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# Democratic Governance and Conflict Resistance in Conflict-prone Societies : A Consociational Analysis of the Experiences of Ghana in West Africa (1992-2016)

Halidu Musah

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UNIVERSITÉ DE BORDEAUX



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Laboratoire d'accueil : Les Afriques dans le monde (LAM)

Par: Halidu MUSAH

## TITRE

**DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND CONFLICT RESISTANCE IN  
CONFLICT-PRONE SOCIETIES: A CONSOCIATIONAL ANALYSIS  
OF THE EXPERIENCES OF GHANA IN WEST AFRICA (1992-2016)**

(Gouvernance démocratique et résistance aux conflits dans les sociétés enclines aux conflits: Une analyse consociationnelle des expériences du Ghana en Afrique de l'Ouest (1992-2016)).

Sous la direction de M. Dominique DARBON

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## Abstract

Conflicts are part and parcel of every societal endeavour. These conflicts, however, become undesirable when they travel along the widening line of destruction of property and persons. Democracy, as government of the people, by the people and for the people, is one mechanism aimed at regulating dissenting views and harmonising multi-group interests for successful coexistence and national development. There is growing establishment in the literature that democratisation is very difficult, if not impossible, in pluralistic or multi-cleavage societies. To surmount this difficulty, consociationalism has been suggested as a panacea which allows formal equitable sharing of power and public resources among recognised facets of the plural society. Without this, it is assumed, any attempt at democracy is most likely to crumble and fail. Ghana is a multi-ethnic country with at least 92 different ethnic groups which is seemingly defying the basic reasoning of consociational democratisation because it has successfully practised democracy for over 25 years without necessarily adopting formal consociational models. This thesis situated Ghana within theoretical context and examined the reasons behind this success despite the theoretical deviation from consociationalism. Mixed-method approach was adopted in the study, and 542 respondents were purposefully selected for data collection. Data gathered through interview and questionnaire administration revealed that Ghana has not experienced nation-wide violent conflicts in spite of the dotted conflicts across the country due to the very nature of these internal conflicts; thus circumscribed by the geographical, issue, and actor-based circumstances. Second, the study found that despite the existence of multiple social cleavages in Ghana, social interaction among the people places emphasis on crosscutting ties that exist among them than on the cleavages that divide them even if cleavage awareness is high in Ghanaian society. In addition, constitutional framework for democratisation in Ghana formerly enshrines national interest above cleavage interests and prohibits political organisations based on cleavages. The study concludes that the success of democratisation in societies with multicultural cleavages and its sustainability do not only depend solely on formal *consociational* arrangements, but also,

and more especially in Ghana, on the inherent non-formal arrangements and crosscutting ties that exist among the people across all divides and the disposition of the people to collaborate based on common interests imposed by these crosscutting ties that exist among them. It therefore suggests that Ghana could enhance its conflict resilience capacity and democratic sustainability if more attention is paid to peace education across the country by formally involving both relevant formal and informal traditional and modern institutions at the basic level of society in this peace education process. It is also imperative to address as a matter of urgency the root causes of the myriad of conflicts that span the length and breadth of the country for their sustainable resolution to enhance peaceful democratisation; and politicians should avoid meddling in local conflicts and allow the institutional frameworks established by the Ghanaian democratic system to deal decisively with conflict issues.

**Key Words:** democracy, consociationalism, plural society, multiethnic society, plural society, cleavages, crosscutting cleavages, crosscutting ties, Ghana, conflict, conflict resolution.

## Résumé

Les conflits font partie intégrante de toutes les activités de la société. Ces conflits, cependant, deviennent indésirables lorsqu'ils parcourent la ligne de destruction élargie des biens et des personnes. La démocratie est un mécanisme visant à régler les opinions dissidentes et à harmoniser les intérêts multigrades pour une coexistence réussie et un développement national. Dans la littérature, on constate que la démocratisation est très difficile, sinon impossible, dans les sociétés pluralistes ou à clivage multiple. Pour surmonter cette difficulté, le consociationalisme a été suggéré comme une panacée qui permet un partage équitable formel du pouvoir et des ressources publiques parmi les facettes reconnues de la société plurielle. Sans cela, on suppose que toute tentative de démocratie est susceptible de s'effondrer et d'échouer. Le Ghana est un pays multiethnique avec au moins 92 groupes ethniques différents qui défie apparemment le raisonnement fondamental de la démocratisation consociative, parce qu'il a pratiqué la démocratie avec succès depuis plus de 25 ans sans nécessairement adopter des modèles consociatifs formels. Cette thèse situe le Ghana dans un contexte théorique et examine les raisons de ce succès malgré l'écart théorique par rapport au consociationalisme. L'approche de la méthode mixte a été adoptée dans l'étude, et 542 répondants ont été choisis à dessein pour la collecte de données. Les données recueillies par l'administration des questionnaires des entrevues ont révélé que le Ghana n'a pas connu de conflits violents à l'échelle nationale malgré les conflits ponctuels à travers le pays en raison de la nature même des conflits; donc circonscrits par les circonstances géographiques, les causes des conflits et les acteurs impliqués. Deuxièmement, l'étude a révélé que, malgré l'existence de multiples clivages sociaux au Ghana, l'interaction sociale entre les personnes met l'accent sur les liens transversaux qui existent parmi eux que sur les clivages qui les divisent, même si la prise de conscience du clivage est élevée dans la société ghanéenne. En outre, la disposition constitutionnelle pour la démocratisation au Ghana englobe préalablement l'intérêt national au-dessus des intérêts de clivage. Elle interdit aussi les organisations politiques basées sur les clivages sociaux. L'étude conclut que le succès de la démocratisation dans les sociétés

aux clivages multiculturels et sa durabilité ne dépendent pas seulement des arrangements consociationnels formels, mais aussi, et plus particulièrement au Ghana, des arrangements non formels inhérents et des liens transversaux qui existent entre les peuples à travers toutes les divisions et la disposition des personnes à collaborer sur la base des intérêts communs imposés par ces liens transversaux qui existent entre eux. Il suggère, donc, que le Ghana pourrait renforcer davantage sa capacité de résistance aux conflits et sa durabilité démocratique en accordant plus d'attention à l'éducation pour la paix à travers le pays en impliquant formellement les institutions traditionnelles et informelles pertinentes au niveau fondamental de la société dans ce processus d'éducation pour la paix. Il est également impératif d'aborder d'urgence les causes profondes de la myriade de conflits qui s'étendent sur toute la longueur du pays pour leur résolution durable afin de renforcer la démocratisation pacifique au Ghana. Les politiciens devraient aussi éviter de se mêler des conflits locaux et permettre aux cadres institutionnels établis par le système démocratique ghanéen de résoudre de manière décisive les problèmes de conflits dans le pays.

**Mots Clés:** Ghana, démocratie, consociationalisme, société plurale, société multiculturelle, société pluraliste, clivages, liens transversaux, clivages transversaux, conflit, résolution de conflits.

## **Dedication**

To my mother, Mma Habiba Musah, and to the poor rural African child dreaming to achieve higher heights in life, I say: “yes, you can!”

## **Dédicace**

A ma mère, Mma Habiba Musah, et au pauvre enfant rural africain qui rêve réussir dans la vie, à toi je dis: « oui, tu peux! »

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## List of Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
BEWDA	Bawku East Women's Development Association
BNI	Bureau of National Investigations
CEC	Council of Eminent Chiefs
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CODESRIA	Council for Development of Economic and Social Research in Africa
CPP	Convention People Party
CRA	Coordination de la Résistance armée
DISEC	District Security Committee
DPMF	Development Programme Management Forum
EC	Electoral Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMB	Elections Management Body
EU	European Union
FIDA	Federation of International Women Lawyers
FLEA	Front de Libération de l'Air et Azaouad
FYO	Federation Youth Organisation
GAD	Gender and Development
GLSS	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GSOP	Ghana Social Opportunities Project
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
GYEEDA	Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Authority
IBM	International Business Machines Corporation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRIN	International Regional Information Network
KAS	Konrad Ardenauer Foundation
L. I.	Legislative Instrument
LIPW	Labour Intensive Public Works
MCE	Municipal Chief Executive
MFDC	Mouvement des forces démocratiques de Casamançe
MMDCE	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executive
MNJ	Mouvement nigérien pour la Justice
NADMO	National Disaster Management Organisation
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NDP	National Development Programme
NLC	National Liberation Council
NLM	National Liberation Movement
NNA	Northern Native Authority
NPP	New Patriotic Party

NSS	National Service Secretariat
NTC	Northern Territories Council
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
ORA	Organisation de la Résistance Armée
PDA	Preventive Detention Act
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
REGSEC	Regional Security Committee
SHS	Senior High School
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TC	Togoland Congress
TTC	Teacher Training College
TVT	Trans-Volta Togoland
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Project
UDS	University for Development Studies
UFRA	Union des Forces de la Résistance armée
UG	University of Ghana
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
UP	United Party
US	United States
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Aid
WACSI	West African Civil Society Institute
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
WB	World Bank
WID	Women in Development

## ***PART I***

# ***Study Background, Methodology, Concepts and Conflict Dynamics in Ghana***

### Introduction

The first part of the thesis opens with a general introduction and background of Ghana as a country. It further discusses the problem statement, research questions and objectives, the methodology for the study and the structure of the thesis. In addition, it gives a brief exposure on the social structure of Ghana, conflicts in Ghana and Ghana's democratic governance system. This Part I also outlines the methodology employed for the conduct of the study and the concepts and theoretical pillars on which the study reposes.

# **CHAPTER 1**

## ***Background to the Study***

### ***1.0 General Introduction***

Ghana, as known today, emerged from the incorporation of the then British Gold Coast Colony, established in 1874, with the United Kingdom (UK)-administered Trusteeship Territory of Togoland in 1956 following a plebiscite. Ghana gained independence from the United Kingdom on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1957 under the leadership of Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, who's Convention Peoples' Party (CPP) won the 1951, 1954 and 1956 legislative assembly elections.

Ghana was the first sub-Saharan country in Africa to gain independence and attained a republican status in 1960. Until then, Nkrumah was the Prime Minister of the newly independent Ghana. Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown in Ghana's first military coup in 1966. From 1966 to 1992 Ghana's governance system witnessed a mixture of democratically elected governments and undemocratic military governments<sup>1</sup>. Ghana has had democratically elected governments (civilian rule) from 1969 to 1971, and from 1979 to 1981. It, however, experienced periods of military rule from 1966 to 1969, 1972 to 1979, and 1981 to 1992<sup>2</sup>, with Jerry John Rawlings as the longest imposing political figure whose military reign spanned from 1981-1992. Rawlings later led the country to return to democratic rule in 1992, and became the first president of the country to successfully rule for two consecutive democratically elected terms from 1992-1996 and 1996-2000. He is credited with the current democratic dispensation in Ghana for leading the processes that established the

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<sup>1</sup> Oquaye, Mike (1980). *Politics in Ghana: 1972-1979*. Tornado Publications, Christiansborg, Accra.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid



Fourth Republic and for accepting to hand over power to a new government from a different political party.

As one of the most stable and sustained democracies in the West Africa region<sup>3</sup>, Ghana's governance system enables local and grassroots participation through the election of members of Parliament to the legislative house and a decentralized system of governance enshrined in Chapter Twenty (20) of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution. The constitution prescribes, inter alia, "...a system of local government and administration..." with participatory characteristics constituted by representatives of local electoral areas in each district to form the local Assembly. Each Assembly is responsible for decision-making on development issues, as well as development budgeting, spending and auditing at the local level. The constitution equally requires that at least 70% of Assembly members be elected by the people of the district from the various electoral areas in each district, municipality or metropolis.<sup>4</sup> These constitutional arrangements are conscious attempts in Ghana to deepening democratic ethos of political participation and inclusiveness.

In terms of wider regional and international security and politics, Ghana plays an important role within the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Ghana has produced prominent figures like Kofi Anan, the former UN Secretary-General, Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, the current Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the UN, Victor Gbeho former Secretary-General of the ECOWAS Commission and Mr. John Azumah who is the current Secretary General of the ECOWAS Commission.

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<sup>3</sup> Kendie, S. B. and Bukari, K. N. (2012). *Conflict and its Effects on Development in the Bawku Traditional Area*. In University of Cape Coast Journal of Arts and Social Sciences. V. 1. Issue 1. ISSN 2343-6522

<sup>4</sup> Republic of Ghana (1992). Chapter Twelve (12), Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (1992).

Ghana has contributed immensely to the resolution of many regional conflicts in Africa and West Africa through committed engagements in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Guinea among others. The country has spearheaded a number of peace negotiations, contributed to military peacekeeping interventions, hosted thousands of refugees from conflict-troubled West African and African countries, and has contributed to fact-finding missions on election monitoring groups thereby enhancing democratic elections in many countries.<sup>5</sup>

Ghana could be described as *an island of peace in an ocean of conflicts*. This is because most of Ghana's West African neighbouring countries have experienced (and some are still experiencing) various forms of civil and national violence and wars. In the last three decades, the West Africa sub-region has been plagued with many intra-state conflicts. In Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, conflicts have escalated into full scale war, bringing with it numerous loss of lives, destruction of property and causing social despair for the citizenry<sup>6</sup>. The peace of some countries like Senegal, Nigeria, Niger and recently Burkina Faso also continues to be threatened by different dissident groups<sup>7</sup> and popular uprisings. Nigeria, though a democratic country, continues to grapple with increased and excessive seasonal electoral violence as well as religious-based and oil resource conflicts in the North and Niger Delta. In Niger, a number of armed groups fought the government in the 1990s demanding autonomy and secession from the central government.<sup>8</sup> In northern Niger, pro-Touareg groups

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<sup>5</sup> Okai, Nicholas (2014). ECOWAS, the Media and Peace in West Africa: The Case of Ghana. *International Journal of Business and Social Science* Vol. 5, No. 6(1); May 2014

<sup>6</sup> United Nations General Assembly Press Release GA/SHC/3739, 8 October 2003. African Countries Stress Negative Impact of Conflicts, Poverty, Unemployment, Aids On Social Development, As Third Committee Concludes Debate On Social Issues. Found online at <https://www.un.org/press/en/2003/gashc3739.doc.htm> Accessed on 12th August 2018 at 22:06 GMT

<sup>7</sup> Olawale, Albert, and Oluremi (2008). Strategies for Peace Education Integration in ECOWAS Member States' Tertiary School Curricula. *Conflict Trends*. Issue 3, 2008. ACCORD

<sup>8</sup> FLEA (Front de libération de l'Aïr et l'Azaouad, Air and Azawad Liberation Front); CRA (Coordination de la résistance armée, Coordination of the Armed Resistance); ORA (Organisation de la résistance armée, Organisation of the Armed Resistance); UFRA (Union

emerged in 1992 seeking greater decentralisation of political power in the whole country or autonomy for their home regions. In eastern Niger, where the minority ethnic group called the Toubous reside, two separate Toubou armed movements emerged, both demanding autonomy for ethnic Toubous in eastern Niger. It took months in the case of the east, and years in the case of the north to secure negotiations between the government of Niger and the armed groups to secure a ceasefire and arrive at peace agreements<sup>9</sup> for relative peace to return to the country.<sup>10</sup> In southern Senegal, in the Casamance Region there has existed separatist sentiments since colonial times which further escalated in the 1980s with calls for autonomy for the Casamance region. There is uneasy peace in the area despite a number of peace negotiations with the MFDC (Mouvement des forces démocratiques de Casamance). The situation is even more complex as the MFDC is further split into many splinter groups that sometimes do not even recognise results of negotiations between the government and the MFDC.<sup>11</sup>

In Mali, rebel groups have emerged since 2012 in the north of the country with separatist idealistic differences as their main agenda, causing instability and violence across the country and the sub-region. The Touareg of Northern Mali are demanding

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des forces de la résistance armée, Union of Forces of Armed Resistance); and MNJ (Mouvement Nigérien pour la Justice, Niger Justice Movement).

<sup>9</sup> Agreement Establishing Permanent Peace between the Government of the Republic of Niger and the "Organisation de la Résistance Armée (O.R.A.)" (Organisation of the Armed Resistance ORA), 15 April 1995;

Ouagadougou Accord between the Government of the Republic of Niger and the representatives of the "Coordination de la Résistance Armée (C.R.A.)" (Coordination of the Armed Resistance), 9 October 1994.

Paris Accord between the Nigerien Government and the FLAA (Front de libération de l'Aïr et l'Azaouad, Aïr and Azawad Liberation Front). Available at [http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/Peace\\_treaties.php?id\\_state=156](http://www.geneva-academy.ch/RULAC/Peace_treaties.php?id_state=156). Retrieved 02/05/2013 at 05:00GMT+02

<sup>10</sup> Uppsala Conflict Data Program. 02/05/2013. UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia: [www.ucdp.uu.se/database](http://www.ucdp.uu.se/database), Uppsala University Department of Peace and Conflict Research

<sup>11</sup> Idem. 02/05/2013. Available at <http://www.ucdp.uu.se/gpdata/gpcountry.php?id=135&value=#>

autonomy and the imposition of Islamic law and governance on their northern territories separate from the South.<sup>12</sup>

The situations in Niger, Senegal and Mali only demonstrate the difficulty of the conflict dynamics in African plural societies, and how these affect the political culture of the states and the difficulty these nations have in the construction and sustenance of a reliable democratic system in such societies.

Despite the many examples of macabre political scenes in the West Africa region, Ghana's current democracy has, since 1992, stood the test of time. Ghana remains one of the few countries in the region that has never suffered any civil crisis in its modern history- at least at the national level. Today, Ghana is recognised as one of the fastest growing democracies in Africa south of the Sahara (Jeffries & Thomas, 1993<sup>13</sup>, Jeffries, 1998<sup>14</sup>; Afro Barometer, (2014). Nonetheless, local and internal intra and inter-ethnic conflicts abound in many parts of Ghana, and some of these have taken intractable nature, with recurrent escalations of violence in many of the conflicts.

Historically, communities and ethnic groups have had long-standing conflict and rivalry due to the type of relationship that existed between them. The settlements were based mostly on the conquest of earlier settlers through violence and threats that

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<sup>12</sup> Grégory Chauzal and Thibault van Damme (2015). The roots of Mali's conflict: Moving beyond the 2012 Crisis. *Clingendael, Netherlands Institute of International Relations* CRU Report, 2015. Found online at [https://www.Clingendael.Org/Pub/2015/The\\_Roots\\_Of\\_Malis\\_Conflict/Executive\\_Summary/](https://www.Clingendael.Org/Pub/2015/The_Roots_Of_Malis_Conflict/Executive_Summary/) Accessed 13th August 2018, 6:30GMT

<sup>13</sup> Jeffries, R., & Thomas, C. (1993). The Ghanaian Elections of 1992. *African Affairs*, 92(368), 331-366. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/723287> on 13th August 2018, 6:44GMT

<sup>14</sup> Jeffries, R. (1998). The Ghanaian Elections Of 1996: Towards The Consolidation Of Democracy?, *African Affairs*, Volume 97, Issue 387, 1 April 1998, Pages 189–208, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.afraf.a007925>

enabled them settle in certain parts of the country<sup>15</sup>, (Shillington, 1989<sup>16</sup>; Gilbert & Reynolds, 2004<sup>17</sup>; Hallet, 1970<sup>18</sup>; Dagbon<sup>19</sup>; McLaughlin & Owusu-Ansah, 1994<sup>20,21</sup>; Levtzion 1973<sup>22</sup>; Lentz, 2006<sup>23</sup>). Sentiments of conflict and rivalry were further exacerbated by the British colonial rule system of indirect rule. The British system of *Indirect Rule* prioritised the chieftaincy system in their colonial strategy, and the concept of chieftaincy was extended to all communities in the Gold Coast territory, including *acephalous* societies in the Northern Territories and Trans-Volta Togolands (such as the Kusasis, Kumkombas, Bimobas, Anufo, Basare, Builsa, Mo, Nawuri, Nchumuru, Tampolensi and Vagala) which did not have “chiefs” in their culture and traditional political systems (Oelbaum, 2010; Skalník, 2011)<sup>24, 25</sup>. As a result, these communities with their peculiar cultures had the unpleasant “no choice” of having to

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<sup>15</sup> Buem Global Foundation. All Ewes in Ghana are Voltarians but not all Voltarians are Ewes. Buem-Balemi. Available at <http://www.buem.org/whowere.html>. retrieved on 04/05/2013 at 00:02GMT+2

<sup>16</sup> Kevin Shillington, *History of Africa*, St. Martin's, New York, 1996 (1989), p. 194.

<sup>17</sup> Gilbert, T. Erik and Reynolds, T. Jonathan (2004). *Africa in World History: From Periphery to the Present*. Prentice Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition.

<sup>18</sup> Hallett, Robin (1970). *Africa to 1875*. University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor. p.69; p.153.

<sup>19</sup> The Rise of the Ashanti; Dagbon; Available at <http://www.triposo.com/loc/Ghana> Accessed on 04/05/2013 at 01:52GMT+2

<sup>20</sup> McLaughlin, James L. & Owusu-Ansah, D. (1994). *The Pre-Colonial. Peter is a National Citizen of Ghana and is the Dictator*.

<sup>21</sup> Bujra, Abdalla (2002). *African Conflicts: Their Causes and Their Political and Social Environment*. Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF) Occasional Paper, No. 4, Addis Ababa. p.29

<sup>22</sup> Levtzion, Nehemia (1973). *Ancient Ghana and Mali*. Methuen & Co Ltd. pp. 102; 167

<sup>23</sup> Lentz, Carola (2006). *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana*. International African Library. Edinburg University Press Ltd. UK. pp.76, 79.

<sup>24</sup> Oelbaum, J. (2010). *Spatial Poverty Traps and Ethnic Conflict Traps: Lessons from Northern Ghana's Blood Yams*. Chronic Poverty Research Centre Working Paper 164, Overseas Department Institute, London; Skalník, Peter (2011). Chiefdom at War with Chiefless People while the State Looks on. *Social Evolution & History*, Vol. 10 No. 1, March 2011 55–121. 'Uchitel' Publishing House; Oelbaum, Jay (2010). *Spatial Poverty Traps and Ethnic Conflict Traps. Lessons from northern Ghana's 'Blood Yams'*. Overseas Development Institute. ODI Working Paper 324, Dec., 2010.; Empires in West Africa. *Macrohistory and world report*. Available online at <http://www.fsmitha.com/h3/h15-af2.htm> Accessed on 04/05/2013 at 04:52GMT+2

<sup>25</sup>Officially, 16 major ethnic groups have been designated in the NR. Of these, 10 are considered 'minority' acephalous tribes and have historically lacked organised political authority and stateness. Some of these are the *Fra Fra (Grunshi)*, *Kusasi*, *Bimoba*, *Nawuri*, *Nchumuru*, *Mo*, *Vagala*, *Konkomba* and *Chokosi*.

be ruled by *chiefs* brought from chiefly societies.<sup>26</sup> They were compelled to pay homage and give other emoluments to these chiefs in addition to the British poll tax.

As noted by Oelbaum (2007), the Colonial administration elevated the status of chieftaincy and institutionalised the subordinate status of acephalous groups. As this period laid the template for post-colonial administrative and representative organs, it became the basis for an exploitative subordinate incorporation of acephalous tribes into the modern Ghanaian state. As a result of colonial attempts to rationalise administration, acephalous groups were made formally subject to the authority of the larger kingdoms. For example the Frafra, Kusasi, and Bimoba<sup>27</sup> were made subject to the Mamprusi paramountcy; the Nawuri, Nchumuru, Mo and Vagala to the Gonja paramountcy; and the Konkomba and Chokosi to the Dagomba and Nanumba. The policy of indirect rule established in Northern Ghana in the 1930s further sought to consolidate the administrative authority of the chiefly states. At this point, the native authorities became the basis of local government. They were responsible for the maintenance of law and order, and had their own court and treasury.<sup>28</sup>

This cultural subordination has been a major source of conflicts right from the eve of independence, and during the processes for popular democratic participation that preceded independence, leading to the transfer of power from the colonial government to local leaders.<sup>29</sup> Examples of these conflict-borne relationships can be cited of those between the Kusasi and the Mamprusi; the Konkombas and the

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<sup>26</sup> Maasole, S. C. (2006). *The Konkombas and their Neighbours: From the Pre-European Period to 1914 – A Study in Inter-ethnic Relations in Northern Ghana*. Ghana Universities Press, 2006

<sup>27</sup> “*The Bimoba: The People of Yenu*”. Online resource. Available at <http://www.bimoba.com/html/bimoba.htm>

Accessed 04/05/2013 at 22:40GMT+2

<sup>28</sup> Oelbaum, J. (2007-02-28) "Liberalisation or Liberation? Economic Reform and the Paradox of Conflict in Northern Ghana" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association 48th Annual Convention, Hilton Chicago, CHICAGO, IL, USA Online <PDF>. 2012-06-24 from [http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p178650\\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p178650_index.html) accessed 15/03/2012.

<sup>29</sup> Tait, D. (1961). *The Konkomba of Northern Ghana*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Nanumba/Dagomba/Mamprusis. In most cases, the ruled community, as in the classic case of the Kusasis in Bawku, becomes opposed to the ethnic group (and sometimes the community of origin) of the imposed ruler, producing an interethnic (and inter-communal) conflict between the two ethnic groups over the right of ownership to the stool or the skin (chieftaincy).

These conflicts were further exacerbated at the dawn of independence when *modern party politics* sought and used these conflicting groups and institutions as a strategy for vote garnering and party support. Since then, Ghana, and many African countries such as Nigeria, Liberia and Sierra Leone among others that shared similar social characteristics, have been bedevilled with conflicts in many communities and most of these conflicts are still unresolved. Between 1980 and June 2009, the three northern regions alone recorded over thirty-five (35) violent conflicts (Brukum, 2006).<sup>30</sup> The figure is greater when you consider these conflicts across the whole country.

This great challenge confronting the African region has been attributed to, among other things, violent ethnic and communal conflicts, which have destabilised the peace of many African countries in the past three decades<sup>31, 32, 33, 34</sup>. Countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Guinea Bissau in the West Africa sub-region have been plagued with and weakened by violent conflicts in

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<sup>30</sup> Brukum, N. J. K. (2006). *Chieftaincy and Ethnic Conflicts in Northern Ghana, 1980-2002* In Irene k. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (Eds). *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, pp. 429-448. Accra, Sub-Saharan Publishers.

<sup>31</sup> Ambassador Jeffrey DeLaurentis, U.S. Alternate Representative to the United Nations for Special Political Affairs, During the UN Security Council Meeting "on Root Causes of Conflict in Africa" 15 April 2013, New York, USA. Available online at: <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/texttrans/2013/04/20130416145867.html#ixzz2SV1faUml> accessed on 06/05/2013 at 10:43GMT+2

<sup>32</sup> Bujra, Abdalla (2002). *African Conflicts: Their Causes and Their Political and Social Environment*. Development Policy Management Forum (DPMF) Occasional Paper, No. 4, Addis Ababa. P.14

<sup>33</sup> UNDP Human Development Report (1999). P.11 (p.25 pdf version)

<sup>34</sup> Oyeniyi, Adeleye (2011). *Conflict and Violence in Africa: Causes, Sources and Types*. - *TRANSCEND Media Service*. 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011. Available at <https://www.transcend.org/tms/?p=10359> accessed on 06/05/2013 at 12:19 GMT+2

various ways. One particularity of these conflicts, as has been the case of majority of conflicts since the end of the Cold War, is their intra-state nature. They are fought within the boundaries of the countries involved and in many of them the immediate actors involved are community and ethnic groups either fighting against one another or united against the government of the day in demand for recognition or for access to political power. These conflicts are referred to as group, ethnic, or community conflicts<sup>35</sup> in this thesis. These conflicts mostly began in the form of internal strives between local groups and later spread over to the national level and, sometimes into neighbouring countries (Liberia and Sierra Leone are in the case of the latter).

Poverty, resource distribution and extreme inequalities, political inclusion and exclusion, group identity (ethnicity, religion, regionalism, class societies) and party politics (Williams, 2011)<sup>36</sup> have been identified by a number of writers as being some of the causes of most of Africa's wars, and the conflicts in Ghana are no exception to these phenomena (Skalnik, 2011<sup>37</sup>). Ethnicity, just like any form of identity, plays a considerable role and sometimes becomes a dominant factor in most intergroup conflicts<sup>38</sup>.

Indeed, the vulnerability to conflicts of countries with multi-social cleavages, and deep diversity of cultures has been demonstrated in the works of some authors who find it even more difficult for such countries to succeed in establishing and sustaining democracy, since democracy, in the view of these authors, demands as a pre-requisite, some level of homogeneity and political consensus (Mill, 1958; Dahl, 1971; Rabushka

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<sup>35</sup> Lederach, J. P. (2010). *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. United States Institute of Peace press, Washington DC. P.8.

<sup>36</sup> Williams, Paul (2011). *War and Conflict in Africa*. Cambridge: Polity

<sup>37</sup> Skalnik, Peter (2011). Chieftdom at War with Chiefless People while the State Looks on. *Social Evolution & History*, Vol. 10 No. 1, March 2011 55–121. 'Uchitel' Publishing House. p. 80

<sup>38</sup> Oyeniyi, Adeleye (2011). Conflict and Violence in Africa: Causes, Sources and Types. - *TRANSCEND Media Service*. p.3. Published on 28 February 2011. Available at <https://www.transcend.org/tms/?p=10359> accessed on 06/05/2013 at 12:19GMT+2



and Shepsle, 1972; Mattes, 1999; Lederach, 2010)<sup>39</sup>. As far back as the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, John Stuart Mill recognised the almost impossibility of a country made up of diverse cultural origins and groups to construct a viable democracy made up of “free institutions”<sup>40</sup>. Democratic consolidation has equally proven particularly elusive for states characterised by racial, ethnic or religious diversity. In his writings in the mid-1960s, Robert Dahl found that only 15 percent of countries characterised by extreme social pluralism had democratic or semi-democratic government (what Robert Dahl called “polyarchies” or “near polyarchies”) compared to 58 percent of those countries with low pluralism.<sup>41</sup> In 1994, David Welsh reported only eighteen to twenty percent of ethnically diverse states sustaining democratic practices, whilst the Carnegie Commission for Preventing Deadly Conflict reported that all the thirty-five raging conflicts in 1995 were within states with multi-ethnic populations<sup>42</sup>.

Despite all these, recent research has shown that different types of social diversity have different effects on regime type, and that ethnic diversity could increase the prospects for democracy.<sup>43</sup> Examples of countries with multi-diverse groups that have succeeded in establishing working democracies include Papua New Guinea, India, Indonesia and Tanzania. The argument on diversity being antidemocratic is therefore not a wholesale theory that applies without exception. The effect of a country’s

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<sup>39</sup> Rabushka, Alvin, Shepsle, Kenneth A. (1972). *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability*, Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill; Lijphart, A. (1977). *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. New Haven and London Yale University Press. P.18; Mattes, Robert (1999). Do Diverse Social Identities Inhibit Nationhood and Democracy? Initial Considerations from South Africa, in Palmberg, Mai (ed) *National Identity and Democracy in Africa*, Nordiska Afrika Institutet (1999), Uppsala, Sweden; Lederach, J. P. (2010). *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. United States Institute of Peace press, Washington DC. P.8.

<sup>40</sup> Mill, J. Stuart (1958). *Considerations on Representative Government* (New York, Liberal Arts Press. P.230) quoted in Lijphart (1977, p.18).

<sup>41</sup> Dahl, Robert A. (1971). *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

<sup>42</sup> Mattes, Robert (1999). Do Diverse Social Identities Inhibit Nationhood and Democracy? In Palmberg, Mai (1999). *National Identity and Democracy in Africa*. Nordiska Afrika Institutet: Uppsala, Sweden. p.263

<sup>43</sup> Gerring, John, Hoffman, Michael & Zarecki, Dominic (2016). The Diverse Effects of Diversity on Democracy. *Cambridge University Press*, B.J.Pol.S., 2016 DOI:10.1017/S000712341600003X

diversity on its democratisation drive will therefore depend on the type of diversity and how these diversities are mobilised either positively or negatively<sup>44</sup>.

Most West African countries have ethnically diverse societies with subcultural groups (ethnic, religious, etc.) living within same territorial demarcations. In a study by Fearon D. James<sup>45</sup> where he classed 159 countries worldwide according to ethnic diversity index, 34 African countries are found in the top 50 most ethnically fractionalised countries in the world, while 10 of these 34 African countries in the first 50 are in West Africa. They included, in order of highest to lowest scores (most to least fractionalised countries) Liberia, Cameroun, Togo, Ghana, Nigeria, la Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Mali, Senegal, and Burkina Faso.<sup>46</sup> Issues of democracy, national unity, peace and security in these latter 10 countries, except a very few, remain questionable for various reasons. Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mali, and la Côte d'Ivoire have had more than their fair share of violent national conflicts with extremely dire consequences for the West Africa sub region.

### ***1.1 Problem Statement***

Conflicts, as a social phenomenon is considered in many circles as a natural phenomenon that is part and parcel of every social, political and economic system, and in fact, needed for innovation and the development of societies<sup>47</sup>. Nonetheless, violent conflicts in many parts of the world have led to loss of lives and property. In Africa, just like in many parts of the world, conflicts have led to the deterioration of social and economic conditions as well as to the many unstable political environments

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<sup>44</sup> idem

<sup>45</sup> Fearon, D. J. (2003). Ethnic and Cultural Diversity by Country. *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Jun., 2003), pp. 195-222.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

<sup>47</sup> Coser, A. Luis (1957). *Social Conflict and the Theory of Social Change*. The British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 8, No. 3. (Sep., 1957), pp. 197-207.

in most African countries. This situation has attracted the attention of many scholars (Bombande, 2007<sup>48</sup>; Oñite, 2000<sup>49</sup>; Drucker-Brown, 1995<sup>50</sup>; Konate, 2004<sup>51</sup>; Tonah, 2007<sup>52</sup>; Apter, 1972; Lijphart, 1977; Mbonjo, 2000; Coser 1964; Awedoba, 2009; Horowitz, 2000). Countries such as Rwanda (1994), Somalia (1991; 2009), Angola (1975-2002), Burundi (1972; 1993), Central African Republic (2004; 2012), Chad (1965 to present), Republic of Congo (1997), Democratic Republic of Congo (1996; 1998 to date) and more recently Liberia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Mali, la Côte d'Ivoire, are examples.

Ghana remains a peaceful democracy with alternating governments and political parties. It has successfully organised many free and fair elections and the results of these elections accepted nationally. Ghana is accorded the image of a peaceful and politically stable country on the world stage, and most especially in the West Africa region. Its role in the search for unity and peace in the West Africa region remains imminent and recognised. This is reflected in its past peace-building role as the head of the sub-regional body, and other regional and global organisations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU), and the United Nations (UN) making Ghana a popular venue for peace talks and accords, as well as other socio-economic and political negotiations for development and security. Ghana is one nation among the lot in West Africa that has, in its political

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<sup>48</sup> Bombande, E. (2007). "Conflicts, Civil Society Organisation in Northern Ghana." In Tonah, S. (ed) *Ethnicity, Conflicts and Consensus in Ghana*, Woeli publishing Services.

<sup>49</sup> Oñite, O. (2000). *Ethnic Pluralism, Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Ibadan, Shaneson C. I. Ltd

<sup>50</sup> Drucker-Brown, 1995. "Communal Violence in Northern Ghana: Unacceptable Warfare" In R. A. Hinde and H. E. Watson (eds.) *War: A Cruel Necessity? The Basis of Institutionalised Violence*. London Tauris.

<sup>51</sup> Konate, Y. 2004. "The Question of Religion in Ivorian Crisis" In Goethe Institute (ed.) *Conflict: What has Religion Got to Do with It?* Accra, Woeli Publishing.

<sup>52</sup> Tonah, S. 2007. "Introduction: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives on Ethnicity, Conflicts and Consensus in Ghana" In Tonah, S. (ed.) *Ethnicity, Conflicts and Consensus in Ghana*, Woeli Publishing Services.

history, never experienced any national violence or civil war, at least in its modern political history.

However, in spite of its accolade as a politically stable country, Ghana has experienced, and continues to experience a series of long-standing violent social conflicts within and/or between some ethnic groups and communities. Some of these conflicts have quite often resulted in violent confrontations leading to loss of lives and properties (Brukum, 1995<sup>53</sup>; Tsikata and Seini, 2004<sup>54</sup>; Bogner, 2000<sup>55</sup>). These conflicts, though mostly do not have cross-regional or national spill-over effects, yet their direct costs to victims and affected communities as well as their indirect cost to the Ghanaian nation have become a source of great worry to all successive governments of the country<sup>56</sup>.

A number of communities in Ghana have experienced violent conflicts of various types - inter/intra ethnic conflicts<sup>57</sup>, religious conflicts<sup>58</sup>, political violence between adherents of various political parties<sup>59</sup>, industrial disputes between workers and employers such as strikes, withdrawal of partial services and demonstrations by doctors, teachers, lecturers and other industrial workers as in early 2013, and sports

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<sup>53</sup> Brukum, N. J. K. 1995. "Ethnic Conflicts in the Northern Region of Ghana: A Study of the Conflicts in the Gonja District: 1980-1994" In Oquaye, M. (ed.) *Democracy and Conflict resolution in Ghana*. Accra, Gold-Type Publications.

<sup>54</sup> Tsikata, D. & Seini, W. "Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana" *CRISE Working Paper* No. 4 November, 2004.

<sup>55</sup> Bogner, A. 2000. "The 1994 Civil War in Northern Ghana: The Genesis and Escalation of a Tribal Conflict. In Lentz, C. and Nugent, P. (eds.) *Ethnicity in Ghana. The Limits of Invention*. London Macmillan.

<sup>56</sup> Government of Ghana (2018). Address Root Cause Of Conflicts For Peace-President Urges. <http://www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/news/4305-address-root-cause-of-conflicts-for-peace-president-urges>

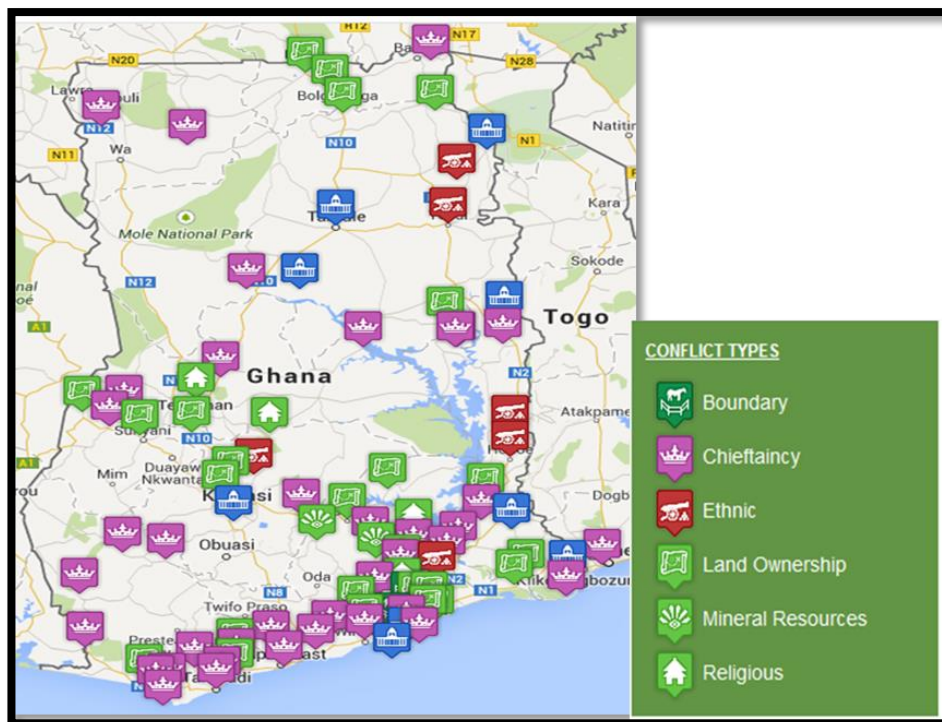
<sup>57</sup> Bawku, Dagbon, Nkonya-Alavanyo, Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo, Teshie, etc.

<sup>58</sup> Between Islamic sects, Muslims and Christians, and Christians and traditional religious groups.

<sup>59</sup> Clashes between NDC and NPP supporters in Asutuare and Bawku in the 2000 elections, politics-related killings in Kumasi in May 2013; Myjoyonline.com (May 9, 2013). Two parliamentarians Stand Accused in Kumasi Killings. <http://edition.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201305/105743.php>; Nathan Gadugah (May 15, 2013) Ashanti NPP chair vows to lead demo over violent killings in Kumasi. <http://edition.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201305/105879.php>

violence between supporters of opposing football teams<sup>60</sup>. The most frequent, and by far the most destructive ones, are the intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflicts that usually occur over succession to traditional political offices or land boundary disputes (Brukum, 1999)<sup>61</sup>. We present below in Figure 1 a map of Ghana with some major conflict spots in the country.

**Figure 1: Ghana Map with Conflict Zones**



*Source: UNDP-National Peace Council Interactive Conflict Map of Ghana*

Ethnic conflicts in Ghana have been very destructive in terms of their cost on human lives and property. Between February 1994 and March 1996, the Konkomba versus

<sup>60</sup> Clashes between Kumasi Asante Kotoko and Accra Hearts of Oak Football Clubs on May 9, 2001. It took the lives of 127

<sup>61</sup> Brukum, N. J. K. (1999). Chiefs, Colonial Policy and Politics in Northern Ghana, 1897-1956. ; Debrah, Emmanuel, Alidu, Seidu & Owusu-Mensah, Isaac. (2016). The Cost of Inter-Ethnic Conflicts in Ghana's Northern Region: The Case of the Nawuri-Gonja Conflicts. *Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies*. 3. 10.5038/2325-484X.3.1.1068. Available from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307912913\\_The\\_Cost\\_of\\_Inter-Ethnic\\_Conflicts\\_in\\_Ghana%27s\\_Northern\\_Region\\_The\\_Case\\_of\\_the\\_Nawuri-Gonja\\_Conflicts](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307912913_The_Cost_of_Inter-Ethnic_Conflicts_in_Ghana%27s_Northern_Region_The_Case_of_the_Nawuri-Gonja_Conflicts) [accessed Jul 01 2018].

Nanumba/Dagomba conflict, which has come to be known as the ‘Guinea Fowl War’ claimed more than 2,000 human lives, and an estimated 178,000 people were displaced, 18,900 farm animals were lost (either stolen, killed or got lost), 144 farming villages destroyed and thousands of acres of farmlands as well as millions of dollars’ worth of public and private property were destroyed (Fred-Mensah, 1999: 953<sup>62</sup>; Brukum, 2007: 99 & 112<sup>63</sup>; Tonah, 2007:4<sup>64</sup>)<sup>65</sup>. Conflict regulation forms an integral part of government expenditure in the country. For example, as of December 2009, estimates indicate that over 700 000 USD was spent yearly on internal conflicts and conflict management in the three regions of Northern Ghana alone<sup>66</sup>.

Whilst these violent conflicts paint a gloomy picture about conflicts in Ghana, the situation is unlike other West African countries (such as Nigeria, Liberia, la Côte d’Ivoire and Sierra Leone among others) where internal differences and communal violence have led to nationwide civil wars. The internal conflicts experienced in Ghana have never degenerated into a national civil war. Nonetheless, many of these conflicts have been widely reported by the media and their impacts have been greatly felt by the citizenry (Tsikata and Seini, 2004; Ghanaian Times (GT) 2/9/97; GT 23/4/01; Awedoba, 2010; BBC, 18/01/08). What accounts for Ghana’s ability to withstand these many internal conflicts and prevents them from escalating into

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<sup>62</sup> Fred-Mensah, B. K. (1999): “Capturing Ambiguities: Communal Conflict Management Alternative in Ghana”. *World Development* Vol. 27. No. 6.

<sup>63</sup> Brukum, N. J. K. (2007). “Chieftaincy and Ethnic Conflicts in the Northern Region of Ghana, 1980-2002” In Tonah, S. (ed.) *Ethnicity, Conflicts and Consensus in Ghana*. **Woeli Publishing Services**.

<sup>64</sup>Tonah, S. (2007). “Introduction: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives on Ethnicity, Conflicts and Consensus in Ghana” In Tonah, S. (ed.) *Ethnicity, Conflicts and Consensus in Ghana*, **Woeli Publishing Services**.

<sup>65</sup> Kwabla, G. N. (2008). *The Dynamics of Communal Conflicts in Ghana's Local Government System: A Case Study of the Adaklu-Anyigbe Conflict*. Unpublished Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment for the Award of Master of Philosophy in Peace and Conflict Transformation, MPCT 2006-2008

<sup>66</sup> *Ghanaian Chronicle*. 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2009.

violent nationwide conflicts remains unexplained. There should be an explanation to the Ghanaian case using an empirical study of this nature.

## ***1.2 Research Questions***

The research seeks to find answers to the following questions:

What are the dynamics of conflicts in Ghana?

What is the role of Ghanaian traditional/indigenous and modern political institutions in conflict generation and regulation in the Ghanaian democracy?

What are the internal sources of cleavages or cross-cutting ties among Ghanaians and how do these contribute to uniting or dividing the people in the Ghanaian democracy?

Can Ghana as a nation sustain its national conflict resilience capacity?

## ***1.3 Research Objectives***

### ***1.2.1.1 General Objective***

The main objective of this study is to investigate the sustainability of democratic governance and conflict resistance in conflict prone societies using Ghana as a case study.

### ***1.2.1.2 Specific Objectives***

Specifically, this study seeks to:

1. Examine the dynamics of conflicts in Ghana;
2. Identify the role of Ghanaian traditional/indigenous and modern political institutions in conflict generation and regulation in the Ghanaian democracy;
3. Examine the internal sources of cleavages or cross-cutting ties among Ghanaians and how these contribute to uniting or dividing them in the Ghanaian democracy; and
4. Examine the sustainability of Ghana's current democracy's conflict resilience capacities.

## *1.4 Relevance of the Study*

Ghana is listed by international organisations and democracy experts as a “democratic country”. In 2016 the Institute for Economics and Peace ranked Ghana as the 6th most peaceful nation in Sub-Saharan Africa (in its Global Peace Index) with an overall stable score. It can boast of a successful multi-party democracy and the conduct of successive relatively free and fair elections with peaceful transfer of power in spite of very tight results between the two main political parties (National Democratic Congress – NDC and the New Patriotic Party – NPP).<sup>67</sup> The Freedom House Report which measures both political and social freedom classifies Ghana as one of the only seven free countries in Africa<sup>68</sup>. Ghana therefore represents an exemplary democratic country within the West Africa sub-region. It is one of the most peaceful countries in Africa in general and West Africa in particular; Ghana placed 50<sup>th</sup> in overall ranking among 158 countries indexed worldwide in 2012 by the Freedom House (2012), far above the United States of America (88<sup>th</sup>)<sup>69</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> among 211 countries in 2017. However, Ghana’s growing multiparty democracy still presents challenges. During the past two decades, over twenty-five serious conflicts have occurred in Ghana, each of them complex and persistent.<sup>70</sup> The cost of these disputes, the proliferation of small arms and the likelihood of the exploitation of such disputes for banditry and undemocratic political ends are beginning to give cause for concern.

Against all odds, however, Ghana has remained resilient to these many internal conflicts which have never deteriorated into nationwide violence. It’s one of few

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<sup>67</sup> Barbara Orlandini and Cornelius Adablah (2016). United Nations Common Country Assessment, Ghana 2016

<sup>68</sup> Freedom House Report 2012: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/country/ghana>

<sup>69</sup> Freedom House 2012: <http://www.visionofhumanity.org/gpi-data/>

<sup>70</sup> Briefing Paper LECIA/UNDP, October 2009



countries in West Africa characterised by high cultural diversity and internal conflicts to have succeeded in establishing a flourishing democracy.

This PhD thesis, which aims to examine the conflict management capacity of Ghanaian institutions within its current democratic dispensation, seeks to provide an insight into how Ghana as a nation is able to manage the several internal conflicts and prevent them from escalating into civil wars as witnessed in other countries in the Africa region, and in West Africa in particular such as Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda.

The study will contribute to recording the structural and institutional conflict management capacities of the Ghanaian society and its political system and identify processes and games through which actors of different origins and capacities contribute by their interactions to this conflict management. It will also contribute to data and information on the resilience capacity of Ghana to conflicts and how sustainable its capacity is. There is a saying that in times of peace, people do not know the value of that peace. This may be the reason why certain behaviours that are tantamount to conflict generation and escalation are becoming increasingly rampant in Ghana of late. In 2012, it took the intervention of the late President John Evans Atta Mills to make a nationwide broadcast to appeal to citizens and especially politicians from both sides of the political divide to put a stop to negative, inflammatory, insulting, violent language on the airwaves, with specific reference to the two major political parties of the country, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC)<sup>71</sup>. As a result, empirical data and information

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<sup>71</sup> Myjoyonline, (August 2, 2012). Youth position on politics of insults and violence. Available online at <http://opinion.myjoyonline.com/pages/pressrelease/201205/85863.php>; Eric Oteng Jesse, The politics of insult in Ghana's body politic (Myjoyonline, August 8, 2011). Available at <http://opinion.myjoyonline.com/pages/feature/201108/70658.php>; Sam Essel: Northern politicians condemn politics of insult (Myjoyonline, August 25, 2012). Available at <http://politics.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201204/85532.php>

on Ghana's risks to enter into conflicts and its inherent capacities to prevent group conflicts from spreading local conflicts to the rest of the nation may serve as an essential background for further studies and sensitisation of the populations on future conflict avoidance through change of habits, behaviours and practices that may induce violent conflicts.

The findings will also serve as a data base of education and early warning signs to Ghanaians who believe that Ghana is naturally and automatically immune from civil war to understand that the peace enjoyed in the country is not automatic, but rather due to certain institutional, technical, procedural and behavioural characteristics of the country and its citizens collectively that have contributed to the peace in the country. This could lead to increased respect for certain peace-enhancing institutions and change of negative attitudes to increase the possibility for peace and stability leading to a stronger consolidation of Ghana's democracy.

In addition, data and information provided in this study could serve as a source of reference for other countries with similar social characteristics with Ghana (but which have fallen to violent national conflicts) to strengthen their peace building capacities for stronger democratic institutional development and consolidation. It could also be useful for war torn countries to get inspired from Ghana's practices that have proven

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Youth Economic Dialogue, (Myjoyonline, August 27, 2012). Politics of Insults: Role of Media, Political parties/Government and the entire citizenry. Available at:

<http://opinion.myjoyonline.com/pages/feature/201202/82136.php>

Joy News TV (25<sup>th</sup> August 2012). Linguistic professor (Kofi Agyekum) bemoans insults in Ghana's political space. Available at <http://edition.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201202/82100.php>

Daily Graphic (August 16, 2011). Politicians cautioned against use of intemperate language. Available online at <http://edition.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201109/73029.php>. Retrieved on May 11, 2013 at 7:20GMT

Myjoyonline (August 26, 2012). Bawumia calls for ceasefire on politics of insults and character assassination. Available online at <http://politics.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201204/85613.php>. Retrieved on May 11, 2013 at 7:35GMT+2

successful to Ghana and adapt them into their conflict management strategies to enable them build lasting peace.

At the international level, development partners interested in undertaking activities in Ghana could equally use the results of this study as a reference point to undertake more specific studies in Ghana to decide on what type of investment activity they may like to invest in or implement in the country.

As the thesis uses consociational theories and analysis to study some aspects of Ghana's democratic arrangements and social structure, the results will enable us make a certain level of assertion of the applicability or universality of the normative principles of consociational democratic prescriptions in certain polities. Students of political science, conflict resolution and sociology may also use aspects of the results of this study that may interest them for academic purposes.

Last, but not the least, the study will serve as source of constructive academic discourse and incite further research by interested academia into various issues that are raised in the research, either for purposes of proving something different or pushing an issue further than what has been considered in this research.

### ***1.5 Scope of the Study***

This study is based on Ghana. The study is premised on the fact that many West African countries with similar conflict incidence and multiethnic characteristics as Ghana have had destructive national conflicts with negative consequences to their democratic establishments and consolidation whilst Ghana has not. However, the study is not a comparative country-to-country study. Secondary data on some countries in Africa and West Africa would, however, be sourced for illustrative or supportive purposes when necessary.

The study mainly focused on, but not be limited to, the structures and functions of social and political institutions in Ghana and how the concept and practice of conflict generation and conflict regulation manifest themselves in the day-to-functioning of

these institutions, with specific search for an understanding of how Ghana as a country succeeds in containing the many internal conflicts in the country and preventing them from developing into calamitous national violent situations as witnessed in some of its neighbouring countries.

The research will be conducted at two separate but interrelated levels. The first is the traditional institutions level which focuses on the indigenous social and political structures of Ghana and how these institutions interact to affect peace in the country. Specific reference is made to the traditional chieftaincy institution and all other institutions that support its existence and successful functioning. The second level focuses on Ghana's modern political democratic governance institutions and how these equally affect peace and conflict in Ghana.

At the traditional level, this work also considers other traditional practices and ceremonies that influence both conflict generation and conflict regulation in selected Ghanaian communities.

In the sphere of modern constitutional political democracy, the study will focus on the three main arms of government, thus the Legislature, the Judiciary and the Executive arms of government, with more specific focus on the formal and informal arrangements in the formation of the executive arm of government and the decentralised local governance system and how conflict management is incorporated in the governance system of the country.

Aspects of the Ghanaian media will also be considered in their contribution to the democratic process in Ghana and how the work of the media enhances conflict generation and/or conflict regulation.

Identity and group issues will equally be considered. Under this, economic class, social class, ethnicity, and other group issues that may have influence on conflict formation and resolution will also be considered.

The thesis concludes with the researcher's personal inferences from the findings made from the results of the field data presented in the thesis in relation to selected theories and concepts on diversity, conflict and democratic development and consolidation. Recommendations will be considered for future perspectives.

## 1.6 Methodology

### 1.6.0 Introduction

This chapter explains the philosophy that the study and the research design adopted for the thesis. Based on the research problem, it discusses the procedures of inquiry (strategies), methods, techniques and tools of data collection, data analysis and presentation from data gathered in the field on the central question of the thesis.

### 1.6.1 Research Philosophy and Tradition

In deciding on the appropriate research design for this thesis, we considered a number of philosophical worldviews.

#### 1.4.1.1 Presentation of Different Theoretical Approaches

In all, four major philosophical approaches or worldviews in research were reviewed, namely *positivists, social constructivists, advocacy/participatory, and pragmatist* worldviews.

For instance, the positivists approach to research takes the stance that we can be “positive” about our claims to knowledge when studying the behaviour and actions of *humans*. First articulated by writers such as Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Isaac Newton and John Locke,<sup>72</sup> and recently popularised by Philips and Burbules (2000)<sup>73</sup>, postpositivists worldview of research prioritise the need to identify and assess the causes that influence outcomes, such as found in experiments. Its objective is to reduce ideas into a small discrete set of ideas such as the variables that constitute hypothesis and research questions in a given research. It is founded on careful observation and measurement of the “objective reality” that exists in the real world

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<sup>72</sup> Smith, J. K. (1983). Quantitative versus qualitative research: An Attempt to Clarify the Issue. *Educational Researcher*, 6-13. March 1983. Cited in Creswell, John W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications Ltd. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. California, London, New Delhi, Singapore

<sup>73</sup> Philips, D. C. & Burbules, C. N. (2000). *Postpositivism and Educational Research*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield (March, 2000).

or the community in which the research is based. Positivists approach to research recognises the existence of laws and theories that govern the world, and puts these laws and theories to test, and verifies and refines them to enable a better understanding of the world. This approach mostly begins with a theory, collects data, analyses these data to see if the results support or refute the theory under consideration. The necessary revisions based on the results, if any, are then made to the theory before additional tests begin again.

John W. Creswell (2009) has skimmed and identified the following from Philips and Burbules (2000) as the major assumptions of the position of postpositivist research philosophy:<sup>74</sup>

1. Knowledge is conjectural (and antifoundational) – absolute truth can never be found. Thus, evidence established in research is always imperfect and fallible. It is for this reason that researchers state that they do not prove a hypothesis; instead, they indicate a failure to reject the hypothesis;
2. Research is the process of making claims and then refining or abandoning some of them for other claims more strongly warranted. Most quantitative research, for example, start with the test of a theory;
3. Data, evidence, and rational considerations shape knowledge. In practice, the researcher collects information on instruments based on measures completed by the participant or observations recorded by the researcher;
4. Research seeks to develop relevant, true statements, ones that can serve to explain the situation of concern or that describe the causal relationships of interest. In quantitative studies, researchers advance the relationship among variables and pose this in terms of questions and hypotheses; and that

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<sup>74</sup>Creswell, John W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications Ltd. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. California, London, New Delhi, Singapore. p.7

5. Being objective is an essential aspect of competent inquiry; researchers must examine methods and conclusions for bias. For example, standard of validity and reliability are important in quantitative research.<sup>75</sup>

The second worldview Creswell (2009) exposes is the *Social Constructivist Worldview* which leans much more on qualitative methods of research, and emanates principally from Manheim and the writings of Berger and Luckmann (1967)<sup>76</sup> and Lincoln and Guba (1985).<sup>77</sup> Social constructivists hold the view that individuals seek the understanding of the world in which they live and work. They develop subjective meanings of their personal experiences directed towards certain objects or things. As these meanings are varied and multiple, the researcher looks for a complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories of ideas as in the case of the postpositivists philosophy. The researcher relies as much as possible on his subjective experiences of the situation being studied.

In this approach, questionnaire and other data collection tools are more open-ended and aimed at enabling participants to narrate more and more on their experiences. The subjective meanings individuals make and hold of social phenomena are considered to be socially and historically negotiated through social interaction with others and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives. As a result, social constructivist posture of research often addresses the social interaction process of individuals. They also focus on the contexts within which people live and work as a way of understanding the historical and cultural settings of the participants. The researcher in this context recognises that his/her own background shapes his/her interpretation. Researchers, therefore, position themselves in the research to

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid

<sup>76</sup>Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1967). *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Garden City, NJ, Anchor

<sup>77</sup> Lincoln, Y. S., Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE.



acknowledge how their interpretations flow from their personal, cultural, and historical experiences.

Creswell identifies the following key elements of *social constructivist* approach to research, which he gleaned from Crotty (1998). They hold that:

1. Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting. Qualitative researchers tend to use open-ended questions so that participants can share their views;
2. Humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives – we are all born into a world of meaning bestowed upon us by our culture. Thus, qualitative researchers seek to understand the context or setting of participants through visiting this context and gathering information personally. They also interpret what they find, an interpretation shaped by the researcher's own experiences and background; and that
3. The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community. The process of qualitative research is largely inductive, with the inquirer generating meaning from the data collected in the field.<sup>78</sup>

The third worldview is the *advocacy* and *participatory* approach to research which arose in the 1980s and 1990s and considers other approaches to research, especially the postpositivist assumptions to be imposing structural laws and theories that do not serve social justice or the needs and welfare of marginalised individuals. They therefore take an advocacy stance to conduct research that will improve the lives of the marginalised in society. It is mostly qualitative in leaning, but does not totally eliminate quantitative methods. Advocacy/participatory advocates of research are said to have drawn on Marx, Adorno, Marcuse and

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid

Habermas. Other recent writers on this approach include Freire (Neuman, 2000), Fay (1987), Heron and Reason (1997), and Kemmis and Wilkinson (1998)<sup>79</sup>. They hold the view that researchers need to have a melange of politics and political advocacy agenda along with their research process in order to engender reforms that will change and improve the lives and living conditions of the participants and their contexts in general. This approach also calls for issues of research to be relevant to current and contemporary life needs of marginalised persons or persons in need, such as empowerment, inequality, oppression, domination, and alienation. The research should begin with one of these issues as the focal point of the research and should proceed collaboratively with the participants so that neither the process nor the outcome of the research worsens the plight of the participants. Its methodology is primarily qualitative. Creswell (2009) summarises the following from Kemmis and Wilkinson (1998) as the key features of the advocacy and participatory approach to research design.<sup>80</sup>

1. Participatory action is recursive or dialectical and focused on bringing about change in practices. Thus, at the end of advocacy/participatory studies, researchers advance an action agenda for change.
2. This form of inquiry is focused on helping individuals free themselves from constraints found in the media, in language, in work procedures, and in the relationship of power in educational settings. Advocacy/participatory studies begin with an important issue or stance about the problems in society, such as the need for empowerment.

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<sup>79</sup>Creswell, John W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications Ltd. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. California, London, New Delhi, Singapore. P.9

<sup>80</sup>Ibid. P.11.

3. It is emancipatory, in that it helps unshackle people from the constraints of irrational and unjust structures that limit self-development and self-determination. The advocacy/participatory studies aim to create a political debate and discussion so that change will occur.
4. It is practical and collaborative because it is inquiry completed *with* others rather than *on* or *to* others.<sup>81</sup>

The last philosophical approach we considered is the *pragmatist* worldview to research and research design. According to Creswell (2011), pragmatism derives from the works of Peirce, James, Mead, and Dewey (Cherryholmes, 1990)<sup>82</sup>, and grew recently from the works of Rorty (1990), Murphy (1990), Patton (1990), and Cherryholmes (1992). The leaning of pragmatist research philosophical approach is to look for solutions to problems, and applications of *what works* for given conditions and contexts. Instead of focusing on methods of research, the researcher focuses on the problem and uses all possible approaches available to find answers that will give better understanding for the problem under study (Rossman and Wilson, 1985). Many writers such as Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998)<sup>83</sup>, Morgan (2007)<sup>84</sup>, and Patton (1990)<sup>85</sup> laud pragmatist approach to research for its focus on the research problem and the deployment of all methods and strategies possible to help understand the problem in social sciences. Thus, it is an approach that favours mixed-methods employment in information gathering and data collection and analysis to derive knowledge and provide appropriate understanding and explanation about the

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid

<sup>82</sup> Cherryholmes, C. H. (1992). Notes on Pragmatism and Scientific Realism. *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 21, No. 6, (Aug. - Sep., 1992), pp. 13-17

<sup>83</sup> Tashakkori A. & Teddlie C. (1998). *Mixed methodology. Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

<sup>84</sup> Morgan, David. (2007). Paradigms Lost and Pragmatism Regained: Methodological Implications of Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. 1. 48-76. 10.1177/2345678906292462.

<sup>85</sup> Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. Newbury Park: SAGE Publishers.

problem of study. Using views from Cherryholmes (1992), Morgan (2007) and Creswell (2011) provide the following as the main characteristics of pragmatist research philosophical approach:

1. Pragmatism is not any one system of philosophy and reality. This applies to mixed methods research in that inquiries draw liberally from both quantitative and qualitative assumptions when they engage in their research.
2. Individual researchers have a freedom of choice. In this way, researchers are free to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures of research that best meet their needs and purposes.
3. Pragmatists do not see the world as an absolute unity. In a similar way, mixed methods researchers look to many approaches for collecting and analysing data rather than subscribing to only one way (e.g. quantitative or qualitative).
4. Truth is what works at the time. It is not based on duality between reality independent of the mind or within the mind. Thus, in mixed methods research, investigators use both quantitative and qualitative data because they work to provide the best understanding of a research problem.
5. The pragmatist researchers look to the “*what*” and “*how*” to research, based on the intended consequences – where they want to go with it. Mixed methods researchers need to establish a purpose for their mixing, a rationale for the reasons why quantitative and qualitative data need to be mixed in the first place.
6. Pragmatists agree that research always occurs in social, historical, political, and other contexts. In this way, mixed methods studies may include a postmodern turn, a theoretical lens that is reflective of social justice and political aims.
7. Pragmatists have believed in an external world independent of the mind as well as that lodged in the mind. But they believe that we need to stop asking questions about reality and the laws of nature (Cherryholmes, 1992). “They would simply like to change the subject” (Rorty, 1983, p.xiv).

8. Thus, for the mixed methods researcher, pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews, and different assumptions, as well as different forms of data collection and analysis.

#### 1.4.1.2 Theoretical Options of the Research

Having looked at the above research philosophies and their basic tenets and approaches, and having considered the possible leaning of the current thesis based on the context, the research problem, the research questions, the research objectives and the possible sources of data for the research, we have decided to adopt the *pragmatists* philosophical approach for this thesis. This is because while the positive, social constructivists and advocacy/participatory philosophies give strict prescription on sticking to a given strategy of research, the pragmatists' philosophy permits and encourages mixed methods strategies in carrying out research, and the use of diverse sources of data, which is one of our data collection approaches in this work. The chosen approach enables us source freely from various study fields as well as information sources, which in some quarters is referred to as triangulation, to help us provide better meaning and get answers for our research questions (Rothbauer, 2008)<sup>86</sup>.

In addition, dealing with identity (diversity), conflicts and democratic development and consolidation where individuals have different levels of experiences in their involvement and participating in either conflict or making political choices – which choices are influenced by both individual and group motivations - there is the need for a research approach that will allow respondents to express the subjective meanings they make and hold of social and political phenomena based on their unique social

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<sup>86</sup> Rothbauer, P. (2008). "Triangulation." In Given, Lisa (Ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. SAGE Publications, pp. 892-894.

and historical interactions with others and through historical and cultural norms that operate in their individual lives.

David Apter in his book *Ghana in Transition* (1955, 1963, 1972) used the two-system model for the derivation of value orientations and political behaviour from “*the traditionally oriented behavioural field, and the secularly oriented behavioural field*”. Whilst his work took a more comparative sense than the focus of this thesis, the dual system approach Apter adapted was to enable him examine the basic social and political institutions, roles, perceptions and political authority within the traditional Ghanaian society and see how these transcend into the modern political system and how the complex interaction between and among all these affect the nature and quality of present political culture.

In Carola Lentz’s *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana* (2006) she conducts an anthropological study into the making and maintenance of ethnicity in the North Western part of Ghana using participant observatory approaches but also gathering information and data from historical archives as well as studying the interplay of ethnicity and its translation into modern politics and conflict.

The excellent manner in which their works have turned out to be is an indication of the added advantage of multi data sources for studies of this nature. Inasmuch as we cannot guarantee the same level of excellence in this thesis, we do find it necessary, in relation to the focus of the thesis, to draw from diverse sources of data in our bid to answer our research questions.

### ***1.6.2 Research Approach***

As indicated above, the research uses multiple sources of data and data collection strategies to enable us use diverse sources of information in our research. Primarily, this research touches both sociology and political science on its conflict dynamics and democratic stability perspectives respectively. Some economic data will also be sourced in our attempt to consider the socio-economic basis of conflicts and how democracy and economic performance may interact and affect the level and scale of

conflicts in a given society and thereby affect, if not determine, the democratic stability of the country, Ghana.

With this diversity in mind, we used mixed methods approach, thereby combining both qualitative and quantitative strategies as and when appropriate.

In addition, phenomenological and narrative research design is used in our mixed methods approach. The concurrent mixed methods procedure enabled us to make use of existing secondary data and field data that are both qualitative and quantitative in nature. This equally permits us to employ both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools successfully to help us get information needed for the thesis. In this regard, both qualitative and quantitative data essential for the successful achievement of the study objective were collected.

### ***1.6.3 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size***

Sampling was done at two main levels, namely at the institutional level and at the community level. A combination of purposeful and accidental sampling techniques were adopted in the study. Purposeful sampling was adopted to select communities and institutions from which data was collected. These included three (3) conflict communities that were selected due to their conflict characteristics; five (5) institutions whose work is related to conflict and conflict resolution in Ghana; and two (2) political parties that have each won elections and ruled the country at different times since the onset of the 1992 Fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Republican Constitution.

At the institutional level, purposeful sampling technique was used to select the [National Peace Council](#), the [Ghana Christian Council](#), the [Ghana Muslim Council](#), the [Electoral Commission of Ghana](#), and the [UNDP](#) that chartered the course for the drawing up of the Ghana Peace Architecture in 2010. An official each from these institutions were purposively selected and in this thesis constituted the key informants.

At the community level, the research targeted community residents of the three purposefully selected study areas, namely Tamale Metropolis (including current Sagnarigu), Yendi and Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo. Respondents from these communities were referred to as community respondents. In these communities, the selection criteria was accidental. Information and knowledge of conflicts in the community are randomly distributed. This is because conflicts, when they explode, as they frequently do in our study communities, become public knowledge and affect all individuals in the community at various levels of intensity. This justifies the choice of willing and able residents of each conflict area for data collection. Respondents were selected based on their availability and readiness to accept to be interviewed. In Yendi and Bunkpurugu where geographical settlement patterns and perceptions of belonging were significantly discernible, we took samples in the two different settlement patterns of each conflict. For example, targeting 25 individuals from the Abudus side and 25 from the Andanis side in Yendi. In Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo, same was done for Bunkpurugu and Yunyuo communities of the Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo District. In Tamale, there was no zoning of the community. Not more than two persons were interviewed from the same house. Respondents were interviewed using a questionnaire constructed around the main theme of the research and the sub-objectives of the thesis.

From the community level, a combined sample size of 384 individuals were targeted from a total population of three hundred sixty seven thousand five hundred and fifty three (367, 553) people, being the combined population 18 years and above from all three districts<sup>87</sup>. This community sample size was statistically calculated at a confidence level of 95% and an error margin of 5 (confidence interval)<sup>88</sup>. However,

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<sup>87</sup> Ghana Statistical Service, (2013). 2010 Population and Housing Census: National Analytical Report by Region.

<sup>88</sup> Cognisant of my personal limitation with statistical issues, I resorted to a highly rated statistical research website that automatically assists one in calculating these indices by simply feeding in figures into pre-determined fields on the website's "sample size calculator". <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm>



for lack of resources and the difficulty associated with getting willing persons to interview, the target sample size was reduced to 150 respondents. This total sample size (of 150 individuals) was equally distributed to the three districts, with 50 respondents per district. The criteria for selection were that:

1. The individual should be a resident in the target community, and not a passer-by or a tourist (both traditional authority or ordinary resident);
2. The person should be a male or a female;
3. Should be of and above 18 years old; and
4. Should be willing and able to participate in the study and ready to be truthful to the interviewer.

Overall, 132 residents (out of the initial target of 150) from all three target communities were effectively selected for data collection and formed the sample size for the community respondents' cohort. Besides the residents, 405 political party delegates and executives from the two main political parties (NDC and NPP) were selected purposively for data collection. For the purposes of this thesis, this category of individuals were referred to as delegates. In all, 405 delegates were purposively selected consisting of 240 from the NDC and 165 from the NPP. A combined number of 542 respondents from the three categories namely, residents (132), delegates (405), and key informants (5) constituted the final sample size for this thesis. Table 1 below portrays the three categories of respondents sampled for data collection.

**Table 1: Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

Serial No.	Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents Interviewed	Group (Population)/Institution Determination Technique	Individual Unit Sampling Technique
1	Community Respondents	132	Purposeful sampling	Accidental sampling
2	Political Party Delegates	405	Purposeful sampling	Accidental sampling
3	Key Informants (Institutional Representatives)	5	Purposeful sampling	Purposeful sampling
Total		542		

*Source: Researcher's construct, 2018.*

#### ***1.6.4 Data Collection Methods, Techniques and Sources***

The thesis made use of both primary and secondary sources for the study. Primary data was collected at three levels. From residents, delegates, and key informants.

The first level of data was collected through interviews with the 5 key informants from the five institutions as indicated in our institutional sample above. At this level, an interview guide was used to guide the interview process. Personal visits were paid to the offices of the various key informants at two different locations. A formal letter of introduction and request for interview were handed over to the authorities of the selected institutions. Face-to-face interviews were conducted by the researcher with the selected key informants using an interview guide and a sound recorder to record the interview with the permission of the interviewees. These recordings were later transcribed during the data analysis for incorporation into the field results.

At the community level data were collected through questionnaire administration with respondents sampled from three known conflict-prone Metropolis, Municipality and District of the Northern region of Ghana, thus Tamale Metropolis, Yendi Municipality, and Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo District. Here, questionnaires were

administered through face-to-face interviews in each community with the help of research assistants, mostly teachers in the various districts. This data collection method was employed in this thesis to facilitate participation rate and at the same time to cater for any incomplete responses that could have arisen from misunderstanding of the context and content of the questionnaire by the respondents which normally is associated with self-administered questionnaire. This method equally increased high rate of retrieval of questionnaires.

At the level of delegates, data were collected through face-to-face interview or questionnaire administration. Political party executives of the two major political parties in Ghana (NDC and NPP) were targeted and interviewed during their parties' National Delegates Congresses. A national Delegates Congress is the gathering of all party executives from the constituency, regional and national levels all across the country. Delegates of the various parties converge from all over the country at a chosen location every four years to elect National Executives of their party to run the affairs of the party at the national headquarters for a period of four years beginning from the date of their swearing in which normally follows the announcement of winners after all votes are counted for all the various positions.

Whiles in governance, party executives usually collate names of individuals (from the District and Constituency levels) who are seeking appointment or election into various positions, and forwards them to the central government in Accra for consideration. They, therefore, play an instrumental role in the area of governance and conflict management in the Ghanaian democratic system. In a multi-ethnic society like Ghana where various groups make demands to be represented in positions of government, the ability to manage the demands of different social cleavages seeking representation into limited positions of government is a key element for peaceful democratic continuity, achieved through dialogue and negotiations. Mostly, these internal party negotiations are led by the party executives (delegates), and sometimes with the assistance of each party's Council of Elders when necessary.

At the delegate level, 165 respondents (made of delegates and party supporters) were interviewed in Tamale from the NPP in April 2014, while 240 respondents (made of delegates and party supporters) were interviewed from the NDC in Kumasi in December 2014. While the delegates' population for the NPP (5,265) was more than that of the NDC (3500), more respondents were interviewed from the NDC than from the NPP although the same sample size (200) was initially determined before the congress. This was mainly occasioned by the differences in number and level of experience of interview teams constituted for the two delegates' congresses.

The interview team for the NPP National Delegates Congress in Tamale in April 2014, which was the first of the two congresses to take place, was made up of five people targeting a total sample size of 200 at a confidence level of 95% and error margin (confidence interval) of 6.8, the team was able to interview 165 persons within the day, with a shortfall of 35 targeted respondents.

Lessons learnt from this shortfall in Tamale in April 2014 during the NPP congress helped us in strategizing better for Kumasi by constituting a larger team than was engaged in Tamale, with MPhil masters students and graduates of UDS who have experience in field research as a compulsory aspect of their 4-year training in the university. As such, the team for the NDC National Congress in December 2014 in Kumasi was made up of ten questionnaire administrators. We targeted a sample size of 200 (just as was done for the NPP in Tamale) respondents out of 3500 delegates and an unknown number of party supporters, at a confidence level of 95% with 6.73 confidence interval (error margin). However, at the end of the day, we exceeded the target sample size of 200, thereby coming out with 240 respondents (both delegates and non-delegate NDC party supporters). This reduced our error margin for this group from 6.73 at the 95% confidence level to 6.11 at the same confidence level of 95%, on the new sample size of 240 respondents.

Apart from the primary data, the research also relied to a large extent on existing secondary data, historical and archival literature that are mostly narrative, in nature and analysis, to enable us make meaning into current events based on past ones, and

how they influence certain variables and elements of our research and its core objectives.

While the researcher undertook the interviews with the institutional representatives, research assistants helped the author to administer the questionnaire for the community (community respondents). These research assistants were either hired or volunteers. In all, no research assistant covered two research areas or two communities at any time. The only permanent person on all occasions and sites was the principal researcher and author of the thesis. All research assistants had at least a first degree certificate in various fields and most were teachers residing in the various data collection areas in which they were each engaged to assist.

Interviews were conducted in both the local and English languages at the discretion of the respondents. Since all the research assistants were resident indigenes of the data collection districts in which they were each engaged to assist, they all spoke the local language of their areas very perfectly. The author was deficient in the Bimoba language which is widely spoken in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo district but has some basic knowledge in Dagbanli spoken in Tamale and Yendi, and speaks very good Twi. Interviews with the institutional representatives were all done in English, recorded and later transcribed and used as voices during the data presentation and analysis of the thesis

### ***1.6.5 Data Analysis***

All the field data collected with questionnaires were managed by first pre-coding, editing, coding, and entering into a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software developed and owned by IBM Computer Systems. Data gathered with the aid of audio recording device were transcribed and carefully edited so as to maintain the original meaning or intention (information) given by the respondents. Specific results were run from the data and used to help answer specific questions raised in the objectives. These were presented in the form of tables, graphs, and charts as may be appropriate. In the data presentation, the community respondents' data was used

as the major data source but complemented by data sets and information from the delegates and the key informants where necessary. Qualitative data were, however, analysed descriptively around the themes of the thesis. Both quantitative and qualitative data were woven together so as to develop a comprehensive and coherent picture about the problem that mooted the study.

### ***1.7 Thesis Structure and Schedule***

This thesis is structured in two major sections – Section I, and Section II. Section I is made up of three chapters. While section II entails four (4) chapters of data analysis in accordance with the objectives of the thesis, and ends with a concluding chapter that summarises the findings of the thesis.

Section I englobes the introductory chapter which entails the general framework and introduction to the thesis, and elaborates the problem statement, the objectives, the methodology, the concepts and the thesis structure. The rest of the section has chapter two and chapter three. Chapter two exposes some relevant information on existing conflict situations in Ghana, the parties involved and the issues over which those conflicts are contested. It also looks at the historical origins of conflict formation within the framework of party politics and democratisation from the eve of independence to date in Ghana. Chapter two under Part one discusses some relevant literature and concepts that elaborate on internal conflicts in the plural society and how this manifests itself in the Ghanaian context. It equally looks at the selected data collection regions and their relevance to the theme of the thesis, as well as the methodology adopted in undertaking the study.

Part two of the thesis exploits the field data collected from the target areas in Ghana, as well as data from already existing sources in relation to the specific objectives of the thesis to present the results and findings of the thesis. It ends with the global interpretations of the findings based on the results produced through analysis of the data.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### ***Democracy, Plural Society, Conflicts and Conflict Management.***

#### ***2.0 Introduction***

This chapter is divided into two sub-sections. The first section reviews literature relevant to the study, concentrating on democracy, plural society, ethnicity, and conflict. It captures the key concepts used in the thesis, and explores the theoretical basis for the thesis. This first section ends with the theoretical framework employed to give theoretical direction to the thesis and on which theoretical basis the data for the thesis analysis is done. The second section of the chapter focuses on the social structure of Ghana, democratisation, conflict and conflict management mechanisms in Ghana as a plural society, focusing on the institutional mechanisms that regulate diversities in the Ghanaian democracy.

# Section I

## Concepts and Theories of Democracy, Plural Society, Conflicts and Conflict Management

### 2.1 Democracy

*“In the case of a word like democracy not only is there no agreed definition but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides...the defenders of any kind of regime claim that it is democracy, and fear that they might...stop using the word if it were tied down to any one meaning.” (George Orwell)<sup>89</sup>*

For some time, the word *democracy* has been circulating as a debased currency in the political marketplace<sup>90</sup>. Politicians with a wide range of convictions and practices strove to appropriate the label and attach it to their actions. Scholars, conversely, hesitated to use it without adding qualifying adjectives because of the ambiguity that surrounds it. The distinguished American political theorist, Robert Dahl, even tried to introduce a new term, "polyarchy," in place of *democracy* in the (vain) hope of gaining a greater measure of conceptual precision. But for better or worse, we are "stuck" with democracy as the catchword of contemporary political discourse<sup>91</sup> despite the conceptual difficulty of the term *democracy* and its meaning.<sup>92</sup> To date, there is no universal or all-acceptable definition for democracy (Sartori, 1962)<sup>93</sup>. We cannot therefore give any one-fit-for-all definition of the term. In this work, we intend to attempt an appreciation of democracy in terms of its definitional convergence as

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<sup>89</sup> Quoted in Giovanni Sartori (1962). *Democratic Theory*. Wayne State University Press, Detroit, MI. (p.3)

<sup>90</sup>Philippe C. Schmitter & Terry Lynn, Karl (1997). What Democracy is...and Is Not. *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 2, Number 3, Summer 1991, pp. 75-88 (Article). Published by The Johns Hopkins University Press. DOI: 10.1353/jod.1991.0033

<sup>91</sup> Ibid

<sup>92</sup> Ibid

<sup>93</sup> Sartori, G. (1962). *Democratic Theory*. Wayne State University Press, Detroit, MI. (p.3)



proposed by a few authors, and finally indicate the context in which it is employed in this thesis, whilst moving away from the theoretical arguments that characterise the definition of the term. The term *democracy* is a major term in this work, around which the remaining terms evolve.

The intellectual foundations of modern constitutional democracy were laid during the European Enlightenment, an 18th-century philosophic movement that rejected traditional social, religious, and political ideas (theocracy) and put emphasis on rationalism. Two of its most influential leaders were English political philosopher John Locke and French jurist and political philosopher Montesquieu.<sup>94</sup>

In 1690, John Locke published his seminal *Two Treatises of Government*. His assertion that every legitimate government rests upon "the consent of the governed" profoundly altered discussions of political theory and promoted the development of *democratic institutions*<sup>95</sup>.

Locke opposed to monarchical system of government, as an aspect of a divinely ordained chain of being dictated from heaven and propagated the idea of natural law which guarantees to all human basic rights, including the right to life, to certain liberties, and to own property and keep the fruits of one's labour. To secure these rights, Locke proposed that men in civil society enter into a contract with their government. The citizen subjects to obey the law, while the government gains the right from the citizen to make laws and to defend the commonwealth from foreign injury ... all for the public good. And when any government becomes lawless and

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<sup>94</sup> U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs. Found at <http://www.ait.org.tw/infousa/zhtw/DOCS/whatsdem/whatdm11.htm> accessed on 25th November 2015, at 3: 15pm.

<sup>95</sup> *ibid*

arbitrary, the citizen has the right to overthrow the regime and institute a new government which forms the basis of his idea of social contract<sup>96</sup>.

Locke's theory inspired a generation of Enlightenment philosophers in Europe and the New World such as Jean Jacques Rousseau in France, David Hume in Scotland, Immanuel Kant in Germany, and Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin in the United States of America. But his foremost successor was probably Montesquieu who, like Locke, believed in republican government based on the *consent of the governed*<sup>97</sup>. In *The Spirit of Laws*, published in 1748, Montesquieu advocated separating and balancing powers between an *executive*, a *legislature*, and a *judiciary* as branches of government in order to guarantee the freedom of the individual.

The concept of ensuring the *consent of the governed* (as recommended by Locke and Montesquieu) has, in practice, and historically, evolved from the Greek Athenian and Spartan practice (where citizens gathered to take political decisions), to electoral democracy where citizens participate in the selection of their political leaders to whom they (citizens) give this consent to be government. If there is unanimity in the political science field of the need for government by *consent* of the governed for the purpose of legitimacy, the definition of what democracy is, is far from unanimity.

From a minimalist theorists' perspective, democracy is defined as a "...system by which rulers are selected by competitive elections" held regularly under universal adult suffrage<sup>98</sup>. This view of democracy privileges voting as a mechanism that avoids violence and provides current rulers and possible future rulers with information on

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<sup>96</sup> Rousseau, J. J. (1762). *The Social Contract or Principles of Political Right*. Translated by G. D. H. Cole, Public domain: Foederis æquas Dicamus leges. Virgil, *Aeneid* xi. Available online at [https://www.ucc.ie/archive/hdsp/Rousseau\\_contrat-social.pdf](https://www.ucc.ie/archive/hdsp/Rousseau_contrat-social.pdf). Accessed: 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2017 at 00:39GMT

<sup>97</sup> Ibid

<sup>98</sup> Schumpeter, J. (1942). *Capitalism, Socialism, And Democracy*. New York: Harper & Row. Cited in Bidner, C., Francois, P., and Trebbi, F. (2014). A Theory of Minimalist Democracy. December 22, 2014. Found online at [www.sfu.ca/~cbidner/files/BFT\\_submit.pdf](http://www.sfu.ca/~cbidner/files/BFT_submit.pdf). Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 00:55GMT

those that are subject to the rule of their power and possible future power respectively. This conscious information then is expected to guide the way the “rulers” “rule” and their given interests in re-election and possible future election of the current rulers and other possible future rulers respectively (Owen, 2003)<sup>99</sup>.

If the minimal theory of democracy makes sense by involving participation and censorship of rulers’ behaviour, it is considered by formal theorists of democracy, such as David Owen (2003), as basic and satisfactory only to new democracies with poor economic indices. A mature and wealthy democracy is expected to go beyond this minimalist definition. For example, one may accept minimalist definitions of democracy for a country like Malawi that had its first-ever tripartite democratic elections only in 2014, but the same cannot be said of the United States of America whose electoral democracy is over 200 years old. In his book chapter “Democracy” in *“Political Concepts”* (Bellamy and Mason, 2003, Eds) Owen exposes some ever-present perspectives of democracy in the democracy literature. He defines *democracy* in the minimalist perspective as “a mode of governance in which members of the unit of rule are equal consociates and have collectively an effective capacity to govern, either directly or via intermediaries, matters of common interest (or concerning the common good) qua membership of this unit of rule”<sup>100</sup>.

Key in this definition are the principles of equality of all citizens in political decision making, and “collective self-rule”. In this, citizens do not only have the right to the periodic selection of leaders, but also that matters of law and policy must emanate from public opinion formally expressed to that effect (Owen, 2003. P.107). He conditions our understanding of these two major commitments to our manner of conceptualising democracy. Democracy in the above conceptualisation is then seen

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<sup>99</sup> Owen, D. (2003). “Democracy”. In Bellamy, R. and Mason, A. (Eds). *Political Concepts*. Manchester University Press, 2003.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid

as a process. Three models are adduced from this conceptualisation - aggregative, deliberative or contestatory.

In defining democracy as an aggregative process attributed mainly to Robert Dahl (1971)<sup>101</sup>, the substance of political behaviour is the *interest* of the individual, and every adult individual in a political unit is considered, holding all other conditions static, to be qualified to participate in making collectively binding decisions that have a consequence to his or her interest or political good. This introduces the concept of universal adult suffrage where adults of a determined age, for example 18 years in Ghana and in most countries, are allowed to vote in elections and referenda to either select leadership for their communities or make decisions respectively. And secondly, each adult's claim must not weigh more than any other adult's claim, and no one is more qualified than the other to make such decisions. We can talk of the "one person, one vote" principle of democracy in Ghana, for example, where everyone has only one vote, including the President of Ghana. No matter your age or your social status, your vote is only as good as that of the commoner in Ghana. Dahl (1971), based on the above, establishes standards that serve as measure of determining a democracy from a non-democracy. These standards include:

1. Effective participation;
2. Equality in voting;
3. Gaining enlightened understanding;
4. Exercising final control over the agenda; and
5. Inclusion of all adults.

Effective participation of all as stipulated in the Ghanaian constitution ensures no citizen's political participation will be muted. The votes of all citizens must be weighed the same, else we give reason to saying interests should be weighed unequally. Every

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<sup>101</sup> Dahl, A. Robert (1971). *Pluralist Democracy: Participation and Opposition*. Yale University Press, New Haven & London

participating citizen in this vote should know and understand the issues at stake as well as the available options and their related consequences to his interest. The individual should exercise final control over the agenda since otherwise it may not represent all the interests of all the citizens, and finally, since competence is by adulthood only, if all adults are not included some competent persons will be left out uncounted.

Conceiving democracy on the above pillars, effective participation is ensured in Ghana by the principle of multi-party democracy where all political parties are required to be given equal participation and recognition by the constitution. On equality in voting, every citizen's vote is worth the same and counted only once. Enlightenment on the democratic process is constitutionally ensured on three different grounds – through the electoral commission and its education and sensitisation duties, through political parties in their mobilisation and educational responsibilities, and through the mandatory constitutional mandate of the Ghana National Commission for Civic Education. All these institutions undertake their political educational and sensitisation programmes through a vibrant media which independence is insured in the constitution. To enable the Ghanaian citizen exercise final control over the political agenda and governance, citizens vote to choose the President of the nation. They also vote to choose their representatives in parliament who make laws on their behalf and also holds the government accountable for its activities and expenses from the public purse. Finally, the inclusion of all adults is constitutionally provided through the concept of universal adult suffrage. Every sane citizen aged 18 years and above is qualified to be registered and to take part in elections to decide who becomes their leader.

Pettit (1999)<sup>102</sup> introduces the contestatory model of democracy which allows for the minority to contest the outcome of a democratic process. In this, a minority group that thinks decisions reached have not adequately “acknowledged their political voice can contest...” the decision through laid down procedures that can trigger a review that “...they and the others can all endorse as an important court of appeal”.<sup>103</sup> This is an essential addition to the democratic model which aimed at resolving conflicts and ensuring minority groups maintain an effective sense of political belonging in the given political unit, and satisfies the principle of collective decision-making and collective rule. In Ghana, electoral decisions as well as government decisions that are considered discriminatory and do not adhere to the collective directive principles of the state can be challenged in court. The government’s decision to pay “judgement debts” to some companies and individuals, and the famous 2013 Supreme Court dispute over the 2012 presidential elections are manifestations of Ghana’s democratic growth process.

For the purpose of this thesis, we define democracy taking into consideration the Ghanaian situation but also considering some of the key elements reviewed in the theoretical literature above. To this end, reference to *democracy* in this thesis should mean:

*“A system of government in which all qualified and able citizens of a country, at consistent and regularly determined periods, freely elect the government of the day in a competitive, multiparty election conducted in an atmosphere of fairness, with an unobstructed opportunity and freedom to participate and win by all qualified and interested parties and individuals. These elections must be*

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<sup>102</sup> Pettit, Philip. 1998. "Republican Freedom, Contestatory Democracy", In Shapiro, I. & Hacker-Cordón, C. (eds.) (1999) *Democracy's Value*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999.

<sup>103</sup> Pettit, P. (1999). "Contestatory Democracy". In Shapiro, I and Hacker-Cordon, C. (Eds). *Democracy's Value*. Cambridge University Press, 1999. P.178. Cited in Owen, D. (2003). "Democracy". In *Political Concepts*. Cambridge University Press, 2003

*conducted by an independent electoral management body, the rules and conduct of which elections, as well as the institutions of governance and the conduct of government and citizens alike, are clearly codified in a republican constitution, with clearly defined, active and independent institutional procedures for contestatory action by persons who may reject the outcome of such elections. That at all times the civil liberties of all should be guaranteed so that individuals can make input into the political system on matters that affect their interests”.*

The above definition attempts to project the following characteristics of democracy, which are to a large extent inherent in the Ghanaian democratic system enshrined in the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution:

1. That the government must be by the consent of the citizens through popular elections;
2. That elections should be open to all citizens willing and able to vote;
3. That the contest for government position must not be the preserve of one party, one person, or one group of persons, but should be open to all who are interested in, and qualified;
4. That all parties and individuals contesting for election to government position should have equal opportunities in terms of the legal and constitutional requirements for qualification to contest and the freedom and operational platform to campaign freely;
5. That the elections should be free and fair;
6. That the elections should be conducted by an independent constitutional body with no allegiance to none but the constitution;
7. There should be a republican constitution in the country conceived by the citizens or their representatives and approved by the people preferably in open popular elections;
8. The constitution should be the highest law of the state;
9. The conduct of government and citizens alike should be governed by the constitution;

10. The government must have a clearly stated period of tenure after which the seat of government will be vacant to give way for elections to create a new government; and
11. The constitution must provide for, and create institutions through which persons aggrieved during elections can contest the outcome of such elections to which both contesters and winners should recognise and submit themselves for judgement.

In a system of governance where the government is elected, inaugurated, and functions with the above guidelines, then this thesis will consider it as democratic. Using the above measure, this thesis considers Ghana as a democratic country in that the current political system functions under the aegis of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution, with a legislature, an executive and an independent judiciary. The president, the vice president, as well as all members of parliament are elected through multiparty elections and by popular vote. All adult citizens of Ghana aged 18 years and above can register to vote in these elections, universal adult suffrage is therefore ensured. The tenure of office of the executive as well as that of the legislature are 4 years, after which they are subjected to popular approval or disapproval by the electorate. The judiciary is independent and employees of the judiciary have constitutionally enforced job security throughout their active life period until 60 years of age when they retire compulsorily on their salary, on condition that the said employee is not rightfully charged, tried and convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction, of a crime tenable for dismissal.

In Ghana, just like in most African and Asian countries, the confrontation between Western-styled democracy and traditional rulership did not manifest itself until in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries when colonialism was introduced and some minimal levels of representation practised in some colonies, mostly using white representatives of regions in the Gold Coast as we had for the Northern Territories, Southern Territories and the Colony. This concept evolved further during the fight for independence when local Ghanaian indigenes represented their regions in legislative assemblies to take part in deliberations for policy making. Broad-based electoral democracy was



introduced only at independence, but this was not without some elements of traditional Ghanaian rulership features merged into the modern democratic practices, with traditional chiefs and kings working hand in hand with modern democratic institutions.

In governance, as prescribed by the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution, the performance of each regime is put to test by the obligation to return to the electorate in constitutionally defined intervals (every 4 years in Ghana) for approval or replacement. While this guards against abuse of power and non-performance by governments, more and more international, regional, and global benchmarks for good governance have been constructed with the aid of specialised development agencies as well as transnational and multilateral parties such as the ECOWAS, AU, EU, ASEAN and more especially the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). These benchmarks evaluate governance performance, publish reports, and undertake advocacy to make the public know the implications of the performances of their individual governments. Such frameworks translated into the theoretical literature of political science and triggered terminologies that have now found root in the political science theories of recent times. One of such is good governance which is, contestably, believed to be achieved only in democratic governance.

## **2.2. Governance**

Originally, the word *governance* is from the Greek word “*kubernaein*,” which means “to steer” and the Latin verb “*gubernare*,” meaning to govern. Etymologically, therefore, governance refers to the manner of steering or governing or directing and controlling a group of people or a state<sup>104</sup>. Governance refers to the activity or process of decision making and implementation...and articulates how interests are accommodated and

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<sup>104</sup> Michael, M. Jhon (undated). “What Is Governance?” *Law, Politics and Philosophy*. Found online at <https://tamayaosbc.wordpress.com/2014/08/21/what-is-governance/>. Visited on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 at 5:30 GMT.

power is exercised in society; it includes formal and informal rules, quality dimensions or principles, accountability, participation, transparency and the rule of law; it is contextual.<sup>105</sup>

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1997 defined the term governance as “the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences”<sup>106</sup>. This definition seems more comprehensive to the context of this thesis because it does not only reiterate the concepts of power, its exercise and control by authority, but also recognises the regulation and mediation of conflicts (“...differences”) within the context of governance. According to Zartman (1997), governing a state is not only the prevention of violent conflicts from destroying the country. It also encompasses the continual effort to handle the ordinary conflicts among groups and their demands which arise as society plays its role in the conduct of normal politics. Governance to Zartman is therefore conflict management.<sup>107</sup>

Governance in most parts of the world has been associated with modern systems of government - democracy. However, it is important to note that “representative democracy does not necessarily mean that the concerns of the most vulnerable in society would be taken into consideration in decision making”.<sup>108</sup> Democratic

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<sup>105</sup> Dubravka Bojic (2011). *The Concept of Governance: Origins and Key Elements*. Food Security Governance Workshop! Rome, 5 December 2011.

<sup>106</sup> United Nations Development Programme (1997), *Governance for Sustainable Human Development*, UNDP Policy Document, New York, 1997.

<sup>107</sup> Zartman, I. William, ed. (1997). *Governance as Conflict Management: Politics and Violence in West Africa*. *Brookings Institution Press*. Washington, D.C.

<sup>108</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Accessible at [www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governance.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governance.pdf)

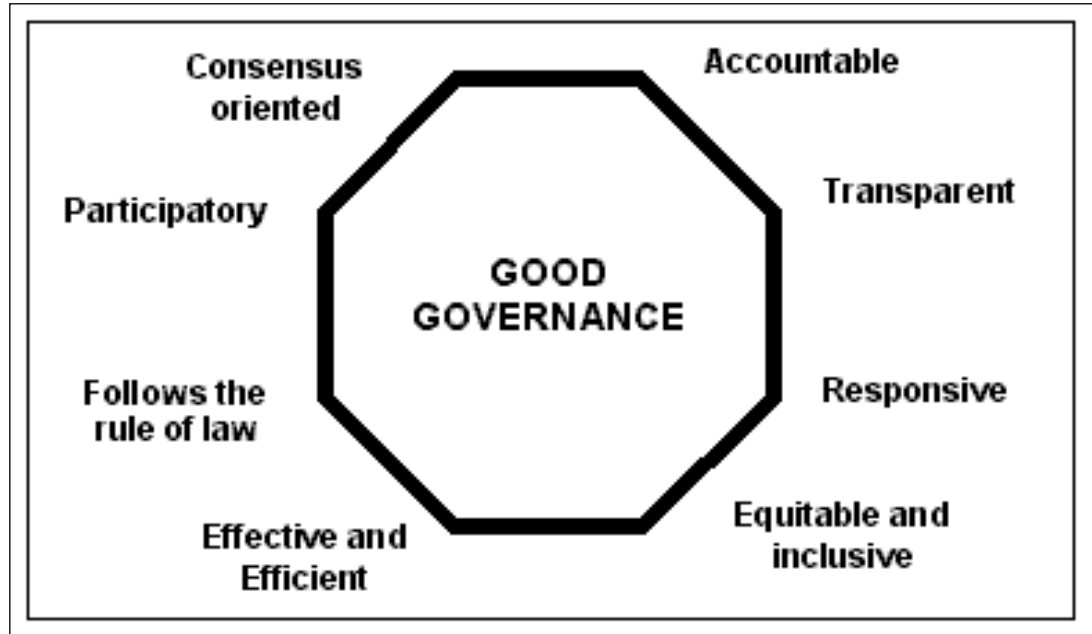
governance is sometimes referred to as good governance. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC) defines good governance as “*the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)*”<sup>109</sup>. Good governance therefore measures the extent to which the concept of democratic participation is ensured in the context of rule of law, transparency and responsiveness of government policies to the development needs and aspirations of its people. The participation of citizen organisations, media organisations and grassroots groups is ensured under good governance, and policy decisions are an amalgamation of government initiatives and input of such stakeholders. It is therefore consensus oriented. Good governance ensures equity in distribution of resources and participation at all levels of governance. For this to happen effectively, the government must ensure financial and political accountability for effectiveness and efficiency<sup>110</sup>. Figure 2 below extracted from the UNESCAP good governance frame is a diagrammatic representation of the characteristics of good governance.

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 2: Characteristics of Good Governance**



*Source: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP).*

Figure 2 above captures some of the key features that should be present in a system in order to ensure good governance. Key among these are accountability, transparency, responsiveness, equitable inclusion, effectiveness and efficiency of institutions and systems, supremacy of the rule of law, participation and consensus-oriented policy making processes.

Accountability is an essential element of every system, especially in governance where the government draws its powers and authority from the governed. Democratic and financial accountability to the governed is meant to ensure prudence in expenditure and moderation in the exercise of power in authority. In addition, governments must be transparent to their citizens through their regular reports on the state of the nation, budgets and budgetary returns. Good democratic governance in this frame expects governments to be responsive to the needs and aspirations of the governed, through

participatory consultations for informed policy decision-making.<sup>111</sup> In governance participation, equitable inclusion is a key factor that does not only ensure good governance, but also, and more importantly for this study, enhances understanding in diversity in the context of Ghana where there exist several social and ethnic groups coexisting within the same democratic boundary. This emphasises the definition of governance by the Philippines National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) as comprising mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights and obligations and mediate their differences.<sup>112</sup> In a multiethnic democracy, as in our case study of Ghana, the ability of the governance system to equitably include all essential facets of society and manage their expectations and differences (conflicts) is a primordial requirement for the measure of good governance.

It is expected that good governance will enable governments to truly ensure democracy through the achievement of goals that really tie in with the development aspirations of all citizen groups, thereby ensuring the true value of democracy and hence increase the trust of as many groups of people as possible in accepting democracy as a preferred system of government. It is only through this that system satisfaction will be engrained in the people. As people develop trust for democracy, they reject all forms of undemocratic governance, thereby ensuring support for democracy and long term democratic consolidation. This is expected to increase tolerance and acceptability across cleavage lines as citizens' interests converge under one trusted democratic system which citizens expect the government to serve their interests under the functioning of the democratic institutions, leading to peaceful democratisation and democratic consolidation.

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<sup>111</sup> Graham, J., Amos, B. & Plumptre, T. (2003). *Principles for Good Governance in the 21st Century*. An Institute of Good Governance (IOG) Policy Brief No.15. August 2003.

<sup>112</sup> UNDP (2004) *A Common View, A Common Journey, A Common Country: An Assessment of the Philippines*

## 2.3 Democratic Consolidation

*“If the shallow, troubled, and recently established democracies of the world do not move forward, to strengthen their political institutions, improve their democratic functioning, and generate more active, positive, and deeply felt commitments of support at the elite and mass levels, they are likely to move backward, into deepening pathologies that will eventually plunge their political systems below the threshold of electoral democracies or overturn them altogether.”*<sup>113</sup>

*“The meaning we ascribe to democratic consolidation...is context-dependent and perspective-dependent. It depends on the type of political regime we study and on the type of regime we want to avoid or to attain”*<sup>114</sup>

The above two quotations, the first from Diamond (1999, 2003) and the second from Schedler (1997) indicate both the need for consciousness in the political practice circles with the use of, and the difficulty in the political theoretical realm in defining, respectively, the term *democratic consolidation*.

Departing from this back to our definitions proposed earlier above in this thesis for *democracy* on the one hand and *good governance* on the other, we explicated the need for citizen consent, acceptably fair and free elections, and governance by the rule of law with input from across all ordinary and organised levels of society – thus electoral and functional democracy that satisfies the aspirations of the people being governed as well as global frameworks for governance. While many theorists attempt in their definition of democratic consolidation from various perspectives – wide or narrow, positive or negative, ideal or operational (Schedler, 1997) others also look at its definition from the stability or instability of democracy, or even the persistence or regression of democracy (Diamond, 1999, 2003).

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<sup>113</sup> Diamond, L. (2003). *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999). P.63.

<sup>114</sup> Schedler, A. (1997). Paper presented at the 1997 meeting of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA), Continental Plaza Hotel, Guadalajara, Mexico, 17–19 April 1997.

We propose to look at democratic consolidation in the light of citizen legitimation of the existing mode of governance (Diamond, 1999, 2003). Then towards the end we will try to situate the Ghanaian context in Schedler's continuum theory of democratic consolidation. In all this we will try to be as brief and probably (if we can) as concise as possible without investing too many lines for the theoretical arguments that underlie this contested concept of democratic consolidation. This for two main reasons. One, that we don't have the theoretical weight to go deep into these arguments; and two, the fact that the thesis is not centred on democratic consolidation even if the concept is relevant in its focus for the analysis of the issues in the thesis.

Writing on democratic consolidation, Diamond (1999) asserts that consolidation "...should be most usefully construed as the process of achieving broad and deep legitimation such that all significant political actors, at both the mass and elite levels, believe that the democratic regime is the most right and appropriate for their society, better than any realistic alternative they can imagine"<sup>115</sup>. This definition has certain common features with our consideration of democracy above in the light of Dahlsian theory of aggregation (1971), Pettit's deliberative model of democracy (1999), and Owen (2003) 's contestatory democracy. The basic idea is that the system of governance should conform to democratic norms to the extent that even when people disagree with procedures and outcomes they would contest their disagreements within the context of procedures and principles laid down for same by the democratic establishment of that polity<sup>116</sup>. At the elite level, political competitors accept democracy and its institutions, laws and procedures as "the only game in town and the only viable framework for governing the society and for advancing their own

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<sup>115</sup> Diamond, L. (1999). *Developing Democracy: Towards Consolidation*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999. P.64

<sup>116</sup> Owen, D. (2003). "Democracy". In Bellamy, R. and Mason, A. (Eds). *Political Concepts*. Manchester University Press, 2003.

interests”.<sup>117</sup> The masses should also have same belief in the democratic system, proven by their “behavioural consensus” (ibid) and cutting across class, ethnic, nationality, and other cleavages.

To this end, there is consolidation when the elite, the masses and civil society routinely and instinctively conform to the written and unwritten rules of the game “even when they conflict intensely”<sup>118</sup> with principled commitments to the democratic framework, with growth in trust and cooperation among political competitors, and socialisation of the general population to adopt democratic practice both in politics and civil society (Diamond, 1999).

As noted by Diamond (1999), democratic consolidation can concretely take place in two main dimensions and at three separate levels of political society. The two dimensions are norms and behaviour; manifesting at three levels of society namely the elite level, the organisational level, and the mass public level. The elite consists of the top decision-makers and political contesters and contestants as in the case of Ghanaian political elites and elders across all facets of the society. The organisational level consists of organisational leaders, political activists and opinion shapers in politics, government, the economy, and society (ibid). As in Ghana, this includes party activists and leadership of the major political parties, especially the NDC and the NPP that have since 1992 oscillated between opposition and government positions and have led the formulation and implementation of major political, economic and social decisions in the country for the past 25 years under Ghana’s fourth republic. This group of individuals wield disproportionate power and influence in society as compared to the ordinary individual at the lower levels of society. As such, they matter

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<sup>117</sup> Diamond, L. (1999, 2003).

<sup>118</sup> Rustow, Dunkwart (1970). Cited in Diamond, L. (1999).



most for the stability and consolidation of democracy both in their behaviour and in their beliefs.

Elite belief in the democratic system and their subsequent conforming behaviour is important. As noted by Dahl (1971), they are more likely to have elaborate systems of political beliefs, more likely to be guided in their actions by their beliefs, and they have more influence over political events. These two groups of individuals also serve as torch bearers in society in shaping the political culture and signalling what kinds of behaviour patterns are proper or improper – since most of them are seen as role models in their various communities<sup>119</sup>. When they are “contemptuous of the rules and norms of democracy, their followers or audiences are more likely to be as well” and when they believe in the system and behave in accordance with the rules and norms of the system their followers and audiences are more likely to do same.

Two main events in recent Ghanaian political discourse have demonstrated this; in 2009 after the Atta Mills-led NDC won the Presidential Election (December 2008), there was heightened tension and rampant political insults in the media, led by ministers, members of parliament and other political party supporters. The political atmosphere was characterised by constant accusations and counter accusations, constant insults and counter insults in the media, most especially radio and television. It took the then President to openly appeal to all political leaders to “cease fire” and unconditionally stop what he termed “the politics of insults” and appeal to their supporters to do same in the interest of peace and good democratic governance that would respect the dignity of the other even if they disagree on issues. Second, in the lead up to the 2016 general elections, the country saw various exposures of corruptions and demonstration of total incompetence and deliberate attempts on the part of the ruling NDC to rip the nation of its meagre resources. Most Ghanaians

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<sup>119</sup> Diamond, p.66

soon identified with these accusations and hurled insults of corruption and incompetence at the Mahama administration, sometimes with justifiable facts though. This clearly reflected in the about 54% and 44% of votes received by the NPP and the NDC respectively, thereby removing the NDC from power in an unprecedented election victory margin against an incumbent party since 1992.

Democratic consolidation demands that elite groups and organisations in their daily operations – formal and informal – respect the legitimacy of democratic institutions and should not regularly violate its constitutional norms, procedures, and laws. Even if we admit that all democracies have their own challenges, dissenting groups and unlawful individuals, these groups and individuals should not be many enough to be “politically relevant”<sup>120</sup>.

At the third and final level of the political society, consolidation is measured by the extent of mass support and approval for democracy as a system of governance above any other thinkable system. There is democratic consolidation when an overwhelming majority of the masses believe that democracy, more than any other form of government is the best form of government, in principle and in practice, for the achievement of their aspirations and act and behave to support the system. While the measure of such support is debatable, Diamond (1999) suggests two-thirds majority as a minimum threshold with between 70% and 75% support for democracy as a “more compelling indicator”, while the opposing view is held by only a small minority of not more than 15% of the population.

The difficulty in assessing the progress of a democratic system towards consolidation is a major challenge. What indicators should one be looking for when measuring the extent of consolidation of a democracy?

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid, p.67.

Huntington (1991) has suggested that democratic consolidation begins when an electoral democracy is established in a polity and the successive winning governments of freely contested election with free and fair results, eventually lose election, accept the results and freely transfers power to a newly elected party.<sup>121</sup> From this perspective, Ghana, in the year 2001, could be said to have achieved democratic consolidation after having changed from the Jerry John Rawlings' led NDC's two-term regime to the John Agyekum Kuffuour led NPP that won the December 2000 elections. Ghana, in fact, went beyond the 2001 change over to change power again from the NPP (after two 4-year terms in power) to the NDC that has ruled the country from 2009 to 2016, and another change over again from the NDC to the NPP after the NPP won the December, 2016 elections in a landslide victory.

While Huntington's change-over criterion of determining democratic consolidation seems easy to measure, other writers like Diamond find it a bit minimalist since electing a government to office does not necessarily demonstrate how well the elected government adheres to other democratic values beyond these elections. Diamond (1999) proposes indicators far beyond electoral roll-over and establishes a two-by-three, six-value, tabular indicators of democratic consolidation focusing on normative and behavioural indicators. We permit ourselves to borrow and reproduce this table here as a quick guide.

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<sup>121</sup> Huntington P. Samuel (1991). *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

**Table 2: Indicators of Democratic Consolidation**

Level	Norms and Beliefs	Behaviour
Elite	Most significant leaders of opinion, culture, business, and social organisations believe in the legitimacy of democracy. All major leaders of government and politically significant parties believe that democracy is the best form of government and that the rules and institutions of the constitutional system merit support. These beliefs are manifest in their public rhetoric, ideology, writings, and symbolic gestures	Leaders of government, state institutions, and significant political parties and interest groups respect each other's right to compete peacefully for power, eschew violence, and obey the laws, the constitution, and mutually accepted norms of political conduct. Elites avoid rhetoric that would incite their followers to violence, or illegal methods, political leaders do not attempt to use the military for political advantage.
Organisations	All politically significant parties, interest groups, and social movements endorse (or at a minimum, do not reject) in their charters, writings, and declarations the legitimacy of democracy and of the country's specific constitutional rules and institutions.	No politically significant party, interest group, movement, or institution seeks to overthrow democracy or employs violence, fraud, or other unconstitutional or antidemocratic methods as a deliberate tactic in pursuit of power or other political goals.
Mass public	More than 70 percent of the mass public consistently believes that democracy is preferable to any other form of government and that the democracy in place in the country is the most suitable form of government for the country. No more than 15 percent of the public actively prefers an authoritarian form of government.	No antidemocratic movement, party, or organisation enjoys a significant mass following, and ordinary citizens do not routinely use violence, fraud, or other illegal or unconstitutional methods to express their political preferences or pursue their political interests.

*Source: Diamond, Larry (1999). "Developing Democracy: Towards Consolidation". P.69.*

Table 2 above provides an explanation of normative and behavioural expectations of the elite, organisations and the mass public of every democracy if that democracy is to be called a *consolidated democracy*.

Another interesting perspective for the understanding of the concept of consolidated democracy is Schedler's teleological analysis of the concept of democratic

consolidation. Schedler (1997) produces a four-stage continuum of democratic consolidation. It starts looking, first, at the type of government in the polity in question at the time of (what I call) the baseline, and its consolidatory goals looking into the future in terms of strengthening democratic tendencies in governance. Thus, the linear continuum starts with authoritarianism from the left hand side of the continuum as the less desired (negative) point, through electoral democracy, liberal democracy, to advance democracy on the far right hand side of the continuum as the most desired (positive) point.<sup>122</sup> What constitutes democratic consolidation depends, therefore, on which of the four points on the continuum the polity in question finds itself and what its concerns are in terms of democratic challenges and where they look forward to as a country to reach in order to be satisfied that their identified democratic challenges have been removed. In the Ghanaian context, we can take the military government that existed before the coming into force of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution as the baseline. The continuum then travels through electoral democracy starting with the December 1992 General Elections to the current stage of democratic governance in the country where there has been many changeovers that witnessed the transfer of power from one political party to another.

To Schedler (1997), the two neighbouring middle categories – electoral democracy, and liberal democracy – represent the empirical referents and starting points of all debate on democratic consolidation. In narrative terms, authoritarianism forms the outer negative horizon both electoral and liberal democracies try to escape from while advanced democracy remains the outer positive horizon both try to approach. At the same time, both electoral and liberal democracy constitute “mutual normative horizons for each other as electoral democracy strives to reach liberal democracy to attain consolidation, liberal democracy strives to avoid democratic relapse into

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<sup>122</sup> Schedler, Andreas (1997). *Concepts of Democratic Consolidation*. Paper prepared for delivery at the 1997 meeting of the Latin American Studies Association (LASA), Continental Plaza Hotel, Guadalajara, Mexico, 17–19 April 1997. P.10.

electoral democracy.”<sup>123</sup> As such, they both appear as “proximate horizons” of attainment and avoidance, each one of the other, reciprocally.<sup>124</sup>

“Those scholars who look (fearfully) from electoral or liberal democracies to authoritarianism equate democratic consolidation with avoiding an authoritarian regression, a “quick death” of democracy. Those who look (hopefully) from electoral or liberal democracies to advanced democracies equate democratic consolidation with democratic deepening, with advances in the quality of democracy. Those who look (with concern) from liberal democracies to electoral democracies equate democratic consolidation with avoiding a “slow death” of democracy, the erosion of some fundamental democratic features. And those who look (with impatience) from electoral democracies to liberal democracies equate democratic consolidation with completing democracy, with repairing its basic defects”<sup>125</sup>

The relevance of Schedler’s continuum theory to our work here is to the extent that it enables us to make an attempt at situating the Ghanaian democracy on this four-point linear continuum. Even if our explanation for such positioning may not be satisfactory, it gives an idea of the possible position of Ghana’s democracy and what may be its consolidation proximate of avoidance and/or achievement.

Somewhere above in this consolidation discussion we mentioned that Ghana has already passed the Huntington consolidation milestone of two-turn-overs since 2008 with six (fairly) free and (fairly) fair multiparty elections under universal adult suffrage. Since 1992, Ghana has had seven democratic regimes with the December 2016 elections registered as another milestone in the democratic annals of the country. So,

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid, p.10.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid

<sup>125</sup> Ibid. p.15.

clearly, by the Huntington measure, Ghana has gone past the consolidation milestone. But how do we transpose this success onto the Schedler continuum? From the Schedlerian perspective, Ghana is surely not an authoritarian nation. The dilemma may be whether we can freely say Ghana is a liberal democracy or whether one can cautiously say it is an advanced democracy? We will, for obvious reasons, consider that Ghana is not an advanced democracy. We will not go into the debate of what constitutes an advanced democracy. We can simply say that a democracy of 25 years old today (2017) cannot be said to be an advanced democracy. This is because the age of a democracy, undoubtedly, has an influence on the levels of assimilation of the populations and their institutionalisation of democratic culture. After all, polyarchy according to Guillermo O'Donnell, is the “happy results of centuries-long processes...”<sup>126</sup> If we consider countries such as the UK and the United States that have practised “democracy” since the eighteenth centuries, they cannot even today, after three hundred years of democratic practice, claim to have no challenges. Some of them still have issues of exclusion, racial hatred, security dilemmas, cleavage violence and economic insecurity. Most of the countries considered as advanced democracies today are, therefore, not on a rosy glide on democratic and development accolades.

Ghana, despite the many successes, is still faced with many democratic challenges including accusations of vote rigging (1992; 2004; 2012), political and electoral violence (2000, 2007/2008)<sup>127</sup>, troubling violent interethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts<sup>128</sup>, political violence<sup>129</sup>, persistent economic and infrastructural

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<sup>126</sup> O'Donnell, Guillermo A. (1996). *Illusions About Consolidation*. Journal of Democracy. Vol. 7 Issue 2. 1996, pp. 34-51. 18

<sup>127</sup> Tsikata, D. & Seini, W. (2004). *Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana*. CRISE Working Paper 5, November 2004. Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford. p.29

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, p.30.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. p.28

inequalities<sup>130</sup>, among many others. All these threaten the quality of democracy, state security, and the very existence of the Ghanaian democratic state. But of course, as indicated earlier, every democracy has its own challenges. The question, therefore, is not about the challenges but how the country constitutionally and culturally resolves these challenges without recourse to violence.

Among its peers in West Africa, however, Ghana is one of the most peaceful democracies in the West Africa region and comparatively stands high in democratic measures. Popular support for democracy among the masses in Ghana reached a high of 81% in 2012.<sup>131</sup> This is above the 70-75% threshold for consolidation as prescribed by Diamond<sup>132</sup> in his prescriptions reviewed above. In addition, 92% of the population in Ghana support elections as means of selecting leaders, while 74% indicate their satisfaction for the performance of the democratic regime in Ghana<sup>133</sup>. Further, 78% of the population believed Ghana has an extensive democratic system, involving all citizens and groups that matter. In 2005, Ghana was the fifth least corrupt country in Africa, the second country in the world with the happiest population, and the first country in Africa with the best public sector management<sup>134</sup>. The issues of contested election results are handled in the law courts (as in 2013 for example). The legal system, a key constitutional and democratic institution, is widely recognised and used in Ghana for contesting disputes and constitutional breaches of individuals and government institutions.

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid, p. 48.

<sup>131</sup> Afrobarometer, 2012 survey. Found at [www.afrobarometer](http://www.afrobarometer)

<sup>132</sup> Diamond, L. (1999). P.68.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid

<sup>134</sup> Jacquemot, Pierre (2015). *Chroniques Africaines: Kenya, Ghana, RD Congo. L'Harmattan (2015)*.p.95.



All these are indication that there is some appreciable level of acceptance of democratic principles by Ghanaians, both the masses and the political elite in Ghana. It also demonstrates a democratic system that functions to the satisfaction and expectations of its citizens. We cannot, therefore, consider Ghana among the “pseudo-democracies”<sup>135</sup> of many African countries in the 1990s. Such “pseudo-democracies” were said to have civilian regimes with flawed multiparty elections that do not meet the minimal criteria for electoral democracy<sup>136</sup>.

The essence of the above discussions is to distil the fact that consolidation may not just be measured by any individual criterion. One can therefore say that democratic consolidation is more of a qualitative measure of democracy. In the sense that there must be democracy before it can be consolidated. Following, as such, a probably sequential<sup>137</sup> path, if there is any, from a bad or undesirable quality of democracy to a good, better and best form of it. By this, we may offer to say that for the purpose of this work, there is democratic consolidation:

*when a democracy moves from an electoral democracy to institutionalised democratic norms and practices, and makes the majority of the people in the given polity (in both formal and informal, organised and individual levels) accept not only the norms and principles of democracy but also willingly invest their time, resources and attention to participate in the democratic process and ensure that such participation adds to inform considerations in the decision-making process and daily functioning of the electoral government.*

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<sup>135</sup> Staffan I. Lindberg (2003). 'It's Our Time to "Chop"': Do Elections in Africa Feed Neo-Patrimonialism rather than Counter-Act It? *Democratization* 10:2, 121-140.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, p.3.

On Ghana, the current thesis discusses democratic consolidation within the context of internal violent conflicts in the country, and how these conflicts have the (un)likelihood of impacting negatively on the quality and sustainability of democracy in Ghana.

For the purpose of this work, we proceed from the minimal procedural perspective<sup>138</sup> definition of democratic consolidation which ties in with most aspects of our proposed definition above. This perspective originates from Schumpeter and later elaborated by Dahl in his conceptual exposition on ‘polyarchy’. It requires not only extensive political competition and participation, but also the practical enjoyment of political rights and the existence and recognition of civil liberties that are effectively enforced in the political system.

These indicators are measured in the democratic system using Dahl and Diamond’s institutional characteristics of a polyarchy and democratic consolidation respectively. The former was reviewed in our few pages on democracy, and the latter in this very discussion on democratic consolidation. However, it is clear that the context of democratisation largely affects the ability and speed of the process of consolidation. In multi-ethnic societies like Ghana where democratisation is seen basically as a problem, how do such multiethnic and social characteristics affect consolidation? Ghana’s multiethnic feature is one key characteristic that should be considered at every level when measuring how far the country has come in its democratic efforts, since ethnicity sometimes plays an important role in the political culture of the country.

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid. p.6.

## 2.4 Ethnicity and Ethnic Group

Ethnicity is a very significant element of everyday interaction of societies, as in Ghana, just as in most ethnically significant societies. Ethnicity is a debatable term and its definition may vary from one theoretician to another. Etymologically, the term “ethnic comes from the Greek word *ethnos*, also originating from *ethnikos*, which means to heathen; or pagan<sup>139</sup> used in then Greece to describe the people who did not yet participate in the Christian faith.<sup>140</sup> In Classical Greek, the term took on a meaning comparable to the concept now expressed by "ethnic group", mostly translated as "nation, people".<sup>141</sup>

Around c.a. 480 BC, Herodotus (8.144.2) gave an account of what defined Greek (Hellenic) ethnic identity in his time, enumerating shared descent (“*homaimon*” - *of the same blood*), shared language (“*homoglōsson*” - *speaking the same language*)<sup>142</sup>, shared sanctuaries and sacrifices (“*theōn hidrumata te koina kai thusiai*”)<sup>143</sup>, and shared customs (“*ēthea homotropa*” - *customs of like fashion*)<sup>144</sup>. From this ancient Herodotian Greek perspective, ethnicity has to do with shared traits of ancestry, language, heritage and tradition as well as customs that have a more or less natural leaning to its formation. This conception of ethnicity was later shared by Clifford Geertz in his primordialist

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<sup>139</sup> R. William (1976):119; cited in Eriksen, 1993:3-4; cited in: Mohamed Mustafa Bin Ishak (1999). *From Plural Society to Bangsa Malaysia: Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Politics of Nation-Building in Malaysia*. PhD Thesis, The University of Leeds Department of Sociology and Social Policy & Department of Politics, July 1999.

<sup>140</sup> Wikipedia definition of ethnicity, under “Terminology”. Sourced at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic\\_group#Terminology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_group#Terminology)

<sup>141</sup> *ibid*

<sup>142</sup> Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, on Perseus. Found in Wikipedia. Definition of ethnicity at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic\\_group#cite\\_note-8](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_group#cite_note-8)

<sup>143</sup> Polinskaya, I. (2010). "Shared sanctuaries and the gods of others: On the meaning of 'common' in Herodotus 8.144", in: R. Rosen & I. Sluiter (eds.), *Valuing others in Classical Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 43-70. Cited in: *opcit.*

<sup>144</sup> Herodotus, 8.144.2: "The kinship of all Greeks in blood and speech, and the shrines of gods and the sacrifices that we have in common, and the likeness of our way of life."; Athena S. Leoussi, Steven Grosby, *Nationalism and Ethnosymbolism: History, Culture and Ethnicity in the Formation of Nations*, Edinburgh University Press, 2006, p. 115 Cited in Wikipedia, historical origins of the definition of ethnicity. Found at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic\\_group#cite\\_note-13](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_group#cite_note-13)

conception of ethnic groups which formed and maintained around *human beings* such as blood ties, language, territory, and cultural differences embedded in their experience of the world and society<sup>145</sup> (see also Gordon, 1964, 27)<sup>146</sup>. In as much as the Geertz primordial concept of ethnicity was based on natural ties, the second aspect of it emphasises on human experience in society, thereby making ethnicity an element of human experience. We can say, therefore, that the experiences of humans in society is what leads them to organise in some ethnic groups for the achievement of certain goals or for the prevention of an undesirable outcome if they were not organised in that manner. This latter aspect of Geertz's concept ties in with Webber's<sup>147</sup> beliefs that ethnicity or ethnic groups were a social construct artificially created by humans in society, and based on the subjective belief of a shared community ("*Gemeinschaft*"). To him, groups did not result from this belief in shared *Gemeinschaft* but rather the groups created that belief. He asserts that group formation resulted from the drive to monopolise power and status in society for political advantage<sup>148</sup>. Later writers have defined ethnicity on the basis of its social and political interactive significance to the individual or group that finds meaning in it. McKay and Lewins equally argued on the importance of interactional aspect of ethnicity and ethnic groups on the basis of Stryker's<sup>149</sup> conception of a *group* as a system of social

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<sup>145</sup> Smith, Anthony D. (1999). "Myths and memories of the Nation". Oxford University Press. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic\\_group#cite\\_ref-smith13\\_30-2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_group#cite_ref-smith13_30-2)

<sup>146</sup> Gordon, M. (1964). *Assimilation in American Life*. New York: Oxford University Press. Cited in: McKay, James and Lewins, Frank (1978) 'Ethnicity and the ethnic group: a conceptual analysis and reformulation'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4 October, pp 412-27

<sup>147</sup> Max Weber: Cited in: Banton, Michael. (2007) "Weber on Ethnic Communities: A critique", *Nations and Nationalism* 13 (1), 2007, 19–35.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid

<sup>149</sup> Stryker, S. (1973) 'Fundamental Principles of Social Interaction'. In Smelser, N. (ed.) *Sociology. An Introduction* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition.), N. York: Wiley. Cited in: Mohamed Mustafa Bin Ishak (1999). *From Plural Society to Bangsa Malaysia: Ethnicity and Nationalism in the Politics of Nation-Building in Malaysia*. PhD Thesis, The University of Leeds Department of Sociology and Social Policy & Department of Politics, July 1999.

<sup>149</sup> Wikipedia definition of ethnicity, under "Terminology". Sourced at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic\\_group#Terminology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_group#Terminology)

interactions, without interactions there cannot be any group<sup>150</sup>. Mckay and Lewins therefore conceived ethnic groups as stemming from two basic elements; *interaction* and *shared ethnic traits*.

While the literature on ethnicity and ethnic groups presents a myriad of arguments on their conception, we wish, for the purpose of this thesis, to focus on some salient aspects of Mckay and Lewins conceptual analysis of these terms. This is because their conception of the terms of *ethnicity* and *ethnic group* gives us better grounds for analysing some manifestations of ethnicity that are evidenced in the social, political and conflict phenomena of Ghana. These specifics relating to the Ghanaian situation will be dealt with later in this section. But first, let us look at the crux of Mckay and Lewins conceptual reformulations that interest us.

The original basis of Mckay and Lewins' work was the belief that much of the work on ethnicity and ethnic groups lacks conceptual precision<sup>151</sup>. They exposed these conceptual definition problems in three axes: (1) that there are instances where the term *ethnic identity* is attributed to members of ethnic groups which are, to them, in reality ethnic *aggregates*, *ethnic categories* or *ethnic populations*; (2) that there are cases where *ethnicity* is used to denote members of ethnic groups or ethnic categories which, in the view of Mckay and Lewins, should be called *ethnic awareness* rather than *ethnicity*; and (3) that the term *ethnicity* has been used in instances where they (Mckay and Lewins) think should be called *ethnic consciousness*.

The first misconception constitutes defining as an ethnic group an “aggregate of people who can be classified into specific “groups” because they possess “objective

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<sup>150</sup> McKay, James and Lewins, Frank (1978) 'Ethnicity and the ethnic group: a conceptual analysis and reformulation'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4 October, pp 412-27

<sup>151</sup> McKay, J. & Lewins, F. (1978). Ethnicity and Ethnic Group: A Conceptual Analysis and Reformulation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. Volume 1, Number 4, October 1978.

(as opposed to subjective) characteristics such as religion, race, national origin or some combination of these characteristics. Some of such characteristics of “common origin” may be common to people across nations and beyond country or continental boundaries and extends to categories composed of several “ethnic groups”. For example, Spanish-speaking groups in the United States may include Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and other Latin Americans as well as Spanish residents in the United States<sup>152</sup>. In the Ghanaian situation, a sample of Hausa-Speaking groups in Accra for example may be made up of Nigerians, Malians, Nigeriens, and other tribes from Northern Ghana that have lived in the “Zongo” communities but for lack of common language, have adopted Hausa for communication and finally do not speak their languages anymore. By this, the possession of some similar socio-demographic characteristics does not automatically constitute a social group or an ethnic group and the other way round<sup>153</sup>. Even if the assumption that sharing some demographic characteristics could make you an ethnic group, it does not sufficiently tell the extent to which a member of this group is committed to it<sup>154</sup>. One’s religious affiliation for example does not tell the “degree of religiosity” of the members of that religion.

Talking of degrees of ethnicity re-emphasises the salience of levels of interaction in the conception of ethnicity. Ethnicity, according to Mckay and Lewins, should therefore be conceived and defined in terms of the values and sentiments which members share. This defines a level of consciousness of members of the group.<sup>155</sup> Such level of affective consciousness is conceived and expressed in two types of *ethnic*

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid

<sup>155</sup> Schermerhorn, N. (1974). *Ethnic Identity and Assimilation: The Polish and American Community*. New York: Praeger. Cited in: Ibid.

*identity*; thus, *ethnic awareness* and *ethnic consciousness* and further complemented by the *intensity* of these two elements of awareness and consciousness<sup>156</sup>.

#### 2.4.1 Ethnic Awareness

Ethnic awareness is the self-awareness and identification of an individual with others on the basis that the person knows s/he possesses certain ethnic traits<sup>157</sup> which are no more meaningful to him/her than his or her other cultural, physical, social or territorial characteristics that s/he shares with others. Ethnic awareness may be manifested in the individual's association with and/or interaction in organisations with motivations that emanate from certain cultural, social, physical or territorial commonness. This source of identification is only one of a number of many sources of identification to the individual. Ethnic awareness is considered as a "community sub-type"<sup>158</sup> which is closely related to other community phenomena such as "family, caste, or residential community" as equally possible sources of personal identification<sup>159</sup>. Individual's identification with ethnic, cultural (and structural) factors – *ethnic awareness* – may vary by ethnic groups (Driedger, 1975: 157) and group members' identification or awareness emanate from factors which do not entail group organisation or group interaction with the same people or same organisations with which individuals from one ethnic group interact or identify with. In contrast, the individual's level of ethnic awareness may not represent the general level of awareness of a given ethnic group. The extent to which each individual pushes his or her level

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<sup>156</sup> Opcit.

<sup>157</sup> McKay and Lewins reference Abramson (1976) and Spicer (1971) to contextualise *ethnic trait* as referring to symbolic element(s) which epitomises the cultural and social distinctiveness of "peoplehood". Examples of such were given as physical contiguity, language or dialect forms, religious affiliation, nationality, phenol-typical features or some combination of these (Schermerhon, 1970: 12), that may be real or fictitious, achieved or ascribed, and changed or supplanted without decreasing the social solidarity of the ethnic group (Abramson 1976; Francis 1947; Spicer 1971). Cited in McKay and Lewins 1978)

<sup>158</sup> Francis, E (1947). "The Nature of Ethnic Group.": *American Journal of Sociology* 52(5): 393-400

<sup>159</sup> McKay and Lewins 1978).

of awareness and what s/he is ready to do, sacrifice or gain for the group to which he belongs determines the individual's level of ethnic consciousness.

#### 2.4.2 Ethnic Consciousness

Ethnic consciousness is the individual's manifestation of strong sentiments about their uniqueness. Unlike ethnic awareness that constitutes an individual's awareness and demonstration of elementary feeling of solidarity and empathy with similar associations and individuals, ethnic conscious individuals manifest a strong feeling of differentiation between them and their group and other individuals and groups that they deem to differ from based on the specific characteristics that form the basis of their awareness. A "we" versus "them" mentality exists between them and other groups and individuals<sup>160</sup> they perceive to be from the "other" group. With this mentality, social organisation, conception, development and pursuit of political goals is directed in competition with and against the other, and there is more likely to be tension and conflict between these individuals and groups. All resources and efforts of ethnically conscious groups are directed towards the achievement of group interest<sup>161</sup>, with a struggle to ensure that the other is denied as much as possible whatever resources exist in society.

It is this manifestation of ethnicity that we see in political organisations that are characterised by multiple ethnically conscious groups as we find in Ghana. This conception of ethnicity helps us understand within the Ghanaian context that ethnic awareness alone could not have led to the numerous ethnicisation of the Ghanaian political process as well as the converse politicisation of local ethnic processes. In Ghana, political activities and governance is ethnicised as much as cultural and

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.; Goering 1971; Connor 1972, 1973

<sup>161</sup> Glazer, N and Manihan, D (1975). "Introduction" pp. 1-26. In N. Glazer and Moynihan (Eds) (1975). *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Cited in McKay and Lewins (1978).



traditional ethnic systems and practices are politicised. The system of chieftaincy which is governed by rules and norms specific to each cultural and ethnic group is politicised to the extent that the chieftaincy system and ethnicity have become tools of political achievement and development aspirations. Groups identified along ethnic lines consciously organise into interest and pressure groups<sup>162</sup> with interest that go beyond just awareness to the conscious seeking and gaining of benefits from political and economic resources for their individual ethnic groups and the struggle to hold political power. In Ghana, who becomes a local Assembly representative, the District Chief Executive, the Member of Parliament, the Regional Minister, the Vice President, the President and many other political office holder are, generally, not contested for on the basis of competence and efficiency but on what ethnic group the person belongs. This is characteristic of Lyman and Douglas' assertion that in ethnically plural societies, as in Ghana, "ethnic relations usually translate themselves into sets and series of strategic and tactical situations played out over time as contending ethnic groups seek to alter their perspective statuses *vis-a-vis* one another"<sup>163</sup>. Ethnicity or ethnic identity is used by individuals and groups as "...a manoeuvre or stratagem in working out their own chances"<sup>164</sup> and life opportunities as well as an assertive instrument over those they consider as "others". Within the context of ethnic consciousness, as manifests in Ghana, ethnic groups exist as ethnic group not only because they have culturally similar histories and origins accompanied by other traits, but more importantly because of the salience or strategic importance

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid. Cited in McKay and Lewins (1978)

<sup>163</sup> Lyman, S and Douglas, W. (1973). Ethnicity: Strategies of Collective and Individual Impression Management. *Social Research* 40(2): 344-365. Cited in McKay and Lewins (1978).

<sup>164</sup> Ibid, p.350.

of ethnic consciousness *vis-a-vis* the wider social milieu.<sup>165</sup> As Chabal (2009:43)<sup>166</sup> puts it, “in African social relations individuals *conceive themselves* (emphasis mine) in terms of the multiple and multifaceted relations which link them with others within ever-expanding and overlapping concentric spheres of identity”. Alongside belonging, ethnic groupings give identity to people within the context of nationalism in most parts of Africa including Ghana<sup>167</sup>.

Within this Ghanaian context, our definition of ethnicity and ethnic group will not be limited to the possession of similar or same physical, cultural, linguistic or other traits but will focus more on the awareness and consciousness concepts of ethnicity and ethnic groups. The focus on the awareness and consciousness conceptualisation helps us in two different ways.

One, while in some regions and geographical areas of Ghana cultural ties define ethnicity, in other regions consciousness or awareness goes beyond cultural ties, but at the same time certain traits and motivations like religion and language can unite groups from different regions and ethnic origins to align and work on similar goals and aspirations – cross-cutting cleavages. An example is Nima in Accra or Moshie-Zongo in Kumasi where we have tribes from mostly the three Northern regions of Ghana, living together, with mostly Hausa as a major medium of communication. In these communities, one finds various levels of mobilisation, segregation and unification, with the two major elements of awareness being religion (mostly Christian and Muslim) and the sense of “northern-ness or “northernhood”. While the sense of

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<sup>165</sup> McKay and Lewins (1978). Ethnicity and the Ethnic Group: A Conceptual Analysis and Reformulation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies Volume 1 Number 4*, October 1978.

<sup>166</sup> Cited in: UNDP-Ghana National Peace Council (2012) Report on Conflict Mapping in Northern Ghana. P.35.

<sup>167</sup> UNDP-Ghana National Peace Council (2012) Report on Conflict Mapping in Northern Ghana. P.35.

northernhood is invoked when in competition with indigenous groups and individuals like the Ashanti in Kumasi or the Ga in Accra, the sense of religion awareness/consciousness is invoked when in competition among themselves. In this circumstance, employing cultural ties to define ethnicity in Ghana may not be generally applicable to cover these two different situations. However, for the fact that each of these situations can be understood as different levels of awareness and/or consciousness, the awareness and consciousness conceptual definition can apply to both situations.

Two, most of the internal conflicts in Ghana are motivated not just by groups with cultural ties, but differing pursuit of a “we” and “they” divide where groups and individual activities *consciously* perceive, plan and implement strategies to debilitate the “other”, or gain certain social, political, or economic advantages over the “other” perceived not to be part of the “us”. In these conflicts, the existing data reveal that we do not solely have “interethnic” conflicts that occur between groups of differing cultural descent and history, but also “intra-ethnic” conflicts that occur within same ethnic groups between gates, families and other divisions that are invoked to give reason to differentiation. The use of the awareness and consciousness conceptualisation of ethnicity and ethnic groups will permit us to cover these converse conflict phenomena in Ghana. Consequently, an ethnic group is a group of individuals that come together motivated by a level of *ethnic awareness* in the individuals to organise and interact with one another.

Ethnicity is the exhibition of any level of *ethnic consciousness* in ones activities, conception of life, social organisation, political pursuits and participation, conflict formulation and resolution as well as interaction with other persons both within and outside his/her community. I consider secondary, any cultural, historical, genetic, traditional characteristic that may form the basis of identification. This is because such characteristics are primary to every people and society and therefore exist everywhere in the world. However, the salience and uniqueness individuals and groups attach to these characteristics is what gives that sense of *difference* between “them” and “others”.

In sum, the term of reference that shall be used in the present study is that ethnicity is considered as an aspect of social relationships between two or more groups in which group attachment and cohesiveness may stem from several common or shared identifications such as descent, historical ties, and culture; and they coexist and compete within the boundaries of a single territorial state or political authority, but may seek, have and maintain alliances with other individuals they consider as having similar characteristics and motivations residing outside the nation. It is within this framework that ethnic political mobilisation (*consciousness*) usually emerges, for the control and management of power resources of the state, in which ethnicity serves as a device for the pursuit of group goals through competition and interaction for the ethnically conscious, just as for political entrepreneurs who play on these sentiments of awareness and consciousness, to the extent that, to the politician, the group concerned is of political salience<sup>168</sup> to him/her, or s/he identifies with any one of the groups. In many cases, it is the penchant pursuit and manifestations of identity consciousness that leads to inter-group, inter-personal, and inter-communal conflicts in societies.

## 2.5 Conflict

A conflict is “*A social situation in which a minimum of two actors strive to acquire at the same time an available set of scarce resources*”.<sup>169</sup> According to Awedoba (2009), conflict can be described as a relationship between two or more parties that centres on differences, disagreement on some issue of common interest or concern, divergence, incompatibilities, clash of wills and the like; it may involve antagonism and

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<sup>168</sup> Posner N. Daniel (2004). The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi. *American Political Science Review* Vol. 98, No. 4 November 2004

<sup>169</sup> Wallensteen, P. (2007). Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System. *SAGE Publications*, 2007

opposition. The parties to a conflict may be individuals or groups or collective entities that may be in contact physically or naturally or that may share the same space<sup>170</sup>.

Conflict is therefore the outcome of any behaviour or action undertaken by one party against the other in a bid to undo his or her competitor in a contest of interests or resources desired by both parties at the same time. There are two main forms of conflict as espoused by Galtung (1969)<sup>171</sup>. Conflicts can either be violent or nonviolent. Conflicts are non-violent when they do not negatively affect the parties or third parties involved in the conflict such that they cannot achieve their aspirations and potentials. Violent conflict is seen as a state of conflict where parties and/or standers-by are negatively affected by the conflict.<sup>172</sup> In our reference to conflicts here in this thesis, the term *conflict* is used to refer to violent forms of manifestations of any kind between or among individuals, groups or communities with the aim of inflicting direct or indirect harm to the opponent or reducing the opponent's chances of enhancing their interests and aspirations.

Whilst, in general terms, conflicts are seen as inevitable social phenomena<sup>173</sup>, violent conflicts are undesirable for the development of society. Violence can be in the form of direct violence where people physically attack one another by use of violent means and arms; or structural where institutions are embedded with negativities that affect human life and prevent people from achieving their potentials and aspirations; or cultural where direct and structural violence is either justified or not considered to be

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<sup>170</sup> Awedoba, A. K. *et al* (2009). An ethnographic study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts: Towards a Sustainable Peace: Key Aspects of Past, Present and Impending Conflicts in Northern Ghana and Mechanisms for their Address. *Sub-Saharan Publishers*, Accra, Ghana

<sup>171</sup> Galtung, J. (1969). *Violence, Peace, and Peace Research*. International Peace Research Institute, Oslo

<sup>172</sup> Ibid

<sup>173</sup> Coser, L. (1956). *The Functions of Social Conflict*. New York: The Free Press, 1956.

wrong.<sup>174</sup> In history, direct violence, which we otherwise refer to here as violent conflicts is what is mostly felt, assessed and discussed in development and political circles. World War I and II, wars in Cambodia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Liberia are examples of violent conflicts.

In Ghana, violent conflicts of national scale have not occurred in its recent past, however, many communal conflicts have occurred and keep occurring at various levels of the Ghanaian society. Examples include the Yendi conflict, the Bawku conflict, the Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo conflict, the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, and the Osu stool conflicts among others. Most of these conflicts have ethnic description as they mostly occur and are limited to a given ethnic group (intra-ethnic), or between two or more ethnic groups (interethnic).

Ethnic conflicts are conflicts that occur when the parties to a conflict are organised within a framework of ethnically conscious lines and pursue conflicts aimed at a similarly ethnically consciously organised group of people who consider themselves and their objectives and aspirations to be in difference and threatened by the other. Ethnic conflicts can be either intra-ethnic or interethnic. A conflict is intra-ethnic when the parties are from the same ethnic group but divided along other lines of interest and objectives, and having differences over a particular issue. Interethnic conflicts occur when the parties to the conflict are from two distinct ethnic groups divided by unrelated historical, cultural, linguistic, traditional or physical characteristics. In Ghana, there are manifestations of both types of conflicts in many areas of the country. Some intra-ethnic conflicts include the Abudu/Andani conflict in Dagbon in the Northern Region and the Ga stool conflict in the Ga State of the Greater Accra Region. Some interethnic conflicts include the Mamprusi/Kusasi conflict in Bawku in the Upper East Region and the Konkomba/Nanumba conflict

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<sup>174</sup> Opcit

that occurred in the 1990s in the Northern Region of Ghana. Ethnic conflicts are known to be common in plural societies and theorists of plural society see interethnic conflicts as major threats to democracy and democratic consolidation in plural societies (Dahl, 1971; Lipset, 1963; Dahl, 1998; Furnivall, 1948)). This is because the various segments of the plural society would pursue their group interests at the detriment of other groups' interests, thereby dividing the society on ethnic fault lines that ignore the common political good, making it difficult to build political consensus for democratic governance (Dahl, 1971). Opposed interests in obtaining scarce resources promote competition. Conversely, positively interdependent goals facilitate cooperation. Intergroup competition promotes intragroup morale, cohesiveness and cooperation as people identify with their in-group against the out-group (Vinacke, 1964<sup>175</sup>; Fiedler, 1967<sup>176</sup>; Kalin and Marlowe, 1968)<sup>177</sup>. Intergroup conflicts of interest may create intergroup antagonism, but also enhances identification with, and positive attachment to the intra-group (Coser, 1956; Tajfel & Turner, 1979)<sup>178</sup>. In such instances, political organisation is ethnic-based and interest negotiation with out-groups is hard-lined with no or little compromises. Compromises, however, emerge when interests coincide and the only basis for achieving such interests is by cooperation. It is at this moment that conflict becomes integrative and less adversarial as individuals engage in intergroup collaboration for a common purpose. Finally, interest cooperation is essential for *community* relationship building in every political society. Without this, society remains society without communal commonalities and

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<sup>175</sup> Vinacke, W. E. (1964). Intra-group power differences, strategy, and decision in inter-triad competition. *Sociometry*, 27, 25-40.

<sup>176</sup> Fiedler, F. E. (1967). *Theory of Leadership Effectiveness*. McGraw-Hill Inc. US (October 1967)

<sup>177</sup> Kalin, R. and Marlowe, D. (1968). The Effects of Intergroup Competition, Personal Drinking Habits and Frustration in Intra-group Cooperation. *Proc. 76th Ann. Conv. A.P.A.*, 3, 405-406.

<sup>178</sup> Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin, & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-37). Monterey, CA Brooks/Cole

political cohesion, thereby negatively affecting positive political organisation and governance of that society.

## **2.6 Society**

According to Landis (1977) a society is a continuing number of people living in a specific area who are relatively organised, self-sufficient, and independent and share a common culture<sup>179</sup>. The number of people in a society vary from one society to the other but in all there should be permanence and continuity in the society, as well as organised with systems and institutions that structure patterns of interaction (Ibid). These interactions create a web of social relationships established among the people. These social relationships may be direct or indirect, organised or unorganized, conscious or unconscious<sup>180</sup>. A society has a geographical area within which the vast majority of the social interactions take place. Members of a society, because of their cultural beliefs, traditions, habits and norms, have unique characteristics that distinguish them from other societies (Landis, 1977).

Society is an abstract conception of a network of social relationships which cannot be seen or touched, but conceived within a territorial limit, in which the occupants may have or may not have coinciding interests and common objectives. Both common and diverse interests are present in society. We can think of the American society, the French society or the Ghanaian society. The Ghanaian society can be differentiated from the Togolese society by its territorial, linguistic and cultural characteristics. However, apart from territory, language and other cultural characteristics, certain features may resemble or be similar, yet still they exist as different societies. A society is differentiated from others by certain characteristics which may not be absolutely

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<sup>179</sup> Landis, Judson R. *Sociology. Concepts & Characteristics*. 10th ed. (C) Oct 1997, pap, text ed. 37.95 (0.534.52560-s) Wadsworth Pub.

<sup>180</sup> <http://www.preservearticles.com/201104306147/7-most-important-differences-between-society-and-community.html>



unique but characteristically peculiar in either their conception or their practices. As exemplified by many societies in Africa, a given society may have sub-cultural organisations that can qualify as social units to be called a society. In Ghana for example, while one can talk of the Ghanaian society where certain socio-cultural conceptions and institutions may cut across the whole society, other cultural practices in the society may be limited to sub-units of the society. For example, while the general Ghanaian society taboos practices such as incest and homosexuality (that has become controversial political issue of late), issues of dowry payment by a man to marry a woman in Ashanti culture is different from same in Bissa, Dagau or Kusasi cultures<sup>181</sup>. These cultural differences may further be intensified by differences in ancestry, lineage and language. When these different, culturally-distinct and organised groups exist in multiples within a given society, we can refer to it as a plural society.

## ***2.7 Plural Society and Multiethnic Society***

According to Lijphart (1977), a plural society is a society divided by “segmental cleavages...It exists where political divisions follow very closely, and especially concern lines of objective social differentiation, especially those particularly salient in a society”.<sup>182</sup> “Segmental cleavages may be of religious, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural, racial, or ethnic nature”.<sup>183</sup> Some salient differentiating features of a society may be ethnic, linguistic, religious or racial. Differences are considered salient when people who belong to a particular group view themselves as different cultural communities, think of this difference as important in their organisation and identity, and try to preserve and develop this difference. In some cases, the struggle

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<sup>181</sup> Assimeng, M. (2007). *Social Structure of Ghana: A study in Persistence and Change*. Ghana Publishing Corporation, Assembly Press, Accra. Pp. 79-88

<sup>182</sup> Eckstein, H. (1966). *Division and Cohesion in Democracy: A Study of Norway*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966, P. 34. In Lijphart, A. (1977). *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. Yale University Press. PP.3.

<sup>183</sup> Lijphart, A. (1977). *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. Yale University Press. PP.3.

to preserve that particularity becomes negatively determined as hostility or bad feelings toward persons belonging to other ethnic groups.<sup>184</sup> An example of a plural society is a society with many different ethnic and cultural groups living side by side in the same society. Ghana is one such example with many ethnic groups living within the same political system.

We refer to plural society in this thesis as a political system in which reside two or more culturally and ethnically different groups of people, exhibiting any level of awareness and/or consciousness in their interaction and relationships with other groups based on traits and characteristics known to and emphasized by each of the groups in their social, political and economic organization. Plural societies, in their original conceptual formulation were considered chaotic and conflictual, and therefore, ungovernable by democratic means, except by an external force.<sup>185</sup> Later, Lijphart demonstrated the contrary and proposed that consociationalism was the ideal way to ensure democratic governance in plural societies. In this thesis, Ghana is considered a plural society because there are over ninety-two (92) different ethnic groups existing in the country<sup>186</sup>, living side by side, but not without ethnic conflicts in parts of the country<sup>187</sup>. In as much as a plural society may find it difficult to establish and sustain democratic governance (Dahl, 1971; Lijphart, 1977), it may be possible for a certain level of convergence and consensus building if the cleavages that define the identity of the groups are *crosscutting* and not dividing, either by interest or by any

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<sup>184</sup> Encyclopaedia of Democracy, II, London, Routledge, 1995, p. 853. Cited in Frckoski D. Ljubomir (1999). "Certain Aspects of Democracy in Multiethnic Societies". *Journal Of International Affairs*, December 1999 – February 2000 Volume IV - Number 4

<sup>185</sup> Furnivall, J. S. (1939) *Netherlands India*. London: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>186</sup> Asante, Richard & Gyimah-Boadi, E. (2004). *Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector in Ghana*. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD, 2004). P.15.

<sup>187</sup> This does not take into consideration the political salience of each of these groups yet.

other form of association or by the interaction of interest that are common to the various groups concerned (Lipset, 1963; Morris, 1956).

## ***2.8 Theory of Crosscutting Cleavages and Crosscutting Ties***

In 1956 Stephen Morris came out with his study of the East African nations of Kenya, Tanganyika (now Tanzania) and Zanzibar, and Uganda (where he discovered a variety of ethnic groups such as Africans (18,000,000), Arabs (79,000), Europeans (50,000), and Indians (198,000) living in these societies. They speak different languages and exhibit other distinct cultural habits and where possible limit social contacts within their individual ethnic groups. Economic activities in these societies were ethnic specific. As the Europeans worked mostly in political positions, the Indians were mostly into commerce and the Africans were mostly in the working class and rural peasantry. Following these identified characteristics, Morris qualified these East African countries to fit somehow into the description of a plural society<sup>188</sup>. However, Morris found something in this study that will make a more interesting contribution to the plural society discourse. In his study, he observed that within the various ethnic groups, individuals attached more importance to sub-group divisions than they do to the larger ethnic labels separating them from other ethnic groups within the society. Using the example of the Indians in East Africa he indicated that *Indians*, as any other non-Indian group may call them, are internally organized into various subcategories and groups. Despite the fact that in East Africa the Africans, Arabs, and Europeans use the label "Indians," to address that group of people, the fact remains that "more important to an Indian in East Africa than being a Hindu or Muslim, or even, on most occasions, than being an Indian is being an Ismaili, a Patidar, a Sikh, a Goan, or a member of a dozen or so of other caste or sectarian groups."<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>188</sup>Morris, Stephen (1956). "Indians in East Africa: A Study in a Plural Society," *British Journal of Sociology* 7, no. 3 (October 1956)

<sup>189</sup>*Op cit*, (1956), p. 207.

Thus, Morris concluded that “divisions within each racial category are more significant in the composition of the total society than the broader racial categories”. He observes that factionalism within ethnic groups may forestall perfect ethnic cohesion, leading, on occasion, to alliances of expediency across racial lines<sup>190</sup> and that, a plural society begins to resemble a non-plural society when racial, ethnic or communal groups are further divided into sub-units. This realisation draws us from the placement of undue emphasis on differences that exist between diverse ethnic groups in a plural society and neglecting underlying similarities and “ties”. From a conflict resolution point of view, alliances of expediency across racial lines (common ties) are very important if any meaningful strategy is to succeed in bringing peace and stability in a plural society. These alliances are exploited as points of common interest (*connectors*) across all ethnic divides and used for successful interventions for conflict resolution as well as create workable political alliances among elites of the various groups for successful democratic governance<sup>191</sup>.

In addition to the internal fragmentation that Morris identified within the Indian ethnic group, he also found that one sub-category of the Indians, the Ismailis, who are predominantly Muslims, vacillated in allegiance to other racial subgroups as and when their interests shifted. Morris also discovered that significant business relations existed among and between Europeans, Africans and Indians. He thereby concluded that *in effect, nonethnic cleavages can cut across racial lines and thereby encourage joint pursuit of some common multiethnic objectives*<sup>192</sup>. This formation of interethnic connections along certain lines of activity, be it religious, economic, political party alliances, and any

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<sup>190</sup>Rabushka, Alvin, and Shepsle, Kenneth A. (1965). *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability*. Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company. *A Bell & Howell Company*, Columbus, Ohio. (P.13)

<sup>191</sup> Anderson, B. Mary (1999). *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace - Or War*. Lynne Rienner Publishers (1999).

<sup>192</sup> Morris, Stephen (1956). "Indians in East Africa: A Study in a Plural Society," *British Journal of Sociology* 7, no. 3 (October 1956)

other form of alliance among and between cleavage groups of a plural society is what Lipset calls “*crosscutting cleavages*”

Another evidence of crosscutting cleavages is the situation where the peoples of distinct cultures in a plural society have a good understanding of the others’ language, musical culture, and other salient distinct features of one another and, as a consequence of this understanding, are ready to accept and/or tolerate one another in society. Crowley (1957) in his study of Trinidad identified at least thirteen different racial and national groups in the country<sup>193</sup> making it possible for him to describe Trinidad as a plural society<sup>194</sup>. Trinidad, however, was free from ethnic conflict<sup>195</sup>. According to Crowley, this peace was accounted for by the fact that the various groups and cultures, though distinct, are not totally exclusive of one another, and that members of any group are often proficient in the others’ language or have some informed knowledge about the cultural activities of the other groups. They have mutual knowledge in one another’s vital cultural features as “language, folk belief, magic practice, mating and family structure, festivals and music” which come together to provide the common ground that makes social unity possible in Trinidad<sup>196</sup>. Crowley described this as “*plural acculturation*”. In Ghana for example, many social and ethnic groups are well aware of their identity and sometimes even act consciously to differentiate the “we” from the “them” as we may find Southerners in Ghana calling someone of Northern Ghanaian origin a “*pepe ni*” or “*ta ni*”. In the same way, someone of Northern origin is easily heard calling a person of Southern Ghanaian

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<sup>193</sup> Crowley identifies thirteen distinct racial and national groups that comprise the social structure: (1) foreign whites, (2) local whites (French Creoles), (3) light coloreds, (4) coloreds of English origin, (5) coloreds from other West Indian islands, (6) Chinese and Chinese-Creoles, (7) Portuguese, (8) Negroes (Creoles), (9) Spanish speaking Venezuelans, (10) Syrians and Lebanese, (11) Christian East Indians, (12) Muslim Indians, and (13) Hindus

<sup>194</sup> Crowley, Daniel J. (1957). "Plural and Differential Acculturation in Trinidad," *American Anthropologist* 59, no. 5 (October 1957): 817-24

<sup>195</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>196</sup> *Opcit*

origin as (especially the Akan) as a “*Kambonga*”. However, people of northern Ghana themselves are diverse in ethnicity and equally have high awareness of their identities across ethnic, linguistic, religious, and regional lines. Some sub-divisions exist in the South where the Akans, for example, are sub-divided into Brongs, Ashantis, Fantes, Akwapims, and Kwamus among others.

However, despite these recognisable differences and consciousness exhibited across the country along the several ethnic lines, Ghanaians have a fair idea of the various cultures and traditions of one another. During the celebration of some traditional festivals of other ethnic groups, chiefs and peoples of other ethnic groups are invited to attend, witness, and sometimes participate in the form of presenting their own traditional dances during the festivals of their guests. This is what happens when Kusasi and other ethnic groups perform their traditional dance at the invitation of the Bissas to their annual Zekula festivals in Kulungungu in the Upper East Region of Ghana. This cultural understanding serves as a vital element in preventing the plural society from fragmenting to the point of excessive violence against one another and subsequent dissolution of the polity and thereby serving as an element of relative peace and unity.

One other empirical evidence that shows that in some plural societies ethnic groups may not necessarily organise themselves in distinct economic pursuits<sup>197</sup>, was further demonstrated by Burton (1957) in his study of ethnic relations in Mauritius. The findings of Burton’s study corroborate the thesis of Morris and Crowley on the internal stratifications that may exist within distinct ethnic groups in a plural society, as well as the changing phase of the economic scenes of plural societies, and that with time, a plural society (using Mauritius in the 1950s as an example) could change from

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<sup>197</sup> To the extent that one economic activity is 100% occupied by one ethnic group, as we saw above in Morris’s study of East Africa, to the extent that economic activities in these societies were ethnic specific as the Europeans worked mostly in political positions, the Indians were mostly into commerce and the Africans were mostly in the working class and rural peasantry.

a society in which the stratification of racial groups is congruent with distinct economic activities to one in which each ethnic section pursues a whole range of occupations. In the Ghanaian case, there is no single economic activity formally recognised as that of a particular ethnic group or region. Many groups are into transport, just as many are into farming. However, naturally circumscribed occupations like fishing for example may be practised by coastal groups and populations. But what is important is that, this activity is not reserved for one ethnic group even if there could be dominance because of their location. Other groups resident in these areas equally engage in same as this activity may be the most dominant economic activity in the area.

These cross-activities and cross-engagements result in the encouragement of a *rapprochement* of communities on occupational and class lines, thereby de-emphasising ethnic distinctions or cleavages and focusing on crosscutting ties. This then serves as good basis for possible political cohesion in the society<sup>198</sup>. The concurrent process of economic modernisation and social change where members of different groups and cleavages of society cross-relate in the various sectors of the economy, Burton suggests, creates crosscutting institutions which, in turn, foster cooperation among different races, different ethnic groups and different cultures. This does not, however, annul the fact that individuals, despite their crosscutting activities will at certain times have recourse to their various ethnic identities in the political arena and other social and cultural functions. Burton writes:

*“In this paper I have tried to examine social stratification in plural societies. I began by looking at the various statuses of ascription such as ethnic group, religion, and language by which the sections of a plural society are usually differentiated. I*

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<sup>198</sup> Burton, Benedict (1957). *Mauritius: Problems of a Plural Society* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1965), and "Stratification in Plural Societies," *American Anthropologist* 64, no. 6 (December 1962): 1235-46. Cited in Rabushka, Alvin, and Shepsle, Kenneth A. (1965). *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability*. Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company. A Bell & Howell Company, Columbus, Ohio. (P.13)

*found that for Mauritius, and I believe most other societies, corporate groups cannot be differentiated on this basis, but they sometimes serve as symbols which differentiate blocs in certain political contexts”.*<sup>199</sup>

While we see in the above literature the gradual downplay of the potential of conflict in the plural society, the current facts on conflicts all over the world, especially in Africa and the Arab world, leave us to question the current validity of such propositions. Well over 90% of all conflicts today are intrastate conflicts fought among and between various cleavage groups, and a few against internal governments within the borders of the same state, even if sometimes we have spill over effects (Williams, 2011)<sup>200</sup>. From the mid-sixties, and more especially in the nineties after the end of the Cold War, the world experienced a downward trend in number of violent conflicts generally. Contrary to this global trend, Africa has witnessed an astronomical rise in interethnic and inter-cleavage conflicts more than any other continent, most of which take a large dimension and lead to the destruction and/or weakening of many states and democracies<sup>201</sup>.

The development in some countries including Rwanda, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Central African Republic, Eritrea, and recently Mali, Kenya, Zimbabwe, La Côte d’Ivoire, Egypt and Libya puts to question the natural conflict resolution effect of cross-cutting ties. These conflicts have threatened the very existence and democratic endeavours of the many states in which they occurred. This may suggest that cross-cutting ties have to be accompanied

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<sup>199</sup> Burton, Benedict (1957). "Stratification in Plural Societies" p. 1244 (emphasis added).

<sup>200</sup> Williams, D. Paul (2011). *War & Conflict in Africa*. Polity Press, Cambridge, UK. p.4; Forced migration: A consequence of armed conflict. Available online at <http://www.forcedmigration.org/research-resources/expert-guides/armed-conflict-peace-processes-and-forced-migrants/armed-conflict-and-forced-migration> Accessed on 22 May 2013 at 5:50GMT+2

<sup>201</sup> Williams, D. Paul (2011). *War & Conflict in Africa*. Polity Press, Cambridge, UK. p.4.



by deliberate conflict intervention mechanisms such as the chieftaincy institution, the Peace Council and the courts, among others, as exist in Ghana

The above examples are clear indication of the fact that neither intra-ethnic factionalism, mutual knowledge, cross-cutting cleavages, nor shared values, as discussed above, can actually hold together all plural societies today. In addition, political consensus may not necessarily exist between diverse ethnic groups just for the fact that they exhibit some cross-cutting features. However, one can give examples of plural societies in which democracy is sustained such as the United States of America, Belgium, Spain, South Africa, Benin, Burkina Faso (until October 2014), Ghana, Botswana, Netherlands, Ireland, Papua New Guinea, and India.

The inconclusive demonstration of the ability of crosscutting cleavages to maintain a stable democracy leaves more room for exploitation not only for a better understanding of the concept of plural society but also for the best ways to make democracy function successfully in a plural society without violent conflict among its populations.

Coser, Lipset, and Lijphart in their writings on the democratic prospects of multiple group affiliations and memberships, enhance this perception by indicating that these affiliations do not only prevent the existence of a single deep cleavage for enhanced chances for stable democracy, but also will help to insulate the individual by binding his fate to that of other cleavages of people.<sup>202</sup> Cross-cutting cleavages or multiple affiliations therefore can help:

*“...reduce the emotion and aggressiveness involved in political choice...The chances for stable democracy are enhanced to the extent that groups and individuals have a number of crosscutting, politically relevant affiliations. To the*

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<sup>202</sup> Coser, Lewis. (1956). *The Functions of Social Conflict* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1956), pp. 78-79 and Lipset, Seymour, M. (1963). *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1963), p. 77

*degree that a significant proportion of the population is pulled among conflicting forces, its members have an interest in reducing the intensity of political conflicts”.*<sup>203</sup>

Their point, then, is that the *absence* of cultural diversity and crosscutting affiliations in a *plural society* may be positively harmful to the prospects of stable democracy and rather encourage deepened cleavages liable to induce conflicts.

The benefits and prospects of crosscutting ties for democratic dispensation is further enhanced when political institutions and political culture are fashioned around a consociational democratic principle. To the extent that we can consider Ghana as a plural society, the ensuing second part of this chapter looks at the various social and cultural (ethnic) groups living in the country, the interplay of cleavages and social amalgamations, conflict generation in Ghana and the available institutional mechanisms used in the management of social conflicts in the country.

## **2.9 Theoretical Framework**

The study employed the *theory of consociational democracy* as a guide to investigate the factors that account for the relatively peaceful democratic dispensation in Ghana for the past 25 years. The theory envisages that it is difficult for a country with multiethnic and plural social groups to establish, sustain and consolidate democratic governance systems unless that country follows certain prescriptions recommended by the theory.

By application in this thesis, we discuss consociational democracy with reference to the thesis topic which proposes to study Ghana as a plural society with a democratic system of governance despite its numerous internal conflicts, using consociationalism as a basis of analysis to determine the factors accounting for the stability of Ghana’s

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<sup>203</sup>Lijphart, Arendt *op.cit.* (Anchor Books, 1963), p. 77.

democracy. The focus here is to determine the extent to which Ghana's democratic stability is accounted for or not by consociational arrangements.

Consociational democracy was first mentioned in Gabriel A. Almond's 1956 typology of democracies. Later, Arendt Lijphart<sup>204</sup> elaborated more on the theory of *consociationalism* agreeing with Almond on the vulnerability to instability in culturally heterogeneous societies that are 'divided by mutually reinforcing cleavages'. At first, Lijphart used the word 'politics of accommodation', but writing later in a 1968 *World Politics* article titled "Consociational Democracy", he employed the term "consociationalism"<sup>205</sup>. Historically, the term derives from Althusius' 1603 article in *Politica Methodice Digesta*, entitled "Concept of Consociatio". While Lijphart refers to Lewis as the intellectual originator of the theory of consociationalism,<sup>206</sup> most literature on consociationalism refers to Lijphart as "the most productive and imaginative author"<sup>207</sup> or the major contributor to the theory of consociational democracy and has been given much credit for its theoretical development.

Indeed, the importance of Lijphart's development of consociational theory is because the theory suggests to provide a concrete solution to the scepticism regarding the attainment of stable democracy in divided societies<sup>208</sup>. Halpern writes:

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<sup>204</sup> Lijphart, Arendt (1968b). 'Typologies of democratic systems'. *Comparative Political Systems* Vol. 1,

No. 1, pp. 3-44.

<sup>205</sup> Lijphart, Arendt (1969). "Consociational Democracy". *World Politics* (October), Vol. 21, No. 1

Pp-207-25. USA: Princeton University Press.

<sup>206</sup> Opcit

<sup>207</sup> Van Schendelen M. P. C. M (1984). 'The views of Arendt Lijphart and collected criticisms. In Van Schendelen, ed. *Acta Politica* Vol. 19, No. 1 [Consociationalism, pillarisation, & conflict management in the Low Countries], (January), pp. 19-55. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Boom

<sup>208</sup> Halpern, Sue M. (1984), *Consociational democracy and the dangers of politics as science*. Doctoral Thesis. Oxford: University of Oxford.

*“...In the twentieth century, the prevalence of subcultural conflicts based upon race, language, religion, and ethnicity have rendered this scepticism [the dangers that subcultural differences pose for democracy] commonplace (...) the possibility of maintaining stable democracy in a sub-culturally fragmented state appeared to political theorists to be remote at best. For this reason alone, the publication of Arendt Lijphart's theory of consociational democracy might have attracted attention: unlike its pessimistic predecessors, this theory purports to demonstrate how stable democracy can be maintained in divided states”<sup>209</sup>*

The above quotation reinforces our use of this theory believing that it was postulated as a strategy for addressing problems in culturally plural societies like Ghana to be able to institute, maintain and consolidate democratic governance.

A number of principles underlie the theory of consociationalism. In its formulation, a plural and multiethnic society can only establish and sustain democracy if these principles are adhered to.<sup>210</sup> They comprise:

1. Grand coalition (executive power-sharing);
2. Group/segmental autonomy;
3. Proportionality; and
4. Mutual/Minority Veto.

According to Lijphart, *executive power sharing* entails the formation of a government made up of a grand coalition of the political leaders of all significant segments of the divided society. Lijphart differentiates this from the principle of majority rule and large opposition.<sup>211</sup> In Ghana's democratic system, executive power is concentrated

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>210</sup> Lijphart, Arendt (2000b). 'The wave of power-sharing democracy'. Cited in Noura, Assaf (2004). *Consociational theory and democratic stability: A re-examination Case Study: Lebanon*". Unpublished Thesis, University of Warwick, Department of Politics and International Studies

<sup>211</sup> Lijphart, A. (1977). *Politics in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. New Haven and London Yale University Press. P.25.

in a single president elected on the basis of a multiparty elections. The Presidential candidate of the party that wins becomes the executive head of the nation and government in power. However, the constitution enjoins all political parties to be constituted with a nation-wide membership without identification with any segment of society; not with any ethnic, religious, or regional character.

The second principle of consociationalism is to create a *Segmental or community autonomy* which entails the delegation from central government of high degree of autonomy to the segments of the plural society to enable as much autonomy in decision-making as possible to these separate segments. By extension, decision-making on all issues of common interest must be arrived at jointly by the representatives of the main segments. However, when it comes to other issues that are not of common national interests, decision-making should be left to each segment to determine what is good for the interest of that segment. Segmental autonomy in Ghana may be perceived in terms of Ghana's decentralised governance system where there exists both devolution and decentralisation.

The third principle of consociational democracy is *proportionality*. The principle of proportionality is closely linked to that of grand coalition. Proportionality is to ensure fairness in segmental representation in civil service appointments and allocation of scarce financial resources in the country<sup>212</sup>. This is to ensure the removal of “a large number of potentially divisive problems from the decision-making process and thus lightens the burdens of consociational government.”<sup>213</sup> Proportionality also has a positive influence on the process and outcome of decision-making, such that “...a roughly proportional distribution of influence in policy problems can usually only be

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid, pp.38-41

<sup>213</sup> Ibid, p.39

assured if the decision is bargained over with the participation of all groups”.<sup>214</sup> This, of course, enables each group to influence decision and policy process in correspondence with the weight of its representation of that segment in the country, thereby ensuring fairness.

The fourth component is *mutual or minority veto*. Mutual veto is the constitutional provision of veto rights to minority groups in the consociation as a means of protecting their rights in the case of majority votes to determine decision that the minority may find very vital to their interests and very existence. The minority will, under this principle, be able to block a decision they find inimical to them and lobby for change. This will “give each segment a complete guarantee of political protection”<sup>215</sup> on vital issues and constitutional change. Mutual veto guarantees to each segment that it will not be outvoted by the majority when its vital interests are at stake.

Critics have raised concerns about Lijphart's conception of consociational democracy in a number of spheres. One of such concerns is the limitless or broadness of its conception of the principles of consociationalism. And secondly, the redefinition of the concept and the reduction in the number of its impinging principles over time from its original conception of five principles that included “*plural, deeply divided society*” in 1968 to one that he reduced to four principles in 2000 (Lijphart, 2000a). This imprecision in defining the set of principles underlying the theory over time results in two major theoretical and practical problems<sup>216</sup>. First, the difficulty for scholars

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<sup>214</sup> Jurg Steiner (1971). “The Principles of Majority and Proportionality.” *British Journal of Political Science*, 1, No. 1 (January 1971)65. Cited in Lijphart A. (1977). *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. New Haven and London Yale University Press.

<sup>215</sup> Lijphart, A. (1977). *Politics in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. New Haven and London Yale University Press. p.37.

<sup>216</sup> Noura Assaf (2004) *Consociational theory and democratic stability: A re-examination Case Study: Lebanon*”. Unpublished Thesis, University of Warwick, Department of Politics and International Studies. P.21.

studying the theoretical model of consociational democracy to be able to use to describe the system of a given state, and second the difficulty in concretely rejecting a particular system designated as a consociation<sup>217</sup> since the imprecision in its defining principles lends the theory to a probably unlimited elasticity of application. For example, in his prescription of grand coalition, Lijphart does not show how a grand coalition should look like. He discusses it in “general terms without specifying its exact institutional form.”<sup>218</sup> While attempting to prescribe *a grand coalition cabinet* as the *prototype consociational device*, he accepts any “variety of other forms” to serve the same purpose.<sup>219</sup> This makes the notion of grand coalition “a catch-all concept” that one can use to describe any form of government or activity related to governance undertaken by “segmental elites in their capacity as bloc representatives or not...”<sup>220</sup> Meaning that, any form of coalition, formal or informal, constituted by elites with the aim of running a government can qualify to be consociative, hence “the researcher using the model as a guide is thereby encouraged towards creativity, not exactitude towards identifying grand coalition somewhere within the folds of a state's political fabric”<sup>221</sup>

Another line of concern in Lijphart’s definition of grand coalition as a concept in consociationalism is the qualification of the noun “segment” with the adjective “significant”, thus “significant segments” of the divided society. As to what size,

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid

<sup>218</sup> Opcit, p.31.

<sup>219</sup> Idem. P.31.

<sup>220</sup> Halpern, Sue M. (1986). 'The Disorderly Universe of Consociational Democracy'. *West European Politics* (April), Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 181-97. London: Frank Cass. Cited in Noura Assaf (2004) Consociational theory and democratic stability: A re-examination Case Study: Lebanon”. Unpublished Thesis, University of Warwick, Department of Politics and International Studies. P.21

<sup>221</sup> Ibid, (1986, 190). Cited in Noura Assaf (2004) Consociational theory and democratic stability: A re-examination Case Study: Lebanon”. Unpublished Thesis, University of Warwick, Department of Politics and International Studies. P.21

number, or unit of measure will be used to tell when a segment is *significant* is not known, and as to who decides whether a segment is significant or not. The lack of clarification in such a definition is by itself a recipe for conflict since naturally this will generate a contest for significance, deepening the division in the already divided society. This will, naturally, erode the very basis for consociationalism since it was meant for recreating consensus and avoiding the inherent conflict-prone nature of plural societies that make it impossible for them to run a *non-consociational* democratic governance system. Meanwhile, democratisation according to Robert Dahl as we discussed in our section on the concept of democracy above, requires the participation of all sections of society. Whatever criterion will be used to declare a segment as *insignificant* in the society and therefore cannot be represented will be going against this basic tenet of democracy. To the effect that power emanates from the citizen (people/masses) to the ruler, the nonrepresentation of a so-called *insignificant* segment of society will nullify the system being called democratic if the segment not represented is affected by the rules, norms, policies and decisions of the ruler they have not participated in its establishment nor its functioning, and their interests are not represented.

Not all, in dropping the component of “...divided, or deeply divided”<sup>222</sup> societies from his initial “plural societies and divided or deeply divided societies<sup>223</sup>” there was no further attempt to distinguish between plural societies and divided or deeply divided societies. In this state, we are left to think that any society that comprises plural segments is necessarily a divided, or deeply divided, society. No room is provided within this context for exploring the possibility of a plural society being united under a functioning and successful non-consociational democracy. Is the assumption that

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<sup>222</sup> Lijphart, 1986

<sup>223</sup> Lijphart, 2000a



“only the consociational model can be a remedy to the problems that plural and divided societies face” universally true? The Ghanaian context here provides a test case for measuring the validity of the last two concerns raised in the critique of the theory of consociational democracy.

Ghana is ranked the 12<sup>th</sup> country with the highest score in ethnic fractionalisation and cultural diversity in Sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>224</sup> There are over eighty (80) different internal conflicts going on in the country as of the end of August 2015, some of these conflicts are interethnic whilst others are intra-ethnic, yet, since the early nineties Ghana has steadily moved from electoral democracy in 1992 to liberal democracy in 2001<sup>225</sup>. While we can evidentially say Ghana is a plural society by no less standards<sup>226</sup>, we cannot say the same about the democratic arrangements and internal functioning systems as well as their interaction that contribute to the success of Ghana in charting a democratic system of governance. This will form part of the subject of inquiry of this work. Meanwhile, in as much as we are sensitized to the fact that the plural society is conflict-prone in nature, we are not explicitly told by Lijphart the types of conflict that are inherent in the plural society and the expected issues over which the different segments of the plural society are supposed to be conflicting over. We equally know that Lijphart expects that these conflicts are going to be serious enough to destabilise or impede successful democratic governance; however, there is lack of clarity as to the expected level of intensity of the conflicts in the plural society and how much consociationalism can reduce these conflicts, so as to ensure stable governance of the plural society. Conversely, we are not told how much unity the process and

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<sup>224</sup> Fearon D. James (2003). Ethnic and Cultural Diversity by Country. *Journal of Economic Growth*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Jun., 2003), pp. 195-222

<sup>225</sup> Lindberg I. Staffan (2003). ‘It’s Our Time to “Chop”’: Do Elections in Africa Feed Neo-Patrimonialism rather than counteract it? *Democratization*, 10:2, 121-140.

<sup>226</sup> Advantageously because Lijphart’s definition for plural society leaves much for latitudinal application by the researcher as mentioned above by Halpern (1986)

functioning of a consociation is expected to effect on the plural society in order to avoid democratic relapse or ensure democratic consolidation. This thesis has some objectives that confront some of these issues.

One recent addition to Lijphart's proposition is Horowitz's five-point proposal for reducing ethnic conflict and ensuring successful democratic governance in an ethnically plural society. In his book, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (1985; 2000), Horowitz equally recognises the difficulty in establishing and sustaining democratic governance in an ethnically plural society. Upon review of various methods, both practically adopted and theoretically proposed, for the resolution of ethnic conflicts, Horowitz criticises the concepts of territorial federalism and any strategies that will recognise and enhance such cleavages. This is because he believes that territorial recognition of cleavages and divisions based on such differences would rather enhance and deepen the fault lines and conflicts that exist among the people instead of enhancing crosscutting cleavages. On the contrary, when administrative divisions and financial/development allocations are done across social divisions it will enhance local competition and enhance crosscutting cleavages among the people across the various ethnic lines. In addition, in case of any conflicts, these conflicts would be localised and thereby preventing them from escalating to the national level (Horowitz. 1985; 2000). He recommends forms of federalism that will induce cross-cleavage formation through five major strategies:

1. Dispersion of conflict away from the centre by proliferating the points of power and breaking up ethnic solidarity. One way to do this is to purposefully demarcate federal border lines to cut across as many ethnic enclaves as practicable, thereby regrouping them in one federal state;
2. Strategizing to reduce emphasis on inter-ethnic conflict and increase intra-ethnic conflicts through internal competition within the same ethnic groups, for example by reserving offices for particular ethnic groups. By so doing, persons from the target ethnic groups will contest for those positions and create internal competition. Another way of enhancing intra-ethnic competition is the territorial devolution of power to increase competition for

federal offices within same groups in the case where federal boundaries enclose concentration of single ethnic groups;

3. Creating incentives for inter-ethnic cooperation through:
  - a. Electoral system design and reform that enhances any form of “vote pooling” (alternative vote system for example) so as to avoid ethnic game playing that mobilises a majority ethnic group to rise to victory. A multiethnic voting constituency will compel party elites that cannot get the majority of votes within their ethnic divide (by the sheer dictates of the alternative vote system) to strive to get the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> alternative preference votes from other ethnic groups to be able to win an election, thereby the need to “pool votes” from “other” ethnic groups to enhance their chances of winning;
  - b. Required distribution of votes for elections: where it is required by law that a party or an individual candidate gets a minimum of a pre-determined percentage of votes from a determined number or percentage of states, regions, or districts before it/s/he can win an election. An example<sup>227</sup> is Nigeria where one needs at least 25% of all votes in at least two-thirds of all states of the country before one can be declared winner of an election;
4. Encourage interest-based alignments other than ethnicity, class, territory or religion. Meaning that in the design of a federal state, the federal boundaries must not coincide with ethnicity. This will break up ethnic groups into a number of smaller groups dispersed in different states where other alliances must be formed to enable the realisation of personal aspirations beyond ethnic group agenda pursuit; and

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<sup>227</sup> My own example.

5. Reduce group disparity through social policy. There should not be massive grievous disparity between ethnic groups in terms of economic status and economic opportunity. The mechanisms for this adopted in the USA, Malaysia, India, and elsewhere are various forms of affirmative action programmes that give conscious preferences to members of a backward or relatively disadvantaged group in order to lift them up to a relatively similar status or more opportunity for education and economic development.

It is clear that although Horowitz supports consociational democracy, he does not, however, follow the clear cut territorial demarcation proposed by Lijphart. In Ghana, this territorial demarcation of regions with multi-ethnic groups within same region is practised, though Ghana is not a federal state. So the regions' autonomy is to the extent that central government allows as prescribed in the local governance regulation of Ghana ( Local Government Law, 2016) where some governance departments are decentralised to the regional level but with much power still at the top of government structure. On conflict generation and conflict resolution, most of the conflicts are localised but their effects cannot be said to be same. In addition, the parties involved in conflict (individuals and ethnic groups, for example) may transcend regional boundaries even if the conflict has a central local ground and issue. For example, the notorious Bawku Chieftaincy conflict between the Kusasis and Mamprusis is centred on the Bawku skin. And Bawku is in the Upper East Region. This has not prevented suspicions in Bawku of Mamprusis from the Northern Region of Ghana (where the majority of Mamprusis in Ghana reside) infiltrating into Bawku to fight in support of their Mamprusi kin whenever the conflict erupted. Whether these are substantiated or not, these suspicions have come to stay in the informal minds of both Kusasis and other residents. Others have tried to prove this by questioning why the Kusasi majority in the area have failed to annihilate the supposed minority Mamprusis if their kin from Northern Region were not always smuggled into Bawku to help them fight.

It is clear, therefore, that Ghana's multiethnic democracy does not follow any one of the above recommendations to the letter, but yet has survived without any nation-wide violent conflict jeopardising its democracy. This phenomenon needs an

explanation with empirical data. This explains why this thesis leans on the theory of consociationalism and cross cutting cleavages, and has its conceptual framework constructed under the motivation of same.

## Section II

# Social Structure, Conflict and Conflict Management in Ghana

### *2.10 Social Structure of Ghana*

Traditionally, the basic unit of society in Ghana is the *family*. The significance of the individual is important only when s/he is considered within the context of the family. Individualism is therefore not a traditional value of the Ghanaian society. As stated by Assimeng (1999), “*it is not possible to appreciate the behaviour of a personality unless one takes into consideration the cultural background of that personality*”<sup>228</sup>. The concepts of family and community go beyond the Western nomenclature of “family” where it involves the man, the wife and the children. Ghanaian traditional concept of family includes everyone in the clan from the great grandfather to the great grandchildren, both male and female.

In the family, the family head<sup>229</sup>, always a man, is the head of the family, and responsible for handling matters of family and represents the family in the community when the need arises. In kingly and chiefly cultures, the society is organised around a king or a chief who has responsibility for the resolution of major problems beyond the family head. He is the custodian of the natural environment including the land, waters, trees and the preservation of the culture of his people on behalf of the *ancestors* to be transcended down to the generations unborn.<sup>230</sup> Language and ethnicity (tribe)

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<sup>228</sup> Assimeng, Max (1999). *Social Structure of Ghana: A Study in Persistence and Change*. Ghana Publishing Corporation, Publishing Division (1999). P.41

<sup>229</sup> The family head is known in Ghana by different nomenclature by the different tribes and languages: *abusapanin* in Akan, *parza* in Bissa, *yidaan* in Kusaal, *yidando* in Wala, *Apetor* in Ewe etc.

<sup>230</sup> Ancestors are the dead who have once lived in a given society, and contributed their quota to development of their community and family and are now in spirit and in a more powerful position than the living.

are given high importance in community organisation, and most communities organise themselves around these indicators. The jurisdiction of a chief or king may, however, go beyond the ethnic borders to encompass other ethnic groups living within the geographical jurisdiction of the chief or king's tutelage.

While in the early days of ethnographic history the "tribe" was perceived a descent-based community with a common language and culture, by the 1930s this perception was already being fundamentally revised in the Gold Coast, now Ghana<sup>231</sup>. In the course of the introduction of *Indirect Rule* (1921-1957) new territorial arrangements were discussed in terms of ethnic concepts as an attempt to "reduce complexity in administrative decision-making, especially in a multi-faceted political landscape" (Lentz, 2006).<sup>232</sup>

#### 2.10.1 Cultural and Ethnic Groups in Ghana

Generally, in Ghana, there are a variety of tribes and ethnic groups spread all over the country with no specific ethnic group having 100% of members residing in a given geographical space or administrative demarcation, even if some ethnic groups are more concentrated in some geographical areas than others.

It is estimated that over ninety-two (92) ethnic groups live in Ghana<sup>233</sup>. For convenience sake, these ethnic groups are further classified under larger linguistic and cultural groups such as the Akan, Ga-Adangbe, Guan, Mole-Dagbani, Grusi, Ewe, and Mande-Busanga.

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<sup>231</sup> Lentz, Carola (2006). *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana*. Edinburgh and London: Edinburgh University Press for the International African Institute. p.174

<sup>232</sup> Idem

<sup>233</sup> Asante, Richard & Gyimah-Boadi, E. (2004). *Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector in Ghana*. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD, 2004). P.15.

According to the year 2010 Population and Housing census, the predominant ethnic cluster is the Akan with 47.5% of the total population of the country, comprising Agona, Ahafo, Ahanta, Akwapim, Akwamu; Akyem, Aowin, Asante, Asen (Assin), Brong and Banda, Chokosi, Denkyira, Evalue, Fanti, Kwahu, Nzema, Sefwi, Wassa. The Akan group is followed by the *Mole Dagbani* (16.6%) who are comprised of the Builsa (Kangyaga or Kanja), Dagau (Dagaaba), Dagomba, Kusasi, Mamprusi, Namnam, Nankansi and Gurense, Walba (Wala), Nanumba. The next group is the *Ewe* (13.9%). *Ga Adangbe* (7.4%) comprising the Adangbe, and the Ga and the least group of *Mande* otherwise known as the *Mande-Busanga* consisting of the Busanga, Wangara (Bambara, Mandingo), make up 1.1% of the total population.<sup>234</sup>

In all, over 85 ethnic groups have been mentioned in the 2000 Population and Housing census of the Ghana Statistical Service. However, this number still does not cover all the ethnic groups in the country. For example the Hausa, Moshie and other nomadic groups such as the Fulani have not been represented in this statistic.

While some ethnic groups are predominantly found in certain administrative regions of Ghana, no particular region is occupied 100% by any single ethnic group. While ethnicity and language on one hand, and religion on the other are both key features along which social and cultural awareness is organised in Ghanaian society, religion as a sub-element of ethnic identification and awareness (or consciousness) is less coinciding than that of cultural and linguistic identities. Religion is therefore one of the crosscutting elements to ethnic identification, awareness creation and consciousness in Ghana.

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<sup>234</sup> Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), 2012.



### 2.10.2 Religion

In Ghana today, religious constructions have metamorphosed away from the hitherto African traditional religion that used to be, centuries back, but now a more complex mix of religious diverse convictions. As a result, Ghana today has many “foreign” religions, especially different sects of Christianity and Islam, coexisting with the all-time African traditional religion either separately or in a subtle but complex interrelationship.

The mutation of Ghana’s religious convictions has been enhanced by processes of Ghanaian traditional social systems’ adaptation to the exigencies of social and cultural contact and interaction with other non-Ghanaian societies, cultures and practices. Assimeng attributes this to “items of cultural diffusion, especially items of the religious type, and the gradual disintegration and reinterpretation of aspects of traditional culture as a result of cultural importation from especially the western world.”<sup>235</sup> The two major sources of influence on Ghanaian traditional society that must have had a major impact on Ghanaian traditional religion must have been colonialism, and missionary work of religions like Christianity and Islam. These phenomena have led to formal Western and Arabic education which were first focused on literacy, arithmetic and European culture (language, civics, history and lifestyle).

By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some missionary schools already existed in Ghana training the workforce that was needed not only for the increase in acceptability of the missionary propagation of religious messages, but also to complement and supplement the colonial objectives of the colonialists in the then Gold Coast, and of course increase their acceptability. Religious affiliation, just like ethnic identities in Ghana, is not

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<sup>235</sup>Assimeng, Max (199). *Social Structure of Ghana: A Study in Persistence and Change*. Ghana Publishing Corporation, Publishing Division (1999). P.56.

definite to particular communities or geographical regions as no one region has a 100% composition of people from one single religious conviction in the country. Administrative regions are demarcated for purposes of political and development administration and have no obvious ethnic or religious prejudice in their identification, demarcation and administration. The next section takes a look at the development of modern democratic political culture in Ghana starting from the years preceding independence, and how this development built on traditional institutions for their establishment and functioning and its consequent conflict inherence in modern day Ghana.

### ***2.11 Communal Conflict***

Communal conflicts presupposes another type of conflict, just like chieftaincy conflict, or ethnic conflict. Communal conflicts occur between and among members of a community. The conflicting parties could be organised along any form of identity but live within recognised boundaries of either same or different communities. When a conflict organises members of one community against another, we refer to it as inter-communal conflicts. When the parties involved emanate from the same community, we call it an intra-communal conflict.

As stated earlier on, Ghana as a country has experienced a number of intra-communal and inter-communal conflicts. Some of these include the conflicts in Bawku between the Kusasi and Mamprusi communities, Dagbon conflict in Yendi, conflicts between the Nkonya and the Alavanyo communities, among others. The factors that cause these conflicts and the parties/communities involved vary from one conflict to the other.

### ***2.12 Factors Influencing Violent Social Conflicts in Ghana***

Many factors account for conflicts in Ghana. Notable among these are chieftaincy, land ownership and multiple land sales, party politics, electoral mismanagement and

abuse of electoral processes, ethnicity and ethnic consciousness, and religion among others<sup>236</sup>. These factors vary from one conflict situation to another.

### 2.12.1 Chieftaincy

The chieftaincy system in Ghana is the major traditional system of governance where chiefs are made leaders of given communities and traditional areas where they exercise traditional legislative, adjudicative and executive power over their subjects. Chapter Twenty-Two, Article 270 of the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana guarantees the institution of chieftaincy “...together with its traditional councils as established by customary law and usage...”<sup>237</sup> Article 277 defines a chief as “...a person, who, hailing from the appropriate family and lineage, has been validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as a chief or queenmother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage.”

The above definition of the “chief” highlights the various legitimate traditional customary processes necessary for the installation of a chief. In Ghana, most of the chieftaincy conflicts have been contested around one or more of these processes, thus the person should hail from the “appropriate family and lineage”, being “validly nominated or selected” and lastly being “enstooled, enskinned or installed in accordance with relevant customary law and usage.”

Many of the chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana are mostly intra-ethnic as witnessed between the Abudus and the Andanis in the Yendi chieftaincy succession dispute. For example some family members challenging the appropriateness of a nominee in terms of the family and lineage from which he or she is nominated; the validity of the nomination in terms of the body of authority that nominated him or her; or the

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<sup>236</sup> Tsikata, D. and Seini, W. (2004). *Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana*. CRISE Working Paper 5. November 2004.

<sup>237</sup> Republic of Ghana (1992). 1992 4<sup>th</sup> Republican Constitution of Ghana.

appropriateness of the authority that enstooled, enskinned or installed him, among other reasons. However, the scale of violence in intra-ethnic conflicts in Ghana is far less than when the conflict is inter-ethnic, though they have persisted longer.<sup>238</sup> It is because of the rampant occurrence of chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana that the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution established and guaranteed the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs with the preoccupation of resolving chieftaincy conflicts in the country as captured in Articles 271 and 274 respectively. These Houses of Chiefs are therefore a constitutionally established mechanism for the resolution of conflicts in Ghana.

### **2.12.2 Land Ownership and Multiple Sale of Lands**

Land in Ghanaian culture is a sacred communal and family property held in custody by the living for the dead and the yet-to-be-born generations.<sup>239</sup> Apart from its use in Ghana for agricultural purposes, land also serves for the construction of residential homes and commercial places. It is therefore “an asset and a resource with economic, political, social and cultural ramifications”.<sup>240</sup> Land ownership and land use in Ghana generate various types of conflicts involving chiefs, family heads, government, individuals and groups in various permutations – (a) inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic; (b) between groups; (c) between chiefs and their people; (d) governments and communities; (e) communities and transnational corporations; and (f) between individuals, who have claim or derivative rights in land such as strangers, tenants and migrant farmers, women, youths (Aryee et.al., 2007).<sup>241</sup> Tsikata and Seini (2004)

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<sup>238</sup> Brukum, N. J. K. (2006). *Chieftaincy and Ethnic Conflicts in Northern Ghana, 1980-2002* In Irene k. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (Eds.). *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*. pp. 429-448. Accra, Sub-Saharan Publishers.

<sup>239</sup> Nukunya, G. K. (2003). *Tradition and Change in Ghana: An Introduction to Sociology*. Ghana Universities Press, Accra. Revised Edition.

<sup>240</sup> Aryee, R. A. Joseph et al (2011). *Local Power Struggles, Conflicts and Conflict Resolution: The Causes, Dynamics and Policy Implications of Land-related Conflicts in the Greater Accra and Eastern Regions of Ghana*. CODESRIA Research Reports: NO. 3, March 2011.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid

indicate that the “... struggle over land and its control is [an] important aspect of ethnic conflicts and identity politics. There is general agreement in Ghana that the land tenure system and its administration are subject to serious problems that have exacerbated land tenure insecurity with negative implications for national development” (Tsikata and Seini, 2004)<sup>242</sup>

Land ownership is said to be one of the major causes of the most devastating conflict in Ghana’s recent history – the Konkomba-Nanumba war of 1994-1995.<sup>243</sup> The costs involved in such conflicts are heavy. An estimated 1,000 people lost their lives and more than 150,000 were internally displaced in Northern Ghana as a result of land disputes which led to ethnic violence in 1994-1995. Aryee *et al* (2011) indicate that over 16% of Ghanaians cite land boundary or land disputes as a major source of conflicts in Ghana, above chieftaincy (13%), and political rivalries (10%).

### **2.12.3 Party Politics**

Party politics opposes political parties and their adherents at various levels of the democratic process. Among these, important features such as the formation, presence and active functioning of multiple political parties in the country and the organisation and conduct of credible, free and fair elections must be present and characteristic of the political system. In addition, there is need for a post-election governance process that is responsible to the people, engages the opposition, ensures freedom of the media, and the active participation of civil society in the governance process.

While these features as enumerated above are present at different levels in the Ghanaian democratic system, party politics is registered to be one of the root causes

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<sup>242</sup> Tsikata, D. and Seini, W. (2004). Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana. CRISE Working Paper 5. November 2004. Cited in Aryee, R. A. Joseph et al (2011). Local Power Struggles, Conflicts and Conflict Resolution: The Causes, Dynamics and Policy Implications of Land-related Conflicts in the Greater Accra and Eastern Regions of Ghana. CODESRIA Research Reports: NO. 3, March 2011.

<sup>243</sup> *opcit*

of many conflicts in a number of communities (Tsikata and Seini, 2004; Ayee et al., 2011; Awedoba, 2009).

Political violence in Ghana constitute various forms of violence between supporters of political parties, to assassinations aimed at political figures in the country. Even before independence, Ghana experienced various forms of political violence including the attempted and (sometimes) successful assassination of political figures (Tsikata and Seini, 2004). One of these included the attempted assassination of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in Kulungungu with a bomb explosion that took the lives of other attendants of the gathering. Various levels of violent conflicts are experienced in the country when elections are approaching and during or after elections. In Bawku, after the December 2000 general elections, violent conflicts broke up between supporters of the parliamentary candidates of the NDC and the NPP, and quickly transformed into an inter-ethnic conflict rooted in chieftaincy and land ownership rights (Ibid). Many deaths were reported in that conflict. In a similar vein, conflicts broke up in Asutuare between followers of the NPP and the NDC following the 2000 elections. This conflict was also said to be rooted in chieftaincy and irrigated land ownership issues. In both cases, while party politics provided the immediate causes for the manifestation of conflicts, the root causes of these conflicts were far beyond electoral issues.

Ghana also experienced a number of violent political *coups d'état* from independence to 1981. Under these military governments, Ghanaian population underwent various forms of violent repressions and military brutality such as beatings, arbitrary arrests, rapes and murders (Oquaye, 1980; 2004; Tsikata and Seini, 2004).

What is worth noting here, is that, party politics could either be a primary or secondary cause to conflicts, but of course it presents the conditions necessary for conflicting groups and individuals to get at one another.

#### 2.12.4 Electoral mismanagement and abuse of electoral processes

Electoral processes are very important for the successful establishment and sustenance of a democratic government in any country. The strength of the electoral management body (EMB), which is its ability to institute the appropriate processes for the conduct of free and fair multi-party elections which results are acceptable to all stakeholders, is very essential for the success of democracy.<sup>244</sup> In Ghana, consistent quadrennial electoral mismanagement and electoral process abuses have led to electoral violence in many parts of the country. These conflicts peak in election years when the stakes are high for elections and political parties and their supporters try to undo their opponents by all means possible<sup>245</sup>. These conflicts, though localised and confined, have accompanied every election in Ghana, especially under the Fourth Republic, occurring before, during, and after elections (Aning and Kwaku. 2011; Tsikata and Seini, 2004; Ayee et al 2011). Election-related conflicts usually take the form of threats, intimidation, physical assault, vandalism of electoral materials, as well as the use of hate speeches and incendiary language (Aning and Kwaku, 2011).

In Ghana, election-related violence is caused by lack of adherence to electoral rules and procedures by both political parties and their supporters, as well as officials of the Electoral Commission or their representatives. Sometimes, lack of education and ignorance of electoral laws and regulations are also causes (Aning and Kwaku, 2011). When individuals get euphoric about their chances of winning and want to do everything possible to ensure or increase their chances, they deliberately or ignorantly undertake actions that are contrary to the procedures, leading to protests from the opposite side of the political divide, and sometimes physical engagements that turn

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<sup>244</sup> Lindberg, I. Staffan (Ed.) (2009). *Democratization by Elections: A New Mode of Transition*. *The Johns Hopkins University Press*, Baltimore; Diamond, L. (2011). *Why Democracies Survive*. *Journal of Democracy*, Volume 22, Number 1, January 2011, pp. 17-30

<sup>245</sup> Aning, K. and Kwaku, D. (2011). *Managing Election-Related Violence for Democratic Stability in Ghana*. Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

bloody or deadly as were the cases of Bawku and Asutuare immediately after the 2000 general elections.

In 2013, immediately after the 2012 elections, Ghana experienced one of the longest electoral cases ever in the Supreme Court of Ghana when the NPP challenged the final results of the elections that proclaimed the NDC's John Dramani Mahama as the winner. The case was on national TV live for over 7 months and finally a "split decision" was rendered in favour of the NDC. In a disputed election popularly called "the stolen verdict" the NPP accused the NDC of stealing the 1996 general elections in which Rawlings was re-elected.

Apart from disputing results of presidential elections, many parliamentary results have been contested in many courts in all the elections held in Ghana since 1992. Among these, the case of Amadu Sakande (NPP) in the Bawku constituency stands out as a national case where after a futile contestation of the results in which he was elected member of parliament for the Bawku Central Constituency, he was further prosecuted for breaking Ghana's dual citizenship law.

In recent times, trust issues have engulfed the Election Management Body (EMB) in Ghana, leading to very serious national arguments on the integrity of the electoral commission to conduct free and fair elections. At the exit of the then Chairperson of the Electoral Commission, Dr. Afari Gyan, President Mahama appointed Mrs. Chalotte Osei as new Chairperson. Her appointment introduced the first female Commissioner to the Commission since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in January 1993. The opposition NPP officially opposed her appointment. While the NPP were trying their best to make Ghanaians see the new Commissioner as lacking the integrity to conduct credible elections in 2016, the ruling NDC also jumped to her defence making it an affair of political parties, and not about the competence of the individual appointed to the commission.

Another common election related issue of conflict in Ghana is the credibility of the electoral register and the issue of foreigners from the surrounding ECOWAS region



being on the electoral register of Ghana. The NPP has consistently thought that the votes from the Volta Region were inflated by their kin and kindred living across the Togo border, whilst the NDC has always thought votes from the Western, Central and Brong-Ahafo Regions are inflated by relatives and ethnic mates of these regions living across the Ivorian border. This question reached its peak when in 2016 before the NPP accused the Commission of allowing the NDC to stack the voters' register with several hundreds of thousands of illegally registered voters from Togo. The Commission had to appoint a national committee to sit on the issue and receive submissions from registered political parties and civil society organisations based on the evidence provided by the NPP. This initiative deflated to some extent the tensions in the country.

Even though the elections were held quite successfully and led to a change of government, issues of mistrust, funds misappropriation and corruption have hit the EMB and petitions and counter petitions are currently being submitted to the President of the Republic for the impeachment of the Chairperson of the Electoral Commission.<sup>246</sup> The response of the opposition NDC party is that the NPP is doing everything to sack the Commissioner because they (NPP) had objected to her appointment when they were in opposition.

While the credibility of the Electoral Commission in past elections has been lauded in the Africa and West Africa Regions, it has always faced challenges and its operations lend themselves to various levels of violence at various times. The future of Ghana's democracy would be determined by how successful the current impasses

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<sup>246</sup> Myjoyonline.com 19th July, 2017. "Confirmed! President receives petition for impeachment of EC boss" <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2017/July-19th/no-petition-for-impeachment-of-ec-boss-received-presidency.php>; Dr. Bright Akwetey Myjoyonline.com, 27<sup>th</sup> July 2017. "Chaos at EC could erode Ghana's democratic gains – Dr. Akwetey"; *Graphic Online* 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2017. "EC staff petition Prez to remove Charlotte Osei" online at <http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/ec-staff-petition-prez-to-remove-charlotte-osei.html>

between the Commissioner and her deputies and staff is handled at the institutional, legal and political levels of the country.

#### **2.12.5 Ethnicity and ethnic consciousness as source of conflict**

Ethnicity and demonstrated ethnic consciousness have caused many violent conflicts in Ghana. In these instances, two or more ethnic groups undertake violent actions against one another in pursuit of their group interest and desire to undo the other for same. A number of ethnic conflicts have been experienced in Ghana. Some of these conflicts have been in existence for so many years and still remain unresolved. Examples of such are the inter-ethnic conflicts between the Mamprusi and Kusasis in Bawku, in the Upper East Region, and those between the Nkonya and Alavanyo people in the Volta Region as cited much earlier. Some other examples of such conflicts are in a dormant state but have been relatively non-violent for over two decades now. An example of the latter is the 1994-1995 Konkomba-Nanumba and allies conflict that is reported as one of the most devastating single inter-ethnic conflicts in the history of Ghana.

Today, many of these conflicts are still simmering and are time bombs that could explode anytime if not properly handled.

#### **2.12.6 Religion as Source of Conflict**

Just like any other form of social cleavage, religion constitutes an important aspect of human life in many societies. It is meant to define and circumscribe the relationship between societies and the divine. In other societies it forms the basis for social and moral norms and sometimes transcends into the democratic constitution-building processes of some countries, especially those built on religion. Examples of these include ancient Egypt, Rome, and France before the renaissance period, many Arab countries such as Iran, Sudan, Saudi Arabia among others.

The general goal of Religion is to hold each family together, unite the inhabitants of every village, bind together the inhabitants of the various villages of a territorial unit

and give the cohesion that is essential to their mutual security (Abdullai Ahmed An-Naim, 1999).<sup>247</sup> Sometimes it is difficult to separate religious life from the economic and the political as religion may lay the foundation for the operation of the other<sup>248</sup>. The question of religion, social life, and politics may therefore intertwine to produce various outcomes of human behaviour.

While many seek religion as a source of peaceful co-existence in society, religion has equally been a source of violent conflicts in many societies. Between 1992 and 1995 ethno-religious conflicts rocked and destroyed Bosnia Herzegovina, clashing Muslim Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats led to Genocides in Srebrenica and Moktar<sup>249</sup>. Same has occurred in Mali confronting the pro-Islamic Northern Toareg against the South, and in Nigeria where the Pro-Islamic North is confronted against Christian communities.<sup>250</sup>

Religion is fervently practised in Ghanaian culture (Nukunya, 1992). There are three main religions practised in the country with each of them having sects. Some of these include Islam and its related sects, the African Traditional Religion and Christianity. Most Ghanaians practise at least one of these religions and they co-exist side-by-side in the Ghanaian society. There is no one region or community in Ghana where only one particular religion is exclusively found, even if in some places some majority indices may exist in religion among the population.

Ghana has experienced a number of religious conflicts. Some of these are inter-religious conflicts and others are intra-religious conflicts. Some intra-religious

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<sup>247</sup>An-Na'im, A. Abdullahi (1999). *Proselytization and Communal Self-Determination in Africa*. Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1 May 2009.

<sup>248</sup>William T. Cavanaugh (2007). "Behind the common question lies a morass of unclear thinking". *Harvard Divinity Bulletin* 35 No. 2, (2007)

<sup>249</sup>British Academy (2015). *The Role of Religion in Conflict and Peacebuilding*.

<sup>250</sup>Idem.

conflicts occurred in the 1990s between Ahli Sunna and Tijania Muslim sects in Wenchi, Wa, Atebubu, Sunyani, Kumasi, and Accra. In recent years, religious differences have brought some churches at loggerheads with some traditional councils in Accra because the Ga Traditional Council instructed churches to cease drumming, singing and dancing for one month leading to the celebration of the yearly Homowo festival. This period is called the “ban on noise-making”. The churches believe that drumming, singing and dancing form an integral part of their spiritual activities and so the ban is an infringement upon their right to worship, whilst the Ga Traditional Council also posits that the land of Greater Accra is their traditional and ancestral land, so it is their responsibility or right to undertake the yearly traditional ritual of pacifying the lands. Anyone who does not agree to this rule to cease just one month of noise making should rather leave their ancestral land. Some churches, individuals, and even the Ghana Bar Association have had legal issues with the Ga State saying their ban on noise is unconstitutional.<sup>251</sup>

Religion, therefore, though a means to foster social cohesion and the maintenance of social order in society, can sometimes generate controversy and conflicts depending on how these religious interactions are fashioned and internalised across lines of belief and confessions.

### ***2.13 Conflict Management Mechanisms in Ghana***

The mechanisms adopted for the management of any conflict is dependent on many factors. These include the context within which the conflict occurs, the parties involved in the conflict, the issue of incompatibility over which the parties are in conflict, level or intensity of the conflict, the resources available for conflict

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<sup>251</sup> *Ghana Web*, “Traditional leaders can’t ban noise making”. Dan Soko, GhanaWeb 05/06/2014 02:18:00 found at <http://www.ghanagrio.com/sites/news/66269--039-Traditional-leaders-can-t-ban-noise-making-039-.html>

intervention, and the knowledge, experience, and skills of the individuals intervening in the conflict.

Generally, conflict management in a democratic system starts from the structural level where conflict management and conflict sensitive approaches are fused into the initial process of democratic institutions building as a measure to remove potential structural inequalities and injustices that may be produced in the intended democracy.<sup>252</sup> Democracy in itself is intended as a conflict management mechanism in society as it provides the opportunity for equitable participation in decision making and vest power in the ruled to enable them have some level of control over their rulers and make choices that are relevant to the pursuit of their own aspirations as a people. In diverse societies where democracy is well implemented, the system serves to regulate individual interests and provides the opportunity for individuals and groups who do not have power today to have access to power the next time, or continue to hope to be able to change one day. In the event where such institutional peacebuilding efforts are not able to prevent conflicts and they thus become overt and violent, many other options exist for managing such conflicts.

Some of the generally well-known mechanisms for conflict management include mediation, negotiation, and arbitration.

Ghana as a country has managed its internal conflicts in many ways across the country. Traditionally, conflict management in Ghanaian culture is a daily activity that spans from the responsibility of parents to those of the community leaders and chiefs. Today, both traditional and modern mechanisms are employed to manage conflicts in Ghana. We discuss some of the pertinent ones below.

### 2.13.1 Security Services

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<sup>252</sup> Galtung, J. (1969). *Violence, Peace and Peace Research*. Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1969), pp. 167-191

One of the major strategies used by the Ghana government when violent conflicts erupt is for the security service to quickly organise police and military to intervene to stop the violence while working to identify the leaders of the parties in conflict. These leaders are contacted for talks and negotiations to enable them call on their individual groups and supporters to stop the violence. Many times, persons directly involved in exacting violence are arrested by the security services for screening and prosecution if possible. In many conflict spots in Ghana, the government has established reinforced police presence and military camps in these conflict zones. Examples of these are the military bases establishments in Bawku, Nkonya-Alavanyo, Yendi, and Wa Municipality among others.

In many cases, the police call on the military for assistance and in some instances, the police don't even attempt because the situation overwhelms them. In Bawku for example, the military are first to intervene in large scale violence while the police intervene in interpersonal conflicts that do not involve large groups confronting each other.

The challenge with using the security services for conflict management in Ghana is that, most of the conflicts experienced in the country have cultural and traditional roots with long historical antecedents. They are therefore intractable and security personnel intervention only succeeds in reducing or curbing violence but does not succeed in dealing with the root causes of the conflict. However, the presence of the many military bases in conflict zones has helped in many occasions to save lives, ensure security of persons and protect property as typified in the Yendi succession conflict and the Nkonya-Alavanyo recurrent clashes in Ghana.

### **2.13.2 The Court System**

The adversarial court system is being more and more patronised in many conflict situations. In Ghana, two systems of arbitration operate side-by-side, and the level of intensity, the type of conflict and the issue and actors involved determine the choice

or obligation for a system of arbitration. The Traditional courts are chaired by chiefs and elders while the modern court system is superintended by judges and magistrates

For the traditional court system, the court echelon starts from the local chief's palace, through the divisional chief's palace, to the Traditional Area chaired by paramount chiefs, where conflicts are resolved through customary arbitration.

In the modern court system, the grades of court include the local magistrate courts, the circuit courts, high courts, appeal courts and the Supreme Court which also has appellate jurisdiction. In the regions and districts the most available courts are the local magistrate courts, the circuit courts and the high courts, usually located in the district and regional capitals.

While individuals can choose between the traditional arbitration system and modern court systems to access for the resolution of their conflicts, not all matters of disputes have jurisdiction in the traditional courts. Criminal cases are totally beyond the jurisdiction of the traditional courts. The modern courts can, however, receive any dispute for arbitration provided the case is called at the right level within the judicial hierarchy in relation to the issue and its "receivability" in that court.

While the traditional court system uses Ghanaian traditional norms, common sense, and social regulations specific to the traditional area in question to judge cases, the modern court system adopts British jurisprudence that requires being learned in law and court procedure to be able to access successfully the court system successfully. Most at times, lawyers and legal brains are required to assist in the modern law courts. This financial burden and legal knowledge limitations sometimes limits access to poor individuals who cannot afford such financial costs associated with accessing modern law courts in the democratic system. In the Regional and National Houses of Chiefs, however, there is provision for the use of lawyers by disputants, which is a transformation in the chieftaincy institution.

Escalation of dispute arbitration processes is allowed in both the traditional and modern system of arbitration for disputants who are not satisfied with court decisions

in either systems to proceed to the next highest level with appellate jurisdiction. In the traditional system, disputants are allowed to move from the local chief to the divisional chief's palace for the resolution of their conflicts and finally to the paramount chiefs (Traditional Council). Any matter thereof, which is not chieftaincy related may be forwarded only to the courts. Matters relating to chieftaincy succession issues can be transferred from the Traditional Council to the Regional House of Chiefs through the National House of Chiefs and eventually to the Supreme Court if there is no satisfactory settlement at the Regional Houses of Chiefs and National House of Chiefs respectively. For instance, the National House of Chief's Registry (2016) indicated that there were 106 chieftaincy cases pending before the National House of Chiefs besides the other Regional Houses of Chiefs.<sup>253</sup>

Both the Regional and National Houses of chiefs have original and appellate jurisdictions. Meaning, they can both initiate fresh adjudication of chieftaincy cases (original jurisdiction) and also accept chieftaincy cases which have already been dealt with by other lower legal bodies (appellate jurisdiction)<sup>254</sup>. The establishment of the National House of Chiefs is contained in Article 271. Its mandate is contained under Article 272, and its Jurisdiction established under Article 273 of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution are as follows:

*271. "There shall be a National House of Chiefs.*

*(2) The House of Chiefs of each region shall elect as members of the National House of Chiefs five paramount chiefs from the region.*

*(3) Where in a region there are fewer than five paramount chiefs, the House of Chiefs of the region shall elect such number of divisional chiefs as shall make up the required representation of chiefs for the region.*

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<sup>253</sup> National House of Chief's Registry, 2016, Ghana.

<sup>254</sup> Chieftaincy Act 759, 2008, Ghana.



272. *The National House of Chiefs shall -*

*(a) advise any person or authority charged with any responsibility under this Constitution or any other law for any matter relating to or affecting chieftaincy;*

*(b) undertake the progressive study, interpretation and codification of customary law with a view to evolving, in appropriate cases, a unified system of rules of customary law, and compiling the customary laws and lines of succession applicable to each stool or skin;*

*(c) undertake an evaluation of traditional customs and usages with a view to eliminating those customs and usages that are outmoded and socially harmful;*

*(d) perform such other functions, not being inconsistent with any function assigned to the House of Chiefs of a region, as Parliament may refer to it.*

273. *(1) The National House of Chiefs shall have appellate jurisdiction in any cause or matter affecting chieftaincy which has been determined by the Regional House of Chiefs in a region, from which appellate jurisdiction there shall be an appeal to the Supreme Court, with the leave of the National House of Chiefs or the Supreme Court.*

*(2) The appellate jurisdiction of the National House of Chiefs shall be exercised by a Judicial Committee of the National House of Chiefs consisting of five persons appointed by that House from among its members.*

*(3) A Judicial Committee of a National House of Chiefs shall be assisted by a lawyer of not less than ten years' standing appointed by the National House of Chiefs on the recommendation of the Attorney-General.*

*(4) A member of a Judicial Committee of the National House of Chiefs shall be removed from office on the ground, of proven misbehaviour or of infirmity of mind or body by the votes of not less than two thirds of all the members of the National House of Chiefs.*

*(5) A Judicial Committee of the National House of Chiefs shall have original jurisdiction in any cause or matter affecting chieftaincy*

*(a) which lies within the competence of two or more Regional houses of Chiefs; or*

*(b) which is not properly within the jurisdiction of a Regional House of Chiefs;  
or*

*(c) which cannot otherwise be dealt with by a Regional House of Chiefs.*

*(6) An appeal shall lie as of right in respect of any cause or matter dealt with by a Judicial Committee of the National House of Chiefs under clause (5) of this article to the Supreme Court.’<sup>255</sup>*

The Houses of Chiefs all over the country have, since their establishments, been managing most conflicts on chieftaincy issues. This has not excluded disputants to often time combine their accessing the Houses of Chiefs and the modern law courts simultaneously as it is the case with the Dagbon and Bimbilla chieftaincy cases. The Houses of Chiefs, as mechanism for conflict regulation in Ghana, have shown some successes as many chieftaincy cases have been resolved through this system. It is clear that the cases resolved through the Houses of Chiefs mechanism would have had to add to the myriad of criminal and other chieftaincy cases that are arbitrated in the modern court system.

In addition, the mix of modern approaches into the traditional chieftaincy arbitration system through the Houses of Chiefs, with incorporated mechanisms such as the Judicial Committee of the House that demands the services of a lawyer, is a step forward to enable the Houses to handle issues within their remit while respecting and protecting the integrity and basic human rights of the individual, a requirement that sometimes eludes processes in the traditional setting. While the Judicial Committees of the Houses of Chiefs are established by the constitution and their mandate spelt out in same, there are other committees and commissions that are periodically formed by either the Legislature, the Judiciary or the Executive (Presidential or Ministerial) to handle conflicts in the country, as and when the situation arises.

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<sup>255</sup> 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution, Articles 271; 272; and 273.

### 2.13.3 Committees and Commissions

As part of strategies for the management of conflicts, there has been a tradition of establishing commissions of inquiry and committees to investigate issues of conflict within and between communities, and sometimes between individuals. One of the early committees of inquiry into chieftaincy conflicts began in the early 1950s (if not earlier). For example, the last Governor-General of Ghana, commissioned a committee of inquiry to investigate into the Bawku chieftaincy conflict in 1952 to determine the truthful owners of the Bawku skin. The committee submitted its findings which were gazetted in the same year. The Committee's findings favoured the Kusasis, and a government White paper was issued to that effect. The Mamprusi challenged the conclusion of the Governor General's white paper in the then Divisional Court (now High Court) by way of *Certiorari*<sup>256</sup>.

Several of such committees have been established by the Presidency to investigate into many conflict cases in many communities across the country both in the past and present times. For instance, the Yendi Skin Affairs has witnessed the establishment of various Commissions and promulgation of Legislative Instruments including; Opoku Afari Commission of 1959, Azzu Mate Kole Commission of 1968 and Ollenu Commission of 1974 as captured by the Wuaku Commission Report (2002), Awedoba (2009) and Tonah (2012)<sup>257</sup>. In 2002 when Ya Na Yakubu Andani was murdered along with 28 others due to clashes between the Abudus and Andanis (Royal gates), the then Kuffuour government established the Wuaku Commission to investigate into the circumstances leading to the death of the King and other persons, and identify

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<sup>256</sup> Divisional Court ruling 1958.

<sup>257</sup> Tonah, S. (2012). The Politicisation of Chieftaincy Conflicts: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *The NORDIC Journal of African Studies*, 21 (1): 1-20.

the perpetrators and make appropriate recommendations to the President (Wuako Commission Report, 2002)<sup>258</sup>.

Further, the government instituted the Committee of Eminent Chiefs headed by the Asantehene Otumfuo Osei Tutu II to oversee the implementation of the Wuako Commission's recommendations. Several years down the line, these efforts have not yielded their intended goal of resolving the conflict and getting another King installed for Dagbon. The Dagbon Kingdom is still without a King as both parties of the divide still claim legitimacy to the throne. However, the findings of the Wuako Commission enabled the Attorney General to prosecute the suspected persecutors of the late Ya Na Yakubu Andani and thirty others. Unfortunately, the suspects have been acquitted and discharged for lack of evidence to continue with the case, erupting further protests from the Andani gate and their supporters. Dagbon, is still enjoying fragile peace.

Other important committee systems that are used in Ghana are the District and Regional Security Councils<sup>259</sup>. These are formal government institutions established by government to regulate conflict and collect conflict intelligence through the security services and the local government bodies in each district and region. Early warning signs are observed and identified at all moments and strategies adopted to curb violence. At the District level, the District Chief Executive (who is appointed by the President in collaboration with the local authorities of each District and approved by the Assembly) is the chairperson of the District Security Council (DISEC). The Regional Security Council (REGSEG) is chaired by the Regional Minister, who is equally appointed by the President of the Republic. These security councils oversee

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<sup>258</sup> Report of the Commission of Inquiry (Yendi Events), C.I. 36/2002 (Wuako Commission)

<sup>259</sup> Security and Intelligence Agencies Act - 1996 (Act 526). Found online at <http://laws.ghanalegal.com/acts/id/209/security-and-intelligence-agencies-act> visited on 31st August, 2017 at 1:06 GMT+00

the implementation and supervision of security directives from the Presidency and Ministry of Interior, and equally advise government on security situations from the District and Regional levels. For instance, the DISEC at Yendi and Bimbilla and the Northern Region REGSEC had been instrumental in the management of the Yendi skin affairs between the Abudus and the Andanis and the inter-ethnic conflicts between the Konkombas and Nanumbas at the then Nanumba District of the Northern Region.

#### **2.13.4 Parliament**

Among all the three basic arms of government, the role of parliament in conflict prevention and resolution in every democratic dispensation is very primary and extremely important (Mitchell O'Brien, 2005). Parliament is the leading political institution that should determine the context, regulation and conduct of all other political institutions in a democracy (ibid). The role of parliament in conflict prevention, regulation and resolution cannot, therefore, be overemphasised. What the executive and the judiciary do should be within the institutional framework and legislative establishment determined by parliament. One principal means by which parliament plays the role of peace and conflict resolution is its principle of representation which allows for the people to be represented in the house and indirectly participate in the governance of their country through these representatives. This representation does not only give citizens the power to participate in the governance of his own affairs, but also allows for creation of alliances and consensus building (log-rolling) among the people (March and Olsen, 1989)<sup>260</sup>.

Another basic roles of parliament is the establishment of legislation and constitutional assurances for ensuring and respecting the basic human, social, economic and political

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<sup>260</sup> March, G. James and Olsen, P. John (1989). *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics*. *The Free Press, a Division of Macmillan, Inc., New York and Collier Macmillan Publishers, London*;

rights of individuals of all facets of society without discrimination whatsoever. Political participation by all is very important for the success and strengthening of every democracy. As the representative of the people, parliament needs to work effectively to ensure the limitation of executive power and judicial abuses. In democracy, power and authority belongs to the people and the exercise of such must have the people in mind and respect for their input. Parliament has many ways of contributing to ensuring conflict prevention and regulation in every democracy, and the more efficient the legislature is able to play this role the less likely a democracy is to fragment to conflicts and divisions.

One way of parliament ensuring conflict prevention in a democracy is through legislation and ensuring of effective decentralisation programmes that aim at increasing inclusiveness in participative governance and ensuring local governance responsiveness in policy making in order to mitigate conflict escalation and enhance poverty reduction (O'Brien, 2005). This is because greater responsiveness in policy making has the dual advantage of ensuring that decision-making addresses local points of friction and develops more pro-poor and development oriented policies, since policy makers are able to respond to the needs and demands of poorer citizens through the direct and effective participation of citizens thanks to the enactment of pro-citizen decentralisation policies by parliament (O'Brien, 2005; Rodrik, 2008<sup>261</sup>). Pro-poor policies have the added advantage of building an environment where conflicts are less likely to arise or escalate to violence when they arise (Ibid). The Assembly system in Ghana decentralises governance and development planning to the local level. The Assembly is made up of popularly elected representatives of the

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<sup>261</sup>Rodrik, D. (2008). Thinking about Governance. In North et al (2008). *Governance, Growth, and Development Decision-making*. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, Washington, DC, 2008.

people, based on universal adult suffrage. Development budgeting is done at this level with guidelines from the National development plan which allows for assemblies to determine the priority needs of their districts for central government to fund for the people. This assembly (decentralisation) system is modelled to give local representatives a platform for deliberation on their own development issues and allocating their development and budgetary provisions to the supply and resolution of their own needs determined by themselves.

Closely linked to parliament's role in decentralisation for peaceful democratisation is its role in ensuring the executive follows equity procedures and delivery. Parliament can prevent conflicts by effectively promoting and ensuring the passage of essential legislation to promote and ensure equity in the distribution of the economic and social benefits accruing from the system. Pronounced socio-economic inequity or inequality, according to Mitchell O'Brien (2005), can have two undesirable consequences on the peace of the democratic country. One, it creates a conducive atmosphere for greedy actors to kindle conflicts; and two, groups that perceive themselves as constantly disadvantaged by such unequal allocation of resources and benefits will have no incentive to continue to support and participate effectively in the democratic political process, and may resort to violence if other conditions available to them can support or enhance same. The critical role of parliament in ensuring equity through legislation and effective supervision of the implementation of such legislation ensures the avoidance of such grievance conflicts (Collier, 2001; Collier & Hoeffler, 2004)<sup>262</sup> The District Assembly Common Fund in Ghana is one of the major attempts by the government at ensuring equity in income distribution and development project sharing. All Assemblies are supposed to receive on a regular quarterly basis some equitable sums of money allocated to them from the central

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<sup>262</sup> Collier, P. & Hoeffler, A. (2004). Greed and Grievance in Civil War. *Oxford Economic Papers* 56 (2004), 563-595. Oxford University Press, 2004.

government through the office of the Administrator of the District Assembly Common Fund. The problem, however, arises where after the release of such monies the executive arm of government determines, de facto, most of the direction of expenditure allocation, leaving a weak Assembly that cannot in reality sanction the Chief Executive (of such Assemblies) who are appointed by the President to represent them.

Parliament can also effectively manage emerging conflicts through dialogue and consultative legislation processes that will arrive at laws, policies and government actions capable of responding effectively to the needs of all sectors of the society including the media and other civil society organisations (O'Brien, 2005; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2005). Civil society organisations are sometimes more conversant with issues and needs of the local people than members of parliament and the executive in Ghana. Engagement with such organisations enables parliament to be fed with vital and relevant information, knowledge and expertise that will enable parliament to direct law making and policy direction more appropriately. This does not only increase wider acceptability for legislation, but also increases the chance of the responsiveness of parliamentary legislation and easy education of the public on such legislation. Responsiveness enables legislation and government action to address the dire needs of society thereby reducing the festering of grievance, bitterness and possibly greed that lead to conflicts in societies. Inversely, civil society organisations and especially the media can assist Ghana to effectively educate the masses on the import and direction of law making and equally receive valuable input from the public through same bodies (O'Brien, 2005).

In conflicts involving the executive and sectors of society, the opposition in parliament can be a great resource to help intervene (Ibid). This is more so in a neo-presidential system of government like that of Ghana where most of the executive is



drawn from parliament<sup>263</sup>. In the case where the executive gets involved in conflicts with sections of society, the opposition in parliament remains a possible viable option with a group of individuals in parliament that are democratically elected by the people but who at that moment are not directly involved in the conflict. Its intervention in such matters could be of great help to serve as independent intermediaries.

Unfortunately, however, opposition members of parliament in Ghana have constantly perceived their role as being in parliament to “oppose” the incumbent, and almost always employ the media to vilify the ruling government and discredit almost all programmes undertaken by the government. This is without exception and any party in opposition at any time almost always does same. The government’s State of the Nation’s Address is quickly condemned by the opposition and countered by what they term “the true state of the nation” address delivered by the opposition with high media coverage. Government budget statements are condemned and objected to by the opposition with attempts to stifle its approval either holistically or partially. Ruling governments have to resort to their numbers as majority (if they have a majority advantage) to approve programmes and projects. The counter effect of this is that, the ruling majority sometimes engages in shady financial deals and quickly assemble their majority membership to have these deals passed using the excuse that the opposition is “always being against” to blindfold the public. This is not to render the Parliament of Ghana useless as it may sound, but to say that certain times, there is rubber-stamping of unpopular government policies in the name of the people’s representatives. This is exemplified by many government deals across governments in Ghana, the most recent of which is the “Ameri Power Deal” which is currently under investigation after change of government. Meanwhile, this same deal accused

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<sup>263</sup> Gyampo, R. (2013). *The State of Political Institutions in Ghana: Auditing and Strengthening the Pillars of Political Institutions in Ghana’s Fourth Republic*. Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany, 2013. P.58.

of being dubious, was passed by the parliament of Ghana even with the objection and refusal to vote of the then opposition (now in government).

In the performance of the duties of the judiciary to prevent, resolve and avoid conflict escalation, parliament still remains that one most important democratic institution that can ensure effective judiciary. The judiciary is that arm of government that gives reason, meaning and applied interpretation of the laws made by parliament and those contained in the constitution. The judiciary does not act on anything that is not law and such law is the solemn duty of parliament as the representatives of the masses in a democracy. The judicial system provides a forum for which individuals or groups with conflicting interests can come together to resolve their differences. Outcomes of judicial resolutions are not lobbied as parliamentarians may do through logrolling and other means of compromises and consensus in their law-making processes. In court, evidence is prime and the courts' decisions must be based on the legal grounds that support the evidence of each side of the conflict. In return, the disputants' acceptance of the ruling of the courts gives legitimacy to the rule of law, to the courts and to the democratic system. Such acceptance is very important for the avoidance of conflict escalations between divergent interest groups in a democracy. However, the judgement of the court will only be regarded as authoritative and accepted by all litigants and the wider society only if the disputants and the wider citizenry have confidence in the operation and impartiality of the judiciary.

The role of parliament in enhancing judicial impartiality and helping to build confidence in the operations of the judiciary cannot be overemphasised. According Mitchell O'Brien (2005), parliaments in democracies can facilitate the effectiveness and impartiality of the judiciary of the country through:

1. The strengthening of judicial independence;
2. Enacting laws that empower courts to resolve conflicts in a just and equitable manner – for example require fair compensation for acquisition of private or community property by government – for example land as in the case of Ghana;

3. Appointment of honest and qualified judges using transparent, merit-based appointment selection processes, possibly through the use of judicial councils and committees;
4. Ensuring the security of tenure for judicial appointees, except for good cause such as ethical breaches of the codes of conduct of judicial appointees as recently happened in Ghana in 2015 after the “Anass exposé on judicial corruption”<sup>264</sup>;
5. Providing continuing judicial education;
6. Facilitating better funding and capacity development for law schools; and
7. Requiring the publication of the rulings of all court decisions in the country and ensuring that they are easily available and accessible to the general public at the least of cost as possible to the common citizen.

Parliament can equally assist the judiciary in its conflict management role through the promotion of the peaceful management of conflicts by demonstrating exemplarily through their debates in parliament between the ruling and opposition party representatives, as well as through fora beyond the floor of parliament like community fora, radio programmes, TV educational programmes and other public arenas.

The Parliament of Ghana has in many cases played and continues to play a very critical role in the management and regulation of conflicts in Ghana. In Many instances when violence erupts the security services intervene as soon as possible to curb violence. To enable them do so, the Ministry of Interior falls on Parliament to demand from it the imposition of curfews in areas and zones of conflict, because Parliament is the sole constitutional body in Ghana that can sanction a curfew or state of emergency.

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<sup>264</sup> The “Anass expose on judicial corruption” in Ghana is a judicial scandal that was investigated and exposed by an ace investigative journalist Anass Arimiyaw Anass in 2015 with video evidence of some judges demanding and taking bribes for which they delivered travesty of justice in return for whatever benefits they took from their clients. Some judges however refused to be induced and even threatened reporting their inducers to the police. A judicial committee was constituted by the chief justice and all those who were genuinely found to have gone against the judicial ethics in Ghana were dismissed from their posts.

The express and timely response of Parliament in such instances is critical to the success of the security services on the ground to succeed in their intervention as witnessed in the Dagbon crisis, the Bimbilla violent clashes, the periodic violent skirmishes in Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo District and the occasional violent eruptions between Alavanyo and Nkonya in the Volta Region.

In as much as curfews may not resolve conflicts, they are necessary in times of violence to save lives and property since it prevents people from congregating to collectively instigate and embark on violence or acts leading to the breach of peace (Awedoba, 2009).

Also, parliament sets Parliamentary Investigation Committees into issues of conflict and corruption when the need arises. A recent example occurred in February 2017 when the current energy minister Mr. Boakye Kyeremateng Agyarko was vetted by the Parliamentary Vetting Committee after being appointed by the President. There were allegations of some monies paid to the committee members to influence them to approve his appointment. Parliament constituted an investigative committee on behalf of the people of Ghana to inquire into the veracity or otherwise of the claims by another Member of Parliament. The committee vindicated the then minister designate of the allegations and he was subsequently approved to take office, while the accusing parliamentarian (Mr. Mahama Ayariga) was made to render an apology to the people of Ghana.

In addition, Parliament ensures equity and accountability for the citizenry through the management of the public purse by scrutinizing public spending by government. This helps to reduce or curb corruption in the public sector which has been a source of rancour and demonstration among the citizenry occasionally. However, parliament itself has of recent times come under criticism for being corrupt. This implies that in playing its watchdog role, parliament needs to undertake a serious in-house cleaning to make its role more legitimate and effective.

The role of parliament in conflict prevention and resolution equally extends to the electoral commission in every democracy. The mandate for the creation of the electoral management body, its terms of reference, the procedures for the conduct of elections and the registration of political parties, the registration of voters, the question of who qualifies to be a voter, the criteria for the verification and validation of individuals' qualification for registration into the voters' register....are all determined by the framework and constitutional regulations legislated by parliament for the Commission. In the performance of its duties, the electoral commission must adhere strictly to the laws and regulations of the country to ensure that elections are not only conducted in a peaceful, free and fair manner, but also to ensure the full and unrestricted participation of the majority of the electorate. Universal adult suffrage must be ensured by the constitution and other supporting legislations. Level grounds must be accorded all political parties and individuals interested to participate and contest freely in all elections as may be contained in such legislation. In Ghana, Article 51 of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution makes room for the constant establishment and revision of electoral regulations by the Electoral Commission through constitutional instruments approved by parliament for the conduct of all elections in the country<sup>265</sup>.

### **2.13.5 The Electoral Commission (EC)**

Elections, as a democratic process, is a conflict management mechanism aimed at choosing leaders from among the many contesting, and sometimes rival, political elites of a given country. The ability of the Electoral Commission (EC) to perform such a function successfully promotes peace in the country and enhances democratic consolidation.

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<sup>265</sup> Republic of Ghana (1992). Constitution of the Republic of Ghana 1992. Page 47.

The electoral Commission in Ghana works to undertake credible elections by drafting and submitting electoral laws in the form of Constitutional Instruments (C.I.) to Parliament for passage to regulate every election as mandated by the constitution in Article 51 of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution, which stipulates, that:

*“The Electoral Commission shall, by constitutional instrument, make regulations for the effective performance of its functions under this Constitution or any other law, and in particular, for the registration of voters, the conduct of public elections and referenda, including provision for voting by proxy.”*

In addition, the EC is responsible for the procurement and supply of electoral essential materials on election days, without which materials electoral processes cannot be completed smoothly to ensure peace and stability as well as credibility of election results. The constitution establishes in Article 48 the modalities for “Appeals from Decisions of the Commission”.<sup>266</sup> This is aimed at reducing post-election violence as happened in Kenya in 2007 and in Côte d’Ivoire recently. For all these regulations to be peaceful, voters, party activists, as well as the political elite must know, understand and accept the electoral regulations of the country. The famous “Election Petition” at the Supreme Court of Ghana after the 2012 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, which disputed the Presidential Election Results is a good example of Ghanaian elites’ understanding and readiness to follow laid down electoral laws and constitutional provisions. The acceptance of the Court’s decision on the seven-months-long electoral dispute was critical to the peace of the country. This is in sharp contrast to the Kenyan (2007) and Ivorian situations that led to the post-election disturbance in those countries.

The EC undertakes voter register cleaning and education exercises for the public and political parties to ensure citizens and party activists understand and follow electoral

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<sup>266</sup> Article 48, Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana, 1992.

rules and regulations for peaceful elections. Most of the Public sensitisation is done in connection with the media and the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE). The appearance of the EC before the Supreme Court which was charged for unlawful rejection of some Presidential aspirants just before the December 2016 elections was an indication that the EC has to play its neutral and firm role to ensure a sound and violent-free electoral game in Ghana. Such instrumental role played by the EC is acclaimed as a major boost to the successful elections in Ghana in 2016.

### **2.13.6 The National Peace Council (NPC)**

The National Peace Council (NPC) was established by the National Peace Council Act, Act 818, 2011. The National Peace Council first worked as a voluntary organisation of religious representatives interested in conflict resolution. Its membership was constituted by a voluntary group of religious leaders from the three major religions - Islam, Christianity and African Traditional Religion. It succeeded in intervening in many important conflict situations especially before, during and after elections to calm down tensions in the country and also get political party leaders to commit to the rules of elections. These successes, coupled with the continued call for the formalisation of the body to constitutionalise its mandate to the enactment of the National Peace Council Act, Act 818 of 2011 by the Parliament of Ghana. It is mandated, among others “... *to facilitate and develop mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution, and to build sustainable peace in the country*”.<sup>267</sup>

The Council collaborated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to develop the National Peace Architecture for Ghana. It has Regional Peace Secretariats in all the regions of Ghana, intervening in conflict situations for resolution, management, conflict data collection, early warning signals picking and

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<sup>267</sup> Republic of Ghana (2011). National Peace Council Act 818, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2011.

reporting to the various District and Regional Security Committees for action where necessary. The peaceful elections held in 2012 and 2016 are partly credited to the role of the NPC.

In the performance of their roles in Ghana, the NPC and the National Council for Civic Education (NCCE) assist Parliament and the Electoral Commission through diverse media to educate the public on their operations.

### **2.13.7 National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE)**

The NCCE is a national institution established under Article 231 of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution, and mandated by Article 233, among others, to educate and inculcate in the citizens of Ghana awareness of their civic responsibilities and an appreciation of their rights and obligations as free people<sup>268</sup>. Practically, the NCCE has been engaged in public education on elections and election procedures, the responsibility of citizens to protect the integrity of the democratic process, and call to courageously participate non-violently in every electoral process and report any miscreants that are seen flouting the laws of the country. The security services and the district and municipal assemblies work together with the NCCE to announce curfew hours and further security regulations in conflict zones in times of emergency and violent disturbances.

By this, the commission plays its public sensitisation role to either assist in understanding electoral processes and avoiding violence or in informing the people during conflict emergency situations. However, the commission has consistently complained of lack of adequate resources to perform its functions properly. This reduces its efficacy in terms of assisting in promoting peaceful democratisation and coexistence which needs a second thought.

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<sup>268</sup> Articles 231; and 233 of 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana



### 2.13.8 Religious Bodies and Councils

Ghana is a highly “religious” country and most Ghanaians belong to one religion or the other. According to the 2010 Ghana Housing and Population Census, 94% of Ghanaians belong to religious groups. Among these, 71.2% of them are Christians and 17.6% are Muslims, whilst 5.2% of these are Traditionalists.<sup>269</sup> These three major faiths in Ghana preach peace and non-violence among their adherents.

In the larger picture of conflict management in Ghana, the church and the mosque have played and continue to play very critical roles in assisting to bring about peace, or at least to reduce violence in many communities. The National Peace Council has representatives from the major religious groups and other civil society organisations. In addition, the Catholic Bishops Conference, and other Christian associations such as the Christian Council, issue appeals to conflicting parties to lay down their arms, stop violence and resort to due process either through the modern or traditional arbitration systems. Religious leaders are also allowed to settle conflicts between and among their congregations when the parties in conflict belong to their congregation, especially if the issue involved is not a criminal one. These religious bodies equally intervene in matters relating to their members and other members of society, and may refer any criminal issues to the police for further action. Disputes that are mostly handled in these instances are conflicts among couples, interpersonal conflicts in society, and other delinquent engagements of the youth whose parents have failed to handle at the household or family level. These low-level conflict resolution roles played by religious leaders go a long way to contribute to the suppressing of latent tensions in society, thereby preventing same from reaching the overt level of conflicts in society. They also contribute through their preaching of the “Word of God” to the social conditioning process aimed at shaping society towards peace and nonviolence.

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<sup>269</sup> Ghana Statistical Service (2011). Ghana National Housing and Population Census, 2010.

The seemingly absence or less inter-religious violence in Ghana is partly attributed to the vibrant role of these religious councils and bodies.

### **2.13.9 The Family**

The family is the basic unit of society. It serves as the primary source of identity and social conditioning. It inculcates the norms and traditions of the family, the community and the society at large in its members and assists in education and trade. In Ghana, the traditional concept of family extends beyond the immediate family to include other members that in western concepts would be considered relatives. This introduces the concept of nuclear family and extended family. The nuclear family includes the couple (a husband and wife; it could be a husband and his wives since polygamy is traditionally accepted and practised in Ghana) and their children. The extended family includes everybody that is closely related in the clan, literally including the first, second, third and fourth generations and extensions of the family. In the latter system, the education and socialisation of the young to the social norms and cultural practices is the responsibility of all, and not only reserved for the immediate family (Nukunya, 2003).<sup>270</sup>

The family educates and socialises the child to adhere to social norms and grow to become a responsible citizen of the society. In social conflict settings, the family is the primary witness of conflicts and calls conflict parties to order to avoid violence. They settle disputes between couples, siblings, and across the extended family. Disputes are first reported to the household head or family head who may single-handedly work at resolving the conflict or engage some or all family members depending on the issue and or parties at stake. By this role, the family prevents conflicts in society from getting into large scale violent confrontation and, thus,

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<sup>270</sup> Nukunya, G. K. (2003) *Tradition and Change in Ghana: An Introduction to Sociology*. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Accra: Ghana University Press.

reduces the stress that would have been mounted in the chief palaces or in the modern court system of arbitration.

### ***2.14 Conceptual Framework on Democratisation in Plural and Multiethnic Societies***

The following framework is conceived to conceptualise the possibility of democratisation in a plural society. It is inspired by the literature of democracy in plural societies, with special reference to the theory of crosscutting cleavages and democracy in plural societies.

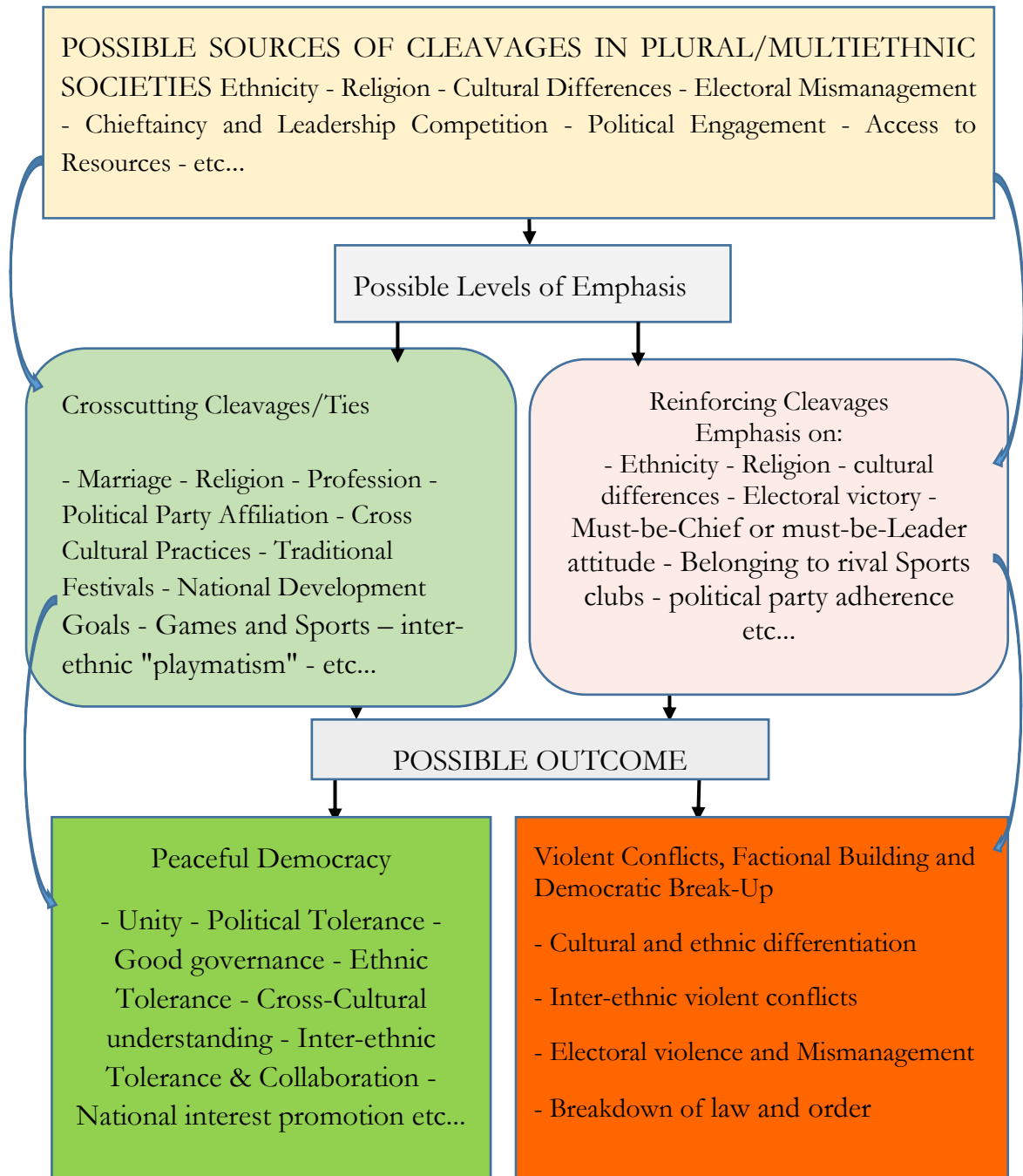
Figure 3 below presents a conceptual framework of democratisation in plural societies. The upper case indicates some possible sources of division and conflict that exist in plural societies. These possible sources of conflict do not necessarily generate conflicts in the community unless individuals and groups behave and act in a way that will emphasize these differences above the general interest of the community and the society in general. In the middle of the frame, the two boxes represent two different ways individuals in society could relate. These include relationships that either emphasise on crosscutting societal ties or those that emphasise on social cleavages. If the emphasis is on cleavages (coinciding), thus differences that exist among the groups, more distance is created between groups and groups become antagonistic to one another, competing unfairly and creating violence against one another. The rule of law is not respected and order in society becomes the order of the stronger groups. This renders successful democratisation virtually impossible, as groups do not have the interest of the nation at heart but rather their group interests. In politics, groups do anything they can and acquire power to their groups and work consciously for the elimination or undermining of other groups. Political competition is reduced to groups' parochial interest and the national interest is rendered secondary. This eventually will lead to democratic frustration, thereby making it difficult to sustain it. This is represented in the lower right box of the frame in Figure 3 above.

On the other hand, where emphasis is placed on common ties (crosscutting ties), interests are crosscutting and of national in nature. The crosscutting ties that exist

among them serve as connectors between the various divides of the society. This allows for cooperation, respect for other groups' rights (human rights), collaboration and successful democratisation. The win-lose attitude associated with emphasis on cleavages is reduced to a level that allows for collaborative governance of the system. Especially, when these cleavages are reduced by effective procedures of cooperation. This will give way for successful democratisation as indicated in the box at the left side of the two outcomes below the frame. Whilst crosscutting cleavages and ties promote trust and objectivity, coinciding cleavages on the other hand deepen mistrust and subjectivity.

In the absence of crosscutting effects that could lead to successful democratisation, consociative arrangements could be made to establish consociational democracy, allowing the various cleavages of the society to stay in their separate groups without any effective interaction, but organised under one consociational government. This is where consociationalism becomes relevant to governance in the plural society.

**Figure 3: Conceptual Framework of Democratisation in Plural and Multiethnic Societies**



*Source: Author's construct, September, 2017*

### 2.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at relevant literature necessary for this thesis. Theoretical and conceptual issues, as they apply in the context of the thesis were dealt with. Concepts

such as democracy and governance both at the modern and traditional levels in Ghana were discussed. In addition, the benchmarks for democracy and good governance were also discussed and put in context in Ghana. Also, issues of ethnicity, ethnic awareness and ethnic consciousness that are characteristic features of plural societies such as Ghana, and how these contribute to peaceful democratisation or violent inter-group conflicts were equally considered.

Further, the chapter considered the theory of crosscutting and coinciding cleavages as applies in Ghana, and some of the factors that contribute to violent conflicts in Ghana, as well as the mechanisms present in Ghana's democratic system for conflict resolution. The chapter concludes with a conceptual framework that was informed by the theoretical discussion in the literature. The theories of consociationalism and crosscutting cleavages (and ties) were instrumental in determining this conceptual frame. The next chapter presents a historical review of conflict structures in Ghana and its related issues.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### ***The Historical Formation of Conflict Structures in Ghana***

#### ***3.0 Introduction***

This third chapter of the thesis presents an overview of the Ghanaian context. It presents a brief description of Ghana's multi-ethnic characteristics and its political organisation as well as how the interaction of these two impact on the peace of its society. It also traces, to some extent, the rise of some conflicts in Ghana and how these conflicts festered through the interaction of colonialism and modern political organisation in the Ghanaian system. Its objective is to assist us understand current social and political organisation in Ghana and how this evolved through the interaction of tradition and modernity, as well as their consequential effect on conflicts and democratic governance in contemporary Ghana. This discussion is done in the light of the concepts of pluralism, conflict and the development and sustenance of a stable democracy in plural societies, with reference to Ghana's democratic development starting from the eve of independence. In addition, it presents some highlights on the study areas where field data was collected for this thesis. These areas are known conflict spots that were selected to help us provide answers to some of the objectives of the thesis, and which answers could be extrapolated to the national situation.

#### ***3.1 Social and Political Structure of Ghana***

Every society has its own social and political organisation that ensures its smooth functioning (Nukunya, 1999). Ghana as a society has various facets of consideration when talking about its social and political structure. These may include various institutions such as kinship and marriage, religion, language, work and livelihood, and its political organisation. In this thesis, our focus in this section will be on the political structure of the Ghanaian society and how the institutions in the political system

functioned to ensure law and order in the society. We consider this at three main phases namely the pre-colonial, colonial (pre-independence), and post-colonial (post-independence) phases.

### ***3.1.1 Pre-colonial Political Administration in Ghana***

Various communities in pre-colonial Ghana were governed by their individual norms with their unique structural organisations. Principally, Ghanaian societies were organised in one of two main social and political structures, namely, centralised (or chiefly) societies, and acephalous (or non-chiefly) societies (Nukunya, 1999; Awedoba, 2009; Brukum, 2006).

Centralised societies in Ghana have an organised administration with a central figure of authority and power, usually a chief. Examples of such organised societies are the Ashanti and Dagbon Kingdoms. Stateless or acephalous societies on the other hand did not have a centralised authority around which the state was organised. The latter functioned in smaller social units like families and family heads with each family head wielding authority and power over their own smaller family units. Examples of acephalous societies are the Kusasis. Whilst decision making in centralised communities emanated from a central authority and binding on the whole society with punitive sanctions for deviants, there was no central authority in acephalous societies from which decisions emanated (Awedoba, 2009). This did not mean that non-centralised communities did not have institutions that ensured law and order and regulated conflicts between individuals in the society. However, these institutions, unlike those of the centralised societies and states, are at the basic (family) levels (Nukunya, 1999, p.167); and for decades each of these two different systems regulated life and ensured social and political order among their individual populations until the introduction of colonial rule that tinkered with the various systems (Awedoba, 2009. P. 3).



### 3.1.2 Colonisation and Local Governance in Ghana

Lentz (2006) writing on the political organisation of modern Ghana and the relationships between the peoples of the country, indicates that the ethnic construction of modern Ghana and its representation in democratic politics can sometimes be “properly understood against the backdrop of their political visions” by paying attention to their various “...degrees of capacity for political negotiations” regarding societies with “organized government” in contrast with families which lived in autonomous, small “family communities” and were continuously feuding among themselves and incapable of negotiating with Europeans (Arhin, 1974, 99-100, cited in Lentz, 2006: 76, DeLavignette, 1970<sup>271</sup>; Blanton et al, 2001<sup>272</sup>). The latter could only be “civilised” by means of armed force. (Ibid, p.116, cited in Lentz 2006: p.76; See also Darbon, 2014<sup>273</sup>; Boone, 2014<sup>274</sup>; Lugard, 1922<sup>275</sup>)

During colonial rule the various regions of the colony were not given the same level of recognition in terms of political representation and economic importance. Each Territory was treated based on how they were perceived to contribute to the success or failure of the colonial administration. While mass labour migration had already *linked* the Northern Territories with the rest of The Colony, the British regarded the Northern Territories as a “hinterland, requiring protection and careful administration

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<sup>271</sup> Delavignette, R. L. (1970). 'French Colonial Policy in Black Africa, 1945 to 1960', in Lewis Gann & Peter Duignan, (eds.). *Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960: Volume 2, The History and Politics of Colonialism 1914-1960. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press* (251-285).

<sup>272</sup> Blanton et al (2001). Colonial Style and Post-Colonial Ethnic Conflict in Africa. *Journal of Peace Research*, Volume: 38 issue: 4, pp. 473-491.

<sup>273</sup> Darbon, D. (2016). “Public Administration, State and Society.” In Bach, D. (Ed.) (2016). *State and Society in Francophone Africa Since Independence. Springer, 27 July 2016.*

<sup>274</sup> Boone, C. (2003). *Political Topographies of the African State. Cambridge University Press, 27 Oct., 2003.*

<sup>275</sup> Lugard, F. D. (1922). *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa. William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1922.*

along the lines of ‘progressive traditionalism’.<sup>276</sup> The Northern Territories were not represented at the colony level by African or Ghanaian representatives as was the case with the Southern Territories and the Colony. The Northern Territories were represented by the British Chief Commissioner resident in the Territories.

Historically, therefore, there existed differences between the Northern and Southern territories of the Gold Coast in economic development and political representation and participation under the British indirect rule system. While the South was considered an organised society with well-developed traditional political structures to be relied on by the colonial government for its policy implementations, the North, even if some kingdoms and communities were organised under kingship, was considered primitive, economically nonviable, and politically unorganised. To the colonialist, only force could rule these Northern Ghanaian societies, as Furnivall (1948) puts it in his suggestion for governing plural societies and truly, rulers and local leaders were forced to bargain (or even accept without bargain) to establish stable mechanisms of rule of taxation that fed into the economic motives of the colonial concept (Boone, 2003). The fact remains, however, that whilst the peoples of the Northern Territories were organised in small clans, tribes, and kingdoms (Awedoba, 2009), the Southern Territory had a large Akan population organised in relatively larger groups which, even though had their own differences in pre-colonial times, united against the Europeans in many wars that earned the respect of the Europeans. Secondly, many populations in the south possess more or less similar or homogeneous socio-cultural characteristics that make them easily clustered into the larger Akan kingdom or ethnic group such that a united front among them makes them a force to reckon with. Third, the peoples of the Southern Territories with their superior war pump and power acted as intermediaries of the slave traders whilst the

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<sup>276</sup> Lentz, Carola (2006). *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana*. Edinburgh and London: Edinburgh University Press for the International African Institute. P.76.

Northern Territories served as a source for slaves raided by the warriors of the southern territories (with the assistance of organised warrior kingdoms of the North) and taken back to be sold to the white slave trader back in the Coastal towns of southern Ghana<sup>277</sup>. These phenomena established long relationships between the leaders of the South and European slave traders, and drifted into defining the political relationship between the peoples of the Southern Territories and the colonial administration. Besides, the Southern Territories with their geological and climatic advantage were pre-disposed to many natural resources that were not only needed by the British colonial government, but formed the basis for colonising the Gold Coast in the first place. Gold, cocoa, timber, bauxite, which were very vital for the presence of the colonial government are all in the South. The Northern Territories did not have any of these resources, thus making it economically less interesting to the colonial government.

These differences in status, agency and consideration accorded by the colonial government to different parts of the same country only added up to the already culturally diverse and sometimes adversarial attitudes and relationships borne out of historical prejudices between and among the peoples of the Gold Coast. It also created and/or reinforced the economic inequalities (that existed between the Northern and Southern Territories of the Gold Coast) which in the view of Lipset (1963)<sup>278</sup> and Dahl (1998<sup>279</sup>: 1971)<sup>280</sup> can be a source of problem for democratic development, sustainability and consolidation in plural societies. These regional (territorial at the time) differences, accentuated by the colonial administration,

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<sup>277</sup> Bombande, F. H. (2007). "Conflicts, Civil Society Organisations and Community Peace Building in Northern Ghana". In Tonah, S. (Ed). *Ethnicity, Conflicts and Consensus in Ghana*. (98-115). Accra, Ghana. Woeli Publishing Services.

<sup>278</sup> Lipset, M. Seymour (1963). *Political Man*. Anchor Books Edition. pp. 24-53

<sup>279</sup> Dahl, A. Robert (1998). *On Democracy*. Yale University Press, New Haven & London. pp 145-165

<sup>280</sup> Dahl, A. Robert (1971). *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. Yale University Press, New Haven & London. pp. 81-104

manifested themselves even more in local political organisation and mobilisation on the eve of independence when the Gold Coast witnessed an increase in political mobilisation that was done around these territorial differences and the chieftaincy system.

The first time the Northern Territories were represented in the Gold Coast Legislature was in 1946 with the formation of the Northern Territories Council (NTC) where chiefs from all the Northern Native Authorities (NNA) were to form a discussion group to discuss “matters of common interest” and to learn “to think further than purely local affairs”<sup>281</sup>. The representatives of the NTC equally participated in the Coussey Committee of 1948 to prepare drafts for a new constitution (4 chiefs from the Northern Territories). The report of this committee, which was published in 1949, recommended the abolition of the Native Authorities and the separation of chieftaincy from local government to enable the removal of chiefs and traditional leaders from the determination and conception of political democratic institutions on the eve of independence in the Gold Coast. This effort did not, however, succeed in the total elimination of chieftaincy from “governance” even if there was the “separation” of “chieftaincy” from “politics”<sup>282</sup>.

Right from the late 1940s, from the onset of preparations for handing over of power from the colonial government to Ghanaian leadership, the question of regional (territorial) representation became a conscious issue of concern for the various regions of the Gold Coast. More so for the regions that perceived themselves not to have the educational and human resource capacity to put in good representation in both political offices and in civil service positions in Accra and at the regions.

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<sup>281</sup> Lentz, Carola (2006), Lentz, Carola (2006). *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana*. Edinburgh and London: Edinburgh University Press for the International African Institute. (p.176).

<sup>282</sup> Report of the Coussey Committee on Constitutional Review for the Gold Coast (1949)

Differences in exposure to and opportunities for education varied very widely in the regions at the coming of European education into the country, with the Northern and the Trans-Volta Territories being the least beneficiaries of these opportunities. In the few schools that existed in the two territories, people from chiefly families had the first opportunities, and training in these schools at the time was targeted at producing teachers and priests. This gave further advantage to chiefly families in addition to their original advantage of being privileged for the collection of taxes and property rates for the colonial government under the indirect rule system, and their subsequent representation of the people at the Native Authority.

When in 1949 the Coussey Committee, in its constitutional deliberative report, recommended the abolition of the Native Authorities and the separation of chieftaincy from local government, whilst local government institutions are constructed in preparation towards independence, Northern chiefs did not take it kindly, for obvious reasons. First of all, they considered this new development “too far-reaching, fearing that early independence and rapid Africanisation of the civil service would lead to ‘*black imperialism*’ from the South” since not enough trained Northern staff was available to occupy posts, and that the North would remain ‘nothing other than a labour camp’ for the South (Lentz, 2006)<sup>283</sup>. Second, due to the educational, economic and political inequalities between the North and the South, and the history of the South raiding the North for slaves and the North being a labour source for plantations, mines and other viable colonial industries in the South, the North feared the departure of the *white man* could re-subjugate the North to the *tyranny* of the South (“*black imperialism*”).

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<sup>283</sup> Lentz, Carola. (2006). *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana*. Edinburgh University Press for the International African Institute (p.176),

The first concern reminds us of one of the conditions Lijphart (1977) establishes for the good functioning of a consociational democracy, thus the requirement for “allocating civil service appointments and scarce financial resources in the form of government subsidies among the different segments”<sup>284</sup> of a plural society. One challenge to Lijphart’s idea is what presents itself in Ghana. In a situation where one or more groups or segments of the society, for reasons peculiar to their development (geographical, ideological, historical, colonial etc.), do not have the requisite number of persons with the education, knowledge, skills and maybe experience necessary to fill up certain positions reserved for that group, the group concerned will still be at a disadvantage in relation to those positions.

The second concern equally demonstrates the lack of the mutual security and the trust that must exist among various cultural groups to enable the establishment, successful functioning and the sustainability of liberal democracy in a plural society. The Northern leaders did not trust Southerners who have the majority of their people in the civil service and political offices in the government of the day to treat the North fairly after the white colonialists would have handed over power to Ghanaians and left the country. The Northern Territories Council (NTC) members cautioned the “ignorance, inexperience and apathy of Northerners” of which political parties in the South could take undue advantage of and relegate the North to the background (Lentz, p.177). In the midst of these suspicions and (somehow) historically linked worries, the Gold Coast, all the same, became independent in 1957 under the new name *Ghana*. The advent of party politics leading to this independence was to see an emergence of party alignment and voter mobilisation built around regionalism, ethnicity and other cleavage-based identifications and divisions that did not enhance the unification of the country.

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<sup>284</sup> Lijphart, Arendt (1977). *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration*. Yale University Press. p.38

The social structure of Ghana was further altered by the process of decolonisation. Regional (Territorial) and ethnic politicisation in Ghana manifested themselves in the periods leading to independence and the nursing of multi-party democracy in the Gold Coast. The integration of other parts of the Gold Coast into the “colony”<sup>285</sup> in preparation for independence was launched in the late 1940s through the establishment of Territorial Councils to get representatives especially from the Northern Territories, which did not have any representation before then, to represent their peoples in Accra. Initiatives were also activated at the United Nations to integrate the Trans-Volta Togoland into the Gold Coast.

Ghana as known today, therefore, is a conglomerate of four (4) formerly distinct territorial components that were brought together around the time of Independence<sup>286</sup>. These components included:

1. The Gold Coast Colony which was made up of the Coastal States, Akyem Abuakwa and Akwamu, that came under British colonial rule as a result of the Bond of 1844;
2. The Kingdom of Ashanti, which was annexed by the British at the end of the Ya Asantewaa War in 1901;
3. The Northern Territories, which comprised kingdoms that came under British influence by reason of *treaties of friendship* executed between the British Government and the traditional rulers via the Northern Territories Ordinance of 1901; and
4. The Trans-Volta Togoland – a British Trust Territory which was originally part of the German colony lost to the Allied Forces after the First World War,

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<sup>285</sup> Made up of the coastal states, Akyem Abuakwa and Akwamu, which were under British colonial rule as a result of the Bond of 1844

<sup>286</sup> Ghana Government Official Website. The Historical Context of Ghana. Available online at: <http://www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/information/reports/144-the-historical-context> accessed on 16th June 2013 at 04:29GMT+2

and was split up between Britain and France and administered under a mandate of the League of Nations.

Thus, Ghana, at the time of its birth, was not a monolithic entity, and the various components had their own tensions and disagreements. Historical, economic, political, ethnic and territorial issues fuelled and shaped relationships between and among these four major components of the then Gold Coast. In addition, colonial government policies reinforced inequalities and differences right from the community level (among and between different ethnic and cultural groups) to the national level (between different regions and their populations). While the Gold Coast Colony and the Kingdom of Ashanti had some advantage and privilege in political representation, education and infrastructural development compared to the rest of the Gold Coast due to their strategic importance<sup>287</sup> to the success of colonial objectives, the Northern Territories and the Trans-Volta Togoland were either neglected and or exploited for obvious reasons.

Limited economic opportunities in the Northern Territories coupled with extreme poverty, poor climatic conditions, lack of or unexplored resources led young men of the North to seek work in the South. The Northern Territories became the source of migrant labour for the mines and cocoa farms in the South, and this was encouraged by official labour recruitment policies underpinned by the belief that men from the Northern Territories were hard-working. In the words of Governor Gordon Guggisberg, “every man of the Northern Territories [was] worth his weight in gold ... for the mines, for private enterprise and for the development of those schemes the completion of which are necessary to secure progress and development”<sup>288</sup>.

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<sup>287</sup> The South, comprising Gold Coast Colony which was made up of the coastal states, Akyem Abuakwa and Akwamu, and the Kingdom of Ashanti, had the mines, the timber, the cocoa, the fish, and the route to export colonial resources back to Europe.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid



This southward migration of strong able-bodied persons from the North had devastating consequences for social cohesion and community development for the peoples of the North. On account of the need to preserve the North as a reservoir of cheap and unskilled labour, a conscious policy not to encourage literacy through the provision of educational institutions evolved leading to the provision of very few educational institutions in the North that offered education beyond Primary School level and, consequently, very few well-educated people to take up positions in the government and civil service at independence. From this backdrop, the representatives of the Northern Territories Council (NTC) – mostly chiefs that were being used for the implementation of the colonial indirect rule system – objected to the granting of “immediate independence” that was the watch-word of the CPP leadership that led the fight for Independence in 1957. This is because they rightly feared the domination of politics and civil service by the slave-lord Gold Coasters in the South, based on their historical relationship during slave trade, coupled with the low level of education referred to earlier. This made it difficult for the Northerners to get well trained individuals to take up civil service positions. The Chiefs also indicated that the treaties they signed with the British in the 19th century were *friendship and protection treaties*, and, consequently, the British had no legal basis to hand them over to another government without ensuring that they had extra protection under the Independence Constitution. Thus, the development of the Northern Territories and equitable treatment of persons of Northern origin by people of the South were issues that demanded attention at the dawn of independence.

Up North, these sentiments drove Northern representatives to oppose to Dr. Kwame Nkrumah’s CPP. Northern leaders united to create the Northern People’s Party (NPP) in 1954, led by Chief S. D. Dombo, one of the influential Legislative Assembly members from the Northern Territories. The main objective of the NPP was to obtain and promote “respect for the culture of the peoples of the Northern Territories; to obtain ‘political and social advancement’ and to fight for “a progressively increasing share (of Northerners) in the administrative and other services of the country”. (Lentz 2006, p.179).

Furthermore, The Trans-Volta Togoland (TVT), which today represents the Volta Region of Ghana and parts of Northern Region, was put under the trusteeship of the British and French by the League of Nations after World War I. On the eve of independence, the British informed the UN of its relinquishing of the trust agreement if the Gold Coast became independent without the Trust Territories joining. This information to the United Nations increased the pace of agitation by Ewe<sup>289</sup> nationalists who had been campaigning since 1946 for the two Trust Territories of Britain and France to merge as one independent country in order to re-unite the Ewe peoples who had been split up by the Mandate of the League of Nations. They feared that the split would become permanent should separate arrangements be made for the two Trust Territories. The Togoland Congress<sup>290</sup> (TC), a political party under the leadership of S. G. Antor, had emerged to champion the cause of separation of the TVT from the Gold Coast because they believed that if the British Trust Territory integrated with the Gold Coast upon independence, the French would also annex the French-speaking part, leading to a permanent split of the ethnic group.<sup>291</sup>

Internally, among the populations of the TVT, however, the issue was more complicated. Whilst some of the agitators wanted the Anlo-Ewe of the south-east to be integrated with the Trust Territories in order that all Ewes would be in one political entity, others, fearing domination of an Anlo-Ewe state by the Anlo, called for secession. On the other hand, the peoples of the northern British Trust Territory preferred integration with the Gold Coast so that they could be with their kith and kin as the split of the Territory between the British and the French divided people from same families, clans, and ethnic groups. For instance, the capital of the kingdom

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<sup>289</sup> The Trans-Volta Togoland was principally occupied by the Ewe, the Gurma, Guan and Akan

<sup>290</sup> A Political Party that was meant to promote the interest of the peoples of the Trans-Volta Togoland

<sup>291</sup> Ibid

of Dagbon, Yendi, was located in the Trust Territory whilst a part of it was in the British-held Northern Territories. Other groups also had blood ties with some of the peoples of the Northern Territories and also felt a closer affinity to them than to those of the northern French Trust Territory.

In a decision of the UN General Assembly in December 1955, the peoples of the Trust Territory were to be given the opportunity to decide in a plebiscite, if they wished to be integrated into the Gold Coast at independence, or to remain separate until a decision was taken in respect of the French-administered part. The plebiscite was held on 9th May 1956 with an overall majority of 58% in favour of integration with the Gold Coast. However, in the southern part of the Trans-Volta Togoland where the Togoland Congress had campaigned vigorously for separation, there was a 55% (meaning 45% of people in Southern Volta voted for integration with the Gold Coast) majority in favour of separation. Consequently the decision to integrate the TVT with the Gold Coast at its independence was a minority decision as far as those in the south of the Trust Territories were concerned. The separatists were dissatisfied with the results of the plebiscite and believed that the decision in favour of integration had been procured by manipulation.

As a result, at independence, some groups of persons particularly in southern TVT did not wish to be part of Ghana. They did not abandon their agitation and there were many disturbances in 1957 soon after independence. Efforts to suppress these agitations led to repression of those political activists who were campaigning for separation.

In all, the Ashanti Kingdom and the Colony, just like the other regions of the Gold Coast, also had their own suspicions, reservations and secessionist tendencies on the

eve of independence<sup>292</sup>. There was mutual suspicion between Ashanti and the Colony. The coastal neighbours of Ashanti feared being dominated by the Ashanti should they come together under one political entity. On its part, Ashanti feared domination by the Colony. Even though in the early 1940s there were efforts at rapprochement between the Colony and Ashanti, these mutual suspicions did not die off completely. The formation of the National Liberation Movement (NLM) in 1954 as an opposition party to the CPP further worsened their suspicions as the NLM became the official mouthpiece of Ashanti, its Kings and Ashanti aspirations.

The immediate objective for the creation of the NLM was to press for higher prices for cocoa which was the major cash crop of the Ashanti and other forest zones of the South. As a result, the movement gained popularity in the Ashanti, Akyem Abuakwa and the Krobo areas which had large tracts of cocoa farms. The remote impetus for the NLM's formation, however, was the perceived marginalisation of the traditional ruling class by the Convention People's Party (CPP)<sup>293</sup> under the leadership of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. In addition, the chiefs were also suspicious of the centralist policies of the CPP and feared marginalisation in the CPP's eventual governance of the country after independence. The NLM therefore proposed for a federal form of government for Ghana and especially the Ashanti Kingdom fearing that a highly centralized form of government would lead to dictatorship from Accra. The demand for federalism was rejected in the 1957 Independent Constitution but provision was made for a minimal form of devolution with the provision for Regional Assemblies.<sup>294</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Ibid

<sup>293</sup> Nations Encyclopedia. Ghana. Found at <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Africa/Ghana-POLITICAL-PARTIES.html> Accessed on January, 10 2016 at 4:54GMT+1

<sup>294</sup> Wikipedia. *History of Ghana*. Available online at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Ghana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Ghana) retrieved on 18th June, 2013 at 13:56GMT+2

In effect, it is evident from the above that the preparations for modern political democratic construction in Ghana was marked by manifest interplay of elements of mistrust, suspicion, and divisive relationships among and between regions and ethnic groups in the colony. The above exposition demonstrates the difficulties experienced in Ghana during the early stages of democratisation and state formation. It exposes the problems of bringing separate social cleavages together under one political umbrella. Ghana, after these initial social and political cleavage turmoils, transitioned from inter regional conflicts at independence to a mix of conflicts at two separate levels: on the political arena where it suffered years of interrupted democratic processes that were laced with intermittent coups d'état; and at the intra-communal level where the institutional transformations led to interethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts that have existed till today. The importance of this historical review to the development of this thesis is to the extent that it demonstrates the existence of social cracks and problems of integration at independence that could have been a premise for the establishment of a consociational democratic system in Ghana at that time, or even the creation of a federal state. At Independence, however, Ghana was united under a unitary democracy. What follows in terms of the evolution of pre-independence conflicts and their impact on post-independence democratic Ghana is our interest and at the core of this thesis.

### ***3.1.3 Post-Independence Political Administration in Ghana***

Events in Ghana shortly after independence saw the springing up and proliferation of many regional, tribal, ethnic and religious based political parties and associations not only in direct opposition to the ruling party – the CPP, but also in the pursuit of interests and goals that were aimed at satisfying various cleavages and ethnic groups. The CPP saw this as a threat to national unity, and the security of Ghana's budding democracy that had just started in the newly independent country. To forestall this development, and to ensure the continuous legitimacy of the CPP, the then CPP government took advantage of its majority in parliament to pass the Avoidance of

Discrimination Act (ADA) in 1957.<sup>295</sup> The ADA prohibited all ethnic, regional, geographical, territorial and religious based parties and political organisations in Ghana. From then onwards, all political parties with such characteristics were compelled to fold up since they were declared illegal with severe consequences to the leaders and membership of such parties. They all united to form the United Party (UP) in 1957.

The process of decolonisation in Ghana had two important consequences for regional and local politics in the country.<sup>296</sup> In the first place, the removal of the British colonial officials from local government made way for local political initiatives. In this regard, locals (non-British Ghanaians) who were chosen to replace the British officials were either initially employed in teaching or worked in chieftaincy structures, and were involved in local conflicts before their employment into local government positions. Some of them were also CPP adherents and thereby gained the favour of the CPP government that got them employed into those positions. The employment of these individuals, therefore, reinforced already existing divisive tendencies among and between ethnic groups and communities that were divided along the CPP/NLM/NPP local politics in the run-up to independence. Conflicts and adversarial competition “erupted between villages, among chiefs and along ethnic lines” at the time (Lentz, 2006, 180).

Secondly, the withdrawal of British colonial officials also gave way to the proliferation of alliances and political outlets. This is because, whereas before then the people had a common “external” ally in the person of the colonial Governor – represented at the local level by the District Commissioner – who was the key individual capable of supporting local groups and individuals in the pursuit of their interests; this situation

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<sup>295</sup> Republic of Ghana (1957). Avoidance of Discrimination Act 38 of 1957.

<sup>296</sup> Lentz, Carol (2006). Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana. P.179.

changed after decolonisation when structures for self-governance were set up from the local to the national level, spanning from local councils through the district councils and the regional councils up to the seat of government in Accra. These various hierarchical levels were soon to be played off against one another both in composition in terms of who filled what positions in these structures, and in the functions and jurisdictions of the various structures.<sup>297</sup>

Local government structures were designed to co-exist side-by-side with the traditional chieftaincy institutions which continued to form an essential framework for the forging of local political alliances. In the context of the historical experience where chiefly families had more access to the few educational institutions established in some areas of the Gold Coast, especially in the *Northern Territories*, chiefly families had more schooled members than other non-chiefly families. Consequently, the elections conducted for the choice of representatives to the local, district and regional councils were either won by educated sons of chiefs who worked for the colonial administration under the indirect rule system or by educated chiefs themselves. Only in rare circumstances were these elections won by the very few non-chiefly-but-educated individuals of the time. This was without prejudice to the automatic representation of chiefs forming a defined percentage of the membership of the local and district councils (Lentz, 2006: 180-183). Thus, a form of “neo-traditional” system, fused with modern political offices and elites (hybridisation), was created allowing chiefly offices to be converted into offices within the modern political system, a practice Bayart (1993) described as reciprocal assimilation of elites<sup>298</sup>. This development further deepened the alteration of the social and political structure of the country (Nukunya, 1999; Brukum, 2006; Awedoba, 2009; Tsikata and Seini, 2004)

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid, p.180.

<sup>298</sup> Bayart, J. F. (1993). *The State in Africa: the Politics of the Belly*. London: Heinemann. Cited in Lentz, C. (2006). *Ethnicity and the Making of History in Northern Ghana*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press (International African Library). p.180

from a purely traditional system purposefully organised during colonial rule to make the indirect rule system to succeed, to a modern democratic system of governance which elite were however drawn from the previous leadership of the traditional system, making it difficult to call it a purely modern democratic system of governance.

Until 1958 all divisional chiefs equally served as local council chairmen and also had the privilege to select among chiefs of their traditional jurisdiction and closest relatives to take up posts as “traditional members” in the local and district councils, because the law provided for traditional members’ representation at the councils. One’s chances of getting elected to become a councillor and/or gaining political power and influence increased proportionally if one was both educated and a member of a chiefly family. With this melange of traditional and modern political institutions and functions, divisional chiefs by their privileged position dominated the political scene at all three levels of local, district and regional councils.

Today, this *direct* fusion of traditional and modern political and administrative institutions and functions does not only still exist in Ghana, but deeply felt in the Ghanaian political culture and in the construction of governance from all levels of the political and administrative structure – district, regional and national. The traditional governance system runs parallel to the modern political system, with similar governance objectives but not fused structural functions. Chiefs are recognised by the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution as part of the governance system in Ghana, even if the same constitution circumscribes the functions of the chief as “non-political”<sup>299</sup> and *excludes* them from “active party politics”.<sup>300</sup> The story was different immediately after independence.

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<sup>299</sup> Republic of Ghana (1992). *1992 4<sup>th</sup> Republican Constitution of Ghana*. Articles 270-277.

<sup>300</sup> *ibid*



As party politics became gradually entrenched after independence, and politicians continued to attach more and more importance to the role of the chief in rallying popular support from their constituents for political parties during elections<sup>301</sup>, coupled with the inter-mingling of chiefs and their close allies in local government, the CPP government (after independence) became more and more involved in the determination and instalment of chiefs all over the country. Sometimes the CPP did this without recourse to peculiar, established local traditional rules for the selection and installation or dismissal of chiefs. Consequently, any suspected (perceived) or real (whether subtle or open) allegiance/support by a chief for any other political party, either than the CPP, was tantamount to that chief's own call for his (self) dismissal. Such chiefs would be quickly replaced by a rival aspirant who is flirting or ready to flirt with and rally votes for the CPP. This phenomenon was to sow the seeds of conflict between and among different rival groups, families and gates, and to last into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with the current intractable chieftaincy conflicts that exist throughout the country. One example of such chieftaincy conflicts started by such occurrences that still exists today is the Bawku chieftaincy conflict. Another is the Abudu versus Andani chieftaincy gates conflict in Dagbon (Yendi).

Another avenue for conflict in this *transitional* era was the chief's reticence to accept being an equal citizen of equal right within the budding structures of local governance where chiefs and non-chiefs were supposed to have equal status in the discussion and decision-making process at the local government level. The desire to "rule" in the councils as if they were under their chieftain huts was in contrast with the pseudo Western-established democratic principles that were being developed in the new nation, leading to conflict with other non-chiefly educated elites in the councils

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<sup>301</sup> Tonah, S. (2012). The Politicisation of a Chieftaincy Conflict: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 21(1): 1-20 (2012)

(Lentz, 2006; Awedoba, 2009; Odotei and Awedoba, 2006<sup>302</sup>). In Lentz (2006), we read A. P. S. Termaghre, then commissioner for the Lawra District in a statement of advice to his successor, state that: "... (D)o not forget to reconcile with the chiefs...(c)hieftaincy is a very sensitive institution and (chiefs) wish to remain above the ordinary member of the masses...The Traditional Council arrogates strong feelings to dominate both the party and the (local) Council and their activities. With careful education this tendancy (*sic*) can be uprooted" (Lentz, 2006, 182).

Yet another form of conflict that manifested itself (if not worsened) at the dawn of independence was that between organised kingdoms/chiefdoms and communities that were made to rule or oversee non-chiefly communities during colonial rule. In some instances, as in the case of the Bawku conflict, the ruling peoples emanated from a different kingdom (Nayiri) and were preferred by the colonial government to help implement the indirect rule system due to their organised system of leadership as opposed to the Kusasi who were an acephalous society without chieftaincy. Many such instances existed in the then colony, especially in the Northern Territories. After independence, and influenced by the mass nationalist mobilisation against colonialism across Africa, same sentiments of liberalism were manifested at the micro level. At this micro level, communities that hitherto cooperated with imposed chiefs during colonialism saw it the appropriate moment to equally emancipate themselves, and hence have their "self-rule". Consequently, a number of inter-ethnic, chieftaincy, and land conflicts spitted over the country, especially in the Northern Territories and Trans-Volta Togoland areas where many acephalous societies and cultures existed or where more powerful and more structurally organised social groups were made to "rule" other groups. These equally led to territorial issues after independence and during attempts to rezone the country for administrative purposes. The non-violent

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<sup>302</sup> Irene k. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (Eds) (2006). Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development. *Sub-Saharan Publishers* Accra.

conflict between the Kwahus and the Ewes of the Afram Plains in which petitions have been submitted to successive governments for change of its name to reflect the ethnic group that owns the plains is an example. In addition, the 1994 violent conflict between the Konkombas and Nanumbas traces its origins to such historical relations (Maasole, 2006)<sup>303</sup>.

The drawing of district boundaries for administrative purposes got inspired from native authority boundaries. Unfortunately, native authority boundaries were already pregnant with conflicts of ownership and belonging since some pieces of land were already contested by a number of native authorities with regard to which native authority owned which administrative district and vice versa. This array of conflicts, inspired by the interplay of ethnic, chieftaincy and native authority boundary conflicts on the one hand, and local government and development initiatives on the other hand was baptised in Lentz (2006) as the conflicts of “the time when politics came” in the 1950s and 1960s (Lentz, 2006. pp. 199).

The time when modern politics came to Ghana “marked a profound shift in which all the long-standing local political rifts...became charged with party politics. The instrumentalisation was mutual: political parties – in particular the CPP – took advantage of local tensions to gain a foothold, while local litigants looked on to party friends” in the regional and national political arena for support in asserting their own interests (Lentz, 2006, 199-200). The involvement of supra-local power blocks impacted local conflicts with an unprecedented divisiveness among the various cultures of the country (ibid, 199-200). Within this context, *politics* was that *external* element of power or force exerted by national power elites and which confronted “a

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<sup>303</sup> Maasole, S. C. (2006). The Konkombas and their Neighbours: From the Pre-European Period to 1914 – A Study in Inter-ethnic Relations in Northern Ghana. *Ghana Universities Press*, 2006

harmonious local traditional community that has its own guidelines and manners” (ibid).

### ***3.1.3 Summary***

Discussing the above in the light of theories of democracy in plural societies, Lijphart in his prescriptions for democracy in plural societies – consociational democracy – favoured territorial and ethnic based structuring of political representation as was prevalent in the many demands of the various sections of the Gold Coast before independence in 1957. However, the Ghanaian case as dictated by the Avoidance of Discrimination Act (ADA)<sup>304</sup> which was passed by the Nkrumah government prohibiting the formation of any political party which membership is of ethnic, religious, territorial or regional nature; is evident of Horowitz (1985, 2000)’s<sup>305</sup> argument that the use of ethnicity, religion, region, territory and other forms of diversity to demarcate political boundaries and representation will rather intensify differences and aggravate conflict among and between different factions rather than create cooperation for peaceful governance and co-existence. The main danger to avoid is doing anything in a plural society that will reinforce coinciding cleavages instead of enhancing cross-cutting cleavages necessary for peaceful democratic governance in a plural society (like Ghana). The ADA 38, 1957 has since maintained its fundamental principle throughout all constitutions in Ghana. In the current Fourth Republican Constitution, 1992, it is a crime to form a political party with sectional, ethnic, religious, or regional leaning.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> Avoidance of Discrimination Act - 1957 (No. 38 of 1957). Found online at <http://laws.ghanalegal.com/acts/id/9/avoidance-of-discrimination-act> accessed on 26th February, 2018 at 06:17 GMT

<sup>305</sup> Horowitz, D. L. (2000). *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California; University of California Press, London England. P.4.

<sup>306</sup> Republic of Ghana (1992). Article 55 (4), 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution.

The consequence of these prescription and arrangement is to compel parties to always compromise and tolerate the culture, views and participation of other cleavages beyond their own ethnic or cultural group. This constant contact will enhance communication and interdependence between populations of different cultural and ethnic origins, and enhance better understanding and tolerance of one another's culture and interests, leading to a more peaceful co-existence necessary for democratic development and sustainability.

The compulsory requirement of having a founding member in each district of Ghana and having offices in at least two-thirds of all constituencies enables the creation, establishment and functioning of political parties with multiethnic and national character in order to “induce moderation and multiethnic bargaining” and “vote-pooling” across ethnic divides.<sup>307</sup> In Ghana, whilst one cannot empirically tell to what extent this has contributed to reducing conflicts, it is clear that it has not eliminated the occurrence of ethnic conflicts in the country. However, one could posit that the situation could have been worst if this dispensation was not taken, and if parties were formed on ethnic and regional cleavage basis with the unavoidable consequence of cultural domination from larger ethnic groups. It is possible to conjecture, for example, that a political party with Akan origin in Ghana could have easily dominated all the other ethnic groups because the Akan currently make up almost 50% of the total population of Ghana, standing at 47.5% according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census. All other tribal groups have below 10% each except the Mole-Dagbani group that has about 16.6% of the population.<sup>308</sup>

In sum, while Ghanaian traditional chieftaincy institutions were successfully used to help administer the Gold Coast under *indirect rule*, the changes that occurred in these

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<sup>307</sup> Horowitz, L. Donald. Opcit

<sup>308</sup> Ghana Statistical Service. 2010 Population and Housing Census.

institutions and in the functions of the chief after independence created conflicts that have lasted without any sustainable solutions yet. In addition, the perceived and actual regional development imbalances, suspicious inter-territorial relationships, and the hybridisation of traditional and modern democratic institutions at independence reinforced mistrusts and conflicts between and among different populations and governance institutions. Many of these conflicts still exist while some of them have hatched other conflicts that are currently prevailing in present day Ghana. The above discussion provides an idea of the dynamics of the socio-political environment that informs the construction of existing conflicts and political institutions in the country. If this was the socio-political atmosphere at independence and after, what does the political institutional architecture of Ghana look like in present day Ghana? Our next section of the chapter outlines the political structure of Ghana as per the 4<sup>th</sup> Republican Constitution, 1992.

### ***3.2 Contemporary Conflict Profile of Ghana***

Ghana as a state is hailed as a beacon of peace, harmony and haven of exemplary democracy compared to its neighbouring countries in the West African Sub-region and in Africa in general.<sup>309</sup> It has never experienced a violent nationwide civil war involving any two dissident groups, or between dissident groups on the one hand and the state army or state agencies on the other. Also, Ghana has, since 1992, established and maintained a viable democratic rule ushered in by the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution. Since then, the nation has successfully conducted six mandatory regime change elections<sup>310</sup>, thereby establishing itself as a potentially consolidated democracy in Africa and in the West Africa region.

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<sup>309</sup> The Ibrahim Index of African Governance, 2017. Pages 16, and 17.

<sup>310</sup> In 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016.

This notwithstanding, there have been (and still exist) many violent conflicts that have defined relationships between regions and social groups in Ghana, leading to the establishment of certain prejudices (wrongly or rightly, but which in fact, affect relationships) between and among peoples across the country. On the eve of independence, many of the political parties that sprang up with the attempt to wrestle power to govern Ghana after the expected departure of the colonial government were of religious<sup>311</sup>, geographical<sup>312</sup>, or ethnic/tribal<sup>313</sup> character. These sectarian parties existed along the nationalist and ideological based parties that got organised to lead the fight for independence, notably the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), and later the Convention People's Party (CPP), the National Liberation Movement (NLM) and the Federation of Youth Organisations (FYO).

Just as in many other African countries at the time, this phenomenon was evidence of the contest for the emerging new state. This is because the same national populations that were united in various ways to fight for self-liberation from colonial rule began to see their emerging success in the fight for independence as an opportunity to transfer same independence and self-liberation to the micro social level of regional and ethnic populations. This was accounted for by varied reasons. One, the nationalist political organisations that led the fight for the then *coming* independence were not considered by certain groups to be well representative of all the social groups in the country. Questions of who the new emerging state belonged to were being asked, and the feeling of “*we are not part*” led to groups that considered themselves *alienated* to engage in agitations aimed at slowing down the process of the march towards independence to enable them to secure special consideration and/or

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<sup>311</sup> Muslim Association Party

<sup>312</sup> Northern People's Party, Togoland Congress, Ga Shifimo Kpee

<sup>313</sup> Ga Shifimo Kpee, Anlo Youth Organisation, for example

inclusion before independence<sup>314</sup>. Two, the fight for the elimination of the common enemy - the colonialist - gave way at this stage to the need for the expansion of the newly-earned national self-determination to cover all social groups and associations – regional, ethnic, religious and many more – with the renaissance of a self-consciousness that was no more tied to national identities but to subgroups – ethnic, regional, religious, and territorial. The consequence of the preceding two reasons feeds into a political culture of tribalism and nepotism where constituents expected favours from their tribesmen and women, whilst their representatives equally did everything only for their tribes, and will work for the achievement of the latter rather than for a national goal<sup>315</sup>. In the given circumstance, ethnicity is turned into a political resource that one may bargain with to grab financial or political rewards. Apart from ethnicity, many other conflicts have long existed in the Ghanaian political system.

In Ghana, chieftaincy institutions, distribution of income from natural resources such as timber, cocoa, gold, diamond, and bauxite, as well as promises of some political rewards and incentives constituted the lines along which politics was organised in the pre-independence period, (if not today). Regions that held certain resources either felt the need for autonomy or asked for a bigger share of the national cake, claiming that their regions contributed more to national revenue than others. This phenomenon underlay the formation of some political organisations and parties aimed at promoting such sectarian agenda.

The colonial legacy of selecting and installing chiefs by the colonial government in places where they deemed necessary, sometimes without recourse to traditional norms and systems, drifted actively, but succinctly, into the popular politics of pre-

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<sup>314</sup> Horowitz, D. L. (2000). *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California; University of California Press, London England. P.4.

<sup>315</sup> Akokpari, John (2008). *'You Don't Belong Here': Citizenship, the State and Africa's Conflicts. Reflections on Ivory Coast'*. In Nhema, Alfred and Zeleza, Tiyaambe Paul (Eds). *The Roots of African Conflicts: The Causes and the Costs*. OSSREA in Association with James Currey Ltd, Ohio University Press and Unisa Press, 2008. Pp.89-92.



independence Ghana. This manifested in attempts by some political parties using traditional chiefs and kings to pool votes and fellowship from the population during political campaigns, just as the colonial government used these chiefs and kings to pool resources and organise labour for development and other exploitative purposes in the Gold Coast at earlier periods.

Following from the practice of the indirect rule system in the Gold Coast where chiefs were removed or replaced at the will of the colonial governor, Ghanaian emerging politicians of the time took advantage of this situation and either promised incumbent chiefs of maintaining their post (or promising deposed chiefs of getting them back to the throne) if such leaders were able to rally their residents behind them (the politicians) to win elections. This phenomenon put rival chiefs (deposed versus installed) and their followers in adversarial relationships at the political level, thereby affecting social relationships even at the mundane daily level of interaction. This was the case with the Bawku chieftaincy conflict and the Dagbon conflict where rival contesting groups for these skins were taken advantage of by the two most popular political traditions (Danquah-Busia-Dombo tradition; and the Convention People's Party (CPP) of the Nkrumaist tradition). A number of decrees and counter decrees from the era of Nkrumah in the 1950s to that of Jerry John Rawlings military government in the 1980s were passed. These decrees removed, re-installed, replaced or confirmed chiefs all across the country. Certain times, such hidden agenda of new governments eager to fulfil secret (or sometimes public) election promises get their allies back to occupy local chieftaincy positions or wrongly maintained already illegitimate chiefs by hiding behind "shadow" committees and commissions of inquiry, which investigations, findings and recommendations revealed nothing but an affirmation of the known or perceived biases of the ruling powers. Such recommendations are "accepted" by the ruling government and implemented with zeal, using state security forces and their allies were brought to occupy the vacancy created on the skin or the stool.

It is not surprising, from the consequence of the above, that we find in many conflicts in Ghana, especially in those of Bawku, Bimbilla, Yendi, that conflict parties align themselves to opposing political parties, with sometimes a level of predictability of conflict reigniting as soon as the political baton changes from one political tradition to the other. In the instance where the contest for the chieftaincy or kingship is run by different ethnic groups, the result is an interethnic conflict. Sometimes the contest is within the same ethnic group but with different *gates* consequently leading to intra-ethnic conflicts. Such are the cases of Bawku on the one hand and Yendi and Bimbilla on the other respectively.

To prevent the institutionalisation of ethnicity and regionalisation in the political culture of Ghana, Article 55 (4) of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution prohibits in article 55 (4) the formation of political parties “*which ...membership shall ...be based on ethnic, religious, regional, or other sectional divisions*”<sup>316</sup>. Article 55 of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution prescribes in clause (4) that:

*“every political party shall have a national character, and membership shall not be based on ethnic, religious, regional or other sectional divisions”.*

In addition, clause (7) of the same article stipulates that:

*“for purposes of registration, a prospective political party shall furnish to the Electoral Commission with a copy of the Constitution and the names and addresses of its national officers; and shall satisfy the Commission that:*

- a. there is ordinarily residence, or registered as a voter, in each district of Ghana, at least one founding member of the party;*
- b. the party has branches in all the regions of Ghana and is, in addition, organised in not less than two-thirds of the districts in each region; and*

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<sup>316</sup> Republic of Ghana (1992). Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992. Art. 55 (4). P.48.

c. *the party's name, emblem, colour, motto or any other symbol has no ethnic, regional, religious or other sectional connotation or gives the appearance that its activities are confined only to a part of Ghana.*<sup>317</sup>

The conscious insertion of these constitutional provisions stemmed from the past experiences in the political history of the country which show the propensity of Ghanaian elite and masses to organise around such features to promote more sectarian aspirations at the expense of national mobilisation.

Today, in the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution, Chapter 55 (4), as quoted here above, goes a long way to reinforce this provision as a way of creating a united polity in Ghana and to inspire and ensure political organization of national character for unity and sustainable democratic governance. Furthermore, with regards to chieftaincy conflicts, a national law, the Chieftaincy Act 370, 1971 was passed to regulate issues regarding the chieftaincy institution, as well as its functions and limits<sup>318</sup>. Currently, Article 276 (1) of the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution is further reinforced by the provisions of the Chieftaincy act, Act 751, 2008 by decoupling the chieftaincy institution *de jure* from politics, thus:

A chief shall not take part in active party politics and any chief wishing to do so and seeking election to parliament shall abdicate his stool or skin.<sup>319</sup> These conscious provisions notwithstanding, there still exist a myriad of conflicts in Ghana of various types and causes which have been of great concern to governments and relevant conflict management institutions in the country.

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<sup>317</sup> Republic of Ghana (1992). Article 55 (7): 1992 4<sup>th</sup> Republican Constitution of Ghana. Pp.47-49.

<sup>318</sup> Republic of Ghana (1971). Chieftaincy Act 370, 1971.

<sup>319</sup> Republic of Ghana (1992). 4<sup>th</sup> Republican Constitution, 1992. Chapter 22, Art. 72 (1)

A summary of contemporary conflicts is presented here below on Table 3 using the UNDP-Ghana National Peace Council (NPC) Interactive Conflict Map of Ghana. The National Peace Council, as earlier indicated, began as a voluntary institution mooted by eminent individual Ghanaians from the three major religions in Ghana, thus Islam, Christianity and African Traditional Religion. Its successes and continued contribution to conflict prevention, resolution and regulation, peacemaking and development led Ghana to making it a national constitutional body, enacted by the Parliament of Ghana through The National Peace Council Act 818 of 2011. It is mandated, inter alia “... *to facilitate and develop mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution, and to build sustainable peace in the country*”.<sup>320</sup>

The UNDP-National Peace Council Interactive Conflict Map was supported by the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) country peace support and peace architecture programme. It identifies, locates and describes violent conflicts all over the country based on their typology, the parties involved and the main incompatibility that underlies that conflict.

Table 3 below shows all violent conflicts within the boundaries of Ghana that have attracted the attention of the National Peace Council to monitor their status as well as take measures to either contain or resolve them. The National Peace Council, apart from engaging with conflict parties to work for solutions to conflicts, equally makes recommendations to the Government of Ghana on the security threats and the possible measures to prevent violence, protect lives and impose curfews where necessary through the Minister of the Interior and Parliament.

As of August 2015, about eighty-six (86) conflicts featured on the Conflict Map of Ghana. Among these conflicts, as indicated on Table 3 below, two regions namely,

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<sup>320</sup> Republic of Ghana (2011). National Peace Council Act 818, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2011.

the Western and Eastern regions have 13 violent conflicts each, thus 15.3% each of all conflicts in the country. The Volta region has 12 violent conflicts (14.1%), the Greater Accra region has 10 (11.8%) and the Central region 9 (10.6%). The Northern and Brong-Ahafo regions had 8 conflicts each (9.4% each), Ashanti region 7 (7.1%), the Upper East region 4 (4.7%) and Upper West region 2 (2.4%).

**Table 3 : □ Summary of Number of Conflicts in Ghana by Region**

Ranking	Region	Frequency	Percentage
1	Western Region	13	15.3
2	Eastern Region	13	15.3
3	Volta Region	12	14.1
4	Greater Accra	10	11.8
5	Central Region	9	10.6
6	Northern Region	8	9.4
7	Brong-Ahafo	8	9.4
8	Ashanti Region	7	7.1
9	Upper East Region	4	4.7
10	Upper West	2	2.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>86</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Constructed from UNDP-NPC Interactive Conflict Map of Ghana, August 2015*

Two interesting pieces of evidence emanate from this data. One, whilst the country is in the international media for being one of the most peaceful countries in Africa and in the West Africa region, it is evident from the data that so many serious conflicts exist internally in Ghana. At the time of this collation, 86 conflicts were competing for the attention of the NPC in Ghana. This may go a long way to ascertain the fact that most multi-cultural or plural societies are conflict prone<sup>321</sup>, and Ghana, just like its neighbouring countries in West Africa may not be different on that scale. However, what makes the difference is the contested perception of the inability to establish a working and stable democracy within this pluralism and conflicts. What is essential

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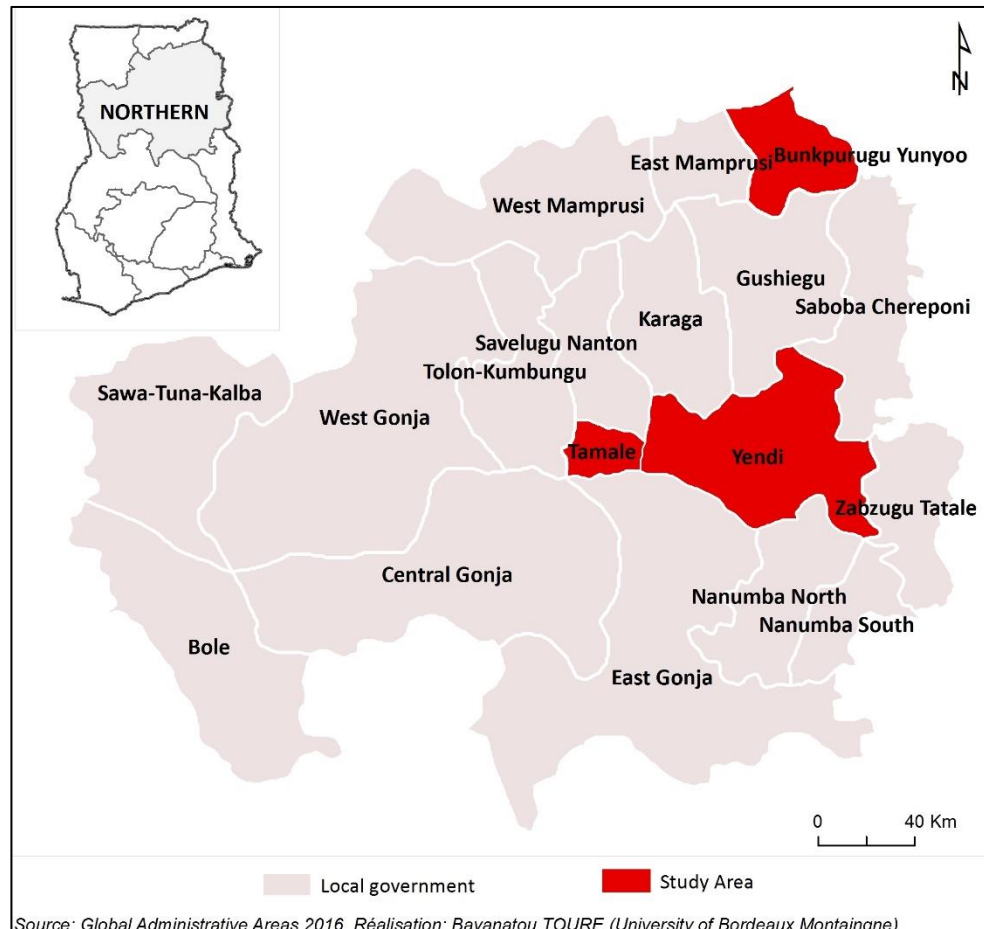
<sup>321</sup> Furnivall, J. S. (1939) *Netherlands India*. London: Cambridge University Press.

therefore is how these conflicts are handled and regulated to prevent them from destroying the society and impeding democratic development and consolidation.

The second issue revealed in the data on Table 3 above is that, most of the times (at least in the last three decades) that Ghana has been in the international media for reasons related to violent conflicts, those conflicts have been reported from the Northern part of the country, especially in the Northern and Upper East regions, and from the South-Eastern part of the country, notably the Volta Region. Conversely, the data on Table 3 shows that the Northern Region only places 6<sup>th</sup> and the Upper East Region stands as the second least in rank (9<sup>th</sup>) after the Upper West Region. The Volta Region, however, places third after the Western and Eastern Regions. What is clear, however, is that the Western and Eastern regions' conflicts are not those for which Ghana has been known in the international media relating to violence. When you talk of conflicts in Ghana, most people will quickly point to Northern Ghana (comprising the Northern, the Upper East and the Upper West Regions) and the Volta Region.

Some of the most notable conflicts for which Ghana is known are the Bawku Conflict in the Upper east Region, the Konkomba-Nanumba war of 1994 in the Northern Region, the killing of the Ya Na in 2002 in the Northern Region, the killing of the Bimbilla chief in 2014, and the Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict in the Volta Region among others. And most of these conflicts have roots in chieftaincy and/or land ownership and ethnicity, whilst party politics remains an over-arching factor in the permutation of whatever underlying cause may exist for each of these conflicts. The role of party politics and conflicts in Ghana remounts as far back as the period leading to independence when popular elections were being organised to select local leaders to take over the new nation and indigenous political parties were being formed in the then Gold Coast to end colonial rule. A historical brief on selected conflicts could illustrate this better.

### 3.3 An Overview of the Dynamics of Selected Conflicts in the Northern Region – The Yendi Chieftaincy Conflict in Perspective



**Figure 4: Map of Northern Region with Study Districts shown in red**

The Map in Figure 4 above shows in red the districts in which primary data were collected through questionnaire administration to selected respondents. In the following paragraphs, we use one conflict situation among the conflicts in these study areas as an example to give an overview of conflicts in Ghana, with specific reference to Northern Ghana.

The Yendi Chieftaincy Conflict, otherwise known as the Dagbon Conflict, is one conflict of prominence in Ghana in general and in Northern Ghana in particular. This is because the Dagbon skin around which the conflict is fought is one of the most important skins in Ghana and the most important in the Dagbon Kingdom and the



Northern Region as a whole. In addition, the damage associated with the conflict and the unprecedented mode of destruction of lives, as well as the height of politicisation, social differentiation, fear and intractability it manifests, makes it a perfect model for studying and understanding most chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana. We use this conflict to present an overview of the historical development of most chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana and how modern politics and democratic governance both impact on these conflicts and how these relationships impact on effective management and prevention of conflicts in Ghana.

The Dagbon Kingdom is said to have originated from Mali to Ghana through marriages, wars...usurpation of power and migration (Tsikata and Seini, 2004) to settle in the current Ghana. The kingdom is said to be founded in 1403 by King Sitobu when the Gbewaa Kingdom broke up into Mamprugu, Dagbon and Nanum along with Naa Gbewaa's three sons Tohogu, Sitobu, and Ngmantambu respectively<sup>322</sup>. The Dagbon Kingdom accounts for more than half of the population of the Northern Region. The capital of the Dagbon Kingdom is Yendi and the Overlord is the Ya Na. According to Dagbon traditional laws, all lands in Dagbon are vested in the Ya Na. The Ya Na is equally the one with the sole right of authorizing and officiating the celebration of traditional and religious festivals, as well as choosing spiritual (Muslim) leaders to perform spiritual functions for the Dagbon Kingdom<sup>323</sup>. The Ya Na once

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<sup>322</sup> Brukum, N. J. K. (2006). Chieftaincy and Ethnic Conflicts in Northern Ghana, 1980-2002 In Irene k. Odotei and Albert K. Awedoba (eds). Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development. pp. 429-448. Accra, *Sub-Saharan Publishers*; Ahorsu, Ken et al, (2011) Edited by Fox Joey. *Governance and Security in Ghana: The Dagbon Chieftaincy Crisis*. SIPRI/OSI African Security and Governance Project, West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

enskined<sup>324</sup> stays as a king for life until his death. He appoints, in consultation with his elders, all divisional chiefs of the Dagbon Kingdom.<sup>325</sup>

The genesis of the Dagbon conflict is said to be traced back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the Nayiri (King of Mamprugu) mediated a succession dispute by “consulting the gods and ancestral spirits” of Dagbon (soothsaying) and limited the legitimate inheritance to the Dagbon Kingship (Ya Na-ship) to Chiefs of the Karaga, Savelugu and Mion communities in Dagbon<sup>326</sup>. These three succession heirs became known as the “three chiefly succession gates” of Dagbon. The ruling equally conformed to a long standing tradition of Dagbon chieftaincy succession that allowed only sons of previous kings to become kings, and established soothsaying, as from then, as the mode of selection for the Ya Na.<sup>327</sup> This unilateral principle of succession to the Ya Na Skin was changed to a system of alternation between the Abudu and Andani family gates between 1824 and 1849. Abudu and Andani were both sons of Ya Na Yakubu I. This was after Princes Abudu and Andani waged a war against their father King Ya Na Yakubu I. After they emerged victorious they did not kill their father, but spared him and allowed him to continue as King, but the two of them (Prince Abudu and Prince Andani) seized the Mion and Savelugu skins respectively, making each of them an automatic heir to their father after his death. After the death of their father the Mion Lana, Prince Abudu was chosen by the Kingmakers of Dagbon as the successor

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<sup>324</sup> An “enskinment” is the investiture of a person on the “skin” which is the official and symbolic seat of power of chieftaincy in Northern Ghana. In the South of Ghana it is a stool, so the term there is “enstoolment”.

<sup>325</sup> Ladouceur, P. (1972) The Yendi Chieftaincy Dispute and Ghanaian Politics. *Canadian Journal of African Studies / Revue canadienne des études africaines*, 6:1, 97-115, DOI: 10.1080/00083968.1972.10803659 ; Ahorsu, Ken et al, (2011), Edited by Fox Joey. *Governance and Security in Ghana: The Dagbon Chieftaincy Crisis*. SIPRI/OSI African Security and Governance Project, West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)

<sup>326</sup> Ferguson, Phyllis and Ivor Wilks, ‘Chiefs, Consultations and the British in Northern Ghana,’ in Michael Crowder and Obaro Ikime, (eds.) *West African Chiefs: Their Changing Status Under Colonial Rule and Independence* (New York: African Publishing Corporation/Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1970). Cited in Ahorsu, Ken et al, (2011), Edited by Fox Joey. *Governance and Security in Ghana: The Dagbon Chieftaincy Crisis*. SIPRI/OSI African Security and Governance Project, West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)

<sup>327</sup> Ahorsu, Ken et al, (2011). Edited by Fox Joey. *Governance and Security in Ghana: The Dagbon Chieftaincy Crisis*. SIPRI/OSI African Security and Governance Project, West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)

to their late father Ya Na Yakubu I, once again under the influence of soothsaying and the direction of the ancestral spirits.<sup>328</sup> Ya Na Abudu (Abdulai I) ruled for 19 years, from 1849-1876. He was succeeded by Prince Andani as Ya Na from 1876-1899. Since then (1899), the kingship of Ya Na has alternated between the two families (of Abudu and Andani), but reportedly not without several violent conflicts and constant loss of lives.

In 1930, the colonial government, in consultation with the elders and chiefs of Dagbon, initiated measures to document and stem the recurrent conflict related to Kingship succession in Dagbon. The colonial government reaffirmed the 17<sup>th</sup> century solution of selecting the King from the three communities of Mion, Savelugu and Karaga as Kings to the Dagbon Skin. The Karaga community's right to succession was denied them in the 1940s when Princes Abudu and Andani fought and conquered their father and all the other communities and ascended to the thrones of Mion and Savelugu respectively. In the 1940s, emergent educated royal elites of Dagbon, under the influence of the then emerging nationalist politics in the Gold Coast, downplayed soothsaying in their efforts to secularise the selection criteria for succession to the Ya Na. A Select Committee was established in 1948 made up of eleven chiefs of Dagbon to replace the then existing kingmakers council of four chiefs. Under this committee, the previous qualification criterion limiting inheritance to the three communities of Karaga, Mion and Savelugu was abolished.

The Abudu and Andani families maintained the succession alternation between themselves until 1954 when the Gbonlana Abdulai, a regent, was selected by the Selection Committee to succeed his late father Ya Na Mahama III. The Abudu family saw the replacement of the old system of rotation with the new Selection Committee system by voting to be rational, the Andani family complained that it had in this

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<sup>328</sup> Ibid

instance truncated their ascension to the throne since it was their time to succeed.<sup>329</sup> This generated a dispute between the two royal gates, with alliances for each of them from supporting family members. The Andani family refused to recognise Ya Na Abdulai III since they found the Selection Committee's choice of him as fraudulent and meant to deny them of the opportunity to be king at that moment and used all means at their disposal to remove the King. They however failed, and Ya Na Abdulai III continued to serve as king until his death in 1967<sup>330</sup>.

The political events leading to independence in the Gold Coast and the acrimony between the two families saw the elite of these two families aligning themselves each to a different political party in the political campaigns and activities that preceded Ghana's independence. The Abudu faction aligned itself with the United Party (UP) while the Andani was associated with the Convention Peoples Party (CPP). Post-independence, as the conflict endured, the Nkrumah government in 1960 brokered a peace deal between the two gates and there was agreement that the rotational system should be restored and the next king should come from the Andani family (gate). However, the reigning King, Ya Na Abdulai III was supposed to continue his reign until his death before the reversal to the rotational system. Andani III from the Andani family was selected and rightly recognised, per the agreement brokered by the CPP government, as the rightful successor when Ya Na Abdulai III died in 1967. In 1968, the National Liberation Council (NLC) Government that overthrew the Nkrumah government, and which was also aligned to the UP political party at independence, set up the Mate Kole Committee. This committee's report declared

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<sup>329</sup> Sibidow, S. M. (2010). *Background of the Yendi Skin Crisis*, (Accra: 1970), Mimeograph. Cited in Ahorsu, Ken et al, (2011). Edited by Fox Joey. *Governance and Security in Ghana: The Dagbon Chieftaincy Crisis*. SIPRI/OSI African Security and Governance Project, West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)

<sup>330</sup> Staniland, M. (1975). *The Lions of Dagbon: Political Change in Northern Ghana*. New York: Cambridge University Press; Anamzoya, S.A. (2004). *A Sociological Enquiry into the 2002 Dagbon Chieftaincy Conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana*. Unpublished M. Phil Thesis, Department of Sociology, University of Ghana. Cited in: Tonah, S. (2012). *The Politicisation of a Chieftaincy Conflict: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana*. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 21(1): 1–20 (2012).

that Ya Na Andani III's enskinment was not done in accordance with the customary and traditional rules of Dagbon culture, and therefore declared his enskinment null and void<sup>331</sup>. They recommended Gbonlana Mahamadu to be installed as Ya Na. The Busia-led government (1969-72)<sup>332</sup>, which was in power at the time of the report, accepted the committee's report.

On 9<sup>th</sup> September 1969 Security forces were mobilised by the Busia government to forcefully remove Ya Na Andani III and replace him with Gbonlana Mahamadu as Ya Na. Fighting broke up between the two sides (Andani and Abudu families), resulting in the death of 30 members of the Andani family. Gbonlana Mahamadu succeeded in replacing Andani III as Ya Na Mahamadu Abdulai IV with the support of the ruling Busia government (Ahorsu and Gede 2011; Ladourceur 1972; Olawale 2006)<sup>333</sup>. The changing dynamics of the conflict, especially for the Andani family, was to occur when in 1972 the Busia government was overthrown in a military coup by Gen. I. K. Acheampong. Several agitations, petitions and letters to the new military government to review the findings of the Mate Kole Committee culminated in the constitution of the Ollenu Committee in 1974 to investigate and "ascertain the correct custom and customary practices for the nomination, selection and enskinment of a Ya Na"<sup>334</sup>. The Ollenu Committee's report, submitted to the Acheampong government, declared the enskinment of Ya Na Andani III as legitimate and therefore

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<sup>331</sup> Tonah, S. (2012). The Politicisation of a Chieftaincy Conflict: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 21(1): 1–20 (2012).

<sup>332</sup> One important political note to take here is that the both the NLC and the Busia governments are offsprings of the UP tradition that opposed Nkrumah's CPP during the elections leading to independence. And remember that the Abodes were aligned to the UP whilst the Andanis were aligned to the CPP. As such, the overthrow of Nkrumah, was an opportunity for the Abodus to use the government to institutionalize their hold onto the Ya Na throne, through the use of such committees and the Mate Kole Committee.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid

<sup>334</sup> Tonah, S. (2012). The Politicisation of a Chieftaincy Conflict: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 21(1): 1–20 (2012).

recommended the removal of Ya Na Mahamadu Abdulai IV from the skin to be replaced by an Andani family member. Based on this recommendation by the Ollenu committee, Ya Na Yakubu Andani II was enskinned as the new King in 1974. As expected, the Abudus refused to recognise the new King. They continued with petitions and agitations that were not accepted. During the Rawlings' military regime (1981-1992), all attempts were made to get the PNDC government to change the kingship back to the Abudus, but all their attempts failed. Ya Na Yakubu Andani II's position was further reinforced in 1986, when the Supreme Court ruled in favour of the Andanis upholding the recommendations and implementations of the Ollenu Committee, and further affirmed the rotational principle of ascension to the throne between the two families as being in tandem with, and fundamental to traditional rule in the Dagbon kingdom. This, however, did not settle the matter as far as the Abudus were concerned, as they waited impatiently for a change of government to re-launch their search for the overthrow of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II<sup>335</sup>.

In the year 2000, when the NPP won the general elections, the Abudu family, taking advantage of the coming into government of a party sympathetic to their cause, strengthened their demands for justice to them by removing the reigning Ya Na and the performance of the funeral of their deposed late king, Mahamadu Abdulai IV. They also organized separate and parallel festivals and celebrations that are said to be the sole preserve of the Ya Na. This was in demonstration of their non-recognition of the reigning King and to undermine his authority as the overlord of Dagbon. These included the celebration of Bugum ("fire") festival and the Eid-ul Adha in 2001 and 2002 and allegedly appointing chiefs to traditional offices without recourse to the Ya

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<sup>335</sup> Anamzoya, 2004; Mahama, I. (2009). *Ya-Na: African King of Power*. Publishers not indicated. Cited in: Tonah, S. (2012). The Politicisation of a Chieftaincy Conflict: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 21(1): 1–20 (2012).

Na (MacGaffey 2006<sup>336</sup>; Olawale 2006<sup>337</sup>).<sup>338</sup>Meanwhile, while the Andanis considered such parallel celebrations as violations of Dagbon tradition and an affront to the authority and powers of the Ya Na, the Abudus had state security protection during such events. The Andanis considered this security protection as government complicity and plot to overthrow the Ya Na and were determined not to let such violations continue.

Media reports indicated in March 2002 that the two factions were actually preparing for a full blown war. The Government, acting upon the recommendation of the Northern Regional Security Council (REGSEC) imposed curfew on Yendi, the traditional capital of the Dagbon Kingdom and the location of the seat of the Ya Na. The curfew was later lifted unilaterally by then Regional Minister Honourable Prince Andani, a member of the Andani family. This lifting had some political interpretations. While the curfew prevented the celebration of the Bugum (fire) festival that was supposed to be led by the Ya Na Yakubu Andani II interpreted by the Andanis as a sabotage from the NPP government, the Abudus were in favour of the curfew as it meant the inability of the Ya Na to organise the festival as supposed, which in any case was their (Abudus) wish. The Ya Na did not want to be seen powerless so he insisted that the curfew should be lifted for the celebrations to go on contrary to the informed decision of the REGSEC, and that there was not going to

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<sup>336</sup> MacGaffey, W. (2006). Death of a king, death of a kingdom? Social pluralism and succession to high office in Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 44(1): 86–87

<sup>337</sup> Olawale, I. (2006). From “Owo Crisis” to “Dagbon Dispute”: Lessons in the Politicization of Chieftaincy Disputes in Modern Nigeria and Ghana, Presented at the 15th Annual Africa/Diaspora Conference, 28 April, Sacramento State University.

<sup>338</sup> Both notes 79&80 cited in: Tonah, S. (2012). The Politicisation of a Chieftaincy Conflict: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 21(1): 1–20 (2012).

be any war. On the instance of Ya Naa, the Regional Minister unilaterally lifted the curfew and the ban on the celebrations on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2002<sup>339</sup>.

On 25<sup>th</sup> March 2002 an emissary of the Ya Na was attacked on grounds of insulting behaviour by some Abudu youth on his way to execute an errand. This led to violent conflicts lasting for 3 days. The military post in Yendi as well as the police and other security operatives could not intervene immediately. By the time security operatives arrived at the war scene the Ya Na and 28 others were killed. 36 houses were also reported to have been burnt.<sup>340</sup> After the violence was finally brought under control, the Interior Minister, the National Security Advisor as well as the Northern Regional Minister resigned from their positions. The NPP government established a Commission of Inquiry led by Justice I. N. K. Wuaku (the Wuaku Commission) to investigate the disturbances that led to the death of the king and many other persons in Yendi from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> March 2002. In its findings, the Wuaku Commission attributed the 2002 conflict to the long-standing chieftaincy dispute between the Andani and the Abudu Gates, the non-observance of the funeral of late Mahamadu Abdulai IV, Ya Na's perception of his authority being undermined by the Abudus, the hasty lifting of the curfew and the ban on the celebration of the Bugum (fire) festival, illegal stockpiling of arms by both Gates, and security lapses among others (29 findings in all).<sup>341</sup> The Commission recommended the prosecution of many individuals that it found culpable in many respect of the law, including offences of *murder, conspiracy to murder, attempted murder, causing unlawful damage, assault, arson, illegal possession of firearms, and unlawful military training*. The Commission recommended that

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<sup>339</sup> Awedoba, A. K. (2009). An Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts: Towards Sustainable Peace. Sustainable Peace Initiative (2009) – Sub-Saharan Publishers, Accra, Ghana, 2009. Pp. 210-211; Report of the Commission of Inquiry (Yendi Events) C.I.36/2002 (Wuaku Commission). Republic of Ghana.

<sup>340</sup> Report of the Commission of Inquiry (Yendi Events) C.I.36/2002 (Wuaku Commission). Republic of Ghana.

<sup>341</sup> Report of Commission of Inquiry (Yendi Events) C.I.36/2002 (Wuaku Commission), Republic of Ghana (pp. 83-88)



the former Northern Regional Minister be *charged with criminal negligence*.<sup>342</sup> The Commission, however, exonerated the interior minister at the time and the National Security Coordinator (who had both resigned following the killing of the Ya Na)<sup>343</sup>.

While the Kufuor-led NPP government accepted the prosecution of 15 other people recommended by the Wuaku Commission for their roles in the conflict and proceeded to do same, it declined to prosecute the former Northern Regional Minister. The charges brought against the 15 persons accused of "...complicity in the murder of the Ya Na..."<sup>344</sup> were dismissed in court for lack of evidence<sup>345</sup>. The court decision created more political opinions as the Andanis said they knew the NPP government was only playing politics with the issue and intentionally did not collect and present enough evidence to the court to enable the court to jail the suspects because they (the suspects) were Abudus and, therefore, allies of the government.

In addition to the establishment of the Wuaku Commission, the Kufuor-led NPP government also established a "Committee of Eminent Chiefs" (CEC) in 2003 to undertake all possible measures and mediation activities to find a lasting solution to the Dagbon chieftaincy conflicts. The CEC was made up of the Asantehene (King of Ashanti), the Yagbonwura (King of the Gonja Kingdom), and the Nayiri (King of Mamprugu).

The CEC after their "independent" investigation established an agreement known as the "Roadmap to Peace" in Dagbon, which was signed by the two primary parties to the conflict. Among these included the burial of the late Ya Na Yakubu Andani II;

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<sup>342</sup> *ibid*

<sup>343</sup> Tonah, S. (2012). The Politicisation of a Chieftaincy Conflict: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 21(1): 1–20 (2012).

<sup>344</sup> Wuaku Commission (2002).

<sup>345</sup> *Opcit.*

the installation of the regent of the late king; the performance of the funeral of the deposed Ya Na, Mahamadu Abdulai IV; the performance of the funeral of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II; and finally, the selection and enskinment of a new Ya Na for Dagbon. As of the end of 2017, only the first two recommendations of the CEC have been implemented – the burial of the late Ya Na Yakubu Andani II, and the installation of the regent for the Andani Gate. The rest of the issues on the roadmap have been shelved for the past 12 years due to differences between the two groups in their implementation.

While the Dagbon chieftaincy question has always been a political issue in the country and in the region since the inception of party politics in Ghana, it gained further political salience in the run up to the year 2000 elections when signs indicated the possible change of government from the NDC to the NPP government. For the Andanis, such a change was already a bad sign and could mean a loss of the Ya Na Kingship. For the Abudus, such a change was an opportunity for them to get a political party in government that would be sympathetic to their cause to confiscate the kingship for the Abudus. Andanis and NDC members think some of the appointments made by Kufuor, especially, the one to the interior ministry, and national security<sup>346</sup>, were meant to facilitate the execution of a diabolic plan to kill the Ya Na<sup>347</sup>. In fact, some days to the violence that led to the death of the Ya Na, former President Rawlings had warned of plans being hatched by the Kufuor government and the Abudus to assassinate the Ya Na<sup>348</sup>.

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<sup>346</sup> The Vice President of the Republic, the National Security Coordinator and the Minister for the Interior were all members of the Abudu faction of the conflict.

<sup>347</sup> Tonah, S. (2012). The Politicisation of a Chieftaincy Conflict: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 21(1): 1–20 (2012).

<sup>348</sup> <http://www.modernghana.com/news/66851/1/yakubu-knew-about-the-ya-na-plot.html>

The NDC, in 2004 and 2008 campaigned in Dagbon with the promise of doing everything to bring the killers of the Ya Na to book, while accusing the NPP of complicity in his death and the conscious dissimulation of incriminating evidence necessary to enable the successful prosecution and subsequent conviction of its allies that were responsible for the murder of the Ya Na. Indeed, the promise to bring the killers of the Ya Na to justice constituted one of the major manifesto items of the NDC in 2008, promising to constitute "...a new truly non-partisan and independent Presidential Commission to re-open investigations into the murder of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II and his elders in March 2002".<sup>349</sup> The same Jerry John Rawlings, who had warned of plans by the ruling government and the Abudus to kill the Ya Na before the real incident in 2002, continued to call for the re-arrest and re-trial of the suspects involved in the killing of the Ya Na.

After defeating the NPP government in 2008, the NDC government re-arrested the 15 suspects and charged them for their various roles in the killing of the Ya Na. However, the accused were acquitted and discharged, as the court said the prosecution could not prove without reasonable doubt that the accused actually planned together to kill the Ya Na. The Court indicated that the two sides (Abudus and Andanis) fought a war that was avoidable, and called on them to go back and find a peaceful solution to their conflict.<sup>350</sup> The Andanis indicated in media communications that the NDC government had failed them because they voted for NDC in 2008 because it had promised to bring the killers of the Ya Na to book, and threatened making the NDC to lose the 2012 elections.<sup>351</sup> The NDC defended itself

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<sup>349</sup> Desmond Darko. (23 November 2011). Ya Na Killer Truth, Segbefia Nails it Right. Ghana. *GhanaWeb*, <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Ya-Na-Killer-Truth-Segbefia-Nails-It-Right-224191>

<sup>350</sup> Source: <http://www.modernghana.com/news/322532/1/accused-persons-in-ya-na039smurder-case-freed.html> cited in Tonah, S (2012).

<sup>351</sup> Source: <http://www.modernghana.com/news/322908/regent-ndc-risk-losing-2012-if-it-does-not-find-ya-na-kille.html> Accessed 25th January 2016 at 13 :40GMT+1

saying the former NPP government had failed to gather enough evidence at the early hours of the incident in March 2002 or had hidden the relevant evidence needed for the successful prosecution of the case. They also said they were incapacitated by this malicious and intentional concealment of evidence by the previous government to successfully prosecute the case in court. A deputy Chief of Staff at the Presidency, in August 2011 said “*the first crucial 48 hours after the incident ought to have been used to find incriminating evidence which would then have been used to prosecute the killers but the government failed because its whole investigation was flawed*”.<sup>352</sup>As the NDC defended itself, blaming the NPP for its (NDC's) failure to bring justice to the Andanis, the NPP prided itself of having been vindicated by the court decision. Today, January 2017, there has not been any successful prosecution of anyone for the death of the Ya Na and the many others that died with him nor has the roadmap for peace, mediated by the Committee of Eminent Chiefs, been executed to its logical fruition in Dagbon. The skin remains unoccupied and tensions are abound in the area and the Dagbon kingdom at large.

The example of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict, its long historical antecedents, the politicisation, the complexity, the security fragility, and the fear and panic that it turns on the citizens is just one typical example of the nature of most conflicts in Ghana. It demonstrates how political choices and political mobilisation are wound around conflict factors in the country and how political parties equally use conflict as a means of voter mobilisation. This does not only demonstrate failures in state security as a young democracy in Ghana, it also indicates the possibilities of democratic failures if such conflict-politics nexuses are not treated with care and eradicated. Such relationship between conflicts and democratisation and political construction in Ghana, gives us enough reason, among others, for the choice of the Dagbon area in the Northern Region for our field data. The Dabgon conflicts are indication of how

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<sup>352</sup> Source: <http://politics.myjoyonline.com/pages/news/201111/76371.php#> Accessed : 25th January, 2016 at 13:54 GMT+1

cultural plurality affects political mobilisation and its propensity to create social division that may heighten tensions which will not only affect the governance and social cohesion of the conflict parties and geographical areas involved, but will also affect the governance system of the whole polity in the long run if not well managed. This is even more so in the particular Ghanaian case where dependence on state security for conflict intervention and maintenance of peace is a norm, while at the same time the state security apparatus is exploited by conflict parties through the lobbying and placement of their loyalists in sensitive state security positions when governments that are sympathetic to their course are in power. In other circumstances, even when such positions are not directly in the hands of one side of a conflict party, elite mobilisation is done through political leaders to influence court decisions and the state judicial apparatus, fairly or otherwise, to have decisions made in their favour.

This phenomenon of state security and judicial apparatus lending themselves to manipulations by both politicians and conflict party elites at the same time is a danger to state security, national unity and peaceful, sustainable, democratic establishment and consolidation. In fact, the threat of cultural diversity to democratic consolidation is to the extent to which divisions and fractionalisation mobilises around national democratic institutions for their own group's interests only to the detriment of national interest. Indeed, the choice of Tamale, Yendi, and Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo in the Northern region was meant to demonstrate the relevance these conflicts provide in our quest to look at internal violent conflict situations in Ghana and the extent to which these are managed, and their possible implosion to affect the larger democratic dispensation in Ghana as a whole. The Tamale Metropolis, the Yendi Municipality and the Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo District are marked in red colour in the map in figure below.

### ***3.4 Conclusion***

Generally, in this chapter, we have attempted to expose the reader to some basic information on Ghana and some selected communities in which research data was

collected from April 2014 to March 2015. For Ghana as a whole, the chapter looked at its demographic characteristics, political administration and governance systems, conflict profile of the country, and finally the genesis of ethnic-based politics during pre-independence era and its consequences on some current existing conflicts in the country. In addition, the chapter looked at basic demographic and conflict information on the selected communities of Tamale, Yendi and Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo. Before this, the Dagbon Cheiftaincy conflict was used as a case to trace the historical origins of most conflicts in Ghana and how the imperfect interaction of traditional and modern politics impact on conflict formation, prevention and resolution in Ghana.

The purpose of the chapter is to give an exposition that will render basic but relevant information to the reader on Ghana, as well as give a fair idea of the existence of conflicts in the country, where these conflicts occur, and finally, the communities that were of interest to this research during the fieldwork leading to the write-up of this thesis. The results of the data collected from these sites are presented and analysed in the data presentation aspect of this thesis. In the following chapter, we discuss the philosophical tradition, research strategy, sampling methods, and general data management issues in this thesis.

## ***PART II***

### ***Data Presentation and Analysis***

#### ***Introduction***

This aspect of the thesis focuses on the data drawn from the target population in the target communities. The other interviews conducted with key informants drawn from selected institutions are incorporated into the analysis in the form of narratives. The data presented here is, therefore, mainly based on the responses of the community residents interviewed and complemented by the results from the delegates where appropriate. This analysis begins with the profile (biostatistics) of the respondents because this was considered important as they had implications for the information extracted from them.

The results are presented in themes, each constituting a chapter, and regrouping responses to a set of questions that respond to the specific objectives of the thesis outlined in the introductory chapter. Chapter four examines conflict occurrences, causes and types, as well as conflict incidence in Ghana as portrayed in both the primary and secondary data. Chapter five examines the roles of traditional and modern political institutions in conflict prevention, escalation and regulation. This is considered in two separate but interrelated spheres, namely within the framework of traditional political institutions embedded in the chieftaincy system (Chiefs and Kings), and secondly within modern political institutions with specific reference to the legislature, the executive, the judiciary and the electoral management body in Ghana. Chapter six presents data on Ghanaians' level of readiness to cooperate with one another in power sharing and in everyday life, thereby creating cross-cutting or coinciding relations and how these influence conflict prevention, escalation and resolution. Chapter seven looked at the resilience of Ghana's democratic system as it moves into the future in its democratic practices, and the final chapter (Chapter 8) gives a summary of the major findings of the thesis and its concluding statements.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### ***Conflict Dynamics and Causes in Ghana***

#### ***4.0 Introduction***

Chapter four opens the analysis part of the thesis, and introduces readers to the respondents from whom data was collected. It delves into conflict dynamics in Ghana including their incidence, knowledge of conflicts, conflict distribution across the ten regions of Ghana and the causes of conflict in the country.

#### ***4.1 Biodata of Respondents***

This part presents the biodata of the respondents who were interviewed in the Northern Region in three selected conflict areas to whom the field questionnaire were administered.

##### ***4.1.1 Sex Composition of Respondents***

Data were collected from three categories of respondents. Namely, residents, delegates and key informants. Out of the 132 residents, 97 of them, representing about 73.5% were males, whilst females were 35, representing 26.5%. In respect of the delegates, a large majority (300 respondents) were males representing about 74.1% whilst the female respondents were 105, representing about 25.9%. With regard to the key informants, all of them (5) were males. Table 4 below depicts the sex composition of the respondents.



**Table 4: Sex composition of Respondents**

Sex Composition of Respondents				
Sex	Residents	Delegates	Key Informants	Total
Male	97	300	5	402
Female	35	105	0	140
Total	132	405	5	542

*Source: Author's field research 2014/2015*

Table 4 above shows that male respondents largely outnumbered female respondents in the research. Whereas the total population of males was 402, representing about 74.2%, that of females was 140, accounting for about 25.8%. Nonetheless, the figure for females shows that at least the views of both males and females were catered for. However, because the study was not focusing on gender, the variation between males and females did not affect the finding in any way. In Ghanaian community, issues relating to conflicts and politics are dominated by males. In addition, talking about conflict and its related issues is a sensitive community affair that women are either forbidden to do in some societies or the women themselves shy away from it (Fayorsey, 2006<sup>353</sup>; Odotei, 2006)<sup>354</sup>. Traditionally, the process of planning for conflict (war) is a male-reserved assignment. These could explain the reason why less females were ready to talk, since the study adopted accidental sampling method for in-community interviews.

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<sup>353</sup> Fayorsey, C. (2006). *Gender, Culture and Governance: Ghanaian Queenmothers as Leaders in Development*. In Irene K. Adotei and Albert K. Awedoba (2006). *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*. *Sub-Saharan Publishers, Accra*.

<sup>354</sup> Abotchie, C., Awedoba, A. and Odotei, A. A. (2006). Perceptions on Chiefs. In: *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, Governance and Development*, Odotei, I. K. and Awedoba, A. K (eds.), pp. 103-144. Legon, Accra, Ghana: *Sub-Saharan Publishers*.

## 4.1.2 Age of Respondents

The age of respondents was one major factor of consideration for selection into the study sample. This was for both ethical and practical reasons. No one below the age of 18 was supposed to be part of the research sample. Section 28 (5) of the 1992 constitution of Ghana defines an adult as any person of the age of 18 years and above . The researcher intentionally avoided any respondent who in this regard was considered as a child. In Ghanaian culture there is a general saying that “life begins at the age of 40”. The assumption is that, a person is able to make a well informed decision at the age of 40 years. Against this notion, the constitution of Ghana requires a person should be 40 years and above before he can contest for the post of President even though the legal voting age is 18 years and above. Similarly, all those beyond the age of 60 years are considered as aged. It is in this regard that in Ghana, apart from some few public servants, all other government workers retire at the age of 60 years. In [International Humanitarian Law](#) (IHL)<sup>355</sup>, conflict engagement must not involve persons qualified to be called “a child” by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)<sup>356</sup>, the [United Nations International Children’s Education Fund \(UNICEF\)](#), or the [International Labour Organisation \(ILO\)](#). Rule 135 of the Customary IHL demands special protection for children in conflict situations<sup>357</sup>. In respect of these provisions, the research consciously avoided children as defined in

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<sup>355</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross – International Humanitarian Law. Found online at [https://www.google.com.gh/url?sa=t&rcct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=11&ved=0ahUKewiS1Nv4m4zaAhUrK8AKHYZTBCIQFghWMAo&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.icrc.org%2Feng%2Fassets%2Ffiles%2Fother%2Ficrc\\_002\\_0703.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3vErjryS7QKZi\\_UKzJxdlq](https://www.google.com.gh/url?sa=t&rcct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=11&ved=0ahUKewiS1Nv4m4zaAhUrK8AKHYZTBCIQFghWMAo&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.icrc.org%2Feng%2Fassets%2Ffiles%2Fother%2Ficrc_002_0703.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3vErjryS7QKZi_UKzJxdlq). Accessed 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 9:56GMT

<sup>356</sup> United Nations General Assembly (1989). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Found online at <https://www.google.com.gh/url?sa=t&rcct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKewi6mtblnozaAhXHWsAKHcx3AhUQFggIjMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ohchr.org%2FDocuments%2FProfessionalInterest%2Fcrc.pdf&usg=AOvVaw10ERRCCUwT805jX6Ysw0b5> accessed 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018, at 10:00GMT

<sup>357</sup> Customary International Humanitarian Law, Rule 135. Found at [https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1\\_rul\\_rule135](https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_rul_rule135). Accessed 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2018, 9:42GMT

the Constitution of Ghana (1992). In this regard, the ages of the respondents were structured around three age brackets, namely 18-39, 40-59, and 60+.

As shown on Table 5 below, the age bracket of 18-39 recorded 290 respondents, accounting for about 53.5%. The age bracket of 40-59 had 212 respondents, representing about 39.1%. Those respondents who were 60 years and above and could be considered as aged in this thesis were only 40, representing about 7.4%.

**Table 5: Age Structure of Respondents**

Age Bracket	Residents	Delegates		Key Informants	Total	Per (%)
		NPP	NDC			
18-39	44	121	125	0	290	53.5
40-59	71	40	97	4	212	39.1
60+	17	4	18	1	40	7.4
Total	132	165	240	5	542	100

*Source: Author's field research 2014/2015*

The age distribution of our respondents, as pictured on Table 5 above, suggests that the respondents were matured or fairly matured and therefore constituted reliable source of data gathering for the thesis.

The deliberate avoidance of persons 18 years and above was to avoid interviewing minors and to test individuals who were both of voting age and had the possibility of knowing much about the conflicts in the area and the possible relationship between these conflicts and the political context of the country. This age group is also important since data on conflicts are sometimes considered as delicate information and for that matter taking data from minors could have eventual unintended legal consequences should something unexpected occur in the field between the interviewer and the respondent or his/her parents.

From Table 5 above, we see that most of the respondents fall between 26 years and 55 years old with a total of 105 respondents, constituting 79.6%. Those between 18 and 25 years make up 15.9% of interviewees, whilst 4.5% were between the ages of 56 and 60+ years. In comparison with national age distribution of Ghana, the

respondents' age groups differed significantly from that of the country. While from the national statistics 27.8% of the population fall within the age groups of 18 to 37 years old, 15.4% in the age groups of 38 to 57 years old and 7.6% between the age groups of 58 and 88 years old and above<sup>358</sup>; the respondents' age groups on the other hand show that 53.1% of them were between the ages of 18 and 35 years old, 42.5% between 36 and 55 years old, and only 4.5% falling between the age groups of 56 and 60 years old and above. This extreme concentration of the youth and the middle-aged, constituting together 95.6% of the respondents (53.1% of 18-35 years and 42.5% of 36-55 years), though coincidental, is that important to the extent that most of those that "actively" get involved in violence fall under this category of age. The sampling method for respondents in each community was more concentrated on a person being above 18 years who agreed to freely and truthfully respond to our questionnaires than on any other criteria.

### ***4.1.3 Occupation of Respondents***

Occupation is one of the identifying causal factors of conflicts since survival and livelihood is considered a critical human need. In Ghana, occupational conflicts like those over farmland ownership and boundaries are common. Some conflicts that are linked to chieftaincy have undertones of land and land resource issues. People compete for these land resources to use for livelihood/survival purposes, residential housing and for self-enrichment, among other reasons. Most people in Ghana, especially in the rural areas, are employed in the agricultural sector, constituting crop farming, animal rearing, forestry and fishing (69.4%)<sup>359</sup>. In farming areas like our selected districts, farmers definitely will see arable land as a primary asset that is sine

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<sup>358</sup> These statistics were calculated from the Raw Data of the Ghana Statistical Service's Ghana Living Standard Survey Round 6 (GLSS 6) of 2012-2013 taken from the Ghanastats website. The calculation was done using SPSS binning method, which due to lack of extreme knowledge in it we could not get the same ranges to match the ranges we used for our field data respondents in analysing their ages.

<sup>359</sup> 2010 Population and Housing Census. Ghana Statistical Service, 2012.

qua non to their very survival and will do anything to have, protect and ensure such land for their survival. Other managerial and professional individuals in the formal sector, though not exclusively so, may need land for purposes other than crop farming, and the land question “evokes sentiments and emotions among *every* stakeholder (my emphasis)<sup>360</sup>. From Table 6 below, 32 of the 542 persons interviewed from all three categories were unemployed representing 5.9% while 82 persons (15.1%) were either students or in apprenticeship. 229 individuals (42.3%) were self-employed in various sectors of the economy, and 199 persons (36.7%) were employed in the formal sector.

**Table 6: Occupational distribution of respondents**

Occupation	Residents		Delegates				Key Informants		Total	
			NDC		NPP					
	Freq	%	Freq.	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Unemployed	17	12.9	8	3.3	7	4.2	0	0	32	5.9
Student/ Apprentice	16	12.1	36	15	30	18.2	0	0	82	15.1
Informal/ Self employment	33	25	123	51.3	68	41.2	5	100	229	42.3
Formal Employment	66	50	73	30.4	60	36.4	0	0	199	36.7
Total	132	100	240	100	165	100	5	100	542	100

*Source: author's field research data, 2014/2015*

We clustered our occupational distribution into groupings that did not show the specific activities undertaken by each respondent. We asked of respondent's occupation and reclassified into the categories presented above on Table 6. The respondents were categorised into many employment statuses. For example the

<sup>360</sup> Joseph R. A. Ayee, Alex K. D. Frempong, Richard Asante & Kwame Boafo-Arthur (2001). Local power Struggles, Conflicts and Conflicts Resolution. The causes, Dynamics and Policy Implications of Land-related Conflicts in the Greater Accra and Eastern Regions of Ghana. Dakar, CODESRIA, *Research Reports n°3*, 2011, 31 p., ISBN 978-2-86978-489-5

*employed* or *unemployed* and whether those who were employed were in the formal or informal sectors. The unemployed included those who indicated they were unemployed and housewives who don't consider their work at home as employment since, to them, employment means being in something for which you are paid. The *apprentices/students* category encompasses respondents who were either learning trades such as fitting/mechanics and sewing/dressmaking. The *self-employed* category was made up of individuals engaged in trading, mechanical engineering/fitting, farming, corn mill operation, carpentry, sewing/tailoring, and driving. While it would have been good to have presented the many various fields of employment and their frequencies and percentages, our coding (recoding and data entry) procedures makes it not possible at the moment to run such results.

Employment gives the means to basic livelihood. Unemployment on the other leads to difficulties in living and leads to psychological imbalances in the individual and the family thereby creating problems. This renders the individual vulnerable to social manipulation to violence and crime<sup>361</sup>. In a study conducted in Nigeria, it was found that youth unemployment, for example, created tension and hatred between the haves and have not, leading to communal clashes and the rise of such groups such as Boko Haram, Niger Delta Militant, armed robbery, prostitution and child trafficking constituting hiccups to security of lives and properties in the country.<sup>362</sup> In our results above however, the unemployed constitute only 5.9% of the total population, which does not seem quite alarming economically by African standards. However, 42% of the informal and self-employed category are in fragile businesses that easily lend themselves to very little incomes and can be easily manipulated into criminal and violent behaviours including illicit trading along with their known economic activities

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<sup>361</sup> Alison McClelland and Fiona Macdonald (1998). *The social consequences of unemployment*. For Business Council of Australia, July 1998

<sup>362</sup>Danjuma Abdullahi & Bala Aliyu Kardi (2012). Role of Governance in Employment Generation in Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSRJBM)*, ISSN: 2278-487X Volume 3, Issue 3 (Sep-Oct. 2012), PP 27-31. [www.iosrjournals.org](http://www.iosrjournals.org)

and mercenary violence. Recent studies have shown that populations, especially the youth, that find themselves in disaffected and economically unviable situations are easily vulnerable to armed violence, gangs, crime, drug trafficking and other illicit activities.<sup>363</sup> There are situations in Ghana where some evidence shows the use of external mercenary youth to participate in conflicts<sup>364</sup>. Not all, some people in other occupations like trading and driving are easily used for the trading and transfer of small arms and ammunitions through concealment in goods and wares they claim to transport for trading purposes. It is reported that the presence of large quantities of arms in most of the conflict zones in Ghana, are precipitating factors that lead to quick resort to violence at the least provocation and increase casualties in conflict situations (Wuaku Commission, 2002).

Whilst occupational distribution may be of importance in conflict situations, the level of education of individuals may also be of importance to conflict analysis when dealing with conflict-prone communities.

#### ***4.1.4 Level of Education***

Two separate statistics are presented here under the level of education of respondents. The first aspect gives a holistic picture of the educational level of all the 542 respondents, as represented here below on Table 7. The second focuses on the educational level of the community respondents' cohort of the target sample as on Table 7 below. This was to enable us make more comparative community to community analysis of the level of education in these communities, and how these relate with conflicts in these communities.

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<sup>363</sup> Ali, M. (2014). Youth Unemployment: A Global Security Challenge. *Harvard International Review* (September 12, 2014). <http://hir.harvard.edu/article/?a=7296> accessed 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2018, at 01:17GMT

<sup>364</sup> Republic of Ghana (2002). Wuaku Commission Report, 2002

Generally, Table 7 indicates that 25.1% of respondents (136) had no education, 4 persons (0.7%) attained primary education, 38 persons (7.0%) had Junior High School (JHS) or Middle School level (MS) education. In addition, 58 individuals (10.7%) and 10 persons (1.8%) had secondary education and Advanced level education respectively. The majority of respondents (205 individuals), representing 37.8% had university education, followed by Teacher Training College for 67 respondents (12.4%). Some 16 other (3.0%) had polytechnic education as 8 persons had education from other institutions.

**Table 7: Level of Education of Respondents (all 3 levels)**

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
None	136	25.1
Primary	4	0.7
JHS/MS	38	7.0
Secondary/ SHS	58	10.7
"A" level	10	1.8
TTC	67	12.4
Polytechnic	16	3.0
University	205	37.8
Others	8	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

On the residents' educational level, Table 8 below indicates that 33 respondents from the three communities have never been to school. Among these, 28 were recorded in the Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo district while 5 were in the Tamale/Sagnarigu metropolis. This does not necessarily mean that people of the Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo district are naturally less educated than those of Tamale and Yendi. The questionnaire was administered more on criteria of readiness to talk and safety of research team in the earmarked areas than based on level of education. Regardless of this observation, the data showed that at least 75% of the community respondents had some level of formal education. Compared to national statistics, the respondents have a higher average



level of education than the national average where 56.3% of Ghanaians 6 years and above have basic education<sup>365</sup>.

The implication of this is that the issues raised were within their understanding, and even more so because they are residents that have first-hand experience in the conflicts of their communities. The respondents, therefore, constituted a reliable source of information for this work.

**Table 8: Level of Education of Respondents: Community Residents**

Level of education * District Crosstabulation					
Level of education	District			Total Freq.	Total %
	Tamale Sagnarigu	/Yendi	Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo		
none	5	0	28	33	25.0
primary	0	0	1	1	0.8
JHS/MS	3	0	6	9	6.8
secondary/ SHS	8	2	4	14	10.6
"A" level	1	0	1	2	1.5
TTC	4	12	0	16	12.1
polytechnic	4	0	0	4	3.0
university	24	27	0	51	38.6
others	1	1	0	2	1.5
Total	47	42	40	132	100

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

Apart from the 33 respondents who have no formal education, 10 others have basic education among which 1 has primary education only and 9 have junior high school education. Fourteen (14) respondents have secondary school education with 8 from the Tamale and Sagnarigu metropolis, 2 from Yendi and 4 from Bunkpurugu. Those

<sup>365</sup> Ghana Statistical Service (2012). Population and Housing Census, 2010.

with university level education are 51, polytechnic 4, teacher training college (TTC) 16, 1 for advance ('A') level, and 1 person for the "other" category.

In respect of the 5 key informants sampled in this thesis, the data obtained indicated that all of them had university education. The positions occupied by the key informants are critical and demand some level of in-depth knowledge and experience acquired through formal education and practice. It was, therefore, not strange that all of them had a minimum of university degree. The educational level of these key informants could influence their responses to the issues raised in the course of interviews.

#### ***4.1.5 Ethnic group of respondents***

The data on ethnicity are consciously presented in three separate categories in line with the three cohort of respondents, namely data from the community respondents in the selected communities; the data from the political delegates; and data on the key informants.

For the community respondents, the research was undertaken in two predominantly Dagomba and one predominantly Bimoba districts. As shown on Table 9 below, Tamale/Sagnarigu and Yendi districts are predominantly Dagomba populated districts (32 and 27 respondents respectively) while Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo is predominantly Bimoba (39 respondents).

**Table 9: Crosstable of Ethnicity in Study Districts**

Ethnic Group of Community Respondents * District Crosstabulation					
Ethnic group	District				
	Tamale	Yendi	Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo	Total	Percentage (%)
Dagomba	32	27	0	59	44.70
Bimoba	1	6	32	39	29.55
Dagau	7	1	0	8	6.06
Konkomba	0	3	3	6	4.55
Kusasi	3	1	0	4	3.03
Gonja	3	0	0	3	2.27
Anofo (Chokosi)	0	1	1	2	1.52
Fulani	0	1	1	2	1.52
Fante	2	0	0	2	1.52
Mamprusi	0	0	2	2	1.52
Vagla	0	1	0	1	0.76
Ewe	0	1	0	1	0.76
Basari	0	0	1	1	0.76
Frafra	1	0	0	1	0.76
Anlo	1	0	0	1	0.76
Total	47	42	40	132	100

*Source: Authors field research, 2014/2015*

A few other tribes live in these communities, such as the Dagau (8), Konkomba (6), Kusasi (4), Gonja (3), and a number of other ethnic groups with representations between 1 and 2 respondents across the total number of 132 respondents captured. It is worth noting that one's ethnic group influences his or her real or perceived level of involvement in each selected conflict. For example, A Frafra man's actions will generate more suspicions if he was found around the Bolgatanga chief's palace (especially if he belongs to a different faction from the faction whose kin is on the Bolgatanga throne) than will generate if he is seen doing the same activity around the Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo chief's palace. This is because the Frafra people in Bolgatanga have no direct contestable interest in the Bunkpurugu skin – it will sound extremely weird in Ghanaian culture if you see a Frafra man from Bolgatanga contesting to be a chief in Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo, because Frafra people have no lineage with that skin and are not heirs to that skin. So the Bimoba chief or citizen would not have fears

and suspicions if a Frafra is found loitering around his palace. In the same way, a Mamprusi individual's actions will generate more fear in Bawku (where the Mamprusis are in a historically long conflict with the Kusasis for the Bawku Chieftaincy) than will generate in Kumasi where the Mamprusis have nothing to do with that land nor their chieftaincy.

Along the same lines of reasoning, the above ethnic data shows that Bimobas are more involved with the Bunpkurugu-Yunyuo conflicts, and the Dagomba more in the Yendi conflicts. Most of the indigenous residents of Tamale are equally Dagombas and belong to either side of the Yendi conflict (Abudus or Andanis). The general picture the information presents is that, the perceived or actual role of an individual in a conflict as represented from the perspective of any side of the conflict divide may depend largely or to some extent on the ethnic group or ethnic affiliation of that individual, hence the importance of ethnicity here as a variable of our field data for further analyses in this work.

Among the delegates of the two political parties, the ethnic composition was crosscutting since they emanate from all the regions and constituencies of the country. However, the region in which the congress is organised skews the ethnic composition in favour of the predominant ethnic groups resident in that capital. This is because many supporters and residents sympathetic to the political party in question, as well as observers attend these congresses even if they don't have votes.

Among the 165 NPP delegates and participants that were captured in the study during their congress in Tamale in April 2014, about 31 different ethnic groups were captured. Among these, the Akan 31 (18.8%) and the Dagomba 33 (20%) were the two predominant groups. All other groups were represented almost equitably. The dominance of the Akan and Dagomba groups was explained by the fact that the Akan group is the largest ethnic group in the country and also constitute the majority of NPP support base in Ghana. In fact, until recently, the NPP has been referred to as an Akan party. For the Dagomba, it could be because the congress was held in the

capital of the Northern Region where the Dagomba are dominant among the population. These figures are represented on Table 10 below.

**Table 10: Ethnic Composition of NPP Delegates and Congress Participants in Tamale (2014)**

Ethnic composition of NPP Delegates/Congress Participants in Tamale 2014		
Ethnic group	Frequency	Percent
Talensi	6	3.6
Wale	4	2.4
Dagau	5	3.0
Bono	6	3.6
Gonja	9	5.5
Zambrama	1	.6
Chambaa	2	1.2
Banda	1	.6
Akyim	8	4.8
Hausa	1	.6
Mamprusi	5	3.0
Akan	31	18.8
Bimoba	2	1.2
Sisala	2	1.2
Vagla	1	.6
Ga	5	3.0
Kokomba	2	1.2
Kasena	2	1.2
Nzema	1	.6
Nanumba	3	1.8
Basari	2	1.2
Dangbe	1	.6
Fante	6	3.6
Kotokoli	1	.6
Guan	2	1.2
Bissa	3	1.8
Moshie	6	3.6
Bulsa	2	1.2
Kusasi	6	3.6
Dagomba	33	20.0
Ewe	6	3.6
Total	165	100.0

*Source: Face-to-face Interviews with Party Delegates in April 2014*

For the NDC delegates' congress in Kumasi as shown on Table 11 below, 31 ethnic groups were represented from across all the 10 regions of the country. However, the Akan ethnic group was dominant with 73 (30.4%) followed by the Dagomba with 33 (20%) respondents and the Ewe, 23 (13.9%). Once again, the predominance of the Akan could be attributed to venue of the congress which was Kumasi, the capital of Ashanti, predominantly Akan. However, the same reasons cannot be adduced to the Ewe and the Dagomba. The NDC have a large support base in the Volta Region that is predominantly Ewe in population. The party equally has many supporters among the Dagomba people. This could explain their dominance among the sampled respondents. What is worth noting and of interest to this thesis, however, is the fact that both political parties have delegates all across the ten regions of the country and across all ethnic divides. Table 12 below (after Table 11) shows the regional composition of delegates at the two congresses of the two main political parties in Ghana.

**Table 11: Ethnic Composition of NDC Delegates and Congress Participants in Kumasi (2014)**

Ethnic composition of NDC Delegates/Congress Participants in Kumasi, 2014		
Ethnic group	Frequency	Percent
Akan	73	30.4
Bimoba	2	0.8
Busanga (Bissa)	5	2.1
Brasa	1	0.4
Bulsa	2	0.8
Chamba	2	0.8
Dagao	11	4.6
Dagomba	32	13.3
Dorimon	1	0.4
Ewe	23	9.6
Frafra, Talensi	10	4.2
Ga	9	3.8
Gonja	6	2.5
Grunshi	2	0.8
Guruma	2	0.8
Hausa	4	1.7
Kusasi	10	4.2
Konkomba	2	0.8
Kotokoli	2	0.8
Krobo	2	0.8
Likpakpa	1	0.4
Mamprusi	1	0.4
Moshie	4	1.7
Nabt	1	0.4
Nanumba	5	2.1
Shai (Dodowa)	1	0.4
Sissala	4	1.7
Songai/Gao	1	0.4
Waala	6	2.5
Wangara	2	0.8
Wassa	2	0.8
Total	240	100

*Source: Face-to-face Interviews with Party Delegates in April 2014*

While the ethnic group figures on tables 10 and 11 seemed skewed towards certain ethnic groups, the regional origin of the delegates as shown on Table 12 below



indicates that there is equitable inclusiveness among delegates in the two major parties, except for the Northern and the Ashanti regions that were venues for the NPP and the NDC congresses respectively. It is expected that the host regions will have more representation of participants especially observers and sympathisers who will not have to spend much to travel to attend the congress as compared to other regions where the congresses were not being held.

**Table 12: Region of Origin of Party Delegates and observers (NPP & NDC)**

Region of origin of Party Delegates and Observers				
Region	NPP		NDC	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Upper East Region	23	13.9	28	11.7
Western Region	7	4.2	15	6.3
Upper West Region	9	5.5	18	7.5
Northern Region	48	29.1	43	17.9
Brong-Ahafo Region	11	6.7	20	8.3
Ashanti Region	22	13.3	44	18.3
Volta Region	9	5.5	14	5.8
Eastern Region	11	6.7	14	5.8
Greater Accra	17	10.3	22	9.2
Central Region	8	4.8	22	9.2
Total	165	100.0	240	100.0

*Source: Face-to-face Interviews with Party Delegates in April 2014.*

While the biodata of the respondents interviewed in the context of this research may seem primary, it enables us to have an idea of a few basic characteristics of the persons we interviewed for the research as we proceed to look at the specific objective-related results of this field work which are presented in chapters five, six, seven and eight in the ensuing related portions of the thesis. The data presented in the next chapters are based primarily on the community respondents' data (132 from the three communities) and supplemented where necessary by the data from the delegates and the key informants (voices) as appropriate.

## 4.2 Conflict Pattern and Dynamics

### 4.2.0 Introduction

This chapter opens the presentation and analysis of data from the field for this thesis. In it, major violent social conflicts in Ghana and their related causes are identified, and discussed in the light of empirical field data collected in Ghana in 2014 and 2015. Issues considered include the occurrence and dynamics of violent social conflicts such as the geographical regions in which conflicts occur, the types of conflict that occur, the current status of the conflicts as well as how long these conflicts have been in existence. This information gives us education on the general understanding of the pattern and dynamics of conflicts in Ghana and respondents' knowledge of these dynamics. Good knowledge of conflict dynamics in any given society promotes conflict awareness and conflict sensitivity which are essential factors that influence individual behaviour towards others in conflict situation. Conflict awareness is an essential element of individual behaviour towards others in conflict situations and impacts either conflict escalation or conflict regulation and resolution, not only on the part of conflict parties but also on the part of the general population in their daily activities to ensure a more peaceful democratic society<sup>366</sup>.

### 4.2.1 Knowledge of Existing Conflicts in Ghana.

Aspects of the field data inquired into respondents' knowledge on the situation of violent conflicts in the country. Respondents were asked to tell the number of violent conflicts they have witnessed or heard of in their community and/or in Ghana. This variable was measured on the nominal scale. The communities that formed the sample for this study at this level were purposively selected for their experiences in violent

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<sup>366</sup> Anderson, M. B. (1999). *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace-Or War*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, (1999)

conflict situations which are still “unresolved” and which conflicts have made very serious media headlines and recorded at least 25 direct violent conflict deaths<sup>367</sup> since their inception in those communities (91 of such conflicts in all as of June 2015). Respondents’ responses were later ranged from 1 to several in a continuous nominal range grouping of 5 per range. The responses are summarised on Table 13 below.

**Table 13: Number of violent conflicts witnessed/heard of in community by residents**

Number of conflicts	Frequency	Percentage (%)
None	23	17.4
1-5	95	72.0
6-10	1	.8
11-15	1	.8
16-20	2	1.5
21 and above	1	.8
Cannot recall	2	1.5
Several/cannot count	7	5.3
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author’s field work 2014/2015*

Table 13 above summarises respondents’ knowledge of conflicts in their communities. From the table, respondents (17.4%) indicated they didn’t witness any conflicts. 97 respondents (72.0%) of respondents indicated they have heard of or witnessed between 1 and 5 conflicts in their community. In addition, 0.8% each of respondents have heard of or witnessed between 6 and 10 violent conflicts, between 11 and 15 violent conflicts, and between 21 and more violent conflicts respectively, whilst together 5.3% of respondents have heard of or witnessed several number of

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<sup>367</sup> In as much as this death toll reference is a total understatement of the number of direct violence deaths recorded in these conflicts, the lack of official or formal verifiable statistics informs our moderation. In some of these conflicts, even a single rise of them could claim more than this twenty-five violent deaths referred to here.

conflicts in their communities. This means that in all, 109 individuals, out 132 (representing 82.7%) have heard of or witnessed violent social conflicts in their communities. This compares well with the responses received from the community respondents presented on Table 14 below on their knowledge of conflicts in the country as a whole. Overall, 83.3% of respondents also indicated they have heard of or witnessed at least 1 or several conflicts in the country at large.

Table 14 below shows that 50% of respondents indicated they have witnessed (or heard of) between 1 and 5 violent conflicts in Ghana whilst 16.7% indicated they have not heard of or witnessed any violent conflicts in Ghana.

**Table 14: Number of violent conflicts witnessed/heard of in Ghana.**

Number of Conflicts	Frequency	Percent (%)
None	22	16.7
1-5	66	50.0
6-10	17	12.9
11-15	5	3.8
16-20	2	1.5
21 and above	3	2.3
cannot Recall	2	1.5
Several/Cannot count	15	11.4
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field work 2014/2015*

Table 13 and Table 14 above indicate that respondents have a very high knowledge of conflicts in their communities and in Ghana in general, thus 82.7 % and 83.3% respectively. This is expected because all the community respondents are persons who must be living in Ghana and especially in the communities where they were interviewed. And since those communities were chosen for their conflict indices people living in those communities could not claim not to have known or experienced or heard of any conflict either in their community or in Ghana. In as much as there is no study in Ghana that measures the general level of Ghanaians' conflict awareness, a nationwide study was conducted on awareness levels of constituents in bye-election

conflicts (National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), 2011). The study revealed that 89.1% of Ghanaians had awareness of bye-election violence in the country<sup>368</sup>. A combined average of 82.5% (from 82.7% for respondents' awareness of conflicts in their community and 83.3% for their awareness of conflicts in the entire country) is an indication that the statistics from the community data could represent a true reflection of the national situation.

Furthermore, our interaction with the key informants also confirmed the high level of conflict awareness among them. All the 5 key informants (100%) indicated having various knowledge of conflicts across the country. This is what one key informant said:

*“Ghana is said to be a peaceful country, but this is in relative terms. At least all the many conflicts I have witnessed or heard did not speak well about the country as a gateway to peaceful democracy in West Africa. We need to work on these violent conflicts to reflect the positive image heard outside about the country”*  
(Key informant, Ghana, 2015).

In a similar way, another key informant remarked:

*“I personally escaped death narrowly. I am therefore conscious about violent conflicts”* (key informant, 2015)

Respondents' high consciousness of conflicts is indicative not only of the widespread existence of violent internal conflicts in Ghana, but also an indication of the media coverage these conflicts have received even if it is difficult to give a measure of this media coverage statistically because of lack of such data. These findings are in line with the National Peace Council's (NPC) interactive conflict map of Ghana which showed that conflicts are dotted across the country. As of June 2015, the National

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<sup>368</sup> Research Department of the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), (2011). *Election Conflict in Ghana: Case Study of Constituency By-Elections*. May 2011

Peace Council (NPC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) identified over 91 active conflict points in their conflict mapping project across the nation<sup>369</sup>. If the respondents' rate of conflict awareness could be translated into conflict sensitive behaviour then it will be more practical for Ghana to manage the numerous violent conflicts in the country in a more successful manner, if not resolve them totally.

A further consideration was made for the number of respondents that chose “*none*”, thus people who indicated they have never seen, or heard of any violent conflicts in the communities in which they lived or in Ghana as a whole. 17.4% of respondents indicated they had never heard of or witnessed any conflicts in the communities in which they lived, and 16.7% indicated they had never heard of any violent conflict in the country. This does not support the logic for the purposive sampling of the communities in which the data were collected. All three communities were selected because they were conflict prone areas. Secondly, the conflicts in these areas had not yet been resolved at the time of data collection. Last but not the least, some of the destroyed houses and chief palaces, as was the case of Bunkpurugu and Yendi respectively, were still unrenovated and visible at sight. What then could have made these residents to respond in the negative as to whether they have ever witnessed any conflicts? To verify this, we tried to look at the relationship between the number of

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<sup>369</sup>National Peace Council, UNDP (2014). Electronic Conflict Map of Ghana. Found at <http://conflictmap.mint.gov.gh/home.aspx> Accessed on 27th June 2015 at 2:12GMT; *Modern Ghana* (21 November 2014, 21:44 CET, General News). NPC Launches Electronic Conflict Map of Ghana. Online at <https://www.modernghana.com/news/582344/1/npc-launches-electronics-conflict-map-of-ghana.html> Accessed on 27th June 2015 at 2:30am GMT.

years the respondent has lived in the community and the response s/he gives as to whether he has ever witnessed or heard of conflicts in their community. The idea here is that, in an event where a resident just settled in the community or in the country, there is the probability that the person may not have yet witnessed any conflict or heard of same. Table 15 below shows a cross table of this investigation.

**Table 15: Number of violent conflicts witnessed or heard of by resident and length of years spent in the community**

Number of violent conflicts witnessed/heard of in your community	Length of stay (years) spent in this community								Total
	<1 yr	1-5 yrs	6-10 yrs	11-15 yrs	16-20 yrs	26-30 yrs	31 yrs and above	all my life	
None	1	4	0	5	6	0	0	7	23
1-5	3	12	9	12	13	0	1	45	95
6-10	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
11-15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
16-20	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
21 and above	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Cannot recall	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Several/cannot count	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	5	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>132</b>

*Source: Author's field research 2014*

The interest here is to identify the category of respondents who indicated that they did not witness any conflicts (23 respondents in total). Within the row of those who indicated that they did not witness any conflicts (row 1 on the table), we find that 1 respondent had lived in the community for less than 1 year, 4 others have been living there between 1 and 5 years, 5 respondents between 11 and 15 years, 6 respondents have lived there between 16 and 20 years, and 7 respondents have live in the community for all their lives.

This is very interesting. Even if persons who have lived for less than one year in the community can claim they did not hear of any conflict in the community<sup>370</sup>, the other categories cannot claim same. This is quite questionable because in 2014 when the data was collected, all the conflicts in these areas had been active or semi-active in one way or the other in the selected communities, to the extent that Bimbilla<sup>371</sup> was so unsafe at the time due to the killing of the king there that we had to withdraw from there to administer our questionnaire in the Sagnarigu and Tamale Metropolis. While the questionnaire did not include any variable that could help give reasons for these denials, these may not be farfetched.

Civilian victimisation has in recent times become an arm employed by conflict factions against populations both in intrastate and interstate conflicts. One possible consequence of victimisation in both instances include being direct subjects to violence<sup>372</sup>. Fear of victimisation should therefore be an expected attitude of populations in conflict areas especially when they are speaking to persons they do not know, and may not trust. Trust is very key in data collection in conflict-afflicted communities. In our case here, the respondents might have not been open enough to the data collection team. Populations living in conflict areas are suspicious of outsiders they do not know. Respondents are difficult to convince for information on issues related to the conflict and general life of people in the conflict area. Suspicion and lack of trust are major causes of conflict escalation and intractability in the first

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<sup>370</sup> The conflicts in these communities are some of the most mediatised conflicts in Ghana. In addition, these conflicts recur so often that any conscious individual cannot live in these communities without having heard of the conflicts. All the same, the benefit of the doubt could be accorded those in the category of having lived in the community for less than one year.

<sup>371</sup> Bimbilla is one of the conflict areas that was initially targeted for data collection. But in June 2014, the Bimbilla chief was killed at a time that we were preparing the grounds there to begin data collection. The state of insecurity engendered by this rise of the conflict obliged us to withdraw from the town and administer questionnaires meant for Bimbilla in the Tamale and Sagnarigu Metropolis.

<sup>372</sup> Wood M. Reed et al. (2012). Armed Intervention and Civilian Victimization in Intrastate Conflicts. *Journal of Peace Research* (Fall 2012); Minoiu, C. and Shemyakina, N. O. (2012). Armed Conflict, Household Victimization, and Child Health in Côte d'Ivoire. *Society for the Study of Economic Inequality*, ECINEQ 2012 – 245 February, 2012.



place, and in most cases it is the endurance of suspicion and lack of trust that make conflicts endure<sup>373</sup>.

In addition, it is possible that individuals who are direct conflict parties or persons who have suffered some level of trauma may not accept to talk about it. As a direct conflict party, conflict denial may equally be used as conflict strategy or sheer mischief to cover up facts and happenings with the intention of preventing any form of intervention in the conflict, especially when the individual believes he has an upper hand in the confrontation, to enable his side of the conflict to delve much pain and probably defeat the other side before any form of intervention could take place. In Ghana during the March 2002 conflict that led to the assassination of the Overlord of Dagbon, Ya Na Yakubu Andani II, the then Interior Minister who belonged to one side of the conflict denied any hostilities when called by a local radio station, Joy FM, after the station had wing of the raging conflict, while at that very moment his people (the Abudus) had besieged the Ya Na's palace<sup>374</sup>. This prevented proactive security measures that could have assisted to prevent the death of the King. Measures taken by the state security were too late to prevent the violence nor shield the king from the painful death.

Denial of the existence of conflict, even when it is evident, is one method of handling conflict for some individuals that adopt the avoidance approach to conflicts. Individuals with conflict avoidance behaviours are not very cooperative in helping other individuals to achieve their goals, nor do they want to address the original issue

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<sup>373</sup> Roy J. Lewicki & Edward C. Tomlinson (2003). Distrust. *Beyond Intractability*. December 2003. Found online at <https://www.mbi-moos.org/essay/distrust> accessed on 29th March 2018 at 3:28GMT

<sup>374</sup> Tonah, S. (2012). The Politicisation of a Chieftaincy Conflict: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 21(1): 1–20 (2012).

of the conflict<sup>375</sup>. These factors could have contributed to the claim of individuals who live in the conflict community claiming they have not experienced or heard of any conflicts in that community.

Another possible related factor could be gender. This has two sides. One side is that women who lose their husbands, children or siblings in conflict will not easily come out of their trauma to freely talk about these conflict situations and even participate in post conflict reconstruction activities<sup>376</sup>. The other side is that males in Ghanaian society have the prejudice that women easily cede to releasing strategic information out to enemies. They, therefore, do not engage or involve women in planning for war or fighting, except otherwise. One of the marks of manhood in most societies, therefore, is to be lip-tight on conflict secrets<sup>377</sup>. A high rate of male respondents as we see in this research, especially in Yendi, could affect such responses. On the contrary, all the party delegates interviewed (405 from both NDC and NPP) and the key informants (5) admitted having heard or witnessed conflicts of violent nature. This is what one key informant had to say:

*“As humans we cannot run away from conflicts. I believe most Ghanaians have heard or witnessed a conflict of violent character, especially when we talk about Northern Region of Ghana”.*

Probing further to establish whether there was any link between those respondents who indicated they did not experience, witness or hear of any conflicts in their

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<sup>375</sup> Kilmann, R. and Kenneth W. T. (1977). "Developing a Forced-Choice Measure of Conflict-Handling Behavior: The "MODE" Instrument". *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 37: 309; Thomas, K. W., & Kilmann, R. H. *Thomas-Kilmann conflict mode instrument*. New York: XICOM, Tuxedo, 1974.

<sup>376</sup> Palmay, I. (2005). Engendering Wartime Conflict: Women and War Trauma. *Violence and Transition Series*, December, 2005); Anjalee Kohli et al. (2015). Social interaction in the aftermath of conflict-related trauma experiences among women in Walungu Territory, Democratic Republic of Congo. *Global Public Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice*, Volume 10, Issue 1, 2015. pp 55-70

<sup>377</sup> Elin Bjarnegård et al. (2015). Gender, Peace and Armed Conflict. In *SIPRI Yearbook 2015*. Oxford University Press, 2015

community on the one hand and the gender of the respondent on the other, this was what was revealed as shown on Table 16.

**Table 16: Gender and number of conflicts heard of/witnessed by residents**

Sex of respondent * How many violent conflicts have you witnessed/heard of in this community? Crosstabulation											
			How many violent conflicts have you witnessed/heard of in this community?								Total
			None	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21 and above	Cannot recall	Several/cannot count	
Sex of respondent	Male	Count	15	71	1	0	2	1	2	5	97
		Expected Count	16.9	69.8	.7	.7	1.5	.7	1.5	5.1	97.0
	Female	Count	8	24	0	1	0	0	0	2	35
		Expected Count	6.1	25.2	.3	.3	.5	.3	.5	1.9	35.0
Total		Count	23	95	1	1	2	1	2	7	132
		Expected Count	23.0	95.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	7.0	132.0

*Source: author's field work, 2014/2015.*

On Table 16 above we concentrate on the coloured column which contains responses from respondents who indicate that they have never witnessed or heard of any conflict in their community. We compared the responses from female respondents who chose this option as against male respondents who chose same, comparing the expected count with the real count to identify which sex (male or female) would have chosen more than expected by proportion of their representation to indicate that they have not heard of any conflicts in their community. The results indicate that actual male representation in this category of response (15 respondents) is below the expected value of 17 respondents. Contrarily, female respondents for this category (8 respondents) is higher than the expected count of 6 respondents for females. Consequently, female respondents have been more closed-lipped to telling the truth than for men despite the higher numerical count for male (15) than for female (8).

## 4.2.2 Perception of Regions in Ghana with most Violent Conflicts

Knowledge of conflicts distribution in the country was equally studied by asking respondents to identify the regions in which conflicts occur the most in Ghana. The results of respondents' answers are summarised on Table 17 below. Respondents rated the ten regions of Ghana in terms of their notoriety for violent conflict occurrence and could choose more than one region known to them to have violent social conflicts.

**Table 17: Respondents' Perception of Regions with most Violent Conflicts (multiple response order)**

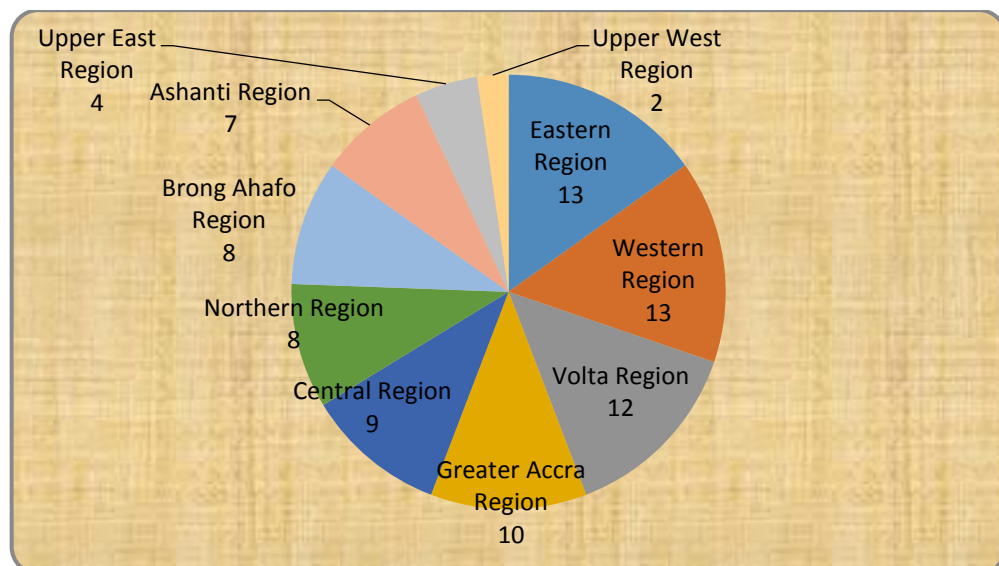
Region	Responses	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Northern Region	125	53.00
Upper East Region	57	24.20
Upper West Region	18	7.60
Greater Accra Region	13	5.50
Volta Region	11	4.70
Ashanti Region	5	2.10
Central Region	3	1.30
Eastern Region	3	1.30
Brong-Ahafo Region	1	0.40
Western Region	0	0.0
Total	236	100.00

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

From Table 17, respondents indicated that the Northern Region of Ghana had more violent conflicts than any other region in the country, registering 125 responses out of 236 responses that were recorded to that question, thus representing 53% of responses. The Upper East Region was scored second with 57 responses out of 236 (24%), the Upper West, Greater Accra, Volta and Ashanti Regions were 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> respectively with 7.6%, 5.5%, 4.7% and 2.1% respectively. The Central and Eastern Regions recorded 3 responses each, representing 1.3% for each, whilst the Western Region, according to the respondents, was the least affected by conflicts, recording zero (0) from all respondents.

These results indicate that respondents perceive the Northern and Upper East Regions of Ghana as the two hottest spots of violent conflicts in the country. Noticeably however, the facts and reality differ sharply from respondents' views. The National Peace Council (NPC) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s interactive conflict map of Ghana establishes that as of June 2015 there were a total of eighty-six (86) active conflicts existing all over the country and which conflicts were being attended to by the NPC. The project further gives a distribution of conflict incidence across the country by region. In Figure 5 below we summarise the distribution of conflicts from the NPC-UNDP conflict project.

**Figure 5: NPC-UNDP Conflict by Region in Ghana**



*Source: Researcher's Construct from NPC-UNDP Interactive Conflict Map of Ghana.*

In Figure 5, the Western and Eastern regions of Ghana recorded the highest number of conflicts, 13 each out of 86 conflicts representing 15% percent for each. The Volta Region is second in number of existing conflicts with 12 conflicts, representing 14% of cases. The Greater Accra and Central regions recorded 10 and 9 conflicts respectively, thus 12% and 11% respectively of conflict cases. The Northern Region and Brong-Ahafo Region each has 8 conflicts, representing 9% of cases each. The Ashanti region recorded 7 cases (8%) whilst the Upper East and the Upper West were the least with 4 (5%) and 2 (2%) conflicts respectively.

**Table 18: Comparative data between Perceived Conflict Incidence and Data from UNDP-NPC**

Region	Responses from Respondents (2014/2015)		Real Data of Conflict Incidence in Ghana as per the UNDP-NPC Conflict Data (2015/2017)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Northern Region	125	53.00	8	9.3
Upper East Region	57	24.20	4	4.7
Upper West Region	18	7.60	2	2.3
Greater Accra Region	13	5.50	10	11.6
Volta Region	11	4.70	12	14.0
Ashanti Region	5	2.10	7	8.1
Central Region	3	1.30	9	10.5
Eastern Region	3	1.30	13	15.1
Brong-Ahafo Region	1	0.40	8	9.3
Western Region	0	0.0	13	15.1
Total	236	100.00	86	100.0

*Source: Constructed from Researcher's Field Data and UNDP-NPC Data*

Comparing the results from respondents on Table 17 and Figure 5, combined on Table 18 above, one deduces a striking difference between the *perception* of respondents and the NPC-UNDP data on conflicts in Ghana. According to the NPC-UNDP conflict project, the Upper East Region and the Northern regions combined actually have only 14% of violent conflict cases nationwide, thus only 14 out of 86 conflict cases across the country. The respondents' data on Table 17 above, however, indicates that 77% of all conflicts in Ghana are found in the Upper East and Northern regions of Ghana. This misperception is even worst when you consider Western Region, which is *perceived* by respondents in the survey as being the most peaceful region in the country with no violent social conflicts (recording zero (0) cases from respondents), actually tends out to be the least peaceful region in the country in the NPC-UNDP data on conflicts in Ghana, along with the Eastern Region, each

recording 13 conflicts (highest recorded in the project) with 15% each of conflict cases respectively.

The disparity of data between the *perceived* geographical incidence (perceived regional occurrence of respondents) and real conflict occurrences in the country (regional incidence) could be attributed to a number of factors. The Northern Region and the Upper East Region have some of the longest lasting conflicts in the country, namely the Dagbon and Bawku chieftaincy conflicts respectively which started in the pre-independence era. Secondly, the Northern Region of Ghana, since after the colonial wars in the history of modern Ghana, is the only region in the country to have experienced full-fledged war since after independence, with violence casualties numbering over a thousand dead and affecting a population of over ten thousand people. The Konkomba-Nanumba conflict of 1994 in the Northern Region created a serious security problem for the government of Ghana, with over 2000 people killed, over 200,000 internally displaced, 441 villages destroyed<sup>378</sup>, and the ECOWAS sub-region was confronted with a humanitarian/refugee situation requiring the intervention of the UN and ECOWAS<sup>379</sup>. This memory recall of the 1994 Konkomba-Nanumba war due to its historical intensity since independence, coupled with the intense and gruesome nature of the current unending conflicts in Dagbon, Bunkpurugu, and Bawku, with their unpredictable and erratic volcanic nature that usually attract a lot of attention, makes it such that other regions see the Upper East and Northern regions as more conflict ridden than any other region.

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<sup>378</sup> Pul, S. A. H. (2003). Exclusion, Association and Violence: Trends and Triggers in Northern Ghana's Konkomba-Dagomba Wars. *The African Anthropologist*, Vol. 10, No. 1, March 2003.

<sup>379</sup> United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN). 16-22 October 1999. "Tripartite Discussions on Ghanaian Refugees in Togo." Quoted in: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada: "Ghana: Conflict between the Konkomba and Nanumba tribes and the government response to the conflict (1994-September 2000)". Available at <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3df4be33c.html> . Accessed on June 30, 2015 at 00:26GMT.

Not all, media reportage on the northern part of Ghana has almost always concentrated on the negative aspects of development, thereby neglecting commonalities and cross-cutting opportunities that exist among the peoples and erasing the many positive development strides made by the three regions of the North<sup>380, 381</sup>. This creates a negative image for the North to the extent that people of other regions of the country consider the three Northern regions of Ghana as conflict-prone, poor, retrogressive, archaic and uncivilised<sup>382</sup>.

One other factor is that the killing and subsequent beheading of the Ya-Na, the Overlord of Dagbon in Yendi, aroused so much public attention in the North which has since been volatile in terms of security, without a paramount chief, and posing lots of security concerns to residents and the government of Ghana. However, it must be said that Dagbon is not the only place in Ghana where chiefs have been killed. The killing and elimination of traditional leaders and sometimes political leaders and high profile individuals has of late become a source of worry in Ghana. Recently, towns like Nkonya in the Volta Region<sup>383</sup>, Nsawam in the Eastern Region<sup>384</sup>, Joma in the

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<sup>380</sup> Modern Ghana.com. (14th September 2010). UDS Vice Chancellor unhappy with negative media reportage. Found at: <http://www.modernghana.com/news/296018/1/uds-vice-chancellor-unhappy-with-negative-media-re.html>. Accessed: 30th June, 2015 at 00:45GMT.

<sup>381</sup> Chief Superintendent Mathew Appiah Agyei, Deputy Northern Regional Police Commander, "Media Asked to Avoid Negative Reportage about Northern Region". *Ghana News Agency* (GNA) Tamale, May 14, 2010, Found at: <http://www.ghananewsagency.org/social/media-asked-to-avoid-negative-reportage-about-northern-region--15668>. Accessed: April 26, 2016, at: 01:25 GMT.

<sup>382</sup> Abdulai Sufyan (2009). Northern Ghana and Media Propaganda. *Modern Ghana*, Feature Article, March 24, 2009. Found online at <http://www.modernghana.com/news/207952/1/northern-ghana-and-media-propaganda.html>. Accessed 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2016 at 01:10GMT

<sup>383</sup> Myjoyonline.com (02-06-2015): "Nkonya: One person shot dead on farm". Found at <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2015/June-2nd/nkonya-one-person-shot-dead-on-farm.php>. Accessed 29th June at 02:35 GMT.

<sup>384</sup> Myjoyonline.com (31-03-2015). "Police deny being negligent in murder of chief at Nsawam". Found at: <http://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2015/March-31st/police-deny-being-negligent-in-murder-of-chief-at-nsawam.php#sthash.ZSMGJOUn.dpuf>. Accessed: 29th June 2016, at 02:40 GMT.



Greater Accra Region<sup>385</sup>, Nkonya Ahenkro in the Volta Region<sup>386</sup>, Seikwa Traditional Area in the Tain District of the Brong-Ahafo Region<sup>387</sup>, Chinto, near Drobo in the Adoagyiri Nsawam District of the Eastern Region<sup>388</sup> have all recorded chiefs being assassinated by unknown individuals, not to mention other political and high profile killings the nation has recorded with the latest being the assassination of the late member of Parliament for Abuakwa North Constituency, Honourable J. B. Danquah-Adu on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 in his house, a son of a former liberation fighter and a member of the “big six” that led Ghana to independence in 1957. Regardless of these revelations, the circumstances leading to the death of these traditional and political figures differ markedly from that of the Dagbon. As noted by the Wuaku Commission (2002), Yendi witnessed a three-day continuous violent clashes leading to the death of 28 others besides Ya Na, the Paramount chief. This probably could explain why even among residents of the selected communities there is high perception that Northern Region and Upper East Region are more violent-prone regions in Ghana, whilst in fact in reality incidence of violent conflicts showed otherwise.

While these facts of violent occurrences go a long way to show the widespread nature of violence and conflicts in the country, especially surrounding chieftaincy, the causes of these conflicts remain diverse, varied and sometimes even incomprehensible to experts and practitioners in peace and conflict resolution as well as policy makers. We examined respondents’ own knowledge of the causes of violent social conflicts in

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<sup>385</sup>*Daily Guide*, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2014. Joma Chief Shot Dead. Found online at <http://www.modernghana.com/news/528938/1/joma-chief-shot-dead.html>. Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June,

<sup>386</sup> *ureportghana.com*. (02-06-2015). “Nkonya Ahenkro Chief Shot Dead”. Found at: <http://ureportghana.com/2015/06/02/nkonya-ahenkro-chief-shot-dead/>. Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2017 at 02:58GMT

<sup>387</sup> Ghananation.com. (06-03-2013). “Chief Shot Dead”. Found at <http://www.ghananation.com/news/22094-chief-shot-dead.html>. Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at 03:03 GMT

<sup>388</sup> “Chief and His Driver Shot Dead”, *Peacefmonline.com* (31-03-2015). Found at: <http://news.peacefmonline.com/pages/social/201503/237364.php> Accessed: 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2017 at 03:10 GMT.

Ghana from respondents; this was aimed at helping to answer the objective of the research aimed at identifying the main causes of violent conflicts in their community and in Ghana as a whole. Since these respondents live in the conflict communities, they are expected to have better knowledge and understanding of these conflicts and the plausible solutions for their sustainable resolution and how this feeds into the existing literature on the causes of violent conflicts in Ghana.

#### **4.2.3 Causes of Conflicts in Ghana.**

Respondents were asked to tell the causes of violent social conflicts that they have witnessed or heard of in their community and/or in Ghana.

Some possible causes of violent social conflicts in Ghana were suggested in the questionnaire based on researcher's knowledge and experience of the terrain, existing literature and the pre-testing of the questionnaire. Respondents had the liberty to choose as many causes as they found appropriate based on their individual knowledge of the causes of conflicts in their communities or in Ghana as a whole. Of the seventeen suggested options to this question, nine were collapsed during analysis into the category of "other" due to the low scores these options obtained from respondents. Asking as to the causes of those conflicts, 25 respondents, representing about 18.9% could not tell or did not know the causes. The remaining 107 respondents, representing about 81.1% however, responded in the affirmative and gave various causes as captured on Table 19 below.

**Table 19: Causes of Conflicts in Ghana**

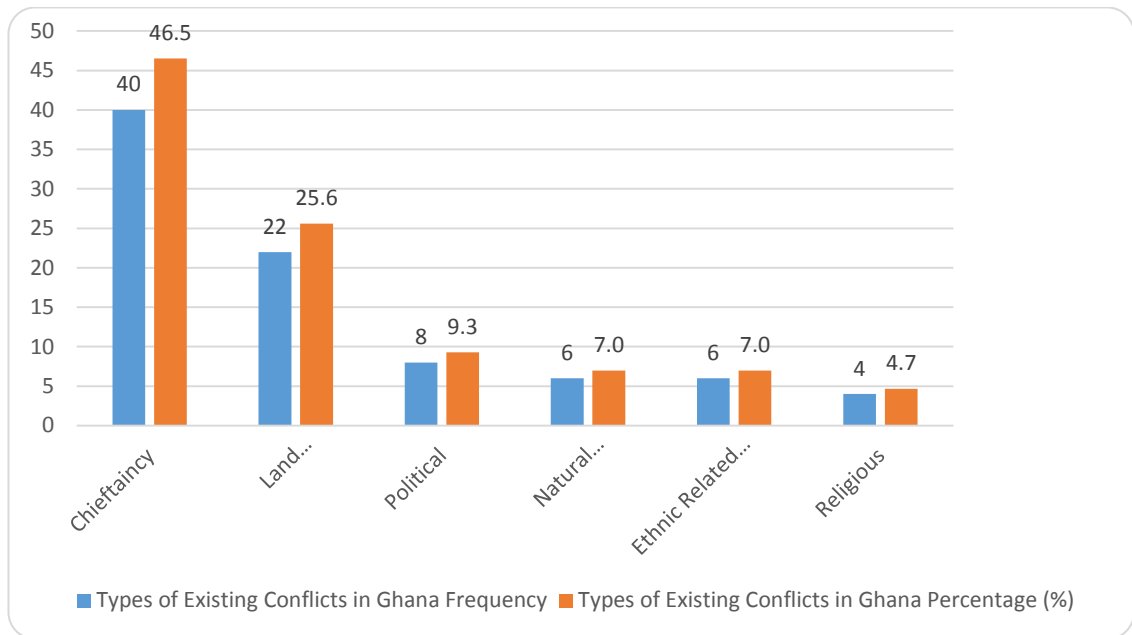
What are the causes of these conflicts	Responses	
	N	Percentage (%)
Don't Know/Can't tell	95	19.20
Chieftaincy	127	25.70
Land ownership disputes	72	14.60
Political Manipulation	61	12.30
Political elections and campaign	50	10.10
Ethnic Differences	38	7.70
Dishonesty / bad leadership	18	3.00
Religious differences	11	2.20
Others	25	5.00
Total	494	100

*Source: Researcher's Field Research 2014/2015*

All the 127 responses out of 494 responses (because they were multiple choice responses), representing 25.7% of the responses indicated that *chieftaincy* was the main cause of conflicts in their communities and in Ghana. This was followed by *land ownership disputes* with 72 responses (14.60%). The third major cause of conflicts in Ghana, as indicated by the respondents was *political manipulation*, which obtained 61 responses (12.30%), and *political elections and campaigns* being the 4<sup>th</sup> cause of violent social conflicts in Ghana with 50 responses (10.10%). *Ethnic differences* was the 5<sup>th</sup> with 38 scores (7.70%), while *dishonesty/bad leadership* and *religious* causes recorded 18 and 11 responses, representing 3% and 2.20% respectively. Nine “other” causes of conflicts together accounted for 5% of conflicts in the country.

The above results from respondents were compared with data from the Ghana National Peace Council and United Nations Development Programme (GNPC-UNDP) conflict data to see the causes of conflict as featured prominently in the various data sets. The GNPC-UNDP programme categorises conflicts by types which, in the nutshell, indicates the issue around which the conflict is centred. This, therefore, makes it similar to our variable “*causes of conflicts*” as captured in our field data. Figure 6 below presents the various types of conflicts that exist in Ghana as captured in the GNPC-UNDP conflict programme in Ghana.

**Figure 6: Causes of violent conflicts in Ghana**



*Source: Constructed by author from GNPC-UNDP Interactive Conflict Map of Ghana*

Figure 6 above indicates that there are more chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana than any other type of conflict, thus 40 conflicts, representing 46.5% of all existing conflicts in Ghana. This is followed by Land ownership and acquisition conflicts with 22 conflicts across the country (25.6%). Political activity related conflicts occupy the third position with 8 conflicts in the country as of August 2015 (9.3%). Conflicts originating from natural resources issues, as well as from ethnic related issues concurrently occupy the fourth position with each individually scoring 6 conflicts (7.0%) each. Religion plays the least role in conflicts with 4 existing conflicts (4.7%) at the time of the data.

Comparing these facts to the results on Table 19 which displays respondents' perception of the causes of conflicts in Ghana, we find similarity in data. Chieftaincy, land acquisition and ownership, politics and political related issues, sequentially and in descending order, occupied the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> most present causes of violent social conflicts respectively in Ghana. The differences between the respondents' answers and the GNPC-UNDP data occur from the 4<sup>th</sup> position where the data differ in variable but not by essential cause positioning. Whilst in the field data natural

resources were not explicitly mentioned by respondents, the GNPC-UNDP data found natural resources as a separate variable and it occupies the 5<sup>th</sup> position in its data. Ethnic differences and religion continue the scale with “bad leadership”, (which is not considered in the GNPC-UNDP data) occurring after “ethnic differences” and before “religious differences” in the results from the field data where it was considered. These are represented on the comparative data table represented below on Table 20.

**Table 20: Comparative field and NPC-UNDP data on the causes of conflicts in Ghana**

Causes of Conflicts in Ghana					
Responses from Study Sample			NPC-UNDP Data		
	Freq	Per (%)		Freq	Per (%)
Chieftaincy	127	25.70	Chieftaincy	40	46.5%
Land ownership disputes	72	14.60	Land	22	25.6%
Political Manipulation	61	12.30	Politics	8	9.3%
Political elections and campaign	50	10.10			
Ethnic Differences	38	7.70	Ethnic Related	6	7.0%
Dishonesty / bad leadership	18	3.00	Natural Resources	6	7.0%
Religious differences	11	2.20	Religion	4	4.7%
Others	25	5.00	-	-	-
Don't Know/Can't tell	95	19.20	-	-	-
Total	494	100		86	100

*Source: Researcher's field Research and NPC-UNDP Data*

These statistics corroborate, to some extent, the existing literature on the causes and sources of conflicts in Ghana. Tsikata and Seini (2004), identify a number of causes of communal violence in Ghana. These include, among others, in order of importance, land and land boundary disputes; traditional leadership; political rivalries,

and leadership contests and exclusion<sup>389</sup>. Some of these causes are interrelated. For example, chieftaincy and land resources are closely related. This is because in Ghana, most lands are stool lands (or family lands) and the chief occupying the stool or the skin holds such land in custody for the current and future generations, and is responsible for the allocation of such lands to members of his community and *outsiders* that may desire same for usufructory purposes<sup>390</sup>. Access to the stool, therefore, does not only give the chief the power to rule that traditional area but also an automatic access to stool land and the resources thereof. In recent years, the phenomenon of land sales to individuals has heightened the conflict on land issues for two reasons. It has heightened the debate in some communities on the right of chiefs to sell such lands, as well as the increased conflicting competing claims to both land rights and chieftaincy positions all over the country. Even in cases of family land sales the chief or his representative must approve of any form of allocation from the family to any third party for any reason for which such land is given out or acquired.

While the study by Tsikata and Seini (2004) rates land disputes as the most rampant cause of violence in Ghana, our current field data places chieftaincy as the first cause of violent conflicts in Ghana with 26% of responses. Land disputes place second with 15% of responses. Two political related causes of conflict in Ghana were mentioned by respondents: these are *political manipulation* (12.30%) and *Political elections and Campaigns* (10.10%). If we consider these two causes as political related factors and combine their scores we get an average score of 22.40%. This places party politics in the field data as the second highest cause of conflicts in Ghana after chieftaincy and land disputes. The implication of this is that chieftaincy and politics related issues must be given serious attention if conflicts are to be sustainably managed in Ghana.

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<sup>389</sup> Tsikata, D. & Seini, W. (2004). *Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana*. Working Paper 5. November 2004.

<sup>390</sup> Apter, David (1972). *Ghana in Transition*. Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press. 2<sup>nd</sup> Revised Edition, p56. ; Nukunya, G. K. (2003). *Tradition and Change in Ghana: An Introduction to Sociology*. Ghana Universities Press, 2003. Second Edition.

It is even more worrying to know that most of these conflicts have been there for over six decades or more and are as recurrent as often (Tsikata and Seini, 2004).

To further verify these causes of conflicts identified in the field as presented above, the research looked at some key elements of the identified causes and tried to unearth how each of the causes of conflicts affects the peace of the Ghanaian democratic system. Specifically, chieftaincy, land and land resources, religion, ethnicity, and politics were examined in detail to find out how these affect peace or conflict in the Ghanaian democracy. To do this, the research examined the possible effects of these variables as either unifying factors or dividing factors in the Ghanaian society. The approach here was to examine how each of these variables, by measure among the respondents, either play a unifying role in favour of peace and conflict resolution or a dividing role in favour of violent conflicts. For each, a variable that is perceived to have a positive role in unifying the people is said to contribute less to conflicts in the country, and a variable that is perceived to divide the people is said to be more conflict-prone. Each of these variables are considered separately in detail below.

#### 4.2.3.1 Chieftaincy

In Ghana, chieftaincy conflicts are by far the most endemic conflicts that affect the country's peace (Tsikata & Seini, 2004). The main cause of conflict in the chieftaincy institution has been attributed to the selection of the person to become chief when a vacancy occurs on the stool or skin, and the process of installing these chiefs as affirmed by Anamzoya et al (2012):

*“In the last half century, Northern Ghana has become synonymous with conflicts, with several areas experiencing violent ethnic, land and chieftaincy*

*conflicts. Though these three main sources of conflicts are interconnected, chieftaincy conflicts are without doubt the most preponderant in the north*<sup>391</sup>.

Anamzoya and Tonah (2012)<sup>392</sup> elucidate the rampant nature of conflicts in Ghana, especially Northern Ghana and the preponderance of chieftaincy conflicts in the country. Chieftaincy conflicts in most communities in Ghana is linked to the choice of a successor to the chief, or to his installation as chief, or yet still during traditional festivals where opposing factions to the same stool or skin contest the right to the performance of traditional cultural rites associated with these festivals and which must be performed by the chief. This notwithstanding, there are also many cases where these events represent a show of unity, strength and oneness among the people of some traditional areas and chieftains.

conscious of these mixed-effects of these occasions, the research sought to know from respondents how the selection of a successor to a skin or a stool on the one hand, and the installation of a new chief on the other hand contributes to the unity and oneness of their people or divides the people and incites conflicts among them.

On Table 21 below, we find that 88 respondents, representing 66.7% agree that the installation of chiefs creates unity and brings people together, whilst 42 respondents, (representing 31.8 %), disagree with the assertion. Only 2 respondents (1.5%) said they couldn't tell if it does unite the people or not. On the other hand, when asked about their level of agreement to the assertion that the installation of chiefs causes disunity and conflicts in Ghana, 104 respondents (78.8%) said they agreed to the assertion and only 26 respondents (19.7%) said they disagreed to the assertion that the installation of chiefs causes disunity and generates violent conflicts in Ghana.

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<sup>391</sup> Anamzoya, A. Sulemana & Tonah, Steve (2012). Chieftaincy Succession Dispute in Nanun, Northern Ghana: Interrogating the Narratives of the Contestants. *Ghana Journal of Geography* Vol. 4. 2012 pp. 83-1 02

<sup>392</sup> Ibid.



comparing respondents' answers to the positive and negative assertions on the role of selecting and installing chiefs in peace and conflict, it can be said that only 26 respondents (19.7%) really confirm that the installation of chiefs contribute positively to peace and unity in Ghana.

**Table 21: Possible Crosscutting role of installing chiefs in Ghana**

Installation of chiefs in Ghana				
	bring people closer across ethnic divides		divides people across ethnic divides	
Reponses	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
Agree	88	66.7	104	78.8
don't agree	42	31.8	26	19.7
don't know	2	1.5	2	1.5
Total	132	100	132	100

*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

On Table 21 above, respondents demonstrated divided views. When a total of 62 respondents (47%) are *in support* of the assertion that choosing a successor enhances unity among the people, and at the same time an equal 62 respondents (47%) *disagreed* that this activity creates unity and enhances peace. On the other hand, 106 respondents (80.3%) agreed that choosing a successor to a chief is an activity that frequently divided the people and created violent conflicts in Ghana. Only 22 (16.7%) respondents disagreed with the negative and conflict-prone effect of choosing a chief to be installed. This means that only 16.7% of the respondents from the negative side could confirm the claim of the 47% that agreed that the selection of a chief has unifying and peaceful effect on society. In itself, the 47% of respondents that supported the positive effect of choosing a chief, is inadequate as support for the assertion, as compared to the 80.3% demonstrated by the respondents in support for its negative implications for the society. This confirms that the choice of heirs and successors to occupy a stool or a skin, in actual fact, are major trigger factors in chieftaincy conflicts.

**Table 22: Crosscutting effect of choosing a successor to chiefs in Ghana**

Choosing a successor to chiefs in Ghana:				
	Brings people closer across ethnic divides		Divides the people across ethnic divides	
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	62	47	106	80.3
don't agree	62	47	22	16.7
don't know	8	6.1	4	3
Total	132	100	132	100

*Source: author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

In addition, these statistics go a long way to confirm that chieftaincy as an institution is a major source of conflict in Ghana (Tsikata & Seini, 2004; Anamzoya & Tona, 2012)

Closely related to chieftaincy is the element of control of land and land resources that is identified as the second major source of conflict in Ghana per our results on the causes of conflicts.

#### 4.2.3.2 Land and Land Resources

Land issues were identified by our respondents as well as the NPC-UNDP data on causes of conflict in Ghana. Land is one of the most revered resources in the Ghanaian society because it plays a primary role in the traditional economic lives of the individual in Ghanaian society<sup>393</sup>. In traditional Ghanaian society land is owned and used by the living on behalf of the dead and the generations yet unborn. In non-centralised communities, land is owned by descent groups. Individuals gain access to land through the leaders of these descent groups. Individuals who gain access to land

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<sup>393</sup> Nukunya, G. K. (2003). *Tradition and Change in Ghana: An Introduction to Sociology*. Ghana Universities Press, 2003. Second Edition. pp. 95-96.

under such circumstances only hold the land on allodial rights. In communities with a centralised political system such as the Akan, the Ga, the Dagomba and many other such systems of Northern Ghana, land that is not vested in descent groups and families is known as stool lands and held in custody for the community by the kings or chiefs on behalf of their people past, present and future<sup>394</sup>.

In recent times, the sacredness associated with land ownership is becoming more and more reduced and the rules and norms for its acquisition are correspondingly becoming less rigid but modernised along with land acquisition provisions of modern political constitutions. Chiefs and family heads, as well as individuals who are supposed to hold land in custody for their people, have responded to rising demand for land by selling out these lands for cash and other economic benefits. This is occasioned partially by rising demand for land associated with population growth, modernisation of agriculture, commoditisation of agricultural produce, rising demand for housing and the estate industry, and the development and expansion of industry that depend more and more on agricultural produce as raw materials. Consequently, the contest for chieftaincy positions is directly linked to the contest for holding and controlling land and land resources in terms of royalties related to it, making chieftaincy contests even more acrimonious than expected. The position of chief is not only seen today as just a call to leadership, but an opportunity for increased economic advantages for the one who finally emerges as the chief.

This has increased the stakes on land, to the extent that the allocation and sale of land today in Ghana have become a central issue in the conflict landscape of the country. It is believed that the stakes on chieftaincy issues and their related conflicts have

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<sup>394</sup> Idem

increased due to the window such access to the throne provides for the chief's access to and control of land and other associated mineral resources therein<sup>395</sup>.

As a result, the respondents were asked to tell in their own views and experiences, if the acts of selling of lands as well as allocating land for farming activities contribute to uniting the people and enhancing peace in the country or rather contributes to dividing the people and escalating violent conflicts in Ghana. The results for the effects of land sale is on Table 23 and those for allocation of land for farming is on Table 24 below.

On Table 23 below, 48 (36.4%) respondents supported the idea that issues around the sale of land and land resources enhance unity, whilst 81 respondents (61.4%) disagreed with that assertion. On the other hand, 74.3% of respondents (98) agreed that the sale of land and land resources divided the people and caused conflicts, whilst 23.5% (31) disagreed that it caused division in society and creates conflicts.

**Table 23: Crosscutting effect of Selling Land and Land Resources**

Selling lands				
	brings people closer across ethnic divides		divides the people	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	48	36.4	98	74.3
don't agree	81	61.4	31	23.5
don't know	3	2.3	3	2.3
Total	132	100	132	100

*Source: author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana*

On the question of the allocation of lands for farming activities, which is closely related to the sale of land, the results on Table 24 below indicate that 77 respondents

<sup>395</sup> Tsikata, Dzodzi and Seini, Wayo (2004). Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana. CRISE Working Paper 5 (November 2004)

(65.9%) agreed that allocating lands for farming activities unites the people and brings peace, and 39 respondents (29.5%) disagreed to that assertion. On the contrary, 56 respondents (42.4%) agreed that land allocation for farming divides the people and causes conflicts, whilst 69 respondents (52.3%) disagreed to that assertion. In effect, therefore, there is divided opinion of respondents on the effect of land allocation for farming activities. A comparative examination with the results on the effect of land selling on socio-political cohesion in Ghana, we find that land selling is more a divisive variable (74.3%) than allocating lands for farming activities (42.4%). In other words, allocating land for farming activities is more a uniting variable (65.9%) than selling land (36.4%).

**Table 24: Allocating land for farming activities and crosscutting cleavages**

Allocating land for farming activities				
	brings people closer across ethnic divides		divides the people and creates conflicts among them	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
Agree	77	65.9	56	42.4
don't agree	39	29.5	69	52.3
don't know	6	4.5	7	5.3
Total	132	100	132	100

*Source: author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana*

This demonstrates that inasmuch as land issues are one of the identified causes of conflicts in Ghana, the specific issue of land that is more conflictual is the commercialisation (sale) of land by chiefs and families, not disposing other related factors. One of such related factors that make land a source of conflict in Ghana is the extensive use of land for farming activities.

#### 4.2.3.3 Engaging in farming activities

In Ghana, about 51.5% of the population is engaged in agrarian activities and own and operate farmlands, with 82.5% of rural households and 26.6% of urban households involved<sup>396</sup>.

Many a time, people clash on ownership of pieces of land or allodial rights to a piece of farm land. Farm ownership conflicts increase tremendously at the onset of the raining season leading to the preparation of lands for planting food crops. Many cases are reported to the police, the courts and chief palaces, and certain times the intervention of the police and the military are needed to avoid communal clashes over land and cropping rights. As a result, we explored the effect of putting land to farming activities in either uniting the people or dividing them in the community, noting that land space is the underlying factor under consideration here.

From their responses presented on Table 25 below, 76.6% of respondents (101) agreed with the assertion that the use of land for farming activities united people across ethnic divides and enhanced peace in their communities, whilst 19.7% (26 respondents) disagreed with same. On the negative effects, 33 respondents (25%) accepted that engaging in farming activities divided the people and created conflicts among them, whilst 96 respondents (72.7%) confirmed their agreement with the positive contribution of engaging in farming activities by disagreeing with the assertion that it divides the people and causes conflicts.

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<sup>396</sup> Ghana Statistical Service, Ghana Living Standards Survey Round 6 (GLSS 6)

**Table 25: Effect of engaging in farming activities on Peace and Conflict in Ghana**

Engaging in farming activities				
Responses	brings people closer across ethnic divides		divides the people and creates conflicts	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
agree	101	76.6	33	25
don't agree	26	19.7	96	72.7
don't know	5	3.8	3	2.3
Total	132	100	132	100

*Source: author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana*

#### 4.2.3.4 Ethnicity

Ethnicity was identified as one of the causes of conflicts in Ghana by our respondents with 38 respondents (7.7%), and in the NPC-UNDP (7.0%). To further investigate this ethnicity variable, the research examined what aspects of ethnicity and ethnic relations affect the peace of the country. We sought to determine how ethnic awareness could either lead to a level of ethnic consciousness that may lead individuals to organise themselves on ethnic lines against other persons who are not of their ethnic groups, or uniting across ethnic lines for a common goal and peaceful co-existence. Respondents were asked as to their level of agreement to the assertion that ethnicity was either a uniting element or a divisive element in the Ghanaian democratic dispensation.

The majority of respondents (103), (78%) agreed to the assertion that ethnicity was a uniting element in their communities, whilst 25 respondents (19.9%) disagreed with that. As to whether being members of the same ethnic group contributed to dividing the people, 36 respondents (27.3%) said it was a dividing factor and contributed to conflicts. On the other hand, 92 respondents disagreed with this assertion, thereby, reaffirming the agreement by the 78% of respondents that said being members of the same ethnic group helps to unite and create peaceful coexistence.

**Table 26: Ethnicity, Unity and Division**

being members of the same ethnic group				
	brings people closer across ethnic divides		divides the people	
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	103	78	36	27.3
don't agree	25	18.9	92	69.7
don't know	4	3	4	3
Total	132	100	132	100

*Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2014/2015, Ghana*

The observation on Table 26 is that, respondents have a higher tendency to be more at peace with persons from their ethnic belonging than individuals who are of a different ethnic group. This means that there is a consciousness that 78% of respondents would at various times use ethnicity against others that are not of their own ethnic group. This confirms literature on ethnicity being one of the causes of conflicts in Ghana (Tsikata and Seini, 2004; Anamzoya and Tonah, 2012; Odotei and Awedoba, 2006). However, per our respondent data on the causes of conflicts, ethnicity only forms one the least causes of conflict in Ghana, occupying the fifth position after chieftaincy, land, political manipulation, and political elections and campaigns in descending order.

#### 4.2.3.5 Politics and political manipulation

Politics, political manipulations and elections have been identified as one of the causes of violent conflicts in Ghana (NPC-UNDP, 2007; Tsikata and Seini, 2004; Odotei



and Awedoba, 2006; UNDP, 2012<sup>397</sup>; Meissner, 2010<sup>398</sup>). In most cases, political conflicts occur around electoral disputes, campaigns, election results, disputes on processes and dates for some electoral activities. Party supporters and sympathizers clash on many of these issues leading, sometimes to injuries and death (Meissner, 2010; Tsikata and Seini, 2004).

#### 4.2.3.6 Religion

Religion was identified by 2.2% of our respondents as one of the causes of conflicts in Ghana and equally represented 4.7% of all existing conflicts in Ghana as of August 2016 according the GNPC-UNDP interactive conflict data (2016).

Religion, though not one of the concrete and easy things to recognise and understand, it plays an important role in the Ghanaian society. It defines the relationship between the individual and the supernatural world<sup>399</sup> and shapes their worldviews. Three major religions are noticed in Ghana, among other smaller ones. These are Traditional African (Ghanaian) Religion, Islam, and Christianity. These have various sects and splits that are more or less uncountable, especially in Christianity. In Islam a few sects exist as well. In African Traditional Religion, although the concept may be the same, each society, traditional area, community, ethnic group or even family has its own gods and ancestors at various levels with diverse importance on the spiritual ladder.

Religion, in most cases, plays a capital role in the establishment of the social norms that exist in the community, ranging from birth rites to puberty, marriage and death

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<sup>397</sup> United Nations Development Programme – Ghana National Peace Council (2012). *Conflict Mapping in Northern Ghana*. Found online at [https://www.google.com.gh/url?sa=t&rcct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=2ahUKEwimjNHZIMHbAhUHWywKHRsvD9wQFjAAegQIARAm&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.undp.org%2Fcontent%2Fdam%2Fghana%2Fdocs%2FDoc%2FDemgov%2FUNDP\\_GH\\_NPC%2520-%2520draft%2520report%2520for%2520conflict%2520mapping-%2520Northern%2520Ghana%2520\(2\)%25202012.pdf&usg=AOvVaw1wiTj0DZxm1UoS1w9ShZFE](https://www.google.com.gh/url?sa=t&rcct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=2ahUKEwimjNHZIMHbAhUHWywKHRsvD9wQFjAAegQIARAm&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.undp.org%2Fcontent%2Fdam%2Fghana%2Fdocs%2FDoc%2FDemgov%2FUNDP_GH_NPC%2520-%2520draft%2520report%2520for%2520conflict%2520mapping-%2520Northern%2520Ghana%2520(2)%25202012.pdf&usg=AOvVaw1wiTj0DZxm1UoS1w9ShZFE)

<sup>398</sup> Meissner, Kathrin (2010). February 2010 Elections and Conflict in Ghana: Country Analysis. *Friedrich Erbert Stiftung International Policy Analysis*.

<sup>399</sup> Opcit, pp. 55-57.

or funeral rites. In addition, it serves as the basis for the establishment of codes of ethics and behavioural norms of various communities among its believers. Religion, though transcends ethnicity, in some cases is synonymous with ethnicity, especially in Ghanaian traditional religion where each ethnic group has its own traditional religious uniqueness in rites, festivals and other performances peculiar only to them. In Christianity and Islam, however, the diversity is less pronounced as the ethnic element is less in the guiding scriptures<sup>400</sup>, emphasising “brotherhood” and “sisterhood” in the one religion. In Christianity and Islam, anyone that accepts the confession and believes in that religion is, in principle, automatically accepted as a brother or a sister and of oneness in spirit, thereby playing a very unifying role in society.

This notwithstanding, religion has been cited as a cause of violent conflicts that have disrupted the peace of many communities in Ghana<sup>401</sup>. These are in the form of inter- and intra-religious conflicts. As regards inter-religious conflicts, easy mention could be made of the Tijania versus Sunni Muslim sects in Wenchi, Atebubu<sup>402</sup>, and Wa in 1996; Seventh Day Adventist Church versus Muslims groups over land ownership in Atebubu in 2015; Ga Traditional Council versus a section of Christian Churches in Accra in 2000<sup>403</sup>; and Muslims versus Christians in Kumasi in 1995<sup>404</sup>. Many of such incidents have claimed human life, caused destruction to private and public property and put stress on the state security apparatus. For example, in the 1998 Kumasi intra-religious clashes between two Muslim sects that was reportedly sparked by a dispute

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<sup>400</sup> The Holy Quran and Hadiths, and the Holy Bible

<sup>401</sup> Tsikata, Dzodzi and Seini, Wayo (2004). *Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana*. CRISE Working Paper 5 November 2004, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford; Treve, K. Wise (2013), *Religious Conflict and its Impacts on Society: A Case Study of Global Evangelical and Evangelical Presbyterian Churches in Anyako*. Unpublished Masters Thesis; Ahiave, Edwin Carscious (July, 2013). *Conflict and Conflict Resolution in Ghana: The Case of the Dagbon Conflict*. Unpublished Masters thesis;

<sup>402</sup> *Ghanaian Times*, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1996.

<sup>403</sup> Atiemo, Abamfo. (undated). Fighting for the Rights of the Gods: Tradition, Religious Human Rights, and the Modern Nation-State in Africa – A Ghanaian Case Study. [www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu) Accessed on 2017, at 28<sup>th</sup> June, 15:34 GMT.

<sup>404</sup> *The Daily Graphic*, 2nd December 1995.

over "a burial ground", four people died and 24 others sustained "serious injuries" and 90 others were arrested<sup>405</sup>. In each of these conflicts, the police, the military and the law courts have been deployed in various ways to ensure peace returns to the individual communities. Such animosities have, in certain times, drifted into politics and elections, enhancing the violent stakes that sometimes characterise political activities in the country.

Despite these violent situations that have sometimes characterised the religious landscape in Ghana, religion has played a capital role in the promotion of peace in the Ghanaian democracy. The National Peace Council (NPC) of Ghana, was first started by representatives of all the major religious bodies in Ghana to initiate mediation and peace efforts in instances of violent conflicts in the country. It grew to become well recognised and many people from society and the media quickly call on them to intervene whenever there is looming or real violence anywhere in the country. Today, it has become a national constitutional body with an act of parliament (Act 818, 2011) establishing it with the mandate of conducting pre-emptive investigations for early warning signs of conflicts, and reporting same to the government of the day for preventive action<sup>406</sup>. The NPC also intervenes in conflicts with the support of the government for mediation and resolution. They are also at the forefront of the UNDP-sponsored National Peace Architecture and national conflict mapping of Ghana.

Apart from the NPC, the role of religious leaders in conflict resolution in Ghana cannot be overemphasized. The pastor or the imam is sometimes the first point of

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<sup>405</sup> Ghana Focus, 6 Feb. 1998; 19 Jan. 1998. Cited in Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (July, 1998). Ghana: Conflicts between "traditionalists" and the "Al Sunna" faction of the Muslim community including the cause of the conflicts and any sectarian killings since 1995 in Ghana particularly in Wenchi in the Brong-Ahafo Region. Accessible online at <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6acc0.html>. Accessed on 2017, at 28<sup>th</sup> June, 22:54 GMT.

<sup>406</sup> National Peace Council Act, 2011, (Act 818).

call when conflict arises, and are seen as effective and confidential conflict resolution mechanisms for many households and families.<sup>407</sup>

In view of the above, and the fact that respondents in this study as well as other literature identify religion as one of the causes of conflicts in Ghana, we proceeded to examine the extent to which religion can be considered to be more conflictual than peaceful in its contribution to stable democracy in Ghana.

Respondents were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement to the assertion that religion enhances peace in Ghana on the one hand, and to the assertion that religion breeds conflicts and disunites the people on the other hand. The results of these two variables shown on Table 27 presents 121 respondents (91.7%) in favour of the assertion that religion unites people and brings them closer across ethnic divides. Only 8 persons disagreed with that assertion. On the other hand, 38 respondents (28.8%) agreed that religion divides the people and creates conflicts, whilst 90 respondents (68.2%) disagreed that religious activities divide the people and cause conflicts among them, while 4 respondents (3%) said they couldn't tell if religious activities did affect the unity of the people.

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<sup>407</sup> Rasul, Amina (2009). *The Role of Religion in Peace Making*. Paper Presented at the CSID 10th Annual Conference May 5th, 2009; Khairulnizam Mat Karimi & Suzy Aziziyana Sali (undated). *Role Of Religious Leader In Interfaith Dialogue Towards Conflict Resolution: A Muslim Analysis on Christianity's Perspective*. College of Foundation & General Studies, UNITEN Bandar Muadzam Shah, Pahang, MALAYSIA

**Table 27: Effect of engaging in religious activities and effect on unity or division among the people**

Religious Activities				
	Brings people closer across ethnic		Divides the people and creates conflicts	
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	121	91.7	38	28.8
don't agree	8	6	90	68.2
don't know	3	2.3	4	3
Total	132	100	132	100

*Source: Author's field research, 204/2015, Ghana*

With the seeming overwhelming support of respondents for the peaceful effect of religion in the Ghanaian society, we further inquired to see if the peaceful effect of religion is felt only among people in the same religion, or with people across other religions.

The results, as presented below on Table 28, were that 109 respondents (82.6%) agreed with the assertion that being members of the same religious confession creates unity, and enhances peaceful coexistence in society, whilst only 21 respondents disagreed to the same assertion. On the negative effects of being members of the same religious confession, 75% of respondents (99) disagreed with the assertion that membership of a same religious confession created division and disunity in society, whilst 29 respondents (22%) agreed that it really divided people and created conflicts.

**Table 28: Effect of Being Members of the Same Religious Confession on Peace or Conflict**

beings members of same religious confession				
	brings people closer across ethnic divides		divides the people	
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
vagree	109	82.6	29	22
don't agree	21	15.9	99	75
don't know	2	1.5	4	3
Total	132	100	132	100

*Source: author's field research, Ghana 2014/2015.*

By contrast, while the results for the positive impact of religion on unity and peace was supported by 91% of respondents, 82.6% of respondents agreed with religion being a source of unity and peace among people in the same religions confession. On the other hand, whilst 68.2% rejected the assertion that religion created divisions among the people, 75% of respondents rejected the dividing tendency of religion among people belonging to the same religious confession. For each side, therefore, religion remains a very important unifying variable in the Ghanaian society<sup>408</sup>. It is, therefore, admissible to say that, though religion is identified as one of the causes of conflicts in Ghana, its influence on conflict is more minimal as compared to chieftaincy, land resources, and politics which occupy the first three position of importance in contribution to conflicts in Ghana.

In as much as the contribution of chieftaincy succession, land and land resources as well as party politics to violent conflicts in Ghana constitute a major source of worry and concern, the intractable nature of the conflicts they generate and their phenomenal recurrences are even more worrying and dangerous to the development

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<sup>408</sup> Khairulnizam Mat Karimi & Suzy Aziziyana Sali (undated). *Role Of Religious Leader In Interfaith Dialogue Towards Conflict Resolution: A Muslim Analysis on Christianity's Perspective*. College of Foundation & General Studies, UNITEN Bandar Muadzam Shah, Pahang, MALAYSIA

and consolidation of democracy in Ghana. Many wonder why most of these conflicts, especially chieftaincy conflicts, have become intractable and difficult to get to complete resolution. In furtherance, the research sought to investigate among respondents why the conflicts they have heard of or witnessed in their communities or in Ghana have not been sustainably resolved and also suggest working ways these conflicts could be resolved sustainably. Point 4.2.4 below explores the issues related to conflict intractability in Ghana and their related solutions.

#### 4.2.4 Causes of Conflict Intractability in Ghana

Many conflicts in Ghana, identified by both the respondents and research have been in existence since the pre-independence era<sup>409</sup>, <sup>410</sup>, <sup>411</sup>. To investigate into the causes of conflict intractability, it is imperative to first ascertain that the conflicts in question have really existed for long and also, that they have not been durably resolved since their inception. We asked respondents to tell whether conflicts in their communities had been sustainably resolved or not. Respondents were not asked to indicate the exact date of start or escalation of each conflict. The results of their responses to these questions are presented on Figure 7; Table 29; and Table 30, all below.

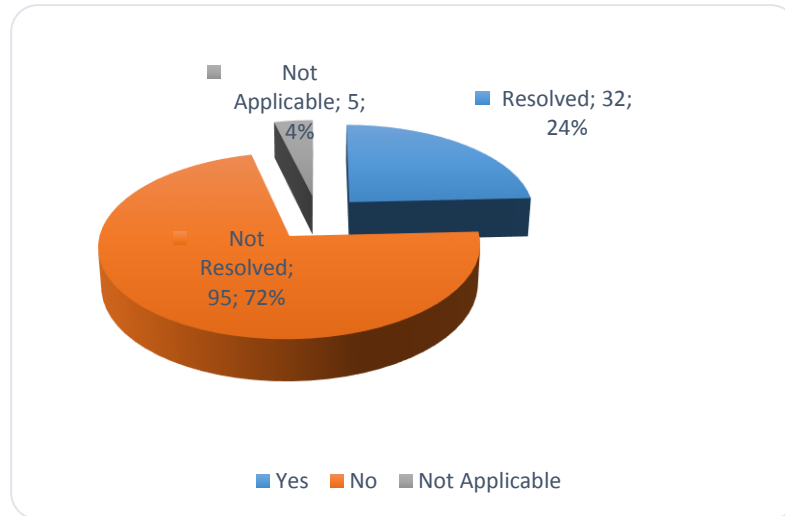
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<sup>409</sup> Tsikata, D. and Seini, W. (2004). Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana. *CRISE Working Paper 5*, November 2004

<sup>410</sup> Joseph R. A. Ayee, Alex K. D. Frempong, Richard Asante & Kwame Boafo-Arthur. Local power Struggles, Conflicts and Conflicts Resolution. The causes, Dynamics and Policy Implications of Land-related Conflicts in the Greater Accra and Eastern Regions of Ghana. Dakar, CODESRIA, *Research Reports n°3*, 2011, 31 p., ISBN 978-2-86978-489-5

<sup>411</sup> Kasanga, K. and Kotey, N. A. (2001). Land Management in Ghana: Building on Tradition, London: *International Institute for Environment and Development*.

**Figure 7: Status of conflicts in Study Communities**



*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

From Figure 7 above, 32 respondents (24%) indicated that conflicts in their community or in Ghana have been sustainably resolved, whilst 95 respondents (72%) indicated that conflicts in their community or in Ghana have not been sustainably resolved. This indicates that many conflicts are in a state of non-resolution or in a highly negative state. We did not seek to identify what types of conflict are resolved and which are not. However, inferential analysis into existing data and those presented earlier in this chapter by the respondents themselves on the existing types of conflicts in Ghana indicate that chieftaincy, land and political conflicts are the three most rampant and most intractable types of conflicts in Ghana as shown on Table 20 above as well as on the National Peace Council-UNDP conflict data of Ghana summarised in Figure 7 above.

How long then have these conflicts been in existence? The duration of a conflict before it is sustainably resolved plays an important role in determining whether that conflict is intractable or not, and more importantly how it affects relationships as well as its ability to transform institutions towards the direction of the conflict interests and issues. When conflicts are quickly resolved without their recurrence, they are said to be sustainably resolved. When conflicts recur without sustainable resolution, it is said to be intractable. Most at times, the longer conflicts keep before they are resolved,



the more their negative effects are felt by the society in question and its population and institutions at large. The tendency of conflicts to destabilise social and political systems and institutions does not only depend on the conflict's intensity, but also importantly its duration and its ability to be resolved sustainably as early as possible<sup>412</sup>, <sup>413</sup>, <sup>414</sup>. The duration of the conflict is, therefore, important because of its effects on existing systems in that society. Respondents' answers on conflict duration were sought, and the results presented on Table 29 below.

**Table 29: Duration of Existence of Conflicts in Research Communities**

Length of Existence of Conflict (by years)	Frequency	Valid Percent (%)
Not applicable	9	6.9
Don't know / can't tell or remember	5	3.8
<1 year	0	0
1-5 years	63	48.5
6-10 years	33	25.4
11-15 years	3	2.3
16-20 years	1	.8
21-25 years	2	1.5
26-30 years	1	.8
31-35 years	3	2.3
above 50 years	10	7.7
Total	130	100.0

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

From Table 29 above, 63 (48%) out of 130 respondents indicated that conflicts in their communities have existed for between 1 and 5 years, while 33 respondents

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<sup>412</sup> Cárdenas, M., Eslava, M., & Ramírez, S. (2011). External Wars, Internal Conflict and State Capacity: Panel Data Evidence. *Latin America Institute at Brookings*. Available online [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2011/1/12-state-capacity-conflict-cardenas/0112\\_state\\_capacity\\_conflict\\_cardenas.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2011/1/12-state-capacity-conflict-cardenas/0112_state_capacity_conflict_cardenas.pdf) on 18th June 2016, at 17:04 GMT+2

<sup>413</sup> Conteh-Morgan, E. (2001). International Intervention: Conflict, Economic Dislocation, and the Hegemonic Role of Dominant Actors. *The International Journal of Peace Studies* Autumn/Winter 2001, ISSN 1085-7494, Volume 6, Number 2.

<sup>414</sup> Polachek, W. S. & Sevastianova, D. (2010). Does Conflict Disrupt Growth? Evidence of the Relationship between Political Instability and National Economic Performance *Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA)*, Discussion Paper No. 4762. February 2010.

(25.4%), said their communities' conflicts have existed for between 6 and 10 years. 2.3% of respondents said their communities' conflicts have existed between 11 and 15 years, and a combined 13.9% of respondents said their communities' conflicts have existed between 16 years and 50 years and over.

We can better appreciate the indicators of intractability on Table 29 above when we look at the main causes of conflict intractability on Table 30 below.

**Table 30: Causes of conflict intractability in Ghana**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Don't know/can't tell/not applicable	53	40.2
Political interference and manipulation for votes and political gains	27	20.5
Lack of cooperation from conflict parties, intolerance, lack of understanding	21	15.9
Resolution efforts do not address root causes of conflicts/poor conflict management	8	6.1
Some people gain from these conflicts so they keep them going on	7	5.3
No third party interested in resolving the conflicts	6	4.5
Illiteracy and ignorance about conflict resolution skills/methods	3	2.3
Injustice and corruption	3	2.3
Unemployment	2	1.5
Bad leadership/bad governance	1	0.8
Disrespect for the rule of law	1	0.8
Total	132	100

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

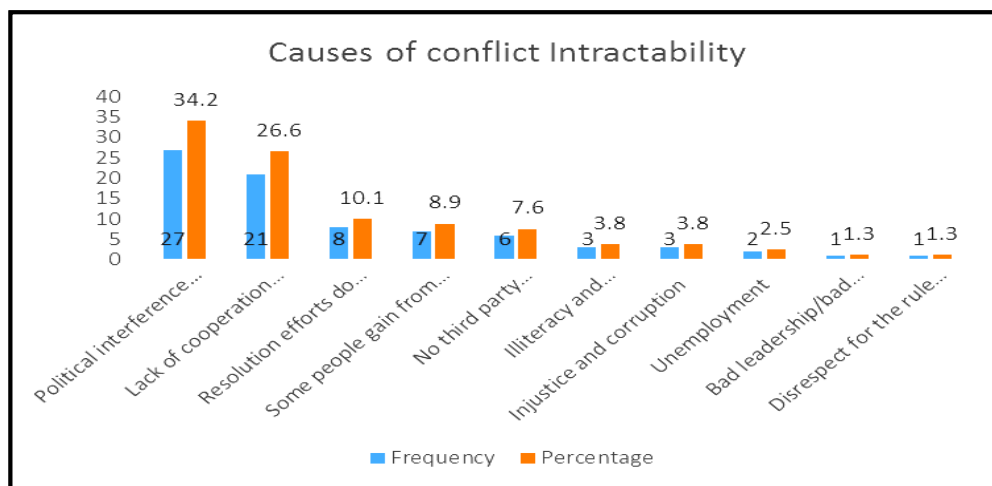
From that data, 40.2% of respondents (53 out of 132) indicated they don't know the reasons why the conflicts have not been sustainably resolved since their inception. While it may look unusual for such a high percentage to claim no knowledge of reasons why conflicts in their communities have not been sustainably resolved after several years of their occurrence and recurrence, it also demonstrates the extreme complexity of these old conflicts that undoubtedly present a mix of variables and causes. As one key informant indicated:

“It is difficult to tell why these conflicts never finish. At one time you think enough has been done to put an end to a conflict, and suddenly you find that same conflict is rising in violence again. And this is how most of our conflicts have been”. (Key informant, 2015)

These long-standing conflicts contain a mix of causes ranging from chieftaincy, partisan politics, legal issues, and multiple rancour. This could justify the 40.2% that indicated they *cannot tell or do not know* why these conflicts cannot be sustainably resolved. It is not as if these respondents do not have any idea to express. However, they may find it difficult to sieve or sort these multiple reasons that keep recurring each time in mixed nature to keep the conflicts unfortunately active.

To successfully analyse the reasons why most of the conflicts remain intractable, we re-presented these results on a different table without the *don't know/can't tell/not applicable* category, this maintains the frequency figures but increases the percentage values for clearer view of what variables obtained much more attention and vice versa. This re-presentation is done on Figure 8 below.

**Figure 8: Causes of conflict intractability (Re-presentation)**



Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015

From Figure 8 above, political interference is identified by 27 respondents (34.2%) as the major cause of conflict intractability in Ghana. In second position is lack of cooperation from conflict parties, intolerance and lack of understanding with 21

respondents (26.6%). The third cause of conflict intractability, according to the community respondents, is *conflict resolution efforts not addressing the root causes of conflicts*, registering 8 respondents (10.1%), whilst *conflict entrepreneurs* and *lack of third party interest in the resolution of the conflicts* constitutes the fourth and fifth positions with 7 respondents (10.39%) and 6 respondents (9.09%) respectively. *Illiteracy and ignorance of conflict resolution skills*, and *injustice and corruption* scored 3 responses each (3.8% each), whilst unemployment scored 2 responses (2.5%), and bad leadership as well as disrespect for the rule of law scored the lowest with 1 response each (1.3% each).

The above results reveal a number of issues. One, they help us establish that many conflicts in the surveyed communities, and for that matter in Ghana, have been in existence for so long a time without sustainable resolution, and two, they indicate that the behaviour of politicians, attitude of conflict parties and other stakeholders, irresponsive resolution procedures and approaches as well as conflict entrepreneurship are some of the causes of conflict intractability in Ghana. The fact remains that most conflicts in Ghana, with specific reference to the three conflict areas studied have been in existence for more than fifty years at least and others for over centuries. The findings from this thesis are in line with the works of Ferguson (1970), Lund (2003), the literature review report of the UDS and UG (2010), and Brukum (1995), among others. For example, the Yendi (Dagbon) chieftaincy conflict is said to trace its origins to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and has since been in existence with intermittent years of peace and violence.<sup>415</sup> The Bimbilla conflicts in the early

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<sup>415</sup>Ferguson, Phyllis and Ivor Wilks, 'Chiefs, Consultations and the British in Northern Ghana,' in Michael Crowder and Obaro Ikime, (eds.) *West African Chiefs: Their Changing Status under Colonial Rule and Independence* (New York: African Publishing Corporation/Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1970). Cited in Ahorsu, Ken et al, (2011), Edited by Fox Joey. *Governance and Security in Ghana: The Dagbon Chieftaincy Crisis*. SIPRI/OSI African Security and Governance Project, West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI); Ahorsu, Ken et al, (2011). Edited by Fox Joey. *Governance and Security in Ghana: The Dagbon Chieftaincy Crisis*. SIPRI/OSI African Security and Governance Project, West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI)

1980s<sup>416</sup>. The Kusasi-Mamprusi chieftaincy conflict in Bawku also started before independence in Ghana<sup>417</sup>. The Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict started in 1923 and is still not resolved<sup>418</sup>.

A number of socio-political phenomena that occurred in Ghana before, during and after colonial rule have led to many intractable conflicts in the country. The date of the conflict-causing variable or phenomenon determines the age of the conflict emanating from that incident. The influence of political mischief and bias of governments, as well as the use of coercive state agencies for political and personal gains by both politicians and chiefs were common incidents in pre-independence Ghana<sup>419</sup>. During colonial governance, the British policy of indirect rule installed and elevated chiefs, in some case, without reference to pre-existing norms for doing so, and “without sensitivity to the multi-ethnic character of the colonial territories.”<sup>420</sup> This created discontentment among the populations as well as between imposed chiefs and their “subjects”, even if such animosities were subtle and did not lead to open violence and loss of lives at that time. On the eve of independence when Ghanaian polity started to organise around newly formed political parties, the society gradually became characterised by rivalling contests for political power and

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<sup>416</sup> Australian Refugee Review Tribunal (2009). *Refugee: Research Response on Ghana*. 26 March 2009; Mbowura C. K. (2014). Inter-Ethnic Conflicts and their Impact on National Development, Integration and Social Cohesion: A Study of the Nawuri-Gonja Conflict in Northern Ghana. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 4, No. 7(1); May 2014.

<sup>417</sup> Lund, C. (2003). Bawku Is Still Volatile”: Ethno-political Conflict and State Recognition in Northern Ghana. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* · November 2003, pp. 587–610.

<sup>418</sup> Enhancing Human Security through Developing Local Capacity for Holistic Community-Based Conflict Prevention in Northern Ghana. *Literature Review Report* Submitted by: University for Development Studies (UDS), University of Ghana (UG), and Ghana Network for Peacebuilding, August 2010.

<sup>419</sup> Brukum, N. J. K. 1995; Chieftaincy and Conflicts in Northern Ghana. Department of History, University of Ghana, Legon. Mimeograph. Quoted in: Tsikata, D. & Seini, W. (2004). *Identities, Inequalities & Conflicts in Ghana*. Working Paper 4.

<sup>420</sup> Pul, S. A. Hyppolit (2003). Exclusion, Association and Violence: Trends and Triggers in Northern Ghana’s Konkomba-Dagomba Wars. *The African Anthropologist*, Vol. 10, No. 1. (March, 2003); Tsikata, D. & Seini, W. (2004). *Identities, Inequalities & Conflicts in Ghana*. *CRISE Working Paper 4*, November 2004.

authority<sup>421</sup>. Indigenous newly-formed political parties conveniently played into the politics of chieftaincy and traditional power, canvassing for votes with promises of maintaining or removing kings/chiefs and their employees whose roles will help the political party to win or lose power in each case<sup>422</sup>. This has created a polarised and conflict-laden socio-political culture in many Ghanaian conflict areas today, with special reference to Bawku and Dagbon where each side of the conflict divide in each of these areas belongs to a separate political culture without exception, and political appointments from each of these areas follow these fault lines and identifications. For example in Bawku, for political positions in the municipality, region or national level, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) has consistently made its appointments (if the appointee is to be from the Bawku area) from the Mamprusis, while the National Democratic Congress (NDC) has always made its appointments from the Kusasis. In 2013 after the NDC was declared winner of the 2012 elections, President Mahama attempted breaking this tradition in Bawku by nominating for the first time one Mr. I. K. W. Amadu, an educationist from the Bissa minority ethnic group (who is neither a Kusasi nor Mamprusi). Violent demonstrations were led by youth groups of the Kusasi ethnic group and Mr. Amadu was rejected at the assembly votes in the first instance when the Assembly was convened. This compelled the President to replace him by nominating one Mr. Bukari Issahaku, an NGO worker from the Kusasi ethnic group, whose nomination was endorsed at the first voting opportunity in the Assembly<sup>423</sup>. In Dagbon in the Northern Region, the NPP has always made its appointments from the Abudu side of the Dagbon (Yendi) conflict, whilst the NDC

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<sup>421</sup> Before colonialism until the eve of independence, popular party politics and political party campaigns were not known in the Ghanaian society.

<sup>422</sup> Apter, David (1972). *Ghana in Transition*. Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, p261.

<sup>423</sup> Article 143 (1) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana requires that the President's nominee to the position of District Chief Executive be approved by not less than two-thirds majority of members of the Assembly present and voting at the meeting.

has always made its appointments in Dagbon from the Andani side of the same conflict<sup>424</sup>.

Obviously, therefore, (but unexpectedly maybe), the attainment of national independence, and the political and social events that facilitated same, propelled a new renaissance of self-consciousness and demand for local independence on the part of tribes and ethnic groups that felt disenchanting or suppressed by chiefly groups during colonialism and indirect rule (Apter, David 1972; Horowitz, Donald, 2000). It also initiated a pattern of political culture that was to live to divide many populations and chiefdoms in many communities of the country, leaving it today with the many internal conflicts haunting the nation and endangering its democratic gains and sometimes with wanton economic consequences on the nation.

It is, therefore, not surprising when Tsikata and Seini (2004) commented that chieftaincy is at the centre of several types of communal conflicts, particularly those related to ethnicity, succession to traditional political office and the struggle over land<sup>425</sup>.

If the chieftaincy institution which is supposed to facilitate development, unite the people and maintain peace and order is now perceived by many as one of the main sources of conflicts in Ghana, one should then be wondering whether the chieftaincy institution, which is the core nerve of Ghana's traditional political system, still plays its pacific and development role in modern Ghana or it is now a source of rancour, conflicts and social disintegration? The next chapter examines the role of Ghanaian political institutions in enhancing peace or creating violence in the Ghanaian democratic system.

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<sup>424</sup> If the appointees are to be from the Andani family.

<sup>425</sup> Tsikata, D. & Seini, W. (2004). *Identities, Inequalities & Conflicts in Ghana*. Working Paper 4.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### ***Conflict and Democracy in Ghana: Do Institutions Matter?***

#### ***5.0 Introduction***

The role of political institutions in shaping the political landscape in any country cannot be overemphasized. The establishment and correct functioning of these institutions essentially give direction and focus to citizens' conduct and help maintain a peaceful atmosphere for the thriving of democracy and associated a social and economic systems. Weak or defective institutions in a political system exposes that country to danger, violence, malfunctioning and breakdown of democratic governance. The contrary too enables effective political mobilisation, respect for rule of law and increased peace (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2008<sup>426</sup>). In this chapter, the role of political institutions in the generation and regulation of conflicts in the Ghanaian society is examined. This was done by considering traditional political institutions on one hand and formal (modern) "democratic" political institutions on the other. In Ghana, traditional and formal political institutions work hand-in-hand in the shaping of the individual's life while the individual equally owes allegiance to both systems. In everyday life, however, an individual seeking for conflict resolution may choose to resort to either traditional norms and institutions or formal western-originated institutions depending on many factors including locality, issue at hand, level of education, and the individual's knowledge, preference and trust of the institution. To this effect, institutions play a vital role in both the generation and regulation of violent conflicts. The chapter established that both traditional authorities and formal modern political institutions of democracy affect, in various

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<sup>426</sup> Acemoglu D. Robinson J. (2008). The Role of Institutions in Growth and Development. *Commission on Growth and Development, WORKING PAPER NO. 10.*



degrees, the internal violent conflicts occurring in Ghana. In the same vein, how these same institutions assist in the regulation and resolution of such conflicts in the society was considered.

### ***5.1 Traditional Political Institutions and Conflicts in Ghana - Agents of Peace or Violence?***

Traditionally, Chieftaincy in pre-colonial Ghana was the main system of governance. Kings, Chiefs and sub-chiefs carried out combined legislative, executive, judicial, religious, and military responsibilities<sup>427</sup>. They were assisted by their Council of Elders of the community, who in turn were subject to the paramount chief or the king of the area. Lower level chiefs received instructions from the higher chiefs in all aspects of administration, and forwarded cases that they could not or find difficult to handle. The community and divisional chiefs presented reports on the state of affairs of their chiefdoms and communities at determined intervals of time during general or annual meetings. Although these types of institutions were not the same as those of Western institutions, in terms of structure and administrative procedures, and the substance of their responsibilities, as well as the privileges attached, they created a similar level of social and political cohesion in their respective communities as were found in Western countries at the time<sup>428</sup>. As such, the unity, peace and security of Kingdoms, Chieftains, and communities were largely dependent on the good leadership and protection of their Kings, chiefs, sub-chiefs and community/family leaders that constituted the hierarchy of the chieftaincy institution. The chieftaincy institution, however, underwent some levels of transformation both during colonial governance, and more so in the post-independence era<sup>429</sup>. During colonial rule, the spiritual role

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<sup>427</sup> Isaac, O-M. (2013). *Politics, Chieftaincy and Customary Law in Ghana*. Konrad Ardenauer Foundation (KAS) International Reports.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid

<sup>429</sup> Mamdani M. (1996). *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996. P.141. In Awinsong A. M. (2017). *The Colonial and Post-Colonial Transformation of African Chieftaincy: A Historiography*. Dr.

of the chief was transformed into a political role where lands that were held in custody for the dead and the living were made property of the chief and same were easily acquired by the colonial ruler for exploitative purposes<sup>430</sup>. The judicial function of the chief was transferred into the courtroom *à la* European<sup>431</sup>. At independence when democratic institutions were being nurtured to take over the reins of governance in Ghana, the community mobilisation functions of the chief was transformed into a force for political mobilisation for various nascent political parties, while the chiefs equally used their positions to seek political recognition and economic advantages from politicians. This phenomenon has gradually found its way into a de facto institutionalised neo-traditional system of governance that now operates along with the modern democratic system, with chiefs recognised in a consultative sphere as development agents<sup>432</sup>, but de jure, excluded from active politics<sup>433</sup>.

In an attempt to identify respondents' views on the role of the chieftaincy institution in conflict resolution and/or escalation, respondents were asked their consideration of the traditional chieftaincy institution in terms of their ability to (a) resolve conflicts amicably; (b) resolve conflicts sustainably; (c) escalate conflicts instead of resolving them; and finally, (d) perpetuate conflicts instead of sustainably resolving them. The answers were scaled from "strongly agree" (highest) to "strongly disagree" (lowest).

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*Mark Hubbard's historiography seminar.* Kwame Arhin, "The Search for 'constitutional chieftaincy,'" in *The Life and Work of Kwame Nkrumah*, ed. Kwame Arhin (Accra: Sedco Publications, 1991): 27-54.

<sup>430</sup> Mamdani M. (1996). *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996. P.141. In Awinsong A. M. (2017). *The Colonial and Post-Colonial Transformation of African Chieftaincy: A Historiography*. *Dr. Mark Hubbard's historiography seminar*.

<sup>431</sup> Ibid

<sup>432</sup> Knierzinger, Johannes (2011). *Chieftaincy and Development in Ghana: From Political Intermediaries to Neotraditional Development Brokers*. *Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikastudien, Arbeitspapiere / Working Papers Nr. 124*, 2011.

<sup>433</sup> Republic of Ghana (1992). *Constitution of the Republic of Ghana*. Chapter Twenty-Two.

Table 31 below shows respondents' level of agreement to the chieftaincy institution in Ghana being a trusted mechanism for the amicable resolution of conflicts among disputants.

**Table 31: Traditional Institutions in Ghana Help Resolve Conflict Amicably**

Level of Agreement/Disagreement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	42	31.8
Agree somehow	67	50.8
Disagree	13	9.8
Strongly disagree	6	4.5
Don't know	4	3.0
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/ 2015*

Amicable conflict resolution demands a win-win type of conflict resolution where conflict parties are made to understand themselves and each other's issues, leading to forgiveness and reconciliation on a given issue at a given time and space.

From Table 31 above, 42 out of the 132 respondents, representing 31.8% indicated their strong agreement to the chieftaincy institution helping in resolving conflicts amicably, whilst 67 respondents (50.8%) agree somehow to this assertion. Conversely, 13 respondents (9.8%) and only 6 respondents (4.5%) “disagree” and “strongly disagree” respectively to the assertion that traditional institutions are trusted mechanisms for amicable resolution of conflicts in Ghana. Four (4) respondents (3.0%) claimed they didn't know whether traditional institutions could be trusted to resolve conflicts amicably among conflict parties or not. By aggregation, when respondents who “strongly agree, 42 (31.8%) are added to those who agree somehow, 67 (50.8%), we will have about 109 respondents representing 82.6% having a positive level of trust in traditional Ghanaian institutions as being trusted mechanisms for the amicable resolution of conflicts among parties. In that sense, only 19 respondents, representing 14.3% of respondents do not trust Ghanaian traditional institutions to resolve conflicts amicably.

Amicable resolution of conflicts does not necessarily end conflicts. An amicably resolved conflict is said to be sustainable when the outcome of the process is durable. The lack of durability of many peace and conflict resolutions has led to the relapse of such agreements in many instances. Failure of peace agreements leads to reprisals and re-escalation of conflicts. In Ghana, many conflicts such as the Dagbon, Bawku, Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo, Nkonya-Alavanyo, Osu and Tuobodom chieftaincy conflicts, among others, have defied many negotiated agreements in the course of many decades since their inception. The key role any institution can play to positively affect the status of conflicts in the country, is to ensure that negotiated peace prevails beyond temporary settlements.

We asked respondents to indicate their level of trust in traditional institutions' capability of ensuring more sustainable peace in Ghanaian societies. Table 32 below represents respondents' view.

**Table 32: Ability of Traditional Institutions to Sustainably Resolve Conflicts**

Level of Agreement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	34	25.8
Agree somehow	74	56.1
Disagree	17	12.9
Strongly disagree	4	3.0
Don't know	3	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Researcher's Field Research, 2014/2015*

From Table 32 above 34 respondents (25.8%) “strongly agree” that traditional institutions in Ghana help to resolve conflicts sustainably. In addition, as many as 74 respondents constituting 56.1% “agree somehow” to the same assertion. In contrast, 17 respondents (12.9%) “disagree” that traditional institutions help in the sustainable resolution of conflicts while 4 respondents (3.0%) “strongly disagree” to same, and 3 respondents (2.3%) answered that they “don’t know” if the institutions are able to resolve conflicts sustainably or not.

If we aggregate the responses of those who agree strongly with those who agree somehow (34 respondents, (25.8%) plus 74 respondents, (56.1%)); and equally add those who strongly disagree to those who disagree (12.9%) and (3.0%) respectively, we get 108 respondents who positively perceive traditional institutions as being capable of sustainably resolving conflicts in Ghana, representing 81.9% of all responses to that question; while 20 respondents, representing 15.2% negatively perceive these institutions of being capable of resolving conflicts sustainably in the country.

Comparing the results on Table 31 and those on Table 32, herein combined and represented by Table 33 below, it is evident that respondents' views on traditional Ghanaian institutions' ability to both resolve conflicts "amicably" and "sustainably" are almost the same.

**Table 33: Comparative Results of Respondents' Perception on Traditional Institutions' ability to resolve conflicts amicably and sustainably**

Level of Agreement	Traditional Institutions Help resolve conflicts amicably		Traditional Institutions Help sustainably Resolve conflicts	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree/ Agree somehow	109	82.6	108	81.9
Disagree/Strongly disagree	19	14.3	21	15.9
Don't know	4	3	3	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Author's Field Research, 2014/2015*

The results indicate that respondents have a positive perception of traditional institutions helping in resolving conflicts amicably and sustainably, thus 109 respondents (82.6%) and 108 respondents (81.9%) respectively.

These results suggest one of two things or both. One, that people have high trust in, and expectation of Ghanaian traditional authorities being able to amicably and sustainably resolve conflicts in Ghana based on respondents' (knowledge of the) expectations of the duties and functions of such institutions. Two, that Ghanaian

traditional authorities have practically demonstrated their ability to amicably and sustainably resolve conflicts through proven examples known to the respondents. The research did not include questions that asked respondents for any evidential proof of the traditional institution's role in helping them resolve conflicts either amicably or sustainably. However, questions were asked on respondents' "*peace seeking behaviour*"<sup>434</sup>. The questions sought to know who individuals approach when they have conflicts and need a resolution or a hearing. This will indicate the level of confidence people have in various traditional institutional options that exist in the Ghanaian society for redress in conflict situations. The more a person has confidence in a system, the more s/he makes use of that system. However, the medium chosen by a party to redress conflicts equally depends on the type of conflict, level of conflict, as well as the parties involved in that conflict.

In this situation, the focus was to see how much people use family heads, community heads, chiefs, law courts, police and other institutions as their points of call when they have conflict with other persons. Table 34 below represents respondents' recourse to the use of such options.

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<sup>434</sup> My own coine to describe those individuals who are consulted by conflicting parties for redress. I prefer this coine to conflict seeking behaviour which rather describes individuals' conflict behaviour and their attitude towards conflicts when such situations arise.

**Table 34: Respondents' Peace-seeking Behaviour**

Where do you go first to have your conflicts resolved?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Household head	11	8.4
Family head	26	19.7
Clan head	26	19.7
Community leader	19	14.4
Chief	48	36.5
Other	2	1.6
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Researcher's Field Research, 2014/2015*

From Table 34 above, 11 (8.4%) out of the 132 respondents interviewed privileged household heads as their first point of call for conflict resolution whilst 26 respondents, representing 19.7% each preferred family heads and clan heads respectively for resolving their conflicts. Community leaders were preferred by 19 respondents (14.4%), chiefs by 48 respondents (36.5%) and only 2 respondents (1.6%) would use other media as their first point of call to have their conflicts resolved. This data indicate that more respondents (36.5%) privileged the use of chiefs to resolve their conflicts whenever they have issues with others. This picture, at first sight, does not look convincing to say that people have confidence in traditional authorities as means of conflict resolution in the Ghanaian society. However, when we consider what constitutes the traditional institutional structure in Ghana, it is made up of a hierarchical ladder starting from the king or the chief at the top of this hierarchy, followed by the sub-chief, then the community or clan leader, the family head, and finally the household head or the parents (if different from the household head). Aggregating the scores for all these, we get 98.4% of respondents (130 out 132 respondents) that resort to one level or the other within the traditional institutional structure for the resolution of their conflicts. The “other” category includes the use of the police, the law courts, friends, and siblings, church leaders, among others. These options together scored only 1.6%. This is a reaffirmation of the people’s trust in the traditional authorities for the resolution of their conflicts as shown on Tables 31, 32, and 33 above.

The finding from the community respondents were not different from the responses given by the key informants. All the key informants (5) affirmed the instrumental role played by the chieftaincy institution in the prevention of conflicts and the promotion of peace. This is what one key informant indicated in an interview:

*“Ghana’s peace is tied to the chieftaincy institution. Most community members know the chiefs even more than the state government and its functionalists. The chiefs adjudicate conflicts involving their subjects, and also lobby the government for the development of their respective communities. They mobilise their subjects for development, and are the first point of call by any official, including government officials. Peace education and conflict sensitisation activities are channelled through them to their subjects, especially before, during and after elections. This to me is a great job carried by the chiefs in preventing conflicts and promoting peace in the country”.* (Key informant, 2015)

For the purpose of memory testing, and more importantly to prove the above results further, we reversed the functional variables of the traditional institutions in their contribution to peace or violence in Ghana. By this, we made two negative categorical statements. One, that traditional institutions *escalate conflicts more than they help resolve them*; and two, that traditional institutions *perpetuate* conflicts in Ghanaian societies instead of helping to resolve them sustainably. The results of the responses of respondents for these two statements are shown on Table 27 and Table 35 respectively below.



**Table 35: Traditional institutions escalate conflicts more than they help resolve them**

Level of Agreement	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	20	15.2
agree somehow	33	25
Disagree	67	50.8
strongly disagree	11	8.3
don't know	1	0.8
<b>Total</b>	132	100

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

Table 35 above indicates that 20 of respondents (15.2%) *strongly agree* with the statement that traditional institutions escalate conflicts in respondents' communities (and in Ghana) instead of resolving them. In addition, 33 respondents (25%) *agree somehow* to the same assertion that traditional institutions escalate conflicts in Ghana, whilst 67 respondents (50.8%) and 11 respondents (8.3%) *disagree* and *strongly disagree* respectively with this assertion. One (1) respondent (0.8%) indicated s/he didn't know if traditional authorities do escalate conflicts or not.

By aggregation, 53 respondents, constituting about 40.2% of respondents *agreed* in one way or the other that traditional institutions are a cause of conflict escalations in Ghana, whilst 77 individuals, constituting about 59.1% of respondents disagree that traditional institutions escalate conflicts. The decision to aggregate the results of the scaled responses of interviewees is borne from the fact that linguistically, the local language into which most of the work was translated does not have the ease of qualifying by scale of agreement to such levels in everyday language as does the English language, and for that matter the Likert Scale employed can only be easily understood and expressed in negative, positive or neutral forms – *I agree, don't agree, can't tell* or *I don't know*. For this reason, we add up both positive scales of “*agree*” and “*strongly agree*” to indicate that the respondent has a positive view of the statement or declaration made, and equally add up the two negative views of *disagree* and *strongly disagree* to represent the respondents disapproval of the same statement.

We further made a similar negative categorical statement on the ability of traditional institutions to sustainably resolve conflicts. For this, we stated that “traditional institutions perpetuate conflicts in Ghana”. This is in sharp contrast with one earlier question that sort to know from respondents whether traditional institutions help to resolve conflicts sustainably in Ghana. And, as it was with the immediate preceding negative statement, respondents’ answers were recorded on a scaled table informed by the Likert Scale. The results are presented on table 36 below.

**Table 36: Traditional Institution perpetuate conflicts in the country**

Variable	Frequency	Percent
strongly agree	25	18.9
agree somehow	29	22.0
Disagree	38	28.8
strongly disagree	33	25.0
don't know	7	5.3
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author’s field research 2014/2015*

On the perpetuation of conflicts, 25 respondents (18.9%) *strongly agree* and 29 respondents (22%) *agree somehow* that traditional institutions perpetuate conflicts in Ghana. However, 38 respondents (28.8%) and 33 respondents (25%) *disagree* and *strongly disagree* respectively that traditional institutions perpetuate conflicts in the country, whilst 7 respondents (5.3%) indicated they *didn’t know* if the assertion was true or not. For easier reference, if we aggregate these results to consider those who agree to or reject the assertion that traditional institutions perpetuate conflicts instead of helping to resolve them sustainably, we get 40.9% of respondents (54 respondents) who agree that traditional institutions perpetuate conflicts, and 53.8% (71 respondents) who disagree with this assertion. In consequence, majority of respondents affirmed their trust in traditional institutions as agents of peace in the Ghanaian society. We should, however, be concerned with the high figures in support of the negative functions of the traditional institutions. Thus 40.2% and 40.9% respectively for conflict escalation and conflict perpetuation respectively cannot be swept under the carpet. However, it is important to note that this is a confirmation of the already confirmed views of the respondents on chieftaincy being one of the

highest causes of conflicts in Ghana. Although respondents see traditional authorities as agents of peace, they equally posit that these same institutions are the major causes of conflicts in the country, in addition to manipulation and electoral issues.

In a similar view, another key informant stated:

*“...The Chiefs are like lukewarm water. They prevent conflicts through the settlement of differences among their subjects and the dissemination of peace messages for peaceful coexistence. However, they are also one of the major sources of conflicts in the country due to their involvement in issues relating to contention over legitimacy to the skin/stool, which often is not properly dealt with”.* (Key informant, 2015)

The perceived confidence and patronage of respondents in Ghanaian traditional institutions as trusted agents for conflict resolution, as revealed earlier, rather contradict the results of some respondents' responses concerning the causes of conflicts in the country presented on Table 19. While in these results respondents perceive traditional authorities to be leading all other causes of violent conflicts in the country, these same institutions are trusted by the same respondents to be amicably and sustainably resolving their conflicts. What explains these seemingly contradictory responses or paradox? The data collection did not include any question to help verify this. However, we propose two separate explanations.

First of all, we explain this by employing the Mansfield and Snyder (1995) *process* versus *condition* explanation of the democratic peace. To Mansfield and Snyder, while the condition of being democratic may decrease the probability of violent conflicts, the *process* of becoming a democratic country may conversely incite conflict. In the same vein, we must recognise that the traditional authorities can only serve the people

to their expectation when they are in place<sup>435</sup>. In the case of analysis in this thesis, while citizens may trust chiefs and the traditional political system to resolve their conflicts, the difficulty arises where the *process* of selecting and installing chiefs rather becomes the main source of conflicts in the society. In Ghana, most conflicts are fought on contest over the legitimacy of individuals who occupy such institutions. The high reverence and consideration accorded by the society to the institution of chieftaincy, therefore, demands that those who occupy such positions as well as the processes that lead to their choice and installation should equally be accepted and trusted by the people the institution serves. In Ghana, the criteria, process, as well as regulations regarding the choice and installation of chiefs are what is conflictual in nature. This could explain the high level of respondents' trust in such institutions despite their high level of conflictuality.

Secondly, most people will trust more and prefer to deal with an institution that is readily accessible to them (by distance, cost, language, tradition etc.) and which foundations are built on cultural and traditional norms that the local non-western-schooled individual understands better through history and practice, than a law court or any other western-tradition-styled political institution which might present challenges to that individual. For example, to go to court, one might need to travel far to a major district capital or municipal capital in order to access one. One might need to speak English. One might need to hire a lawyer or have an idea of what constitutes the legal foundation of the modern Anglo-Saxon legal system used in Ghana. One might need to even understand the basic rules of court proceedings before you can feel comfortable to consider it as an option for conflict resolution and thereby seek this institution. In a region where the literacy rate is as low as 37.2%, the lowest in the whole country, as compared to the national literacy rate of 74%, it is not

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<sup>435</sup> Mansfield D. E. and Snyder, J. (1995). 'Democratization and the Danger of War.' *International Security* Vol. 20 No. 1 (1995), pp. 5–38. See also 'Democratization and War.' *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 74 No. 3, pp. 79-98.

out of place to find that many people would prefer using traditional means of conflict resolution to using other modern institutions that demand some level of education and other forms of investment including cultural reasons. This, however, is not to discredit the use of Western mechanisms in resolving conflicts and other social disorders such as crime.

Finally the preceding challenges could reduce the trust of the individual in the modern system of jurisprudence as an institution. With traditional institutions, they are more readily available and easy to access for redress of conflicts when they arise. For example, a household head, a family head, or a community leader is just a voice-shout away or a few steps to be able to seek their attention. The chief or King's palace is a few houses away. In addition, persons occupying these positions who are sought for help in resolving conflicts know the genesis of every family in the village and members of their lineage from ancestry to present. They understand trade-offs and other influences based on non-legal terms such that the use of moral basis, lineage, social and property rights, as well as reason based on the norms and traditions of their society. All these, added to their long history of using the traditional institutions for conflict resolution make their trust in these institutions high, even if they also think they contribute (really or perceived) to many conflicts in the society. This was the system before colonial intervention in many African societies. The people depended on it for their security, psychological, and livelihood needs and these systems had proven very dependable to them. Comparatively, the traditional authority system functioned in a more or less similar fashion as the judiciary, executive and legislatures of modern democratic systems of today even if there were no structural divisions of institutions for structural balance of power as in modern popular democracies and the rules of engagement are not recorded in a written constitution. It is therefore not surprising that most citizens will prefer traditional institutional options to other modern institutions for their conflict resolution anytime such conflicts arise amongst them. However, the effectiveness of these traditional institutions will be better felt and their relevance proven beyond doubt only when they are devoid of conflict to enable them function at all times to serve their constituents.

How does this compare to respondents' perception of modern political institutions in causing or regulating conflicts in Ghana? The research considered respondents' views on the role of modern political institutions in the prevention, generation and resolution of conflicts. The next section looks at the results of the responses offered by respondents on that subject.

## ***5.2 How Democracy Affects Peace: The Role of Modern Political Institutions in the Prevention, Escalation and Regulation of Conflicts in Ghana***

### 5.2.0 Introduction

This aspect of the thesis analyses data collected from the three main conflict areas of focus, with specific reference to the role modern political institutions in conflicts and peace in Ghana. The thesis sought to identify if, in the view of the respondents, these political institutions have any role in the prevention, escalation or resolution of conflicts in Ghana and what exactly these roles are.

The three main arms of government, namely the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary were considered as the key modern political institutions in Ghana. In addition, critical to every democratic system is the elections management body which is responsible for the conduct of elections, since democratic elections are considered as the main entry point for multiparty democracy. This was examined using three main categories of questions on our field questionnaire.

Questions posed centred on the role of these institutions in:

1. The prevention of conflicts;
2. The escalation of conflicts; and
3. Any other way they might affect the peace of the country.

### **5.2.1 Role of Modern Political Institutions in Conflict Prevention**

It is important to note that the role played by any stakeholder or actor in a conflict situation could either be positive or negative. The role institutions play in conflicts is very critical to the extent that institutionalised inequalities or inadequacies could lead to structural violence (Galtung, 1969; March and Olsen, 1989; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).<sup>436</sup> The need therefore for political institutions to consciously play their roles for the development benefit of the totality of the populations of the democratic systems they serve in cannot be overemphasised (Acemoglu, 2008)<sup>437</sup>. To this effect, we analysed the role of modern political institutions in conflict prevention, escalation and/or regulation in the Ghanaian society looking at whether they positively or negatively affect the Ghanaian society and the conflicts that escalate in these communities as perceived by the citizenry.

First of all, this thesis attempts to establish, through our respondents and available secondary data, whether modern political institutions in Ghana play a role at all in peace or violence in the country. To avoid any form of confusion on the part of respondents as to what constituted *political institutions* in the context of this thesis, the researcher specified the political institutions that were considered in the context of the research. Respondents were asked to tell if "...modern political institutions such as the Executive (president, ministers, MMDCEs), the Legislature (parliament/parliamentarians), the Judiciary (courts and security system) and the Electoral Commission play a role in conflict prevention in Ghana". The aim was to seek respondents' views on how such institutions contribute to the peaceful

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<sup>436</sup> Galtung, Johan (1969). Violence, Peace and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1969), pp. 167-191; March, G. James and Olsen, P. John (1989). Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics. *The Free Press, a Division of Macmillan, Inc., New York and Collier Macmillan Publishers, London*; DiMaggio, J. Paul and Powell, W. Walter (1983). The Iron Cage Revised: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields. *American Sociological Review*, Volume 48, Issue 2 (Apr., 1983), 147-160.

<sup>437</sup> Acemoglu, D. (2008). *Interactions Between Governance and Growth*. In North et al (2008). *Governance, Growth, and Development Decision-making*. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, Washington, DC, 2008.

development and functioning of the Ghanaian democratic system, or if they negatively affect the democratic system by generating violent conflicts in the country.

The results as shown on table 37 below indicate that 95 out of 132 respondents, representing 72% indicate that modern political institutions play a role in the prevention of conflicts in the country. On the contrary, 17 respondents (12.9%) said these institutions did not play any role in preventing conflicts, whilst 20 individuals (15.2%) said they did not know whether they do or do not play any role in the prevention of conflicts in the country.

**Table 37: Do Modern Political Institutions Play a role in Conflict Prevention**

Do modern political institution play a role in conflict prevention in Ghana?		
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	95	72.0
No	17	12.9
don't know	20	15.2
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Authors field research, 2014/2015*

We continued to ask respondents to explain their answers to this question. This was important to enable us establish what specific roles modern political institutions in Ghana play in conflict prevention. It was equally important to be able to tell how such roles are played and by what institutional initiatives. For the majority who answered in the affirmative to the previous question (95 respondents), 37 (38.9%) of them indicated that modern political institutions prevent conflicts by creating unity through peace education, peace talks, negotiations and the provision of emergency assistance to conflict victims. Another 28 respondents (29.5%) said modern political institutions prevent conflicts through law enactment and enforcement, prosecution of people who generate violent conflicts and the use of the court system for conflict resolution. Some 22 other respondents (23.2%) said they prevent conflicts through the deployment of security officers to conflict areas and sending out threats for conflict



parties to lay down their arms, whilst 6 other respondents (6.3%) believe that political institutions have put in place certain democratic institutions and frameworks for conflict resolution that are supposed to prevent conflicts in Ghana but indicated, however, that these institutions are not effective enough in their functions. Two (2) respondents (2.1%) think that modern political institutions prevent conflicts because “government assists in the resettlement of conflict victims” when conflicts occur.

Gathering from the results from Table 37 and Table 38, respondents largely agree that modern political institutions play a major role in ensuring the peaceful dispensation of democracy in Ghana (72% of respondents). They further agreed that three major approaches to conflict prevention and resolution are adopted by these political institutions, thus through a) peace education (38.9%); b) law enactment and enforcement (29.5%); and c) deployment of security personnel to intervene in conflict situations. Together, these three approaches represent the opinions of 92.6% of respondents.

**Table 38: How do Ghanaian Modern Political Institutions Prevent Conflicts in Ghana?**

Explain answer in H1 above-YES	Frequency	Percentage (%)
They help in uniting the people through peace education, peace talks, negotiations, emergency assistances etc.	37	38.9
Through law enactment and enforcement /prosecution of people involved in conflicts/use of courts to resolve conflicts	28	29.5
They deploy security to conflict areas and send out threats for conflict parties to lay down their arms	22	23.2
Though ineffective, certain institutions are put in place to prevent and resolve conflicts	6	6.3
Government assists in resettling conflict-displaced persons	2	2.1
Total	95	100

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

### ***5.3 Role of Modern Political Institutions in Conflict Escalation***

The success or failure of democratic institutions depends on their responsiveness as institutions and their ability to mediate conflict by hearing, channelling and mediating multiple citizens' demands that modern society expresses through civil and political associations.<sup>438</sup> This shows the critical role political institutions play in every democracy, and their ability to play such roles in a proper, efficient and impartial manner will determine how they are able to regulate conflicts in the democratic society.

Having gathered the views of our respondents on the role of these political institutions in conflict regulation, it is only proper to know what these respondents think of the same institutions' role in conflict escalation in Ghana. Two sets of questions were asked. First, respondents were asked to tell whether modern political

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<sup>438</sup> Conflict Prevention: A Guide (Toolbox)

institutions play a role in conflict escalation in Ghana; and secondly they were requested to explain their answers to that question.

In their responses to whether modern political institutions play any role in conflict escalation in the country or not, majority of respondents (65), constituting 49.2% answered yes, whilst 41 respondents, representing 31.1% answered no. At the same time, 26 respondents (19.7%) answered that they don't know whether modern political institutions play a role in conflict escalation or not. Table 39 below depicts respondents' view about the contribution of modern political institutions to the escalation of conflicts in Ghana.

**Table 39: Respondents' Views on modern political institutions' role in conflict Escalation in Ghana**

Do modern political institutions play a role in conflict escalation in Ghana?		
Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	65	49.2
No	41	31.1
don't know	26	19.7
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author's Field Research, 2014/2015*

However, it does not just suffice to say that modern political institutions play a role in conflict escalation. It is important to seek to understand how these institutions escalate conflicts in society.

To probe this, respondents were asked to explain their answer as represented on Table 39 above, thus, how political institutions escalate conflicts in Ghana. Among the 66 respondents that believed Ghanaian political institutions escalate conflicts in Ghana, 19 (28.8%) 66 respondents explained that some people occupying positions in political institutions use conflicts to get into those positions. Further, 27.3% (18) of respondents indicated that “incumbent (political parties) often support their members against members of opposition parties and they segregate against non-party members”. At the same time, some 6 out of 66 respondents (9.1%) said modern political institutions through “partiality, favouritism and side-taking which often divide the people and lead to conflict escalation between groups”. In addition, 5 respondents (7.6%) indicated the EC and its electoral processes has not been impartial and neutral to political competition in the country, thereby leading to the escalation of violence. “Politicisation of political institutions by individuals” also registered 5 responses (7.6%). These results are represented on Table 40 below.

**Table 40: How Modern Political Institutions Escalate conflicts in Ghana**

Explain your answer in 3 above-YES	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Some of the people occupying offices in these institutions use conflicts to get into those political offices.	19	28.8
Ruling parties support their members against members of opposition parties and they segregate against non-party members	18	27.3
Institutions' partiality, favouritism and side-taking divide people & escalate conflicts in the country	6	9.1
Politicians & Electoral Commission fail to be neutral in conflicts & political competitions thereby escalating violence	5	7.6
Good framework for the institutions but people in positions politicise them for selfish gains and create conflict	5	7.6
Corruption on the part of public officials stimulate violent confrontations	4	6.1
Politicians make different promises to conflict parties, thereby keeping the conflict parties at loggerheads	4	6.1
They abuse their freedom of speech ending up causing conflicts through politics of insults	2	3.0
They don't act early enough to avoid/prevent and/or resolve conflicts	2	3.0
The institutions sometimes skew conflicts resolution/arbitrate decisions to favour wrongdoers/no true justice	1	1.5
Total	66	100.0

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

Five other explanations were mentioned by respondents as to how modern political institutions escalate conflicts in Ghana. These included corruption 4 (6.1%), making different promises to different opposing groups fighting in a same conflict by politicians 4 (6.1%), Politics of insults and abuse of freedom of speech by persons working in political institutions 2 (3.0%), untimely intervention in conflict areas 2 (3.0%), and lastly injustice and the skewing of conflict resolution decisions to favour wrongdoers 1 (1.5%).

The respondents have established that modern political institutions:

1. have a role to play in conflicts;
2. play a role in conflict prevention; and

3. play a role in conflict escalation.

It is difficult to empirically demonstrate the effects of political institutions in conflict escalation<sup>439</sup>. However, there is some level of agreement that political institutions have a role in both conflict resolution and conflict escalation<sup>440</sup>. The fact that scholars and practitioners always try to focus on the type of institutions that need to be established in post-conflict reconstruction (to ensure peace) is an indication that institutions play a very critical role in the stability of governance systems and their ability to reduce conflicts and maintain a balanced social and political system<sup>441</sup>. Belmont, Mainwaring and Reynolds (2002) assert that “[i]n contrast [to most other factors influencing conflicts], political institutions can be altered to increase the likelihood of managing conflict democratically.”<sup>442</sup> If the choice and status of a political institution is relevant for the stability and conflict management capacities of a state, then it presents no doubt that political institutions play a role in conflict. And this role could either be positive or negative. The field data presented above on the role of political institutions in managing conflicts could, therefore, not be far from the truth. In Ghana, the very introduction of democracy as a governance system on the eve of independence equally introduced ethnic and communal alignments that were informed by the need for recognition and protection from the government in the event that the party they are supporting wins the election. In the same way, those ethnic groups that supported political parties and individuals who finally lost in those elections suffered various forms of neglect, condemnations, exile and sometimes incarcerations at worst. Chiefs

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<sup>439</sup> Przeworski, A. (2004). Institutions Matter? *Government and Opposition* 39(4):527-540.

<sup>440</sup> Christin, T. and Hug, S. (2006). Political Institutions and Ethnic Conflict Resolution: Dealing with the Endogenous Nature of Institutions. *Paper Prepared for ISA Conference in San Diego, March 21-5, 2006*.

<sup>441</sup> Ibid

<sup>442</sup> Belmont, C.atherine, Scott Mainwaring and Andrew Reynolds (2002). Introduction to Institutional Design, Conflict Management and Democracy in Divided Societies. In Andrew Reynolds (Ed) (2002). *The Architecture of Democracy: Institutional Design, Conflict Management, and Democracy in the Late Twentieth Century*. Cited in Christin, T. and Hug, S. (2006). Political Institutions and Ethnic Conflict Resolution: Dealing with the Endogenous Nature of Institutions. *Paper Prepared for ISA Conference in San Diego, March 21-5, 2006*.

who supported the government in power had their skins and stools protected by decrees, whilst some presidential decrees were used to “destool” or “deskin” chiefs and kings that did not support the course of the party in government. In Bawku, for example, the Kusasis saw their support for Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in the July 1956 elections as a catalyst for their take-over of the Bawku chieftaincy in 1958, following the Chiefs Removal Order passed by the Nkrumah government<sup>443</sup>. Many former chiefs were exiled along with some of their family relations and supporters. In Bawku, the leaders of the then Northern People’s Party (NPP) “were forced into exile along with the Mamprusi Bawku Naba, Yerimah Mahama, who due to the Chiefs Removal Order 1958, had to remain 24 miles from Bawku”<sup>444</sup>. All the Mamprusis who went into exile returned immediately after the overthrow of the Nkrumah government in 1966. The new military government that was sympathetic to the Mamprusis introduced the Chieftaincy Amendment Decree 1966, NLCD 112 and reinstated the then deskinned Mamprusi Bawku Naba, making him the recognised Bawku Naba per the Second Schedule of this Decree<sup>445</sup>. In Dagbon, alliances were established individually between the two opposing royal gates of the Dagbon Chieftaincy with the then two main opposing political parties, thus Nkrumah’s CPP and the Danquah-Busia-Dombo United Party traditions. These manifestations of political alliances by traditional authorities at the early days of democratic institutional establishments in Ghana have endured to create cracks in some societies and enmities between some social groups as in the case of Bawku and Dagbon. Today, the Mamprusis in Bawku and the Abudus in Dagbon are more or less predominantly perceived to be of leaning

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<sup>443</sup> Lund, C (2003). ‘Bawku is still volatile’: Ethno-political conflict and state recognition in Northern Ghana’. (PDF Download Available). Available from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/231852261\\_%27Bawku\\_is\\_still\\_volatile%27\\_Ethno-political\\_conflict\\_and\\_state\\_recognition\\_in\\_Northern\\_Ghana](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/231852261_%27Bawku_is_still_volatile%27_Ethno-political_conflict_and_state_recognition_in_Northern_Ghana) [accessed May 11 2018].

<sup>444</sup> Idem.

<sup>445</sup> Mensah-Brown, A. K. (1969). Chieftaincy and the Law in Ghana. *Journal of African Law*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Summer, 1969), pp. 57-63.

to the New Patriotic Party, whilst the Kusasis in Bawku and the Andanis in Dagbon are predominantly perceived to be of leaning to the National Democratic Congress.

Recently, Ghanaian political institutions such as the Parliament, the Judiciary and the Electoral Commission have been in the news for various negative reasons laced with corruption and political divisions. In Parliament, various forms of corruption charges have been laid against parliamentarians, creating a negative public uproar in the country, and leading to the formation of various parliamentary inquiries. A case in point was the Agyarko corruption allegation investigation in 2017<sup>446</sup>. In the Judiciary, the Anas ArmeYaw Anas exposé on judicial corruption equally initiated heated discussions on the role of judges in delivering unimpeded justice in Ghana<sup>447</sup>. It led to many lawsuits and, more importantly, the constituting of a judicial committee<sup>448</sup> supported by Parliament, which investigated and dismissed a number of judges that were found guilty in the process<sup>449</sup>. Other judges that were found guilty but disagreed with the decision of the investigative judicial committee sued the Judicial Service<sup>450</sup>.

On the specific role of political institutions in chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana, most (if not all) of the committees that have been constituted to investigate conflicts in the country have always been initiated by the Executive and supported by the Parliament

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<sup>446</sup> <http://citifmonline.com/2017/01/28/bribery-scandal-i-didnt-pay-minority-a-penny-agyarko/>

<sup>447</sup> <https://www.modernghana.com/news/642132/bribery-scandal-34-judges-exposed.html>

<sup>448</sup> <http://www.gbcghana.com/1.7002350>

<sup>449</sup> <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Judicial-scandal-21-judges-sacked-399177;>  
[https://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2015/December-8th/full-list-of-dismissed-judges.php;](https://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2015/December-8th/full-list-of-dismissed-judges.php) [http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35037318;](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35037318)

<sup>450</sup> [https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/judicial-corruption-judge-sues-cj-for-unlawful-dismissal.html;](https://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/judicial-corruption-judge-sues-cj-for-unlawful-dismissal.html)  
[http://citifmonline.com/2015/09/14/judicial-scandal-judge-sues-anas-says-video-is-unlawful/;](http://citifmonline.com/2015/09/14/judicial-scandal-judge-sues-anas-says-video-is-unlawful/) [http://www.pulse.com.gh/news/anas-expose-justice-dery-sues-anas-chief-justice-again-id6262735.html;](http://www.pulse.com.gh/news/anas-expose-justice-dery-sues-anas-chief-justice-again-id6262735.html) [https://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2015/November-24th/suspended-judge-ayisi-addo-sues-anas-eight-others-for-defamation.php.](https://www.myjoyonline.com/news/2015/November-24th/suspended-judge-ayisi-addo-sues-anas-eight-others-for-defamation.php)



of Ghana or Vice Versa<sup>451</sup>. Examples of such in Ghana are the Minyilla Commission of Inquiry on the Bawku Conflicts<sup>452</sup> and the Wuaku Commission of Inquiry of 2002 on the Dagbon Conflicts<sup>453</sup> as well as the use of Legislative Instruments such as L.I 59 of 1959; L.I 596 of 1967; NLC Decree 296 of 1968; Azzu Mate Kole Commission of 1968; and Ollenu Commission of 1974<sup>454</sup>. These Legislative Instruments, Commissions and Decrees were instituted by the Legislative Assembly (Parliament), The Presidency (Executive) or by Military Governments (Supreme Military Executive). These show the involvement of Ghanaian political institutions in conflict even as far back as the early days of independence in Ghana till date. It must be noted, however, that whatever the nature and manner of institutional involvement in conflict situations in Ghana, these interventions have their positive and negative effects on conflicts.

The question then is, what role do these institutions play to resolve conflicts in the Ghanaian democracy? The next section addresses this issue.

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<sup>451</sup> *ModernGhana.com* of 12 December 2001. *Commission to investigate Bawku Conflict*. <https://www.modernghana.com/sports/18911/1/commission-to-investigate-bawku-conflict.html>; Committee Appointed by the Governor-General to investigate the Bawku Chieftaincy matter, 1958; Minyilla Commission on Bawku Conflict; Wuaku Commission on Dagbon Conflict; Lund, C. (2003). 'Bawku is still volatile': Ethno-political conflict and state recognition in Northern Ghana. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. 41. 587 - 610. 10.1017/S0022278X03004373.

<sup>452</sup> The Report of the Committee to investigate the Bawku Lands Dispute 1984 (the so-called Minyilla com-mission) stated that 148 Mamprusis and some 87 Kusasis had land confiscated by the new Kusasi chiefs (pp. 14–15). Lund, C (2003). In 'Bawku is still volatile': Ethno-political conflict and state recognition in Northern Ghana. (PDF Download Available). Available from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/231852261\\_%27Bawku\\_is\\_still\\_volatile%27\\_Ethno-political\\_conflict\\_and\\_state\\_recognition\\_in\\_Northern\\_Ghana](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/231852261_%27Bawku_is_still_volatile%27_Ethno-political_conflict_and_state_recognition_in_Northern_Ghana) [accessed May 09 2018].

<sup>453</sup> Report of the Commission of Inquiry (Yendi Events), C.I. 36/2002 (Wuaku Commission). Executive Summary Available online at [https://www.google.com.gh/url?sa=t&rcrt=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiw58jQ\\_fjaAhWUbMAKHdX9CGEQFgglMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Freliefweb.int%2Fsites%2Freliefweb.int%2Ffiles%2Fresources%2F66E768400CE-D18FEC125785B0046DC44-Full\\_Report.pdf&usq=AOvVaw0W5beZBiKdLcmweU1PUDwz](https://www.google.com.gh/url?sa=t&rcrt=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiw58jQ_fjaAhWUbMAKHdX9CGEQFgglMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Freliefweb.int%2Fsites%2Freliefweb.int%2Ffiles%2Fresources%2F66E768400CE-D18FEC125785B0046DC44-Full_Report.pdf&usq=AOvVaw0W5beZBiKdLcmweU1PUDwz)

<sup>454</sup> Owusu-Ansah, D. and McFarland, D. M. (1995). *Historical Dictionary of Ghana* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). London. *The Scarecrow Press, Inc.*; Wuaku Commission Report, 2002; Awedoba, A. K. (2009). An Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts: Towards a Sustainable Peace. *Sub-Saharan Publishers*; Tonah, S. (2012). The Politicisation of Chieftaincy Conflicts: The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 21 (1): 1-20.

## 5.4 Role of Modern Political Institutions in conflict Resolution

The role of modern political institutions in the promotion of democracy and regulating interests and conflict in a multicultural society cannot be overemphasised. “Governance is conflict management... (it) is not only the prevention of violent conflicts from destroying the country (and weakening democracy); it is the continual effort to handle the ordinary conflicts among groups and their demands which arise as society plays its role in the conduct of normal politics”<sup>455</sup> The role of institutions in governance effectiveness, which in turn affects the condition of conflicts in the state, cannot be overemphasised. Studies have shown that effective governance institutions play a positive role in reducing the negative effects of conflicts as well as minimising conflicts themselves<sup>456</sup>. Just as conflicts are part and parcel of society (Coser, 1956), institutions also matter most in the social realm as they play an unavoidable role of regulating the functioning of societies and how conflicts are managed and resolved (Hodgson, 2006)<sup>457</sup>.

As a result, the many diverse interests of the different social groups in Ghana can thereby be managed to prevent violent conflicts through a well institutionalised democratic system where essential institutions of governance play to the dictates of the law. Interests of various groups are subjected to the general developmental goals of the country. The existing institutions need to be able to be used to manage the very diversity that constitutes the feature of the Ghanaian society. It is only when these happen that such institutions would be seen to be playing a positive and unifying role in the democratic process of Ghana. To succeed in this endeavour, democratic

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<sup>455</sup> Zartman, I. William, (1991): Introduction. In *Governance as Conflict Management: Politics and Violence in West Africa*. Brookings Institution Press, Washington, D. C. (p.1)

<sup>456</sup> Hegre, H. and Nygard, H. M. (2014). Governance and Conflict Relapse. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Online DOI: 10.1177/0022002713520591; Zakaria, Fareed. (1997). “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy.” *Foreign Affairs* 76:22-43.

<sup>457</sup> Hodgson M. G. (2006). What Are Institutions? *Journal of Economic Issues* Vol. XL No. 1 March 2006

political institutions should perform their duties diligently, and must be perceived by the populace to be performing as such.

In finding out as to what respondents think of the role of Ghanaian political institutions in conflict resolution, respondents were asked if modern political institutions play a role in conflict resolution in Ghana. To this, a “yes” and a “no” answers were proposed with other options as “it depends”, “don’t know/can’t tell” which were found plausible during pre-testing of questionnaire. To this question, a large majority, 73.5% (97) of the total respondents (132), said that modern political institutions in Ghana contribute to conflict resolution, and 13 (9.5%) said they didn’t. Nineteen (18) respondents (13.6%) said they *don’t know*, whilst 4 respondents (3.0%) said *it depends*. These responses are captured on Table 41 below.

**Table 41: Do Modern political Institutions play a role conflict resolution in Ghana**

Do modern political institutions play a role in conflict resolution in Ghana?		
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	97	73.5
don't know	18	13.6
No	13	9.8
it depends	4	3.0
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author’s field research, 2014/2015.*

For those who said modern political institutions play a role in conflict resolution in Ghana, we asked them to explain their answer by telling how they think these institutions perform their conflict resolution roles. Their explanations are tabulated on table 42 below. These answers were proposed by respondents themselves since the researcher did not propose any answers here for respondents to validate.

**Table 42: How Modern Political Institutions Contribute to Conflict Resolution**

Explain your answer in q. 5-YES		
Explanations	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Through peace education and sensitisation against conflicts	22	22.7
They play emergency role by deploying security personnel to conflict areas to threaten conflict parties to stop fighting	21	21.6
Through justice delivery and prosecution of wrongdoers in conflict cases, conflict mediation and negotiation for resolution	20	20.6
Through law enactment and enforcement functions of some of these institutions	18	18.6
They prevent conflict escalation through good governance	15	15.5
They provide emergency/humanitarian assistance to conflict victims	1	1.0
Total	97	100.0

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

Out of the 72.7% of respondents that said modern political institutions play a role in conflict resolution, 22 of them (22.7%) explained that these institutions resolve conflicts by helping in peace education and sensitisation against conflicts. Another 21 respondents, representing 21.6% said modern political institutions play a critical role in emergency deployment of security personnel to conflict areas to threaten conflict parties to lay down their arms. Further, 20 respondents (20.6%) also explained that formal political institutions play a role in conflict prevention through justice delivery and the prosecution of wrongdoers in conflict cases and also through mediation and negotiation for conflict resolution. Another 18 respondents (18.6%) indicated that political institutions contribute to conflict resolution through the law enactment and enforcement functions of some of these institutions, while 15 respondents (15.5%) believe that they resolve conflicts through good governance that is ensured by these political institutions, and lastly only 1 respondent said that political institutions ensure the provision of humanitarian assistance and emergency aid to conflict victims.

Further the responses obtained from the respondents who said modern formal political institutions contribute to conflict prevention and/or resolution (positive role), were crossed with those who said these same institutions contribute to the escalation of conflicts. This was to enable us determine if citizens have a *dual perception* of the role of modern political institutions in both conflict escalation and conflict prevention and resolution.

The results of this cross-tabulation as indicated on Table 43 below show that, of the 95 respondents (72%) that indicated that modern political institutions contribute to conflict prevention, 51 of them (53.7%) indicated at the same time that these same institutions contribute to conflict escalation in their communities, whilst only 37 of them (38.9%) confirmed their assertion that modern political institutions did not contribute to conflict escalation, and 7 respondents (7.4%) of that same group said they didn't know whether modern political institutions contribute to conflict escalation or not. This means that only 38.9% of those who said modern political institutions contribute to conflict prevention really confirmed their *positive* perception of these institutions being of peaceful value to the country's democracy.

**Table 43: A Cross-view of respondents on the Contribution of Modern Political Institutions to Peace and Conflict Escalation in Ghana**

			Do modern political institutions play a role in conflict Escalation in Ghana			Total
			Yes	No	don't know	
Do modern political institutions play a role in conflict prevention in Ghana	Yes	Count	51	37	7	95
		Expected Count	46.8	29.5	18.7	95.0
		% within Do modern political institutions play a role in conflict prevention in Ghana	53.7%	38.9%	7.4%	100.0%
		% of Total	38.6%	28.0%	5.3%	72.0%
	No	Count	13	3	1	17
		Expected Count	8.4	5.3	3.3	17.0
		% within Do modern political institution play a role in conflict prevention in Ghana	76.5%	17.6%	5.9%	100.0%
		% of Total	9.8%	2.3%	0.8%	12.9%
	don't know	Count	1	1	18	20
		Expected Count	9.8	6.2	3.9	20.0
		% within do modern political institution play a role in conflict prevention in Ghana	5.0%	5.0%	90.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	0.8%	0.8%	13.6%	15.2%
Total	Count	65	41	26	132	
	Expected Count	65.0	41.0	26.0	132.0	
	% within Do modern political institution play a role in conflict prevention in Ghana	49.2%	31.1%	19.7%	100.0%	
	% of Total	49.2%	31.1%	19.7%	100.0%	

Source: Author's field research, 201/2015

The results presented above on tables 36, 37, 38, and 39 are from responses that treated the combinations of the four selected political institutions namely the executive, the legislature (parliament), the judiciary and the electoral commission (EC) and their activities. These selected institutions constitute “modern political institutions” in the context of this section of the thesis. In the next paragraphs, the

study explored the data that examined the specific roles played by these institutions individually.

The “executive”, in this aspect of our work, refers to the President and all political appointees in the presidency (or the office of the President) as well as Ministers and Deputy Ministers of State, and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs) in the country. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the assertion that the Executive contribute to making peace in Ghana. The responses were ranked on the Likert Scale with the highest agreement to the assertion being *very much agree*, through *somewhat agree*, *don't agree*, and *not at all* as the least indicator of “agreement”. We had an added category of *don't know* that was observed in our pre-tests and therefore was added to the proposed responses on the questionnaire.

**Table 44: Respondents’ belief in the Executive and the Presidency contributing to Peace**

Do you believe the presidency and the executive contribute to making peace in Ghana?		
Level of Agreement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
very much agree	55	41.7
somewhat agree	55	41.7
don't agree	8	6.1
not at all	6	4.5
don't know	8	6.1
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author’s field research 2014/2015*

As shown on Table 44 above, the executive generally scored very high with an aggregate<sup>458</sup> of 110 respondents (83.4%) perceiving them to contribute to peace in the country. Very few individuals 8 and 6 respondents chose *don't agree* and *not agree at all*

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<sup>458</sup> This figure is the aggregate of those respondents who *very much agree* (55) and those who *somewhat agree* (also 55).

respectively to the executive arm of government contributing to peace in Ghana. Some 8 more respondents indicated they *don't know* whether the executive and the presidency contribute to peace or not.

This overwhelming majority of support suggests that respondents perceive the executive to be working to enhance peace, supporting unity and avoiding the escalation of violent conflicts as much as possible.

When asked the same question for the legislative arm of government (parliament) respondents indicated similar high positive response to the legislature contributing to peace in Ghana. An aggregate of 78.1% of respondents (103) indicated that they *very much agree* and *somewhat agree* that parliament contributes to making peace in Ghana, whilst an aggregate of 12.8% do not agree that parliament contributes to enhancing peace in the country. Earlier on when respondents were asked to explain their assertion that political institutions play a role in peace in the country (presented earlier on table 26 above) the second most important reason respondents indicated for saying modern political institutions contribute to peace in the country was that modern political institutions contribute to peace through the enactment and enforcement of laws in the country. Law enactment is the principal responsibility of the Ghanaian parliament. The results on Table 45 below, therefore, do confirm this belief of respondents in the parliament of Ghana.

**Table 45: Do you believe the parliament of Ghana contributes to making peace in the country?**

Do you believe the parliament contributes to making peace in Ghana?		
Level of Agreement	Frequency	Percent
very much agree	53	40.2
somewhat agree	50	37.9
don't agree	12	9.1
not at all	6	4.5
don't know	11	8.3
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

On their perception of the judicial arm of government (we specified the law courts at this instance) as presented on Table 46 below, an aggregate of 85.6% of respondents



(112 respondents) indicated they *very much agreed* (56.8%) and *somewhat agreed* (28.8%) that the law courts contribute to peacemaking in Ghana. An aggregate of 11 respondents (8.3%) rejected the assertion that the law courts help to make peace in the country, whilst 8 respondents (6.1%) said they didn't know whether they did or did not.

**Table 46: Respondents belief in Ghanaian Judiciary contributing to peace**

Do you believe the law courts contribute to making peace in Ghana?		
Level of Agreement	Frequency	Percent
very much agree	75	56.8
somewhat agree	38	28.8
don't agree	7	5.3
not at all	4	3.0
don't know	8	6.1
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015*

For the EC (as shown on Table 47 below), an aggregate of 71.2% of respondents (94 of them), indicated their agreement to the commission contributing to peace. On the contrary, an aggregate of 18.9% of respondents (25 of them) were of the view that the EC does not contribute to peace in Ghana. Some 13 respondents said they couldn't tell if the commission contributes to peace or not.

**Table 47: Respondents’ belief in electoral commission contributing to peace in Ghana**

Do you believe the electoral commission contributes to making peace in Ghana?		
Level of Agreement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
very much agree	52	39.4
somewhat agree	42	31.8
do not agree	11	8.3
not at all	14	10.6
don't know	13	9.8
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author’s field research 2014/2015*

While the aggregate score of 71.2% of respondents trust the EC for contributing to peace is very high and encouraging in an emerging democracy like Ghana, a comparison with the scores of the first three political institutions inquired into, thus the executive, the legislature and the judiciary reveals that the EC scored the least in trust for contributing to peace. This is followed by the parliament with 78.7%.

Table 48 below assembles the results for all the four institutions whilst aggregating (for each of them) the results for the two positive variable scores (*very much agree* and *somewhat agree*) and those for the two negative variable scores (*do not agree* and *do not agree at all*).

**Table 48: Consolidated Table for Respondents agreement on political institutions contribution to peace in Ghana**

Judiciary (law courts) contribute to peace in Ghana			Parliament contributes to peace in Ghana		Presidency and executive contribute to peace in Ghana		Electoral Commission contributes to peace in Ghana	
Level of Agreement	Freq	Per (%)	Freq	Per (%)	Freq	Per (%)	Freq	Percent (%)
Agree	112	85.6%	103	78.1%	110	83.4%	94	71.2%
Do not agree	11	8.3%	18	13.6%	14	10.6%	25	18.9%
don't know	8	6.1	11	8.3	8	6.1	13	9.8
Total	132	100	132	100	132	100	132	100

*Source: author's field research, 2014/2015*

The judiciary scored the highest among the four institutions in positive perception for peace with 85.6% of respondents saying it contributes to peace in the country, followed by the Executive scoring 83.4% of respondents. Parliament is 3<sup>rd</sup> in level of trust with 78.1%, whilst the EC scores the least with 71.2% of trust from respondents. However, all the scores for the four are generally high, and this gives the indication that respondents have a positive view of the contribution of the four institutions to peace in their communities and in Ghana at large.

After seeking to examine whether the selected modern political institutions “contribute” in any way to peace, we proceeded to collect respondents’ possible measure of the “frequency” with which any of these institutions engages in acts that either divide the people and create conflicts or unite them and create peace. Respondents were to choose from a scaled tabular set of options ranging from *very frequent, somewhat frequent, not frequent, not frequent at all* and a neutral option of *I don't know* which was not emphasised by the interviewer unless necessary. Table 49 below presents the results of respondents on how frequent modern political institutions creating disunity and conflicts in Ghana.

**Table 49: How frequent do modern political institutions create conflicts and disunity among Ghanaians?**

To what extent do you believe the following political institutions contribute to creating conflicts and dividing/opposing people in your community or in Ghana?								
Response	The Judiciary		Parliament		Presidency		Electoral commission	
	Freq	Perc	Freq	Perc	Freq	Perc	Freq	Perc
very frequent	11	8.3%	18	13.6%	21	15.9%	15	11.4%
somewhat frequent	20	15.2%	23	17.4%	25	18.9%	19	14.4%
not frequent	38	28.8%	36	27.3%	36	27.3%	39	29.5%
not at all	55	41.7%	48	36.4%	42	31.8%	49	37.1%
don't know	8	6.1%	7	5.3%	8	6.1%	10	7.6%
Total	132	100.0	132	100.0	132	100.0	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015.*

The executive arm of government, was cited by 15.9% of respondents as *very frequent(ly)* and 18.9% as *somewhat frequently* dividing the people and causing conflicts in the country. This was followed by the parliament with 13.6% and 17.4% of respondents who said it contributed *very frequently* and *somewhat frequently* respectively to dividing the people and creating conflicts. In third position is the EC with 11.4% and 14.4% of respondents respectively that believed it caused conflicts among the people and divided them *very frequently* and *somewhat frequently* respectively, whilst the judiciary was perceived by respondents as being the least instigator of division and conflicts in the country with 8.3% and 15.2% of respondents that believed it caused conflicts *very frequently* and *somewhat frequently* respectively.

More importantly, a comparative aggregation of respondents' answers in this domain indicate a more positive perception than a negative one. This is to say that the comparative aggregate of the respondents' positive perception of modern political institutions largely surpasses their negative perception of these institutions as exposed above on Table 49. In this aggregated comparison, we consider responses given to the effect that an institution *very frequently* or *somewhat frequently* causes division and conflicts

to be of negative value to peaceful democratic development, whilst responses that indicate *not frequent* and *not at all frequent* are considered to perceive the said institution in a positive perspective within the same measure. For example, an aggregate of 59.1% of respondents maintained that the executive do not frequently divide the people or cause conflicts, as against the aggregate of 34.8% that believe that the executive are sources of division and conflicts to the population. In the same vein, an aggregate of 63.7% of respondents also maintained a positive perception of the legislative arm (parliament) of not being a source of division and conflicts, against the aggregate of 31% that believe the legislative arm of government (parliament) is a source of division and violent conflicts in Ghana. The Electoral Commission was second in confidence level as 66.6% of respondents perceived it not to contribute to dividing the people and causing conflicts, as against 25.8% of respondents indicating they believe the Commission created divisions among the people and caused violent conflicts. The judiciary scored the most in positive perception from respondents among which 70.5% of respondents indicated it did not contribute to dividing the people and causing violent conflicts, whilst 23.5% of respondents indicated a negative opinion of the judiciary to the effect that it divides society and causes conflicts in Ghana.

Conversely, these results indicate a somewhat low but not negligible level of contribution of modern political institutions to divisions in society and causing violent conflicts in Ghana. To this effect, the larger number of respondents with negative perception on modern political institutions was attributed to the executive (34.8%). They considered the executive as a source of division and violent conflicts. Also, 31% of respondents consider the parliament as a source of division and conflicts, whilst the EC was selected in third position by 25.8% of respondents in this regard. The judiciary recorded the least among respondents (23.5% of respondents) as dividing the people and causing conflicts among them.

The judiciary being the least in conflict escalation is very important for every democracy. The judiciary is the main body for the adjudication of disputes and conflicts and all legal controversies in every democracy, and the extent to which its

rulings are accepted depends largely on the level of trust of the citizenry in it, and its own demonstration of impartiality in the dispensation of justice<sup>459</sup>. While there are instances of political violence in Ghana, judicial decisions being a source of violent conflicts in the country are very much limited. However, the same cannot be said of the Electoral Commission because recently most of the political conflicts experienced in the country have been election related (Tsikata and Seini, 2004). All of these election-related conflicts were directly linked to presidential and parliamentary elections and their campaign issues (Ibid).

Furthermore, electoral related activities and conflicts in recent times have been one major source of violence in present time(s) as witnessed in Kenya in 2007 and in la Côte d'Ivoire in 2011. As a result, the research sought to collect respondents' views on the contribution of voter registration exercises to peace in the Ghanaian democratic process. Table 50 below shows the results of respondents' answers to this question.

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<sup>459</sup> O'Brien, M. (2005). Parliaments as Peacebuilders: The Role of Parliaments in Conflict-Affected Countries. *World Bank Institute Working Papers, Series on Contemporary Issues in Parliamentary Development*. 2005

**Table 50: Contribution of Voter Registration exercise to peace or violence**

Voters registration exercise contribution to creating peace and uniting people of Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	40	30.3
somewhat frequent	31	23.5
not frequent	35	26.5
not at all	19	14.4
don't know	7	5.3
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field survey, 2014/2015*

From Table 50 above, 40 respondents (representing 30.3%) said voter registration exercises in Ghana create peace and unite the people *very frequently*, and 31 respondents (23.5%) believed it creates peace and unites the people *somewhat frequently*. This gives an aggregate of 71 respondents (53.8%) who show a positive perception of the contribution of voter registration to peace and uniting the people. On the contrary, 35 respondents (26.5%) and 19 respondents (14.4%) respectively indicated that voter registration exercises contribute *not frequently* and *not at all* respectively to peace in Ghana thus, an aggregate of 46 respondents (40.9%) had somehow negative view about the contribution of voters registration exercises to peace and unity in Ghana. Only 7 respondents (5.3%) indicated they didn't know whether voter registration exercises contribute to peace and unity in Ghana or not.

Probing further, all the 46 respondents indicated that there had been times where voters' registration exercises had generated open confrontations and clashes among people of different political divides. This finding is not far from the reality since there exist many examples of open fighting and unnecessary challenging of potential voters by agents of the two main political parties (NDC and NPP) as it happened in some registration centres in Garu in the Upper East Region, in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region, and some parts of the Volta Region during the final voter registration process in 2016. In Garu where I observed the exercise in 2016, over 26 individuals suspected to belong to the opposition NPP party were challenged by officials of then ruling

NDC, and the NPP Constituency Chairman had to “defend” them at the District EC office before their registration could be validated. The NDC also “defended” about 10 suspected NDC supporters whose registrations were challenged by the NPP<sup>460</sup>.

In addition to voters’ registration, voter identification on the day of voting is one other essential exercise that constitutes the EC’s activities for election in Ghana. The biggest challenge in voter identification emerged when before the introduction of the biometric voter identification system individual political parties could challenge the validity of voters and prevented them from voting based on arguments of the suspected voters being impersonated and many more accusations among which double or multiple voting. In a bid to introduce sanity into the voter identification system, the biometric voter identification process was adopted following the 2012 Nigerian experiences. This system, however, came with its own challenges as biometric identification devices sometimes failed to identify voters, thereby denying them the opportunity to vote in the elections, especially in the 2012 general parliamentary and presidential elections, leading to voting being extended to an unprecedented second day in the history of Ghanaian democracy since the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> Republican Constitution. This second day of voting was contested largely by the opposition and perceived as a hidden strategy of the incumbent (NDC) to use the dark of the night to steal the elections.

This defect was corrected in the 2016 general elections with the provision of the manual verification process that allowed voters to go through manual verification if the biometric identification device fails to identify the voter. In a documented research by the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) in 2011, voter identification and multiple voting were the two main overarching causes of bye-

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<sup>460</sup> Report of then NPP Garu Constituency Chairman, Jonathan Jambeidu, 2016. Garu, Upper East Region, Ghana.



election violence and conflicts in Ghana.<sup>461</sup> In this current research, one of the activities that was inquired into was the contribution of voter identification exercise to either creating a peaceful democracy or enhancing conflict and violence among Ghanaians.

The results of respondents' answers to this question as displayed on Table 51 below indicate that 30 respondents (22.7%) agreed that voter identification exercises *very frequently* united the people and created peace amongst them while 32 respondents (24.2%) agreed to the assertion that voter identification exercises *somewhat frequently* created peace and united Ghanaians. These two variables (*very frequently* and *somewhat frequently* creating peace) together score an aggregate of 62 (46.9%) out of 132 respondents who have a positive perception of the contribution of voter identification exercises to peaceful coexistence and unity in Ghana. On the contrary, 33 respondents (25.0%) and 31 respondents (23.5%) respectively indicated that voter identification as an activity in the Ghanaian democratic process did *not frequently* and did *not at all* create peace and unity among the people of Ghana respectively. This gives an aggregated total of 64 respondents (48.5%) who do not have a positive perception of the contribution of voter identification to peace and unity in their communities. This negative figure is almost 2% higher than the positive perception of respondents to voter identification's contribution to peace.

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<sup>461</sup>National Commission for Civic Education (2011). Election Conflict in Ghana: Case Study of Constituency By-Elections. NCCE, 2011, Ghana.

**Table 51: Contribution of Voter Identification Exercise in creating peace or violence among Ghanaians**

Voters Identity verification's contribution to creating peace and uniting people of Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	30	22.7
somewhat frequent	32	24.2
not frequent	33	25.0
not at all	31	23.5
don't know	6	4.5
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

The finding from this thesis highlights the outcome of the NCCE's research on electoral violence during by-elections in Ghana, which showed that 34.6 percent of the respondents across the country indicated "*Misunderstanding about the identity of the prospective voter, multiple voting and use of provocative language/accusations and counter accusation/inflammatory remarks are the major issues that trigger by-election conflicts*"<sup>462</sup>. This indicates that voter identification, though an essential component of the democratic process in Ghana, the manipulation of such exercises, however, generates violence and thereby mars the beauty of the democratic process in the country. This is caused principally by the attitude and negative political culture of citizens in the country, especially political parties through their supporters and agents who are always present at the polling stations to monitor the voting process, and conflict entrepreneurs who take advantage of the voting situation to create violence for their own benefit<sup>463</sup>.

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<sup>462</sup> National Commission for Civic Education (2011). *Election Conflict in Ghana: Case Study of Constituency By-Elections*. NCCE, 2011, Ghana

<sup>463</sup> West African Network for Peacebuilding, Ghana (WANEP-Ghana), (2016). 2016 Election, We'll Disappoint "Conflict Entrepreneurs" Again. Available online at <http://radioxyzonline.com/wanep-2016-election-well-disappoint-conflict-entrepreneurs-again/>

## *5.5 Effect of Party Executive Elections on Peace or violence*

Another important set of electoral activities that received attention in this work was the election of political party executives to lead political parties. The EC is the sole institution mandated to supervise the elections of political party executives across the country for all the political parties in Ghana at the Constituency, Regional and National levels. In the constitutions of all the existing political parties in Ghana, party leaders or party executives are elected every four years in-between national elections to run the affairs of each party and prepare for the nearest impending election. These party executive elections could yield both positive and negative results with their overarching effects on the Ghanaian democratic process. On the positive side, party executive elections could enable the choice of leaders to prepare the party for elections, organise funding for elections, draw and sell the manifesto and campaign message of the party, mobilise voters for their party, supervise and monitor elections to ensure transparency and fairness in the electoral process, and represent the party in various fora with election related matters. All these in any democracy contribute to enhancing the confidence of the supporters and increase the fairness and freeness of the election process and acceptability for election results when they are finally announced, thereby enhancing the consolidation of democracy.

On the other hand, the election of political party executives in Ghana, especially within the two current major political parties (NDC and NPP), have presented certain key challenges. First of all, one of the major challenges of party executive elections is the challenge of the need for ethnic, regional and socio-religious inclusion in most cases. Ghana, as a multi-ethnic society, presents the challenge of most key ethnic and other social groups seeking representation in the elected executives of political parties, and the political parties equally try to consciously ensure this inclusion to create a balance of representation to enhance their appeal to the electorate across groups and regions. For example, in the December 2014 National Delegates Conference of the NDC that I witnessed at the Baba Yara Sports Stadium in Kumasi, Alhaji Hudu Yahaya (a Northerner from Tamale in the Northern Region of Ghana) who was in the lead for the position of National Chairman of the party was prevailed upon on

the dawn of the elections in Kumasi to withdraw to enable Mr. Portofi to win that position since the then President John Dramani Mahama was also a northerner and other northerners were tipped to win other positions in the same elections. Also, in April 2014, I closely followed and witnessed the NPP's National Delegates Conference that took place at the Tamale Sports Stadium, and same sentiments were used to campaign for the position of National Chairman where radio messages indicated the need for a Northern Chairperson for the party since same party leaders were championing for the future election of Mr Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo to become the flagbearer of the party. Eventually, the message went down well and for the first time in the history of the NPP a northerner, Mr. Paul Afoko, was overwhelmingly elected to the position of Chairman of the party, even if he was later suspended indefinitely by the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the party for purported misconducts.

At the constituency (basic) level the problem is less pronounced but gets more attention as one goes up the political ladder from the constituency level to the regional and especially at the national level.

At the national level, issues of “camps” have always developed and divided the political campaign, creating internal cracks that sometimes lead to open confrontations and dampen the fortunes of some political parties in the final general election where they contest against other more united parties. In the year 2000, it was suspected that the hand-picking of late Professor Mills by the then outgoing President Jerry John Rawlings (to lead the NDC) led to the downfall of the NDC in the 2000 general elections. In the same vein, the alleged Kufuor-supported camp of Alan Kyeremanteng and that of Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo in the primaries of the NPP in 2007 must have cost the party its strong fortunes in the 2008 general elections despite the huge transformation and revived economy the country was then enjoying under the NPP. Up to date, the many divisive issues in the NPP that have led to the death of the Upper East Regional Chairman, Mr. Adams in 2015 as well as the indefinite suspension of the NPP National Chairman, Paul Afoko and some other

national executives was attributed mainly to their belonging to one of the Allan Keremateng versus Nana Addo camps in the NPP.

In this work, we asked respondents to indicate their perception on the contribution of party executive elections to peace and unity in the country as far as these activities are concerned in Ghana's democratic practice and process. We asked this question at three main levels of party executive elections, thus the constituency, the regional and the national levels. Respondents were asked to indicate how frequent these activities contributed to peace or otherwise in their communities and in Ghana. The results of respondents' answers to these questions are presented on the tables below.

From table 52 below, 28 respondents (representing 21.2%) said election of party executives at the constituency level creates peace and unites the people *very frequently*, while 40 respondents (30.3%) believe that the election of party executives at the constituency level *somewhat frequently* creates peace and unites the people. Both indicating an aggregated figure of 68 respondents (51.5%) who believe elections of constituency party executives create unity and peace among the Ghanaian populace. On the contrary, 37 respondents (28%) said these elections did *not frequently* create peace and unity while 20 (15.2%) respondents said they did *not at all* bring peace and unity in the community. This gives an aggregate of 57 respondents (43.2%) who have a negative impression of the contribution of elections of party constituency executives to peace and unity.

**Table 52: Constituency Executive Elections' Contribution to Peace and Unity in Ghana**

Election of Party Constituency Executive contribution to creating peace and uniting people of Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	28	21.2
somewhat frequent	40	30.3
not frequent	37	28.0
not at all	20	15.2
don't know	7	5.3
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

The next level of party executive elections is the regional executive elections. From the results of our respondents shown on Table 53 below, 30 respondents (22.7%) said the election of party executives at the regional level contributed to peace and unity *very frequently*; 36 respondents (27.3%) said it did *somewhat frequently*; 40 respondents (30.3%) said it did *not frequently* and 20 respondents (15.2%) indicated it did *not at all* contribute to peace and unity among the people of Ghana. By aggregation, 66 respondents (50%) of respondents have a positive perception of regional executives' contribution to peace and unity in the Ghanaian democracy, while 60 respondents (45.5%) have a negative perception of its contribution to peace and unity. One is clear in one's mind, based on these empirical results, that a 45.5% negative perception of an activity's contribution to peace and unity in a democracy cannot be underestimated. This is because our review of democratic support levels necessary to enhance democratic consolidation, sustainability, stability and durability demands over 70% to 75% of positive popular support for that democracy based both on perception, real results and citizen participation, as against a negative democratic support or perception of not more than 15%<sup>464</sup>.

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<sup>464</sup> Diamond, L. (1999). *Developing Democracy: Towards Consolidation*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999. P.64

**Table 53: Regional Party Executive Elections enhance to Peace and Unity**

Election of Regional Party Executives contribute to creating peace and uniting people in Ghana.		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	30	22.7
somewhat frequent	36	27.3
not frequent	40	30.3
not at all	20	15.2
don't know	6	4.5
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

However, we can make a more comprehensive analysis and judgement from the results on the impact of the electoral activities on democratic unity and peace in Ghana only when we present the results of the rest of the activities captured in our field work.

The next level of executive elections, considered in this thesis, was the election of national executives for political parties in Ghana. Issues of regionalism and ethnicity are almost always manifest in the campaign and election processes for the selection of national executives of political parties in Ghana. The more regionally and ethnically balanced a party is in its composition of executives for the management of the party at the national level, the more positive its perception of appeal and inclusiveness among the electorate. In the same vein, parties that do not have such a balance are criticised by the media and the electorate for discrimination and tribal alienation. The struggle for representation is seen in internal party “camps” as they try to undo each other as to which camps get more representatives to assist them control the executive committee with the long term view of supporting their favourite future presidential candidate. Such opposing camps and individuals sometimes get acrimonious, leading to violent clashes between/among contestants and supporters.

When respondents were asked of their views on the contribution of national party executive elections to the peace and unity of the population in the Ghanaian democracy, 33 respondents (25.0%) indicated these elections contributed *very frequently*

to peace and unity while 37 respondents (28%) indicated they contributed *somewhat frequently* to peace and unity among the people. On the other hand, 39 respondents (29.5%) said national executive elections did *not frequently* contribute to peace and unity, while 17 respondents (12.9%) indicated they did *not at all* contribute to any peace and unity. Six (6) respondents said they *do not know* whether it contributes to peace or not.

**Table 54: Contribution of National Executive Elections to Peace and Unity in Ghana**

Election of National Party Executive contribute to creating peace and Uniting people of Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent
very frequent	33	25.0
somewhat frequent	37	28.0
not frequent	39	29.5
not at all	17	12.9
don't know	6	4.5
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

This indicates an aggregate of 70 respondents (53%) who have a positive perception of the contribution of national executive elections to peace and unity and an aggregate of 56 respondents (42.4%) with a negative perception of the contribution of these elections and their processes to the peace and unity of the country. These responses are captured on Table 54 above.

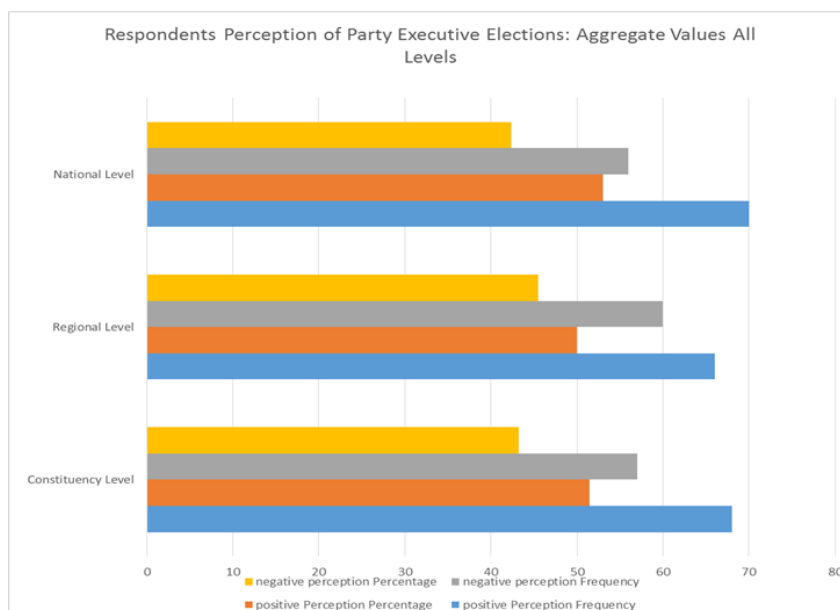
To have a better view of the question of party executive elections and how they contribute to peace or unity in the Ghanaian democracy, we reproduce the aggregated results at the three levels of party executive elections and respondents' perception of their contribution to peace and unity, thus from the constituency, the regional and the national levels. The results are shown on Figure 9 below.

From the diagrams (Figures 9 and 10) below, we find that respondents' negative and positive perceptions of the contribution of political party executive elections to peace and unity vary across dimension but similar within each variable. For those who have a positive perception of these elections, the values range from 53% for the



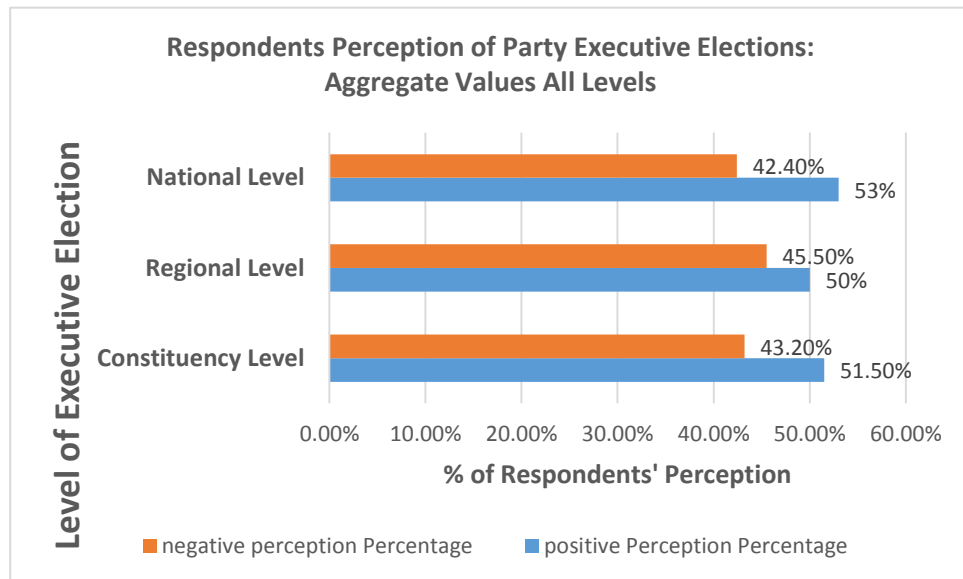
constituency level elections, 50% for the regional level elections and 52% for national level elections. On the other hand, 42.4% of respondents have a negative perception of the contribution of constituency party elections to peace and unity in their communities, 45.5% negative perception for the regional executive elections and 43.2% for the national level. We observe that the perception levels vary only across perception category (whether positive or negative) but virtually similar along the three levels of elections (constituency, regional and national levels). While the highest positive perception index is recorded at the constituency level with 53%, the highest negative perception index was recorded at the regional level with 45.5%. On the contrary, while the lowest positive perception was recorded at the regional level 50%, the lowest negative perception level was recorded at the constituency level thus 42.4% indicating that constituency party executive elections are the most peaceful of the three of executive elections.

**Figure 9: Aggregated Results of Respondents' Perception on Political Party Executive Elections**



*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana*

**Figure 10: Respondents' Perception of Party Executive Elections' Contribution to Peace**



*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana*

While the election of political party executives have an appreciable propensity to disunite the people as demonstrated above on Figures 9 and 10, there are some other activities during which signs of acrimony and looming conflicts sometimes manifest themselves. One of such political activities that is likely to give early warning signals on the possibility of looming electoral violence during party executive elections is the process of campaigning for votes. With party executives selected in the three major strata of the politico-administrative setup of the country (constituency, regional and national), the campaign for these elections equally covers these three levels automatically. However, the election of party executives at the three levels take place at different times. Constituency executives are elected about three years before the general national elections in Ghana, and the regional and national executives take place about two years before the general national elections, with the regional executive elections always preceding the national executive elections.

Many a times, supporters of candidates who are contesting for the same party executive position clash either verbally or physically for very trivial reasons, in a bid to prevent the successful execution of their opponents' campaign strategies as part of their own campaign strategy. In the current work, we asked respondents of their view

on how the campaign process for party executive elections either contribute to peace and unity or violence in the country. Their answers are summarised on Table 55 below.

**Table 55: Contribution of Campaigns for Constituency Party Executive Elections to Peace and Unity**

Campaign for Election of Constituency Party Executives contribute to creating peace and Uniting people of Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
very frequent	31	23.5
somewhat frequent	46	34.8
not frequent	32	24.2
not at all	15	11.4
don't know	8	6.1
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

Out of the 132 respondents that answered that question, 31 of them, representing 23.5% indicated that the campaign process for party executive elections contributed in creating peace and uniting the people *very frequently*, while 46 respondents (34.8%) said it did *somewhat frequently*. Giving an aggregated positive perception of the campaigns by 78 respondents (58.3%). On the other hand, 32 respondents (24.2%) said it did *not frequently* contribute to peace and unity while 15 respondents (11.4%) indicated that it did *not at all* contribute to peace and unity in their communities. Consequently, an aggregated number of 47 respondents (35.6%) indicated a negative perception of the contribution of campaign activities' contribution to creating peace and unity among the electorate, in contrast with 78 respondents (58.3%).

The second level of party executive elections is at the regional level. This research attempted to verify the effect of regional level campaign processes for these elections' impact on the peace and unity of the Ghanaian democratic system. From Table 56 below, 34 respondents (25.8%) said campaigning for regional level executive elections create peace and unite the people *very frequently*, and 40 respondents (30.3%) said it did *somewhat frequently*, summing to an aggregate of 74 respondents (indicating 56.1%) who hold a positive perception of the effect of these campaigns on the peace and unity of

the people. On the other hand, 35 respondents (26.5%) said these campaigns did *not frequently* lead to peace and unity among the people whilst 16 respondents (12.1%) said they did *not at all* enhance the peace and unity of the people. Seven (7) respondents said they *did not know* if they did or did not affect the peace and unity of the people. This gives an aggregate of 51 respondents (38.6%) that express a negative perception of the contribution of campaigns for regional party executive elections contribution to peace and unity in Ghana.

**Table 56: Effect of Campaigns for Regional Party Executive Elections on Peace and Security**

Campaigns for Election of Regional Party Executives contribute to creating peace and uniting people of Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	34	25.8
somewhat frequent	40	30.3
not frequent	35	26.5
not at all	16	12.1
don't know	7	5.3
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

In relation to campaigns for national party executive elections, (as shown on Table 57 below) 34 respondents, making 25.8%, said campaign activities for the election of national party executives *very frequently* contributes to peace and uniting the people whilst 42 respondents (31.8%) believe that these campaigns contribute somewhat frequently to peace and unity of the people. On the contrary, 32 respondents (24.2%) said the campaigns did *not frequently* contribute to peace and unity among the people whilst 17 respondents (12.9%) indicated they did *not at all* contribute to peace and unity in the country. Seven (7) respondents (5.3%) said they *don't know* whether these campaigns affected peace and unity. On the whole, an aggregated 76 respondents (57.6%) (a combination of figures for the responses that indicate that these campaigns “*very frequently*” and “*Somewhat frequently*” have a positive perception of the contribution of campaigns activities for the election of national party executives, whilst an aggregate of 49 respondents, indicating 37.1% (a combination of figures for the

responses *not frequently* and *not at all*) have a negative perception of the contribution of these campaigns.

**Table 57: Contribution of Campaigns for National Executive Elections in Ghana to Peace and Unity**

Campaign for Election of National Party Executives contribute to creating peace and Uniting people of Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	34	25.8
somewhat frequent	42	31.8
not frequent	32	24.2
not at all	17	12.9
don't know	7	5.3
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015, Ghana*

For a clearer perspective on respondents' perception on the contribution of campaign activities for political party executive elections at the three main levels to peace or conflicts in Ghana, we aggregated the figures for both positive<sup>465</sup> and negative<sup>466</sup> perceptions at all three levels of these campaigns and presented them together in Figure 11 below. Figure 11 below shows a fused bar graph of the aggregated positive and negative perception levels of respondents on the contribution of campaign activities for the election of political party executives at the constituency, regional and national levels to peace or conflict, whilst figure 12 shows a histogram with only the percentages of same data as in Figure 11.

From Figures 11 and 12, we find that respondents' positive perception of campaign activities' contribution to peace is higher at all the three stages of constituency,

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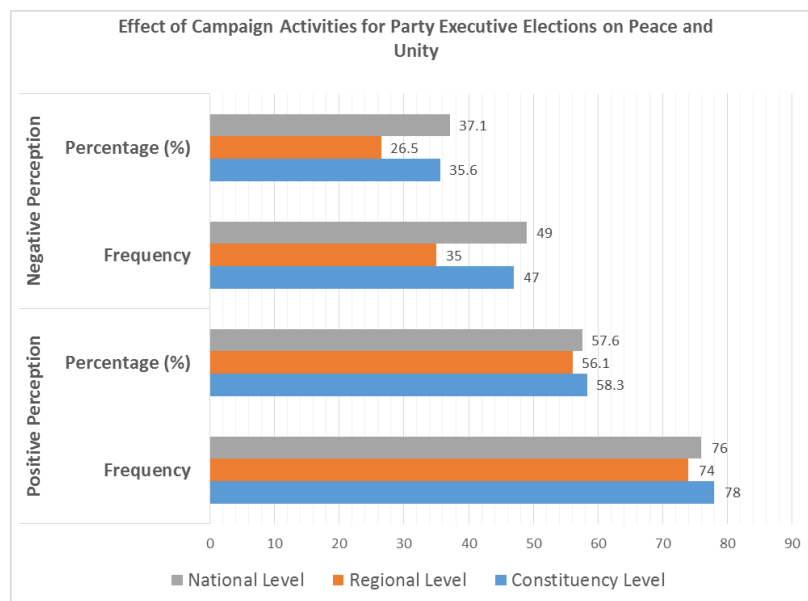
<sup>465</sup> Combined figures for respondents who indicated that campaign activities *very frequently* and *somewhat frequently* contributed to peace and uniting the people.

<sup>466</sup> Combined figures for respondents who indicated that campaign activities for the election of political party executives at each level did *not frequently* and did *not at all* contribute to peace and uniting the people)

regional and national levels with the average national positive perception level standing at 57.33%. At the constituency level, respondents' perception of the contribution of campaigns for the election of constituency party executives to peace stands at 58.3%, followed in descending order by national level at 57.6% and the regional level at 56.1%.

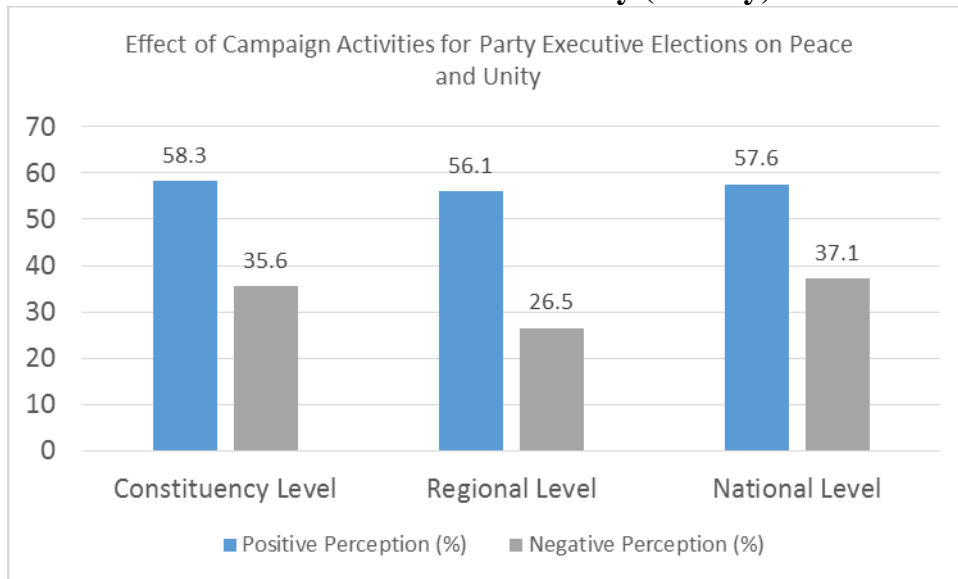
On the other hand, the average negative perception level of respondents stands at 33.07%, with the highest negative impact of these campaigns perceived at the national executive elections (37.1%), followed in descending order by that of the constituency level (35.6%) and the regional level (26.5%).

**Figure 11: Effect of Campaign Activities for Party Executive Elections on Peace and Unity**



*Source: Field Research 2014/2015, Ghana*

**Figure 12: Effect of Campaign Activities for Party Executive Elections on Peace and Unity (% only)**



*Source: Field Research 2014/2015, Ghana*

## 5.6 General Elections

Having looked at the results of the various political activities at the party level, we proceeded to consider the effect of general national elections on the peace and unity of the Ghanaian democratic system. In Ghana, general national elections are conducted for two main purposes. One, for the election of parliamentarians who will represent their constituents in the national House of Parliament, and two, for the election of the President of the Republic of Ghana.

This was done by looking at the contribution of national Parliamentary and Presidential elections in Ghana to the peace and unity of the populace. It needs to be told that in Ghana, parliamentary and presidential elections are conducted on the same day, and this has been the case since the beginning of the Fourth Republic with the 1992 Republican Constitution, except in 1992 itself when the presidential and parliamentary elections were held differently, leading to the boycott of the parliamentary elections by the main opposition party led by Professor Adu Boahen after suspicions of rigging in the presidential election results. Respondents' responses are summarised below.

On the contribution of parliamentary elections, respondents' responses shown here below on Table 58 indicate that 39 respondents (29.5%) believe that parliamentary election contribute to peace and unity *very frequently* and 30 respondents (22.7%) said they did *somewhat frequently*. On the other hand 36 respondents said parliamentary elections did *not frequently* create peace and unity while 21 respondents said parliamentary elections did *not at all* create peace and unity among the people and 6 respondents said they *don't know* whether they did or did not.

**Table 58: Contribution of Parliamentary Elections to Peace and Unity in Ghana**

Parliamentary Elections contribute to creating peace and uniting people of Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	39	29.5
somewhat frequent	30	22.7
not frequent	36	27.3
not at all	21	15.9
don't know	6	4.5
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

Aggregating the positive and negative perceptions, we get 69 respondents (52.2%) and 57 respondents (43.2%) showing positive and negative perceptions respectively of the contribution of parliamentary elections to peace and unity among Ghanaians.

For presidential elections (as shown below on Table 59), 35 respondents (26.5%) said presidential elections contribute *very frequently* to peace and unity in the Ghanaian democracy and 34 respondents (25.8%) said they contributed to peace *somewhat frequently*. Another 35 respondents (26.5%) also said presidential election did not frequently contribute to peace and unity while 22 respondents (16.7%) believe presidential elections do *not at all* enhance peace and unity. Six (6) respondents said they could not tell whether presidential elections contribute to peace and unity or not.



**Table 59: Contribution of Presidential Elections to Peace and Unity in Ghana**

National Presidential Election contribute to creating peace and Uniting people of Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	35	26.5
somewhat frequent	34	25.8
not frequent	35	26.5
not at all	22	16.7
don't know	6	4.5
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

By aggregation, 69 respondents (52.3%) have a positive view of the contribution of presidential elections to peace and unity in the Ghanaian democracy whilst 57 respondents, making 43.2% have a negative view on same.

The picture as presented is an indication that the contribution of presidential elections to the democratic consolidation of Ghana has been positive. Nonetheless, the views of the 57 respondents representing 43.2% who had a negative view of parliamentary election exercises is an indication that much needs to be done to streamline the process to make it more helpful to Ghana's peaceful democratic building.

To help verify the data we acquired from our respondents on the contribution of specific political activities to the peaceful sustainability or otherwise of the Ghanaian democratic process, the same political activities that were posed to the respondents in relation to their (these political activities) contribution to peace were repeated while asking respondents to indicate how same activities contributed to conflicts, violence and division.

**Table 60: Do Voter Registration Exercises Generate Violent Conflicts in Ghana?**

Voter registration exercises generate violent conflict in Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent
very frequent	25	18.9
somewhat frequent	24	18.2
not frequent	41	31.1
not at all	36	27.3
don't know	6	4.5
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author's Field Research 2014/2015*

On voter registration exercise in relation to their impact on conflict generation and or escalation, as demonstrated on Table 60 above, 25 respondents (18.9%) indicate that voter registration exercise generates violent conflicts *very frequently*, and 24 respondents (18.2) said they did *somewhat frequently*. On the contrary, 41 respondents said they did *not* generate conflicts *frequently* whilst 36 said they did *not* generate conflicts *at all*. Six (6) respondents said they *don't know* whether these registrations generated conflicts or not.

On voter identity verification, 25 respondents (18.9%) said voter identity verification exercises *very frequently* generate conflicts, whilst 29 respondents (22.0%) said they generated conflicts *somewhat frequently*. On the contrary, 36 respondents (27.3%) indicated voter identity verification did *not frequently* generate violent conflicts whilst 34 respondents (25.8%) said they did *not* generate any conflicts *at all*. Eight (8) respondents said they couldn't tell if they did or did not. These are represented on Table 61 below.

**Table 61: Does Voter Identity Verification Generate Violent Conflict in Ghana?**

Voters Identity verification generate violent conflicts in Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	25	18.9
somewhat frequent	29	22.0
not frequent	36	27.3
not at all	34	25.8
don't know	8	6.1
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015, Ghana.*

When asked whether the election of political party executives at the constituency level generates violent conflicts, 24 respondents (18.2%) and 44 respondents (33.3) said these elections created violent conflicts *very frequently* and *somewhat frequently* respectively. On the contrary, 51 respondents (38.6%) indicated that these elections did *not frequently* generate violent conflicts, whilst 7 respondents (5.3%) indicated they did *not at all* generate any violence in the country. Only six (6) persons responded that they *didn't know* whether these elections generated violent conflicts or not. Table 62 demonstrates these results.

**Table 62: Does the election of Constituency Party Executives generate Violent Conflicts**

Election of Political Party Constituency Executives generates conflicts in Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
very frequent	24	18.2
somewhat frequent	44	33.3
not frequent	51	38.6
not at all	7	5.3
don't know	6	4.5
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

On the issue of regional executive elections generating violent conflicts, Table 63 below shows that 26 respondents (19.7%) said these elections did generate violent conflicts *very frequently*, and 41 respondents (31.1%) said they *somewhat frequently*

generated conflicts. On the other hand, 50 respondents (37.9%) indicated that regional executive elections of political parties in Ghana did *not frequently* generate violent conflicts while 6 respondents (4.5%) said they did *not at all* generate any violent conflicts in the country. Nine (9) other persons (6.8%) said they couldn't tell if these elections did generate conflicts or not.

**Table 63: Do regional executive elections generate violent conflicts in Ghana?**

Electing Regional party Executives generates conflicts in Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	26	19.7
somewhat frequent	41	31.1
not frequent	50	37.9
not at all	6	4.5
don't know	9	6.8
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

When respondents were asked to tell how frequent national executive elections generated violent conflicts, 30 of them (22.7%) indicated that these elections generated violent conflicts *very frequently*, and 41 of them (31.1%) said they generated violent conflicts somewhat frequently. Contrarily, 45 respondents (34.1%) objected to the assertion and said they did *not frequently* generate violent conflicts whilst 9 persons (6.8%) said they did *not at all* generated any form of conflict in the country. Table 64 below demonstrates these results. While there are empirical data on the frequency of party executive elections causing violence in Ghana for us to use for comparison here in these analysis, many agree that Ghana experiences many electoral violence (Tsikata and Seini, 2004).

**Table 64: Do National Party Executive Elections Generate Violent Conflicts in Ghana?**

Electing National Party Executives generates conflicts in Ghana		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	30	22.7
somewhat frequent	41	31.1
not frequent	45	34.1
not at all	9	6.8
don't know	7	5.3
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015, Ghana*

While we now know so far that the election of party executives itself can sometimes be acrimonious in many areas of the country, it is also true that the campaign processes preceding these elections are equally sometimes marred by some occurrences of violent clashes either among supporters of contesting candidates or even among the candidates themselves. As a result, we proceeded to examine how the campaign processes of political party executive elections contributes to (or generates) violent conflicts at the three main levels of the country's political organisation, thus the constituency, regional and national levels. We equally considered how campaigns for national presidential and parliamentary elections generate violent conflicts in the country.

With the campaigns for constituency executive elections, 24 respondents (18.2%) indicated that these campaigns generated conflicts in a *very frequent* manner whilst 31 respondents (23.5%) said they generated conflicts *somewhat frequently*. Disagreeing with the assertion that the campaign activities for constituency executive elections generates violent conflicts in Ghana, 41 respondents (31.1%) indicated that these campaigns did *not frequently* generate conflicts in the country whilst 28 respondents (21.2%) said they did *not* generate any conflicts *at all*.

**Table 65: How Frequent Do Campaigns for Elections of Constituency Party Executives Generate Conflicts in Ghana?**

Campaigning for the Election of Constituency Party Executives generates conflicts in Ghana		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	24	18.2
somewhat frequent	31	23.5
not frequent	41	31.1
not at all	28	21.2
don't know	8	6.1
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

It must be mentioned that campaigns for constituency level executives are limited within the geographical and demographic limits of each constituency and these elections are done by an Electoral College assembling polling station executives of all the Electoral Areas within the constituency. Campaign activities for the election of constituency executive elections are, therefore, conducted within the constituency with concentrated targeting of the polling station executives.

On the matter of campaigns for regional level executive elections, as shown on Table 66 below, 20 respondents (15.2%) said these campaigns caused violent conflicts *very frequently* and 36 respondents (27.3%) said they did *somewhat frequently*. On the other hand, 40 respondents (30.3%) indicated that these campaigns did *not frequently* cause violent conflicts, and 28 others (21.2%) said these campaigns did *not at all* generate any violent conflicts. Only 8 respondents (6.1%) indicated that they *did not know* if these campaigns generated violent conflicts or not.

**Table 66: Do Campaigns for Regional Level Executive Elections Generate Violent Conflicts In Ghana?**

Campaigning for Election of Regional Party Executive generates conflicts in Ghana		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	20	15.2
somewhat frequent	36	27.3
not frequent	40	30.3
not at all	28	21.2
don't know	8	6.1
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015, Ghana*

Responding to the effect of campaigns for the election of national executives of political parties on violent conflicts in Ghana, 27 respondents (20.5%) indicate that these campaigns create violent conflicts very frequently while 34 respondents (25.8) said they created violent conflicts *somewhat frequently*. Contrary to this, 41 respondents (31.1%) and 24 respondents (18.2%) said these campaigns did *not frequently* and did *not at all* generate violent conflicts respectively. Only six (6) respondents (4.5%) said they couldn't tell if they did generate conflicts or not. These results are reproduced on Table 67 below.

**Table 67: Do campaigns for National Party Executive Elections Generate Conflicts in Ghana?**

Campaigning for Election of national party Executives generate conflicts in Ghana		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	27	20.5
somewhat frequent	34	25.8
not frequent	41	31.1
not at all	24	18.2
don't know	6	4.5
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015*

After looking at respondents' views on the effect of campaigning for executive elections at all levels of the political echelon, we further considered campaign activities for three other important levels of election, thus the campaigns for parliamentary

elections, campaigns for national presidential elections and campaigns for local level elections.

Just as for constituency party executive elections and campaigns, campaign and election activities for parliamentary level elections are sometimes characterised by violence and hooliganism among supporters and opposing candidates as well. While presidential elections and their related campaign activities are nationwide, parliamentary elections and their related activities are mostly limited to the confines of the constituency for which the parliamentarian is being elected to represent in parliament. Certain times constituents experience the intervention of some citizens of their constituencies living either outside the places they hail from within the country or in the diaspora who may come into the constituency by themselves to propagate their political interest and seek votes for their preferred candidates. Sometimes, such people living outside their constituency are consciously brought/bought into the constituency to help in the canvassing for votes in favour of their sponsors or political benefactors.

In the view of residents, as shown on Table 68 below, 36 of them (27.3%) said parliamentary level elections generate violent conflicts *very frequently*, while 43 respondents (32.6%) indicated that these elections generate violent conflicts *somewhat frequently*. On the contrary, 39 respondents (29.5%) said these elections did *not frequently* generate violent conflicts, and 9 respondents (6.5%) said they did not generate any conflicts *at all*. Five respondents (3.8) said they couldn't tell if these elections generated conflicts or not.



**Table 68: Do Parliamentary Elections Generate Violent Conflicts in Ghana?**

Parliamentary Elections generate conflict in Ghana		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	36	27.3
somewhat frequent	43	32.6
not frequent	39	29.5
not at all	9	6.8
don't know	5	3.8
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

For the effect of presidential election on violent conflicts in Ghana, 45 respondents (34.1%) said these elections did generate violent conflicts *very frequently*, and 44 respondents (33.3%) said it did *somewhat frequently*. On the other hand, 31 respondents (23.5%) objected to the assertion and said presidential elections did *not frequently* generate any violent conflicts in Ghana, whilst 7 respondents (5.3%) said these elections did *not* generate any violent conflicts *at all*. Only 5 respondents (3.8%) said they couldn't tell if they did or did not.

**Table 69: Do Presidential Elections Generate Violent Conflicts in Ghana?**

National Presidential Elections generate conflicts in Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	45	34.1
somewhat frequent	44	33.3
not frequent	31	23.5
not at all	7	5.3
don't know	5	3.8
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015, Ghana*

On the issue of local level elections, which constitutes the election of assembly men and women into the District Assembly, and also the election of unit committee members for the various electoral units, 24 respondents (18.2%) indicated that they *very frequently* generated violent conflicts while 37 of them (28%) said they did *somewhat frequently*. The majority of 46 respondents (34.8%), however, said these elections did

*not frequently* generate violent conflicts and 20 respondents (15.2%) said they did *not at all* generate any violent conflicts in Ghana. Five other persons (3.8%) said they couldn't tell if they did or did not.

**Table 70: Does the Election of Local Level Representatives Generate Violent Conflicts?**

Local level elections generate conflicts in Ghana		
Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)
very frequent	24	18.2
somewhat frequent	37	28.0
not frequent	46	34.8
not at all	20	15.2
don't know	5	3.8
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Field Research 2014/2015, Ghana*

## 5.7 Chapter Summary

In Chapter five above, we attempted to empirically examine the role of modern political institutions in the prevention, escalation and regulation of violent conflicts in Ghana, and more importantly how such roles affect the democratic dispensation of the country. This was done with reference to data collected from the field in Ghana.

The chapter considered political institutions in two different but interlinked perspectives. First, it considered traditional political institutions and their role in conflict prevention, escalation and regulation. Second, it also considered modern political institutions, namely the executive, legislature, judiciary and the electoral commission, in the same light.

On the role of traditional political institutions, the data suggest that citizens have a high positive perception of the role of these institutions on the peace of the country's democracy. First of all, respondents believe that traditional institutions play a very important role in maintaining order, creating unity and ensuring peace in the Ghanaian society (82.6%). Respondents further maintained that traditional political institutions play a very important role by sustainably resolving conflicts in the

Ghanaian society (81.9%). On the other hand, citizens equally perceive the traditional institutions to be a major source of conflicts and destabilization agents in the Ghanaian democratic system, with special reference to the chieftaincy institution as the main source of violent conflicts in most parts of Ghana (40.2%).

On modern political institutions, the role of parliament, the presidency, the judiciary and the electoral commission of Ghana were considered. On the whole, 72% of our respondents indicate that all political institutions mentioned in the questionnaire have a role in conflict prevention, 49.2% in conflict escalation, and 72% in conflict resolution.

Conflict prevention is best done by modern political institutions in Ghana through peace education and emergency assistance (38.9%), law enactment, enforcement and prosecution of law offenders (29.5%), deployment of security personnel to conflict areas (23.2%), and finally through institutional capacity building and resettling of conflict displaced persons (8.4%).

On their involvement in violence, our data indicated that some of the ways through which political institutions contribute to escalate violent conflicts in Ghana included (a) the use of conflict to gain access to political offices, (b) ruling parties taking sides in conflicts involving their supporters against other conflict parties that they don't identify politically with, (c) institutional manipulation and partiality, (d) lack of neutrality and impartiality on the part of politicians and the electoral commission, (e) politicization of institutions of governance in Ghana, (f) corruption, and (g) insincerity on the part of politicians and their unwillingness to fulfil political promises, among others.

On their contribution to peace, the judiciary scored most with 85.6% of respondents agreeing to them contributing to peace in Ghana. This was followed closely by the executive with 83.4%, then the legislature with 78.1% and lastly the electoral commission with 71.2%.

In view of the critical role played by every electoral body in the consolidation of democracy in every polity, we undertook a disaggregated study of the Electoral Commission's work in Ghana and how each activity under its aegis is perceived to either contribute to violence or peace in Ghana. By the data, the most peaceful activity undertaken by the electoral commission is campaign activities for the election of constituency executives (58.3%), followed by same campaign activities for the election of national executives (57.6%), campaign activities for regional executive elections (56.1%), national executive election processes is fourth, along with voter registration exercises, both with 53%.

In contrast, the most violent electoral activity in Ghana is national presidential elections with 67.4% of respondents believing that they contribute to violence escalations in the Ghanaian democratic process. This is followed by Parliamentary elections as the second most violent electoral activity with 59.9%. National executive elections come third in violence generation, whilst constituency executive elections come fourth (51.5%) and Regional executive elections come 5<sup>th</sup> in violence escalation.

Data presented demonstrate that modern political institutions play a significant role in many of the violent conflicts that occur in the country, especially those related to issues of political power and the democratic process. This goes to add up to the evidence accumulated in chapter five of this work where we dealt with data on the causes of conflicts in Ghana.

Moving forward, there is the need for answers to some questions. Overarching among these is why, despite the many conflicts and the consistent involvement of democratic institutions in creating conflicts in Ghana, the country still remains an example of democracy amongst its West African and African peers and touted as a beacon of democracy to be emulated? Ghana is a nationally peaceful democratic country despite the many segmented social groups and temporal political violence that characterises the Ghanaian democracy. The next chapter treats data with focus on various activities and associations within Ghana and among Ghanaians that either enhance crosscutting cleavages or not, and how these might enhance successful democratisation and

democratic consolidation despite the existence of various diversities/cleavages and conflicts in Ghana as a social and political entity.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### ***Plurality, Cross-Cutting Cleavages, Power-Sharing and Conflict in the Ghanaian Democratic System***

#### ***6.0 Introduction***

In a plural society, democracy and its consolidation are at risk if the different social groups do not interact and cooperate in other ways either than the ethnic and linguistic characteristics that differentiate them (Lijphart 1969, 1972; Horowitz, 2000). However, when individuals and groups interact across cleavages, and further perceive other persons as being of equal right to share power and economic resources in the country, then there is political equality and rule of law, and democracy can be established and made to flourish in such a plural society.

In this chapter, we look at the tendency of Ghanaians to belong and adhere to social and political groups either than their natural and quasi automatic belonging to the ethnic groups into which they were born. More importantly, the chapter looks at the willingness of citizens to cooperate politically across ethnic divides, and how these co-operations are perceived (by respondents) to affect peace and the consolidation of Ghana's democracy.

To examine these, the research considered respondents' belongingness or otherwise to a number of possible social and political groupings, associations and political parties in Ghana, especially at the basic level of society. These included belonging to:

1. an ethnic-based association in Ghana;
2. a professional-based association in Ghana (farmers group, market/commercial group or association);
3. property-owned-based association;
4. a political party; and
5. a gender-based association;

Further, we proceeded to verify respondents' perception of how such cross-associations (if any) could impact on democratic peace in Ghana. In addition, respondents' disposition to political power-sharing in Ghana was specifically inquired into. However, the concept of power sharing in this chapter of the thesis was discussed beyond the formal elite-level party-based system as often promoted in political circles (Lijphart, 1977; Binningsbø, 2013)<sup>467</sup>. Rather, power sharing was conceived in this context as individuals' willingness to cooperate and work together at two different levels: one, to work and collaborate with persons of different ethnic origin within the leadership of the same political party; and two, to work within the same public institution with persons of different ethnic and political origins. The following are results of data collected from respondents in the study areas based on the parameters above.

## ***6.1 Plurality and Crosscutting Cleavages***

To enable us establish the existence or otherwise of crosscutting alliances and linkages among the people beyond ethnic cleavage lines, a number of defined associations or groups were specified in the questionnaire, and the interviewed respondents were asked to indicate their belongingness or otherwise to the specified associations. The results are summarised and presented in the tables and cross tables below.

Citizens' belonging to ethnic associations was the first variable explored. This was meant to find out if respondents consciously belonged to ethnic-specific associations in their locality or in Ghana as a whole. In our discussion of ethnicity under the "concepts and theoretical framework" of this thesis, we distinguished between benign "ethnic awareness" and engaged "ethnic consciousness". Most Ghanaians have high ethnic awareness and know and identify with their ethnic origin, but it may not be all

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<sup>467</sup> Lijphart A (1977) *Democracy in Plural Societies*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press; Binningsbø M. H. (2013). Power sharing, Peace and Democracy: Any Obvious Relationships? *International Area Studies Review*, 16(1) 89–112

persons who will engage in acts that are aimed at enhancing the interests of their ethnic groups against one other ethnic group in the event of conflicting interests and scarce resources. It is, however, natural that one should be tended to work in favour of “their own” when constrained with choice. Before looking at other forms of cleavage associations, respondents were asked to tell if they belonged to an ethnic association or not. Below on Table 71 are the results of their responses.

**Table 71: Do you belong to an Ethnic-Based Association/Group?**

Belonging to an ethnic based association/ group		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	46	34.8
No	85	64.4
I won't disclose	1	.8
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015*

From Table 71 above, 46 individuals out of the 132 respondents interviewed, representing 34.8%, indicated that they belong to ethnic based associations and groups, whilst 85 respondents, representing 64.4% indicated that they did not belong to any ethnic based association or group. Only one person (0.8%) said s/he was not able to disclose her/his status of association or otherwise. From these results, even though a good number of the respondents (34.8%) belong to ethnic associations, most of them (64.4%) indicated they did not belong to any ethnic-based association.

From the above, one could conclude that respondents, and therefore the majority of Ghanaians (64.4%), are not interested in expressing ethnic consciousness and, thereby, do not consciously organise themselves on ethnic lines in terms of associations and groupings. The facts on the ground are, however, different. In Ghana, ethnic socialisation begins at the basic unit of the family where parents educate their children on their cultural and ethnic identities through language, socio-cultural norms and traditions and other forms of trade and professional skills which



at times are unique to each culture and ethnic group<sup>468</sup>. Ethnic identification and self-organisation along same lines are a daily phenomenon in Ghanaian society, even in formal educational institutions meant for the training of the youth. This is evident across various levels of the Ghanaian educational system, starting especially from the secondary school level where the majority of students leave their homes and villages to attend school in different towns and regions. There is the conscious effort of introducing young ones of this level to regional and ethnic associations with formal Ghana Education Service laws governing their operations and compelling them sometimes to have a patron who, in most cases, is a staff of that institution, to guide their operations to avoid excesses and bad education.

This has led to the existence of regional and religious based associations in almost every single Senior High School in Ghana. Examples of such associations include the “Northern Students Union”, “Volta Students Union”, “Upper East Students Union” “Akan Students Union”, “Ga Students Union”, “Ghana Muslim Students Association”, and the “Catholic Students Union”, among others. The situation is even more pronounced at the tertiary level of education such as the Universities, Polytechnics, and Colleges of Education where the once region-based associations that existed at the secondary school level now get decimated to become ethnic-specific with names of associations such as the “Gonja Students Union”, “Dagbon Students Association”, “National Union of Bissa Students”, and the “Dagaaba Students Union” among others. And it must be said that these unions and associations still exist in every single secular higher educational institution in Ghana.

The effect of this is a formalisation of the ethno-political socialisation of the Ghanaian citizenry. To the extent that citizens get interested in and adhere to other non-ethnic-based associations and groups in the country, ethnic consciousness that is likely to

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<sup>468</sup> Nukunya, G. K. (2003). *Tradition and Change in Ghana: An Introduction to Sociology*. Ghana Universities Press, 2003. Second Edition.

influence ethnic conflicts would be lessened<sup>469</sup>. When cross-associations abound, interests will get common at different levels among different ethnic group members, thereby reducing the inimical effects of extreme ethnicisation and extreme ethnic consciousness which may result in violent conflicts (Lijphart, 1977).

To examine the level of cross-associations among our respondents, we crossed the results of respondents' responses on their belonging to an ethnic association/group with their belonging to other associations and groups namely, *professional-based associations, property-owned associations, political party, and gender-based associations*. The results are shown on Tables 71, 72, and 73 below.

From Table 72 below, among those who answered that they belong to ethnic-based associations (46 persons), 22 of same group indicated that they also belong to a professional-based association whilst 24 of same group said they did not belong to any professional association. However, 14 of the 36 respondents who said they belong to professional associations indicated that they did not belong to any ethnic based organisation. In all, while 46 persons out of the 132 respondents indicated they belong to ethnic associations, 37 of the 132 respondents belong to professional associations with an intersection of 14 respondents being those who belong to both professional and ethnic based associations. Here, the figures indicate a more conscious level of organisation at the ethnic level than at the professional level.

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<sup>469</sup> McKay, J. & Lewins, F. (1978). Ethnicity and Ethnic Group: A Conceptual Analysis and Reformulation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. Volume 1, Number 4, October 1978.

**Table 72: Crosstable of belonging to an ethnic based association and to a professional based association**

Belonging to an ethnic based association/ group * Belonging to a professional based association (farmers group, market, etc. Crosstabulation								
Count		Belonging to a professional based association (farmers group, market, etc.						Total
		Yes		No		don't know		
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Belonging to an ethnic based association/ group	Yes	22	16.7	24	18.2	0	0	46
	No	14	10.6	69	52.3	2	1.6	85
	I won't disclose	1	0.8	0	0	0	0	1
Total		37		93		2		132

*Source: Author's Field Work, 2014.*

To enable us have more insight into what the above levels of associations may signify, we further examined how the answers of respondents on the same question of belonging to an ethnic association look like when cross-examined with the results of the question on belonging to a property-owned association<sup>470</sup> as presented on the cross table (Table 73) below.

<sup>470</sup> Some examples of property owned-associations in Ghana include Landlords Associations, Cattle Owners Associations, Transport Owners Associations, Land Owners Associations etc.

**Table 73: Crosstable for Belonging to an ethnic association and to a Property-owned association**

Belonging to an ethnic based association/ group * Belonging to a property owned based association* Crosstabulation						
Count						
		Belonging to a property owned based association				Total
		Yes	No	I won't disclose	don't know	
Belonging to an ethnic based association/ group	Yes	14	30	1	1	46
	No	9	74	1	1	85
	I won't disclose	1	0	0	0	1
Total		24	104	2	2	132

*Source: Author's field work 2014/ 2015*

From the cross table above (Table 73) one can note that while 46 respondents (34.9%) said they belonged to ethnic associations in the country, a total of 24 respondents (18.2%) belonged to a property owning association. Only fourteen (14) respondents belonged to both property owning associations and an ethnic association at the same time and 30 respondents out of the 46 that belong to an ethnic association did not belong to any property owning association. Nine (9) persons belonging to a property owning association did not belong to an ethnic association and one (1) person who refused to disclose whether s/he belonged to an ethnic association disclosed s/he belonged to a property owning association.

While noting from Table 73 that many more individuals belonged to ethnic based associations (34.9%) than to property owning associations (18.2%), we proceeded to examine how the respondents scored on their adherence to political parties in Ghana. On Table 74 below, we cross-tabulated results of respondents' belonging to ethnic associations with their belonging to a political party.

**Table 74: Crosstable for belonging to an ethnic association and belonging to a political party**

Belonging to an ethnic based association/ group * Belonging to a political party Crosstabulation						
Count						
		Belonging to a political party				Total
		Yes	No	I won't disclose	don't know	
Belonging to an ethnic based association/ group	Yes	20	24	2	0	46
	No	16	67	0	2	85
	I won't disclose	0	1	0	0	1
Total		36	92	2	2	132

*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015*

It was equally notable here that more persons belonged to ethnic associations (46) than belonging to political parties (36). In addition, 16 respondents who said they did not belong to any ethnic association indicated here that they belonged to a political party in the country. On the contrary, 24 of those who said they belonged to an ethnic association, said they did not belong to any political party. This shows that over 52.1% of those who belonged to an ethnic association did not belong to any political party in Ghana, showing a higher adherence rate to ethnic associations than to political parties. This may indicate a higher level of ethnic consciousness than political consciousness. Consequently, higher ethnic awareness over political awareness could push individuals to act in any way toward the satisfaction of the interests of their ethnic groups than to ensure good political governance.

By the results on Table 74, only 20 respondents fall within the intersection of the 46 persons that belong to ethnic associations and the 36 persons that belong to political parties. This may mean that, it is only these 20 respondents (15.2%) out of the total 132 respondents interviewed that may act in favour of the interests of both their ethnic groups and those of their political party at the same time, while 24 respondents (18.3%) may act in favour of their ethnic groups only and 16 persons (12.1%) have the tendency of acting in the interest of their political parties only.

While adherence to professional associations, religion, property owning groups and political parties remain some of the most viable options for crosscutting cleavage formation in any democracy and for that matter Ghana, adherence to gender groups and associations have also of late become a known phenomenon in the Ghanaian society.

Globalisation, democratisation and equitable development advocacy have led to a conscious effort in development policy architecture meant to ensure gender inclusion and gender equity in the day-to-day governance process of polities all over the world. The rise of “women in development (WID)” after the Second World War and “women and development (GAD)” in the late sixties have transcended into governance and governance policy development. In addition, the third wave of democratisation in the 1990s was consciously accompanied by gender activism and advocacy aimed at making gender equity and gender equality an embedded feature of existing and rising democracies. As a result, such gender sensitive features were consciously looked out for in international development and democratic co-operations and agreements.

Women are considered vulnerable, less empowered and less resourced both financially and politically, and therefore need to be consciously “added” to the socio-political and economic planning discourse of societies. Just as in the words of Schalkwyk (2000) “Gender (like race or ethnicity) functions as an organizing principle for society because of the cultural meanings given to being male or female. This is evident in the division of labour according to gender. In most societies there are clear patterns of “women’s work” and “men’s work,” both in the household and in the wider community – and cultural explanations of why this should be so”<sup>471</sup>.

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<sup>471</sup> Schalkwyk, Johanna (2000). *Culture, Gender Equality and Development Cooperation*. Canadian International Development Agency (Cida), June 2000. 200 Promenade du Portage, Hull, Quebec K1A 0G4, Canada.

Generally, some believe that “...while the specific nature of gender relations varies among societies, the general pattern is that women have less personal autonomy, fewer resources at their disposal, and limited influence over the decision-making processes that shape their societies and their own lives. This pattern of disparity based on gender is both a human right and a development issue<sup>472</sup>”.

Ghana being part of the global village, gender issues have become part and parcel of the social and political fabric of the Ghanaian democratic architecture for many years now. The result is the formation and/or proliferation of women’s associations and gender-specific NGOs working in politics, economic empowerment, gender rights activism and advocacy, and social protection. There are many of such groups and associations in Ghana such as the Catholic Women’s Association, Assemblies of God Women’s Conference, Presbyterian Women’s Fellowships, Christian Women’s Association of Ghana, Muslim Women’s Association of Ghana, Federation of International Women Lawyers (FIDA-Ghana), Bawku East Women’s Development Association (BEWDA) among others. The main objective of most of these women associations is the promotion of the interests of women and girls in society through advocacy, socialisation, sensitisation and political engagement. At the community level, there is the widespread phenomenon of *women groups’ boxes*<sup>473</sup> in Ghana that have become a source of lending and economic empowerment to women groups. Non-Governmental Organisations as well as political parties and individuals use these women’s *box* system to mobilise support and collateral for loans at the banks for such rural folk to support their businesses and solve their other pertinent problems.

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<sup>472</sup> Idem

<sup>473</sup> This is a system of saving where about twenty-five women organise themselves into a group with a metal box locked with padlocks and a small hole created on top of the box through which only Ghana Cedi notes are stashed weekly per head into this box. The notes cannot come out through the hole until the box is open. The five or three keys to the padlocks are kept by rotation among selected members at a time and the box is open in group at certain intervals at which the accumulated money is either loaned with interest agreed by the group to a member or used to open a joint business that will bring them interest, whilst at the same time the group continues the savings again till the next “opening”.

At the national level, gender interests coupled with global and regional frameworks established by the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) motivated the creation of the first Ministry of Gender, Children and Women’s Protection under the then John Agyekum Kuffuour-led NPP government in 2001, and this ministry has since stayed as one of the key government ministries in Ghana. Gender, politics and governance in Ghana is, therefore, an essential component of Ghana’s democratic process, with significant impact on the measure and perception of “goodness” or “badness” of a particular government at a time, especially in inclusiveness and gender-sensitivity.

When our field respondents were asked whether they belonged to a gender-based organisation or group as shown in the results on Table 75 below, 13 (9.9%) out of the 132 respondents interviewed 13 respondents (9.85%) said they belonged to a gender-based association. Among the 13 respondents, 12 of them (92.3%) also belonged to an ethnic-based organisation or group. This means that all, except one person among those who belonged to gender-based associations also belonged to an ethnic-based association.

**Table 75: Crosstable of belonging to an ethnic-based association and belonging to a gender-based association**

Belonging to an ethnic based association/ group * Belonging to a gender based association Cross tabulation						
Count						
		Belonging to a gender based association				Total
		yes	no	I won't disclose	don't know	
Belonging to an ethnic based association/ group	Yes	12	33	0	1	46
	No	1	79	1	4	85
	I won't disclose	0	1	0	0	1
Total		13	113	1	5	132

*Source: Author's fieldwork, 2014/2015*



However, among the 46 persons who belonged to ethnic-based associations, 33 of them (71.7%) did not belong to any gender-based association. This means that adherence to ethnic-based associations among respondents far supersedes their adherence to gender based association, and that adherents to gender-based associations are also likely to be members of an ethnic-based association. This re-echoes the priority respondents accord ethnicity as a symbol of social and personal identification than they do to gender. We proceeded to determine the gender dynamics of the respondents who indicated being associated with gender groups in their society.

This is because most at times when we talk of gender, the impression is created that women get more involved in gender issues than men, and that gender advocacy is meant to improve the situation of women in society<sup>474</sup>. As a result women may be perceived to belong more to gender-groups and associations than men<sup>475</sup>.

In our interviews, 73.5% of our total respondents were male whilst 26.5% were female. If all things are held equal, and if the above assumptions of female adherence to gender-based organisations were true in the case of the respondents, it is expected that we either have more females belonging to gender-based organisations or we have nearly 73.5% of those who belong to gender-based associations being men, and 26.5% of them being female as per their representation in the total sample.

However, the results of the cross table derived from the sex versus gender group belonging (on Table 76 below) shows that among the 13 respondents that indicated belonging to gender-based organisations, 11 of them (84.6%) are male whilst only 2

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<sup>474</sup> United Nations General Assembly Resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; United Nations (1995). Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; European Union (2010). A Strengthened Commitment to Equality between Women and Men: A Women's Charter, Brussels, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

<sup>475</sup> Popielarz, A. Pamela (1999). (In) Voluntary Association: A Multilevel Analysis of Gender Segregation in Voluntary Organizations. *Gender and Society*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Apr., 1999), pp. 234-250.

respondents (15.4%) in that category are female. Indicating a departure from the perception that females are more tended to associate with gender-based associations and organisations than men. Conversely, however, the percentage of total female respondents that indicated that they did not belong to any gender-based association (88.6%) also surpasses the percentage of total male respondents that indicated same (84.5%). So on both sides, the male respondents, according to these results, are more prone to belong to gender-based associations than their female counterparts. This could be said to be a departure from the expected general perception in society.

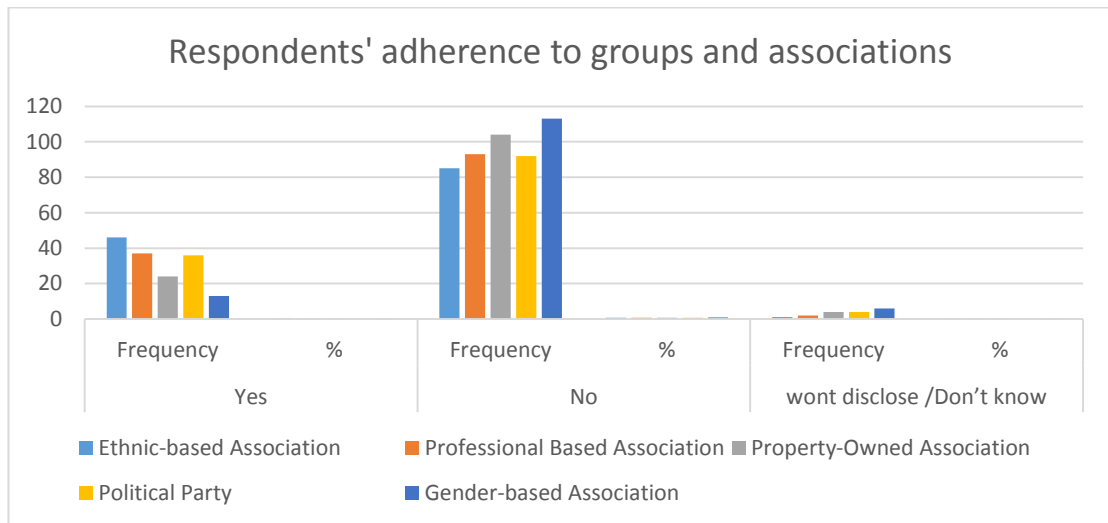
**Table 76: Sex of Respondents versus belonging to a gender-based group or association**

Sex of respondent * Belonging to a gender based association Crosstabulation						
Count						
		Belonging to a gender based association				Total
		Yes	no	I won't disclose	don't know	
Sex of respondent	male	11	82	1	3	97
	female	2	31	0	2	35
Total		13	113	1	5	132

*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015*

Summarising from the various group adherence patterns of respondents, it is clear from the grouped results on Figure 13 and Table 77 below that ethnicity scores the most in respondents' allegiance with 46 respondents, indicating 34.8%. This is followed by adherence to professional-based associations with 37 respondents, indicating 28%; whilst political party affiliates were 36, indicating 27.30%. Property owners' associations scored 24 (18.2%) whilst adherence to gender based associations got the least with only 13 respondents who said they belonged to such associations.

**Figure 13: Respondents' Adherence to Various Groups and Associations**



**Table 77: Merged results for Respondents' adherence to various groups and Associations**

Do you Belong to any of these associations or groups						
Category	Yes		No		wont disclose / Don't know	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Ethnic-based Association	46	34.80%	85	64.40%	1	0.80%
Professional Based Association	37	28%	93	70.50%	2	1.50%
Property-Owned Association	24	18.20%	104	78.80%	4	3%
Political Party	36	27.30%	92	69.70%	4	3%
Gender-based Association	13	9.80%	113	85.60%	6	4.60%

*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015*

Even though our results above show that more respondents adhere to ethnic-based associations and groups in Ghana, it is also clear that Ghanaians equally adhere to professional, political, and property-owning groups among others. As a result, the expectation is that these crosscutting associations would have a positive influence on the perception of “the other” in the eyes of persons from different ethnic groups, and equally influence their readiness to cooperate politically and administratively in the governance of the country. This will be a key indicator to peace and liability to peaceable behaviours that would enhance a peaceful political culture which would promote unity, national interest and democratic consolidation.

We, therefore, proceeded to examine the likely effect of these cross-associations on peace or violence within communities and among individuals. In this, we asked our respondents on their views as to whether, a) belonging to associations with people from different ethnic groups has an effect on peace or violent conflicts in Ghana; b) the multi-ethnic character of the Ghanaian society is a source of peace and unity or violent conflicts; and c) there should be political power sharing in Ghana, and on what basis should such political power sharing be done, whether on ethnic basis or on regional basis.

On the question of whether belonging to an association with membership from diverse ethnic groups enhances peace and conflict resolution in Ghana or not, 60.6% of our respondents (80) *very much agreed* with the assertion. Another 26.5% (35 respondents) said they *somewhat agreed* to that assertion. Only 7 respondents (5.3%) said they *disagreed* with the assertion and 3 respondents (2.3%) said they *somewhat disagreed* with this assertion. By aggregation, when we add up the respondents that *very much agreed* with the assertion to those that *somewhat agreed*, we find that the majority of respondents, 115, (87.7%) have a positive view of associations with different ethnic group membership enhancing peace, unity and conflict resolution among Ghanaians. On the contrary, only 10 respondents combined (7.6%) have a negative view of this form of association being of negative value to peace, unity and conflict resolution in Ghana. Seven (7) other persons (5.3%) said they couldn't tell if belonging to associations with multi-ethnic memberships enhanced peace and brought about conflict resolution. Table 78 below shows these responses.

**Table 78: Do you agree that being a member of a group with multi-ethnic membership enhances peace and unity?**

Association with different ethnic group enhances peace and conflict resolution		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
very much agree	80	60.6
somewhat agree	35	26.5
Disagree	7	5.3
somewhat disagree	3	2.3
don't know	7	5.3
Total	132	100.0
<i>Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015</i>		

To verify our respondents' results (as on Table 78 above), we posed, in a reverse form, the question of multi-ethnic membership associations' ability to enhance unity, peace and conflict resolution. Thus, respondents were asked to indicate their views on the assertion that belonging to such an association could bring about disunity, conflicts and violence among groups and individuals in Ghana.

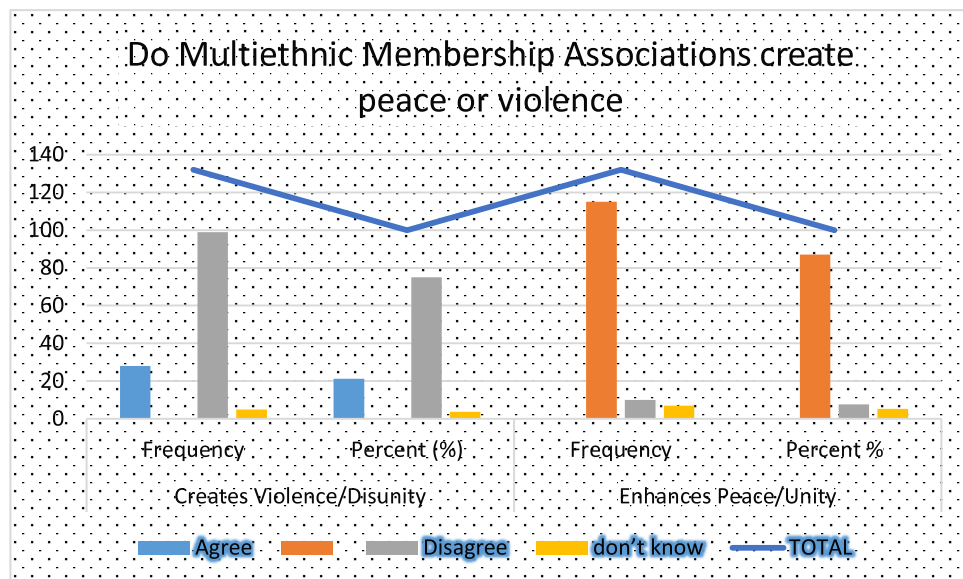
The results, as displayed (as on Table 79 below), were more or less a confirmation of the previous question because only 6 respondents (4.5%) said they *very much agreed* that adhering to associations whose members come from different ethnic groups lead to violent conflicts and disunity in Ghana, whilst 22 respondents (16.7%) said they *somewhat agreed* with the assertion. On the contrary, 89 respondents (67.4%) *disagreed* with the assertion that belonging to these associations could lead to violence, disunity and conflicts in Ghana, whilst 10 respondents (7.6%) *somewhat disagreed* with the assertion. Aggregating these results into positive and negative perceptions, we find an aggregate of 28 respondents (21.2%) who agree that belonging to multi-ethnic-member associations can bring about disunity, conflicts and violence in Ghana, whilst 99 respondents (73%) believe that belonging to associations with multiethnic membership rather creates unity, peace, and enhances conflict resolution in the community.

**Table 79: Belonging to a Multi-ethnic membership associations leads to conflict, violence.**

Belonging to association with members from different ethnic groups leads to conflict, violence		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
very much agree	6	4.5
somewhat agree	22	16.7
Disagree	89	67.4
somewhat disagree	10	7.6
don't know	5	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015, Ghana*

Compared to the results on Table 78, it is clear that although there is a marginal reduction in the positive value assigned by respondents on belonging to multiethnic associations and their effect on peaceful democratisation (reduced from 87.7% on Table 78 to 73% on Table 79), there is still overwhelming support for the positive effect of belonging to multiethnic membership associations on peaceful democratisation. This is combined in the graph below on Figure 14.



**Figure 14: Comparative graph of the effect of multiethnic membership Associations on Peace or Violence in Ghanaian Democracy**

The next issue explored among the respondents was to examine how the general multiethnic character of the Ghanaian society as a whole either enhances peaceful democratisation in Ghana or serves as a source of disunity and violence, thereby, retarding democratic consolidation in the country. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to the assertion that the multiethnic character of Ghanaian society contributes to peace and unity. This was measured on the Likert Scale from “very much agree” to “very much disagree”, with “I don’t know” as an option at the end.

**Table 80: Multiethnic Character of Ghana a source of Peace or Violence**

Is the Multi-ethnic character of Ghanaian society a source of Peace & unity or Violence & Conflicts				
	Peace and Unity		Disunity/Violence & Conflicts	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
very much agree	71	53.8	19	14.4
somewhat agree	36	27.3	23	17.4
disagree	16	12.1	71	53.8
somewhat disagree	7	5.3	16	12.1
don't know	2	1.5	3	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Author's Field Research, Ghana, 2014/2015*

Table 80 above presents a comparative table of the possible peaceful and violent effects of Ghana's multiethnic character on its democracy. The peaceful effects are to the left of the table whilst the violent effects are to the right of the table. From this table, we find that whilst 71 respondents (53.8%) *very much agreed* to the assertion that the multiethnic character of the Ghanaian society is a source of peace and unity, only 19 respondents (14.4%) *very much agreed* to the contrary, that is Ghana's multiethnic character being a source of disunity, violence and conflicts. Another 36 respondents (27.3%) *somewhat agreed* that the multiethnic character of the country is a source of peace and unity, whilst on the negative effect of same, 23 respondents (17.4%) *somewhat agreed* that it causes disunity, conflicts and violence. On the other hand, whilst only 16 respondents *disagreed* that Ghana's multiethnic society enhance peace and unity, 71 respondents (53.8%) *disagreed* to the contrary. Seven (7) persons (5.3%) *somewhat disagreed* with Ghana's multiethnic character being of positive value to Ghana's democracy in terms of unity and peace, whilst 16 respondents (12.1%) *somewhat disagreed* that Ghana's multiethnic character leads to disunity, conflicts and violence. Only 2 respondents (1.5%) and 3 respondents (2.3%) each indicated they did not know if it caused unity and peace or violence and conflicts respectively.

Table 80 presents some interesting results on respondents' perception and experiences on Ghana's multiethnic character. If we aggregate the results into positive



and negative perceptions by adding those who *agree* to those who *somewhat agree* (as positive); and further those who *disagree* to those who *somewhat disagree* (as negative), we find that 107 respondents (81.1%) indicate that Ghana's multiethnic character has a positive impact on its democracy whilst only 23 respondents (17.4%) indicate the contrary. On the multiethnic feature of the country's society being a source of disunity, conflicts and violence, however, 86% of respondents don't think this assertion is true, therefore emphatically indicating that this feature of the Ghanaian society plays a positive role in peaceful democratisation. About 31.8% (42 respondents) believe that the multiethnic character of the Ghanaian society leads to conflicts and violence.

From the above, we establish without doubt, that respondents very strongly believe that Ghana's multiethnic character has a positive effect on its democracy by helping to enhance unity and peace among citizens through the complex socialisation processes that take place at the various levels of crosscutting associations in the country. The expected effect of this on political democratisation is how much these multilevel associations and the socio-political mixes influence the willingness of the citizenry, especially their elites and those they represent, to share political power and collaborate in sharing political resources among all the facets of Ghana's multi-social divide.

The next section examines respondents' willingness to share power with persons of different divide and to tolerate one another and work together in one office space whether politically or otherwise. First, we tried to establish if respondents agreed with the concept and idea of power sharing in the first place. Second, we attempted to examine on what basis power sharing could be done if any (on ethnic lines or regional lines?) and the possible effect this might have on democratic consolidation in Ghana either by enhancing peace and unity among the people or by fostering disunity, conflicts and violence.

When our respondents were asked whether they believed in political power sharing<sup>476</sup> or not, 66 respondents (50%) said they *very much agreed* to political power sharing and 36 respondents (27.3%) said they *somewhat agreed* to political power sharing. On the other hand, 19 persons (14.4%) said they *don't agree*, whilst 9 respondents (6.8%) said they *don't agree at all* to political power sharing. Only 2 respondents (1.5) said they *don't know* if they agree to political power sharing or not.

**Table 81: Do you agree to political power sharing in Ghana?**

Political Power Sharing in Ghana		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
very much agree	66	50.0
somewhat agree	36	27.3
don't agree	19	14.4
not at all	9	6.8
don't know	2	1.5
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

From Table 81 above, we have an aggregated 102 respondents (77.3%) who generally *agree* to political power sharing, whilst an aggregate of 28 respondents (21.2%) have a negative disposition towards the idea of political power sharing in Ghana. This shows an overwhelming majority of support for political power sharing among respondents interviewed. In Ghana, the constitution allows for the winning political party to (solely) form the ruling government. This makes it a “winner-takes-all” political system where the losing parties are automatically denied the opportunity to be part of the core executive power structure of government. Appointments to ministerial and all executive political positions, as well as appointments to key offices in the public

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<sup>476</sup> In explaining the concept of political power sharing to respondents, most of whose interviews were done in the local languages especially for the community respondents, it was explained on two main grounds depending on what level of power-sharing was concerned. At the ethnic level, it was explained as persons from different ethnic groups being selected and put together to work within the same setup (party leadership). At the regional level, it was explained as persons emanating from different regions of the country selected and put together to run either a given political party or a government.

and civil service positions are done by the president from the membership and known sympathisers of the winning political party.

With this “winner-take-all” history of political culture in Ghana, the tendency is to have a population whose dispensation towards power-sharing and leadership collaboration is likely to be negative and uncompromising. This could further be aggravated by the plural character of the Ghanaian society as a multiethnic one. Further still, in regions, communities and traditional areas where there exist interethnic conflicts, the dispensation of citizens for cross-ethnic collaboration and “community” is reduced and sometimes rare. This is further aggravated by the automatic historical tendency in Ghana of having different *parties* to a particular conflict at the communal level belonging to different rival political parties at the national level as exemplified by the Bawku and Dagbon conflicts where each major opposing side to the conflict belongs to one of the two major opposing political parties in Ghana (NDC and NPP).

In the light of the above, and with reference to respondents’ disposition to accepting power sharing and political collaboration in Ghana (per the results on Table 81 above), the need to examine and understand respondents’ position on how political power sharing affects the peace and unity or conflict situation of the country and its democratic system cannot be overemphasized.

Proceeding in this direction, respondents were asked of their level of agreement to the assertion that political power sharing or being positively disposed to accepting same will help increase peace and resolve conflicts in Ghana. For this, 66 respondents (50%) *very much agreed* to the assertion and 37 respondents, (28%) also said they *somewhat agreed* to the assertion. This represents an aggregate of 103 respondents (78%) who *agree* to this assertion. On the contrary, 15 respondents (11.4%) and 8 respondents (6.1%) indicated they *don’t agree* and *do not agree at all* respectively to the assertion that political power sharing can help resolve conflicts and create unity among the people in the Ghanaian democratic system. The aggregate of those with a negative perception to the conflict resolution and uniting effect of political power

sharing therefore stands at 23 (17.5%). Which, compared to the 103 respondents who took a positive stance to the conflict resolution effect of political power sharing, the former becomes negligible. Some other 6 persons (4.5%) said they did not know or could not tell if it has any effect or not whatsoever on the peace and unity of the Ghanaian society.

**Table 82: Will political power sharing help to resolve conflicts in Ghana?**

Political power sharing will help resolve conflict		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
very much agree	66	50.0
somewhat agree	37	28.0
don't agree	15	11.4
not at all	8	6.1
don't know	6	4.5
Total	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015, Ghana*

We further tried to cross tabulate for the results of those who believed in political power sharing (102 respondents (77.3%)), and those who believe political power sharing could be a source of peace, unity and conflict resolution. This was to enable us determine and confirm the answers to each of these questions. The expectation is that, if one believes in power sharing as a democratic value in a multiethnic society like Ghana, it should be because power sharing has a positive value of democracy to offer the system, and in this case, helping to resolve or moderate the expected conflicts that might result from the clash of interests among the diverse social groups and sections of society. As such, if the cross table reveals that majority of those who believe in power sharing are at the same time the ones who believe power sharing can assist in resolving conflicts in Ghana, then the answers in the former can be validated by those in the latter. However, if it turns out to be the vice versa, then we cannot trust or validate respondents' answers which indicated an overwhelming support for the question on political power sharing.

From the crosstable below (Table 83), out of the 66 persons who *very much agreed* in favour of political power sharing, 58 of same persons also *very much agreed* that political

power sharing will help resolve conflicts in the Ghanaian democracy. In addition, of the 36 respondents who equally *somewhat agreed* to political power sharing, 5 of them *very much agreed* that power sharing resolves conflicts; and 27 of them *somewhat agreed* that political power sharing can contribute to conflict resolution in Ghana. However, there is an aggregate of 3 respondents who *somewhat agreed* to political power sharing but *do not* believe that political power sharing in Ghana will help resolve conflicts in the country. One (1) person among the same category could not tell whether power sharing has a conflict resolution effect or not.

**Table 83: Crosstable of Political Power sharing versus Power sharing resolves conflicts**

Political Power Sharing in Ghana * Political power sharing will help resolve conflict							
Crosstabulation							
Count							
		Political power sharing will help resolve conflict					Total
		very much agree	somewhat agree	don't agree	not at all	don't know	
Political Power Sharing in Ghana	very much agree	58	8	0	0	0	66
	somewhat agree	5	27	2	1	1	36
	don't agree	2	1	11	3	2	19
	not at all	0	1	2	4	2	9
	don't know	1	0	0	0	1	2
Total		66	37	15	8	6	132

*Source: Author's field research, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

The statistics on the above crosstable validate the results on respondents' belief in both political power sharing and the conflict resolution effect of political power sharing (Lijphart, 1977). However, an interesting question remains on the minds of readers. What type of power sharing is really necessary in Ghana to enhance this peaceful effect of political power sharing? Two thesis were proposed in the field questionnaire for the respondents. Power sharing based on ethnicity; and power sharing based on regional boundaries.

Respondents were asked if power sharing, using each of these two criteria either enhances peace or creates violence and conflicts. Each of these two views was

expressed in the form of “need”, as to whether there *is need* for or *no need* for power sharing based on ethnicity and on region, and respondents either *very much agreed*, *somewhat agreed*, *did not agree*, or *did not at all agree* to each of the proposals. Table 84 below shows the results for the two questions combined into one table for the community respondents. From these results, we notice that 44 respondents (33.3%) indicated that they *very much agree* with power sharing based on ethnicity, and 39 respondents (29.5%) also said they *very much agree* there is no need for power sharing based on ethnicity. Another 22 persons (16.7%) said they *somewhat agree* that there *is need* for power sharing based on ethnicity, against 30 persons (22.7%) that indicated they *somewhat agreed* to the assertion that there is no need for power sharing based on ethnicity. By aggregation, if we combine the two levels of agreement in both categories of power sharing options, we get 66 respondents (50%) agreeing to power sharing based on ethnicity, as against an aggregate of 69 respondents (52.3%) who agree that there is no need for power sharing based on ethnicity, giving a split perception from respondents on ethnic-based power sharing.

**Table 84: Is there need or no need for political power sharing based on ethnicity?**

	<b><i>Need for</i></b> Power Sharing based on ethnicity		<b><i>No Need for</i></b> power sharing based on ethnicity	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
very much agree	44	33.3	39	29.5
somewhat agree	22	16.7	30	22.7
don't agree	49	37.1	55	41.7
not at all	15	11.4	6	4.5
don't know	2	1.5	2	1.5
Total	132	100.0	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

On the contrary, 49 respondents (37.1%) said they *don't agree* with the assertion that there *is need* for power sharing based on ethnicity, whilst 55 respondents (41.7%) rejected the idea (*don't agree*) that there is *no need* for power sharing based on ethnicity. Another 15 respondents (11.4%) said they *don't agree at all* that there is any need for

ethnic based power sharing whilst 6 respondents (4.5%) *don't agree at all* to the assertion that there is no need for power sharing based on ethnicity. On aggregate, therefore, 54 respondents (48.1%) are against power sharing based on ethnicity whilst 61 persons (46.2%) object to the assertion that there is no need for power sharing based on ethnicity. Generally, it can be said that respondents are divided in their support for power sharing based on ethnicity.

Among the party delegates, we also inquired from respondents if they supported ethnic balance at the regional and constituency levels of their parties' executive structures (leaderships). The results, as on Tables 84 and 85 below, show that about 75.4 % of NDC respondents (181) and about 63.3% of NPP respondents (105) respectively said they supported ethnic balance in the selection of regional party executives. About 24.6% of NDC respondents (59) and 36.4% of NPP respondents (60) said they did not believe in ethnic balance in the selection of party executives at the regional level.

**Table 85: Delegates' views on ethnic balance in their regional party executives' selection**

Do you believe in ethnic balance in the leadership of the party at the regional level?						
Responses	NDC		NPP		TOTAL	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
Yes	181	75.4	105	63.6	286	70.6
No	59	24.6	60	36.4	119	29.4
Total	240	100	165	100	405	100

*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana*

**Table 86: Delegates views on Political Power Sharing at the Constituency level**

Do you believe in ethnic balance in the leadership of the party at the Constituency level?						
Responses	NDC		NPP		TOTAL	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Yes</b>	178	74.2	105	63.6	283	69.9
<b>No</b>	62	25.8	60	36.4	122	30.1
<b>Total</b>	240	100	165	100	405	100

*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana*

In a similar vein, Table 86 above shows that 74.2% of NDC respondents (178) and 63.6% of NPP respondents (105) respectively favoured ethnic balance at the constituency level, whilst 25.8% (62) and 36.4% (60) of NDC and NPP respondents respectively did not favour ethnic balance at the constituency level. While there is some little difference in level of acceptance for ethnic balance in the executives of the two political parties, thus, more acceptance of ethnic balance in the NDC than in the NPP, the general picture is the same when considering the aggregated figures from both parties at the two different levels. There is an aggregate acceptance for ethnic balance of about 71% at the regional level and about 70% at the constituency level.

Until recently, the NPP has been considered an Akan party due to the historical antecedents of its origins traced back to the Dankwah-Busia Tradition before independence. The Dankwah-Busia Tradition Political leadership had sought to create an Akan confederacy that would be recognised in a federal arrangement during independence, an idea that was rejected by Nkrumah and the CPP in general<sup>477</sup>. The NDC on the other hand is perceived as a party of the grassroots people across the country, even if it is also perceived as pro-Volta because of the ethnic origins of its founder, Flt. Lt. Rtd. Jerry John Rawlings, who is from the Volta Region and people

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<sup>477</sup> Tordoff, W. (1962). The Ashanti Confederacy. *The Journal of African History* Vol. 3, No. 3 (1962), pp. 399-417



from the Volta Region are perceived to be more inclined to almost always vote for the NDC. While the NDC has produced leaders of diverse ethnic origin in its history, the NPP has, since the inception of the Fourth Republic been led by Akans. Apart from these dynamics in party leadership, the NDC is also the only party among the two major parties to produce a President (John Dramani Mahama) who is not of Akan origin since 1992. The NPP has of late struggled to erase the perception of it being an Akan party, so as to increase its acceptability across the country. It was one of the major campaign messages of the NPP in the recent 2016 election campaigns, and the results it got across the nation (54.4% in a first round victory) is an indication that it was able to increase its acceptability.

Furthermore, the research also examined respondents' views on power sharing based on regional division in Ghana. According to the results (as presented on Table 87 below) respondents' decision on region-based power sharing is more decisive in favour of regional power sharing than their stance on power sharing based on ethnicity, on which our respondents were more or less divided in their position.

**Table 87: Is there the need for or no need for power sharing based on regions in Ghana?**

	<i>Need for</i> power sharing based on regions in Ghana		<i>No Need for</i> power sharing based on regions in Ghana	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
very much agree	51	38.6	26	19.7
somewhat agree	44	33.3	24	18.2
don't agree	25	18.9	75	56.8
not at all	11	8.3	5	3.8
don't know	1	.8	2	1.5
Total	132	100.0	132	100.0

*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

The results on Table 87 indicate that 51 (38.6%) and 44 (33.3%) respondents each *very much agree* and *somewhat agree* respectively to power sharing based on regional boundaries. Making a total aggregate of 95 respondents (71.9%) out of 132 that agree to power sharing based on regional consideration/balance. On the other hand 75

(56.8%) and 5 (3.8%) respondents each *don't agree* and *do not at all agree* respectively that power sharing should not be based on regions. This presents an aggregate of 80 respondents (60.6%) that disagree to the assertion that there is *no need* for power sharing based on regions in Ghana. Technically, respondents in this latter category can be said to have accepted power sharing based on regional balance. This notwithstanding, an aggregate of 36 respondents (27.1%) objected to the *need for power sharing based on regions* and another 50 respondents (37.9%) also agreed to *no need for power sharing based on regions*.

The above results are confirmed by results of a similar question posed to the delegate cohort of our sample. Party delegates who had gathered in two separate locations (the NPP in Tamale, in April 2014; and the NDC in Kumasi, in December 2014) to choose their national leaders were sampled and asked to tell if there was need for regional balance at the top leadership of their individual parties. Their responses, as captured on Table 88 below, indicate that 193 out of 240 NDC delegates (80.4%) and 132 out of 165 NPP delegates (80%) indicated that they believed in regional balance at the top leadership of their individual political parties. This shows an almost equal percentage of delegates for both parties believing in regional balance at the national level leaderships of their party. However, 47 out 240 delegates (19.6%) for NDC, and 33 out of 165 delegates for NPP said they did not believe in regional balance. In all, an aggregated total of 80.2% (325 respondents) of combined delegates for NDC and NPP (405 respondents) said *yes* to regional balance in the leadership of political parties at the national level, whilst an aggregate of 19.8% said *no* to regional balance in representation among national party executives.

**Table 88: Views on Need for Regional Balance at the top leadership of their political parties**

<b>Do you believe in regional balance in the top leadership of the party?</b>						
<b>Response</b>	<b>NDC</b>		<b>NPP</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>Yes</b>	193	80.4	132	80	325	80.2
<b>No</b>	47	19.6	33	20	80	19.8
<b>Total</b>	240	100	165	100	405	100

*Source: Author's field work, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

The results on table 88 above could be considered even more authentic if we recall the fact that data for the political party delegates were collected at different times of the same year 2014 and at very different locations in the country (NPP in April 2014 in Tamale in Northern Ghana, and NDC in December 2014 in Kumasi in Southern Ghana; and the data collection team for each Congress was composed of different members except the main researcher who was present in each case). The results being almost the same (80.4%; and 80% respectively in favour of regional balance) indicates that issues of regional balance are very key to both ordinary residents (71.9% as on Table 76 above) and politically active individuals (80% as on Table 88 above) in the country.

Recalling the regional politics that characterised the Ghanaian political atmosphere in the early days before independence and soon afterwards, this historical antecedent has kept sections of the Ghanaian citizen conscious of the power imbalances that have this far existed and many have yearned for a more just political system that involves all sectors of the Ghanaian society, especially in the handling of political positions. The birth of many political parties in Ghana has a traced history to regional, ethnic, religious and sectional leanings. The de jury banning of such sectional political groupings in the 1960s, though has been very successful in the prevention or reduction of regional political acrimonies and secessionist tendencies, the question of regional and ethnic group leanings to political parties has, de facto, transcended political waves in the country and continues to be an issue in Ghanaian politics even today. With such a background, it is not surprising that citizens may still feel the need

for power sharing among regions of the country to ensure regional power balance in order to avoid the current winner-take-all arrangement in Ghana. What is more interesting of these results is the fact that respondents have proven to have a more emphatic support for power sharing based on regions than on ethnic groupings, even if they equally show a marginally high support for the latter.

We then asked the respondents as to whether each of them will like to “collaborate with or share political power with someone who is not of the same ethnic group” and why?

To this question 119 respondents (90.2%) answered “yes” to collaborating or sharing power with someone who is not of the same ethnic group with him or her, and only 12 respondents (9.1%) responded “no” to that question, whilst only one person said it *depends*. Table 89 below reflects these results.

**Table 89: Will you collaborate or share political power with someone who is not of the same ethnic group?**

Will you collaborate with or share political power with someone who is not of the same ethnic group?		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	119	90.2
No	12	9.1
It depends	1	.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Author’s field research, 2014/2015, Ghana*

To know why majority of respondents (90.2%) will accept to collaborate or share political power with persons from different ethnic groups, about 8 different reasons were given to explain that stance. These included, as displayed on Table 90 below, reasons such as (1) because Ghana is a multiethnic country (3 respondents); (2) because “we are of the same nationality, so the development of the people should be placed above all” (9 respondents); (3) “to promote good governance, national integration, peaceful co-existence and political unity across ethnic groups” (66

respondents); (4) “we are Ghanaians and we all have the civic right to any political party/power” (6 respondents); (5) to enable us “...share ideas, knowledge and experiences” (10 respondents); (6) “that will stop inter-ethnic, inter-political and inter-communal violence” (1 respondent); (7) political power sharing and collaboration is good but it should be “...based on capabilities and competence in the ethnic group” (15 respondents), and finally 8) that political power sharing is good but it is better if not “tribalised”.

**Table 90: Why would you accept to Collaborate or Share Power with Persons across Ethnic Divides?**

Reasons for answer YES in Q14 above		
Reasons	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Due to the multi-ethnic nature of the country	3	2.5
We are of the same nationality so the development of the people should be placed above all	9	7.6
To promote good governance, national integration, peaceful co-existence and political unity across ethnic groups	68	57.1
We are Ghanaians and we all have the civic right to any political party/power	6	5.0
We will share ideas, knowledge and experiences	10	8.4
That will stop inter-ethnic, inter-political and inter-communal violence	1	0.8
It should be based on capabilities not ethnicity	15	12.6
Political power should not be tribalised	7	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: author's field research, Ghana, 2014/2015.*

For those who answered “no” to political power sharing and collaboration with persons from other ethnic groups, they gave the following reasons for their choice of “no”.

**Table 91: Why Respondents Will Refuse to Share Power or Collaborate with Persons across ethnic divides**

Reason	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Don't know/can't tell	1	9.1
Because I don't trust people from other ethnic groups	1	9.1
This will further exacerbate conflicts	2	18.2
It can create tension and violence within my group and between the two ethnic groups	1	9.1
We are Ghanaians and we all have the civic right to any political party/power	3	27.3
Because our interests are incompatible he will bring me down	2	18.2
To prevent misunderstanding	1	9.1
Total	11	100

*Source: field research, Ghana, 2014/2015.*

Among them, one person said s/he chose “no” to power sharing with persons of different ethnic group origins in Ghana because s/he cannot trust someone from a different ethnic group to share power with. Two (2) persons said that power sharing will rather exacerbate conflicts in the country. One (1) other respondent said it will create tension and conflict with his ethnic group, and between his group and the other persons’ ethnic groups. Three (3) respondents said all ethnic groups and individuals have rights to any political party or power. Two (2) respondents further said their interests are incompatible and so his collaborator from the other ethnic group will bring him down. Then finally, one (1) respondent said it will prevent misunderstanding, whilst one respondent did not answer to the question.

From the above, the data demonstrate that ethnicity does not seem to be a major obstacle to cross ethnic collaboration. This is further confirmed by the earlier aspects of this chapter where the research discovered from respondents that individuals advocating for balance in leadership were more focused on regional balance at the national level than on tribal balance. This development is a welcome phenomenon for democratic development in a plural society like Ghana. This is because, emphasis

on ethnicity would create divisions that will be detrimental to democratic development and sustainability (Lijphart, 1969, 1972; Horowitz 2000). Ghanaians' dispensation towards other forms of collaboration beyond ethnicity, and their willingness for political power sharing with persons across ethnic lines is a major resource for successful democratisation in the country, despite it being a multiethnic society.

## ***6.2 Chapter Summary***

This Chapter Six (6) of the thesis attempted an examination of the various forms of associations to which Ghanaians adhere. The main aim was to establish whether Ghanaians, in their multiethnic composition, go beyond their individual ethnic groups to associate across ethnic boundaries, or they focus mainly on social organisations that are ethnic-centred against other ethnic groups. In addition, the chapter sought to discover if Ghana's multiethnic character serves as a positive element for enhancing democratic governance or it rather enhances divisions and promotes conflicts among the people. Furthermore, the concept of cross-ethnic collaboration and political power-sharing were explored in this chapter to find out if our respondents were predisposed to same, and how this cross-ethnic collaboration and power-sharing can play a positive role in enhancing peace among citizens and promoting democratic sustainability in Ghana.

The data revealed that though some Ghanaians belong to ethnic-based associations, the majority of our respondents (64.4%) did not belong to any ethnically organised associations. However, about 34.8% of them (representing 46 respondents) belonged to these associations. It was further revealed that 22 respondents (47.8%) out of those who belonged to ethnic group associations (46) also belonged to other professional-based associations. And of the 28% (of the 132 respondents interviewed) that belonged to professional based associations, 59.5% of same belonged to ethnic based associations. Generally, however, more respondents belonged to ethnic-based associations (34.9%) than those who belonged to professional associations (28.1%). In the same vein, more persons belong to ethnic-based associations (34.9%) than to

property-owning associations (18.2%); to political parties in the country (27.3%); and to gender-based associations (9.9%), whilst more males (84.6%) belonged to gender-based associations than females (15.4%).

However, a good number of the same cohort of respondents that adhered to ethnic based associations, have cross-associations. For example, 47.8% of them belonged to professional based associations; 30.4% of them belonged to property-owned associations; 43.5% of them belonged to political parties; and 26.1% of them belonged to gender-based associations. This indicates the existence of crosscutting cleavages among our respondents, even though they were sampled from communities with unresolved violent conflicts, a situation which when well exploited could inure to the benefit of the country's democracy, since individuals would have multiple allegiance and interests that would go beyond ethnic-specific goals and aspirations.

Examining how these cross-associations could be concretely employed to the benefit of democracy and governance in Ghana for conflict resolution, the data indicated that 87.7% of respondents believed that Ghanaians' belonging to cross-associations enhances peace and conflict resolution in Ghana, while 81.1% believed that Ghana's multiethnic character has a positive impact on its democracy.

On political power-sharing, 77.3% of our respondents were found to be of positive disposition to power-sharing and 78% of them believed political power sharing helps to reduce or resolve conflicts. On the basis on which power-sharing could be done in Ghana (either on ethnic or regional basis), the community respondents were split in their views as about 50% each supported ethnicity and regional lines respectively. For the political party delegates cohort of our respondents, 75.4% support ethnic balance at the constituency level and 71.9% supported ethnic balance at the regional level. At the national level, however, regional balance was preferred (about 80.4%) to ethnic balance (about 19.6%).

However, 90% of all respondents together agreed to collaborate to work and associate with persons from ethnic groups either than their own ethnic groups. As reasons for



accepting to collaborate and share political power with persons from other ethnic groups, the majority (57.1%) said it would “promote good governance, national integration, peaceful coexistence and political unity across ethnic groups”.

Generally, the chapter reveals Ghanaians’ leaning towards ethnicity, but also demonstrates the existence of crosscutting associations and cleavages beyond ethnicity. Most importantly, the willingness of respondents to cross-ethnic collaboration and political power-sharing is a remarkable feature of the Ghanaian society.

In the next chapter, which is the concluding chapter of this work, the thesis looks at the reasons why despite the many internal conflicts in Ghana, the country has never experienced a nationwide war that derailed its democracy and governance system, and whether it can continue to sustain its conflict resilience at the national level and what needs to be done to ensure this peace.

## **CHAPTER 7**

# ***Democratic Sustainability and Conflict Resilience Capacity in Ghana***

### ***7.0 Introduction***

This chapter probes into the democratic sustainability and conflict resilience capacity of Ghana as a country. In fact, the chapter addresses the major topic of the thesis by examining and analysing some of the reasons why Ghana as a nation has never fallen into a nationwide violent conflict despite the many internal communal conflicts that span the length and breadth of the country. It inquired into the possibilities of such a situation befalling Ghana and what are some of the factors that could lead to a nationwide violence. Finally, it sought to solicit possible measures that could continue to prevent the country from a future nationwide violent conflict and help it to maintain its peaceful democratic governance system in sustained peace.

### ***7.1 Why Ghana has never experienced a nationwide violent conflict***

Ghana as a country is dotted with many violent conflicts (UNDP-NPC, 2015; Tsikata and Seini, 2004; Awedoba, 2009, Brukum, 2003). However, these conflicts have never escalated to a violent national conflict. The main objective of this thesis was to identify what enables Ghana as a country to contain such conflicts and prevent them from developing into violent national conflicts that could destabilise its democratic dispensation and institutions.

On this, respondents were asked to tell why, in their view, the many conflicts dotted around Ghana have never gone violent nationwide. The responses obtained from our community sample cohort, as displayed on Table 92 below, indicate that 40 respondents (30.3%) said Ghana has never experienced a nationwide violent conflict because *most conflicts are on tribal and chieftaincy issues* (small communities, regions or tribes). Another 28 respondents (21.2%) said it is *because the Justice system in Ghana works*

*well, whilst some 14 respondents each (10.6% each) said it is because the security services such as the police and the military are doing a good job and Ghanaians are peace loving people respectively. Some 9 respondents (6.8%) attributed it to the multi-ethnic nature of Ghana. Another 8 respondents (6.1%) attributed Ghana's peaceful democracy to the availability of peace promoting networks/ organisations and institutions who are usually involved in conflict resolution, whilst 6 respondents (4.5%) believe that the state puts in place measures to prevent conflicts. Some 4 others (3.0%) said because there exists cross-cutting ties among the people in Ghana. Two (2) respondents each (1.5% each) attributed Ghana's peace to the promotion of peace by the Ghanaian media; most Ghanaians have seen and are aware of the negative consequences of conflicts in other countries; and because of respect for democracy respectively.*

**Table 92: Reasons why Conflicts in Ghana do not lead to Nationwide Violent Wars**

Why has Ghana never experienced a nationwide violent conflict?		
Reasons	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Most conflicts are on tribal & chieftaincy issues (small communities, regions or tribes) not nation-wide	40	30.3
Because the Justice system in Ghana Works	28	21.2
Because the security services such as the police and the military are doing a good job	14	10.6
Ghanaians are peace-loving	14	10.6
Because of the multi-ethnic nature of Ghana	9	6.8
Availability of peace promoting network/organisation & institutions usually involved in the conflict resolution	8	6.1
Because the state puts in place measures to prevent conflicts	6	4.5
Because there exist cross-cutting cleavages in Ghana	4	3
The Ghanaian media promote peace	2	1.5
Most Ghanaians see and are aware of the negative consequences of conflicts in other countries	2	1.5
Because of respect for democracy	2	1.5
Because there is food security in Ghana so there are no hungry persons who will go to create any problem for conflict to occur	1	0.8
Because of the intervention of religious bodies	1	0.8
God protects Ghana against nationwide conflicts	1	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Source: Author's fieldwork, 2014/2015, Ghana.</i>		

One (1) respondent each (0.8% each) said Ghana has never experienced a nationwide violent war because there is food security in Ghana so no one can influence any Ghanaian to go and create any problem for conflict to occur; Because of the intervention of religious bodies; and God protects Ghana against nationwide conflicts.

The results here above on Table 92 emphasize the fact that when conflicts are dispersed to the local level, it saves the wider national level from conflicts (Horowitz, 2000). Even though Ghana is not a federal state as Horowitz espoused on multiethnic polities, the ethnic and territorial (geographical) boundaries within which most of the conflicts occur in Ghana help to naturally circumscribe their effects to remain within

the boundaries and populations among whom the conflicts occur only. This makes it impossible for conflicts to spread to the whole population, since it is not everyone who may be interested or concerned with the issues that are at the core of the conflicts in question. Also, the national seat of government has never been contested in any violent conflict since January 1993 when the Fourth Republic was out-doored, even if contests by political parties for the Presidency have sometimes turned violent in some areas in the country, but these are usually between a few individuals or groups in given constituencies. These violent occurrences are, just like other conflicts in the country, isolated cases without a conscious nationwide mobilisation by opposing sides to engage in such conflicts (Tsikata and Seini, 2004).

In addition, the identification of the judicial system as one of the second most important contributory factors to Ghana's peaceful democracy is a further confirmation of citizens' positive perception of the judicial system as an institution that is functioning properly to serve the interests of the people as earlier affirmed by same community respondents in chapter five of this thesis. Another important factor is the identification of Ghanaians *being peace-loving*. So also is the perceived trust of respondents in the security services as contributing to the peaceful democratic order in the country. These are important features of every peaceful democracy (Diamond, 1999; 2003; 2017<sup>478</sup>). Violent conflicts emanate principally from groups' and individuals' failure to understand and empathise with one another in times of disagreement and diversity of interests (Fisher, Ury and Patton, 1991)<sup>479</sup>. The ability to understand and tolerate one another across social divides is a critical ingredient for the survival and sustainability of democracy in a plural society (Lijphart, 1969; 1972; Horowitz, 2000). Peace-loving people exhibit positive attitude towards conflicts as

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<sup>478</sup> Diamond, L. (2017). Democracy Only as Strong as Citizens' Support for It. *SFGate*. March 9, 2017. <https://www.sfgate.com/opinion/article/Democracy-only-as-strong-as-citizens-support-10991552.php>

<sup>479</sup> Fisher, R., Ury, W., & Patton, B. (1991). Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in.

opposed to violent-loving people who exhibit negative behaviour in times of conflicts (Fisher, Ury & Patton, 1991). The way and manner individuals and groups approach conflicts is capital to the determination of the course and product of conflicts. Conflicts are natural in every human society (Coser, 1956). The determination to find positive solutions to conflicts when they arise helps to reduce violence and keeps conflicts at levels that allow democracies to thrive without major shocks and truncations in the existence and functioning democratic institutions and systems. The lack of such determination in times of conflicts, however, renders a nation vulnerable to violent conflicts and risk of democratic recession. Going forward, it is important to know whether Ghana runs any risk of running into a nationwide violent conflict that citizens might see imminent in the near future.

## 7.2 Risk of Nationwide Violent Conflict in Ghana

Respondents were asked to tell if, in their view, Ghana runs the risk of a nationwide violent conflict in the near future as witnessed in Liberia, Sierra Leone and la Côte d'Ivoire among others. To this, 48 respondents, constituting 36.4% answered “yes” while 84 respondents (63.6%) said “no”. Their responses are captured on Table 93 below.

**Table 93: Possibility of Future Nationwide Violent Conflict in Ghana**

Does Ghana run the risk of a national conflict one day?		
Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	48	36.4
No	84	63.6
Total	132	100

*Source: author's fieldwork, 2014/2015, Ghana*

When asked to explain their responses (as on Table 93 above), those respondents who said Ghana runs the risk of a future nationwide conflict provided the following reasons for their answers as captured on Table 94 below. About 25% of respondents (12) indicated that the behaviour of Ghanaian politicians and wrongful conduct of political activities are what could lead to such a conflict. Another 22.9% of them (11)

said such a conflict will occur if the government fails to solve existing conflicts in the conflicting communities or zones. About 10.4% each (5 respondents each) also think that national elections can easily create national conflicts, and high corruption in the country can lead to a national violent conflict. Some 8.3% (4 respondents) said there is too much injustice in the country, while 6.3% (3 respondents) said such a conflict will occur if the government is not proactive in dealing with political conflicts. About 4.2% of respondents each (2 respondents each) indicated that conflicts will occur because of disrespect for others; and people should be educated to avoid conflicts otherwise a cluster of conflicts can affect Ghana respectively. In all, an aggregate of 20 respondents (41.7%) point to politic and political related reasons that constitute a danger to the Ghanaian democracy and are likely to cause nationwide conflicts in Ghana (as indicated in the pink-coloured cells of Table 94 below). This gives credence to politics and political manipulation identified earlier as one of the major causes of conflicts in Ghana in chapter 4 of this work, as well as in the works of Tsikata and Seini (2004), Odotei and Awedoba (2006), Ayee et al (2012) and Tonah (2012).

**Table 94: Why Ghana Risks a Nationwide Violent Conflict**

Explain your answer in 2 – YES		
Reasons why Ghana Risks Violent War	Frequency	Percentage (%)
The behaviour of politicians and wrongful conduct of political activities can lead to a national conflict	12	25.0
If the government fails to solve the existing conflicts in the conflict communities or zones	11	22.9
Our national elections can easily create national conflicts	5	10.4
Corruption always goes high in the country	5	10.4
There is too much injustice in Ghana	4	8.3
If governments are not proactive in dealing with political conflicts	3	6.3
Because of disrespect for others	2	4.2
People should be educated to avoid conflicts otherwise a cluster of conflicts can affect Ghana	2	4.2
Looking at the nature of chieftaincy issues, if not managed well it will lead to conflicts	1	2.1
The trends of ethnic dominance by the Akans may set other ethnic groups against them	1	2.1
Because of the culture of impunity with which many do act during conflicts	1	2.1
It is obvious that Ghana has become a bipartisan state (NDC/NPP) if not managed well there could be a clash between NDC &NPP	1	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Author's fieldwork, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

In addition, another, 2.1% each (1 respondent each) attributed it to the poor management of chieftaincy conflicts, ethnic dominance by the Akan ethnic group; the culture of impunity during and after conflicts, and that it is obvious that Ghana has become a bipartisan state (NDC/NPP) if not managed well there could be a clash between NDC and NPP supporters, respectively.

It is obvious that the respondents who believed Ghana runs the risk of a nationwide conflict (36.4%) are far less than those who believe Ghana does not run that risk (65.6%). The reasons given by the former's group of respondents are quite evident and present in the Ghanaian society. For example, politics, political elections and the



meddling of politicians in local conflicts; the many unresolved conflicts in the country; and ethnicity issues are present features of conflicts in Ghana as identified in Chapter 4 under causes of conflicts in Ghana. In addition, Many other notable research works have also confirmed these factors as endangering the peace of Ghana's democracy (Tsikata and Seini, 2004; Adotei and Awedoba, 2006; Awedoba, 2009; Tonah, 2012; Wuaku Commission, 2002; Ayee, 2011; Lund, 2003, Anamzoya and Tonah, 2012).

Another notable variable that is overarching from these same respondents is the issue of corruption which was not much dominant (in respect of the statistics) but not negligible under the causes of conflicts. The issue of corruption in Ghana, has become a topical national issue for some time now, and has constantly appeared in the manifestoes of all political parties as a problem that needs attention from governments if Ghana's democracy is to grow positively. The two dominant political parties have constantly used it against each other to prove how much each of them is either dedicated to developing Ghana or running the country down. Since the emergence and prominence of investigative journalism in Ghana, which has led to the unearthing of prominent corruption cases, especially in the last 8 years, citizens have measured and assessed governments' performance by how much that government has fought corruption or allowed it to grow in Ghana. Examples include Anas ArmeYaw Anas pieces on corruption in the police, in the electricity company of Ghana, the judiciary, and recently in the Ghana football Association/Confederation of African football ("No. 12"); as well as Manesseh Azure Awini's corruption exposures in the Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency (GYEEDA); the National Service Secretary (NSS) and Ministry of Local Government with Zoomlion Ghana Limited. Massive confusion rocked the Ghanaian judicial system in 2016 after the release of "enemies of the state", leading to the creation of a national investigative Judicial Committee and the subsequent dismissal and resignation of many judges.

During the 2016 elections, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) devoted much of its time and resources to analysing contracts awarded by the National Democratic Congress

(NDC) government and exposing so much fraud within the former government, leading to Ghanaians voting massively against the NDC government. These are indications and proof that corruption has become a real issue for the survival of the Ghanaian democracy just like any other established democracy.

For the 84 respondents who said Ghana does not run the risk of any violent national conflicts, 10 different reasons were given for their answers. These are shown on Table 95 below. Among these, the peace-loving nature of Ghanaian was evoked once again, but this time it occupies the highest position with 22 respondents, representing 26.2% who said *Ghanaians are peace-loving people that always work for peace in the country*. The second reason was the natural circumscription (ethnic, regional and geographical effect) of internal conflicts in Ghana. To this, 21.4% of community respondents (18 respondents) said Ghana does not run the risk of any violent national conflict because *it is not all the regions that are involved in such conflicts*, whilst 15.5% (13 respondents) attributed their answer to the strong nature of Ghana's democracy. They said *Ghana has a strong democracy that embraces diversity and will protect the peace of the nation*. Another 14.3% (12 respondents) attributed it to the religious nature of the majority of Ghanaian population indicating that *the majority of the people in Ghana are God-fearing and prayerful so God will not permit a conflict in Ghana*, 9.5% (8 respondents) believed *the security forces and law systems intervene appropriately* in conflicts to ensure peace in Ghana always. The rest said *Ghanaians are law-abiding* (4 respondents, representing 4.8%); *peace is being preached day-in-day out in Ghana* (3 respondents, representing 3.6%); and 2 respondents, representing 2.4% said they *did not know* and could not explain their answer but they believed that Ghana would not fall to any nationwide conflict.

**Table 95: Reasons why Ghana would not Experience a Nationwide Violent Conflict**

Why Ghana does not run the risk of a nationwide Violent Conflict		
Reasons	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Ghanaians are peace-loving people that always work for peace in the country	22	26.2
Because it is not all the regions that are involved in such conflicts	18	21.4
Because Ghana has a strong democracy that embraces diversity and will protect the peace of the nation	13	15.5
Majority of the people in Ghana are God-fearing and prayerful so god will not let there be a conflict in Ghana	12	14.3
Because the security forces and law systems intervene appropriately	8	9.5
Ghanaians are law abiding people	4	4.8
Because day-in-day-out, peace is being preached	3	3.6
Can't tell / can't explain / don't know	2	2.4
Because problems are easily resolved when they occur	1	1.2
Ghanaians are very much aware that politicians don't speak the truth	1	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Author's fieldwork, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

Some relevant issues emanate from these results. The importance of attitude to conflict is highlighted here as a prime factor for the peaceful democratic order in Ghana. Attitude has been identified by many practitioners and scholars as that fundamental determinant of the outcome of conflicts in society (Galtung, 1969<sup>480</sup>; Wallensteen, 2007<sup>481</sup>). This conceptualisation of conflicts is supported by many other

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<sup>480</sup> Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, Peace, and Peace Research. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1969), pp. 167-191. Sage Publications, Ltd.

<sup>481</sup> Wallensteen, P. (2007). Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, Peace and the Global System. *SAGE Publications*, 2007

writers (Zeytoonian, 2014<sup>482</sup>; Bell, 2002<sup>483</sup>; Robin, 2002<sup>484</sup>; Thakore, 2013<sup>485</sup>; Kinsella and Rousseau, 2009<sup>486</sup>; Bercovitch, 1983<sup>487</sup>; Verma, 1998<sup>488</sup>; Yousef et al 2010<sup>489</sup>). Ghanaians being perceived as peace-loving will definitely assist in how conflicts in the Ghanaian political system are managed so as to reduce the possibility of them becoming violent and spreading beyond bounds.

Another index of interest on Table 95 is the localisation of conflicts (Harowitz, 2000) where issues in local conflicts remain of interest only to members of the local community and do not attract the interests of the various communities across the nation. This notwithstanding, there are instances in Ghana where conflicts are imported or exported from local conflict zones to cosmopolitan cities like Kumasi and Accra where residents across the conflict lines from conflict zones have migrated to. This is the case with the conflicts of Agbogbloshie in Accra where there are frequent bloody clashes between the Konkombas and Dagombas, a conflict believed to be the sequels of the 1994 Konkomba - Dagomba/Nanumba interethnic conflict that devastated much of the Northern Region of Ghana. The most recent of these

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<sup>482</sup> Zeytoonian, M (2014). Lessons from Jerusalem; Part I: what attitude do we bring to our conflicts?, Dispute Resolution Council, LLC, September 18, 2014

<sup>483</sup> Bell, A. (2002). *Six Ways to Resolve Workplace Conflicts*. San Francisco, CA: University of San Francisco.

<sup>484</sup> Robin, D. (2002). *When to engage, when not to engage*. A Daniel Robin and Associates website. <http://www.abetterworkplace.com>

<sup>485</sup> Thakore, D. (2013). Conflict and Conflict Management. IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM) e-ISSN: 2278-487X. Volume 8, Issue 6 (Mar. - Apr. 2013), PP 07-16. [www.iosrjournals.org](http://www.iosrjournals.org)

<sup>486</sup> Kinsella, D. and Rousseau, D. L. (2009). Democracy and Conflict Resolution. In Bercovitch, J., Kremenjuk, V. and Zartman, I. W. (2009). SAGE Handbook of Conflict Resolution. SAGE UK, 2009.

<sup>487</sup> Bercovitch, J. (1983). "Conflict and Conflict Management in Organizations: A Framework for Analysis", *The Asian Journal of Public Administration*, 5(2), December, 1983.

<sup>488</sup> Verma, V. K. (1998). Conflict Management. In Pinto, J. (Ed) (1998). The Project Management Institute Project Management Handbook 1998 ISBN 0-7879-4013-5.

<sup>489</sup> Yousef, S., Hipel, K. W., & Hegazy, T. (2010). Attitude-based strategic negotiation for conflict management in construction projects. Paper presented at PMI Research Conference: Defining the Future of Project Management, Washington, DC. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute. Found online at <https://www.pmi.org/learning/library/attitude-based-strategic-negotiation-conflict-6476>

conflicts was the one that occurred in April 2017<sup>490</sup>. The same is the case with the occasional clashes between the Abudus and Andanis in Alabar, a suburb of Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti Region<sup>491</sup>. However, each time these conflicts erupt in the “diaspora”, the security services, traditional authorities and their indigenes as well as other groups that are not directly linked to the conflict quickly intervene, and sometimes the traditional authorities threaten sacking them out of their land if they should disturb the peace of their host traditional areas. This approach always quickens the pace of lessening the violence when they occur, and it controls the spread of violence and belligerents’ response to same.

Furthermore, respondents expressed confidence in the Ghanaian democratic system, recognizing its capacity to “*embrace diversity*” and thereby making it capable of “*protect(ing) the peace of the nation*”. Strong democratic institutions and the recognition and obedience of the rule of law by all facets of society is an important element for the success of democracies, especially in multiethnic and multicultural political systems (Diamond, 1999; Horowitz, 2000).

Among the key informants interviewed, all these three factors were identified as contributory factors to Ghana not having had any nationwide conflict. For example, one key informant noted:

*“Ghana is only lucky to have escaped violent nationwide conflicts since independence, but also it is because of the nature of the conflicts. We don’t go fighting and shooting anyhow. So you see that people fight themselves within their communities, and this will not bring other regions to join any of the fighting parties; what for? It doesn’t*

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<sup>490</sup> Citifmonline. “Konkombas, Dagombas clash again at Agbogbloshie; many injured”. Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:10 pm <http://citifmonline.com/2017/04/11/konkombas-dagombas-clash-again-at-agbogbloshie-many-injured/>

<sup>491</sup> <http://www.a1radioonline.com/2017/08/17/tension-in-kumasi-as-abudus-andanis-clash-at-alabar/>

*concern them. Even if you kill yourselves, people in other communities and regions will at best insult you, they won't just pick arms and decide to join you for a conflict that does not concern them,"* (Key Informant, 2015).

Another key informant remarked:

*"Most people in Ghana are religious and peace-loving. We are not the very violent type of people. Some cultures are violent from history, but modernization and the need for law and order that comes with modern democracy makes it difficult for such people to behave violently. The law will deal with you. So people are careful. The democratic system is in itself a guide and pressure point that regulates our conducts"* (Key informant, 2015).

On the possibility of a future nationwide conflict that may derail the country's democratic system, one key informant said:

*"Conflicts in democracies like Ghana are normal. We are mixed. Many ethnic groups and everyone wants something from the system. Why won't we have conflicts? As for the future...you know they say it's unknown. Our political leaders must be careful. They have to bring everyone on board. You can't satisfy everyone, but Ghanaians are discerning. We can see if things are being done right or not. So when we do things right, our future is bright. If we don't, we may have problems. But all in all, I think there is more optimism than pessimism."* (Key informant, 2015)

All these point to the fact that there are a lot of existing factors that Ghana can capitalize on to enhance its peaceful democratic development and consolidation, but for how long can a country with such features continue to resist violence when day-in-day-out conditions exist for such violence? The next point assesses Ghana's capacity to resist nationwide violent conflicts.

### **7.3 Capacity to Resist Large Scale Violent Conflict**

To further examine Ghana's conflict resistance capacity, the study inquired into respondents' perception of Ghana's capacity to resist large scale conflicts. From Table

96 below, 69 respondents (52.3%) out of the 132 community respondents indicated that Ghana had the capacity to resist large scale conflicts as a country, whilst 30 respondents (22.7%) said Ghana did not have that capacity. Another 32 respondents (24.2%) indicated that they did not know and could not tell if Ghana has that capacity or not, and 1 respondent (0.8%) said it depends. The responses of our respondents to this question demonstrate the level of uncertainties associated with conflict prediction, and that in itself demonstrates a problem. The more certain a population is of its conflict situation, the more they trust the activities of other people and interpret same within the context of such trust. It is, however, understandable for people of conflict areas, as in the case of these respondents, to express uncertainties regarding conflict activity, because most of those conflicts are recurrent and it is always uncertain what happens the next moment.

**Table 96: Ghana's Capacity to Resist Large Scale Conflict**

Can Ghana resist large scale nationwide war?		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	69	52.3
No	30	22.7
don't know	32	24.2
it depends	1	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Author's fieldwork, 2014/2015, Ghana*

Consequently, we asked respondents to explain the reasons for their answers as on Table 96 above. Their reasons are summarised on Table 97 below. Table 97 demonstrates that, among the 69 respondents, (52.3%) who indicated that Ghana has the capacity to resist large scale conflicts, 23 of them (33.3%) explained that *Peace education and conflict sensitisation are effective in Ghana and the message is going down well with Ghanaians*, whilst 10 respondents, representing 14.5% said *Ghanaian security services are effective and we can count on them to prevent nationwide violent conflicts*. In addition, 9 respondents (13.0%), 7 respondents (10.1%), and 5 respondents (7.2%) each said *Individuals, institutions and bodies have worked well in solving conflicts; Ghana needs peace and*

*development; and God will not permit war in Ghana due to the religious nature of the people respectively.*

Further, 4 respondents each (5.8% each) said because there is unity and understanding in Ghana; and there is respect for rule of law in Ghana respectively. Some 3 respondents (4.3%) said the majority of Ghanaians are not corrupt, and 2 respondents each said because of the multiethnic nature of Ghana, and don't know respectively.

**Table 97: Ghana's Capacity to Resist Large Scale War**

Capacity to Prevent violent national war		
Responses	Frequency	Percent
Peace education and conflict sensitisation is effective in Ghana and the message is going down well with Ghanaians	23	33.3
Because our security services are effective and we can count on them to prevent nationwide violent conflicts	10	14.5
Individuals, institutions and bodies have worked well in solving conflicts	9	13.0
Ghana needs peace and development	7	10.1
God will not permit war in Ghana due to our religious nature	5	7.2
Because there is unity and understanding in Ghana	4	5.8
There is respect for rule of law in Ghana	4	5.8
Majority of Ghanaians are not corrupt	3	4.3
Can't tell/no idea/don't know	2	2.9
Because of the multi-ethnic nature of the country	2	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Author's fieldwork, 2014/2015, Ghana*

For the respondents that answered “no” to Ghana's ability to resist a nationwide conflict, they were asked to explain their answer, and Table 98 below summarises their explanations. Among them, 26.7% of respondents (8) said Ghana does not have the capacity to resist nationwide violent war because *politicians continue to meddle into local conflicts*, and 23.3% (7 respondents) said *poverty is making people vulnerable to political manipulation* into causing violence in society to the benefit of the politicians. Another 16.7% (5) said *peace education does not reach a large number of Ghanaians especially in the villages*, whilst 13.3% (4 respondents) indicated that *Ghana has few security personnel, and some of*



them do not do their work well. Some 13.3% (4 respondents) also said *there is too much tribalism* in Ghana, whilst 6.7% (2 respondents) indicated that *corruption has eaten into Ghanaian fabric and if not checked will cause a nationwide uprising against our leaders* and bring down the democratic order in the country.

**Table 98: Reasons why Ghana May not be able to Resist a Nationwide Violent Conflict**

Why Ghana may not be able to resist a nationwide violent war		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Our politicians meddle into local conflicts	8	26.7
Poverty is making people vulnerable to political manipulation	7	23.3
Peace Education does not reach a large number of Ghanaians, especially in the villages	5	16.7
Ghana has few security personnel, and some of them do not do their work well	4	13.3
There is too much tribalism	4	13.3
Corruption has eaten into the Ghanaian fabric and if not checked it will cause a nationwide uprising	2	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Author's fieldwork, 2014-2015, Ghana.*

When the same question was posed to the key informants, this was what one of them said:

“One cannot say Ghana is insulated from any violent conflict. Every nation is prone to conflict unless you do things right. Especially in a multiethnic country like ours. Our leaders know we are prone to conflict. That is why we have the National Peace Council. It is meant to prevent violent conflicts, and resolve them wherever they occur. We should not think we are better than Liberia or Sierra Leone. They had also passed through peaceful times like Ghana before their conflicts erupted. So we cannot take our current peace for granted. We need to be conscious of this and activate the right political, social and cultural institutions to function properly to our advantage. Individual behaviour too is important. I am not compelled to slap you back if you slap me. I may report to the police instead of slapping you back. If the police pick you

up, would you slap them? No. But if I slap you back we might fight and draw other people into the confrontation and before we realise it might grow to become an inter-family or even inter-ethnic conflict” (Key informant, 2014)

#### ***7.4 Measures to increase Ghana’s capacity to withstand or prevent large scale conflicts***

Based on the preceding data, respondents were asked to suggest measures that could help to increase Ghana’s capacity to withstand or prevent large scale conflicts. Table 99 below presents a summary of their answers.

According to the responses, 33 respondents each (25% each) suggested that for Ghana to enhance its conflict resistance capacities, there is the need for the country to redouble its *peace education efforts, campaign for peace and unity, and increase security capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness to maintain law and order* as well as *suppress violence* respectively. *Good governance, economic growth, improvement of living standards, equitable distribution of economies of scale* were suggested by 17 respondents (12.5%), whilst *tolerance and respect for others’ views* registered 12 responses (9.4%). Some 8 respondents each (6.3% each) suggested that *politicians should not be involved in chieftaincy conflicts; the independent law courts should deal with conflict issue promptly; Ghanaians should avoid hate language in the media and the politics of insults in the country; and ensuring justice to all people of Ghana, respectively, will help to prevent large scale war.*

Similarly, some 4 respondents each (3.1% each) also suggested that Chieftaincy issues should be allowed to be handled by traditional leaders; no religion should be allowed to criticise another religion publicly; and the need to clamp down on corruption since corruption has the potential of creating violence in the country.

**Table 99: Measures to Increase Ghana's Conflict Resilience Capacity**

Suggest measures that need to be taken to ensure Ghana increases her conflict resilience capacity.		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Ensure that Ghana increases her conflict resilience capacity through peace education, campaign for peace and unity	33	25.0
Increase security capacity, efficiency, and effectiveness to maintain law and order as well as suppress violence	33	25.0
Good governance, economic growth, improvement of living standards, equitable distribution of economies of scale	17	12.5
Tolerance and respect for others views	12	9.4
Politicians should avoid meddling in chieftaincy conflicts and independent law court should deal with chieftaincy issues promptly	8	6.3
Avoid hate language in the media and the politics of insults in the country	8	6.3
We must ensure justice to all people of Ghana	8	6.3
Chieftaincy issues should be allowed to be handled by traditional leaders	4	3.1
No religion should be allowed to criticise another religion publicly	4	3.1
Dealing swiftly with corruption to avoid any potential violent conflict in the country	4	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Author's fieldwork, 2014/2015, Ghana.*

## 7.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter inquired into the conflict resistance capacities of Ghana and its ability to sustain its democracy as a country. On why the many internal conflicts in Ghana have never led to a nationwide violent conflict, it was discovered in the chapter that the very nature of these internal conflicts with respect to their geographical limitations, conflict parties involved in these conflicts as well as the issues at stake contribute to confine these internal conflicts within the areas of occurrence. In addition, some conscious social and institutional measures put in place in the Ghanaian democratic system have also been identified to help to promote peace and maintain order. On the possible risk of Ghana falling into any future violent national conflict that might derail the democratic gains of the country, majority of the respondents (63.6%) were

of the opinion that though Ghana is not insulated from violence as witnessed among some sister countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, and La Côte d'Ivoire, yet they debunked the idea that it is unlikely for the country to find itself in violent condition due to the seemingly effective functioning of the various democratic institutions and structures in the country. They, however, suggested that politicians should avoid interfering in local conflicts and increase coverage for peace education programmes and conflict intervention initiatives in the country, among others.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### ***Summary of Findings and Conclusion***

#### ***8.0 Introduction***

This chapter focuses on the summary of major findings and conclusion made on the topic ‘Democratic governance and conflict resistance in conflict-prone societies: A Consociational analysis of the experiences of Ghana in West Africa’. The content of this chapter reflects the picture drawn from the data gathered in connection with the objectives of the study.

#### ***9. Summary of Major Findings***

This thesis revealed a number of issues in relation to its main objective which was to investigate the sustainability of democratic governance and conflict resistance in conflict prone societies, specifically using Ghana as a case study under consociational theory on democratisation in plural societies. This analysis was done under four sub-objectives, namely:

1. to examine the dynamics of conflicts in Ghana;
2. to identify the role of Ghanaian traditional (indigenous) and modern political institutions in conflict generation and regulation in the Ghanaian democracy;
3. to examine the internal sources of cleavages or cross-cutting ties among Ghanaians and how these contribute to uniting or dividing them in the Ghanaian democracy; and
4. to examine the sustainability of Ghana’s democracy’s conflict resilience capacities.

On examining the dynamics of conflicts in Ghana, the thesis analysed the incidence and pattern of conflicts in Ghana, their causes, and their factors of intractability in the country. On conflict incidence across regions, respondents identified the Northern Region (53%), the Upper East Region (24.2%) and the Upper West Region (7.6%) as the first three regions (respectively) with most conflicts in Ghana. This

finding contradicts the UNDP-NPC interactive conflict map of Ghana which rather has the Eastern Region together with the Western Region (15.1% each); the Volta Region (14.0%) and the Greater Accra Region (11.6%) as the first three regions with the highest incidence of conflicts in Ghana (UNDP-NPC, 2015). This contradiction is considered a misperception since the results do not reflect the facts on conflict incidence across the regions in the country. This misperception, as the study found, is attributed to media reportage on northern Ghana which is said to focus on the negative aspects of development in the North. Such reportage neglects commonalities and cross-cutting ties that exist among the people thereby erasing the many positive development strides made by the three regions of the North<sup>492</sup>;<sup>493</sup>. In addition, the misperception is further attributed to the killing of the Ya Na, the Overlord of Dagbon in 2002, which aroused so much media and public attention and focus on the North from across the country and the world over. The Dagbon Traditional Area has since remained volatile (or at best cautiously peaceful) in terms of security, without a paramount chief, and posing lots of security concerns to residents and the government of Ghana (Awedoba, 2009).

On the causes of conflicts in Ghana, the study revealed that chieftaincy (25.7%), land ownership disputes (14.6%), political manipulation of local conflicts (12.3%), political elections and campaigns (10.1), and ethnic differences (7.7%) constitute the main causes of conflicts in Ghana. This finding was supported by secondary data from the UNDP-NPC conflict data on conflict incidence in Ghana that revealed that Chieftaincy conflicts account for 46.5% of conflicts in Ghana as of August 2015,

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492 Modern Ghana.com. (14th September 2010). UDS Vice Chancellor unhappy with negative media reportage. Found at: <http://www.modernghana.com/news/296018/1/uds-vice-chancellor-unhappy-with-negative-media-re.html>. Accessed: 30th June, 2015 at 00:45GMT.

493 Chief Superintendent Mathew Appiah Agyei, Deputy Northern Regional Police Commander, "Media Asked to Avoid Negative Reportage about Northern Region". *Ghana News Agency* (GNA) Tamale, May 14, 2010, Found at:

<http://www.ghananewsagency.org/social/media-asked-to-avoid-negative-reportage-about-northern-region--15668>. Accessed: April 26, 2016, at: 01:25 GMT.

while land conflicts 25.6%; political activity related conflicts 9.3%; natural/mineral resources 7.0%; and ethnicity related conflicts (7.0%) constituted the main causes of conflicts in Ghana according to the UNDP-NPC conflict data on Ghana. This finding equally conforms to Tsikata and Seini (2004)'s research findings on conflict incidence in Ghana that identifies land and land boundary disputes; traditional leadership; political rivalries, and leadership contests and exclusion, among others, as the most prevailing causes of conflicts in Ghana<sup>494</sup>. Conversely, the study also revealed that the chieftaincy institution is a very instrumental system for the prevention and resolution of conflicts in the country with about 83% of respondents using it as their major peace-seeking institution, whilst about 82% of community respondents trust in its ability to resolve conflicts in Ghana.

In examining the role of modern political institutions in Ghanaian conflicts, the study focused on four major institutions namely the executive, the legislature, the judiciary and the electoral commission. The findings from the thesis show that all the selected political institutions examined in this thesis have a role to play in conflict prevention (72.0%) just as in conflict escalation (49.2%), as well as in conflict resolution (73.5%). The findings show that modern political institutions in Ghana prevent conflicts through peace education and emergency assistance (38.9%), law enactment, enforcement and prosecution of law offenders (29.5%), deployment of security personnel to conflict areas (23.2%), and finally through institutional capacity building and resettling of conflict-displaced persons (8.4%).

On the involvement of the selected Ghanaian political institutions in causing violence and conflicts in Ghana, the findings showed that political institutions escalate violent conflicts in Ghana through (a) the use of conflict to gain access to political offices, (b) ruling parties taking sides in conflicts involving their supporters against other

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<sup>494</sup> Tsikata, D. & Seini, W. (2004). *Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana*. Working Paper 5. November 2004.

conflict parties that they don't identify politically with, (c) institutional manipulation and partiality in conflict issues and handling conflicts in communities, (d) lack of neutrality and impartiality on the part of politicians and the electoral commission, (e) politicization of institutions of governance in Ghana, (f) corruption, and (g) insincerity on the part of politicians and their unwillingness to fulfil political promises, among others.

On their contribution to peace, the findings indicated that modern political institutions in Ghana contributed to peace in varying degrees with the judiciary (85.6%), the executive (83.4.1%), the legislature (78.1%), and the electoral commission (71.2%) in descending order of perceived importance of contribution.

On cleavages and crosscutting ties, the thesis finding shows that despite the existence of multiple ethnic, social, cultural, religious and political groups in Ghana that have high awareness of their individual cleavages, Ghanaian population is woven together by relevant crosscutting ties such as the celebration of traditional festivals (93.9%); interethnic cross-marriages (96.2%); multiethnic professional group memberships (88.6); multiethnic membership adherence to religious groups (91.7%); and, most importantly, the willingness and preparedness of citizens to collaborate with groups, other than those from their own ethnic groups, in political power sharing both in-party and across political divides for the purpose of the governance of the country (90.2%).

In examining Ghana's ability to continue to resist nationwide violent conflicts, the findings of the thesis indicated that Ghana has high chance of continuing to resist nationwide conflicts (52.3%) due to its internal capacities such as the geographical circumscription of local conflicts to the communities where they occur (30.3%); a strong justice system (21.2%); a proactive and responsive security services (10.6%); the peace-loving nature of the population; and the existence of effective conflict prevention and peace education structures in the country, all working to the advantage of peaceful democratization.



Finally, the thesis findings showed that the ability of Ghana to maintain a stable democracy in an inherently multiethnic society is not due to any formal consociational arrangements. However, the internal informal arrangements within major ruling political parties where leaders are consciously chosen and selected across major social divides, provides grounds for peaceful collaboration that enhances citizens' acceptability of Ghana's democratic institutions and governance systems.

The above finding contradicts consociational democratic espousals that believe that a country with multiethnic social cleavages may not be able to successfully establish and sustain democratic governance if it does not create a consociational government (Lijphart, 1969; Horowitz, 2000; Mill, 1958; Furnivall, 1955; Dahl, 1971; Rabushka and Shepsle, 1972; Mattes 1999).

However, the thesis findings showed that the Ghanaian democratic system has some inherent challenges that may negatively affect its peace if care is not taken. Political interference in chieftaincy and local conflicts and wrongful conduct of political activities (25.0%), the existence of many intractable conflicts in the country (22.9%), the non-adherence to electoral provisions (10.4%), corruption (10.4), and injustice (8.3%) were identified as possible conflict triggers, among others. These findings conform to Tsikata and Seini (2004) and Aryee et al (2007).<sup>495</sup>'s findings on conflict triggers in Ghana which include chieftaincy, land ownership and multiple land sales, party politics, electoral mismanagement and abuse of electoral processes, ethnicity and ethnic consciousness, and religion among others.<sup>496</sup>

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<sup>495</sup> Aryee, R. A. J. et al (2011). *Local Power Struggles, Conflicts and Conflict Resolution: The Causes, Dynamics and Policy Implications of Land-related Conflicts in the Greater Accra and Eastern Regions of Ghana*. CODESRIA Research Reports: NO. 3, March 2011.

<sup>496</sup> Tsikata, D. and Seini, W. (2004). *Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana*. CRISE Working Paper 5. November 2004.

## 8.2 Conclusion

This thesis concludes that Ghana fits into the theory of multiethnic, multi-cultural and pluralistic societies by dint of its diversity of cultures, many ethnic groups and diverse social cleavages. Ghana is also bedevilled with many internal conflicts as proven in the thesis data. However, on consociationalism as a concept of democratisation in plural societies, Ghana differs to a large extent because it does not have formally established democratic arrangements based on existing social cleavages as espoused by theories of consociationalism. Nonetheless, informal consensual arrangements within and across political parties and crosscutting ties among the populations as well as their willingness to coexist despite social differences permit successful democratisation with positive signs of sustainability being evident in the Ghanaian democracy.

From the findings in this thesis, it could be suggested, therefore, that the success of democratisation in societies with multicultural cleavages and its sustainability do not only depend solely on formal *consociational* arrangements, but also, and more especially in Ghana, on the inherent non-formal arrangements and crosscutting ties that exist among the people across all divides and the disposition of the people to collaborate based on common interests imposed by these crosscutting ties that exist among the people. To this effect, we conclude that the concept of consociationalism, as this thesis proves, should be discussed with specific reference only to applicable contextual perspectives, and should be altered by weaving in the concept of *crosscutting ties* which, in the Ghanaian case, has overshadowed cleavage-based consociational arrangements. The emphasis on crosscutting ties in Ghana has succeeded because Ghana has formerly constitutionalised prohibitions to the institutionalisation of cleavage emphasis in the public space, thereby enhancing cross-cleavage relations, but not ignoring in-group alliances that, however, must not supersede the formal establishments that give emphasis to the national interest as enshrined in the constitution of Ghana.

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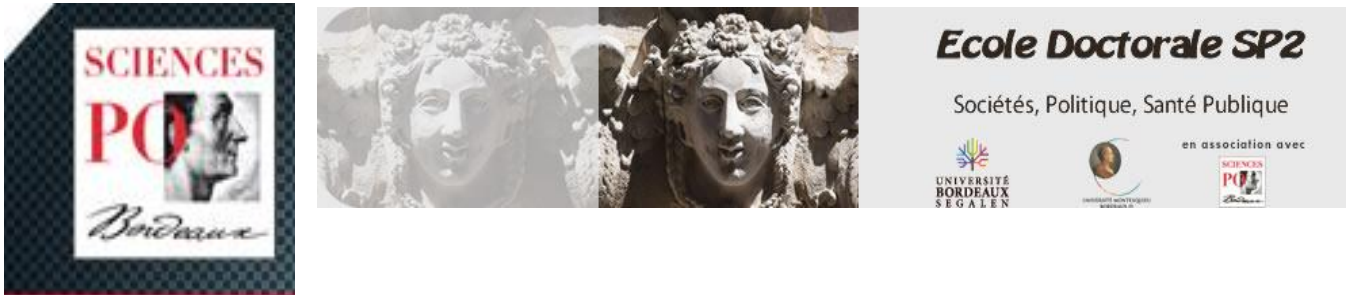
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# **Appendix 1 : Main Questionnaire for Community Respondents**



ÉCOLE DOCTORALE SP2  
UNIVERSITÉ DE BORDEAUX, INSTITUT D'ÉTUDES POLITIQUES  
BORDEAUX, FRANCE

## STATEMENT OF CONSENT

My name is Musah Halidu, a PhD candidate of the Institut d'Études Politiques, Université de Bordeaux, France. I am conducting a research for my thesis which centres on Conflict and Democratic Development and Consolidation in Plural Societies, with Ghana as my case study. My research topic is "*Democratic Governance and Conflict Resistance in Conflict-Prone Societies: A Consociational Analysis of the Experiences of Ghana in West Africa*" and need some responses from you to a few questions to enable me conduct this research successfully.

Data collected are for academic purposes only and all respondents' identity shall be kept confidential, as such, you are not required to give your name.

You reserve the right to decline to participate in this research or any question you don't want to answer, but if you agree to participate in the research, you promise to answer all questions diligently and truthfully to the best of your knowledge.

I thank you in advance for accepting to answer my questions



**Institution:** Institut d'Études Politiques, Université de Bordeaux, France

**Topic:** “Democratic Governance and Conflict Resistance in Conflict-Prone Societies: A Consociational Analysis of the Experiences of Ghana in West Africa”

GENERAL INFORMATION

Questionnaire ID: .....  
Enumerator’s Name/ID: .....  
Date of Enumeration/Administration: .....  
Name of Community: .....  
Constituency: .....  
District: .....  
Region: .....

BIODATA OF RESPONDENT

Sex: a) Male b) Female  
Age: a) 18-25; b)26-30; c) 31-35; d) 36-40; e) 41-45; f) 46-50; g) 51-55; h)56- 60; i)60+  
Level of education? A)none; b) primary; c) JHS/MS; d)Sec School/SHS ; e) “A” Level; f)TTC; g) Polytechnic; h) University; i) other, specify.....  
Highest Certificate: .....  
Occupation: .....  
Ethnic group: .....

CAUSES OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN GHANA

For how long have you lived in this community? A) < 1 year; B) 1-5 years; C) 6-10 years; D) 11-15 years; E) 16-20 years; F) All my life; G) Other; specify.....  
For how long have you lived in Ghana? A) < 1 year; B) 1-5 years; C) 6-10 years; D) 11-15 years; E) 16-20 years; F) All my life; G) Other; specify.....  
How many violent conflicts have you witnessed /heard of in Ghana? .....  
How many violent conflicts have you witnessed/heard of in this community? .....  
What role did you play in the conflict(s) above? A) fighter; B) victim; C) peacemaker; D) Rescuer; E) Other, specify.....  
What were the causes of the conflict you witnessed/heard of in?  
In Ghana? .....  
In your community? .....

**CAUSES OF CONFLICT INTRACTABILITY IN GHANA/IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

How many times have you heard of / or witnessed violent conflicts in Ghana?  
 For how long have violent conflicts in your community existed? A) 1-5 years; B) 6-10 years; C) other, specify.....  
 How often do they recur? .....  
 Have the conflicts in your community been sustainably resolved? A) Yes B) No  
 Why are the conflicts not sustainably resolved?.....  
 Do you think the conflict has the potential of recurring? A) Yes; B) No  
 Give reason(s) for your answer in 5 above. ....  
 What do you think could lead to the next recurrence of the conflict in your community? .....  
 What do you think could lead to the sustainable resolution of the conflict in your community? .....

**COMMUNITIES MOST NOTED FOR VIOLENT CONFLICTS IN GHANA**

In which of these ten regions of Ghana do violent conflicts occur the most? (Multiple answers possible)? a) Greater Accra; b) Western; c) Central; d) Eastern; e) Ashanti; f) Brong-Ahafo; g) Northern; h) Upper East; i) Upper West  
 Why do violent conflicts occur in these regions the most? .....  
 Mention specifically any community that you know violent conflicts have occurred in Ghana in the last:  
 10 years: .....  
 5 years: .....  
 1 year: .....

Do these violent conflicts threaten the security of Ghana? A) Yes B) No

Explain your answer in 4 above: .....

**PLURALITY, POWER-SHARING, CROSS-CUTTING CLEAVAGES AND CONFLICT PREVENTION / RESOLUTION**

Do you belong to any of the following? (Multiple responses accepted)

Item No.	Description	Yes	No	I won't disclose	Don't Know
	An ethnic-based association / group				
	A professionally-based association (farmer groups, market wo(men), cattle sellers etc.)				
	A property ownership-based association (landlords, landowners', cattle owners,				
	A political party or politically-based association				
	A gender-based association				
	Other, specify: .....				

Belonging to associations which members are of different ethnic groups enhances peace and conflict resolution: a) very much agree; b) somewhat agree; c) disagree; d) somewhat disagree; e) don't know

Belonging to associations which members are of different ethnic groups enhances leads to conflicts, violence and division among the people: a) very much agree; b) somewhat agree; c) disagree; d) somewhat disagree; e) don't know

The multi-ethnic character of Ghanaian societies is a source of unity and peaceful co-existence: a) very much agree; b) somewhat agree; c) disagree; d) somewhat disagree; e) don't know

Ghana's multi-ethnic nature is a source of conflict and division among the people: a) very much agree; b) somewhat agree; c) disagree; d) somewhat disagree; e) don't know

Rate the following from very much agree to least much agree:

Activity	Degree of Agreement to Activity being a Source of cross-cutting cleavages / Conflict prevention / resolution				
	Very much agree	Somewhat agree	Don't agree	Not at all	Don't Know
There is need for political power sharing in Ghana					
Political power sharing will help resolve conflicts					
There is need for power sharing based on ethnicity					
There is no need for power sharing based on ethnicity					
There is need for power sharing based on regions in Ghana					
There is no need for power sharing based on regions in Ghana					
Power sharing					

What activities / situations in your community do you most believe bring people closer to one another across ethnic divides?

Activity	Degree of Agreement to Activity being a Source of cross-cutting cleavages				
	Very much agree	Somewhat agree	Don't agree	Not at all	Don't Know
Celebrating traditional festivals					
Installing chiefs					
Choosing successors to chiefs					
marriage					
Selling and buying goods in the market					
Selling land					
Allocating land for farming activities					
Engaging in farming activities					
Communal labour					
Performing religious activities					
Being members of same religious confession					
Offering of joint contracts to people of different tribes					
Being members of the same trade or profession					
Being members of the same ethnic group					

Which of the following activities / situations do you most believe divide and oppose the people in your community/Ghana?

Activity	Degree of Agreement to Activity being a Source of cross-cutting cleavages				
	Very much agree	Somewhat agree	Don't agree	Not at all	Don't Know
Celebrating traditional festivals					
Installing chiefs					
Choosing successors to chiefs					
Marriage					
Selling and buying goods in the market					
Selling land					
Allocating land for farming activities					
Engaging in farming activities					
Communal labour					
Performing religious activities					
Being members of same religious confession					
Offering of joint contracts to people of different tribes					
Being members of the same trade or profession					
Being members of the same ethnic Group					

Will you collaborate with or share political power with someone who is not of the same ethnic group with you? A) Yes; b) No; C) Other, specify:.....

Give reasons for your answer in 4 above: .....

#### GHANA'S TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND CONFLICT ESCALATION AND/OR REGULATION?

Do you have a traditional leader/ruler/chief in this community? A) Yes; B) No

Do you seek third-party intervention when you have conflict? A) Yes; B) No

Where or who do you address your conflict issues to when they occur? A) Household head; B Family Head; C) Clan Head; D) Community leader; E) Chief; F) other; specify

Traditional institutions / system of governance in your community/Ghana help in resolving conflicts amicably. A) Strongly agree; B) agree somehow: C) disagree; D) strongly disagree; E) don't know.

Traditional institutions / system of governance in your community/Ghana help to sustainably resolve conflicts. A) Strongly agree; B) agree somehow: C) disagree; D) strongly disagree; E) don't know.

Traditional institutions in your community / Ghana escalate conflicts more than they help to resolve them. A) Strongly agree; B) agree somehow: C) disagree; D) strongly disagree; E) don't know.

Our traditional institutions perpetuate conflicts in the country. A) Strongly agree; B) agree somehow: C) disagree; D) strongly disagree; E) don't know.

#### ROLE OF MODERN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN CONFLICT PREVENTION, ESCALATION OR RESOLUTION IN GHANA

Do modern political institutions such as the Executive (president, ministers, MMDCEs), the Legislature (parliament/parliamentarians), the Judiciary (courts and security system) and the Electoral Commission play a role in conflict prevention in Ghana? A) Yes B) No, C) don't know, D) other, .....

Explain your answer in 1 above .....

Do modern political institutions such as the Executive (president, ministers, MMDCEs), the Legislature (parliament/parliamentarians), the Judiciary (courts and

security system) and the Electoral Commission play a role in conflict escalation in Ghana? A) Yes B) No, C) don't know, D) other, specify: .....

Explain your answer in 3 above .....

Do modern political institutions such as the Executive (president, ministers, MMDCs), the Legislature (parliament/parliamentarians), the Judiciary (courts and security system) and the Electoral Commission play a role in conflict resolution in Ghana? A) Yes B) No; C) don't know, D) other, specify: .....

Explain your answer in 5 above .....

To what extent do you believe the following political institutions contribute to making peace in Ghana?

Political Institution	Degree of Agreement to Institution contributing to peace in Ghana				
	Very much agree	Somewhat agree	Do Not Agree	Not at all	Don't Know
The Presidency and the Executive					
Parliament					
The Law Courts					
The Electoral Commission					

To what extent do you believe the following political institutions contribute to creating conflicts and dividing/opposing the people in your community or in Ghana?

Political Institution	Degree of Agreement to Institution contributing to peace in Ghana				
	Very frequent	Somewhat frequent	Not frequent	Not at all	Don't Know
The Presidency and the Executive					
Parliament					
The Judiciary					
The Electoral Commission					

To what extent do the following political activities contribute to creating peace and uniting the people of Ghana?

Activity	Degree of Agreement to Activity being a Source of Conflict in Ghana				
	Very frequent	Somewh at frequent	Not frequent	Not at all	Don't Know
Voter Registration Exercise by the Electoral Commission					
Voter Identity verification during elections					
Election of Party Constituency Executives					
Election of Regional Party Executives					
Election of National Party Executives					
Campaign for Election of Constituency Party Executives					
Campaign for the Election of Regional Party Executives					
Campaign for the Election of National Party Executives					
Parliamentary Elections					
National Presidential Elections					



Which of the following activities generate violent conflicts most in the country  
(choose from most frequent to least frequent)

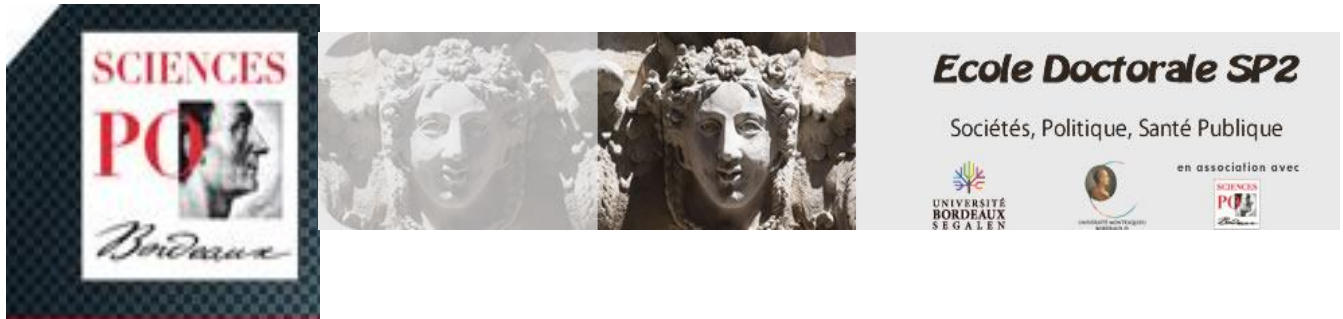
Activity	Degree of Agreement to Activity being a Source of Conflict in Ghana				
	Very frequent	Somewhat frequent	Not frequent	Not at all	Don't Know
Voter Registration Exercise by the Electoral Commission					
Voter Identity verification process during elections					
Electing political Party Constituency Executives					
Electing Regional Party Executives					
Electing National Party Executives					
Campaigning for the Election of Constituency Party Executives					
Campaigning for the Election of Regional Party Executives					
Campaigning for the Election of National Party Executives					
Parliamentary Elections					
National Presidential Elections					
Local level (Assembly) Elections					

LEVEL OF CONFLICT IMMUNITY OF THE GHANAIAIAN STATE

1. Why don't the many conflicts in the Ghana lead to a national violent war?  
.....  
.....
2. Does Ghana run the risk of a national conflict one day? A) Yes      B) No.
3. Explain      your      answer      in      2      above.  
.....
4. Is Ghana conflict immune? A) Yes      B) No. C) Don't know, D) Other, specify:  
.....  
.....
5. Explain      your      answer      in      question      4      above:  
.....  
.....
6. Can Ghana as a nation be able to keep resisting large scale war nationwide? A) Yes, B) No. C) don't know; D) other, specify:  
.....
7. If "yes" to question 6 above, explain your answer:  
.....  
.....
8. If "No" to question 6 above, state measures that need to be taken to ensure that Ghana increases her conflict resilience capacity.  
.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION AND PATIENCE

# **Appendix 2 : Political Party Delegates' Questionnaire**



## **ÉCOLE DOCTORALE SP2**

## **UNIVERSITÉ DE BORDEAUX, INSTITUT D'ÉTUDES POLITIQUES BORDEAUX, FRANCE**

### **STATEMENT OF CONSENT**

My name is Musah Halidu, a lecturer of the University for Development Studies and a PhD candidate of the Institut d'Études Politiques, Université de Bordeaux, France. I am conducting a research for my thesis which centres on Conflict and Democratic Development and Consolidation in Plural Societies, with Ghana as my case study. My research topic is *“Democratic Governance and Conflict Resistance in Conflict-Prone Societies: A Consociational Analysis of the Experiences of Ghana in West Africa”* and need some responses from you to a few questions to enable me conduct this research successfully.

Data collected are for academic purposes only and all respondents' identity shall be kept confidential, as such, you are not required to give your name.

You reserve the right to decline to participate in this research or any question you don't want to answer, but if you agree to participate in the research, you promise to answer all questions diligently and truthfully to the best of your knowledge.

I thank you in advance for accepting to answer my questions

Institution: Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Université de Bordeaux, France

TOPIC: "Democratic Governance and Conflict Resistance in Conflict-Prone Societies: A Consociational

Analysis of the Experiences of Ghana in West Africa"

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Questionnaire ID: .....

Enumerator's Name/ID: .....

Date of Enumeration/Administration.....

**SECTION I: BIO-DATA**

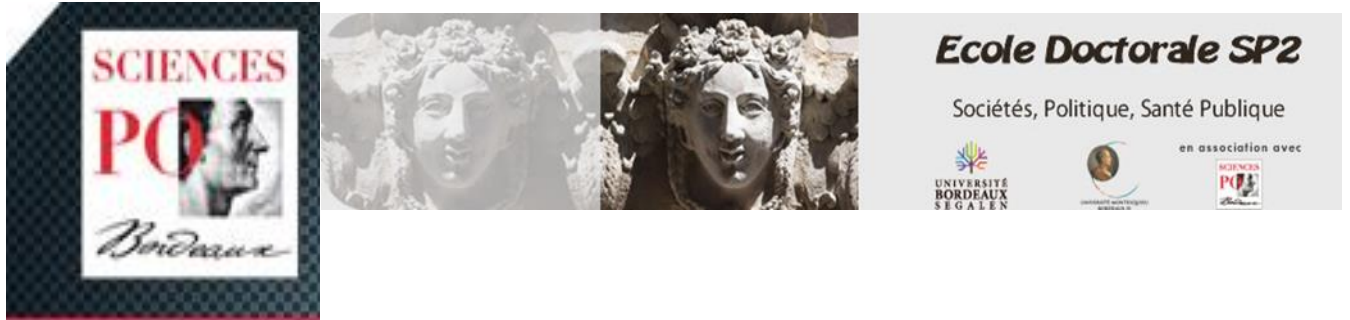
- 1. Sex: a) Male b) Female
- 2. Age: a) 18-25; b)26-30; c) 31-35; d) 36-40; e) 41-45; f) 46-50; g) 51-55; h)56-60; i)60+
- 3. Region of Origin:
- 4. Delegate: a) Yes b) No
- 5. District: .....
- 6. Constituency: .....
- 7. Position in Party: .....
- 8. Occupation: .....
- 9. Ethnic group: .....

**SECTION II: VIEWS OF DELEGATES ON CONSOCIATIONAL DEMOCRACY IN GHANA**

- 1. Do you believe in regional balance in the top leadership of the party?
- 2. A) Yes B) No
- 3. Give reasons for your answer in "1" above.  
.....
- 4. Do you believe in ethnic balance in the leadership of the party at the:
  - a. Regional level? a) Yes b) No
  - b. Constituency level? A) Yes b) No

5. Give reasons for your answers in question 3 above. ....
6. Will you encourage people to vote for regional or ethnic balance? A) Yes  
b) No
7. Give reasons for your answer in question 5 above.  
.....  
.....
8. Will you / did you vote for regional balance in the party's leadership?
9. Do you believe ensuring regional and/or ethnic balance in party leadership can help resolve conflicts in Ghana? A) Yes B) No
10. Explain your answer in "question 8" above.  
.....  
.....If you have the opportunity what will you have changed in party politics in Ghana?  
.....

# **Appendix 3 : Interview Guide for Key Informants**



**ÉCOLE DOCTORALE SP2  
UNIVERSITÉ DE BORDEAUX  
INSTITUT D'ÉTUDES POLITIQUES  
BORDEAUX, FRANCE**

## **STATEMENT OF CONSENT**

My name is Musah Halidu, a lecturer of the University for Development Studies and a PhD candidate of the Institut d'Études Politiques, Université de Bordeaux, France. I am conducting a research for my thesis which centres on Conflict and Democratic Development and Consolidation in Plural Societies, with Ghana as my case study. My research topic is "*Democratic Governance and Conflict Resistance in Conflict-Prone Societies: A Consociational Analysis of the Experiences of Ghana in West Africa*" and need some responses from you to a few questions to enable me conduct this research successfully.

Data collected are for academic purposes only and all respondents' identity shall be kept confidential, as such, you are not required to give your name.

You reserve the right to decline to participate in this research or any question you don't want to answer, but if you agree to participate in the research, you promise to answer all questions diligently and truthfully to the best of your knowledge.

I thank you in advance for accepting to answer my questions

Institution: Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Université de Bordeaux, France

TOPIC: "Democratic Governance and Conflict Resistance in  
Conflict-Prone Societies: A Consociational

Analysis of the Experiences of Ghana in West Africa"

### **KEY INTERVIEW GUIDE - QUESTIONS FOR POLITICAL PARTY EXECUTIVES AT THE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL**

1. How does the Ghanaian political system manage the various diversities and inter-group conflicts to avoid nationwide civil war or political dissolution in the country?
2. When your party is in power, do you make consideration for political appointments based on:
  - a. Regional representation;
  - b. Ethnic group representation;
  - c. Former school mates;
  - d. Same professional association;
  - e. Religious representation.
3. How does your party manage regional and ethnic agitations for inclusion into political appointments when it is in power?
4. How do Ghanaian governments manage to contain the many spots of conflicts in Ghana from escalating into a national violent humanitarian emergency?

## **Appendix 4 : Photos on Yendi Conflict**

**Figure 15: Late Ya Na Yakubu Andani II**



*Source: [dailyguideafrica.com](http://dailyguideafrica.com)*

**Figure 16: Gate of Dagbon Chieftaincy Palace (Gbewaa Palace) in Yendi**



*Source: <http://dailyguideafrica.com/abudus-withdraw-dagbon-peace-process/>*



## **Appendix 5 : Photos from Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo**



**Figure 17: Bunkpurugu-Yunyuo District Assembly Building, located in Bunkpurugu (source: taken by researcher, April, 2018)**



**Figure 18: Road leading to Bunkpurugu from Nakpanduri (source: personal picture, April, 2018)**



**Figure 19: Burnt house of a conflict victim**



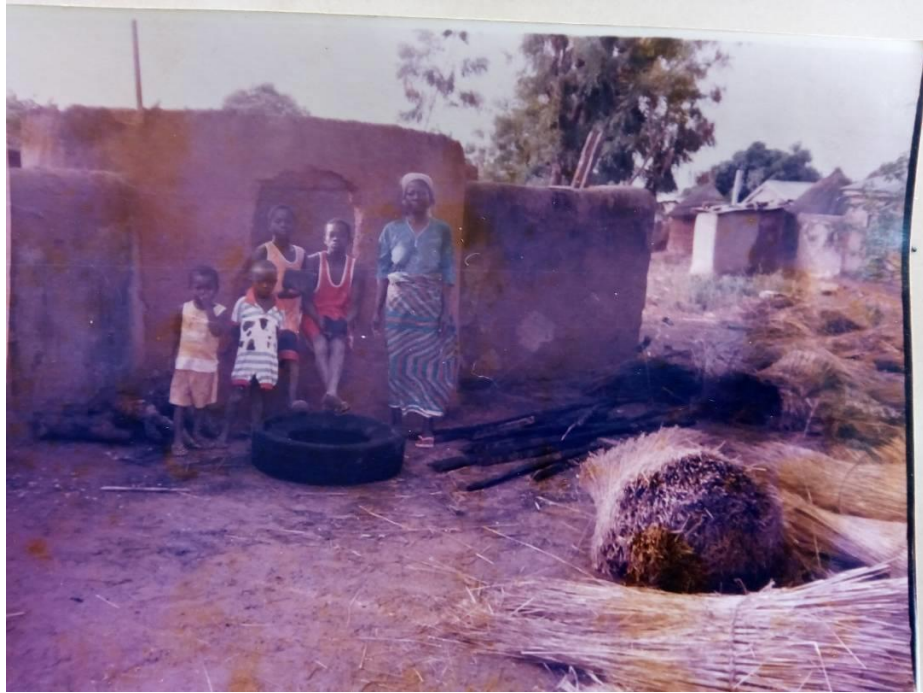
**Figure 20: Burnt items of conflict victim and family**



**Figure 21: Ruins of a house destroyed in conflict and abandoned**



**Figure 22: A cluster of houses belonging to one side of the conflict destroyed and abandoned**



**Figure 23: A mother and children in the yard of burned house**



**Figure 24: What a sad "birthday"**



**Figure 25: A conflict widow and her nursing mother-daughter living in a house under renovation from conflict destruction**

## **Appendix 6 : News Coverage of NPP Delegates Congress, Tamale, April 2014**

**Figure 26: Nana Akufo-Addo's Entry to Tamale for the NPP's 2014 National Delegates Congress**



*Source: The Chronicle, April 11, 2014*

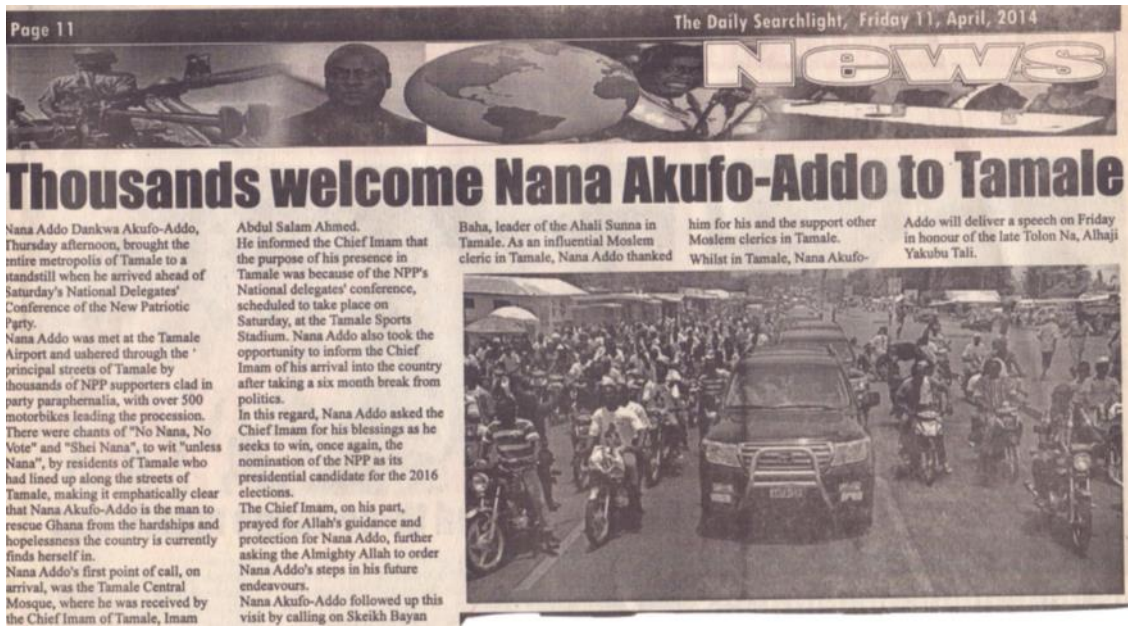
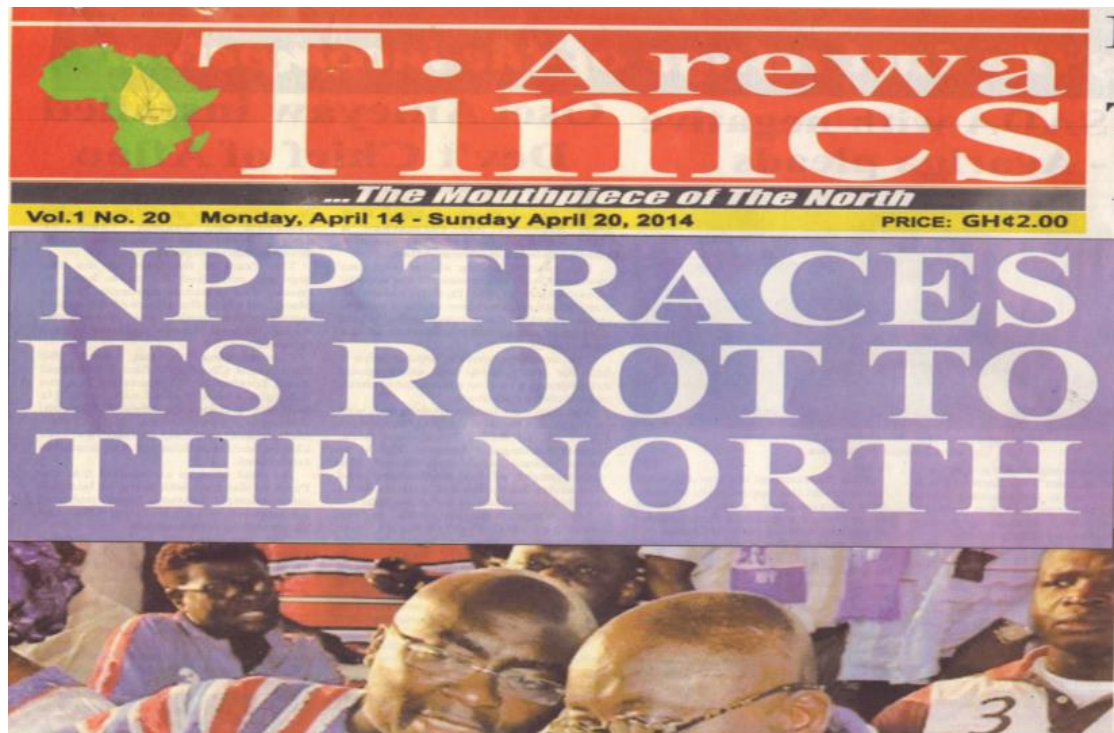
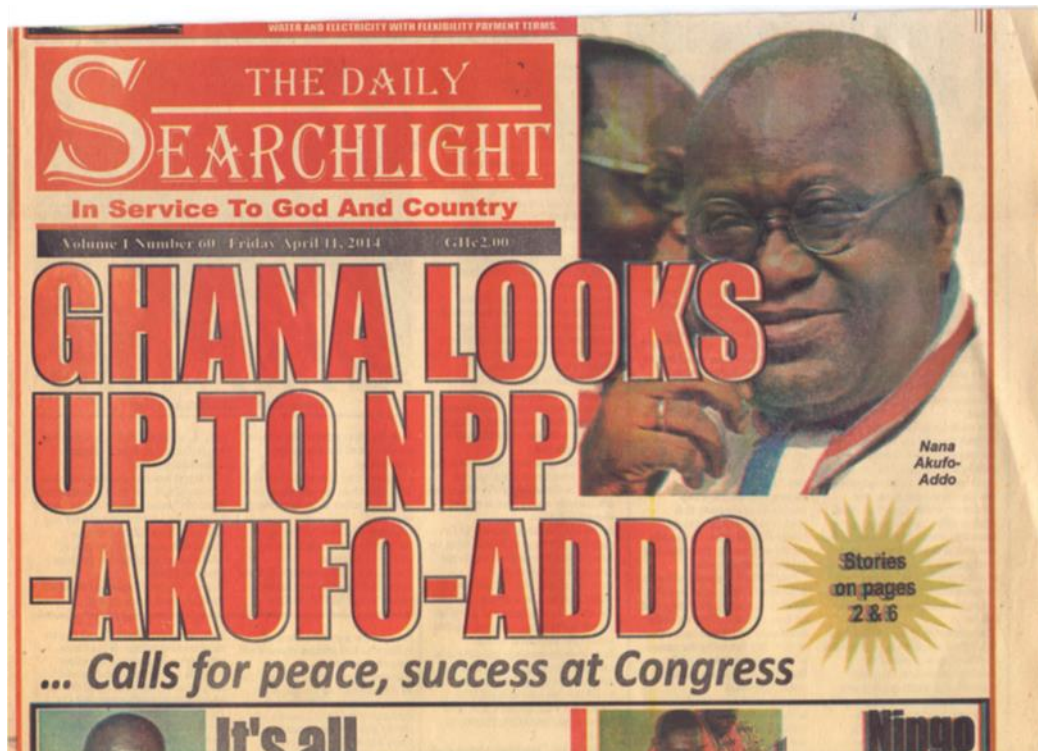


Figure 27: Tamale in the North traced as Root of NPP



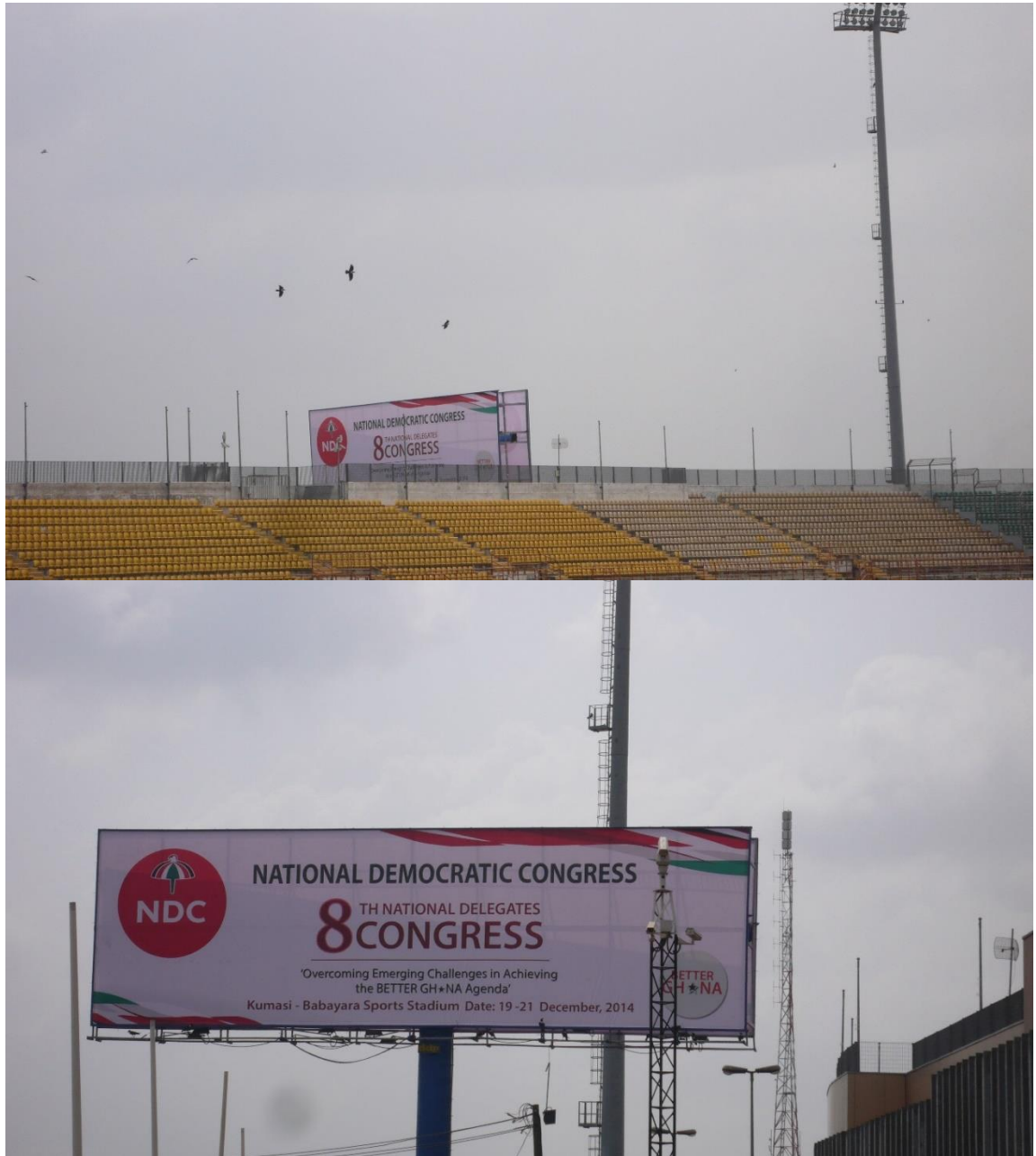
Source: Arewa Times, April 14, 2014

**Figure 28: New Executives selected for the NPP in Tamale at the end of their April 2014 Conference**





## **Appendix 7 : Photos from NDC Delegates Congress, Kumasi, Dec., 2014**



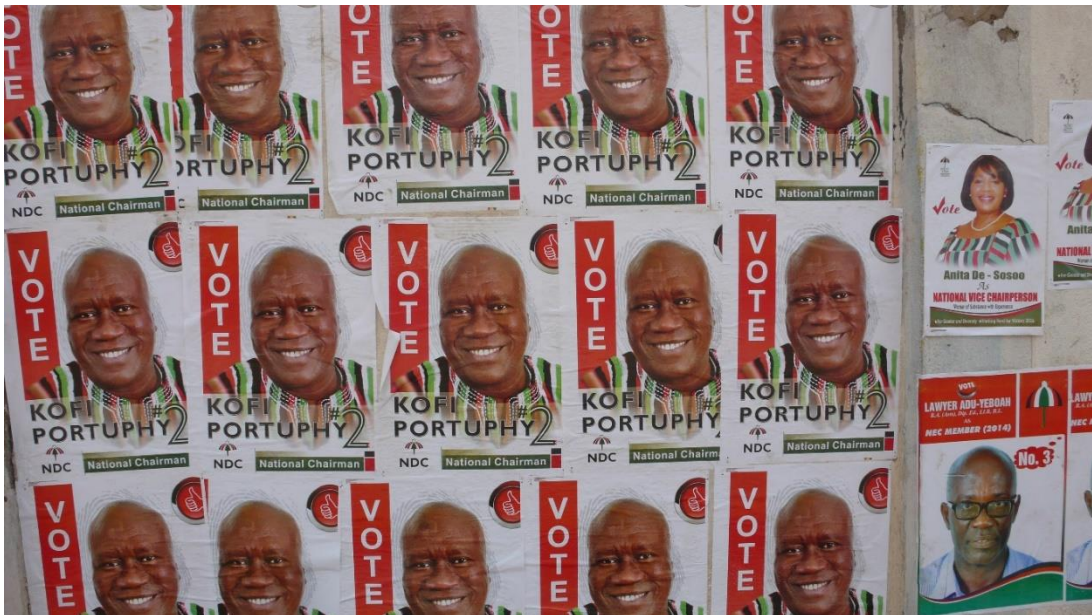
**Figure 29: NDC National Delegates Congress, 2014, Kumasi, Ashanti Region**



**Figure 30: Venue of the NDC National Delegates' Congress**



**Figure 31: National Chairman Contestant who finally withdrew because the then Presidential Candidate (Mr. John Dramani Mahama) is a Northerner, so the party leadership preferred a southern chairman for the party in order to create regional balance**



**Figure 32: Kofi Portuphy was preferred as a Chairman (because he is southerner), and he was voted as such**



**Figure 33: Walls of the stadium covered with pictures and posters of party executive-contestants (Dec, 2014)**



**Figure 34: The way leading to the entrance of the Sports stadium covered with NDC contestants' posters (December, 2014)**