their lives in a clash between warring factions in the conflict. There is, currently, a joint military and police force in Bimbilla and its surrounding communities to keep peace; a curfew has been imposed in the area, litigation is on-going, and CSOs are into peace talks.

The Central Gonja District is located in the south-western part of the Northern Region of Ghana. The district shares boundaries with the Kintampo District in the Brong Ahafo Region to the south, the West Gonja District to the west, Tamale Metropolis to the north, Tolon District to the north-west and the East Gonja District to the east (Figure 10). Her major towns include Tuluwe, Yapei, Kusawgu, and Mpaha with Buipe as the administrative capital. Just like the other districts, the Central Gonja District is heterogeneous with Gonja, Dagomba, Hanga, Mamprusi, and Dagarbas as the major groups. Others include Ewes, Akans, Chekosi, and Konkombas.
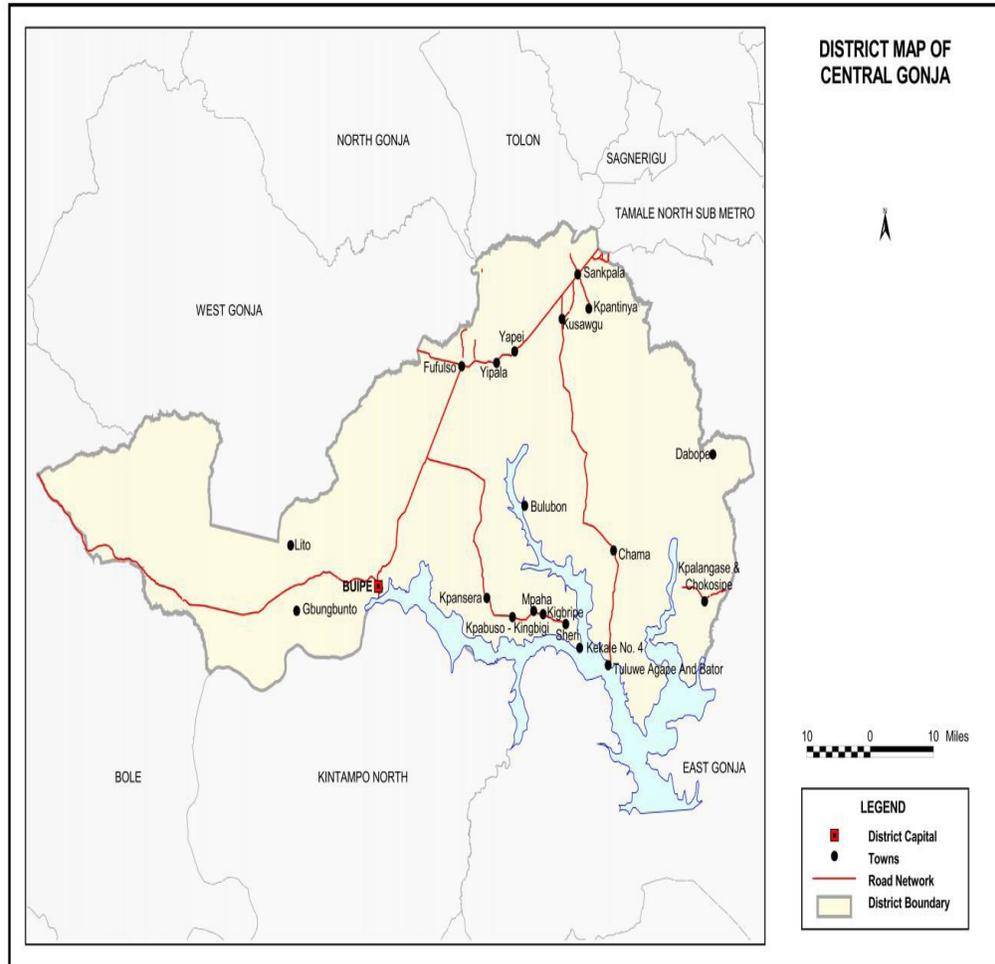
Figure 10: Map of Central Gonja District

Source: Adopted from GSS (2014c, p.2)

The Buipe chieftaincy conflict was a protracted localised intra-ethnic struggle between Jinapor and Awusi royal families in the Buipe Traditional Area – one of the key traditional skins of the Gonja Kingdom in the Northern Region of Ghana. Since the conflict begun in 2009, there had been many clashes between the Jinapor and the Lebu allies anytime the chief of Buipe had to perform some functions; for instance, during the celebration of the Damba festival or in the collection of market tolls among others. In addition, the jubilation by the favoured

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side, whenever there was a court ruling on the matter, leads to violent confrontations (Kendie, et al., 2012).

Even though there were several efforts to resolve the conflict by civil society organisations (CSOs) and government mediation, committees of enquiry, and the law courts (adjudicated by both the Tamale High Court and the Appeal Court in Accra), the conflict persisted. The conflict was finally put to rest through an indigenous mechanism: the Yagbonwura, the overlord of the Gonja traditional area, constituted a traditional council committee to address the root causes of the conflict (Godwin, 2015). The same mechanism was employed to solve an intra-religious conflict between the Tijaniyya and the Alusuna Muslim sects at Mpaha. This makes the district a model study area for this study as indigenous mechanisms have proved to have some relevance in conflict management in the area.

Study Population

The study population includes traditional authorities, indigenous people, and the adversaries in the three study areas. In addition, the District Assemblies, the Regional Peace Council (RPC) with its corresponding Regional and District Security Councils, the House of Chiefs (HOC), and Security Personnel (military and police) at study sites were part of the study population. CSOs such as West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and the Bolgatanga-Novrongo Catholic Diocese, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs), Court personnel including the clerks, judicial

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commissioner, and magistrates, and finally, law professionals all formed part of the study population.

Sampling Procedure

The Northern Region is noted for the high incidence of conflicts (land, ethnic, and chieftaincy) as compared to other regions of the country (Kendie et al., 2012). This necessitated carrying out the study there. The conflicts are spread over the region. the key guiding principles underlying the selection of the study areas are: high incidence of conflicts in an area; protracted, deep-rooted, relapsed nature of the conflicts; violent nature of the conflicts (the use of arms, injuries, property destruction, and deaths); extensive nature of the conflicts (involve larger groups); and where indigenous mechanisms have been successfully used in the management of conflicts. The districts that emerged based on these guiding principles are the Bunkprugu-Yunyoo, Nanumba North, and Central Gonja Districts.

Bunkprugu-Yunyoo District, from 2007-2017, had recorded high incidences of conflict in the Northern Region compared to other districts. About 30 clashes between factions, due to conflicts related to land and chieftaincy disagreements, have been recorded. Albeit, these conflicts are relapsed in nature, suggesting some signs of weaknesses in the mechanisms employed in managing the situation. In total, 21 on the spot deaths, an uncountable number of injured people, and 48 completely burnt houses have been recorded within the period, making the district suitable for this study.

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The Nanumba North District came next to Bunkprugu-Yunyoo District. Within the same period, the intra-ethnic chieftaincy succession conflict had recorded about 18 deaths including the death of the chief of Bimbilla. The Central Gonja District was very viable per the guiding principle pertaining to the successful use of indigenous mechanisms in conflict management. For this reason, the district was added to the two to enable a comprehensive analysis of the conflicts and conflict management in the Northern Region of Ghana.

The purposive sampling technique was used to select Bunkprugu-Yunyoo, Nanumba North, and Central Gonja Districts because these Districts met the guiding principle/selection criteria. District Assembly officials, Court personnel, the District Security Council, the House of Chiefs, WANEP, and other NGOs into Human rights, Peace, and Conflict management were all purposively selected and engaged for eliciting information. Through a preliminary interaction with the selected District Assembly officials, WANEP, and the Security Councils, spokespersons of the adversaries, leaders from the major ethnic groups and some key informants were identified and purposively sampled for the study. The sample size for the entire study was 62 participants. The breakdown of this is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of Sample Size

Response Unit	Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo	Nanumba North	Central Gonja	Regional officers	Total
Traditional leaders/Adversaries					
- Jamong family	2				2
- Jafouk family	2				2
- Konkombas	2				2
- Bimobas	2				2
- Nakpa Naa		2			2
- Andani		2			2
- Awusi family			1		1
- Jinapor family			1		1
Key informants					
- DA officials	1	1	1		3
- Regional Security Council				1	1
- District Security Council	1	1	1		3
- House of Chiefs				1	1
- Court Personnel				1	1
- WANEP				1	1
- Catholic Diocese	1			1	2
Male FGD	6	6	6		18
Female FGD	6	6	6		18
Total	23	18	16	5	62

Source: Field survey (2017)

Data Sources

Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. The primary data were obtained from traditional authorities, indigenous people, Court personnel and law professionals, the District Security Council, the House of Chiefs, WANEP, and other NGOs in the purposively selected communities. Secondary information was obtained from both published and unpublished materials and activity reports on the work of the DISEC, WANEP, and the HOC. Newspapers,

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articles, minutes of meetings, as well as conference and working papers of the institutions that were relevant to the topic were, also, reviewed.

Data Collection Methods

Two data collection methods were used in consonance with the qualitative nature of the phenomena under study. These are interview and focus group discussion. Observation was used as an auxiliary method to augment these two. Interview was the major data collection method in this study. It is a useful way of collecting qualitative data because the technique is "introspective" and allows participants to report on themselves, their views, their beliefs, practices, interactions, and concerns (Freebody, 2003). Considering the quality of data needed for this study, in-depth interviews helped me check the reliability of a response by asking the same question differently and at different stages of the interview.

The unstructured form of interview had an advantage of building good rapport and creating a relaxed and healthy atmosphere in which participants easily cooperate, answer questions, and clear misapprehension about any aspect of a study. Furthermore, not many residents of the selected communities can read and write the English language. The interview enabled the field assistants and I to translate questions into the local languages, which are widely spoken in the study areas.

The interview technique was employed to obtain data from a number of stakeholder groups in the study. These are traditional authorities; the three

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districts assemblies and the Peace Councils, the House of Chiefs (HOC), Security Personnel (military and police) at study sites, Civil Society Organisation (CSOs) Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs), and Court personnel. The interview guide was used as the instrument for this method of collecting data. It captured issues relating to all the objectives of this study.

Some advantages associated with the use of interviews include the opportunity to observe the non-verbal behaviour of participants and to ensure completeness. It also ensured a high response rate as it is easy to administer. However, the use of this instrument was time-consuming since clarification and probing of some of the issues was needed.

Focus group discussion was another method employed for the data collection. Kruger (1990) defines focus group discussion as a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive non-threatening environment. A focus group discussion is a form of qualitative research method/technique in which a group of people is asked about their attitude towards a product, service, concept, advertisement, or an idea (Neuman, 2000). Topics were introduced in an interactive group setting where participants were free to talk with other group members.

The main purpose of the focus group discussion in this research was to draw participants' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a way that would not be feasible using the one-to-one interviews. These attitudes, feelings, and beliefs were partially independent of a group but were revealed via

the social gathering and the interaction which being in a focus group entails (Creswell, 2003).

Compared to individual interviews which aim at obtaining individual attitudes, beliefs, and feelings, focus groups elicit a multiplicity of views and emotional processes within a group context. In the focus group discussion, I was interested in such things as how people respond to each other's views to derive some conclusions from the group interactions (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Two focus group discussions each (men and women) were organised in the selected districts discussing the phenomena under study. The participants comprised of the purposively sampled indigene participants. The focus group discussion guide covered all the objectives of the study.

Through my preliminary engagements with some key informants at Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo district, I was privy to the organisation of a blood burial ceremony between the Jamong and Jafouk families on the chieftaincy conflict that has raged for years. The observation method was employed to observe the process.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection took a period of 42 days, from 9th March 2017 to 19th April 2017. I contracted nine enumerators to assist in the collection of data. The research assistants were individuals who could speak the local dialects of the selected districts to address the issues of language barrier. I organised a day's training workshop for the assistants to educate them on the items on the interview

and the focus group discussion guides. This helped in the appropriate interpretation of the items and addressed ethical issues in research.

The enumerators were later deployed to the districts (three each in a district) to collect the data. Individually, they conducted the in-depth interviews and then collectively organised the focus group discussions. My role was to make contacts with the District Assemblies, monitor the progress of work by the assistants, and conduct the key informants' interviews at the Regional level.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data from the field was first cross-checked and edited to ensure that responses were obtained for all the questions on the interview guide and the focus group discussion guides that the information given were relevant. The tape recordings of the interviews and the focus group discussion were transcribed and categorised under specific themes to be used for the analysis. This made it easier to use direct quotes where relevant. When using multiple cases, "a typical format is to first provide a detailed description of each case and themes within the case, called a within-case analysis" (Creswell, 1998, p.63). The within-case analysis was followed by a thematic analysis across the cases, referred to as cross-case analysis or cross-site synthesis (Creswell, 1998; Yin, 2003). Accordingly, all the details with respect to each study area were organised into the respective case files. The within–case analysis was carried out for all the three study areas on the first and second objectives.

Within-case Analysis

The within-case analysis used thematic analysis to identify themes through a careful reading of the data. It is a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes became the categories for analysis. In this study, the thematic analysis incorporated both the data-driven inductive approach and the deductive a priori template of codes approach. The research analysis was an iterative and reflexive process. The data collection and analysis stages were undertaken concurrently. Development of the themes was grounded in the original data by revisiting the previous stages of analysis before proceeding further.

Cross-site Analysis

At this stage, the previous stages were closely scrutinised to ensure that the clustered themes were representative of the initial data analysis and assigned codes. The within-case analysis was followed by a thematic analysis across the study areas, referred to as cross-site analysis. Using the themes established in the within-case analysis, the inductive analysis was utilised for the cross-site analysis. The emergent themes from all cases suggested categories that formed broader concepts for consideration and were the beginning of the synthesis. Integration of the data involved expanding, collapsing, merging, and creating categories that best represent initial interpretations of meaning. It seemed appropriate to retain themes that cut across cases rather than stand-alone themes.

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Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board before the actual field work. The informed consent of the respondents was also sought. A statement relating to informed consent was read to the participants at the beginning of each interview. Informed consent for key informants was sought through a letter of consent. The respondents were informed that their rights will be guaranteed and protected if they agreed to be included in the study and that participation in the study was voluntary.

Permission was also obtained from the District Assemblies, the District Security Council (DISEC), and the Chiefs and elders of the study areas. The researcher and research assistants introduced themselves to the participants to avoid impersonation and doubts. In addition, the purpose of the study and the nature of information finding was made known to the administrators and participants of the study areas. Willingness and anonymity of participants were duly respected as all forms of identification including names, addresses, and telephone numbers were avoided in the interviews.

Chapter Summary

The study adopted the interpretivism paradigm to research which results in a qualitative research design. The multiple case study design was used for this study. Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo, Nanumba North, and Central Gonja Districts were selected for the study because of the relapse of conflict situations in these areas of the Northern Region. The purposive sampling technique was used to select key

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informants, which gave a sample size of 62 participants. The interview guide, focus group discussion guide, and observation guide were the main instruments for data collection. The data collection commenced on 9th March 2017 and ended on 19th April 2017. Thematic analysis and cross-site analysis were used to analyse data.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONTEXTUAL ISSUES OF CONFLICTS

Introduction

This chapter aims at examining and presenting the results of the contextual issues (conflict characteristics) of conflicts in the three sampled Districts of the Northern Region of Ghana. The data were collected from the traditional leaders, the District Security Councils, Civil Society Organisations (Novrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese and the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding), and the Regional House of Chiefs using interviews, focus groups and observation guides. The analysis involved the use of thematic analysis (within-case analysis) and cross-site analysis. The main aim of this aspect of the analysis was to establish linkages and synergies between and among the conflict characteristics in order to identify potential areas for intervention.

Origin, Nature, and Actors of the Conflicts

The study profiled each of the conflicts in order to trace their origin. A conflict profile provided a brief characterisation of the context within which the conflicts had occurred. It considered the history of the conflict, placing much emphasis on the generic (structural) causes and critical events. The nature of each of the conflicts is also described as well as the actors' analysis. This laid a foundation for the examination of the conflict management mechanisms for sustainable conflict management in the affected areas.

The Nanumba North District conflict

Two major categories of conflicts are present in the Nanumba North District. On one hand is an intra-succession chieftaincy conflict within the same gate called Gbugmayili. This bordered on which of the two individuals, Andani Dasana Abdulai and Alhaji Salifu Dawuni, was qualified to become the next Bimbilla chief. On the other hand, there is a long-standing inter-ethnic conflict between the Nanumbas and Konkombas emanating from the quest of the Konkombas to get a chief from their kin installed as a Konkomba Naa in Bimbilla. Unlike the former, the latter is not relapsed; it has not resurfaced since 1995. Of interest to this study is the intra-succession chieftaincy conflict.

The intra-chieftaincy succession conflict occurred following the death of the paramount chief of the Nanumba Traditional area, Naa Abarika Attah, on the 22nd of September 1999. Getting a substantive and acceptable chief to occupy the vacant paramount skin has, since, been a problem. However, the in-depth interviews showed that the paramountcy of the Nanumba Traditional area is reached through two main gates: the house of the lions (Gbugmayili) and the house of the ring (Bangyili), with each taking turns to occupy a vacant Bimbilla skin. Naa Abarika Attah (the deceased king) was from the house of the ring (Bangyili), which means that the next king of the Nanumba Traditional area has to come from the house of the lions (Gbugmayili). This laid down structure had not witnessed any misunderstanding from the time of the Naa Azuma (the fourteenth chief of Bimbilla) when the royal gate of Nanum was divided into the Gbugmayili and Bangyili to the time of Naa Abarika Attah (the thirty-first chief of Bimbilla).

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The in-depth interviews also indicate that no royal in the traditional area can ascend to the paramount skin without, first, having climbed through a hierarchy of chieftaincy titles to the apex (Figure 11).
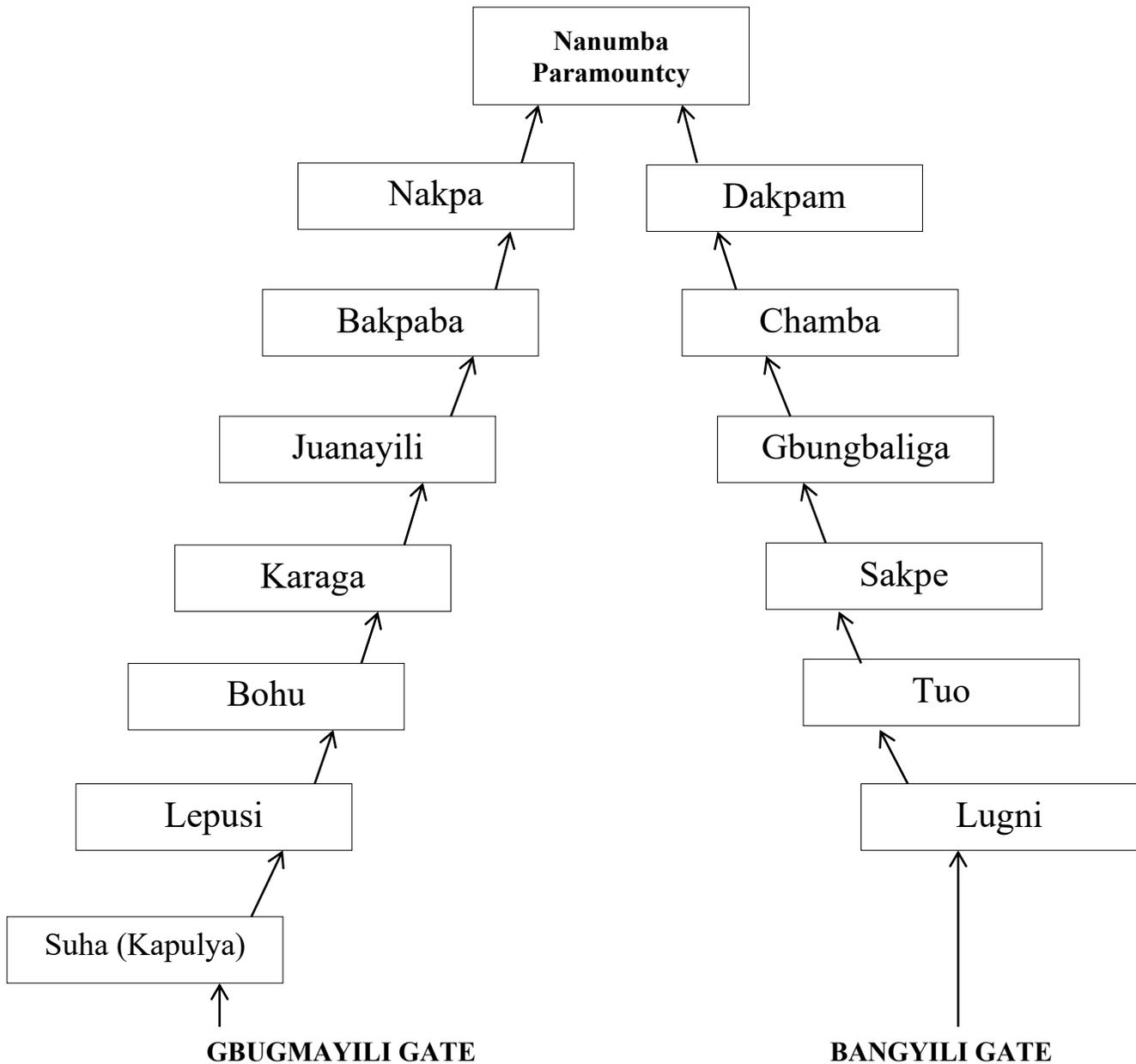
Figure 11: Hierarchical Titles to the Nanumba Paramountcy

Source: Field survey (2017)

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Figure 11 describes the hierarchy of chieftaincy titles that a royal of the Nanumba Traditional area has to pass through to the paramountcy at Bimbilla. For instance, a royal from the Gbugmayili gate must rise through the ranks, starting from the lowest title of Suhu (Kapulya) until he gets to Nakpa, the final skin title on their side that opens to the paramountcy. In the same way, a royal from Bangyili must also pass through the various titles from Lugni through to Dakpam before he can be enskinned as a paramount chief. One would have expected smooth succession with these arrangements in place but that was not the case.

Following the death of Naa Abarika, nine Kingmakers met and decided on whom to be the next King as tradition demands. The nine Kingmakers were Juo Naa (head of the Kingmakers), Wulensi Naa, Gambugu Naa, Kpatihi Naa, Jilo Naa, Joli Naa, Langiri Naa, Chichege Naa, and Dibsi Naa. Out of the nine kingmakers, six (6) members chose Andani Dasana Abdulai to ascend to the throne. This received a fierce challenge from the other three (3) members including the chairperson of the kingmakers, Juo Naa. They argued that the customs of the traditional area do not allow anybody who has not handled a sub-title to be given a higher status title, not to mention occupying the paramount skin. According to them, Andani Dasana Abdulai had never been a sub-chief and, therefore, is not qualified for the position.

To these three members of the kingmakers, Alhaji Salifu Dawuni (the sitting Nakpa Naa), is the most qualified person to occupy the vacant title. The Nakpa title is, of course, the final stage for a Gbugmayili royal to ascend to the

paramountcy. Alhaji Salifu Dawuni had held the Bakpaba Naa title before moving to Napka when it got to his turn. This made him the most qualified person to ascend the Bimbilla throne according to his supporters. Opponents of Alhaji Salifu Dawuni objected to this saying his father had never been a King of Nanun, and that disqualifies him. It is for this reason that the six Kingmakers who thought the King must have been the son of a previous King proposed Andani Dasana Abdulai, whose father had been a King.

The spokesperson for Alhaji Salifu Dawuni's supporters counter the above argument and remarked with the following:

> Can a royal ever ascend the throne of Dagbon without a skin title? Can same be done in Mamprugu or Yagbon? If the answers to these questions are no, why would people wish that for Nanun? It is not for nothing we have a hierarchy, it is not for nothing we have a system of succession put in place. It is based on the hierarchy that even a child in Nanun is able to tell who succeeds a sitting Bimbilla Naa in the event of his death. It is not enough to say you are a son of a former Yaa Naa, Yagbon, Naayiri, or Bimbilla Naa and, for that matter, get straight to the throne. My brother, this is unfair, unusual and not part of our succession culture. (Traditional leader in Bimbilla, 22nd March 2017).

This quotation implies Andani Dasana Abdulai cannot be a Bimbilla King just because he is a son of a former King. It also means that the hierarchy and succession culture of the traditional area would be flawed if he is enskinned as the paramount chief. Another important element in the quotation is the feeling of

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injustice. This buttresses the assertion by Maiese (2003) that injustice is the origin of conflicts. Maiese asserts that the desire for justice is one that people tend to be unwilling to compromise on; an individual's sense of justice is connected to the norms, rights, and entitlements that are thought to underlie decent human treatment. In the same vein, it supports Coleman and Deutsch's (2012) view that the origins of conflict emanate from who gets what and how much they get.

From the two stands, inductively, two conditions are of necessity to be met for one to be made a king of the Bimbilla traditional area. The candidate must be a son of a previous king and must rise through a hierarchy of succession to the highest point. In addition, none of the conditions is of more value than the other, which means that one cannot fall short of one of the conditions and still be made a king. On this premise, one would not be wrong to conclude that both Andani Dasana Abdulai and Alhaji Salifu Dawuni are not qualified to be kings of the traditional area.

The findings that two conditions are of necessity to be met before one could be enkinned as a king of Bimbilla is in line with the illustration in the conceptual framework. According to the indigenous wholistic theory, indigenous people's experience can be framed and contextualised within a historical, social, political and economic framework. Such a wholistic framework provides a concrete tool for the understanding of the nature of balance and harmony (Absolon & Willett, 2005). This, therefore, can be used to understand the conflict content and acquire different views from all key stakeholders on what needs to be

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done in instances where one falls short of a condition for sustainable management.

Alhaji Salifu Dawuni being a Nakpa Naa today came from his bravery in accepting the Bakpaba skin title. The in-depth interview revealed that when there was a vacancy at Bakpaba, nobody at the Dasana's lineage wanted it because of the belief that anyone accepting the title will die prematurely. Nevertheless, Salifu Dawuni took it and ruled for seven years until there was a vacancy at Nakpa. It is claimed that before Salifu was given the Bakpaba title, Naa Abarika had offered it to the Dasana family, they refused it arguing that their predecessors never had to go through that line of promotion and that they went through Juanayili, Nakpa and to the paramountcy. No one came forward to take the Bakpaba title, neither were there contestations to the enskinment of Salifu Dawuni because it was generally believed that Salifu would die shortly after his enskinment.

Probing on the refusal of the Dasana lineage to Bakpaba title revealed that during the era of Dasana's father, Naa Abdulai, the whole family neglected his brother, Bakpaba Naa Attah, who was a chief at Bakpaba and died a mysterious death without the help of the family. According to the narratives, when he was about to die he swore an oath and told the family that whoever in the family progresses on the ladder to Bakpaba should not succeed but die – the reason for the family's fear towards being enskinned as Bakpaba.

From the time of Naa Abarika's death in 1999 to 2002, the traditional area had no paramount chief. Andani's supporters, in collaboration with the keeper of the king's regalia, quickly enskinned Andani Dasana as the Bimbilla Naa in 2002.

Alhaji Salifu Dawuni and his supporters carried their protest against the enskinment of Andani Dasana by a formal report and complaint lodged at the Northern Regional Security Council. They further went to court and an injunction was placed on the enskinment and other related activities of Bimbilla Naa. The Northern Regional Security Council referred the case to the Traditional Council under the secretary of Guma. They ruled on two issues:

- that, one could not be king of Nanun if he did not previously hold any traditional title and

- that, Juo Naa who is the head kingmaker, must be part of the final decision on who should be king.

This implied that Andani Dasana Abdulai is not qualified to ascend the Bimbilla Naa title and accordingly, Alhaji Salifu Dawuni (Nakpa Naa) was enskinned as Bimbilla Naa. Andani Dasana then took the matter to the Regional House of Chiefs where he was declared the legitimate King of the traditional area. While the Traditional Council recognises Alhaji Salifu Dawuni as the legitimate King, the Regional House of Chiefs recognises Andani Dasana Abdulai as the legitimate King. This polarized the traditional area and led to attacks and counter-attacks between the two factions.

Alhaji Salifu Dawuni appealed to the Regional House of Chiefs since the first ruling did not go well with him. On 13th March 2012, the committee delivered its judgment dismissing the claims of the petitioners. In effect, the paramount issue of whether the 1st petitioner/Appellant or the 1st Respondent was properly nominated and enskinned Bimbilla Naa was decided in favor of the 1st

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Respondent. Against this decision, the Appellant filed an appeal to the National House of Chiefs. On 5th March 2014, Salifu Dawuni died a "natural death", and that worsened the situation.

On the day of the burial, gunmen believed to be their opponents attacked the crowd, killing one person and injuring several people in the process. The in-depth interviews revealed that his burial would mean that, he would have been buried as a Bimbilla Naa because all the "Tingdamba" in charge of the burial of the paramount chief of Bimbilla (Daadanyili and Binda) were there to put the traditional burial regalia on him for the burial. Burying him as a Bimbilla Naa would pave way for his lineage to ascend to the paramount skin in future. The District Security and the Regional Security Councils imposed a curfew from dawn to dusk.

On 19th July 2014, three gunmen disguised themselves and attacked the Palace of Andani Dasana, murdered him, and killed several others. A conflict broke out in the whole Bimbilla Township and several lives were lost. The security forces arrested a number of people from Salifu Dawuni's side. They detained some at Tamale and sent others to the BNI office at Accra as suspects. Investigations were carried out and the suspects arraigned before a high court for judgment. Some were released after about a year while others, until date, remain detained.

Another deadly attack occurred on 9th July 2015. In what has been described as a fight over beef, supporters of Andani Dasana attacked Alhaji Salifu Dawuni's people and killed over forty (40) people through armed-bush and

opened-fires. Many houses were burnt and properties, destroyed. Twelve people from both sides were arrested and detained at the Tamale prisons for almost six months. All the suspects have been released except two, one from each faction, who were charged and found guilty of murder.

This attack had to do with the regent of Bimbilla, Naa Yakubu Dasana Andani who "illegally" installed two Warrior Chiefs from the Giino and Pusugu communities on 9th February 2017. The installation led to hot exchanges of gunfire after the opposing group from the late Nakpa Naa Salifu's family allegedly attacked the gathering. The Regional Security Council confirmed that they were informed about the intention of the Bimbilla Regent to enskin sub-chiefs on February 9, a decision the Council ruled against. Unfazed by the Council's stance, the regent went ahead with his plan, courting the displeasure of the other faction and resulting in the bloody clash. Ten people were reported dead while 18 were reported injured and in critical conditions at the hospital.

The findings that curfew had been imposed, several people were arrested and detained, is in line with the formal conflict management mechanisms as indicated in the conceptual framework. In addition, people losing their lives are in line with the contextual issues captured by the conceptual framework, as the conflicts were violent and destructive in nature. According to the Berghof Foundation (2012), when conflicts consist of actions, attitudes, and structures that cause physical, psychological, social or environmental damages or prevent people from reaching their full potential, such conflicts are destructive and violent in nature.

Within-case Analysis

It is instructive to note the role of history in the pursuance of goals in this conflict. Although there is a well-designed chieftaincy succession plan, each side constructs a kind of history that suits her interest. Critical, here, is the version of history held by the Andani Dasana Abdulai faction. While clearly not held by all members of the community, it tends to provide a continuing rationale for the rejection of pragmatic compromises. As a structural cause, it makes it difficult for any of the factions to give up because what is gotten from peace seem less valuable than what must be given up for peace, particularly when tentative and uncertain gains are measured against the presumed benefits of a reconstruction of the history.

Inductively, another structural issue prolonging this conflict is the dominance of high levels of mistrust. The persistence of the grievances have generated hatred and, apparently, led to a lack of trust for each other. An atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust had been created, and that characterizes the relationship existing between the families of Adani Dasana Abdulai and Alhaji Salifu Dawuni and their supporters. Cooperation, when attempted, is always a risk.

A major structural condition in this conflict is that it is not, merely, a conflict about chieftaincy title but a conflict of interest. What has not been measured at this moment is the emotional depth of the conflict, the intensity of the hatred, mistrust, and the contempt that has developed and deepened over time. However, this feeling may be so profound that some of the adversaries in the

conflict may prefer to inflict pain on the other side than to gain something for themselves. This is in line with James and Ryals' (2010) view on the core elements of conflict as they assert that interest in conflict occurs when there are actual or perceived scarcities of resources, procedural issues, and psychological issues.

The proximate cause and/or the trigger of the conflict was the death of Naa Abarika. In fact, it is since his death that the district had remained restless. All the struggles and atrocities recorded are because of the search for the next king to succeed Naa Abarika after his death. The second proximate cause was the attempt by the family members of Salifu Dawuni to bury his body at the royal cemetery. On several occasions, attempts were resisted by the other faction, which had led to many clashes. Court decisions have also triggered some clashes due to jubilations by a faction. In recent times, the regent has been alleged to be enskining new chiefs in some of the villages in the traditional area. This action caused the death of 10 people and injured 18 as recounted by a key informant.

Analysing the actors in this conflict following Wyman's (2013) categorisation of actors into grassroots, middle, and top levels actors highlights three major findings. Firstly, the grassroots actors were the families of Andani Dasana and Alhaji Salifu Dawuni who were closely knit to each other in the Gbugmayili lineage. This group of people has a direct stake in the outcome of the conflict and for that matter are using a fighting behaviour. This also means that the conflict cannot be managed by complete separation of the adversaries. This

primary actors' main motivation is to rule the community with an interest in occupying the skin and enjoying whatever benefits are associated with it.

Secondly, the nine kingmakers can be described as the middle-level actors in this conflict. They are the allies or sympathizers of the two families and have an indirect stake in the outcome. For sustainable outcomes, importance has to be attached to this level of actors as they may assume a catalytic role through their linkages to the top and grassroots. This actors' motivation was to select the right person to occupy the vacant skin with an interest of not breaching cultural practices and tradition. Finally, the Regional House of Chiefs, the military, and the civil society organisations occupy the top level actors in the conflict. Their motivation is to mediate between the warring factions with an interest in creating a peaceful environment pre-requisite for development.

A snapshot of this conflict presents a worrying picture since the conflict can be described as being very destructive. It is characterised by tension and intense violence including the burning of farms and houses and injuring and killing of opponents. The availability and access to sophisticated guns facilitate the attacks and counter-attacks which have caused physical, psychological, and social damages and has prevented people from reaching their full human potentials in the area. It has weakened the social fibre, slowed down economic activities, and polarised the society to negative activities, impeding investor interest. The worrying part of this conflict is that it appears endless.

In assessing the current state of the conflict, in the pendency of the appeal by Alhaji Salifu Dawuni, upon the death of both the 1st Appellant and 1st

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Respondent, substitutions were made for the purpose of determining the appeal. The petitioners and respondents now read as follows:

Bimbilla Naa, Salifu Dawuni {Petitioners/Appellants} substituted by

1. Sagnarigu Lana Shani Azumah

2. Juo Regent, Osman Mahama

AND

Andani Dasana {Respondents} substituted by

1. Nyelinborgu Naa, Yakubu Andani Dasana.

2. Azumah Natogmah.

The traditional area is still under a curfew with heavy security presence. The division among Kingmakers has led to the polarisation of the society with all sorts of issues that can easily arouse the territorial instincts of individuals and groups to the conflict. In addition, deceased chiefs are yet to be buried and their funerals, performed. The society is, currently, characterised by mistrust and fear. All the interventions (especially the curfews) tend to achieve short-term stability but fail at dealing with the structural cause of the conflict.

The Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District conflicts

The Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District presents similar but different underlying issues of the conflict situation to that of the Bimbilla District. Two on-going conflicts are prevalent in the District. These are the chieftaincy succession conflict between the Jafouk and Jamong families from the same clan (*Louk* clan) of the

Bimboba tribe and the ethnic conflict between Konkombas and Bimobas regarding access to and control over land.

Bimobas in the Bunkpurugu traditional area migrated from Togo to settle in the area because there is vast land to serve their interest in farming. Konkombas, originally, inhabited the place, but they kept shifting outward since it is believed that they were not comfortable co-inhabiting with different people. Both the Konkombas and Bimobas were acephalous groups and recognised the Nayiri (overload of the Mamprugu Traditional Area) as their landlord. The Nayiri initially assigned people as "caretakers" of the land, not chiefs. But, as time passed, these titles became chieftaincy titles for these acephalous groups.

Although there are other clans within the Bimoba ethnic group such as the *Buuk*, *Temong* and the *Bawk*, the *Louk* clan was the first to settle in Bunkpurugu and are, therefore, the successors to the Bunkpurugu skin. The *Louk* clan is the predominant clan in both Bunkpurugu and Nakpanduri. Due to this, the Bunkpurugu and Nakpanduri chieftaincy titles come from this clan. This clan is made up of the Jafouk and Jamong members who hail from the same grandparents at a village called Loukporuk.

The interviews revealed that the Jamong family happened to be the first to ascend to the title and ruled for three consecutive regimes, from *Bait* (chief) Najonk to *Bait* Jamong and to *Bait* Mong. They argued that the Bunkpurugu skin is reserved for only members of the Jamong family and had nothing to do with succession turns between their family and another family. According to the narratives, their father was the first to settle in Bunkpurugu among the Bimobas

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and was the first to ascend to the title. This suggests that no individual outside this family is qualified to be enskined as Bunkpurugu chief.

Contrary to the above assertion by the Jamong family, the Jafouk family argued that they were equally qualified to be enskined as Bunkpurugu chiefs. According to the family, nothing prevents them from contesting for a vacant Bunkpurugu skin since they are Bimbobas and from the *Louk* clan. "All we need is to present a candidate to the Nayiri who by the Nayiri's own criteria, can manage the traditional area on his behalf" (Key informant from Bunkpurugu, 9th March 2017).

A validation at the Nayiri's palace revealed more intriguing information concerning the status quo of succession in chieftaincy at the Bunkpurugu traditional area. According to a key informant, Nayiri has prerogative rights to choose from either side (Jafouk or Jamong) or even any person from any other clan apart from the *Louk* clan to ascend to the skin since there is no written or verbal succession plan in the traditional area. Whenever there is a vacant Bunkpurugu skin, individuals from all the clans are qualified to present candidates to Nayiri for consideration. The Nayiri, through consultations and background checks, selects one of these candidates but do not make it known until the day slated for the enskinment.

On the day of enskinment, all the contestants assemble at the Nayiri's palace for the process to begin. Through the linguist of the Nayiri, both the contestants and the clan leaders are asked whether they will accept whoever is chosen from among them to lead the traditional area. A strong response comes

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from the crowd; "yes" signifies their readiness for enskinment. The Nayiri then moves to the contestants, holds the hand of the chosen one and brings him forward as the chosen one. With this done, the other contestants move behind that candidate to signify their acceptance of the Nayiri's choice.

After the demise of *Bait* Mong from the Jamong family in 1998, the Nayiri enskinned *Bait* Nong from the Jafouk family as the Bunkpurugu chief. Following that the Jamong family had ruled the traditional area for three consecutive regimes, this did not go down well with them. The Jamong family, therefore, sent the matter to court (Regional House of Chiefs) for a clarification. As the matter was being adjudicated, *Bait* Nong continued to rule and died in 2006 after ruling for eight years. The Nayiri enskinned another Jafouk family member-Alhaji Abuba to succeed *Bait* Nong. He is currently the chief of Bunkpurugu. The Jamong family, still perceiving they are being treated with "injustice", as they argue, continued their case at the Regional House of Chiefs. It has been 10 years but the case is still pending in the court.

This period had been characterised by tension in all facets of life between the two families, especially each time they return from court. For instance, on the 18th of October 2014, a member of the Jafouk family was found dead at Kpentaing, a community 3 kilometres away from Bunkpurugu. This led to upsurges and the burning of each other's houses. Security personnel arrested some suspects from the Jamong family and retrieving from them some sophisticated weapons after which they took them to Tamale for interrogation. However, they were released within a short period, and this infuriated the Jafouk family. To

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retaliate, they burnt several houses belonging to the Jamong family and killed one person.

Similarly, there were attacks and counter-attacks between the two families in the months of April, May, and November 2015. Many of the Jamong family members consisting of men, women, and children fled to Togo and were taken care of by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) while others were dispersed among different towns in Ghana. It is important to state that the Jamong family could no longer bury corpses at the common cemetery. Tradition demands that the chief is informed before burial takes place but they were not ready to do so since they did not recognise the reigning chief as a legitimate Bunkpurugu chief. Any attempts to bury corpses at the cemetery led to clashes. For this reason, all dead bodies from the Jamong family were taken to Nakpanduri for burial. By the end of 2015, the following data on the affected people were recorded. The District Security Council confirmed the mapping in Table 5.

Table 5 : Estimated Number of Affected People from Each Family

Outcome of conflict	Jamong	Jafouk
Houses burnt	68	80
Refugees in Togo	250	0
Displaced people	300	Unknown
Injured people	14	21
Total deaths	7	9

Source: Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District Security Council (2017)

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The Catholic Church first intervened by giving moral talks to the two families to patiently wait for the court decision. The Navrongo Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese organised a peace workshop and invited fifteen people from each family. The workshop resulted in the two gates signing a memorandum to respect the rights of one another and live in peace while they wait for the court to decide. This move led to the return of some of the Jamong refugees from Togo. In addition, the Jamong side could now bury their corpses at the common cemetery with both sides in attendance.

The in-depth interviews revealed that some organised groups such as the Bimoba youth association in the diaspora, the media, and some political heads took advantage of the calm situation and organised a blood burial ceremony to signify an end to the conflict between the two families. The District Security Council confirmed that in March 2016, a football match alongside the delivery of peace messages led to the blood burial signifying unity between the adversaries. The in-depth interviews, however, revealed information that marred the symbol of unity claimed to have been achieved. A key informant remarked:

> Let me tell you, on the eve of the blood burial, a house belonging to the Jafouk people was attacked and burnt down. The media (Joy TV) with the other organisers knew of this but ignored it and insisted the blood burial must continue explaining that some people in the community do not want peace to prevail. I am also reliably informed that the Jamong family are not ready to withdraw the case from the court and even insist that they will

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go for appeal in the event that they are pronounced losers. (Key informant in Bunkpurugu, 9th March 2017).

The above quotation implies that wounds are merely bandaged, not treated, and they might fester in no time. There are still people in the community who see the blood burial as not having any impact since justice has not been delivered. An interview with the spokesperson of the Jamong family confirmed the information by the key informant insisting that they will pursue the case to any level until justice is served. The people of Bunkpurugu are still under a curfew and the society can be described as enjoying a fragile peace.

The other conflict in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District is an inter-ethnic conflict between Konkombas and Bimobas regarding access to and control over land. Konkombas, Bimobas, and Mamprusis predominantly inhabit the district. However, both Bimobas and the Konkombas recognise the Mamprusis as owners of the land. The conflicts between the two settler ethnic groups – Bimobas and Konkombas – have to do with each perceiving the other as not being the rightful owner of the land and, for that matter, should not be deciding who has access to the land. The conflict also has to do with a stereotyping against the Konkomba ethnic group as being a lesser class of humans. The in-depth interviews revealed that Konkombas were less educated, less privileged, not economically well to do, and lived a haphazard life. On the other hand, the Bimobas saw themselves as "high-class" people having a greater number of educated individuals and economically well to do people. A key informant made this statement:

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Komkobas were not encouraged to send their children to school, they never had education as compared to the Bimobas, and this has been a great setback to their living standards. As a trekking officer and a stranger in this community, if I go to any Bimoba community, I get good drinking water. However, if I go to the Konkomba's community, the water is not good because they do not have a good source of drinking water and if I don't drink it, they won't relate well. It is a common knowledge in this society that when one gets involved in destructive and dirty activities, they ask the person…why are you behaving like a Konkomba? (Key informant in Bunkpurugu, 9th March 2017).

The above quotation brings to light how Konkombas are seen as less privileged and of a lower class of people in the District. This "down-grading" attitude has led to so many conflicts. It is also clear that Konkomba communities are lacking fundamental basic human needs such as water, which compromises the individual sense of justice connected to entitlements. According to the narrations, Konkombas feel the Bimobas have used their land to develop themselves. So in the event of misunderstandings, they destroy the properties of the Bimobas to get even.

Land conflicts have occurred involving reprisal attacks between the Konkombas and Bimobas in Nakpanduri, Teima, and Jimbale. In addition, there have been land battles between Kambatiak and Gbankoni communities of Konkomba and Bimoba respectively leading to the poisoning of drinking water sources (wells) and killing of innocent people as well as the destruction of

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properties. In these communities, there exist ambiguities concerning the rightful or recognised owner of the land. For instance, in Kpemale, a misunderstanding between a Konkomba man and a Bimoba man over a piece of land earmarked for the construction of a school led to the death of three people. Konkombas and Bimobas rallied around their kinsman to claim ownership of the particular land meant for a communal project. The misunderstanding degenerated into violence, which was characterised by sporadic shootings and the burning of houses.

Further insights into the conflict revealed that for each ethnic group, letting the land go means accepting that the other group was superior and owned the land in the area. The disagreement was all about who had the right to allocate the land for the school project. Having the absolute authority to give out the land would be interpreted as some form of control and power over all the land in the area. The problem here is the multiple claims made over the same piece of land (between a Bimoba and a Kokomaba) where land right is supported by oral history but not legal documents and have lasted a couple of generations. Such rights over land have followed different forms over time and have shaped debates concerning authority over resources.

Within-case Analysis

The first structural cause of the conflicts in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District is the gradual centralisation of the acephalous ethnic groups in the area. Ethnic groups which previously had no centrality and recognised leaders are now centralising and are faced with a challenge of who gets what. In the case of the

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chieftaincy succession, the Bimoba ethnic group had no chiefs and, for that matter, succession plans. Key issues detailing who qualifies to be the chief of the place are lacking. The two families (Jamong and Jafouk), all from the same clan (*Louk*), are struggling to attain this status because of the importance attached to chieftaincy in recent times. From the time of the recognition of the "caretakers" as chiefs, only five chiefs have acquired the title to date. Without a succession plan, conflicts related to the Bunpkurugu title will continue. In the case of the land conflict between the two settler groups: Bimobas and Konkombas, both groups are gradually centralising and fighting for dominance. Letting a land to the opposition would mean the acceptance of dominance of that ethnic group.

The above finding is in line with the conceptual framework for the study, which illustrate structural conflicts as a type of community-based conflict that must be understood for sustainable management. According to Moore (2005), structural conflicts arise from structural inequalities in the control, ownership, power, authority or in geographical separation. This is exactly the situation in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District concerning both the land and chieftaincy struggles.

Another structural cause directly linked to the gradual centralisation of the settler ethnic groups is history. In both the chieftaincy succession and land conflict cases, each of the parties construes history to suit their stance. For instance, the Jamong family argues that their father was the first to settle in Bunkpurugu among the Bimobas and was the first to ascend to the title. Individuals outside this family were not qualified to become Bunkpurugu chiefs according to them. In the other case, Bimobas present a history that they were the

first to settle in Kpemale, Kambatiak, and Gbankoni and for that matter have every right to control the land. In effect, each side had a history that justifies their actions, making it difficult to compromise.

The finding that the families construe history to justify their actions is in line with the realist theory of conflict. The realist theory believes that competitive process between actors, primarily defined as states, is a natural expression of conflict by parties engaged in the pursuit of scarce and competitive interests (Molley, 2003). It, again, argues that decision makers have a moral justification to defend their basic interest and ensure self-preservation using any means necessary.

Another structural cause prolonging the conflicts in Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo is the issue of social relationships between the Bimobas and the Konkombas. Strong emotions, stereotypes, poor communication, and historic negative patterns characterise their relationship. In the particular case of the conflict between the two ethnic groups, Konkombas were seen as a lesser class of people and therefore lack respect and recognition in the society. This stereotype is inculcated into the younger generation that reinforces the divisional lines between the two ethnic groups. This is in line with Collins' (2008) assertion of identity as a major cause of conflict. According to Collins, when group members feel their sense of self is threatened or denied legitimacy or respect, conflict arises. Court declarations on the contested issues: the building of a school on a disputed land and the harvesting of dawadawa and shea fruits on disputed land constitute the proximate causes of the conflict in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District.

The grassroots actors in the intra-chieftaincy succession conflict were the families of the Jamong and Jafouk within the same clan. This does not extend to all Bimobas since there are different clans within this ethnic group. The Jamong and Jafouk members are the primary actors and were directly affected by the outcome of the misunderstanding. Their motivation is to be the dominant and ruling family with regards to the Bunkpurugu skin. The interest, therefore, is to occupy the skin, acquire power and authority, and be accorded respect and prestige in the community.

In the other case, the grassroots actors are largely the two dominant ethnic groups in the District – Bimobas and Konkombas. This meant that differences felt extended to the whole District and makes the situation very difficult to deal with. This actors' motivation was to acquire more farmlands and other land resources like the dawadawa and shea trees. Their interest, therefore, was to have access and control over land in the traditional area. The Nayiri serves as the middle-level actor in all the conflicts in the District. As the landlord of the traditional area, his decisions as to who gets what are paramount. However, the narrations show that the Nayiri is gradually losing his power and authority over these ethnic groups as most of his decisions have been rejected due to a "sense of injustice".

The Jamong family rejected the Nayiri's choice of Bait Nong as the Bunkpurugu chief and took the issue to court. The Nayiri's choice of chiefs in Gbankoni, Jimbale, and Kpemale had been rejected as they were chased out of the communities. This is a clear manifestation of self-emancipation from the rule of the Nayiri. Notwithstanding this, the Nayiri's role in the management of these

conflicts cannot be downplayed. He is such an important actor who has to be considered at every level of decision making if success is to be achieved. His motivation is to maintain his control in the traditional area with an interest in sustaining the allegiances of the minority ethnic groups to the Nayiri skin.

The Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese, WANEP, Ibis, District Security Council, and the Regional House of Chiefs served as the top-level actors in these conflicts. These mediators were all striving to facilitate the sustainable management of the conflicts. Another group of actors in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo conflicts is the class I will describe as "spoilers". This is made up of the media and the various ethnic associations in the diaspora. This group of people had either conscious or unconscious interests in maintaining the negative status quo. While the media is only interested in the negative aspects, the ethnic associations in the diaspora were only ready to provide weapons and ammunition for battles. These constitute important actors who must be considered in the management process.

The nature of the conflict in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District is destructive. There has never been a disagreement concerning land or chieftaincy without casualties in terms of injuries, burning of houses, and deaths. If in effect, a whole community's drinking water sources (boreholes and wells) could be poisoned, it shows how deep-rooted the differences are and how opponents do not only seek to gain the desired objectives but to injure and eliminate rivals as well. The in-depth interviews revealed that the land conflict between the two ethnic groups have been very destructive and almost all the communities in the District

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have had their fair share of its impact. This finding concurs with the classification of conflict as destructive by Bercovitch et al. (2008). According to Bercovitch et al., verbal and non-verbal insults, ego attacks, inflexibility, a mindset of retaliation, and exchange of negative emotions characterise destructive conflicts.

In considering the current status of the conflicts, Jamong and Jafouk families are still locked up in the court waiting for a decision regardless of the much-praised blood burial indicating an end to their hostilities. Workshops on peaceful co-existence between Bimobas and Konkombas organised by the Navrongo Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese and WANEP have led to a blood burial in Kpemale, Kambatiak and Gbankoni signifying an end to hostilities. On the 30th of April 2017, a land disagreement between Sayeegu and Sambiluk communities led to the death of the chief of Sayeegu together with his son and two other people. This shows how volatile the traditional area is concerning land conflicts. As far as the underlying issue of who has access to and control over land has not been addressed, the district cannot be described as a peaceful society.

The Central Gonja District Conflicts

The Central Gonja District also presents two major conflict situations, a battle of "legitimacy of authority" between the Yagbonwura (overlord of the Gonja traditional area) and his surrogate Bawah Awusi on one side against Abdulai Mahama Jinapor, the chief of Bupei on the other side. The other conflict was a land conflict in Mpaha between the Tijaniyya and the Alusuna Muslim sects regarding access to land.

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In the first instance, at a traditional council meeting in Yagbonwura's palace at Damango, one of the subordinates of the chief of Bupei, Abdulai Mahama Jinapor, fired gunshots into the air. Shooting a gun into the air in the presence of the Yagbonwura was interpreted as a sign of disrespect to the Yagbonwura's authority since it was against the customary practices of the Gonja tradition. Yagbonwura and the traditional council decided to sanction the Buipewura, by way of taking the Buipe skin title from him (deskinment) and giving it to another person. Bawah Awusi was chosen and enkinned immediately Jinapor was told he no longer holds the Buipe skin title.

The deskinned Buipewura, Abdulai Mahama Jinapor, sent the case to the Tamale High Court challenging the authority of the Yagbonwura to deskin him. He argued that per the tradition, Kagbapewura, who performs the final enskinment of a Yagbonwura, is the same person from whom a Buipewura draws his power and authority. Kagbapewura after enskining a Yagbonwura does not see eye-to-eye with the Yagbonwura again and so delegates the Buipewura to attend traditional meetings on his behalf. Yagbonwura cannot, therefore, deskin a Buipewura who is a representative of the Kagbapewura at traditional council meetings. He won the case at the Tamale High court. The Yagbonwura appealed against the ruling of the Tamale High Court at the Appeal Court in Accra. Again, the deskinned Buipewura was pronounced the winner.

The litigation as to who really rules the Buipe traditional area led to many confrontations between the factions. Since the beginning of this struggle in 2010, there have been several clashes between the Jinapor and the Yagbonwura/Awusi

allies anytime there were functions to be performed by the chief of Buipe such as in the celebration of the Damba festival, collection of market tolls among others. In addition, anytime there was a court ruling on the matter, the jubilation by the favoured side led to violent confrontations. The last of such clashes was on the 5th of March 2011 when the Jinapor sympathisers took to jubilations following the Appeal court's ruling in their favour.

The misunderstanding developed into a struggle for authority between the traditional institutions and formal institutions. The traditional council recognised Bawah Awusi as the legitimate and substantive Buipewura while, legally, the formal court recognised Abdulai Mahama Jinapor as the Buipewura. The traditional council argued that they enskin and for that matter have the right to de-enskin. The formal court, on the other hand, pronounced such an act of de-enskinment without justifiable reasons as dehumanising. According to the verdict, it was against the human rights of Abdulai Mahama Jinapor.

Non-State actors such as the West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP-Ghana) collaborated with some Community Based Organisation (CBOs) to carry out peace initiatives in the traditional area. The CBOs were the Centre for Rural Improvement Services (CRIS) and The Human Help and Development Group (THUDEG). These NGOs or non-state actors' interventions were in the form of education, awareness creation, sensitisation, and mediation. For instance, a peace march was organised by WANEP involving women of the two factions to put pressure on the traditional leaders to resolve their differences and let peace reign in the Buipe Traditional Area. Through the focus group

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discussion, it became known that although these initiatives were not sufficient, they were necessary as they laid the foundation for other engagements between the factions. The initiatives reduced hostilities among residents and created an environment where every community member sought peace in the traditional area.

Following the move by the Civil Society Organisation (CSOs), a traditional system of conflict management was resorted to for sustainable results. The Yagbonwura and the traditional council, to find a lasting solution to the conflict, formed a committee of eminent chiefs. This indigenous method took matters to rest in Buipe and paved way for peace. The mechanism is discussed in detail in chapter seven. The male and female focus groups discussions revealed that this mechanism was by far, the best to find a lasting solution to the Buipe chieftaincy conflict. According to them, the process dealt with the issues satisfactorily leading to a mutually acceptable and self-sustaining outcome. Buipe currently can be described as one of the most peaceful towns in the Northern Region concerning chieftaincy conflicts.

The other conflict in the Central Gonja District was a land conflict between the Tijaniya and the Alusuna Muslim sects. The conflict was about the sitting of a land for the construction of a mosque. Mpaha is a Muslim dominated community with both Tijaniya and Alusuna sects of the religion. The conflict ensued when the Tijaniya Muslim sect wanted to build a mosque at Kpanbuso, the middle of Mpaha, on a land that was closer to the Alusuna dominated zone of the

community. The Alusuna faction resisted this move by the Tijaniya faction to build the mosque nearer to their section of the town.

According to the Alusuna sect's account, they were the first to settle in Mpaha and first to build an Arabic school in the community. Allowing the Tijaniya sect to build a mosque close to them will mean a spread of their ideology into the area, which may affect their younger generation. Contrary to this account, the Tijaniya sect argued that they were the first to take Islam to the Mpaha community and for that matter, they were responsible for offering prayers for and on behalf of the leaders of the community. According to them, Alusuna sect is a "modern moderate Muslim group" who do not abide by some of the strict teachings of the religion. They were afraid to lose some of their members through the teachings of the Tijaniya sect in their zone according to the field narrations from the focus group discussions. The accounts by the two groups implied that the land was used as a cover-up in an ideological struggle between the two sects of the same religion.

In the course of the struggles, three people were killed on different occasions of attacks and counter-attacks at the building site anytime an attempt was made to lay the building's foundation. The District Security Council (DISEC) and the traditional leaders of the community intervened and recommended that the Tijaniya sect should shift the sitting of the building a little bit away from the Alusuna zone to pave way for peace in the area. With no traditional/indigenous underpinnings, the conflict was put to rest when the Tijaniya sect agreed to shift the mosque away from where it was initially supposed to be built.

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Within-case analysis

In the Central Gonja District conflicts, two main structural causes were identified. In the first case concerning the deskinment of the Buipe chief, Abdulai Mahama Jinapor, disregard for tradition and customs was the structural cause. This was justified using history as the reference point for deskinment. The deskined chief equally used history in his challenge to secure his title. The proximate/triggers were the performance of traditional duties such as the celebration of the Damba and fire festivals and other related royal functions like the collection of market tolls. During the conflict, two individuals claimed ownership of the Buipe skin title and anytime there were such functions to be performed, the duality in the process led to clashes. The other proximate/trigger had to do with court declarations where the jubilation by the favoured side led to clashes.

The findings that history was used as a reference point to challenge decisions concur with the assumptions of the indigenous wholistic theory. The eastern doorway of the theory brings forth teachings of visioning, beginning, and rebirth. The beginning denotes recognition that indigenous people are in a state of resurgence and revitalisation and, at this time in their long history, they are recovering, re-emerging, and reclaiming their knowledge base (Absolon, 2010). This means that any differences in the recovery process could lead to conflict.

In the case of the land conflict between the Muslim sects, differences in ideology served as the structural cause of the conflict. The differences in the interpretations of the teachings of the Holy Quran had marred the two distinct

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groups' relationship making it difficult to arrive at agreements on conflicting issues. Another structural cause in this conflict was the use of history regarding which sect was the first to settle in Mpaha. They all argued for dominance using history as the reference point. This is in line with Brukum (1995) and Sulemana's (2009) findings as they found that conflicts results of struggle for autonomy and wars of emancipation. The proximate/trigger in this conflict was the attempt by the Tijaniya sect to build the mosque. Anytime the group starts digging the foundation on which they wanted to put up the mosque, the other sect attacked in resistance to the construction.

The primary actors in the struggle for legitimacy of authority conflict were the family members of Jinapor and Bawah Awusi. They were the people directly involved and affected by the outcome of the conflict. Their prime motivation was to acquire power and authority over Buipe. The interest was, therefore, to rule and have access to and control over resources in the area. The grassroots actors in the land conflict between the Muslim sects were the members of the Tijaniya and Alusuna sects. The main motivation of these primary actors was to spread their ideology across Mpaha. The interest was to become the dominant Muslim sect in the community.

The middle-level actor in the chieftaincy struggle was the traditional council as they were indirectly affected by the outcome of the conflict. Their main motivation was to adhere to the rules and regulations of the traditional area with an interest in safeguarding the traditions and customs governing the Gonja Kingdom. There were no middle-level actors identified in the land conflict

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between the Tijaniya and Alusuna sects. The top-level actors in both conflicts were the High Court, DISEC, WANEP, CRIS, THUDEG, and the committee of the eminent chiefs. Their motivation was to resolve the conflict with an interest in bringing back peace to the area to pave way for development.

The nature of the conflicts in the Central Gonja District was violent. Injuries and deaths were recorded in both cases. Although the Jinapor and Awusi struggle was between two factions, it affected the whole community socially and economically as a curfew was imposed and a ban, laid on the celebration of social and traditional festivals.

The recap of all the instances of conflicts in the study areas is reflective of the conceptual framework of this study. This proves the inevitable and inherency of conflicts in human existence and social progress. As underpinned by the realist theory, the framework suggests that actors should rather prepare to deal with conflicts instead of wish they never occur. The framework further argues that in dealing with conflicts, the first stage is to understand all the contextual issues of the conflicts that will be informative of the next line of action to take. The findings is also in line with the findings of Tsikata and Seini (2004), Brukum (2006), and Opoku (2015) as they found that most chieftaincy and land conflicts are violent in nature.

Tables 6 and 7 provide a summary of the contextual issues of the conflicts discussed and the actor analysis respectively. These were derived from the within-case analysis of the selected conflicts. This is necessary as the tables will give a snapshot of the issues for the cross-site analysis.

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Table 6 : Summary of the Contextual Issues in the Selected Conflicts (Origin/Causes, Actors, and Nature)

| Location | Case | Origin/Causal factors | | Actors | | | Nature of conflict |
		Structural	Proximate/Triggers	Grassroots level	Middle level	Top level	
Nanumba North District	Chieftaincy succession conflict	1. History 2. High levels of mistrust 3. Conflict of interest	1. Death of Naa Abarika 2. Attempts to bury Salifu Dawuni at the royal cemetery 3. Court pronouncements 4. Alleged illegal enskinment of new chiefs by the regent	Families of Andani Dasana and Alhaji Salifu Dawuni	Nine (9) Kingmakers	1. Regional House of Chiefs 2. Military 3. CSOs	Violent (destructive). Burning of houses, injuries, and deaths
Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District	*Case one* Chieftaincy succession conflict	1. Gradual centralization of acephalous groups 2. History	1. Death of Bait Mong 2. Court verdicts	Family members of the Jamong and Jafouk roots within the Bimoba ethnic group	Nayiri	1. Navrongo-Bolagatanga Catholic Dioceses 2. WANEP 3. DISEC 4. Regional House of Chiefs	Violent and very destructive Poisoning of water sources, Burning of houses, injuries, and deaths
Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District	*Case two* Land conflicts between Bimoba and Konkomba ethnic groups	1. Access to and control over land 2. Gradual centralization of acephalous groups 3. Negative stereotype social relations	1. Building of a school 2. Harvest of Dawadawa and shea fruits	Bimoba and Konkomba ethnic groups	Nayiri	1. Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Dioceses 2. WANEP 3. DISEC/REGSEC 4. Regional House of Chiefs	Violent and very destructive. Burning of houses, injuries, and deaths

Source: Field survey (2017)

Table 6, continued

| Location | Case | Origin/Causal factors | | Actors | | | Nature of conflict |
		Structural	Proximate/Triggers	Grassroots level	Middle level	Top level	
Central Gonja District	*Case one* A battle of "legitimacy of authority" between Bawah Awusi and Abdulai Mahama Jinapor,	1. Disregard for tradition and customs	1. Performance of traditional duties such as Damba and Fire festivals 2. Court declaration	Members of the Jinapor and Awusi families	Yagbonwura, the traditional leader of the Gonja Kingdom	1. High Court, 2. DISEC, 3. CSOs (WANEP, CRIS, THUDEG), and 4. The committee of the eminent chiefs	Destructive. Injuries and deaths
Central Gonja District	*Case two* Land conflict between Tijaniya and Alusuna Muslim sects	1. Differences in religious ideologies 2. History with regards to who settled in Mpaha first	1. Attempts by the Tijaniya sect to build a mosque	Tijaniya and Alusuna Muslim members		1. DISEC	Injuries and deaths making it destructive

Source: Field survey (2017)

Table 7 : Actor Analysis of the Conflicts

Location	Case	Actors	Motivation	Interest
Nanumba North District	Chieftaincy succession conflict	*Grassroots level* Families of Andani Dasana and Alhaji Salifu Dawuni	To rule the community	To occupy the skin and enjoy the benefits associated with it
		Middle level Nine (9) Kingmakers	To select a rightful person to occupy the vacant skin	Not to go contrary to customs and tradition
		Top level Regional House of Chiefs Military CSOs	To mediate between warring factions for sustainable management	To create a peaceful environment pre-requisite for development
Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District	Chieftaincy succession conflict	*Grassroots level* Jafouk and Jamong family members	To be the dominant and ruling family with regards to the Bunkpurugu skin.	To occupy the skin, acquire power and authority, and be accorded respect and prestige in the community.
		Middle level Nayiri	To maintain control in the traditional area	Sustaining allegiances of the minority ethnic groups to the Nayiri skin
		Top level The Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese, WANEP, Ibis, District Security Council, and the Regional House of Chiefs	Mediate between warring factions to sustainably manage the conflict	To create a peaceful environment necessary for development
		Top level Spoilers	To gain respect and recognition in terms of support	To maintain the negative status quo
Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District	Land Conflicts	*Grassroots* Bimoba and Konkomba ethnic groups	To acquire more farmlands and other resources like the dawadawa and shea trees	Have access and control over land in the traditional area
		Middle level Nayiri	To maintain control in the traditional area	To sustain allegiances of the minority ethnic groups to the Nayiri skin
		Top level The Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese, WANEP, Ibis, District Security Council, and the Regional House of Chiefs	Mediate between warring factions to sustainable manage the conflict	To create a peaceful environment necessary for development

Source: Field survey (2017)

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Table 7, Continued

Location	Case	Actors	Motivation	Interest
Central Gonja District	Struggle for legitimacy	*Grassroots level* Families of Abdulai Mahama Jinapor and Bawah Awusi	To acquire power and authority over Buipe	To rule, have access to and control over resources in the area
		Middle level The traditional Council	adhere to the rules and regulations of the traditional area	To safeguard the traditions and customs governing the Gonja Kingdom
		Top level The High Court, DISEC, WANEP, CRIS, THUDEG, and the committee of the eminent chiefs	To resolve the conflict	To bring back peace in area to pave way for development
Central Gonja District	Land conflict	*Grassroots level* Tijaniya and Alusuna Muslim sects	To spread their ideology across Mpaha	To become the dominant Muslim sect in the community
		Middle level		
		Top level DISEC and THUDEG	To resolve the conflict	To bring back peace in Mpaha to pave way for development

Source: Field survey (2017)

Cross-site Analysis of the Contextual Issues

Using the multi-causal model of conflict analysis structure, the conflicts in the three selected study areas (Nanumba North, Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo, and Central Gonja Districts) were seen to be widely different on a variety of dimensions. For example, the patterns of causality, levels of expansion, motivations, and interests, and the degree of involvement of top-level actors were hardly identical. Each case contains unique elements that made a comparison difficult, if not potentially misleading. Nonetheless, the cross-site analysis takes a different stand from what seems to make each case unique. The differences among the cases are obviously vital, and it would be foolhardy to ignore them. The analysis brings to light a similar set of structural and procedural conditions in all the cases. These conditions make comparison not only possible but also potentially of great value. This will help generate insights that would aid and strengthen the management mechanisms employed in the management of these conflicts.

In mapping the various contextual factors as per the multi-causal model, all these conflicts were dominated with a structural condition of not merely the use of history by each side to justify their positions, but the particular ways in which history is misused. In effect, each side constructs a kind of mythical history mingling elements of truth about the olden days. The fact is, the different versions of the history, while not held by all the members of the community, tend to provide a continuing rationale for the rejection of pragmatic compromises. This finding is in line with Hauss' (2003) view on the underlying causes of conflicts in contemporary times. According to Hauss, people frequently magnify the

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importance of historical animosities for their own gain. By playing to long-standing fears and resentments among their constituents, they can increase their own power and legitimacy.

The finding also supports Sulemana's (2009) findings on causes of conflicts in Northern Ghana. Sulemana insists that the process of maintaining identity by the continuous selective interpretation of historical events is a major cause of conflict. By attaching ideological differences to such selective versions, they are strengthened to a point of acquiring the status of absolute truth. Particularly important is the fact that new generations are socialised into a selective understanding of the past and, thus, internalises these perceptions, making it difficult to manage differences. The realists' theory of conflict contends that decision makers have a moral justification to defend their basic interest and ensure self-preservation using any means necessary (Morgenthau, 1973; Waltz, 1959; Williams, 2007). This finding supports the theorists' assertion.

A second structural condition that is prevalent in all the cases is the ownership of land, that is, access to and control over land and its resources. Even in conflicts that were chieftaincy related (e.g., Jamon and Jafouk in Bunkpurugu, Alhaji Salifu Dawuni and Andani Dasana in Bimbilla, and Jinapor and Awusi in Buipe), the underlying motivations and interest in those skins were linked to the access to and control over the land resource. This is evident in the actor analysis in Table 7 and supports the views of Mahama (2003), Brukum (2007), Sulemana (2009), Awedoba (2010), and Kendie et al. (2012) on chieftaincy struggles' link to land.

A third factor that characterises these conflicts and has profound implication for management processes concerns the presence of extreme patterns of social segregation, perception of discrimination, and marginalisation. Bimobas and Konkombas in Nakpanduri, Jamong and Jafouk families in Bunkpurugu, Alhaji Salifu Dawuni and Andani Dasana in Bimbilla are segregated; they have different residential areas. Encounters with each other are largely formal with little opportunity to develop shared interests or a common identity. This makes it easier for negative stereotypes to remain unchallenged and biased history to be taken on faith. This supports Collins' (2008) view on identity as a major cause of conflicts.

According to Collins, when group members feel their sense of self is threatened or that they are denied legitimacy and respect, conflict ensues. If any of the factions feel strongly that it has been discriminated against by another faction or a third party, it becomes a recipe for conflict. For example, the Jamong family feels discriminated by the Nayiri; in the same way, Alhaji Salifu Dawuni's family feels discriminated against by the nine (9) kingmakers in the Bimbilla conflict. Similarly, the Konkombas feel the Nayiri has discriminated against them in favour of the Bimobas. This buttresses Sulemana's (2009) findings that, being a victim of discrimination or oppression is, in itself, a cause of conflict in the Northern Region. Discrimination makes a people feel marginalised; hence, marginalised and threatened minority groups are always seen to be in conflict with other groups.

All the cases examined were dominated by high levels of mistrust. This constitutes the fourth structural condition of the conflicts. The persistence of the grievances that generated the conflicts, the hatreds generated by the inevitable atrocities, and lack of knowledge about each other's intentions creates mistrust between parties. Adversaries were trapped into making suboptimal choices because they lacked information, trust, and long-term perspective. For example, actions that each took to protect itself against cheating by the other side may also increase suspicion and induce reactions that create even worse fears and insecurity. The realist theory, also, surfaces in this finding. It suggests that people are prepared to bear the consequences of conflicts since they are inevitable rather than wish there were none.

A culture of violence is being developed and regenerated in Bunkpurugu and Bimbilla through the protraction of the conflicts. A vicious cycle is triggered when a violent incident provokes revenge and counter-attacks. While all the adversaries are in these acts, the processes aimed at resolving their hostilities over the years have been complicated.

Finally, these conflicts were not merely conflicts about land and chieftaincy succession; they were all interest-based conflicts. Important factors to note in all the conflicts were the intensity of hatred, mistrust, and contempt that have developed and deepened over time. The depth of this feeling is profound that some of the belligerences will prefer to inflict pain on the other side than to gain something for themselves. If the Jamong-Jafouk conflict, the Andani Dasana-Salifu Dawuni conflict or the Bimoba-Konkomba conflict was about only access

and control over land or skin titles, compromised solutions would have been much easier. However, such conflicts entail more than it seems and failing to recognise the psychological and emotional depths involved may only make these conflicts more difficult to manage. This revelation is similar to the outcomes of a study by Rugumamu (2002). According to Rugumamu, perceived goals and interest incompatibility are, perhaps, the most basic cause of social conflicts. The last stage of the multi-causal model is to check which conflict transformation efforts are addressing which factors and where there is a need for change or further efforts. This is examined in the subsequent chapters of the study.

In all the conflicts discussed, the grassroots actors were the direct family members of the individuals contending for power and authority. These were the important and key stakeholders in the conflicts. Because they were directly affected by the outcomes of the conflicts, management processes must take into consideration the motivation and interests of these people for sustainable management outcomes.

The middle-level actors were leaders or groups of leaders with the immense traditional power to manipulate issues. In the cases under study, the nine kingmakers in Nanumba North, the Traditional Council in Gonjaland, and the Nayiri constituted this category. Since the conflicts' outcomes affect them indirectly, management processes must capture their views. The top-level actors mostly sought development for these poor communities. Nonetheless, some top-level actors only sought to sustain the negative status quo of the conflicts. These "spoilers" are noticeable by their actions towards the conflict process. In the

mentioned cases, the media, the diaspora groups, and politicians constituted this category.

The contextual issues discussed, which creates a syndrome of conflict in the Northern Region, significantly affect the conflict management mechanisms employed to address the different conflict situations. Understanding the contextual issues set the context for management processes. It is, also, true that the contextual issues may create opportunities for progress or obstacles to progress in the management process. This notwithstanding, Nkabahona (2007) argued that the problem in attempting to resolve or manage a conflict is not merely to seek to understand the contextual issues in the conflict. Although it is necessary, it is not sufficient to gain sustainable management.

The other important aspect is to find ways to alter the hostile perceptions and mutual fears that lock the parties into a zero-sum view of any proposal. It is, therefore, important to find ways to do this. The type of management mechanism, the third parties to administer the mechanism, the timing of the mechanism, and the likely outcomes of the mechanisms are critical to a sustainable management of conflicts in the Northern Region. They create a framework within which efforts at management must proceed. This sets the stage for the next chapter of this study.

CHAPTER SIX

INDIGENOUS CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the study examined the contextual issues of conflicts in the selected areas within the Northern Region of Ghana. The chapter established linkages and synergies between and among the conflict characteristics in order to identify potential structural conditions necessary for management processes. In this chapter, the study examines the indigenous/traditional mechanisms or mediation efforts used in the management of conflicts in the selected Districts. The processes, the actors (elders, chiefs, clergymen etc.), and outcomes are examined. The data were collected from leaders of the primary/grassroots actors, the traditional leaders, Civil Society Organisations (Novrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese and the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding), and the District Security Councils using the interview guide. The analysis involved the use of thematic analysis (within-case analysis) and cross-site analysis.

Indigenous Conflict Management Mechanisms in the Selected Study Areas

The second specific objective of the study was to examine the indigenous conflict management mechanisms that have been used and/or are available for the management of the conflicts in the selected areas. The prime aim was to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the structures of these indigenous or traditional mechanisms. This would aid in their right application as well as in ensuring

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sustainable outcomes from the use of these mechanisms. The in-depth interviews revealed that all the selected areas possess indigenous ways of managing conflicts. The mechanisms are discussed in detail case by case to enable a proper within-case analysis and cross-site analysis.

Indigenous Conflict Management Mechanisms in Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District

In the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District, indigenous mechanisms were used in managing the land conflicts between Bimoba and Konkomba ethnic groups and in the chieftaincy succession conflict between the Jamong and Jafouk families of the Louk clan. In both conflict situations, the elders of the factions including the Nayiri (the King of the Mamprugu traditional area) were pivotal in administering the processes. The indigenous mechanism in this District is referred to in this study as the Nayiri's court and the blood burial.

Nayiri's court and the blood burial

This indigenous conflict management mechanism is an unstructured judicial and arbitration process held at the palace of the Nayiri to resolve conflicts between adversaries. The Nayiri, with his *kpambaliba* (kinsmen), as the traditional leaders of the area, play a role in the administration of justice to the people. They, as well, ensure social cohesion and peaceful relations for all groups of people within the traditional area. It is, therefore, worrisome and an obligation on the traditional leaders to ensure all conflicts within the traditional area is

resolved. The Nayiri's court remains the highest seat of authority among the Mamprusis, Bimobas, and the Konkombas in the area. Only mega cases involving different ethnic groups, land, and chieftaincy are adjudicated in the Nayiri's court.

The process of the mechanism involves both mediation and arbitration, which involves the parties or actors selected by any of the parties to the conflicts, the Nayiri, and his elders. A case is registered at the court for determination through a self-initiation by the Nayiri upon information reaching him informally or when one party lodges a complaint to the chief through the *wulana* (chief linguist). A day is set for the process to commence within three to seven days after a complaint has been lodged; by this time, all parties to the conflict would have been duly informed and invited. Whether the Nayiri summons or a party voluntarily reports a case at the chief's palace, the parties are required to present a token (cola nuts) before the process begins.

The in-depth interviews revealed that on the first day of the sitting, cola nuts and/or an amount of money ranging from GH₵5 to GH₵10 is presented to the chief through the linguist as greetings. In addition, the parties to the conflict are made to exchange greetings. The reason is that enemies do not sit together with the Nayiri, according to the customs and tradition. The greeting, therefore, serves as an indicator of the parties' readiness to resolve their differences. At the *zongni* (a big round room), parties are made to present their cases formally for determination. The chief and his elders listen to both sides carefully and adjourn the case to the next sitting. Within seven days, the next sitting is organised. According to the key informants, the chief and his elders use this period to

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analyse the cases presented by the parties to enable them identify areas where sacrifices can be made by either of the parties or both of the parties to arrive at an acceptable solution (agreement) to all parties.

On the second sitting day, after greetings (the presentation of cola), the chief and his elders ask the adversaries or their representatives questions in an interrogative manner in the presence of all the actors for clarification of portions of the cases presented. The final proposal to parties to an agreement is not made on this day. The case is again adjourned to a final sitting to give space for the chief and his elders to take a final decision based on the interrogation. Through wisdom and soothsaying, the chief and his elders make an appealing decision. The final decision is communicated to the parties on the third sitting. There is no opportunity to appeal the decision in the Nayiri's court.

It is at this stage of the management process that the blood burial ceremony is performed to seal the acceptance of the outcome of the process. The blood burial serves as the final stage of the management process. According to the narratives, in the olden days, the parties immediately set a day for this ceremony to be performed. In contemporary times, parties who are not satisfied with the outcomes of the process by the chief and his elders do not agree to the blood burial but rather seek redress mostly using the formal court system.

The blood burial ceremony is a significant ceremony which seeks to appease the gods of the land for an offence which was committed either advertently or inadvertently by a kinsman or an alien living in the community which could attract the anger or otherwise of the gods of the land. In the land

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conflicts between the Bimobas and Kokonbas, which led to the killing of innocent persons and destruction of properties, the Nayiri's court was used and the blood burial was performed between Kambatiak and Gbankoni communities at Kpemale. In this particular conflict situation, the ground for the burial was carefully chosen. It was done on the contested land lying between the two communities. In addition, the digging of the pit was done by the youth; young energetic men from both factions (Plate 1).

Figure 12: Regional minister with his security guards at the pit-digging site

Source: Field survey (2017)

The leaders of the parties to the conflict supervised the blood burial with a representative of the Nayiri, and the Novrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese. The Northern Regional Minister witnessed it with his entourage. Each faction (the Bimoba and the Kokonba ethnic groups) took to the burial ground local fowls, one goat, millet flour, and a big jerry can of *pito* for the ceremony. These items were used in the pacification process (see Plate 2).

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Figure 13: Inspection of the Items by the Leaders of the Two Factions

Source: Field survey (2017)

After these items were inspected, the animals were slaughtered close to the pit and the blood made to run gently into the pit (Plate 3).

Figure 14: Slaughtering the Animals for the Blood to be Buried

Source: Field survey (2017)

Parties were made to make a promise to live in peace and cooperate with each other. A final word came from the representative of the Nayiri, who urged

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the parties to keep to their promises as they could suffer calamity and end the same way as the animals have ended if any individual or group of individuals disturb the peaceful path they have agreed upon (Plate 4).

Figure 15: Pacifying the gods after slaughtering the animals

Source: Field survey (2017)

This was followed by merrymaking with the *pito* (a local drink) under the shed of a big tree close to the pit. The processes involved in the blood burial ceremony was observed during the data collection in the recent blood burial between the Jamong and Jafouk families.

Notwithstanding the blood burial, there are still pockets of land disputes between the Bimoba and Konkomba ethnic groups in the District. Although not on a large scale, the interviews revealed there are still contestations between members of the two settler ethnic groups regarding land ownership and who benefits from land resources such as the dawadawa fruits. Reference can be made

to the death of the chief of Sayeegu, his son and two other people on the 30th of April 2017.

In the Jamong and Jafouk conflict, the mediation outcome at the Nayiri's court suggested that *Bait* Nong was the rightful candidate from the Jafouk family to be enskinned as Bunkpurugu chief. The Jamong family did not accept this and so no blood burial took place. Rather, the family took the matter to court – Regional House of Chiefs (RHC). In the course of determining the case by the formal court, *Bait* Nong died in 2006. The Jamong family went back to the Nayiri hoping the "right" thing would be done by selecting a member of the Jamong family to occupy the vacant skin. To their surprise, the Nayiri again chose a member of the Jafouk family – Alhaji Abuba – to occupy the Bunkpurugu skin. This incited the family to return to the formal court to continue the process of "seeking justice"; but since 2007 to date, the case has been pending at the Regional House of Chiefs for determination.

Analysis of the mechanism

To begin with, this mechanism can be described as both mediation and an arbitration management process. The reason is that, in some instances, adversaries are meant to arrive at an acceptable solution to their differences. In most of the land cases, such as the conflict between Kambatiak and Gbankoni communities, this mediation form was used and both parties were enjoined to adopt an integrative (win-win) approach. In the other instance of the Jamong and Jafouk conflict, the arbitration form was used with the Nayiri having the final judgement.

This finding is similar to the *Gacaca* courts in Rwanda where people of integrity are used as juries to mediate between adversaries (Retting, 2008).

The Nayiri's court mechanism is easily accessible. In terms of distance, the court is within the traditional area, thus, close to the people. Hence, local communities can easily access it and submit their cases to the concerned local actors (Nayiri and his elders) of the mechanism. Unnecessary costs such as transportation costs are avoided since the court is close to the people. Concerning the payment, no specific amount is charged for the process, the cost involved has to do with the cola (GH₵5 to GH₵10) presented as greetings, which is comparatively affordable. This demonstrates Boege's (2006) view on indigenous mechanisms of conflict management as being less costly and accessible to the local people.

The Nayiri's court allows for inclusion and direct participation of the adversaries in the mediation process. This advantage or strength of the mechanism is evident in the fact that parties to a conflict are directly involved in the process. They are made to present their cases directly by themselves. During meetings, conflict management exercises permit a reassessment of views and claims as a basis for finding options and understanding divergent points of views. It provides an opportunity for the examination of alternative positive decisions to resolve differences. The ultimate aim of the Nayiri's court and blood burial conflict management is to restore relationships and community harmony.

The court focuses on managing rather than resolving because the blood burial aspect has a preventive element as it ensures parties do not revisit issues

that could re-ignite the conflict. The blood burial, which is binding on every indigene of the participating communities, was taken to the effect that the contracting parties accept peace, and there would be no more bloodshed between them. This is similar to the *Mato Oput* (drinking of the bitter herb) of Uganda. According to Ochola (2007), the drinking of the bitter herb means the parties to a conflict accept the bitterness of the past and promise never to taste such bitterness again. It, also, buttresses Menkhause's (2000) assertion that indigenous mechanisms tend to be process-oriented and not product-oriented. This mechanism also uses a short period in the management process. The interviews revealed that at least three weeks and at most eight weeks are used for the entire process.

As far as the shortcomings of the indigenous conflict management mechanisms are concerned, the Nayiri's court, especially the arbitration aspect, does not give parties the opportunity to appeal and re-argue their cases when they are not satisfied with outcomes. The decision of the chief is final and it is for this reason the Jamong family has since sought for redress (justice) using a different avenue. This indigenous mechanism of conflict management entails oral practices and has no documentation. Proceedings and final agreements are not recorded for future reference. This supports Osaghae (2000), Zartman (2000a), Boege (2006), and Zelalem and Endalcachew's (2014) views that traditional mechanisms are oral practices and have no documentation, thereby leading to some problems. Besides, the Nayiri's court arbitration mechanism lacks enforcement. The lack of an opportunity for an appeal may contradict universal standards of human rights

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and liberal democracy. In addition, the elders with the Nayiri, for instance, consist of old men only; this type of gerontocracy is challenged by democratic standards.

In conclusion, the blood burial ceremony is not a self-mediating mechanism but a post-mediation ceremony meant to appease the gods and to seal agreements. This means that if the mediation process is adjudged fair and just, parties would adhere to a blood burial ceremony. The neutrality of the third parties and the fairness in the processes are pre-requisite to the success of the mechanism. The Nayiri's court, to some extent, can be said to be successful in the mediation process between the Kambatiak and Gbankoni communities of the Bimobas and Kokonbas respectively. However, the outcome cannot be said to be sustaining since there are still packets of land confrontations between Bimobas and Kokonbas in the traditional area.

The in-depth interviews revealed that the Nayiri's court was not successful in managing the Jamong and Jafouk chieftaincy conflict. The Jamong family believed the process was arbitrary without recourse to the tradition. They also believed the Nayiri had taken a stand already before the whole arbitration process began. The family, therefore, sought redress at the Northern Regional House of Chiefs. The motivation for the choice of this mechanism will be discussed in detail in chapter seven of the study.

Indigenous Mechanisms in Central Gonja District

The Central Gonja District is a major part of the Gonja Kingdom. Hence, the indigenous mechanisms in the Central Gonja District are not different from

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what pertains to the kingdom. The Gonja Kingdom is a centralised society with leaders (chiefs) at various levels to man affairs. The Yagbonwura wields much power, in most cases, having the last say in the judicial, political, and administrative matters of the kingdom. The Yagbon Skin is strictly rotatory among the chiefs of the five gates – Wasipewura, Kpembewura, Bolewura, Tuluwewura, and Kusuguwura – in the Gonja Traditional Area. Under these five divisional chiefs are sub-chiefs with some power and authority depending on the status of the skin.

Aside the chiefs who are in the line of succession to the Yagbon skin are other chiefs like the kingmakers. These are Sonyowura, Damongowura, Choriwura, Dabrewura, Mankpongwura, Kulawwura, Kpansheguwura, Nsuawura, and Busunuwura. This means that in every aspect of the Gonja society, there exist, leaders, in whom some power of conflict management is vested. The in-depth interviews revealed three main indigenous/traditional mechanisms in the Central Gonja District. These are the chief's court, the use of *Ademang* (totems), and the constitution of indigenous committees for settlement of conflicts.

The chief's court

Depending on the nature and intensity of the conflict, whether it is on an individual basis, inter-family, inter-community, or inter-ethnic basis, the issue is managed at the different levels from the family heads to clan heads, community/village chief, traditional area chief and to the Paramount chief (Yagbonwura). Apart from the family heads stage, disputants report conflict cases

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with cola at the various palaces depending on the level of conflict. The field information revealed that in recent times, a small amount of money is used to represent the cola. According to them, it is a tradition that chiefs are greeted with cola, so the cola given out is not meant for the reportage of the conflict. Parties are not charged any amount when reporting conflict to chiefs in the Gonja Kingdom.

A meeting (chief and council of elders) is convened within three days with notice to both parties to the conflict inviting them to a meeting in the open, where the public (members of the community) can observe the process. Based on the hearings from both sides, the council of elders passes a judgment, which is binding on all parties. The disputant that is pronounced guilty is fined a goat, ram, or cow to be paid to the chief. If the conflict involves some damage to the opponent, one will further pay a certain amounts as compensation to the opponent for the damages caused. In addition, both parties are made to make vows of not repeating the cause of the incident.

The supreme traditional court is the Yagbonwura's court, which consists of the paramount chief and the elders representing the five divisions: Bole, Tulewe, Daboya, Kpembe, and Kusawgu traditional areas. This court is responsible for high-level cases involving larger groups of people such as the conflict in Buipe. However, the interviews revealed that the Yagbonwura's court was not used to mediate the Buipe chieftaincy conflict because the Yagbonwura was a party to the conflict. A key informant remarked:

How could we have used the Yagbonwura's court? No please. This conflict even started at the Yagbonwura's palace and the King and his council deskinned Abdulai Jinapor and enskinned Bawah Awusi. The council could not have been the same people mediating since their position was already clear on the matter. The Yagbonwura cannot judge his own case. Or my brother, will you judge your own case and rule in favour of your opponent? Although Yagbonwura has the final say in everything in this Kingdom, this was not for him to decide. (Key informant in Buipe, 2nd April 2017).

This quotation implies that the Yagbonwura had no jurisdiction to mediate between parties to a conflict of which his interest was obvious. Constituting a committee of eminent chiefs was done. This, therefore, led to the constitution of a committee to avoid conflict of interest. The chief's court, also, is accessible and affordable to the local people; processes and procedures are well attuned to local needs. In addition, the opportunity the chief's court gives for a reconstituting of a committee of chiefs to mediate depending on the actors and in order to avoid conflict of interest is of great advantage. This ensures acceptable outcomes since third parties are seen to be neutral. The chief's court also allows for inclusion and direct participation by primary actors with much emphasis placed on managing the conflict rather than resolving it.

Notwithstanding these, the court lacks written records of previous cases mediated or adjudicated on. It is based on oral practices and without any documentation whatsoever. In addition, even though the outcomes of the court are

binding on all parties, the court lacks the enforcement powers in the current democratic dispensation. This makes it difficult to ensure compliance with outcomes by the parties. The court may contradict universal standards of human rights and liberal democracy since parties may have reasons to disagree with the outcomes but has no opportunity to call for a redress.

Constitution of traditional committees

As part of the Gonja tradition, in times of difficulties in the use of the already existing structures to manage conflicts, and, also, with the main objective of ensuring fairness of processes and sustainable results, the Yagbonwura and his council constitutes a traditional committee to undertake mediation processes. The traditional committees mostly constitute other chiefs within the kingdom but from different traditional areas and have no direct interest in the conflict. This ensures the neutrality of the third party to the conflict. In the case of the Buipe chieftaincy conflict, the Yagbonwura and his council constituted a committee of chiefs towards the management of the conflict. The mandate of the committee was to find a lasting solution to the conflict that had been raging on for many years between the Awusi and Jinapor Royal Families of the Buipe Traditional Area in the Gonja Kingdom.

According to a key informant, the committee was made up of the Damongowura [Chairman], Kpansheguwura, Choriwura, Mankpanwura [represented by Sorwura], Wasipewura, Kpembewura [represented by Kanyasiwura], Bolewura [represented by Salawura], Tuluwewura, Kusawguwura,

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and Lepowura. The narratives, also, indicated that before the committee commenced the management process, the Yagbonwura as a party to the conflict promised to abide by the recommendations of the committee whether favourable or unfavourable. According to a key informant, the Yagbonwura said:

> I have given you this mantle to bring peace to our Kingdom and for this reason, I will take whatever decisions you come out with in good faith. If I am wrong, let me know I am wrong. May our ancestors guide us all in this (key informant in Buipe, 2nd April 2017).

This quote indicates the Yagbonwura's willingness and readiness to resolve the problem. The committee met the factions together on two occasions, met the factions each separately, and, afterward, met several times without the faction, according to the key informants. It was a means of weighing evidence through cross-checking and corroborating of the facts of the conflict. After these series of meetings, the committee's final report recommended the following as guidelines:

i. All chiefs enskinned during the reign of Buipewura Awusi Jewu Bawa Lebu II would still remain as legitimate chiefs and all lands sold considered valid to their owners without the need for them to change or acquire new documents.

ii. The rival Bupie Chief, Bawah Awusi will be given another chieftaincy title known as Danyapiwura to pave way for the re-enskinment of Abdulai Mahama Jinapor as the substantive Buipewura

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iii.   Abdulai Mahama Jinapor should be re-enskinned as the substantive Buipewura

iv.   Any development agenda or project to be carried out in Buipe must come under the watch and supervision of Buipewura Mahama Jinapor II and the de-enskinned Buipewura Bawah Awusi for peace and unity to prevail.

Emphasis must be laid here that all the agreements were verbal; there were no sealed and signed documents to that effect. Customarily, the kingmakers performed all the necessary rituals to seal the agreements and Mahama Jinapor was enskinned as Buipewura, a title he held since 11th June 2008 until he was de-enskinned on 14th May 2010 by the Traditional Council. He pledged to work closely with Bawah Awusi to bring development to the area.

This mechanism is one of the sure means of getting sustainable outcomes in managing conflicts in contemporary times. The surety of the neutrality of the third parties, the transparency and accountability in the processes and procedures, and giving the accessibility and quick nature in delivering results, this mechanism is considered the best for the local people. It, also, ensures inclusion and participation as well as offers an affordable process.

The use of Ademang

The use of *Ademang* is another indigenous mechanism used for conflict management in the Gonja Kingdom, and for that matter, in the Central Gonja District. *Ademang* (plural) or *Kedemang* (singular) literally means smaller gods in

the local dialect. These *Ademang* are used in the management of conflicts in all Gonja settlements. Conflicts that have spiritual dimensions involving incantations, curses, witchcraft, and oath-taking among others, are sent to the traditional and spiritual leaders including the custodians of deities and soothsayers. For example, one party may invoke a curse by using the name of a smaller god (sonyo kipo) or a deity to harm another person for perceived wrongdoing. Once the afflicted party realises through divination that s/he has been cursed, the accused is requested to reverse or nullify that curse by performing the necessary rituals at the appropriate quarters and going through the necessary traditional/cultural processes.

The basic features of the *Ademang,* apart from serving as intermediaries between the ultimate God and humanity, include the fact that they are dreaded and, as such, worshipped with utmost reverence and fear. The diviner or priest takes time to consult the spirit world and explain the supernatural aspect of events and makes issues associated with a conflict convincing, intelligible and, therefore, acceptable to the parties. The priests pronounce judgement and prescribe the sacrifices to atone for wrongdoing and the anger of the ancestors. The priests of the *Ademang* serve as mediators between conflict individuals/groups and the ancestoral spirits.

Analysis of the mechanisms

The chief's court system of managing conflicts is part of a well-structured and time-proven social system geared towards reconciliation as well as maintenance and improvement of social relationships in the Gonja Kingdom and,

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thus, in the Buipe traditional area. The processes and regulations are deeply rooted in the customs and traditions of the Gonjas. According to the focus group discussions, the relevance and utility of the processes lie in the fact that they strive to restore a balance, to settle conflict, and eliminate disputes. What is evident is that, at the community level, there are well-established traditional leadership and consultative structures and processes through which disputes are settled.

The chief's court is purely for arbitration processes with the chief and his elders serving as the arbiters. This is because the chief and his elders make the final decision, which is binding on all parties. Since the chief's court is located within the community and no amount of money is paid for reporting a case for adjudication, the process is accessible and affordable. The direct participation by the adversaries with the use of the local language makes the arbitration process transparent, leading to acceptable outcomes. This supports Menkhaus (2000), MacGinty (2008), Beall and Mduduzi (2009), and Boege et al.'s (2009) views that indigenous mechanisms have a feature of inclusive participatory approach at all levels of the conflict.

In the mechanism, outcomes are meant to heal wounds as the guilty parties are made to pay some compensation to those they offended. The promises made at the end of the process by the parties are meant to ensure a peaceful co-existence between them. The chief's court uses a short duration for the arbitration process. This leads to quick delivery of justice, which prevents relapsed conflicts. This supports Faure (2000), Braeuchler and Thomas (2007), and Brigg's (2008)

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findings that traditional conflict management mechanisms tend to be process-oriented, not product-oriented; that is, they focus on managing rather than resolving conflicts.

Another major strength of the traditional mechanisms in the Central Gonja District worth noting is the constitution of a "neutral" committee made of the chiefs from other traditional areas to adjudicate matters. The composition of the traditional committees demonstrates the Gonjas' notion of participatory democracy. This builds the trust of conflicting parties in the process concerning neutrality. It ensures fairness and produces sustainable results. This mediation process also produces a "win-win" result for adversaries. With reference to the Buipe chieftaincy conflict, the committee recommended another chieftaincy title for Bawah Awusi to pave way for the re-enskinment of Abdulai Jinapor as Buipe chief. This suppressed the high tensions between the supporters of the factions since at the end both parties took home skin titles.

Concerning the use of the *Ademang*, the fear of supernatural powers, ancestors, and other traditional divinities, personal shame and deterrence are the elements of the internal social control processes. The fear of the wrath of the *Ademang* ensures the acceptability of the outcomes. This is in congruence with the views expressed by Bob-Manuel (2000); Brock-Utne (2001); Bercovitch, Kremenyuk, and Zartman (2009); Ogunesan (2014); and Okere (2013) that this indigenous conflict management mechanism is cooperative and does not give opportunity for the accused to deny charges because of the fear of the native gods.

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Notwithstanding the strengths of the indigenous mechanisms in the Central Gonja District discussed, there are associated weaknesses that sometimes limit their efficacy in conflict management. The mechanisms are oral practices with no documentation. They rely on unwritten, oral and flexible precedents or rules. In the use of the *Ademang* for instance, the pronouncement of the priests cannot be verified since it does not follow a strict written code. The use of animal blood, red and white calico, and other materials like amulets in the process is often regarded as barbaric and satanic; outcomes could, therefore, be seen as false claims of the priests.

The mechanisms are also open to abuse by the priests and other traditional leaders. These leaders sometimes abuse their powers for their own benefit and to the detriment of the weak members of the communities. Many *Ademang* in contemporary societies have been established by self-professed priests where innocent victims are manipulated and dispossessed of their wealth. This has reduced the trust of many in the use of the *ademang* in conflict management since priests now concentrate on amassing wealth and not bringing out the truth. This supports Osaghae's (2000) view cited in Boege (2006 p.17) that, "the relevance and applicability of traditional strategies have been greatly disenabled by the politicisation, corruption, and abuse of traditional structures, especially traditional rulership, which have steadily delegitimised conflict management built around them in the eyes of many and reduced confidence in their efficacy".

The outcomes of the mechanisms (chief' court and use of *Ademang*) are binding to all parties without room for an appeal. This may contradict universal

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standards of human rights and liberal democracy since parties may have reasons to disagree with the outcomes but have no opportunity to call for a redress. The mechanisms can also be said to be limited in space. For instance, the chief's court, which is found at all the levels of the Gonja structures, cannot be applicable to acephalous societies where no well-structured hierarchical chieftaincy system exists. Beoge (2006) and Godwin (2015) also made the same findings.

Indigenous Mechanisms in Nanumba North District

While the Bimbilla chieftaincy conflict is still pending before the Northern Regional House of Chiefs, several attempts have been made by both contending parties and other groups to break the stalemate and resolve the conflict. These mechanisms or interventions have mainly been outside the traditional area and have adopted a formal theory of managing the conflict. Reference can be made to the attempts by the Damongo Catholic Peace Mission, the Nayire-the king of the Mamprusi kingdom, the Nanumba Youth Association, DISEC/REGSEC, and the Northern Regional House of Chiefs. Since the conflict begun in 2003, following the death of Naa Abarika in 1999, no attempts at managing the conflict have been successful. Although there are indigenous or traditional mechanisms of managing conflicts within the Kingdom, none has been used in the management of this chieftaincy conflict.

The Nanumba political system can be described as a centralised and hierarchical system under the leadership of the Bimbilla Naa who is considered the king and overlord of the Nanumba people. The Bimbilla Naa reigns over a

number of largely autonomous settlements administered by chiefs who occupy various levels of the political hierarchy and who owe allegiance to him (the Bimbilla Naa). Each Nanumba settlement has a ruling class (*nabihe*) consisting of the chief (Naa) and several elders (Nayili Kpamba) who constitute a court responsible for the administration of their territory. The Nanumba area, also, has female chiefs such as the Pona, Bimbilla-Pona, Kpatua-Naa, Nakpan-Zoo Naa, and Jikuhi-Pona. At all these levels, conflict management took place depending on the nature and parties involved in a conflict.

The Bimbilla Naa's court is the paramount court in the kingdom, which adjudicates cases between adversaries from different communities, clans, and traditional areas. The chief and his elders, just like what pertains in the Gonja kingdom, has a prime responsibility of ensuring peaceful co-existence in the kingdom by dealing with all conflicting parties. The Nanumba king is, therefore, the chief mediator in all matters of conflict in the kingdom. The actors, the process, and the outcomes of adjudication in the chief's court are no different from the Gonja kingdom. The Nanumba kingdom has nine chiefs referred to as kingmakers who are responsible for selecting and enskinning a Bimbilla chief upon the demise of a former one. The kingmakers also serve as the mediators between adversaries to a conflicting issue involving the king.

Aside from these structures, there are queen mothers or female chiefs in the kingdom who are responsible for advising the chiefs at the various levels of the structure. They also have a responsibility of adjudicating in matters involving women and ensuring the welfare of women in the kingdom. All these available

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traditional structures or mechanisms could not work to the fullest in the wake of the succession conflict that had hit the kingdom for more than a decade. In probing the reasons for this failure, a key informant remarked:

> How can these mechanisms be used when the same people to use them to manage the conflict are the same people killing each other every day? How? The conflict has disrupted these structures, the kingmakers who should have known better are divided, and we are all just there like that. In fact, my brother, to be honest with you, these our traditional leaders cannot solve this conflict. (Key informant in Bimbilla, 22nd March 2017).

This follow-up question was, thus, posed: "Are you suggesting this conflict cannot be solved? To this, the key informant noted:

> Look, let me tell you, even if it can be solved, not with these our traditional mechanisms we have here. These chiefs do not even see eye to eye, how can they meet and plan a way forward? They can't (Key informant in Bimbilla, 22nd March 2017).

These quotations show how the traditional mechanisms, which are built on the customs and traditions of the people have been damaged to the extent that no single traditional leader has the capacity to initiate any management process in the kingdom. The in-depth interviews with DISEC and the Catholic Church's representatives buttress the assertion of the respondent. According to these people, no traditional mechanism or leader can initiate any resolution process in the kingdom now. The leaders have all been tagged and aligned to factions in the conflict.

Analysis of the mechanism

The Nanumba kingdom, just like the Gonja kingdom, has a centralised structure of conflict management at every level of the society. From the family level, the clan, the community, the traditional area, to the paramountcy, there are chiefs and elders responsible for administering societal issues that will bring development to the people. Before now, the chief's court possessed all the strengths of the Gonja kingdom's court, except that there is no opportunity for the reconstitution of chiefs in committees to adjudicate a conflict depending on the actors and nature of that conflict. Structures have permanent constituents that deal with every issue irrespective of its nature.

A major weakness in the current state of the indigenous mechanisms in the Nunumba North District is that no neutral third parties are available for traditional processes. The individuals and groups who are supposed to have been administering the processes and procedures of these indigenous mechanisms are the same individuals and groups in conflict. There is a lack of trust and ill suspicion for any traditional mechanism proposed for the management of the conflict. The two focus group discussions held indicated strongly that for peace and sustainable management of the conflict in the Nanumba traditional area, other mechanisms should be considered aside their own indigenous methods.

Summary of Indigenous Mechanisms

Table 8 provides a summary of the indigenous/traditional conflict management mechanisms either available or used for the management of conflicts

in the selected areas. Their strength and weaknesses are also captured to inform areas that can be harnessed for sustainable management of conflicts in the Northern Region. The table also produces a quick snap of the issues necessary for the cross-site analysis.

Table 8: Summary of Indigenous Mechanisms Used or Available

Location	Management form/process	Indigenous mechanism used or available	Strengths	Weaknesses
Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District	Nayiri's Court and Blood burial	Mediation and arbitration	1. Accessible and affordable 2. Inclusion and direct participation 3. Focus on management rather resolution	1. No opportunity for appeal 2. Oral practices without documentation 3. Lack of enforcement 4. Gerontocracy third parties
Central Gonja District	Chief's Court	Arbitration	1. Neutral third parties due to constitution of the elders 2. Available opportunity to reconstitute a committee depending on the nature of case and actors 3. Accessible and affordable 4. Focus on management rather resolution 5. Inclusion and participation	1. No room for appeals 2. Oral practices without documentation for reference purpose 3. Lack of enforcement powers
Central Gonja District	Constitution of committees of eminent chiefs	Mediation and reconciliation	1. Neutrality of third parties 2. Transparency and accountability 3. Accessible and quick results 4. Inclusion and participation 5. Affordable	1. No written records 2. Verbal agreements 3. No room for appeal

Table 8, continued

Location	Management form/process	Indigenous mechanism used or available	Strengths	Weaknesses
Central Gonja District	The use of *Ademang*	Arbitration	1. Instant result/outcome 2. Sacrificing to cleanse bad doings	1. Limited in space 2. Open to abuse 3. Unwritten oral and flexible precedents of rules 4. Contradicts Universal standards of human rights 5. Seen as barbaric and evil
Nanumba North District	Chief's Court	Arbitration	1. Accessible and affordable 2. Focus on management rather resolution 3. Inclusion and participation	1. no neutral third parties are available 2. lack of trust 3. No room for appeals 4. Oral practices without documentation for reference purpose 5. Lack of enforcement powers

Source: Field survey (2017)

Cross-site Analysis of the Indigenous Mechanisms

The indigenous conflict management mechanisms in the selected study areas are oral practices with no documentation, thereby posing some challenges. In all the mechanisms discussed, there are no written procedures and processes for administering the mechanisms. As the outcomes of the arbitration process do not conform to any written structures, agreements to the final decision are verbal, not documented, and not signed. The reliance on unwritten, oral and flexible precedents or rules may lead to an abuse of the mechanisms by the traditional leaders (third parties). The indigenous mechanisms in the selected areas are, also, inconsistent, unpredictable, and discriminatory processes.

Reference can be made to the nine kingmakers in the Nanumba North District and the Nayiri's court regarding the Jamong and Jafouk conflicts, who have been accused of manipulating the system to serve their interests. MacGinty (2008) examined that biased approaches on the part of elders, chiefs, and priests that are sometimes merely motivated by personal greed, affect the efficacy of indigenous mechanisms. This is in congruence with the findings.

Except for Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo, and with particular reference to the Nayiri's court, all the other mechanisms discussed have their outcomes/results binding to the adversaries. In all, the administrators of the mechanisms lack the power to enforce outcomes of mediation and arbitration processes. By the frequent use of animal blood in sacrifices, charms, and amulets in consultation with the spiritual world (in the case of Ademang and the blood burial), indigenous mechanisms are, sometimes, seen to be barbaric and evil. In the advent of

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Christianity and Islam, the indigenous mechanisms are fast disappearing due to their "satanic" tag.

Treating perpetrators according to customary rules can contradict human rights standards: a violation of personal integrity or even torture. The spearing of wrongdoers, for example, is a common and accepted practice of traditional conflict management mechanisms among the Gonja and Nanumba Kingdoms. Though this might be seen as inhumane through western eyes, in the view of indigenous communities, it is more humane than the modern practice of imprisonment.

The indigenous mechanisms in the selected study areas were widely different on a variety of dimensions. They are dependent on and, thus, limited to the customs and traditions of the autochthonous people. Their applicability is confined to specific conditions. This point to another weakness associated with the indigenous mechanisms in the selected study sites. They are limited in sphere, supporting Zartman's (2000) view that, they operate in the context of a community's relationship and values. Zartman adds that, they are aimed at problems in relatively small communities in the local context.

Empirically, from the cases, the Nayiri's court, with its accompanied blood burial for the people of Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District, cannot be applicable in the cases of the Central Gonja and Nanumba North Districts. In the same way, the constitution of a committee of eminent chiefs as a traditional mechanism in the Gonja kingdom is not applicable to the situations of Bunpkurugu-Yunyoo and

Nanumba North Districts. These are unique mechanisms that are only limited to the people within the catchment areas of the kingdoms.

Contrary to this argument, others such as Menkhaus (2000), Gowok (2008), Jetu (2012), and Zelalem and Endalcachew (2014) argue that even if traditional approaches were confined to the local context, they can be of great importance for conflict prevention on a larger scale. According to them, locally confined conflicts have considerable potential for escalation, and nowadays, large-scale internal conflicts are characterised by their permeation by so-called smaller conflicts. That permeation contributes to the intractability of the large-scale conflicts. So-called simple conflicts can quickly degenerate to involve most groups in the community because of the organic character of traditional communities.

Indigenous mechanisms are observed to be immediate and meaningful to all people concerned. In all the mechanisms, indigenous language or dialects understood by all parties are used. Processes and procedure are well attuned to local needs as they produce quick justice to the people. In this regard, accessibility and affordability come to bare. Considering the amount of money involved and the time taken to complete a process, it is relatively cheaper to use indigenous mechanisms to manage conflicts. This supports the views of Kah (2011), Isike and Uzodike (2011), Kwesi (2013) and Adjei and Adebayo (2014) on the advantages of indigenous conflict management mechanisms.

With indigenous mechanisms, parties to a conflict are enjoined to adopt an integrative (win-win) approach with each having the opportunity to present their

case without recourse to counsel. The mechanisms use the inquisitorial and restorative approaches to conflict management instead of the adversarial, winner-looser approach to litigation.

Chapter Summary

This chapter found that the indigenous/traditional mechanisms of conflict management are more preferred in the settling of disputes than the western-centred mechanisms, particularly the formal court system. Yet, some of the conflicts (Jamong and Jafouk, and Bimbilla chieftaincy succession) are now in the courts, principally, because the indigenous mechanisms are not allowed to work. Chiefs and elders who act as third parties in the management processes have been compromised. Given the differences in the culture and traditions of the areas, the potential of indigenous mechanisms for conflict management is limited. Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to ignore the potential and not make use of it wherever possible.

The call, here, is not to advocate for a revisit to the autochthonous ways of conflict management, but to highlight some important elements of these mechanisms that can be incorporated in contemporary ways of managing conflict to ensure sustainability. Given the associated weaknesses of the indigenous mechanisms, conflict management and peacebuilding would have to go beyond the traditional actors and institutions to draw on western-centred approaches. This assertion is well examined in the next chapter in which the western-centred

mechanisms employed in the management of the conflicts in the selected areas are

discussed.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WESTERN-CENTRED CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the study examined the indigenous conflict management mechanisms or mediation efforts used in the management of conflicts in the selected Districts. The chapter examined the processes, the actors (third parties) and outcomes as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the indigenous mechanisms in the quest for searching for ways to manage the conflicts in a sustainable manner. In this chapter, the study examines the western-centred mechanism or mediation efforts used or available in the management of conflicts in the selected Districts. In the same format, the processes, the actors (third parties), and outcomes are examined. The data were collected from leaders of the primary/grassroots actors, the traditional leaders, Civil Society Organisations (Novrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese and the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding), Regional House of Chiefs, and the District Security Councils using the interview and focus group discussion guides. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data.

Western-centred Mechanisms in the Selected Study Areas

The third specific objective of the study was to examine the Western-centred conflict management mechanisms that have been used and/or are available for the management of the conflicts in the selected areas. The goal was to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the structures of these mechanisms

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taking into consideration the processes, actors, and outcomes. This is to allow for an assessment of the right use of mechanisms within the indigenous context for sustainable outcomes. In all the conflict situations in the selected study areas, the in-depth interviews suggest that western-centred mechanisms were used.

The in-depth interviews brought to light two (2) main categories of interveners who focused on western-centred ideologies in the management processes. These were the state and civil society initiators. The intervention mechanisms are classified under the following broad subdivisions: the use of security forces (military and police), legal processes (formal court system), committees of enquiry, and Civil Society organisations. These mechanisms are discussed in detail in the proceeding subsections.

Security Forces (Military and Police)

The police and the military personnel have been used in conflict management and resolution efforts over the years in all the conflict situations in the selected study areas. The security interventions were initiated by the state through the District/Regional Security Committees and have included military and the police engagement to stop hostilities. For instance, following the attack on 19th July 2014 on the palace of Andani Dasana in Bimbilla, which led to his death alongside several others, a military/police contingent was deployed to re-enforce the existing detachment on the grounds under the command of the District and Regional Security Councils. Their duty was to protect life and property. As at the time of the data collection, a curfew was imposed with military and police

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monitoring compliance. There is a security camp at the palace in Bimbilla where the regent is and at the Dawuni's palace. There are, also, many other security checkpoints at various locations in the District.

In the same way, the military and police have been stationed and go on patrols in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District since the inception of the conflicts between Jamong and Jafouk families and the Bimobas and Kokonbas in the traditional area. The police and military teams were always deployed concurrently to take control of affairs anytime there was an outbreak of violence in the study areas. At the time of the data collection, all the study areas except Buipe had military camps stationed at vantage locations to keep peace through curfews, patrols and disarming of the people. This is congruent with Kendie et al. (2012), Bukari (2013), and Yelyang's (2016) findings that government, over the years, have deployed security agencies made up of the police and the Rapid Deployment Force (the army) to the area to maintain peace during violence outbreaks in the Northern Region.

Key actors

The key actors included the District Assemblies in the selected Districts, the Northern Regional Security Council (REGSEC), the District Police, Bureau of National Investigations (BNI), and the Ministry of the Interior. These actors, together, have made collaborative use of intelligence, force, and diplomacy in managing conflicts to date. A critical examination of the measures taken by these actors revealed that they were essential in creating a foundation and an

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environment necessary for peace negotiations in all the conflict situations. The prime aim was to keep adversaries to the conflict apart and terminate the hostilities when the conflict is high. This created an advantage for preventing the continuation of conflicts and creating room for negotiations and mediation for peace by other stakeholders.

The above finding is in line with the theory of formal conflict management. The theory puts the state as the main actor responsible for conflict management. It is, also, in line with the illustration presented in the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework depicts the state as a key actor in managing all types of conflicts within the country: the state will always intervene in ways that will protect and prevent escalation of conflicts. This finding is, also, congruent with Williams' (2011) findings that, to prevent the escalation of a violent conflict, reduce its intensity or geographical extent, and end confrontations, the state must, sometimes, use peace enforcement measures and mediation efforts.

Process

When these conflicts erupt or relapse, there is an urgent need for security stabilisation so police and military teams are deployed to embark on patrols and enforce curfews. While the military personnel are noted for their intolerance for noncompliance, the police, on the other hand, arrest people found breaking the law. The military shows a readiness to counter violence with violence. In the process of enforcing curfews, they display their military machinery and weaponry

to deter adversaries from engaging in further violent acts. The key informant did not hesitate to add that maintaining law and order in these areas is not easy. He remarked saying:

> These people are not easy to deal with… I sometimes wonder where exactly they acquired their weapons and how they learn to use them. They have very sophisticated weapons like AK47 assault rifles, G3s, M3s, and Revolvers in their possession (Key informant in Bunkpurugu, 9th March 2017).

This reveals how unreceptive the area is even with the operations of security personnel. Value is placed on securing weapons for the protection of family members in hostile situations, which make the place volatile.

The military consults traditional leaders, Religious leaders (Imams and Pastors), District Assembly staff, civil society organisations (CSOs), and other prominent people from specific localities when tensions increase in order to come out with strategies to maintain peace. Its personnel appeal to young people not to engage in violence and educate them about the effects of violence, including the fact that they can lose their lives at a young age or jeopardise their futures. This finding concurs with the theory of formal conflict management with assumptions that force, through peacekeeping and curfews, in most cases, is necessary to keep adversaries apart to create an enabling environment for dialogue (Ahmed, 2008; Marshall, 2009).

Finally, DISEC members in all the selected study areas, also, engaged individually in public peace sensitisation activities such as durbars and peace

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matches, which were mostly supported by CSOs and some of the District Assemblies in the quest to ensuring peaceful environments. This, also, concurs with the theory of formal conflict management where peace education and sensitisation activities are necessary for reconstruction of relationships (Rassul, 2010).

Outcomes

The initiatives by the Security Council (Regional and District) are more of operational than structural preventive measures. According to the Carnegie Commission on the Prevention of Deadly Conflicts' 1999 report, operational prevention measures such as sending high-level diplomatic missions to mediate between parties; using economic tools such as sanctions, inducements, or collecting weapons and demobilising fighting units; and forceful measures such as deploying peacekeepers to a region, are used to address immediate crises. On the other hand, structural prevention measures focus on addressing root causes of conflicts such as poverty, political repression and uneven distribution of resources, which can, if left unattended, escalate into violence. The findings of the study support this assertion. A military personnel remarked:

> At a stage where the people go about burning and shooting, force is the key to maintaining peace. We are not interested in who is right or wrong or who attacked the other first. Preventing more casualties, I mean deaths and injuries and destruction of properties is our major goal. Although members of the areas do not like the idea of the use of force because of the

mental apprehension they go through, we do not hesitate in the use of force to calm the situation (Key informant in Bimbilla, 14th March 2017).

The interviews with some of the traditional leaders revealed that the measures taken by the Security Council, in most cases, were biased since the security forces dealt more brutally with a particular adversary than the other. In particular reference to the Buipe Chieftaincy conflict, both parties to the conflict gave instances where they received biased treatment from the military personnel. The Awusi family cited a situation where the security personnel picked up members of their gate while they were collecting market tolls even though the other gate was undergoing the same process. They, therefore, questioned why the Jinapor family members were not arrested as well.

Another instance was cited in the event where the police raided the Buipe Township and arrested 16 people in connection with violence: nine members of the Awusi family were arrested together with seven from the Jinapor gate. This raised questions as well. The Jinapor family, on the other hand, cited the burning of several houses belonging to members of their gate without any arrest by the security personnel.

In Bimbilla, Dawuni's family have questioned the work of the Security Council as to why they had detained some of their members in Tamale and sent others to the BNI office at Accra as suspects since July 2014. Besides, the 12 people from the Andani Dasana family who were arrested following the attacks and killing of 40 people on the 9th of July 2015 have been released. In addition, they questioned why the Security Council allowed the regent, Naa Yakubu

Dasana Andani, to install two Warrior Chiefs from the Giino and Pusugu communities "illegally" when injunctions have been placed on them. They finally accused the Dasana family of enjoying power from the then ruling government, which gave them the opportunity to manipulate all the issues in the traditional area.

Adding to the accusations made by the Dawuni family on the work of the Security Council, the Andani Dasana family, also, accused them of biased interventions. According to them, the Dawuni family had been given military protection at their family house. This, they say, amounts to elevating them to the paramountcy, which they are not. They, also, accused military personnel of brutalising palace guards and reducing them to ordinary members of the areas. These same accusations and counter-accusations have been recorded in the cases of the Jamong and Jafouk families and the Bimobas versus Kokonbas in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District.

According to the various DISEC representatives interviewed, though most of their activities were perceived as biased by the traditional leaders if it does not favour their side, the situation would have been worse if they had listened to complaints from the people on this perceived biases. In the end, though the participants, both DISEC and the traditional leaders, admitted to some disadvantages associated with the initiatives by the Security Council, they all agreed comparatively, that the use of force at that stage was the best option in order to limit the negative aspects of the conflict in the traditional area. However,

they assert that the negativity associated with some of the initiatives by the Security Council could have marred the resolution process.

In the end, the use of force by the police and military, coupled with the restrictions of movement, disarmament, and the imposition of curfews prevented the combatants from engaging in the warfare. This is in line with Nader and Grande's (2002) critique of the theory of formal conflict management that, the theory only calls for measures that will prevent the escalation of violent conflicts and reduces the intensity or geographical extent.

To that extent, the study found that there has been relative calm and a prevention of the recurrence of violence in the areas where these interventions have taken place. This is in line with the assessment by the GAF (2016), that the conflict situation in Northern Ghana has been relatively calm since 2009 due to their operations. Generally, it is accepted that in all the conflict situations that this western-centred intervention was deployed, it was necessary and successful, but not sufficient in addressing the causes of the conflicts. This confirms Reimann's (n.d.) concept of conflict settlement, where the aim is to put an end to direct violence without necessarily addressing the underlying conflict causes. Although violent fighting is suppressed, the underlying causes of the violence remain largely unaddressed.

The causes of insecurity during conflicts in the selected study areas are many and multifaceted as revealed in chapter six. In fact, all key stakeholders in the conflicts are potential sources of insecurity and a threat to peace as acts of insecurity are committed at all stages of the period. Consequently, the Security

Council have not been able to envisage the possible occurrences of violent to put in measures to prevent their occurrence. This mechanism is used only when the violence has occurred.

The presence of the military has the potential to limit the productive capacity of primary actors. This is because the adversaries in conflicts might view the military as executing and championing the course of those in power. Depending on which political party is in power, the faction aligned to it is perceived to have some backing from the government. Particular reference can be made to the Bimbilla chieftaincy conflict where Alhaji Dawuni's family was perceived to have the support of the ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) while Andani Dasana's family aligned to National Democratic Congress (NDC). The present military detachment is believed to be neutral and civil in its operations, but the situation remains uneasy. While the presence of the military and police means the factions cannot perpetrate violence, the underlying quest for violence and revenge is evident.

Legal Processes (The Formal Court System)

The legal system was another state-centred mechanism that took the form of court actions. The court actions were mainly injunctions and prosecutorial activities. In all the selected districts, the formal court system, either the Regional House of Chiefs or the High Court, had been involved in all the management processes. Evidence of the use of the formal court system in all the cases is presented in the ensuing paragraphs.

In the Central Gonja District, for instance, interviews with the traditional authorities revealed that the deskinned Buipewura, Abdulai Mahama Jinapor, was the first to send the case to the Tamale High Court. The account claimed he did this for two reasons: to plead the court to place an injunction on the process to enskin a new Buipewura and to litigate the process that led to his subsequent deskinment as a Buipewura by the Gonja traditional council. On Thursday, January 13, 2011, the court quashed the Gonjaland Traditional Council's purported deskinment of Buipewura Abdulai Jinapor II as the chief of Buipe. The court described the decision as illegal and slapped a Gh¢4,000 fine on the Gonjaland Traditional Council for causing emotional stress to Buipewura Abdulai Jinapor II and an additional Gh¢ 2,400 charge for the expenses incurred during the court proceedings. By the court's decision, Buipewura Abdulai Jinapor II remained the legitimate chief of the Buipe traditional area.

The Yagbonwura and the Gonja Traditional Council appealed against the ruling of the Tamale High Court at the Appeals Court in Accra. Here as well, the deskinned Buipewura, Abdulai Mahama Jinapor, was declared by the court to be the winner. The jubilation by the Jinapor family following the Appeals court ruling in their favour led to violent clashes between the two gates in Buipe on 5th March 2011. It is evident from the recount that all the parties to the conflict, such as the Gonja Traditional Council, Jinapor family, and the Awusi family, agreed to use the legal system (court) to resolve the conflict.

In the Nanumba North District, Alhaji Salifu Dawuni and his supporters carried their protest against the enskinment of Andani Dasana by a formal report

and complaint lodged at the Northern Regional Security Council. They further went to court and an injunction was placed on enskinment and other related activities of Bimbilla Naa. The Northern Regional Security Council referred the case to the Traditional Council under the secretary of Guma where they ruled in their favour. Andani Dasana, then, took the matter to the Regional House of Chiefs and was declared the legitimate King of the traditional area.

Alhaji Salifu Dawuni appealed to the Regional House of Chiefs since the first ruling did not go down well with him. On the 13th of March 2012, the committee delivered its judgment dismissing the claims of the petitioners. In effect, the paramount issue of whether the 1st Petitioner/Appellant or the 1st Respondent was properly nominated and enskinned Bimbilla Naa was decided in favour of the 1st Respondent. Against this decision, the Appellant filed an appeal to the National House of Chiefs. In the pendency of the appeal by Alhaji Salifu Dawuni, upon the death of both the 1st Appellant and 1st Respondent, they were substituted for the purpose of the determination of the appeal. The petitioners and respondents now read as follows:

1. Bimbilla Naa, Salifu Dawuni {Petitioners/Appellants} substituted by Sagnarigu Lana Shani Azumah

2. Juo Regent, Osman Mahama

    and

1. Andani Dasana {Respondents/Respondents} substituted by Nyelinborgu Naa, Yakubu Andani Dasana.

2. Azumah Natogmah.

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In the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District, the Jamong family sent the enskinment of *Bait* Nong by the Nayiri to court (Regional House of Chiefs) requesting the nullification of the act by the Nayiri since 2002. Even upon the death of *Bait* Nong in 2006, the litigation process continued and after 15 years, is still pending in the court.

Actors

Like all other regions in Ghana, the Regional House of Chiefs (RHC) in the Northern Regions is composed of paramount chiefs. From the members, the house elects a president who is assisted by registrars in the running of their businesses. A number of chieftaincy disputes have been sent to the RHCs for redress. While some have been settled, others are still pending. Since the RHCs in the Northern Region are relatively close to the chiefdoms they serve, they are better placed in handling chieftaincy disputes in the Northern Region. Their decision may carry much weight and enjoy considerable respect. However, it was revealed that despite the proximity and the traditional and historical ties to the chiefdoms, not all cases of the House are acceptable to the contestants. Consequently, some cases sent to the RHCs have had to travel all the way to the National House of Chiefs and/or the superior courts of Ghana.

Process

Concerning the processes of this western-centred mechanism, they take the same form of normal court processes where there is a judge(s) and lawyers who present cases and argue in favour of their clients. At the end, the judge makes

a binding statement declaring petitioners or respondents winners. Interviews with the traditional leaders revealed that the processes were new and cumbersome. The traditional leaders, also, indicated that the processes were technical. This supports Kwesi's (2013) assessment of the court as being highly technical and sophisticated to the local people. Moreover, the people claim that although they use the local language, there is, always, a translator who speaks English to the Judges. This, they say, prolongs the issues and delays the whole adjudication process.

Outcomes

On the outcomes of this mechanism, the rigid procedural structure of adjudication and its adversarial nature are described as unsatisfactory for the management of all the conflicts. According to the traditional leaders and some of the CSOs interviewed, the court processes caused more harm than good. Processes and outcomes did not create any room for peacebuilding initiatives in the area. They, also, asserted that almost all acts of vandalism, atrocities, wanton destruction of property, arson, and killings emanating from the chieftaincy conflicts in Buipe, Bunkpurugu, and Bimbilla were because of court pronouncements. According to them, after every court sitting, there were records of packets of conflicts in the various towns. The court pronouncement of a winner and a loser deepened the hostilities among community members and drew the battle lines clearly.

The finding that the court has done more harm than good in these conflicts is congruent with the criticisms of the theory of formal conflict management. The critics argue that the theory ignores deep-rooted cultural issues in the quest for managing community-based conflicts. The finding, also, buttresses the critique made by Sackey (2010) about the court system after investigating into the justice system in land conflicts management in Kinondoni Municipality, Tanzania. According to Sackey, the court or the legal system is not the best in resolving conflicts when the parties have close relationships. All the conflicts under study were between adversaries with close relations; hence, the court system was not the best choice for their management. Overall, the study revealed that intervention efforts by the state through the court system have not yielded any better results. The study further revealed that the root causes of the conflicts have been barely addressed even with the emphatic pronouncement of the legal system on the conflict. The losing parties do not accept the results and have either appealed the decisions or decided to ignore them.

The legal interventions have not been seen as successful as with the case of the security forces' (military and police) efforts. As noted in Buipe, Bimbilla, and Bunkpurugu, the legal interventions have only served to weaken already unstable situations. The court systems have been found to be culturally insensitive (that is in the case of Buipe), unjust (in the case of Bimbilla), or without the power to enforce its own decisions (also, as seen in the case of Bimbilla). This faults Docherty's (2004) assertion of conflict management. According to the Docherty, management should be based on the reconceptualisation of the idea of

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culture that accounts for the historical and political trajectories of the communities. The finding also contradicts the argument of the indigenous wholistic theory. According to this theory, conflicts are rooted in cultural, political, social, and historical elements (Absolon, 2010). Besides, there are spiritual, emotional, and mental relationships embedded in conflicts. It, therefore, means that for any conflict management to be successful, it must capture these issues in the management process (Absolon, 2010).

Committees of Enquiry

Another state-led intervention in the management of conflicts is the setting up of committees and commissions of enquiry. This is another western-centred mechanism identified in one of the selected areas – Nanumba North District (Bimbilla). In the Nanumba North District, where this approach was used, the committee/commission was charged to take evidence and make recommendations towards the sustainable resolution of the conflicts. Following the events of 19th July 2014 in which the Andani Dasana and several others lost their lives, the family, as well as other individuals, institutions and groups including opposition political parties, called on the government to institute an impartial and independent commission to investigate the act. A committee of inquiry was, thus, set up to investigate the matter.

The committee was to make a full, faithful, and impartial inquiry into the circumstances of and establish the facts leading to the events and the resultant deaths of the Bimbilla Chief and others. It was, also, to identify those responsible

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for the event and resultant deaths and injuries and recommend appropriate sanctions or actions against any person found to have caused, been responsible for or been involved in the violence and resultant deaths and injuries. Furthermore, the commission was to inquire into any matter that the commission considered incidental or reasonably related to the events and resultant deaths and injuries. The committee failed to gather enough information on the issues since people were not willing to offer them the needed support. They, then, promised a GhȻ100,000 reward for anyone who will provide information on the perpetrators of the conflicts that led to the death of the Bimbilla chief.

The committee's work could not continue since they lacked information that will inform further decisions and subsequent advice to the government for the management of the conflict in the District. This mechanism was a failed approach to dealing with both the structural and immediate causes of the conflict in the Nanumba North District. This is consistent with Awedoba's (2009) findings that committees of enquiries are post-dated in the sense that it is after the conflict has taken place and damage has been caused that they are set up to do a post-mortem. According to Awedoba, they rarely find solutions to the problem, and some never come out with any report of substance to dealing with the situation.

Civil Society mechanisms

The Civil Societies in this context refers to the non-state actors who initiated and led processes to the management of the conflicts in the selected study areas. The mechanisms they use are categorised under the activities of Non-

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governmental Organisations and Community Based Organisations and that of Religious Bodies.

Non-governmental Organisations and Community Based Organisations

The field information showed that the West African Network for Peace Building (WANEP-Ghana) was one major key non-state actor in all the conflicts in the selected areas. In the Central Gonja District, for instance, WANEP-Ghana collaborated with some Community Based Organisations (CBOs) to carry out their peace initiatives. The CBOs were the Centre for Rural Improvement Services (CRIS) and The Human Help and Development Group (THUDEG). Another non-state collaborator with WANEP was the Canadian High Commission to Ghana. These NGOs or non-state actors' interventions were in the form of education, awareness creation, sensitisation and mediation, negotiation, and facilitation. This is in line with McCandless (2001) findings that, activities undertaken by CSOs that contribute to conflict prevention and resolution include peace and civic education and empowerment/advocacy – advocacy for the protection and promotion of civil and political as well as social, economic and cultural rights.

Process

The Centre for Rural Improvement Services (CRIS), a community-based Non-Governmental Organisation operating in the Northern Region, in collaboration with the Central Gonja District Assembly organised a two-day

workshop aimed at promoting peace among the people in the Buipe traditional area. It brought together women, the youth, chiefs, opinion leaders, religious bodies, security agencies and other civil society organisations to foster understanding and promote dialogue in managing disputes. An interview with the programmes coordinator revealed some of the topics treated were "Overview of Understanding Conflict and Peace", "Negotiation and Peer Mediation", and "Concept of Early Warning and Reporting and Building Self Esteem". The focus group discussion with both men and women groups revealed one key lesson learnt from this workshop. According to them, remaining calm and resorting to dialogue is the way forward to solving their problems instead of resorting to violence, since that could not bring any meaningful development.

The Human Help and Development Group (THUDEG), a Tamale-based NGO, on the other hand, was dedicated to working for the aged and children in deprived communities. They organised programmes with the aim of using the children to advocate for peace in the Buipe Traditional Area. WANEP-Ghana, under its "Ghana Alert Programme", funded THUDEG to embark on a peace project which ustilised children to educate communities about the need for peace in the country. Children, in a procession, held placards (some of which read "Love Peace for the sake of God," and "No Peace, No Development") and chanted peace songs. These were all in the vein of conveying a massage to local decision makers on their desire to bring the longstanding conflict to a peaceful end.

Finally, WANEP-Ghana organised a two-day training workshop on peer mediation for the women of Buipe. It was organised on September 30, 2011, for the women of the Jinapor and Awusi families. This was followed by a peace march with the Canadian High Commission to Ghana, which was expected to put pressure on the factions to resolve their differences and let peace reign in the Buipe Traditional Area. This move was after the women leaders from the two families noted that the conflict was retarding development in Buipe and impacting negatively on the lives of women and children.

In Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District, WANEP-Ghana conducted two pre-dialogue sessions and mediations after the Northern Regional Minister called on WANEP to intervene. On 15th May 2013, a dialogue session was conducted in Tamale, followed by a post-dialogue session attended by representatives selected by the adversaries in the land conflict between the Bimobas and Konkombas. According to the narrative, the dialogue created an opportunity for the adversaries to address grievances surrounding land issues. These dialogue sessions were accompanied with training sessions on peaceful co-existence.

WANEP-Ghana, also, organised a meeting between the leaders of the Bimoba and Konkomba ethnic groups at the Nayiri's palace on 21st June 2014. This meeting led to the factions' chewing of the "spirit cola", pledging not to involve in any acts of violence in the traditional area. The spiritual implication attached to this is act is that the gods of the traditional area will punish those who violate the peace made in the course of chewing the spirit cola.

The research revealed that, the activities of the NGOs and CBOs towards managing the conflicts were encouraging. Even though much of their activities in the Nanumba North District were into Water and Sanitation Hygiene (WASH) activities, they created awareness on the dangers in conflicts in every stage of the their interaction with community members. This is in line with Annan (2013), Galaa and Bukari (2014) and Bukari et al.'s (2017) findings. According to these scholars, civil society groups and institutions provided, among other things, training in conflict prevention, management, resolution and advocacy campaigns.

Outcomes

The activities of NGOs created opportunities for mediations and negotiations, according to the various focus group discussions. Interventions by NGOs and CBOs always brought tensions down, reduced hostilities among residents, and created an environment where every community member sought peace in the traditional areas. This supports the OECD's (2008) view of conflict management, which includes activities addressing the built-in capacities of societies to deal with conflicting interests without resorting to violence and managing disputes with destabilising potentials.

Notwithstanding the above, activities of the NGOs and CBOs have not been enough to address the structural issues underlying the conflicts. Their dialogues failed to address the people's fears and mistrust (Bimbilla and Buipe) and issues regarding respect, quest for access to and control over land (in Bunkpurugu), and concerns around development imbalances that have been

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uncovered by this study. The dialogues in Bunkpurugu, for instance, failed to address the underlying issue of access to and control over land between the adversaries. Again, there was no mention of the fact that either group was more impoverished or more informed than the other because of access to key positions, which allow the dominant group to perpetuate discriminatory tendencies. Third parties' anxious desire to address the proximate issues overshadows attempts to dig more deeply into the conflict. A key informant remarked:

> My brother, all these workshops, and meetings are formalities. All we go there to hear is peace, peace, peace, nothing else. They do not discuss the issues we expect them to talk about which will address why the conflict has come into being and when you raise such issues at such grounds, they see you not to be a peace lover, meanwhile, the problems have not been addressed (Key informant in Bunkpurugu, 9th March 2017).

This suggests that the NGOs and CBOs' processes, also, failed to address the core issues of the conflicts other than dealing with the immediate causes or triggers.

Religious Bodies

Religious bodies have been one major non-state actor in the management of conflicts in Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District: the Navrongo-Bolgatanga Diocese of the Catholic Church, which extends to the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo Districts and the Manprugu traditional areas, and the Catholic Church in Tamale. With other collaborators, these third parties' management activities came in a form of educating, facilitating, and sensitising adversaries to give way to peace. In

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Bunkpurugu for instance, the Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese made contacts that helped to mobilise groups and representatives of the Jamong and Jafouk families on a common avenue to deliberate on issues, providing neutral venues for programmes and using its leverage as a religious institution trusted for its impartiality to bring parties together without resentment.

On countless occasions, the Diocese had facilitated dialogue meetings at Pusu-Namolgu for members of the Jamong and Jafouk families to deliberate on issues which will lead to the management of the conflict in a sustainable manner. The Catholic Church was the first to engage the Jamong and Jafouk factions to meet face-to-face after the conflict in 2002. The Navrongo-Bolgatanga Diocese of the Catholic Church started mediation processes in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District in 1984 during the violence at Bimbagu. Since then, the Church has been prominent in the Nakpanduri, Kambatiak, Teima, Kpemale, Jimbale, Gbankoni, and Bunkpurugu conflicts in both land and chieftaincy matters.

Process

An interview with a key informant revealed that in all the conflict situations that the Church had intervened, the Church conducted an assessment of the conflict to unveil the causes of the conflict and its current status. Based on the outcomes, it designed an intervention and had since held two dialogue sessions. It employed strategies that seemed to be providing different parties the opportunities to interact, air grievances, and buy time for tensions to reduce.

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Through the work of the Catholic Church, some early warning signals have been identified in the communities for stakeholders interested in peace in the District as well as in the Region. It was revealed that anytime there was a bumper harvest, violence is more likely to occur because more guns would have been acquired. Again, when farmers begin to bury their farm produce, there is a possibility of an attack by a faction in the area.

Another approach by the Church was to form outreach groups within the communities where conflicts were prevailing. According to the key informant at the Novrango-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese, the church has formed groups in almost all the conflict communities in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District known as the Peace Management Groups (PMGs). The groups comprise Catholics and other Christians within those areas. These groups were tasked with the responsibilities of engaging with adversaries and facilitating mediation processes, as well as educating members of the communities about the need to abjure violence and co-exist peacefully. The church intends to empower the members of the groups with peace education skills and to use members of these groups as community peace promoters who will engender change through self-transformation.

The Catholic Church had also formed Parish Peace Clubs, Community Peace Committees, and Parish Peace Committees, all of which were engaged in peace education and sensitisation activities such as peace dramas and public forums. The aim was to spread the message of peace widely and to the lowest levels of the conflict-affected communities. These processes can be said to be successful to some extent as the Church's activities have limited confrontations

between the factions to the conflicts in the District. This finding is congruent with Badong (2009), Kendie et al. (2012), Annan (2013), Noagah (2013) and Bukari et al.'s (2017) findings that religious heads among the Christians, Muslims and Animists provide conflict resolution and judicial services to their members through counselling and appeasement of the gods in order to restore order and security in their communities.

This western-centred mechanism has, however, been able to address only the triggers of the conflicts and not the structural issues underpinning the violence in the area. The issues of mistrust, access to land, struggles for recognition, among other structural causes of the conflicts have not been attended to. The narratives, also, show that the formation of the peace groups, unfortunately, met limited enthusiasm by the key participants. Similarly, attempts to involve Muslims have not received enough encouraging response, as some them were part of the adversaries.

Table 9 shows the summary of the Western-centred mechanisms used in the management of the conflicts in the selected study sites.

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Table 9 : Summary of the Western-centred Mechanisms in the Selected Study Areas

Mechanism	Key Actors	Process	Outcomes	Strengths	Weaknesses
Security forces	-District Assemblies -REGSEC -BNI -District Police -Ministry of Interior	-Deployment of patrol teams -Imposition and enforcement of curfews -Display of military machinery and weaponry -Consultation with other stakeholders -Public peace sensitization	-Limit negative aspects of conflicts -Disarmament -Prevent violent occurrences	-Subdue violence -Enforce peace	-Underlying causes remain unaddressed -Unable to envisage the occurrences violence -Accused of biases
Legal process (formal court system)	-High Court -Regional House of Chiefs (RHC)	-Formal procedures in accordance with the laws of the country -Lawyers representing petitioners and respondents -Judge to listen and pass a final binding verdict	-No opportunity for peace initiatives -Pronouncements led to acts of vandalism -Deepened hostilities -Parties not accepting results	-Ensuring rule of law -Promoting human rights	-Rigid procedural structure -Delay in delivery of justice -Cultural insensitive pronouncements -Use of English language in proceedings -Root causes not addressed
Civil Society (NGOs and Religious bodies)	-WANEP -CRIS -THUDEG -IBIS -Catholic Church	-Early warnings -Peace Education (sensitization and awareness creation) -Facilitation, Negotiation -Mediation, Reconciliation -Formation of outreach groups	-Reduce tension -Reduce Hostilities -Creates environment for other stakeholders' engagements -limits confrontations	-Trusted for impartiality -Providing neutral avenues for dialogue processes	-Fails to address people's fear, mistrust, etc -Structural causes remain unattended to

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Table 9, continued

Mechanism	Key Actors	Process	Outcomes	Strengths	Weaknesses
Committee of Enquiry	-District Assemblies -REGSEC	-Consultative meetings -Investigations -Reward schemes	-Failed to gather enough information due to the processes used	-Neutral third parties	-Not able to deal with both immediate and structural causes of the conflicts

Source: Field survey (2017)

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In an assessment of all the western-centred mechanisms used in the management of the conflicts in the selected study areas, activities of Civil Societies, that is, the NGOs and the Religious bodies (Catholic Church), have fared better than the security forces, the legal system, and the committee of enquiry. In Bunkpurugu for example, WANEP has contributed, in no small way, to the peace effort by facilitating discussions with the feuding parties. This has culminated in these parties dialoguing on how to resolve their differences with the aim of smoking the well-known peace pipe together. In Buipe, the activities of the CSOs led to the dialogues that led to the formation of the committee of eminent chiefs who finally resolved the conflict sustainably.

The efforts of Novrango-Bolgatanga Diocese of the Catholic Church in the Bunkpurugu have been tremendously encouraging. The Church is accredited with fame as being the first non-state actor to engage the families of Jamong and Jafouk, and the Bimoba and Konkomba ethnic groups to a dialogue. The facilitating and conciliatory role by the Catholic Church has laid the foundation for further engagements necessary for peace in the selected areas.

In sum, the findings show that though the western-centred mechanisms, especially the formal court system, have been patronised than the indigenous mechanisms, the selected areas were still with protracted and relapsed conflicts. These mechanisms have not been able to address the structural issues underlying the conflicts in the areas, suggesting some weaknesses in the mechanisms (Table 9). Notwithstanding this, the mechanisms possess potentials necessary for limiting the destructive element of conflicts.

Based on the strengths and weaknesses of both the indigenous and western-centred mechanisms, it is suggested that both mechanisms are employed as to derive benefits from the strengths of each approach and offset their different weaknesses. This is in line with the conceptual framework of the study, which suggests a complementarity of the mechanisms in conflict management. In addition, the dual concern theory sets in here. This theory emphasises that the decision to use one style or another in conflict management is a strategic choice based on the likelihood that the style will be successful in a given situation (Chou & Yeh, 2007; Ruble & Thomas, 1976). This is well examined in the next chapter considering the motivation and interests underlying the choice of each mechanism by both grassroots actors and third parties in managing the conflicts in the study areas.

CHAPTER EIGHT

MOTIVATIONS UNDERLYING THE CHOICE OF CONFLICT

MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

Introduction

This chapter examined the motivations of conflict actors for their choice of conflict management mechanisms. This specific objective is aimed at providing essential information on pre-requisite factors necessary for the overall sustainable management of conflicts in the study areas. The local people's interest and motivations for the choice of a mechanism vis-à-vis the contextual issues underlying the conflicts are vital in the search for mutually acceptable ways to managing conflicts in a sustainable manner. The data were collected from leaders of the primary/grassroots actors, the traditional leaders, Civil Society Organisations (Novrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese and the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding) and the Regional and District security councils. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected.

Motivation for the Choice of a Mechanism

In-depth interviews with key informants showed that the type of mechanism employed in dealing with the various conflicts is largely dependent on the initiators of the management processes. In this regard, the analysis categorised the initiators into primary/grassroots or the adversaries, state-led initiators, and the non-state actors' initiatives. When the state champions the course of managing the conflicts, the mechanism(s) that is likely to be used will be different from when

either non-state actors or the grassroots actors champion the course of management. The motivations that led to the choices of the mechanisms the people used in the selected areas are collated in the views of the Primary/grassroots, State agencies, and Non-state actors.

Primary/grassroots Perspectives

The primary actors, in this regard, the direct adversaries were Jamong and Jafouk families, Salifu Dawuni and Andani Dasana families, and Jinapor and Awusi families. In all the conflict situations in the selected study areas, the primary actors chose to use western-centred mechanisms in dealing with their situations. None of the primary actors chose indigenous mechanisms unless, of course, the indigenous mechanism was initiated by "neutral traditional leaders" or by non-state actors.

The first and most relevant motivational factor considered in deciding which mechanism to use in managing the situation was where the actors thought they could seek for justice. The avenue or the mechanism that the adversaries thought could offer them a fair hearing and a just outcome drove the desire for the use of particular mechanisms. For instance, in the Central Gonja District, the key informants narrated that Jinapor's family could not see any other mechanism that would offer them the needed justice other than the formal court system. The highest decision making body in the Gonja Kingdom is the traditional council of which the Yagbonwura is the leader. However, since this same body decided to oust Jinapor as the Buipe chief, he could not use the traditional or indigenous

means. The only option, then, is to seek help from the state apparatus. It was for this reason he sought for redress at the High court in Tamale. A key informant remarked:

> You see, we had no choice again than to go to court, the court was the only place left for us to seek justice. We are much aware of the challenges, talking about the cost involved, the delays, and so many other things. Nevertheless, we needed the court to put things right and low and behold; we had the justice we needed (Key informant in Buipe, 22nd March 2017).

This indicates how the Jinapor family perceived the court to be the avenue for justice. This finding supports Roe et al.'s (2009) view that the nature of the dispute/conflict itself may prescribe the use of certain legal procedures.

In Bunkpurugu, the Jamong family gave similar narrations that led to their use of a western-centred mechanism. According to them, the desire for justice was the prime motive behind their use of the formal court system. The family earlier used the traditional methods of seeking justice – the Nayiri's palace. However, without recourse to what they referred to as justice and due process, the Nayiri ruled against their claims. A key informant commented:

> There is no way we would have had justice at the Nayiri's palace. The Nayiri was the one who chose and enskinned our opponent, how then will he ever rule against his own decisions? This was what made us go to court because that is the place we could seek justice (Key informant in Bunkpurugu, 9th March 2017).

With this in mind, the Jamong family saw the court as the right avenue to access justice.

Similarly, the Andani Dasana family, in the Bimbilla chieftaincy conflict, sought for justice at the formal court after the traditional council had ruled on the matter in favour of their opponents to the skin title. The traditional council, upon consultation, had declared Bakpaba Naa Alhaji Salifu Dawuni the rightful occupant to the skin. Nevertheless, the Andani family felt there was an injustice; hence, they took the matter to the Regional House of Chiefs for redress. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of Kwesi (2013) who identified perceived injustice as the main reason for conflict actors seek redress in the formal court, a place where they can pursue their conceptions of social justice.

Directly linked to the first major motivational factor, which informs the actors' choice of a mechanism to use in conflict management is the perceived likelihood of success in the use of that particular mechanism. All the adversaries who first sought justice either through the indigenous means or through western-centred means weighed the chance of winning or losing through that mechanism before utilising it. This, on the other hand, is consistent with Tsega's (2004) assertion that perceived success is the motive for the use of a particular mechanism for managing conflicts by the actors.

In Buipe, the in-depth interviews revealed that Jinapor's family were sure of winning the case using the formal court system. The respondent remarked:

> We were very sure of winning because this was a case of human right abuse. The formal court system is even against cultural practices that go

contrary to the universal standards of human rights. Why will someone commit an offense and another person will suffer its consequences. The guy who shot the gun in the air was not even one of the palace guards. How then should the chief be dethroned for this act? No, so we knew we had a case (Key informant in Buipe, 22nd March 2017).

It was, therefore, not surprising that the Jinapor family was declared winners at both the Tamale High court and at the Appeals Court in Accra.

The focus group discussions in Bunkpurugu also affirmed that primary actors' use of a mechanism is dependent on the perceived likelihood of success the mechanism comes with. Naa Andani's people asserted that the traditional council's ruling was against the traditions of the land which they were more assured of clarifying when they get to the formal court. The Regional House of Chiefs in Tamale also declared them winners, a perceived success for which they chose that mechanism.

Litigation characterised all the conflict situations in the selected areas for the above two major motivational reasons. In fact, it got to a point where there was a general feeling that the person who first sends the case to court becomes the winner of the case. This perceived syndrome of "whoever goes to court first is the person that wins the case" is evident in Buipe and Bimbilla although there have been appeals upon appeals to such declarations. This motivated actors to rush to court anytime they sense injustice in contradictory issues between them and their opponents.

Other latent motivational factors that came to the known from the interviews were knowledge about the different types of mechanisms available, accessibility to users, and the adequacy of resources (money). In Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo, the leaders of the Jamong family attested that it was even sometimes challenging to attend court proceedings in Tamale because they lacked the means, in terms of money and vehicles, to convey themselves from Bunkpurugu to Tamale. The words from the key informant were as follows:

> Look, we are much aware of all the ways in which we can address the issue. We, as the sons of the first chief of this traditional area- *Bait* (chief) Najonk, should know better which indigenous means are available for us to address the issue. However, when we tried it, it did not work because the third party, I mean the Nayiri, in this instance had taken a stand already. Our knowledge about the formal system motivated us to seek for justice through that means. And we are very sure of winning the case but hmm…

> The case delayed because the court does not want to contradict the ruling of Nayiri who also doubled as the president of the Regional House of Chiefs as at the time of the death of *Bait* Nong. The truth is one and we all know it. If the court will not rule in our (Jamong family) favour, then they cannot rule in favour of our opponents (Key informant in Bunkpurugu, 9th March 2017).

By this, the awareness and accessibility of a mechanism motivates actors to use it. This confirms Castro and Ettenger's (1996) finding that a motivational

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factor in choosing a mechanism is actors' knowledge about the mechanism and their ability (regarding material wealth) to use it. Contrary to the views of Collins (2008), this study did not find motivational factors relating to class, gender, or age. The study found that these factors did not play any role in either motivating the actors to adopt some management mechanisms or not.

State Agencies' Perspective

The state agencies considered were the District and Regional Security Councils of which the police and military are part. According to the in-depth interviews, the main motivation for their choice of a conflict management mechanism was pivoted around maintaining law and order. In this regard, there was only one choice of a mechanism left to be used, and that is the application of reasonable force to keep peace in the conflict areas. The District Police commander remarked:

> Our main objective is to keep the adversaries apart so as to limit the destructive capacities of the conflicts. The burning of houses, sporadic shootings, and other acts of vandalism is what we always want to stop. Persuasion cannot achieve results when tensions are high to that level; the only means is to apply some force to calm the situation. It is, for this reason, we impose the curfew and patrol around to arrest trouble causers (Key informant in Bimbilla, 16th March 2017).

The quotation insinuates that unlike the primary actors, the state agencies' motivations arise from the duties assigned to them. These are already organised

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units with the responsibilities of administering the districts in terms of conflicts. Therefore, instead of considering other factors, they focus mainly on reducing destructive elements of the conflicts, which become their motivation. Notwithstanding this, it was revealed that after this objective had been achieved, the agencies engage stakeholders in dialogue to analyse the possible ways of addressing the issues. Through this, another motivation arises. The District Security and Regional Security Councils weigh their capacity to handle such matters. The motivation, in this respect, is the capacity to handle an issue. If the situation needs negotiations, mediations, or even facilitation, the agency handled it if only they had the capacity to do that. If not, they recommend the appropriate quarters to the adversaries.

Non-state Actors' Perspective

The non-state actors were the civil society organisations and the religious bodies who were involved in the management of conflicts in the selected study areas. The first motivational factor considered by these third parties was the relationship between the adversaries. The choice of a management mechanism was largely dependent on the primary actors' relationship before the conflicts. The Catholic Church, for instance, in intervening in a conflict, had the main goal of restoring the relationship that existed between the adversaries before the conflict. According to a key informant, combatants' relationship informs the choice of a mechanism to use in managing the conflict. He remarked:

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The relationship is the key factor to look at. Most of the conflicts here occur between close family ties, people who live together and do almost everything together, they are interdependent. A mechanism which has the potential of coming out with a collaborative result is what is needed here. If one employs a mechanism that seeks to pronounce a winner and a loser, the conflict will never end because these people see each other every day. So this is what informs us as to what type of mechanism we suggest to them to deal with a conflict situation (Key informant in Bunkpurugu, 9th March 2017).

This suggests that relationships and interdependence issues precede other issues in managing the conflict. Actually, negotiations over interdependence permeate most conflicts throughout the course of the relationship, never becoming completely settled. According to the key informant, a helpful practice is to address the interdependence issue openly in on-going, highly important relationships. For this reason, the Church always mediates and facilitates issues between the adversaries that will enable an acceptable outcome for all parties. This is evident in all the activities the Catholic Church had undertaken in the management of the conflicts in Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District. The Church does not only use formal mechanisms but sometimes rely on indigenous methods for sustainable resolutions. A key informant remarked:

Whether formal or indigenous, what we are interested in is to restore the relationship between them. For instance, the church facilitated the blood burial ceremony between Gbankoni and Kambatiak communities

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regarding the land conflict between them (Novrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese coordinator in Bunkpurugu, 9th March 2017).

Another motivation the Church considers in embarking on a mechanism to resolve a conflict was the capacity of the church to deal with the issues. It was revealed that the activities the church carried out towards the management of conflicts which include organising consultative workshops, educational programmes on peace and sensitisation activities, support with relief items to victims, and holding general awareness programmes, were heavily dependent on the church's capacity to undertake such activities in terms of budget allocations. Before the church initiates any move to engage the adversaries, capacity in terms of the above issues had to be considered.

The West African Network for Peace Building (WANEP-Ghana) takes its motivation from their core objectives, according to the in-depth interviews. The organisation has an objective to increase awareness on the use of non-violent strategies in response to conflicts in the region. For this reason, they strengthen the capacity of peacebuilding organisations and practitioners in the region to engage actively in the peaceful transformation of violent conflicts. WANEP-Ghana has collaborated with THUDEG and CRIS in the central Gonja District and with IBIS in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo District to undertake activities towards conflict management in the districts. It is evident from the narrative that, the organisation's motivation for a choice of conflict management mechanism is largely influenced by the nature of the conflict.

When conflicts are violent in nature, that is, when they involve the destruction of properties like burning of houses and farm produce, or involve the use of weapons leading to the death of combatants, WANEP adopts a mechanism of early warnings. This involves the identification of potential triggers and hotspots of conflicts and taking preventive and precautionary measures to avert a relapse. In instances where the conflicts were not violent, the organisation employs sensitisation and educational programmes to lead to a non-violent means of sorting out the differences. When tensions are calm, mediation, negotiation, facilitation, and reconciliation are used in the management of the conflicts. Employing these various mechanisms by the organisation was dependent on the situation as it was evident in the Buipe, Bunkpurugu, Nakpanduri, and Teima situations discussed in the earlier chapters.

In summary, this chapter examined the motivation for various actors' choice of conflict management mechanisms in managing conflicts in the selected study areas. The study re-grouped the motivation into three different perspectives: primary/grassroots, state actors, and non-state actors' perspectives. The main motivational factors identified by the primary/grassroots actors were the ability of a mechanism to produce justice and the perceived likelihood of success attached to the use of that mechanism. They identified knowledge about the different types of mechanisms available and accessible for use and the adequacy of resources (money) as latent motivational factors. The maintenance of law and order was the main motivational factor to the state agencies. To them, a capacity to handle matters was a latent motivator.

On non-state actors, while the main motivational factor to the Catholic Church is the combatants' relationship with each other and the capacity of the church to undertake certain activities in managing the conflicts, WANEP's main motivation is linked to the nature and level of the conflict. Contrary to the views of Collins (2008), this study did not find motivational factors from all the different perspective of actors related to class, gender, or age. The study found that these factors did not play any role in either motivating the actors to adopt particular management mechanisms or otherwise.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a qualitative research strategy that addresses our subjectivity as researchers related to people and events that we encounter in the field (Primeau, 2003). Reflexivity also addresses the subjective nature of the research account as a narrative constructed by the researcher. It is meant to enhance the quality of research by extending our understanding of how the researcher's position and interests affect all stages of the research process. The reflexive account presented in this study frames the analysis and interpretation of versions of narratives by the parties to the conflicts in the study areas by highlighting aspects of the researcher's reflexivity across the entire research process, including gaining access and telling the story.

Since this study required that I gain access to adversaries (families), I was faced with the challenge of finding willing participants because of the complicated nature of the conflicts. Upon reflection, I began to see it as a process

of their self-selection. I came to attribute this hook phenomenon as an inevitable result of conducting fieldwork within community settings, a part of the reciprocal nature of the relationship that was formed between myself as researcher and the family members as participants. People who are tolerating an interviewer in their midst have every reason to ask what they will get in return. Most often the trade-off is for some type of assistance, including sincere listening to the participants talk about something that interests them (Primeau, 2003). In Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo district, one key informant's trade-off turned out to be my agreement to listen to how he is living with his two wives in the house.

The rules of scholarship have long admonished scholars to be silent, to mute their voices, to keep their voices out of their written accounts. This "myth of silent authorship" (Charmaz & Mitchell, 1997) obscures the reality that any story has potential for multiple voices: the researcher's voice, the participants' voices, and the voice used by the researcher during self-reflection. In this study, my personal biography, including my identification as a northerner and a development agent shaped the processes of data gathering and analysis, and influenced my presentation and writing of the study's findings. The dual lens led me to choose certain participants' specific words or actions over others as I developed and presented concepts and theories out of the data I collected. Ultimately, I decide whose stories (and quotes) to display and whose to ignore.

CHAPTER NINE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of all the findings of the study. It reflects on the major findings, conclusions from the findings, and recommendations for the sustainable management of the protracted and relapsed conflicts in the Northern Region of Ghana. The chapter also presents the contribution of this study to knowledge and suggestions of areas for further research.

Summary

This study sought to analyse conflicts and conflict management mechanisms in the Northern Region of Ghana.

Specifically, the study was undertaken to:

1. Examine the conflict characteristics (origin, level, actors, and nature) in the Northern Region.

2. Assess the indigenous conflict management mechanisms used in the management of conflicts.

3. Assess the western-centred conflict management mechanisms in the management of conflicts.

4. Examine the motivation of conflict actors for their choice of conflict management mechanisms.

5. Make policy recommendations towards the sustainable management of conflicts in the Northern Region.

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The assumptions of interpretivism paradigm underpinned this study. The multiple case study design was used to guide the study. The sample for data collection consisted of 62 participants including key informants. The key informants comprised the District Assemblies, the Regional Peace Council (RPC) with its corresponding Regional and District Security Councils, the House of Chiefs (HOC), Security Personnel (military and police) at study sites, and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). The purposive sampling technique was used to select all the participants. Data collection was by the use of interview guide, focus group discussion guide, and observation checklist while the thematic and cross-site analysis format was used to analyse the data.

Summary of Major Findings

The major findings of the study are summarised based on the specific objectives of the study. The first research objective examined the contextual issues of conflicts in the selected study areas. The findings that emerged were as follows.

    i.   All the conflicts were dominated by a structural condition of not merely the use of history by each side to a conflict to justify their positions but the particular ways in which history is misused. In effect, each side constructed a kind of mythical history mingling elements of truth about the olden days. The fact is, the different versions of the history, while not held by all the members of the community, tend to

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provide continuing rationale for the rejection of pragmatic compromises.

ii. Ownership of land was another structural cause of the conflicts; that is, access to and control over land and its resources. The motivations and interest behind the struggles for the skin titles were linked to the access to and control over land resources for economic reasons.

iii. There was the presence of extreme patterns of social segregation, the perception of discrimination, and marginalisation. Encounters with each other were largely formal with little opportunity to develop shared interests or a common identity. This made it easier for negative stereotypes to remain unchallenged and biased history, to be taken on faith.

iv. The persistence of the grievances that generated the conflicts, the hatred generated by the inevitable atrocities, and lack of knowledge about each other's intentions created mistrust between the parties. Adversaries were trapped into making suboptimal choices because they lacked information, trust, and long-term perspective.

v. All the conflicts can be said to be interest-based conflicts. Important factors to note in all the conflicts were the intensity of hatred, mistrust, and contempt that have developed and deepened over time. The depth of this feeling is profound that some of the belligerences will prefer to inflict pain on the other side than to gain something for themselves.

vi.   In all the cases, the grassroots actors were the direct family members of the individuals contending for power and authority. The middle-level actors constituted the leaders with immense traditional power to manipulate issues. The top-level actors were categorized into two: the development partners (NGOs, CSO, etc.) on one hand and the "spoilers" who seek to sustain the negative status quo of the conflicts on the other.

The second specific objective was to assess the indigenous conflict management mechanisms used in managing conflicts. The major findings under this objective include:

i.   The outcomes of the arbitration process of the indigenous mechanisms did not conform to any written structures, and agreements to final decisions were verbal, not documented, and not signed. The reliance on unwritten, oral, and flexible precedents or rules led to an abuse of the mechanisms by the traditional leaders (third parties).

ii.   Indigenous mechanisms were dependent on and, for that matter, limited to the customs and traditions of the autochthonous people. Their applicability is confined to specific conditions.

iii.   Indigenous mechanisms were observed to be immediate and meaningful, accessible, and affordable. Indigenous languages or dialects well understood by all parties were used. Processes and procedure were well attuned to local needs as they produced quick justice to the people.

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iv. With indigenous mechanisms, parties to a conflict were enjoined to adopt an integrative (win-win) approach with each having the opportunity to present their case without recourse to counsel.

v. Indigenous mechanisms focused on managing rather than resolution. Outcomes were meant to heal wounds as the guilty parties were made to pay some compensation to those they offended. Also, the promises made at the end of the process by the parties were meant to ensure peaceful co-existence.

The objective three had to do with an assessment of the western-centred conflict management mechanisms. It was found that:

i. The conflict management initiatives by the Security Council (Regional and District) were more of operational other than structural preventive measures.

ii. The use of the armed forces together with the police, coupled with the restrictions of movement, disarmament and imposition of curfews tend to prevent the combatants from engaging in warfare. To this extent, the study found that there has been relative calm and a prevention of recurrence of violence in the areas where these interventions had taken place.

iii. The formal court processes caused more harm than good. The rigid procedural structure of adjudication and its adversarial nature had been described as unsatisfactory for the management of all the conflicts as

processes and outcomes did not create any room for peacebuilding initiatives in the areas.

iv. The activities of non-governmental organisations created an opportunity for mediations and negotiations to be employed. Their interventions always eased tensions, reduced hostilities among residents, and created an environment where every community member sought peace in the traditional areas.

v. Some early warning signals have been identified through the work of the Catholic Church. It was revealed that whenever there is a bumper harvest, violence is more likely to occur because more guns would have been acquired. Again, when farmers begin to bury their farm produce underground, there is a possibility of an attack by a faction in the area.

vi. Generally, the western-centred mechanisms have not been able to address the structural issues underlying the conflicts in the areas, suggesting some weaknesses of these mechanisms.

The last objective was to examine motivations to conflict actors for their choice of conflict management mechanisms. The findings were:

i. In all the conflict areas, all the primary/grassroots actors patronised the western-centred mechanism, particularly the court system, for dealing with their conflict situation. Two motivational factors underlined this course of action.

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      a. Fair hearing and just outcomes drove the desire for the use of this mechanism; and

      b. Perceived likelihood of success attached to the use of the mechanism.

ii.   The maintenance of law and order was the main motivational factor to the state agencies for their choice of conflict management mechanisms.

iii.   Combatants' relationship with each other, the nature and level of the conflict, and the capacity of the third party (Catholic Church, WANEP, CRIS, etc.) to undertake certain activities leading to the management of the conflicts were the main motivations to the non-state actors.

iv.   Knowledge about the different types of mechanisms available and accessible for use and the adequacy of resources (money) were identified as latent motivational factors to the non-state actors for their choice of conflict management mechanisms.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, five broad conclusions were drawn.

The contextual issues identified and discussed create a syndrome of conflict in the Northern Region. They have affected the conflict management mechanisms employed to address the different conflict situations. It is undeniable fact that the contextual issues may create opportunities or obstacles to progress in

the management process depending on how they were handled. It is concluded that the contextual issues identified were important factors to creating a peaceful environment because they created a framework within which efforts at management proceeded.

Indigenous mechanisms of conflict management produced sustainable outcomes at the community level as seen in Buipe than the western-centred mechanisms, particularly the formal court system. Yet, some of the conflicts were in court principally because the indigenous mechanisms were not allowed to work. Chiefs and elders who acted as third parties in the management processes abused the mechanisms with arbitrary decisions. The processes, currently, are inconsistent, unpredictable, and sometimes discriminatory. Nonetheless, the mechanisms had been observed and proven to be immediate and meaningful, accessible, and affordable. The use of local dialects was well understood by all parties, and processes and procedure were well attuned to local needs as they produced quick justice to the people.

The western-centred mechanisms had the potential of calming tensions, reducing hostilities among residents, and creating an environment where every community member seeks for peace. However, the mechanisms were not able to address the structural issues underlying the conflicts. Their engagements (dialogues) failed to address the people's fears and mistrust; issues regarding respect, the quest for access to and control over land, and the concerns around developmental imbalances that have been uncovered. Third parties' anxious

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desire to address the proximate issues overshadows attempts to dig deeply into the conflicts. This led to the relapsed nature of the conflicts in the areas.

In the same vein, the use of the formal court system tended to polarize the areas further and did not lead to a resolution of the conflicts. This was because of its winner-loser outcomes, which further divided the interdependent adversaries. It did not put an end to the conflict; rather, it polarised the area. One will not be far from right to suggest that the formal court system is not the appropriate avenue for managing community-based conflicts.

The motivational factors identified from all the different perspectives of actors including the desire for justice, perceived likelihood of success attached to the use of a mechanism, combatants' relationship with each, nature and level of the conflict, and the responsibility to maintain law and order, were the process-oriented actions towards the restoration of balance. Knowledge about people's motivations and perception regarding a mechanism is important as it pre-suggests how to sustainably manage situations as ill-feelings would be taken care of.

Recommendations

There is no single straightforward workable mechanism for managing community-based conflicts. This, however, does not preclude me from making recommendations towards the sustainable management of the protracted conflicts in the Northern Region. The following recommendations are based on the major findings and conclusions made from the study.

Government and Its Agencies

i. The government, through the District Assemblies, Regional and District Security Councils, and Peace Councils should develop a comprehensive programme to incorporate aspects of both the indigenous and western-centred judicial structures. This would make it legitimate and better attuned to local needs. In other words, an enquiry leading to the intersection of the two separate but interrelated ideologies should be carried out as it does benefit from the strengths of each approach and offsets their different weaknesses.

ii. The Regional and District Peace Councils and District Assemblies, should develop the right platform governed by sincerity of purpose. This will help in supporting peaceful management of conflicts whether through incorporation of the two models or adoption of one which will yield sustainable outcomes depending on the contextual issues of the conflicts.

iii. Government and its agencies should focus on the early warning signals to minimize the destructive nature of the conflicts as the management mechanisms are not as totally effective as preventive measures. The District Peace Councils or Security Councils should be tasked with the responsibility of reporting either monthly or quarterly on possible triggers of conflicts within their jurisdictions. This will minimize the lengthy times, loss of lives and properties, psychological trauma, and huge resources expended on managing the conflicts.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

i. Non-governmental organisations including faith-based organisations should take up before-conflict measures instead of the post-conflict initiatives to sensitize and educate community members on the need for a peaceful co-existence. The education programme can comprise all activities that improve attitudes, knowledge, and capabilities for conflict management. People of all levels of the social structure should be shown how to alter their conflict-related behaviour, how to counteract escalation of violence and how to promote conflict management. This could take the form of organising community outreach groups and equipping members with mediation and negotiation skills to undertake conflict management activities at the grassroots level.

ii. CSOs should also promote, enhance, and expedite communities' indigenous mechanisms of conflict management. Promoting such self-supporting systems and indigenous civil societies would help communities to handle their social problems by themselves through their own traditional mechanisms that have been practiced for years. Such traditional mechanisms could play a significant role in managing conflicts and bring long lasting peace and development to the indigenous people.

iii. It is also recommended that CSOs should initiate "conflict-sensitive development" interventions. People living in conflicts areas, especially in Bunkpurugu and Nanumba North District, lack access to basic services and are being marginalised from development initiatives. The lack of

economic resources (access to land) was some of the major cause of conflicts in the areas. CSOs, therefore, can initiate conflict-sensitive development interventions in collaboration with other stakeholders to diversify livelihood options for the rural folks.

iv.   Finally, CSOs should give much attention to educating the youth for peace. The youth are the future leaders of the community so if educated, (formal education) they would be able to recognise the societal values of peaceful coexistence and embrace an environment conducive for the realisation of their material and social desires.

Traditional Authorities

i.   The traditional leaders who act as third parties (Nayiri and the kingmakers in Nanum etc.) must realise the need to address injustice. It is their responsibility to formulate mechanisms, which will result in a win-win situation or a win-lose situation without brewing discontentment. They must stay impartial in their judgement, especially in cases where adversaries are closely related in kinship. The traditional leaders should cultivate the habits of impartiality, trustworthiness, understanding, and ability to consult transparently.

ii.   Traditional leaders should develop partnerships and networks with institutions of higher learning like UCC School for Development Studies, KAIPTC and WANEP to enhance their knowledge and skills in conflict management. Through this, they will be able to share ideas and exchange

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"notes" on common issues in arbitration, mediation, forgiveness, reconciliation and other conflict management practices.

iii.   Traditional leaders must not be selfish; they must take the general well-being of their people into consideration and make sacrifices that will ensure peace like the Yagbonwura, king of the Gonja kingdom, did.

Adversaries

i.   All adversaries who are stacked in the formal courts should withdraw all court cases and resort to the use of participatory mechanisms in addressing their issues. Beyond all doubts, the court has proven not to be fit for managing community-based conflicts as the study revealed.

ii.   Adversaries should be willing to engage with others in peaceful discussions on ways to resolve their differences without the use of violent approaches. If adversaries are holding on to old hurts and resentments, their ability to see the reality of the current situation will be impaired. Rather than looking to the past and assigning blame, they should focus on what they can do in the "here-and-now" to solve their differences.

Contribution to Knowledge

The justification for every academic study lies in its ability to fill some identified gaps. This study filled a number of identified niches, thereby, contributes to knowledge. First, studies in the Northern Region have narrowly focused on conflict actors, its effects on livelihood and providing solutions to

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mitigating conflicts in the area. This study, however, holistically diagnosed the protracted nature of conflicts in the region, taking into consideration the origin, level, nature and the types of mechanisms used (by whom, and at what time) in managing the conflicts. It found that the contextual issues may create opportunities for progress or obstacles in the management process depending on how they are handled.

There is an on-going debate concerning the type of conflict management mechanisms which best suite contemporary conflicts. While some studies have argued for the use of indigenous mechanisms, others have argued indigenous mechanisms cannot stand modern-day conflicts and for that matter, western-centred approaches are the best. The third set of scholars argues for the blend of the two. The findings of this study add to the third set of scholars' argument as it suggests that complementarity benefits from the strengths of each approach and offsets their different weaknesses.

Finally, this study contributes to the literature by developing a conceptual framework on conflict management. The conceptual framework outlines the key elements necessary for a sustainable management of a conflict. It also covers the actions to take when conflicts ensue and exposes critical issues which, when left unattended to, might challenge sustainable management.

Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the key findings, the following thematic areas are suggested for further research.

i. The relevance of local conflict management mechanisms for systemic conflict transformation in the Northern Region

ii. How human rights can be better integrated into indigenous mechanisms or processes of conflict management.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN THE

STUDY AREAS

This research is being conducted by a student from the University of Cape Coast on ***Conflicts and conflict management mechanisms in selected Districts in the Northern Region, Ghana***; as part of his Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme. This interview guide is to elicit information mainly for academic purpose. You are assured of full confidentiality, privacy and anonymity of all the information that will be given by you. You should therefore feel free to give me the right information to ensure the success of this work.

Section A: The conflict characteristics (origin, level, actors, and nature)

Conflict profile

1. What is the political, economic, and socio-cultural context of the chieftaincy/land conflicts?

2. Is there a history of the conflict? (probe for how conflict begun and what were the underlying issues. Also probe for *critical events, mediation efforts, external intervention)*

Conflict causal factors

3. What are the causes of the chieftaincy/land conflicts in the area? (probe for the root causes)

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4. What triggers can contribute to the outbreak / further escalation of conflict?

5. What new factors contribute to prolonging conflict dynamics?

Nature of conflict

6. What is the nature (violent or non-violent) of the chieftaincy/land conflicts?

    6a. If violent, probe for what makes it violent (weapons, open battles, destruction of properties, etc). Also probe for physical, psychological, social, and economic damages

    6b. if not violent, probe for the form it takes or the underlying reasons

7. What makes the chieftaincy/land conflict in the area difficult to manage? (Probe for underlying reason for the frequent eruption of the conflict)

8. How will the respondent describe the level of the conflict? (Probe for either micro or macro level)

Actor analysis

9. Who are the actors in the chieftaincy or land conflicts? Probe for direct (ethnic groups or gates) and indirect actors (Affected people, interest groups, spoilers etc)

10. What are their main interests, goals, positions, capacities, and relationships? Probe for more data on; *need for land, interest in political participation, economic resources, etc)*

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11. What institutional capacities for peace can be identified? (eg civil society, informal approaches to conflict resolution, traditional authorities, political institutions)

12. Which actors can be identified as spoilers? Why? (probe for how they benefit)

13. Are they inadvertent or intentional spoilers?

Section B: Indigenous conflict management mechanisms used in the management of conflicts

14. Are there any efforts in managing/resolving the chieftaincy /land conflict?

15. Who is/are at the centre of these management efforts? (probe for both state and non-state efforts

16. What mechanisms were employed by these people to managing the conflict? (probe for data on whether the mechanisms were traditional/indigenous or Western-centred mechanisms)

17. If indigenous mechanisms were employed, how were they administered and by who or which individuals? (probe for data on how that indigenous mechanisms was done and whether it involved all the adversaries to the conflicts)

18. Have this indigenous mechanism employed been able to manage the chieftaincy/land conflict? (probe for the success or failures of the mechanisms)

19. What do you think are the strength of the indigenous mechanism employed? (probe for specific relevance of the indigenous mechanism used)

20. What do you think are the weaknesses of the indigenous mechanism employed or adopted? (probe for weaknesses of the particular indigenous mechanism used)

21. What are the issues that made this mechanism either easy or difficult to attain sustainable peace in relation to the conflict?

22. How effective was the mechanisms during the management process? (probe for the interveners, the timing of the intervention, who were involved in the process, and collectively how they contributed to the success or failure of the process)

23. Are you aware of any other indigenous mechanism that could have been employed to yield good results than the one used?

24. If yes, what is the mechanism? (probe for process, strengths and weaknesses of the mechanism)

Section C: Western-centred conflict management mechanisms in the management of conflicts

25. If western-centred mechanisms (formal court or committee of enquiries) were employed, do you think it was done at the right time and place considering the issues underlying the conflict?

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26. How was it administered and by who or which individuals? (probe for data on how that western-centred mechanism was done and whether it involved all the adversaries to the conflicts)

27. Have this western-centred (court) mechanism employed been able to manage the chieftaincy/land conflict? (probe for the success or failures of the mechanisms)

28. What do you think are the strength of the mechanism employed? (probe for specific strengths of the particular mechanism used)

29. What do you think are the weaknesses of the western-centred mechanism employed or adopted? (probe for weaknesses of the particular mechanism used)

30. What are the issues that made this mechanism either easy or difficult to attain sustainable peace in relation to the conflict?

31. How effective was the mechanism(s) during the management process? (probe for the interveners, the timing of the intervention, who were involved in the process, and collectively how they contributed to the success or failure of the process)

32. Are you aware of any other western-centred mechanism that could have been employed to yield good results than the one used?

33. If yes, what is the mechanism? (probe for process, strengths and weaknesses of the mechanism)

Section D: Motivation to conflict actors for their choice of conflict management mechanisms

34. Are you aware of any conflict management mechanism in your area? (probe for both indigenous and western-centred mechanisms)

35. Which western-centred mechanisms are available?

36. Are they accessible to any groups in your society or are meant for particular groups? (Probe for reasons)

37. Which indigenous mechanisms are available?

38. Are they accessible to any groups in your society or are meant for particular groups? (Probe for reasons)

39. Which of the mechanism is used often in relation to the chieftaincy/land conflicts

40. What are the reason underlying their choice for that mechanism? (probe for data on whether is by wealth or determined by the relationship with opponents)

Section E: Way forward to sustainable management

41. In your view, what do you think should be done to sustainably management the conflict? (probe for who should do what and at what timie)

42. In line with the trend of the chieftaincy/land conflict, What are windows of opportunity? (probe for *positive developments? What factors support them? And How they can be strengthened)*

Thank you for your co-operation.

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APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR MEN AND WOMEN

GROUPS

This research is being conducted by a student from the University of Cape Coast on *Conflicts and conflict management mechanisms in selected Districts in the Northern Region, Ghana*; as part of his Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree programme. This interview guide is to elicit information mainly for academic purpose. You are assured of full confidentiality, privacy and anonymity of all the information that will be given by you. You should therefore feel free to contribute to this discussion to ensure the success of this work.

1. Contextual issues of the conflict (origin/history, causes, actors, and nature)

2. Indigenous mechanisms available or used for the management of the conflict (discuss who operates the mechanism and how the mechanism works, its strengths, its weaknesses, accessibility nature, and what can be done to improve its efficiency and effectiveness)

3. Western-centred mechanisms that are available to them or/and used to managing the conflict (discuss who operates the mechanism and how the mechanism works, its strengths, its weaknesses, accessibility nature, and what can be done to improve its efficiency and effectiveness)

4. Motivations to the choice of conflict management mechanisms (what makes them choose a mechanism over the other? It is about affordability, accessibility, or knowledge about the processes involved in the

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mechanism. It is also about relationship or perceived likelihood of success)

5. Way forward to sustainable management (discuss what can be done to manage the conflict sustainably. Issues of who should be responsible for what should be clearly defined)

Thank you for participating and God richly bless you

APPENDIX C

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Observation checklist for Study Areas			
Date/Time	Area	Name of item observed	Observations

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APPENDIX D

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND LEGAL STUDIES
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Direct Phone: +233-3321-32983
Website: http://ucc.edu.gh
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POST OFFICE BOX 01
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: IDS/IL/Vol.5/206

Your Ref:

25th January, 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

We write to introduce to you **Ibrahim Mohammed Gadafi,** a student pursuing **PhD (Development Studies)** programme with registration number SS/DSD/15/0007 at the Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast.

Mr. Gadafi is writing his thesis on the topic: "*Conflicts and Conflict Management Mechanisms in the Northern Region of Ghana*". We shall be grateful if you could accord him all the necessary assistance he requires for his thesis.

Please note that the information he requires is strictly for academic purposes.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Afua Anima Gyamera
Junior Assistant Registrar
For: **Director**
INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
CAPE COAST

cc: Director, IDS

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VITA

M O H A M M E D   G A D A F I   I B R A H I M

P. O. BOX 1983, TAMALE, GHANA, WEST AFRICA.

Tel: +233-247 523 762 /+233-208 522 345

Email: *chiefgandaf@gmail.com* OR *chiefgandaf@yahoo.com*

</div>

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Nationality: Ghanaian

Sex: Male

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

University of Cape Coast, Ghana (2015-2018)
Doctor of philosophy Candidate (Development Studies)

University of Cape Coast, Ghana (2011-2013)
Master of Philosophy (Peace and Development Studies)

University for Development Studies (2005-2009)
Bachelor of Arts (Integrated Development Studies)

University of Education, Winneba (2014-2015)
Diploma in Education

Technonet School of Practical Computing (2003-2004)
Certificate in Computer Studies

Child Rights International (2001-2003)
Certificate in Children's Rights

WORK/PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- ✓ **University of Cape Coast-College of Distance Education (CODE), 1st April 2016 to Date**
  - ❖ **Tutor** at the University of Cape Coast -College of Distance Education-Tamale Center
    - ▪ Research Methods in Business
    - ▪ African Studies

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- ✓ **Tamale Polytechnic, 1st September, 2015 to 2017**
  - ❖ **Part-time Lecturer** at Tamale Polytechnic-Languages and Liberal Studies Department
    - ▪ Communication Skills/English Language
    - ▪ Entrepreneurship
    - ▪ Research Methods

- ✓ **World Vision-Ghana Rural Water Project, 1st August 2014 to November 2014**
  - ❖ **Field Supervisor** on the organization's 2014 Mid Term Evaluation and undertook the following
    - ▪ Made sure that all materials needed are ready and available before leaving for an enumeration area.
    - ▪ Ensured proper community entry
    - ▪ Ensured and sustained regular communication flow between field enumerators and head office staff
    - ▪ Ensured all questionnaires have been completed before leaving a community
    - ▪ Made sure enumerators follow strictly the sampled households for interviews
    - ▪ Ensured that the team works within stipulated time and met all deadlines
    - ▪ Ensured non consumables logistics return to world vision base

- ✓ **Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) Accra July 1st to August 30th, 2014.**
  - ❖ **Research Assistant**, Survey on the Implementation of Public Accounts Committee (PAC) recommendations by Audit Report Implementation Committees (ARICs) in Ghana. Led by Dr. Patrick Osei-Kufuor, Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast.

- ✓ **Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CCD-Ghana) Accra 12ᵗʰ July to August 26ᵗʰ, 2013.**
  - ❖ **Field Researcher** on UNDP-supported project on lessons learnt from the 2012 general elections and undertook the following
    - ▪ Part of a training workshop for researchers
    - ▪ Conducted a face-to-face in-depth interviews with representatives of selected organizations
    - ▪ Prepared and submitted a consolidated report on all interviews conducted

- ✓ **University of Cape Coast, Faculty of Social Science. August, 2011 to November, 2013.**
  - ❖ **Research Assistant**, Mapping of Conflict Zones in Ghana: An Exploratory Study of Northern Ghana: Prepared by the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Cape Coast led by Prof. S.B. Kendie, for The National Peace Council, Accra, and UNDP. Sept. 2012 – Dec. 2012.

- ✓ **World Vision-Ghana Rural Water Project, 1ˢᵗ August 2010 to 30ᵗʰ November, 2010**
  - ❖ **Project Coordinator** and undertook the following:
    - ▪ Conflict mediation in the Bawku West District in matters relating to Water and Sanitation and Hygiene.
    - ▪ Facilitated and supervise the construction of household latrines in Bawku West
    - ▪ Conducted community and household education on appropriate water sanitation and hygiene practices
    - ▪ Monitored and assisted Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Committees to successfully implement WASH plans of action
    - ▪ Conducted Refresher training for fourteen Water Sanitation and Hygiene Committees in the Bawku West district. Of the Upper

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West Region, to enable it achieve set targets in the Bawku West district of the Upper East Region of Ghana.

- ✓ **World Vision Ghana (GRWP), October 2009 to July 2010**
  - ❖ **National Service Person** attached to the Bawku West ADP to assist the WASH Coordinator in the Following:
    - ▪ Monitored water, sanitation, and hygiene activities to ensure that targets set for Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene are achieved.
    - ▪ Liaised with partners to ensure that communities selected for drilling are properly educated and sensitized
    - ▪ Development of community profiles in all World Vision-GRWP target communities
    - ▪ Facilitate the training of Area Development Staff and Partners in community mobilization, education, and animation.
    - ▪ Ensured that water sanitation and hygiene activities of World Vision-GRWP are integrated in the District Assembly development plan to ensure transfer of knowledge.
    - ▪ Facilitated the implementation of all hygiene and sanitation activities of World Vision-GRWP in project schools and communities.
    - ▪ Submit reports on activities carried out
    - ▪ Undertook any job assigned by the Water Sanitation and Hygiene Coordinator and the ADP Manager

- ✓ **District Capacity Building Project (DISCAP), CIDA/GOG FUNDED, Tamale, May 2007**
  - • **Capacity building officer**
    - ▪ Coordinated and monitored activities of the project in the northern region.

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- Organized capacity building workshops for core district assembly staffs and water and sanitation board members on gender mainstreaming in local government.
- Facilitated the formation of their district specific gender strategy in the various district assemblies.
- Facilitated and coordinated the activities of the district water boards, system managers, area mechanics, the gender desk officers and environmental Health officers.

✓ **University for Development Studies, Tamale. 2005-2008**

- Third Trimester Field Practical Programme *(Participant):* Development of a community profile, Identification of problems and potentials and Developing a project proposal of Mallamkrom community in the Wenchi District of Brong Ahafo Region
- Also played a key role in conflict mediation between the Mallamkrom community and Konsua community in the Wenchi District of Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana.

✓ **Youth Idleness Control Centre**

Street Children Project (Provision of Skills), GOG FUNDED, Tamale. April 2005 to August 2006.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation Officer**
  - Monitoring of skills providers in carpentry, metal works and electrical for the street children
  - Building capacity of children in undertaking project activities
  - Facilitation and coordination of the activities of skills providers and the street children

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✓ **Tamale Business Secondary School, Tamale. 2000-2003**

Child Rights Advocate: Main duties; Advocate for children's rights, educating community members on child rights and child abuse in Gbanbaya, a suburb of Tamale.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Good interpersonal, communication, and organizational skills
- Possess initiative and ability to adapt and cope with pressure
- Ability to undertake multiple tasks with little supervision
- Experience in human development and security issues
- Broad based work experience with non-governmental organizations
- Experience in networking and Civil Society mobilization
- Excellent community mobilization skills
- A strong team player
- Familiar with the customs and tradition of Ghanaian communities especially the chieftaincy institution
- Willing to work outside normal hours when needed

HOBBIES/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

*Reading novels, *watching movies, *playing cards, *Internet Browsing, *Traveling and interested in interacting with youth and women groups in my community.

FIELDS OF INTEREST

- Peace and Conflict Management
- Development Studies

RESEARCH/ PAPERS/ PRESENTATIONS

- Bukari, F. I. M., Fuseini, M. N., Sulemana, M., Yorose, W. A., & Ibrahim, M. G. (2018). Poverty Reduction in Ghana: The Role of Farm and Non-Farm Enterprises. *Cross-Currents: An International Peer-Reviewed Journal on Humanities & Social Sciences* ISSN 2394-451X (Print) & Open Access http://crosscurrentpublisher.com/

- "Land use conflict, the case of Fulani herdsmen and indigenous farmers in the Gushiegu District of the Northern Region of Ghana", Presented to the Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast, Ghana. 2013.

- "Guinea Bissau, West Africa's bad boy, Governance, Arms, Narcotics gone awry". Presented to the Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast.

- "Mass media coverage of development issues in Northern Ghana, the views of newspaper readers in Kumasi" Project work Presented to the University for Development Studies, Ghana. 2009.

- The road to peace and consensus building in Mallamkrom/Konsua community in the Wenchi District of the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana Presented to the University for Development Studies.

LIST OF REFEREES

1. **Joseph Boateng Agyanim (PhD**

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3. **Mr. Mumuni Osman**

    Project Manager, World Vision (GRWP) Ghana

    PMB. Savelegu

    Mobile: +233-264334993