

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**CHIEFTAINCY SUCCESSION DISPUTES IN NAVRONGO  
TRADITIONAL AREA OF THE KASENA-NANKANA MUNICIPALITY**

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**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

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of the requirements for the award of the degree of  
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**FEBRUARY, 2022**

## DECLARATION

### Student's Declaration

I, Dominic Webakea Kanyagele, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature.....

Date.....

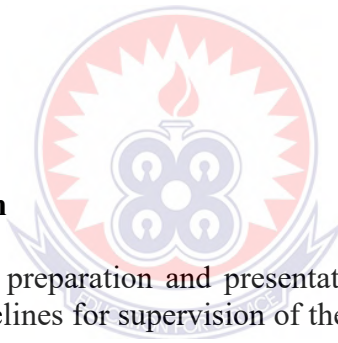
### Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: Dr. David Naya Zuure

Signature.....

Date.....



## **DEDICATION**

To my lovely wife, Millicent Puruseh and our beloved son, Emmanuel Kervin Wesoamo Kanyagele.



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Many thanks to the Almighty God for His mercies, grace and strength bestowed upon me all this while as I journeyed through this great programme. In the preparation of this thesis, valuable information was obtained from journals, articles, and books. I am highly indebted to the authors of these works.

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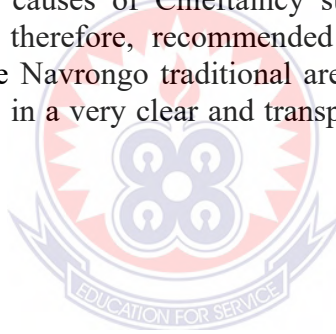
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## ABSTRACT

The Chieftaincy institution has existed since ancient times in Africa and other parts of the world with a remarkable assumption of major developmental role. It is unfortunate to learn among other problems that, here in Ghana, the institution is tainted with succession crises and as a result the beauty of the institution is constantly depleting and subjects are being denied the developments they require. This research was conducted to examine the chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area in the Navrongo Municipality in the Upper East Region of Ghana. A narrative design was used for this study. The population of the study comprised Royals, King Makers, the Elders, and Landlords. A sample of 50 respondents were selected through purposive and convenience sampling techniques. The instruments used for the collection of data for this work were focus group discussion and interview guide. The researcher employed qualitative approach in analyzing data that were gathered from respondents who were strictly the Landlords, Royals, Elders, and the King Makers. The findings revealed that, the process of selecting a chief does not only involve humans (Elders and King Maker), but the gods as well. Thus, "*Kwara Yigino*" (the keeper of the symbol of the throne) together with all Elders and King Makers go out to consult and perform all rituals to know who has been selected by the gods, upon which they (Elders) will vote to confirm what the gods have said. Again, it was revealed that political interference, rivalry and disunity among families were the major causes of Chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area. It was, therefore, recommended that in order to avoid chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area, must depend on the voices of the gods which must be done in a very clear and transparent manner such that no individual can dispute it.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

The institution of chieftaincy as compared to other forms of leadership came out of the natural instinct for self and community preservation and orderliness. Within many human societies, the prime reasons for getting together are security and protection against external enemies or aggression and the need to have leadership in place that inspires and motivates the people to be better. In this modern world, the chieftaincy institution has now gone beyond security and protection and has assumed other equally important roles (Anamzoya & Tonahr, 2018). Chieftaincy is an institution that has existed since ancient times in Africa (Mahama & Longi, 2018). It is an institution that has assumed a major role in many Ghanaian ethnic groups. From traditional perspective, the role of the king at the divisional level was to administer the division, cater for the spiritual, physical and emotional welfare of the people, maintain law and order, consult with elders and act as mediator between ancestors and the clans (Crook, 2019). Even developed countries in the western world such as Canada are continuously adding their indigenous cultural- values to almost all national policies (Tem, 2017).

Among most of the countries of the West African sub-region, Ghana seems to be regarded as an oasis of stability. However, the country faces a host of bitter chieftaincy conflicts (Buur & Kyed, 2018). From the colonial era, chiefs were heavily involved in the social, economic, political and cultural development of the people in the traditional areas (Kwarkye & Owusu, 2019). They have made immense contributions to the development of their various areas. For example, in Asante kingdom, the Asantehene, through his Educational Fund has promoted education in

the Asanteman and the country at large, Togbe Afede of the Asogli State Educational Development Foundation in the Volta Region among others are typical examples of contributions chiefs have made towards the socio-economic development of their people as well as their traditional areas (Yaro, 2020). Again, in the Upper West Region, chiefs in various ways have assisted in the development of the tourist site (the Wechau Hippo Sanctuary) at Talawonaa.

Despite the fact that chiefs are instrumental in spearheading the developmental activities in their chiefdoms and in the country at large, the institution is tainted with succession crises and other problems, and as a result the beauty of the institution is constantly depleting and subjects are being denied of the developments they require to live meaningful lives. Therefore, succession conflict over the world is a major concern, since it affects stability and development. It is unfortunate to note that, as far as succession conflicts are concerned, Ghana has had its share of violent clashes in almost every part of the country at some point in time. About 600 disputes in Ghana are dominated by chieftaincy disputes (Tijani, 2019). The conflicts are not recent developments; neither are they confined to only one traditional area. By and large, almost every traditional area has encountered a chieftaincy dispute in one way or the other. Chieftaincy conflicts in northern Ghana are cyclical in nature and steeped in centuries of historically evolving relationships.

Chieftaincy conflicts have usually been categorized as either inter-ethnic or intra-ethnic (Issifu & Issifu, 2019). Chieftaincy conflicts usually involve two or more parties competing for sovereignty and control over the land and the subjects within a given territory. For example, in Northern Ghana, such conflicts have occurred between the Kusasi and the Mamprusi (Samuel & Halidu, 2018) and the Abudus and

the Andanis. Intra-ethnic conflicts, on the contrary, are conflicts over claims to chieftaincy succession titles involving persons from the same ethnic group or smaller units such as the clan and the family.

Today, no segment of the nation can be said to have monopoly of succession conflicts. Succession becomes necessary when a vacancy is available to be occupied. Vacancy comes about as a result of the death of the incumbent chief, his removal from office or his incapacitation (Bukari, 2019). Succession norms may take into consideration seniority and age, personal attributes, leadership qualities, and capacity to empathise with others as its starting point (Nayiri Tonal, 2018). Navrongo traditional area is no exception to these but they placed much emphasis on lineage, and consensus, since this ethnic group still places emphasis on the class system. The non-adherence to these laid down principles—lineage and consensus – for the selection of chiefs has resulted in most of the succession conflicts (Sicilia, 2017).

In most cases political parties cannot choose their flag bearers peacefully without conflicts, even clubs and associations have difficulties filling vacant positions on their executives despite the fact that all these political parties and associations have written down constitutions (Brukum, 2018). The story is no different when traditional communities have to find successors to occupy vacancies created through abdications, deposition or death of a chief. While it is normal to expect factions in any active competition for power, leadership and authority, the succession conflicts that we see in our communities most especially in northern Ghana and Navrongo traditional area to be specific, generate such unacceptable costs that it calls for a concerted effort to find acceptable solutions to the problem .(Bukari, 2019)

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

The institution of chieftaincy, which is a historic system of leadership among ethnic groups in Ghana, is one of the valued cultural heritages that has survived colonial times and the contemporary autonomous democratic organization. In Ghana, chieftaincy is a system of leadership that has been passed down from generation to generation. Over the course of many years, Ghanaians have continued to view it with reverence and regard (Gumbi, 2021; Haruna, 2021; Slater, 2019). Traditional leadership, judicial decision-making, social cohesiveness, and economic advancement are all things that chiefs contribute to their communities in their roles as custodians of both natural and human resources (Adjei, 2019; Asante & Blewushie, 2021; Assanful, 2020, 2021; Cobb, 2018; Gondwe, 2018; Slater, 2019). However, it is beset by wars, which regularly result in the deaths of women and children and stifle growth. This makes it difficult for the country to develop. The violent political, ethnic, and chieftaincy clashes that have erupted in many previously tranquil nations have brought about instability. According to the findings of research, there are structural factors that contribute to unhappiness; nevertheless, the degree of conflict is determined by the resources that are made available (Aganah, 2018; Cobb, 2018; Ferree & Haggard, 2021; Mohammed, 2018; Nyamnjoh, 2018; Oduro-Awisi, 2018; Osei-kufuor et al., 2019; Patrick et al., 2020; Razak, 2019; Tonah, 2018).

Northern Ghana has the highest proportion of violent intra- and inter-ethnic social disputes (Sicilia, 2017). The majority of these derive from either a chaotic chieftaincy succession or a sense of exclusion from involvement in the conventional political system or land management. The historic area of Navrongo has not been immune to either of these scenarios, with chieftainship succession issues dominating intra-ethnic clashes in the region (Ferree & Haggard, 2021). Despite the fact that the Navrongo



Traditional area is one of the centralised traditional political systems with a well-organised hierarchical structure and succession procedures, the apparent prevalence of chieftaincy succession disputes in the area raises questions about the applicability of cultural arrangements for preventing the menace. In the Navrongo traditional area, chieftaincy succession disputes are becoming quite dramatic, characteristically taking the form of duality of authority to the royal skins.

It is an undeniable fact that chieftaincy remains at the heart of Ghanaian traditions and continues to provide leadership for a lot of people across Ghana, serves as an embodiment of our rich culture, agent of development, and a catalyst of change which must be maintained. Unfortunately, I also agree with most people who hold the view that the rampant chieftaincy disputes hamper progress and for that reason the institutions are of little relevance in local governance (Nayiri Tonal, 2018).

On the demise of a sitting chief in Navrongo, due processes are normally followed to select successors. This is normally governed by customary rules and regulations. The activity of selecting successive chiefs should ideally be smooth and without issues which should ultimately end in joy and happiness. However, Assanful, (2021) reports the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs account that there are about 356 chieftaincy disputes across Ghana.

Again, Sicilia (2017) and Brukum (2018) indicate that due to strong desire to become a chief in many parts of Northern Ghana, the contest for chieftaincy titles, particularly at the divisional, paramountcy or kingship level, is extremely competitive. Hafis-Deen, (2019) on his part states that becoming a chief is not merely a contest between individual members of the royal group, but it also involves the contestants' families, lineages and clans as well as their friends and supporters. It is therefore not surprising

that the contest arising from chieftaincy succession often tend to be expanded conflicts to encompass members of the entire lineage, clan or ethnic group. These disputes especially in some parts of Northern Ghana undoubtedly is becoming a menace as it is the source of conflicts and disputes in the area, and this is very worrying in the sense that, the meagre resources of the area are channeled into managing these conflicts through curfews, buying ammunitions, and allowances for the security personnel who patrol the affected areas. The conflicts also bring economic and social activities to a halt.

The Navrongo traditional area is no exception. The Navrongo paramountcy had a succession conflict which was fortunately resolved by Upper East Regional House of Chiefs. The Natugnia division is one division which also has succession issues which is still an issue in the court to be resolved. Though these chieftaincy succession disputes were partly resolved they still pop up from time to time in the Palaces of the Navrongo Traditional area. The researcher in a field observation noticed that in every palace in the Navrongo traditional area, there are adverse divisions among the people due to the chieftaincy succession disputes that were left unresolved fully. These disputes even though have obtained partial resolutions by court decisions and the participation of the regional house of chiefs, however, there are divisions and gates opened in those palaces which have future implications on chieftaincy successions.

The institution of chieftaincy is intended to serve the needs of the local populace; however, chieftaincy has become commercialized and skins are now auctioned off to the highest bidder due to anticipated profits. In addition, political meddling has rendered chieftaincy less viable. No current study or literature has come to address the menace of chieftaincy succession disputes in the Upper East Region. Most of the

studies of chieftaincy succession disputes are based in the Northern Region, Savanna Region and North-East Region (Brukum, 2018; Hardi, 2017; Issifu & Issifu, 2019; Osei-kufuor et al., 2019; Razak, 2019; Tijani, 2019; Tonah, 2020; S. D. Yaro & F., 2020). Some other studies were conducted to capture geographical areas such as Ashanti region, Greater Accra and Central region (Anamzoya & Tonahr, 2018; Asante & Blewushie, 2021a; Ashahadu, 2018; Assanful, 2020; Ayensah, 2018; Bashiru, 2020; Dankwa et al., 2021; Hardi, 2017; Knierzinger, 2017; Kwarkye & Owusu, 2019; Mahama & Longi, 2018; Samuel & Halidu, 2018; Sicilia, 2017). Yet there is been no current study on chieftaincy succession disputes that capture the cases of Upper East Region. This creates a geographic gap in literature on the subject of Chieftaincy succession dispute and therefore there is every need to consider the Navrongo traditional area as a case since there are evidences of chieftaincy succession disputes in the area.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine the chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo Traditional area and ways by which such disputes could be minimized.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were to:

1. examine the procedure that is followed in selecting a chief in Navrongo traditional area.
2. explore the causes of chieftaincy succession disputes during the enskinment of a new chief in Navrongo traditional area.
3. unravel the forms of chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area.

4. identify the ways of minimizing chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The following research questions informed the study;

1. How are chiefs selected in the Navrongo traditional area?
2. What are the causes of chieftaincy succession disputes during enskinment in Navrongo traditional area?
3. What are the forms of chieftaincy succession disputes in Navrongo traditional area?
4. How can chieftaincy succession disputes in Navrongo traditional area be minimized?

### **1.6 Significance of Study**

The importance of the chieftaincy institution cannot be overemphasized. In traditional Ghanaian society, chiefs performed a number of roles such as being military leaders and defenders of their people, as chief priests who performed religious roles within their jurisdictions, as symbols of identity, as founts of honour, and as sole custodians of stool lands and unifiers. Chiefs played an important role in the struggle against colonial rule (Assanful, 2020). This research work will be useful in diverse ways.

The results of this study will be helpful, not only to people who specialize in resolving conflicts but also to everyone else who works in this field. It will continue to educate decision-makers and organizations that are responsible for safeguarding the peace and stability of the nation on the appropriate processes to take in order to ensure that the chieftaincy institution achieves its stated objective. In conclusion, the results of this research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the issues surrounding

the succession of chieftainships, and they have the potential to be utilized as a textbook by students.

This study will add to existing literature on chieftaincy succession disputes. This study will also contribute to the promotion of development in the Navrongo traditional area. It will as well contribute to existing literature on the procedure that is followed in selecting a chief in Navrongo traditional council and ways chieftaincy succession disputes in Navrongo traditional area.

Since there is gap in literature in the Navrongo traditional area on chieftaincy disputes, this research will be a reference point for further research into the chieftaincy succession crises in the Navrongo traditional area since much research has not been done in the Traditional area on chieftaincy.

Lastly, this research will provide an in-depth information that would be useful to policy makers, the peace council of Ghana, council of chiefs, other institutions, and most especially the ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs in making decisions in relation to chieftaincy succession disputes to bringing lasting peace and the needed development.

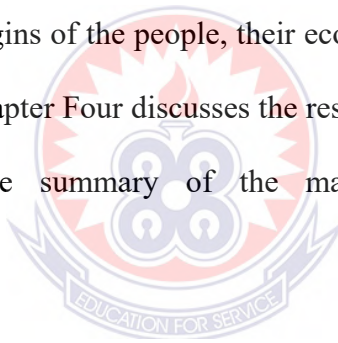
### **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

Conceptually, this study focuses on exploring the causes of chieftaincy succession disputes. Geographically, the scope of this study was the Navrongo Traditional Area. The study covered one Paramount seat and eight divisional areas occupying key positions in terms of governance in the traditional area.

## **1.8 Organisation of the Study**

The study comprises five chapters. Chapter One starts with a general introduction and background to the study, the problem statement, sets the objectives of the study, highlights the method of study, justification and the scope within which the work was undertaken. It also outlines how the was organised. Chapter Two reviews relevant literature, conceptual and theoretical framework.

Chapter Three focuses on the research methodology. These include the study area, study population, sample size, sampling procedure, and selection of respondents. It also describes the administration of the instruments for data collection as well as the proposed methods of data analysis and the geographical setting of the area to be studied, the historical origins of the people, their economic activities, and their socio-cultural backgrounds. Chapter Four discusses the results and findings of the study and Chapter Five gives the summary of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

Ghana, though popularly known as a peace loving country and a beacon of democracy within the African continent south of the Sahara characterized by hospitality, it is still not free from internecine and intermittent communal conflicts which underplay and harm governance and security structures of the country (Ashahadu, 2018). This chapter mainly reviews literature on concept of chieftaincy, chieftaincy conflicts, chieftaincy disputes in northern Ghana, causes of chieftaincy succession disputes, forms of chieftaincy succession disputes, how to manage/curb chieftaincy succession disputes and other relevant theories of the subject matter.

#### 2.1 Conceptual Reviews

##### 2.1.1 Concept of Chieftaincy

According to oral tradition, at a point in time when people began to live together, they saw that it was prudent to appoint who will be their leader. Most often they sought to look for somebody who was outspoken, pro-active and had leadership qualities as well (Ayensah, 2018). As time passed by, it eventually developed into a well-structured system which today has metamorphosed into the institution of Chieftaincy with the creation of stools and skins as a sign of kingship, honor, and authority (Knierzinger, 2017). Currently, it is one of the ideal means of projecting and promoting the rich African culture. Before colonization and modernity, the chiefs discharged their duties as the rulers and governors of their societies (Dankwa et al., 2021).

The chieftaincy institution has been transformed into an important arm of local governance since pre-colonial times (Ayensah, 2018). The British colonial policy depended on the chieftaincy structure in implementing an indirect-rule system of governance (the Bond of 1844). However, the chieftaincy institution has had several roles in local governance after independence of Ghana (Bashiru, 2020). The concept 'chieftaincy' can be analysed at first and foremost looking at who a chief is.

The word chief may mean different things to different people based on the perspective of the person looking at it. Within the jurisdiction of Ghana, a chief is 'a person who hails from the royal or right family lineage, and has been duly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned as a chief or queen mother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage (Yaro, 2019). This constitutional definition alone is insufficient from a number of perspectives (Jönsson, 2017). They assert that, this definition is circuitous because it seems to define a chief with reference to a chief or queen mother. They further state that, if one did not have a prior knowledge of who a chief was, he could not possibly know from the definition who is or not a chief.

Regarding 'family' and lineage or enstoolment, enskinment or installation is not sufficient characterization of chiefs or queen mothers. They further argue that, in some societies, a distinction is made between the chief who can be either male or female, and the queen mother. The latter may be a kinswoman to the chief, a mother, sister, niece, and other relation who shares the chief's roles as ruler. They again argue that, a term like family is not precise. Lineages can be different in span and genealogical depth with minimal lineages nesting within major or maximal lineages. One may belong to the 'royal lineage' yet be excluded if it is not the turn of one's lineage to claim the chieftainship (as the case was in the Mandari skin succession crises and the Tinga succession dispute all in the Bole traditional area), or if one has



been disqualified on the grounds like having deformity in some form or the other (Hardi, 2017).

These objections stripe the dangers and pitfalls of any definition of a chief that refuses the dynamic nature of the chieftaincy institution. This institution is the way for the expression of social, political, religious and to some extent, economic authority conferred on chiefs, queen mothers, priests, religious practitioners and other traditional functionaries in Ghanaian communities (Asante & Blewushie, 2021a).

Basically and traditionally, Chieftaincy is seen to be a complex institution possessing norms and traditions which include achieved and ascribed statuses and roles, as well as sets of responsibilities, privileges, rights and expectations that the stakeholders require of each other or from the society (NHC, 2018). This institution in its complex nature is situated in belief systems of the people and is regulated by principle and as well surrounded by material and abstract symbols and artifacts. Not only is chieftaincy an institution, it joins with other parts of the world and serves as a bridge between the modern system of governance and that of the traditional system (Tonah, 2020).

In many Ghanaian societies, the sources of chieftaincy are shrouded in myths and legends. On the other hand, in other societies it is of a fairly recent origin. Yet in other societies, the origin of chieftaincy remains a contested issue between local scholars and their expatriate counterparts (Tobias, 2020). Adjei, (2019) ended his argument that, chieftaincy mostly in the Akan society is based on the kinship system and the chief is mostly nominated from the maternal lineage. The chief is usually seen as the first citizen of the village, town or city as the case may be. He is regarded as the source of all traditional authority because he is considered as representing the

founding fathers of the community. On the other hand, he is the one who represents the ancestor as the visible representative based on the blood relationship between him and the very ancestors of the clan. In contrast to the Akan system, chieftaincy in the Northern Ghana for that matter is based on the kinship system altogether but by patriarchy.

### **2.1.2 The Concept of Conflict**

The Latin word “conflictus”, which means "collision or clash," is where the word "conflict" originates (Kwarkye & Owusu, 2019). Despite this, there have been numerous attempts to define conflict in a way that best emphasizes its salient characteristics. According to the various facets of conflicts, scholars conducting research on the subject are also generating definitions of them. There are different meanings based on what the main sources of conflict are, such as money, power, values, and emotions. These are commonly referred to as "causing agents" (Brukum, 2018; Bukari, 2019; Crook, 2019; Hafis-Deen, 2019; Knierzinger, 2017; Tijani, 2019). Conflict is a dynamic process, according to the conventional definition, in which structure, attitudes, and behaviors are always changing and impacting one another (Dankwa et al., 2021).

Ayensah, (2018) defined conflict as a fight between antagonists over values and conflicting claims to finite status, power, and resources in which the antagonists try to neutralize, harm, or eliminate their opponents. Conflict participants, according to Ayensah, (2018), are engaged in a war or rivalry over power, wealth, or identity in which they aim to harm one another. The distinctive feature of Ayensah idea is that it acknowledges the root reasons of conflict, such as differences in people's identities, levels of authority, and access to resources. Therefore, conflict is a positive or

negative struggle between two groups that have radically different goals and objectives.

According to Bashiru, (2020), conflict occurs when two or more people engage in actions meant to harm or undermine one another while pursuing competing aims or interests. These parties may be private individuals, businesses, or governments. The goals of the parties may not align with their access to resources, control of traditional or political authority, identities, or beliefs (Hardi, 2017). Conflict may arise when people's wants and interests are satisfied. A potentially violent conflict can develop when two groups or individuals, such as ethnic groups, pursue divergent political, economic, social, or cultural demands and interests.

Conflict, according to NHC, (2018), consists of three interconnected elements: the conflict circumstance, the conflict conduct, and the conflict attitudes. The author also believes that conflict situations are caused by the incompatibility of the parties' goals and, more frequently than not, by the parties' awareness that they are unable to satisfy these goals, leading to their propensity to engage in conflict. The author continues by pointing out that conflict attitudes are related to the parties' viewpoints. Parties have negative attitudes like annoyance or rivalry when they feel like they are being denied something that is rightfully theirs. The exact activities that parties use against one another to prevent them from accomplishing their objectives are referred to as conflict behavior. As a result, the conflict arises because the attitudes of the contending parties are mirrored in their actions. If these attitudes are negative, the action that follows will be unfavorable as well, sometimes creating a scenario where there is open conflict. These three factors support one another while also posing a conflict.

### **2.1.3 The Concept of Chieftaincy Disputes**

Chieftaincy in the post-colonial age is defined by the expression of inter- and intra-ethnic disputes that are fed and cultivated by the institution (Ferree & Haggard, 2021). Despite the fact that there were pockets of inter-ethnic conflict during the pre-colonial era as a result of attempts to expand the territories of one ethnic group at the expense of another, the intra/inter-ethnic conflicts that have occurred since independence have been unsettling, leaving a significant number of vacancies in the Regional Houses of Chiefs (Ray, 2021).

Following the death of an incumbent leader, internal succession debates took place; some of these discussions remained unresolved and continue in various ways today (Awedoba, 2009; Boafo-Arthur, 2003). According to Acheampong, (2019), three key factors may help explain lawsuits and disputes over excrement and skins:

The selection of the occupant of the stool or skin is the topic of ongoing litigation between rich members of society with contested claims to royal stools and skins and poor royals who will not cede their thrones to illegitimate claimants. Furthermore, the number of true royals has increased throughout time. As a result, Aganah, (2018) claims of the families and lineages are particularly forceful. As a result, some royal members are willing to resort to violence to settle disputes over who gets to sit in which stool or skin. Because a chief's reign is permanent, actual royals who could compete for the stools and skins are extremely concerned. As a result, there is community turmoil and unnecessary, costly litigation.

Similarly, Acheampong, (2019) identified four elements that contribute to chieftaincy conflicts. He believes that the relationship between chieftaincy and political authority results in control of economic wealth in the form of material holdings such as land,

mineral resources, regalia, and chief's staff. Because the position of chief comes with so much pomp and hoopla, both royals and non-royals will go to any length to attain the throne, resulting in conflict. He further claims that incumbents are to fault for chieftaincy conflicts because they siphon off enormous quantities of communal funds, such as royalties paid to the royal dynasty (Dzivenu, 2018).

Acheampong's third source of chieftaincy conflict is the lack of documentation on the process of selecting chiefs in Ghana, where the majority of chieftaincy disputes occur.

He says that the money and status associated with Ghana's chieftaincy structure have inspired a large number of young hopefuls to aspire for the throne. Several competing organizations nominate candidates for the stool in the event of the incumbent's death, resignation. Surprisingly, there appears to be sufficient information on

#### **2.1.4 Chieftaincy Succession**

According to Yaro, (2019), the appointment of non-royals to stools or skins in the nation is one factor that contributes to the development of chieftaincy succession disputes. He makes the observation that some of these individuals are non-natives who have been honored for the substantial role they played in contributing to the expansion of the state's infrastructure. Slaves who provided their masters with obedient service in the past were often given the opportunity to join the family of their masters. A few of them were given local women as prizes, and it was with these women that they started families. It is possible that the descendants of these slaves, who are now members of the royal family, will one day emerge as the leading candidates to fill the vacant seat on the stool. When members of the royal family attempt to discriminate against this group of individuals, sometimes referring to them as "foreigners" or "intruders," it creates problems for the country.

According to Jönsson, (2017), new types of succession difficulties have come to the fore in recent years. According to Jönsson, one more challenge that has arisen as a consequence of the high level of education and extensive experience possessed by chiefs, both of which make it difficult for them to remain in their palaces within their respective areas of jurisdiction, is the growing tendency toward the direct and indirect support of absentee chiefs. Because of this, chiefs who have received any sort of education are required to hone their abilities in cities, which requires them to spend a significant amount of time away from their palaces. Aspirants to the chieftaincy are supposed to have a solid educational background, therefore in practice, they become absentee chiefs. The challenges involved with this practice are enormous, given the demands of modern development. The most common approach taken by these chiefs is to delegate leadership responsibilities to councils of elders or stool fathers in the event that they are temporarily absent (Tonah, 2018). Because of this, the absentee chief might occasionally be seen as incompetent, which would allow others to usurp his authority and create a situation where there is conflict. When it comes to the factors that might lead to conflict amongst chieftainships, the relevance of customary law cannot be overstated (Oduro-Awisi, 2018).

On the other hand, it is strictly illegal for the state to get involved in the rituals of traditional succession that are practiced by the people. In order to create conflict, people who seek to be kingmakers, such as queen moms and learned elders, have sought refuge under customary law in some traditional societies.

### **2.1.5 Overview of Chieftaincy in Ghana**

In some sub-Saharan African communities, traditional authority and leadership find expression in forms such as religious leadership, lineage headship, leadership in extended families, and chieftaincy (Assanful, 2020). Assanful, (2021) added that Chieftaincy is, the fullest institutionalised expression of traditional rule; it composes the basic features of prescribed kinship and lineage succession to office; awe and sacredness of office and office holders; specific forms of contractual relationships between chiefs and their subjects; and institutionalised procedures for conflict resolution, decision-making and implementation mostly at the levels of community or kingdom (Asante & Blewushie, 2021b). Similarly, Gondwe, (2018) states that, it is very difficult to define Ghanaian Chieftaincy as a non-state player. It is part and parcel of national life and of the state as well. Chieftaincy is openly recognised and regulated under the constitutions of the Third and Forth Republics (Haruna, 2021), which incorporated and consolidated a substantive corpus of legislation passed during colonial times and after independence: in particular, the Chiefs Recognition Act (Ghana, 1959 cited in Asante and Blewushie, (2021)) and the two Chieftaincy Acts (Republic of Ghana, 1961, 1971). The 1992 Constitution, now in force-recognizes the historic legitimacy of chieftaincy and guarantees its autonomy from state intrusions in its unique domains therefore putting a stop at least in legal theory to the heavy-handed government interference that had been going on even since the days of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (Constitution, 1992) cited in (Gumbi, 2021). In past few decades, chieftaincy has been experiencing a substantial revival in several Sub-Saharan African countries (Cobb, 2018; Mohammed, 2018; Nyamnjoh, 2018; Patrick et al., 2020; Slater, 2019). In the West Africa sub region, this is particularly true of Francophone countries, where chiefs mostly found themselves in a weak position for most of the

four decades following independence, sometimes to the point of virtual irrelevance (Benin) or near extinction (Guinea Conakry) (Oduro-Awisi, 2018).

Chieftaincy represents two major functions: statutory (settlement of chieftaincy disputes and the codification of customary laws) and non-statutory (socio-economic development). Chiefs are the caretakers of the resources within their various communities. In the resource-endowed areas, for example, Bole, chiefs utilize the resources for the general good of their communities (Osei-kufuor et al., 2019). In addition to the assertion of Ferree and Haggard, (2021), Razak, (2019) say popular views on chiefs and chieftaincy are acutely relevant since African governments, international institutions and donor countries are showing a renewed interest in chieftaincy. However, many post-independent African governments regarded chiefs as problematic to modernization and nation-building and tried to curtail their role in local government and national politics (Ferree & Haggard, 2021; Ray, 2021; Tonah, 2018).

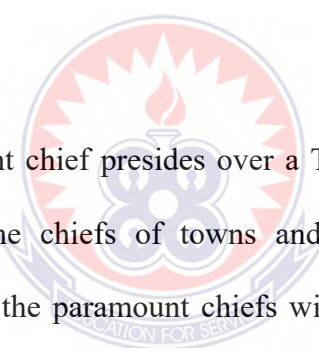


From the 1990s, a substantial number of African countries like Mozambique and Uganda have enhanced or formalized the position of their chiefs (Acheampong, 2019; Aganah, 2018; Dzivenu, 2018; Jönsson, 2017; Yaro, 2019). Chieftaincy culture in Ghana finds expression in a profusion of visual and oral symbolisms and images. Ghanaian chieftaincy is not only here and currently, it is rooted in a rich past and in tradition. It is required to preserve and transmit to modern generations its traditional legacies and heritage, tangible and intangible, real or invented (Ray, 2021). As a governance institution, it commands considerable power and authority over its constituents. This grants it to legislate in some cases, to adjudicate in some contexts, as well as to protect and defend its own. Its managerial functions too are too patent.



Its agents are often charged with the management of communal resources and their preservation. This makes the chieftaincy institution a developmental agency (Ferree & Haggard, 2021).

Additionally, Ray, (2021) said that the Constitution openly prohibits the abolition of chieftaincy by legislation and denies parliament the power to legislate to the detriment of the institution in any form. Sincerely speaking, the 1992 Constitution provides for an institutional structure networking a huge number of chiefly officeholders, from village or ward chiefs (and queen-mothers), up to Paramount chiefs, ruling over territorial units that are now more numerous than the native states were in the colonial Gold Coast administered by the British from the 1920s through to indirect rule (Aghanah, 2018).



In Ghana, every paramount chief presides over a Traditional Council formed by his subordinate chiefs and the chiefs of towns and villages within his jurisdiction (Acheampong, 2019). All the paramount chiefs within each region form a Regional House of Chiefs. Also, there is a National House of Chiefs, which is composed of ten members. Regional House of chiefs and whose president ranks amongst the very top positions in the protocol of the Republic. The National House of Chiefs has the final word in matters regarding chieftaincy. The Houses of Chiefs have the power to recognize and withhold recognition to chiefs (Aghanah, 2018).

For several years, the Governments of Ghana formed a Secretariat for chieftaincy affairs in the country. In latter part of 2005, following a heated debate, its functions were subsumed by a newly instituted Ministry for Culture and Chieftaincy Affairs: an association which is highly revealing of a still unresolved uncertainty surrounding the collocation of chieftaincy within the national political domain. Some members of the

Council of State-the top advisory body, are appointed by the President in their capacity as chiefs. Again, Traditional Councils nominate their representatives to sit in the District Assemblies (the very lowest structure of local government) in the group of non-elected members nominated by the Head of State in consultation with traditional authorities and other interest groups (Acheampong, 2019).

Chieftaincy is among one of the few active institutions that have survived all the three phases of Ghana's political history during pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras despite the general attitude of individuals towards chiefs, and the institution. Arguably, chieftaincy is the bedrock of the Ghanaian society; and eventually the political leadership cannot undermine its credibility without political and social repercussions (Dzivenu, 2018). Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (CIKOD) assert that, a local non-governmental organization that pay attention to the development of indigenous institutions in Ghana, about 80% of Ghanaians claim allegiance to one chief or another. The people regard chieftaincy as the repository of the history and tradition of Ghana; and the custodian of indigenous traditions, customs and usage (Acheampong, 2019). Again, the institution is regarded as the bond between the dead, the living and the yet unborn and is last resort for vacuum created by the modern partisan political structures, in terms of customary arbitration and the enforcement of laws at the communal settings (Aganah, 2018).

During the 1920's, colonial authorities set about putting the certain financial systems of what they called the 'native authorities' 'now known in the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana as the 'traditional councils'(Ray, 2021) .

The Nkrumah government which lasted from the year of independence, 1957, to the year of its overthrow in 1966, impeded the political and judicial roles of traditional rulers, broke their financial backbone and made them passive appendages to the central government (Ferree & Haggard, 2021). Under the colonial administration, they had been active sub-agents in their native authority administrations and native authority tribunals. The various acts relating to chieftaincy in these respects was the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1959. According to Tonah, (2018), Article 13 of the 1960 Constitution states that 'chieftaincy should be sustained and preserved', but, apparently, in the form that the government wanted it. The Chieftaincy Act (No. 81) of 1961 consolidated previous enactments on chieftaincy. This act defines a chief as an individual who:

- i. has been nominated, elected and installed as a chief in accordance with customary law; and
- ii. is recognized as a chief by the Minister responsible for Local Government.

Even though the first clause was contested by Razak, (2019) based on its pitfalls, the remaining provision of the act makes it clear that chiefs could function only in the manner that the central government deems fit and that all chiefs held office at the will of the government (Osei-kufuor et al., 2019).

It may be summarized that, after Kwame Nkrumah's period, Ghanaians, in general terms, embraced the view of the Coussey Committee (1949) which stated that chieftaincy must find a place in the governance of this country (Sicilia, 2017). This suggestion then motivated the 1969, 1979 and 1992 Constitutions which have progressively favoured chiefs. Oduro-Awisi, (2018) grouped chieftaincy into the following categories; pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial regimes. He adds that,

chieftaincy in the pre-colonial era was mainly a system of government that combined legislative, executive, judicial, religious and military responsibilities; and those functions were adopted at the appropriate level of the traditional governance structure. (i. e., at the level of the community and up to the paramount chief).

### **2.1.6 Chieftaincy in the Pre-Colonial Era**

Prior to colonial rule, traditional authority evolved in correspondence with transforming conditions, such as in the direction of main trade routes, in the location of international markets, struggles for the control of natural resources, including gold and the rise of expansionist ideologies (Nyamnjoh, 2018). The chieftaincy institution before colonial era showed more formidable and prestigious abilities because of the level of authority vested in the institution. The lower-level chiefs got instructions from the higher chiefs in various sphere of administration. It was the duty of the communities and divisional chiefs to report on the state of affairs of the community to the paramount chiefs on annual basis during annual durbars (Patrick et al., 2020). He further states that, the people of the pre-colonial time existed as separate ethnic states or kingdoms. Example of some of these states were; the Asante, the Dagomba, the Gonja, the Anlo and many others with boundaries geographically very different from their current regional demarcations. For example, the Asante state spanned four different regions of contemporary Ghana (Cobb, 2018).

### **2.1.7 Chieftaincy in the Colonial Era**

During the long period of colonial rule, the chieftaincy institution was refined, restructured and integrated into the British colonial administration (Mohammed, 2018). This was an effective way of facilitating control and effectively decreasing the cost of governance, and this marked the genesis of the legal framework to regulate the

institution. Before this period, chiefs with the support and recommendation of their council of elders, enforced law and order to regulate their jurisdictions. Three main considerations determined legislation regarding chieftaincy in the colonial era (Slater, 2019).

Gumbi, (2021) stated that, chiefs in these communities eventually lost their long-held community reverence and honour, because they were regarded as betrayers, and consequently the peace of the social order with the chiefs as the foremost constituents became a concern for the colonial regime. Haruna, (2021) stated, five ethnic groups, Mamprusi, Kusasi, Grunshi, and Builsa were merged with the Nayiri as the Paramount Chief. Wala, some Dagaaba and Sissala also came together under the leadership of the Wa Na which faced several objections by some majority of the Dagaaba and Sissala. Additionally, several unassimilated ethnic groups such as Nchumuru, Nawuri, Mo, and Vagala were subsumed with the Gonja chiefs, and the Konkombas and Chokosis were made subjects of Ya Na of the Dagomba kingdom.

Chiefs who were previously vicious adversaries at the pre-colonial period eventually came to appreciate the necessity of co-operation amongst traditional authorities and institutions, against the common imperial power, for mutual benefits and co-existence (Gondwe, 2018).

### **2.1.8 Chieftaincy in Post-Colonial Ghana**

The decline of the powers of the chiefs by the British colonial administration, made the relationship between chiefs and the central government after independence quite ambiguous (Asante & Blewushie, 2021). The question then arose whether chiefs must be allotted the same powers they possessed at time of the pre-colonial period or be

accorded the same treatment granted them under colonial rule (Assanful, 2021). He further states:

*The 1969 Constitution recognized the institution with the Traditional Councils, Regional and National Houses of Chiefs to be an integral part of the state machinery; and all chieftaincy matters were to be handled by the respective constituent bodies of the institution. The recognition was further enhanced with the passage of the Chieftaincy Act, 370 in September 1971, which remained as the main and substantive legal instrument for the institution until the 2008 Chieftaincy Act was passed. And most interestingly, the respective military regimes of Ghana also embraced the institution and accorded it the required dignity it deserved, in spite of the initial skirmishes that infrequently ensued between them. The military accepted and supported the institution as a means of acquiring political legitimacy (Mensah, 2014:267).*

This is so because, the chieftaincy institution directly relates with the people and therefore commands a lot of authority from the people. With the support of the people, the political institutions will face several litigations, thus, Articles 271 to 274 of the 1992 Constitution clearly states the establishment, functions, and jurisdiction of both Regional and National Houses of Chiefs. But, Article 276 of the 1992 Constitution divert a bit from the previous Constitutions with legal frameworks on chieftaincy which debars chiefs from *active* participation in partisan politics. Eventually, any chief who desires to engage in "active" partisan politics must step down from his or her stool or skin. The main aim of this provision is to uphold the sanctity of the traditional values and norms within the Ghanaian culture and that vested in the chieftaincy institution. With this, it is hoped, would absolve the institution from the rancour and wrangling associated with partisan politics (Assanful, 2020).

In accordance with the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, chiefs cannot join political parties and cannot become MPs, but they can be appointed to public offices for which they have individual requisite skill or qualifications and serve in public institutions that are formally non-partisan. District Assemblies are non-partisan bodies and a number of chiefs well beyond the provision of presidential appointees sit in assemblies in all capacities (Adjei, 2019). On the other hand, chiefs are appointed to serve on various Statutory Boards and Commissions such as the Forestry Commission, National Aids Commission, Constitutional Review Commission, Ghana National Petroleum Corporation Board, and many more. Chiefs are also appointed in certain situations such as disasters, planning committees, etc. (Bukari, 2019).

#### **2.1.9 Concept of Dispute/Conflict**

Conflicts, disputes, and disagreements are part of social groups and are to be found in all communal settings. The extent to which they appear may differ from one society to the other. In some societies, conflicts remain dominant while in others, there is a stronger tendency towards consensus. The reason for this difference among social groupings is manifold and sometimes tends to generate considerable controversy (Tobias, 2020). The concept of conflict is mostly confused with related terms such as violence. In clarifying violence, most discourses give pre-theoretical examples as first aids. Some of these examples are; knife-attack, savage beatings, shootings, bombing and physical torture Tonah, (2020). NHC, (2018) stated, psycho-cultural analysts perceive violence as a culturally learnt demeanour and personality constituent in a given society. She further states that psycho-cultural disposition to violence in the beginning stages of socialisation and life experience is crucial in determining and creating images about the self and others and society's inclination with respect to violence. Hardi, (2017) argues that, though this view is crucial, a society that is

psycho-culturally disposed to violence may not define with whom one argues, contests and fights. Violent conflicts and situations of insecurity can greatly intensify poverty. Also, Asante and Blewushie, (2021a) argued that in relationships in which individuals are very deeply involved, both feelings of attraction as well as hostility are likely to arise. He went ahead to say that, the closer the relationship, the greater the affective investment, and the more potential there is for ambivalence. With regard to further explanation to conflict situations in societies, Bashiru, (2020) added that, the absence of conflict within a relationship cannot serve as an index of its underlying stability. Hence, parties are more likely to express their hostile feelings if they feel secure and stable in the relationship and that they are more likely to avoid acting out their hostile feelings if they fear the termination of the relationship (Ayensah, 2018).

A strategic conflict analysis provides a deeper understanding of the conflict context and is an important source of information for use in long-term planning regarding how to reduce poverty through development cooperation in areas affected by violent conflict and insecurity (Dankwa et al., 2021). However, in situations of intense tension, violent conflict or in post-conflict situations, development programmes and projects always run the risk of contributing to more tensions in society, thereby reducing their intended positive impact.

The theoretical debate on conflict and consensus has pitched two major schools of thought against one other. On the contrary, are a number of theorists of the structural functionalist school have conceptualized society as a social system with the various parts within the system contributing towards the maintenance of the entire system (Knierzinger, 2017). Therefore, the structural features of a society are the social, economic and political. They determine the parties with whom one cooperates,



competes and fights with (Ashahadu, 2018). Hafis-Deen, (2019) further states that, violence is the expression of extreme, consistent and intense level of conflict. It can be told that all violence is an outcome of a conflict situation but not every conflict situation is violent. Conflict as defined by Samuel and Halidu, (2018) and also cited by Issifu and Issifu, (2019) as an interaction between two or more parties whose actions towards realizing incompatible objectives or interests result in varying degrees of discord. The psychoanalyst, Sigmund Freud, believes that the genetic material that codes the chromosomes of human beings makes them prone to conflict. So, he argues that, there is no likelihood of our being able to suppress humanity's aggressive tendencies (Brukum, 2018).

In line with the argument of Sicilia, (2017), she made a distinction between two types of conflict which are: the one in which the goal is personal and subjective, and that in which the matter in contention has an impersonal objective aspect. He notes the claim that objectified struggles, which go beyond personal issues, are likely to be more severe and radical (Nayiri Tonal, 2018). He ended his argument by stating that conflict also leads to the formation of coalitions and associations between previously unrelated parties. If more parties face a common opponent, bonds tend to develop between them. This can lead to the emergence of new groups or result in instrumental associations in the face of a common threat (Bukari, 2019). Samuel and Halidu, (2018) stated that, Sigmund and Hobbes seem to conclude that conflict is simply built into the DNA of humans. However, Asante and Blewushie, (2021) asserts that, this view of humanity fails to take into account environmental and other factors that can influence people to act violently. In the same way, crisis is mostly confused with conflict. Crisis defined as a situation of near hopelessness, in which an external intervention is required, which intervention may mark a positive or negative turning

point in the crisis. In the opinion of Issifu and Issifu, (2019), as cited in the United States Institute of Peace, (2008), crisis is a tense confrontation between armed forces that are mobilized and ready to fight and may be engaged in threats and occasional low-level skirmishes but have not exerted any significant amount of force. The probability of the outbreak of war is very high.

In this scenario, crisis goes far beyond the mere occurrence of conflict. In a crisis situation, conflict and violence often precede the crisis. Crises in this regard are seen as a disagreement based on interaction of the two succession parties. Experts in conflict studies have the propensity to differentiate between conflict and crisis. Tijani, (2019) used conflict to describe the underlying issues in a dispute and crisis to refer to the outbreak of armed hostilities.

## **2.2 Theoretical Review**

Numerous conflict theories have been produced over the course of human history in an effort to explain the nature of social conflicts. For successful conflict resolution, an in-depth and rigorous understanding of the issue's remote or underlying causes is required, and this understanding serves as the cornerstone for all subsequent conversations. It is essential, in order to have an understanding of the methods for conflict resolution, to have an understanding of the ideas that underpin the theme. The theories ought to contribute to a better understanding of the underlying reasons for the conflicts. Structural Theory of Conflict, Historical Institutionalism and the Relational Theory of Social Conflict serve as the theoretical underpinnings for this research.

### **2.2.1 The Relational Theory of Social Conflict**

Relational theories explore the sociological, political, economic, and historical ties between various groups in an attempt to explain why violent conflicts occur between these groups. The notion that differences in value systems, cultural norms, and organizational objectives all play a role in defining how individuals and groups connect to one another is widespread (Acheampong, 2019). Disparities in cultural values pose a sociological challenge to the processes of group or individual identity formation. This results in the temptation to perceive others as trespassers who must be prevented from crossing preset cultural boundaries.

For instance, political economy identifies struggle for power and the other benefits it confers as the fundamental source of friction between different interest groups within a political system. This rivalry is a potential source of conflict. In situations when numerous groups share a fixed natural resource, there is a strong probability that each group will strive to eradicate, neutralize, or otherwise hurt the other or monopolize such resources (Dzivenu, 2018). This probability is comparable to the probability that these groups will have a hostile relationship.

Additionally, Yaro, (2019) argues that a history of chieftaincy succession conflict between groups has led in the establishment of negative stereotypes and prejudice, and that this history is the fundamental cause of a number of modern conflicts. When there is a lengthy history of adverse interactions between opposing groups, it is difficult for them to develop mutual confidence. In the case of the instability surrounding the Navrongo traditional chieftaincy, the long-standing differences amongst the fighting factions have made it impossible for them to trust one another; consequently, they do not appear to be prepared for a dialogue. Because each of these

factions has firmly established the position that they are the rightful heirs to the thrones under study, it is exceedingly difficult to resolve their fight. According to relational theorists, the perception that other people are different cause individuals to assume that they are entitled to less or have a lower position due to their culture. This circumstance impedes the flow of communication between the groups and muddles each group's impressions of the other.

### **2.2.2 Structural Theory of Conflict**

The fundamental hypothesis of the structural theory of conflict is that social strife is an inevitable consequence of the particular manner in which societies are formed and organized (Jönsson, 2017). The structural theory investigates societal problems as potential sources of conflict. These social problems include political and economic exclusion, injustice, poverty, exploitation, and inequality. According to Anamzoya and Tonahr, (2018), the exploitative and unjust structure of human society, as well as the superiority of one social class over another, are the root causes of societal disputes relating to Chieftaincy succession disputes. Mahama and Longi, (2018) made the observation that the chance of conflict is raised in a culture when the defining characteristics of that culture are economic and political discrimination as well as poor kinship relations. According to Crook, (2019), the management of resources and how they are put to use are at the core of the developing problems that are occurring around the world today.

When social, economic, cultural, or political change is brought about by an outside force, the presumption is made that the institutions involved have flaws that need to be remedied by imposing new institutions that are fundamentally different from the ones they replaced. The symbols, perceptions, identities, and meanings that cause

conflict are the structural roots of the conflict that are at the heart of the conflict. According to Tem, (2017), the structural root pertains to the way in which we organize and structure our ideas and emotions, as well as the cultural message that influences our perceptions of social phenomena. In other words, it has to do with how we see social phenomena.

### **2.2.3 Historical Institutionalism**

Using Historical Institutionalism (HI), it is possible to better comprehend the Chieftaincy Succession Disputes in the Navrongo Traditional Area. This hypothesis is one of the New Institutionalism method's three components (NI). In opposition to the behavioral viewpoint explanation of social and political occurrences and results, the NI is a distinctive theoretical framework developed throughout the 1960s and 1970s. "Behavioralism tried to explain why and how various individuals conduct unique actions" (Buur & Kyed, 2018). In contrast, the New Institutionalism goes beyond the logical examination of traditional institutional frameworks to conduct inductive research on how institutions (formal laws and informal practices) influence individuals and interact. Thus, the new institutionalists want to demonstrate how institutions influence the determination of political and social outcomes (Buur & Kyed, 2018; Kwarkye & Owusu, 2019; Mahama & Longi, 2018; Tem, 2017; Tijani, 2019). Consequently, researchers found three separate NI strands. Institutionalism such as chieftaincy institution is exemplified through sociology, history, and rational choice (Anamzoya & Tonahr, 2018; Ayensah, 2018; Bashiru, 2020; Dankwa et al., 2021; Hafis-Deen, 2019; Knierzinger, 2017).

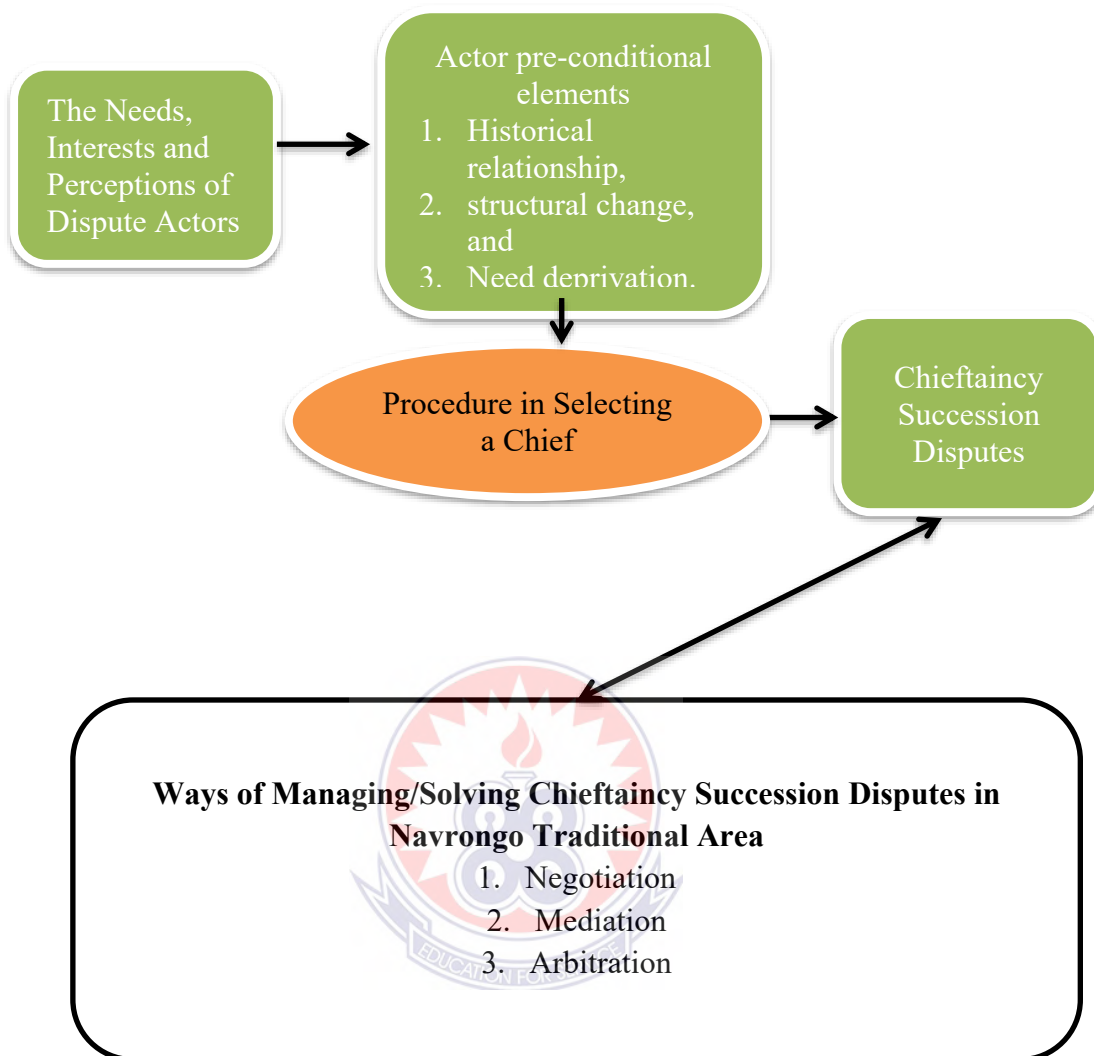
Logical choice according to institutionalists is the pursuit of individual material self-interest is the main influence on political behavior (utility maximization). Rational Choice views politics as a series of issues requiring collective action and emphasizes the role of strategic interaction, mediated by institutions, in determining political outcomes (Oduro-Awisi, 2018). Sociological institutionalism places a strong focus on culture to explain why organizations develop widespread sets of institutional forms, procedures, and symbols. In addition to formal rules, procedures, and standards that serve as the basis for human activity, it expands institutions to include symbol systems, cognitive scripts, and moral norms (Bashiru, 2020).

Slater, (2019), on the other hand, views Historical Institutionalism (HI) as a rather disorganized collection of texts by authors that frequently combine constructivist and rationalist explanations, or the "math" vs "culture" approach. HI focuses on the influence of institutional frameworks and group disputes on social and political behavior, as well as their consequences (Tonah, 2020). HI views politics as an overarching system of interdependent components, with competition between competing groups for limited resources at its core. Political group theory and structural functionalism inform this idea. They expand the definition of institutions to encompass both formal and informal norms, practices, regulations, and conventions incorporated into the organizational structure of the polity (Ray, 2021). Institutions shape actors' desires exogenously, according to the strategic interaction (calculus) hypothesis, and instrumental human behavior is based on a strategic calculation to maximize utility (Tonah, 2018). In order to accomplish this, decisions made on the institutional architecture of government entities influence the future decision-making of individuals (Slater, 2019).

In contrast, the interpretive interaction (cultural) approach asserts that political actions are constrained by worldviews. This is due to the fact that each individual is a unique organism wholly integrated into a universe of institutions constituted of symbols, scripts, and routines that serve as filters for interpreting conditions and oneself prior to formulating an action plan. Thus, institutions offer moral and cognitive settings for understanding and action (Sicilia, 2017). In addition, this theory presupposes path-dependent social causation, unequal power relations in the establishment and functioning of institutions, and idea diffusion (the effect of integrating institutions with ideas or beliefs on political outcomes) (Gondwe, 2018). HI is distinguished from other social science disciplines by its focus on contemporary empirical issues, historical orientation, and emphasis on how institutions produce and influence political behavior and outcomes.

Historical institutional theory offers a novel perspective on how the formal and informal institutions of the Ghanaian state, as well as those of the Kasena people are constantly affected chieftaincy conflicts before, during, and after colonialism. The influence of colonial and post-colonial political structures (such as the Navrongo Traditional Council) with no roots in pre-colonial political offices over traditional institutions with roots in pre-colonial traditional offices contributes to divergent opinions regarding the legitimate heir to the Navrongo throne and that of others in the Kasena groups. In addition, it resolves issues regarding the customs and traditions of the Kasena people, specifically succession and contentious interpretations of ancestral and hereditary rights to political office.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework of the Study**

Chieftaincy Succession dispute actors always have their own needs, interests and perceptions in selection of a chief for an area. Their needs, perceptions and interests are often influenced by certain pre-conditional elements which include; Historical relationships, structural change and need deprivation. When these elements are met, then their perceptions, needs and interests are achieved in the selection of a chief. However, if their pre-conditional expectations are not met, this leads to chieftaincy succession disputes.



This conceptual framework (shown in Fig. 2.1) was established to evaluate the efficacy of the various Chieftaincy Succession Disputes resolution strategies utilized in the Navrongo traditional area chieftaincy disputes. It takes into account the need deprivation, structural changes, and historical links of the conflict's parties. However, certain conditions must be completed before picking a Dispute resolution technique for a specific problem. The selection of a resolution technique is influenced by these preconditions. Simply put, the actors or institutions will be heavily impacted by the pre-conditional factors as well as the wants, interests, and perceptions of the conflict parties while selecting a conflict resolution technique to end a chieftaincy succession dispute. For instance, Brukum, (2018) noted that one of the requirements for mediation is that the parties' efforts to resolve the dispute have failed or that the issue is complex. This study evaluated the formal and informal dispute resolution methods. Adopting mediation as a strategy for dispute resolution, for instance, needs the availability of proper signs. Understanding the desires of the parties is a necessary condition for amicable dispute resolution, yet certain indications and criteria must also be present for conflict resolution to be effective. The negotiating indices are similarly affected by the same elements. Figure 3 depicts the goals, which include maintaining a peaceful, stable society where opposing groups can live, enhancing interactions between parties, and resolving the structural roots of the chieftaincy succession disputes. The accomplishment of these objectives is then evaluated based on certain factors. In other words, the determinants will be used to evaluate or monitor the performance of the specified goals for treating the fundamental causes of the chieftaincy succession disputes. Among the variables in this paradigm are a drop in aggression, victimization, and discrimination, as well as an increase in the parties' willingness to discuss the disputing matter with one another.

## **2.4 Empirical Literature Review**

### **2.4.1 Chieftaincy Disputes in Northern Ghana**

It is indeed a fact that, chieftaincy conflicts are found throughout Ghana, there is a widespread view in the country that northern Ghana is specifically prone to such conflicts. This is probably because some conflicts in the North have been very violent and deadly, involving several ethnic groups living over a wide geographical area. A lot of the conflicts are mostly chieftaincy succession disputes, involving two or more gates laying claim to a chieftaincy title. Such conflicts usually are a matter of determining who is the best qualified person to claim and occupy a particular position, which traditional rituals constitute the "enskinment" process, and whether the individual chosen has gone through the required rituals processes administered by the traditionally designated persons (Anamzoya & Tonahr, 2018; Bukari, 2019; Issifu & Issifu, 2019; Kwarkye & Owusu, 2019; Mahama & Longi, 2018; Tem, 2017; Tijani, 2019; Yaro, 2020). Generally speaking, Chieftaincy disputes become active when there are two or more rival people claiming a vacant stool or skin, the symbols of kingship or chieftaincy in a particular traditional area. The rival claimants may either belong to different ethnic groups or to different lineages of the founding family. These are exacerbated by direct as well as strong political interventions in chieftaincy affairs (Buur & Kyed, 2018). Chieftaincy violence and other conflicts in the north has severally been explained by the long-time of colonial and postcolonial exploitation and neglect of the region, the rate of poverty and high illiteracy rate and the lack of socio-economic infrastructure in the area. Again, Northern Ghana covers a vast geographical area and is generally sparsely populated, with a very minimal presence of state institutions and public personnel including the security forces, police stations, and courts (Crook, 2019; Mahama & Longi, 2018).

Anamzoya and Tonahr, (2018) argues further that besides being violent and protracted, a few chieftaincy conflicts in the north have also been politicized, with ruling governments and the opposition parties directly and indirectly interfering in the conflict. Additionally, conflicts in the north have also been recurrent, often defying numerous attempts at a resolution by the government, traditional authorities and civil society (Crook, 2019; Mahama & Longi, 2018; Tem, 2017).

In northern Ghana and elsewhere, several succession disputes have daunted the image of the chieftaincy institution branding the institution as volatile and barbaric. For instance, there have been many of such succession conflicts between 1980 and 2002. In 1991, Dagombas fought among themselves at Voggu and Zabzugu. Between 1980 and 1986 the Mamprusi and the Kusasi fought three times in the Bawku area over succession to the Bawku chieftaincy. In March 2002, the Dagomba fought among themselves at Yendi during which Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II, the overlord of Dagbon (together with some 40 others) lost his life (Yaro, 2020). The Bimbila succession crises date back to 1999 as well as many of such conflicts in the country. Even though the immediate causes of these conflicts differ, the remote ones are similar if not the same (Tijani, 2019).

Additionally, the conflict of who is the legitimate Bolga Naba (Between two claimants, Martin Abilba III and Awugiya) has also led to some violence in Bolgatanga between supporters of the two. In line with the Bolga chieftaincy affair is a number of succession and land disputes in the Upper East Region. One of such is the Zaare (Tendaana affair) which is essentially between the chief and the earth priest and the question of which one of them controls land and has a right to dispose of land (Issifu & Issifu, 2019).

In recent times the Navrongo traditional area has gone through enskinment of a new chief and this was not done without conflicts since there were different claimants to the skin. Though it did not degenerate into violence there were serious issue with regards to who ascends the skin.

## **2.5 Causes of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes**

The essence of the chieftaincy institution has not waned in most parts of Ghana irrespective of the entrenchment of democratic rule and the expansion of state powers since the return to civilian rule in 1992. On the other hand, a lot of people still hold their traditional leaders in high esteem and support for the institution and chieftaincy is still strong throughout the country (Bukari, 2019).

Nayiri et al., (2018) stated that, in Ghana, the struggle to become a Chief may become more violent when the political, historical, economic and social circumstances surrounding the establishment of the chieftaincy institution in a traditional state become contested; when the rules of succession become unclear; when successive national governments and political parties support one group against the other in a bid to serve their own parochial political interest; and when there are small and light weapons available to the factions in the dispute.

Also, Sicilia, (2017) suggested three critical factors that may account for litigations and disputes with respect to stools and skins. They are as follows:

- i. Affluent personalities in society with ambiguous claims to royal stools and skins fiercely contesting the position with the poorer royals who refuse to succumb to the illegitimate contenders, thereby generating perpetual litigation in the selection of occupant to the stool or skin.

- ii. Legitimate royals have increased in number over the years, as well. Hence the competitive-claims have become highly intense among the families and lineages. Consequently, some royal members are prepared to use fire-arms in the settling of disputes regarding election of occupants to stools and skins.
- iii. The tenure of a chief terminates only at death and this generates a lot of anxiety among legitimate royals who are potential candidates to the stools and skins. This leads to frivolous and wasteful litigations and strife in the communities.

Brukum, (2018) similarly outline four sources of chieftaincy dispute. He argued that, chieftaincy is associated with political power, which eventually translates into the control of economic wealth in the form of stool properties such as land, mineral deposits, regalia and servants who work for the chief. The pomp and pageantry that accompany the position of the chief make the institution so attractive that, both royals and non-royals desire to use every means to ascend to the throne, thus leading to conflict.

Hafis-Deen, (2019) buttresses it with an argument that, misappropriation of communal resources, (such as royalties) by incumbents is a cause of these chieftaincy disputes. The third source of chieftaincy conflict added by Hafis-Deen is that, a lot of the disputes in chieftaincy occur due to lack of documentation on the mode of selection of chiefs, there is basically no written down proper procedure. And lastly, Ashahadu, (2018) added that the appointment of non-royals to stools or skins prepare the grounds for chieftaincy conflicts. He added that, some of these people are total foreigners who are recognised as a result of their immense contribution to the state in terms of infrastructural development.

Since Ghana restored civilian power in 1992, democratic administration has been more entrenched and the reach of official authority has increased, but the chieftaincy institution's significance in the majority of the country has not reduced. In contrast, many individuals continue to hold traditional leaders in high respect, and the institution of chieftaincy enjoys broad support (Slater, 2019). According to Mohammed, (2018), the struggle to become a "chief" in Ghana can turn violent when the historical, political, economic, and social circumstances surrounding the establishment of the chieftaincy institution in a traditional state are contested; when the rules of succession are unclear; when succeeding national governments and political parties support one group against the other to advance their own narrow political interests; and when tyranny is re-established.

Similarly, Cobb, (2018) identifies three primary factors that may be at the center of lawsuits and disputes around feces and skins:

1. Rich people in society with dubious claims to royal stools and skins compete fiercely with destitute royals who refuse to cede to their illegitimate rivals, culminating in a never-ending dispute over who should occupy the stool or skin.
2. Throughout history, the number of legitimate royals has also increased. As a result, various families and lineages have contradictory claims at present. As a result, some members of the royal family are willing to use firearms to resolve disputes about who should sit on stools and skins.
3. Due to the fact that a chief's reign ends only upon death, legitimate royals who may be eligible for the stools and skins are concerned. As a result, there is conflict within the communities and needless and expensive litigation.

Similarly, Patrick et al., (2020) as identifying four causes of chieftaincy conflicts. According to his theory, chieftaincy is associated with political authority, which translates into the control of tangible financial resources such as land, mineral deposits, regalia, and slaves who work for the chief. The pomp and circumstance associated with being the leader make the institution so alluring that both royals and non-royals are willing to use whatever means necessary to ascend to the throne, causing conflict.

According to Nyamnjoh, (2018), these chieftaincy disputes are the outcome of incumbents exploiting shared resources (such as royalties given to the royal house). According to Nyamnjoh, the absence of paperwork on the selection of chiefs is the third cause of chieftaincy conflicts.

The appointment of non-royals to stools and skins in the nation, according to Oduro-Awisi, (2018), creates the conditions for chieftainship conflicts. He notes that some of these individuals are foreigners who have contributed significantly to the improvement of the state's infrastructure and are being rewarded for their efforts.

## **2.6 How to minimize Chieftaincy Succession Disputes**

Conflict settlement is defined as “outcome oriented strategies for achieving sustainable win-win solutions and/or putting an end to direct violence, without necessarily addressing the underlying conflict causes, (Knierzinger, 2017). Although violent fighting is suppressed, the underlying causes of the violence remain largely unaddressed. Again, conflict settlement style typically focuses on mediations between top-level ‘leaders, such as political or military figures and high-profile representatives

of the warring factions. Chieftaincy as an institution has been fused into the governance structures of Ghana. It is incumbent on the institution to come out more useful in the midst of westernisation of the Ghanaian youth, and the dwindling of the Ghanaian culture due to increasing sophistication via the evolution of and access to modern technology. In view of these challenges, for the institution to be recognised transcends legal privileges and the status quo to command of reverence from the urban and rural Ghanaian (Dankwa et al., 2021).

According to Ayensah, (2018), for chiefs and queen mothers in Ghana to be relevant and influential in the public sphere amongst the next generations of Ghanaian societies, the chieftaincy institution must develop an appropriate peer review mechanism, a system which will empower a paramount chief from a traditional area to monitor and evaluate the custodian responsibility and programs of another traditional area, with the very aim of invigorating the progress of the area. The peer review system will curb the illegal sale of stool lands to unscrupulous investors who connive with mendacious chiefs to exploit the resources of their communities, Bashiru, (2020) also advocated for a sustainable and prudent financial arrangement and framework for the chieftaincy institution. In her opinion, this will equip the state to provide relevant resources for the institution of chieftaincy in order to insulate the institution from direct political interventions and control. The prevailing arrangements where the National House of Chiefs is treated similarly to any other government agency is unhelpful.

## **2.7 Chieftaincy Conflicts in Ghana: The Role of the State**

The chieftaincy institution has though maintained its relevance in the Ghanaian society, its biggest challenge confronted most of the time has always been succession



disputes and the continuing chieftaincy conflicts, especially in the Northern half of the Ghana, has not only undermined the Institution and its legitimacy but has also become a major security threat not only to the areas concerned but to the stability of the entire nation (Asante & Blewushie, 2021).

It is a fact there are other causes of conflict in Ghana, Chieftaincy succession disputes stands tall. Who is the right person to be the next chief or king? The demise of a chief and the coming in of the next has mostly become a source for conflict in Ghana especially in the Northern part.

According to the former Minister of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, the Honourable Kofi Dzamesi, there are about 356 chieftaincy disputes across Ghana. And he attributed these disputes to the lack of well laid down succession plans and in many cases are subject to manipulation. The successions to the throne are based on un-codified customs and practices. These disputes usually end in intensive and devastating conflicts such as the Dagbon chieftaincy crisis, Bawku Chieftaincy conflict, the Bimbilla chieftaincy crisis, the Anlo chieftaincy conflict, and the Ga Mantse succession dispute etc.

Another major cause of chieftaincy conflict may also be attributed to the ultimate control of resources by Chiefs. Taking the Northern Ghana for example, Chiefs do not only command respect amongst their subjects, they also have access and control over considerable resources including the labour of their subjects, land, livestock, minerals, water and trees of economic value. Also, the position of the individual among chiefly societies depends on whether his/her father/mother in the kingship title. Title holders are not just respected but venerated and revered. These factors explain why ones' desire to become a chief is high amongst both the rural and the educated urban

population in Ghanaian society (Hardi, 2017; NHC, 2018; Tobias, 2020; Tonah, 2020).

Mostly due to this high desire to become a chief in many parts of Northern Ghana the contest for chieftaincy titles, particularly at the divisional, paramount or kingship level, is highly competitive. Adding to this problem is also the fact that, becoming a chief is not just a contest between individual members of the royal group, but it also involves the contestants' families, lineages and clans as well as their friends and supporters which end up in dividing the people even the more (Adjei, 2019; Assanful, 2020).

It is therefore not surprising that the contest resulting from chieftaincy succession usually tend to be extended to involve members of the entire lineage, clan or ethnic group. Therefore, becoming recurrent, violent and often defying numerous attempts at a resolution by the government, traditional authorities and civil society (Asante & Blewushie, 2021b; Assanful, 2021; Gondwe, 2018).

Apart from it being violent and protracted, a few chieftaincy conflicts in the north have also been politicized, with the ruling government and the main opposition party directly and indirectly interfering in the conflict and supporting the different factions in the conflict. Even though the Ghanaian Constitution frowns on chiefs from engaging in active partisan politics, the institution is not insulated from politics. In some instances, individuals and feuding factions contesting for a throne attached themselves to political parties. This makes it extremely difficult for governments to resolve chieftaincy disputes. Any court's ruling on chieftaincy conflicts is viewed with political lenses. The Bimbilla chieftaincy and the Dagbon Chieftaincy crises are typical examples.

An institution responsible for the protection and promotion of peace has rather been dipped into violence and is eventually becoming in many places a curse rather than a blessing and the response of the state in most cases is nothing to write home about. The prime challenge of the state in dealing with chieftaincy succession disputes in Ghana is as a result of party politics.

## **2.8 Some Attempts at Chieftaincy Conflict Resolutions/Management**

Fortunately for Ghana as a country, the potential for war has long been recognized and efforts aimed at addressing any form of unforeseeable eventualities have been thoroughly carved, these include the following:

- i. Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious affairs responsible for coordinating Chieftaincy affairs and making necessary recommendations to governments. Currently a research project on the lines of succession for all paramountcies in Ghana is ongoing. Even though faced with several challenges making the process slow.
- ii. Establishment of the National Peace Council (NPC) by an Act of Parliament. A National Peace infrastructure with offices nationwide for the promotion of peace and mitigation of conflicts in Ghana.
- iii. Proactive Civil Society Organizations engagements e.g The Ghana Catholic Bishops Conference, Christian Council of Churches, etc periodically monitor government behavior in relation to communal conflicts and putting pressure on government to improve their performance in this regard.
- iv. Imposition of state of emergencies (curfews) in areas with sporadic conflicts usually with heavy presence of the security by the government. Added to the presence of the Security is the willingness of the vast majority of the youth not to allow themselves to be used for violent activities.

- v. Attempts have also been made by various agencies facilitated by the state to establish a database of conflict zones and to design early warning systems to help pre-empt violence and deal with them proactively E.g. NPC, WANEP, UNDP, etc.

Concretely, following the Yendi Chieftaincy conflict, the Government set up the Wuaku Commission of inquiry to determine the facts leading to the escalation in violence and to identify the perpetrators of the Conflict in Yendi. After the Commission completed its work, the Government accepted its report and issued a white paper relating to its implementation.

Also the President set up a Committee of three eminent chiefs under the chairmanship of the Asantehene, to look primarily at the traditional issues relating to the conflict. This committee has worked with the two royal families to produce a road map that is intended to lead to the restoration of peace. It is sad to say that the implementation has been facing numerous challenges revealing further the protracted nature of such intra-communal conflicts.

## **2.9 Catholic Church and Conflict Resolution or Management in Northern Ghana**

Over the years the Church in Ghana like other Civil Society Organisations has done a lot in peace building and conflict management especially in conflict prone areas in Ghana. The government also go about and continues to do the usual things in times of conflict and offer short-term solutions such as imposition of state of emergency in the areas concerned, visitation by high powered government officials to the area and to victims mostly in the hospitals with very high Media team following. These measures in fact do not offer long lasting solutions to the underlying root causes of the conflict as citizens of the area continue to suffer the effects of such conflicts without any

further support from the State in terms of how to permanently deal with the issue (Haruna, 2021).

Most often, government is unable to win the trust of the feuding factions due to a multiplicity of reasons hence its unable to amicably resolve conflicts expeditiously as it should. The Church therefore appears in the scene not only to complement government efforts but to fill in this gap as a neutral arbiter (Gumbi, 2021). The Church is practically known and is planted among the people, and subjected to the same political administration and governance structures as existing by law. The Church capitalizes on its enormous presence in almost every village, town or city to offer home grown solutions to home grown problems. In the end, the church ends up taking more proactive role in peace building than the government (Slater, 2019).

Almost all the dioceses of Northern Ghana have recorded one form of conflict or other. But the worst affected of them all is the Catholic Diocese of Yendi which has nearly become a headquarters of violent communal conflicts in Northern Ghana. Most of the conflicts recorded in the Northern Region took their roots from the Yendi Diocese located in the North-Eastern corridor of Ghana (Nyamnjoh, 2018). These include the 1994 ethnic conflict between the Konkombas and the Dagombas, the Dagbon chieftaincy crisis which led to the murder of the Ya Naa (Yakubu Andani II) in 2002 and the very recent chieftaincy conflict within the Nanumba people which started in 1999.

Others have also cited poverty as another underpinning cause of these conflicts apart from chieftaincy succession disputes. The proactive method of the Church in conflict resolution inspired Bishop Vincent Boi-Nai (Catholic Bishop), to commence a Peace Initiative for the integration of Dagbon and Konkombas after the violent ethnic

conflict between the two groups in 1994. In his view, it is practically impossible to "preach to people who are fighting". When there is peace, there can be development as the Church exists not only for evangelization but for integral human development (Bukari, 2019). His initiative was later renamed the Yendi Peace Committee in 2001 as it had to help in building peace in Yendi after the murder of the King of Dagbon. The Committee composed of people from different religious and political groupings purposely to reduce the tension between the two parties and also the sake of diverse opinions. The Catholic Church in Yendi is known to be the first NGO to bring together the two warring factions in the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict for a face-to-face dialogue, which contributed to the reduction of tension in that area. The diocese was awarded the Martin Luther King Jnr. Peace Award for Peace and Social Justice in recognition of these efforts. And this was presented by the US Embassy in Ghana to the Bishop of the Diocese at the time.

Alongside the Bishop of Yendi, there is also the Diocesan Justice and Peace Committee which works in partnership with the National Catholic Justice and Peace Commission for the purposes of peace building.

Currently, the idea of a Peace Committee has metamorphosed into a Peace Centre named YENDI PEACE CENTRE (YPC) with a legal backing to operate as a Non-governmental Organization by the Registrar General's Department of Ghana in 2007. Not only paying attention to Peace building but also on other relevant thematic areas of concern in the Region, for example promotion of good governance and Human rights and Migration. The Yendi Peace Centre implemented a large scale project in the Political District of Bimbilla for sustainable peace following the murder of one of

the contending chiefs and several others which contributed to the imposition of a curfew in the area.

The involvement of local Church in managing conflicts and lowering tensions in the conflicts of Northern Ghana e.g. in Bawku, Bolgatanga, Damongo, Wa, Yendi and (of course) in the South Alavanyo-Nkonya has been phenomenal and commendable.

It is not surprising therefore that, a former Minister of the Northern Region, Alhaji Mustapha Ali Idris, commended the Roman Catholic Church for its efforts mostly in the areas of education, health, water, etc., and lack of recognition to the Church for its enormous efforts in containing the conflict situation in Northern Ghana; he added that ‘when the history of the difficult situation comes to be written, your names would be printed in letters of gold (Oduro-Awisi, 2018).

Notwithstanding these praises, there is still much to be done in the area of Chieftaincy succession conflict management in Ghana in order to maintain peace and development in the Country in general and to make the institution of chieftaincy more effective, proactive, and formidable than ever particularly in Northern Ghana.

## **2.10 The Geographical Setting of Navrongo Traditional Area**

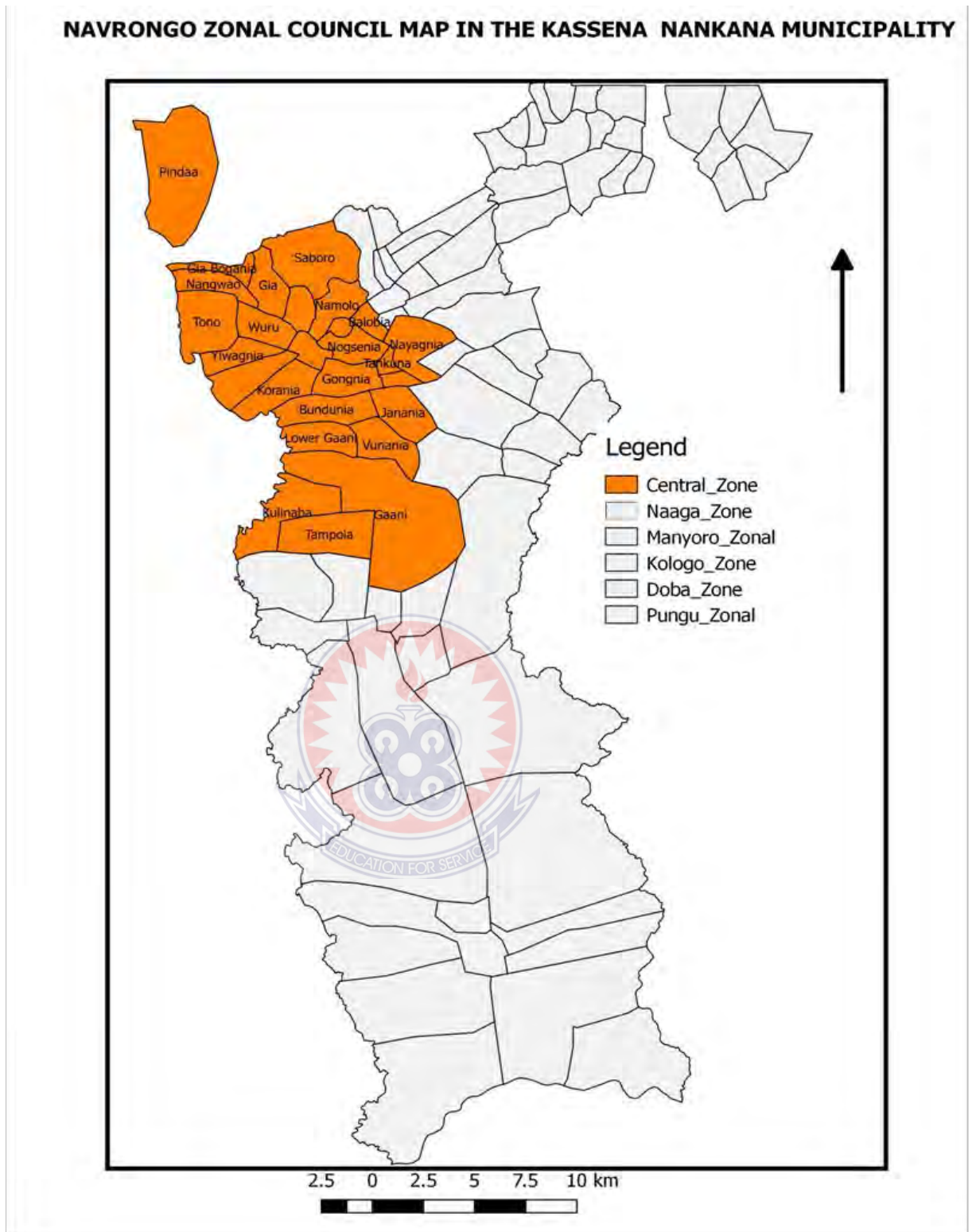
Navrongo is the administrative capital of the Kasena-Nankana people of Ghana. It can be located in the northern part of Ghana in the Upper East Region. Navrongo’s landscape is flat terrain. It is five hundred miles from the National capital, Accra. Chuchuliga bounds the area to the west and Kandiga on east. On the north is Paga and Biu on the south respectively. It must be put across clear that, the Kasena and Nankana constitute two different ethnic groups who have been living peacefully in the same geographical area (Navrongo).

According to the 2010 population estimates for cities in Ghana, it is estimated that, Navrongo has about 2012 settlement population of 27,306 people. Navrongo is an important market town, known for its cathedral and its grotto. Navrongo is located at  $10^{\circ}53'5''N$   $1^{\circ}5'25''W$ . Navrongo's population in 2005 was estimated to be 25,470, and its population in 2020 was estimated to be 131,627. The terrain is flat and the ecology is typical of the Sahel – arid grassland with occasional shrubbery.

The *Kasena* and *Nankana* constitute two different ethnic groups who peacefully co-habit the same geographical area (Navrongo). The *Nankana* can be found mostly to the south and southeastern part of Navrongo, whilst the *Kasena* have settled mostly to the north and northwestern parts of the area. In most cases therefore, you will find the *Kasena* and the *Nankana* owing allegiance to the same traditional authority. The pattern of settlement is a dispersed type especially, in the areas outside the Navrongo township.

The Nankanas are mostly located on the south and south-eastern part of Navrongo, while the Kasena have lived mostly to the north and north-western parts of Navrongo. Gradual mixing looks to have yielded homogeneity since there are no natural demarcations that separate the two ethnic groups (Dankwa et al., 2021). In most cases, you will notice that, the Kasena and the Nankana own allegiance to the same traditional authority. The way of settlement is a dispersed type especially, in the areas outside the Navrongo township. The area has steadily developed into a dispersed–nucleated settlement and the Swish round style of compounds have eventually vanished to give way to European style structures, although the round swish built flat top houses can still be found in some parts of Navrongo.





**Figure2: A Map of the Kasena-Nankana**

*(Source: <http://mysite.verizon.net/vze827ph/images/KAS/-NAN1.gif>.)*

Almost like the rest of the North, the area falls within the large vegetational zone of the Guinea Savannah woodlands that goes from the north to the south-eastern part of Ghana. The natural vegetation is generally vast grassland typically with trees like the baobab, *dawadawa*, shea tree, fig and kapok. These trees are strong and drought resistant by their ability to shed their leaves in the dry season and to store water in the dry season.

The climate of the area is well noted by a dry and wet season. The dry season lasts from about October to April. This season is typically hot, burning sun and dry, lip cracking and sand carrying harmattan winds are the norm. The wet season that lasts for almost half of the year, mostly being from April to October and it is usually characterised by violent thunderstorms that often cause great destruction to buildings. The season is known by a general green ground coverage as plants and grass begin to spring up.

### **2.11 Historical Origins of the *Kasena–Nankana* People of Navrongo**

The *Kasena* and *Nankana* are two different people with different historical origins. The *Kasena* people believe that they were the first to settle in the area, but some writers, notably, Osei-kufuor et al., (2019) asserted that, there is evidence of some ethnic groups who occupied this area which are now extinct. Linguistically, the *Kasena* and *Nankana* belong to the *Gur* speaking group; but while the *Kasena* speak *Kasem*, the *Nankana* speak *Nankani*. According to Razak, (2019) *Kasena* oral tradition believes, they originated from holes from a place called *Telania* currently called Navoro–Pungu.

No archaeological evidence has yet unveiled the myth surrounding the exact date they came to settle in the area. However, since the hole in which they allegedly originated to settle on ground surface is still available, any and future archaeological excavation may unravel this myth. Cultural and linguistic evidence has it that, the Kasena can be traced to Upper Volta, currently Burkina Faso. They are the same as the *Awuna* who claim to have migrated from the north-east from a place called *Pina*. It is possible to accept this explanation on the grounds that other *Kasena* groups who arrived at different times have legends which trace their origin to Burkina Faso. This argument is even more acceptable because of the fact that the *Kasem* language is only spoken in the north and north-western areas from where the legends of the other *Kasena* groups claim to have come.

There is a royal legend in Navrongo which traces the origin of the *Nankana* to a town called Zikku also in Burkina Faso on the north-eastern border of Navrongo. The legend has it that, Butu, who was a royal at Zikku migrated with two of his brothers to the hole-dwellers in Telania whom he had earlier on encountered on one of his hunting expeditions, (Tonah, 2018). Then afterwards moved to settle in a place they called *Navoro*, which was later corrupted to Navrongo by the British. This account of a people from different linguistic and ancestral backgrounds tends to negate the contention that the *Kasena* and *Nankana* are one ethnic group. For so many reasons, however, it is not contradictory to refer to the *Kasena-Nankana* of Navrongo as a people. This is because since the *Nankana* came to meet the *Kasena* hole-dwellers at *Telania* and there evolved a system of close association between them. Hence, several decades of close association of a people within a common geographical region, with unique social and political organisations and a common culture have actually broken the bounds of so many different ethnic and linguistic origins to make the *Kasena-*

*Nankana* one people. The coming together of these two groups of people happened over a long period is convincing and acceptable if one appreciates the fact that the *Kasena* are among the oldest settlers of the North.

It is important to differentiate between the *Kasena–Nankana* of Navrongo and the other *Kasena* and *Nankana* groups in particular, who live outside the Navrongo Township, but within the very same District. Also, there are individual towns and villages within the *Kasena-Nankana* District with Navrongo as their capital who speak either *Kasem* or *Nankani* alone, but not both. For example, predominant *Nankana* people such as Mirigu, Sirigu and Kandiga do not speak *Kasem*, just as predominant *Kasena* like Paga, Chiana and Katiu do not speak *Nankani*. The *Kasena–Nankana* of Navrongo can thus be considered as one people and to a lesser extent, one ethnic group because they speak both *Kasem* and *Nankani* (as a matter of fact, more *Kasem* than *Nankani*).

It is reasonable to say that the *Nankana* migrants under Butu coming from an area where they were already used to the chieftaincy started the fusion of the ethnic groups by quickly adopting the *Kasem* language to legitimise their rule over the *Kasena*. For example, *Na–Voro* that Butu used to name his settlement is *Kasem* and not *Nankani*. Thus, the adoption of the *Kasem* language dates back to the time of settlement of the *Nankana* in the area around the second half of the seventeenth century.

Again, the individual or distinct *Kasena* and *Nankana* groups reject the *Kasena–Nankana* of Navrongo from referring to themselves as either *Kasena* or *Nankana*, but prefer to refer to them as *Kasena–Nankana*. It is also important to note that, the *Kasena* and *Nankana* both frown on the *Kasem* and *Nankani* spoken by the *Kasena–Nankana* of Navrongo. They consider it as inferior and polluted.

## 2.12 The Economic Activities of the Kasena–Nankana People of Navrongo

The vegetation and weather condition of the area has fundamentally influenced the economic and social life of the people. The main economic preoccupation of the people is subsistence agriculture. This is supplemented by hunting of game for meat, mostly grasscutters. Over eighty per cent of people engage in agriculture. However, the launch of the Tono Irrigation Project in the early 1980s, coupled with the construction of dams in most parts of the area has contributed to increase in agricultural activities among the people, particularly, the large-scale production of rice and tomatoes. The family is the basic unit of farming and farms are thus mostly constructed around family compounds. The crops cultivated here include, maize, guinea corn, “early” and “late” millet, calabash, beans and vegetables. Others are sweet potatoes, cotton, tobacco and legumes such as bambara beans and groundnuts. Farming tools included stones and sticks. However, iron tools like spears, arrows and hoes were later introduced into the area as farming and hunting implements. According to oral tradition, a long time ago, a Mossie wanderer came to settle in the area and got married to a Pungu woman. This young man first brought the smelting of iron into the area now known as Punyoro. Even currently, Punyoro mainly, still monopolises the smelting of iron among the *Kasena–Nankana* of Navrongo. Again, owing to the length and in the midst of the dry season that characterises the area, the rearing of livestock is prominent among the people. Animals mostly reared are; goats, sheep, donkeys, fowls and cattle. Apart from the prestige associated with the ownership of livestock, they are also kept for purposes like; the payment of dowry and sacrifices. According to the elders therefore, in times of famine or poor harvest in a particular area, family groups usually travel to their relatives elsewhere to be provided with foodstuffs. Consequently, it can be argued that, there were no regular

institutionalised markets for buying and selling before the 1700s. There were neither currency nor bank too. During the eighteenth century, however, the caravan traders from the south used cowries as a medium of exchange in the region. European commodities like knives, rum and powder, as well as kola nut from the forest reached the area by the caravan trade.

Ferguson on his tour of the Hinterland, specifically mentioned that salt found its way from the region of the Safura on the Niger bend to the *Gourounsi* country. The widening of the scope of the economy with the usage of the cowries raised the desire of many to get rich. It was not surprising therefore that when Babatu came to the area, the indigenous people readily captured their colleagues and sold them to him. The beginning of the slave raids in the area rather strangulated economic activities. People no longer moved out to find food and farming was an uncertain undertaking as crops were likely to be trampled over by Babatu and his men. As one elder said, “while on the farm you had to put your bow and arrow close to you to respond to any sudden attack”. Through the agricultural activities, the caravans fell prey to attacks for their goods. It was in this times that the British found their way into the *Kasena–Nankana* territory of Navrongo.

### **2.13 The Socio-Cultural Background of the Kasena-Nankana of Navrongo**

Some Europeans saw African as an unorganised mass of ‘savages’ who were subjected to the rule of bloodthirsty spiritual leaders and superstitious witch doctors. The assumed uniformity of savage life is but a foreign myth. This is the contention of Miss Colson. Even in Sir Robert Filmer’s criticism of Hobbes who propounded the theory of man in his “natural condition”, he points out that the theory is wrong for Hobbes himself admits “a government of families” before the formation of the

“commonwealth”. This issue about the African and for that matter the Kasena–Nankana people of Navrongo as unorganised, stems from a total misunderstanding and ignorance of the culture of the people. A belief, which would have been projected by their desire to compare the African society to that of the European. The then District Commissioner stated in his report of 1936-1937, “they may be primitive, judged by certain standards, but they have good brains and excellent material to work with”. It is paramount to realise that, the culture of a people pervades their entire life. This cannot be eliminated in considering the Kasena–Nankana society if culture connotes a complex whole that include, knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs and other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society.

A thorough examination of the people’s culture would therefore provide us with the basis for comprehending the social relations among the *Kasena–Nankana* people. One finds among them, certain religious beliefs underlying the basis of their existence and personal development. Their basic conception of religion is the belief in the Supreme God (*Banga-We / Wine*), who is everywhere but can be worshiped only by the fetishes. The people also believe in ancestral veneration and spirits of nature, which are inhabited in stones, trees, rivers, animals and the earth. Religion therefore permeates everything the individual does, including all his actions outside the ordinary routine of his daily life. Social and moral values are governed by the dictates of the fetish. All calamities that befall him are ascribed to the spirits of the ancestors who may be displeased in one thing or the other. Recourse to them is then sought by contacting the soothsayer (*vuru/baga daana*) who indicates the remedy.

The Kasena–Nankana of Navrongo have a life so bound up with the deification of the earth and ancestors that ensures prosperity. Their only possible base of social relations

is through genealogical descent. This gives them a sense of depth, historical belongingness, a feeling of deep-rootedness and a sense of sacred obligation. It is on these bases therefore that those social relations have evolved to segregate the entire society into clans, lineages, households and families.

At the lowest level is the family, which to the Kasena–Nankana includes not only the father, mother and children, but also uncles, aunts, nephews and grandparents. The term for family in Kasem is *anubu* and *mmabia* in Nankani. However, it is sometimes extended not only to signify blood relations, but also relations by marriage. Blood relations, which constitute a family live together in a compound house or *song-yu* in Kasem and *ye- zuo* in Nankani. Most of the compound houses are usually round and may consist of several circular mud huts with conical – shaped grass roofs connected by mud walls. The society further relates in the clan and lineage system. The clan is the wider division of the society and is composed of lineages. Each clan is a composition of related members who trace their ancestry to the original founder. The Kasena– Nankana clans are exogamous, totemic and patrilineal. Clan members do not marry among themselves. They have a totem which they all revere and inherit along the father’s line. The totem serves as an important binding force that unites members of a particular clan. Sometimes, people realise their relation by finding out if they share the same totem or *chullu* in *Kasem*. The people of the *Noghsenia* clan for example have the squirrel and the crocodile as their totem. Totems are usually acquired when it is alleged that at one time or the other, an ancestor swore against he and his descendants ever having to kill or eat what is regarded as the totem. The squirrel became the totem of the people of *Noghsenia* because of the ‘help’ it gave to Kambongwana, the father of Butu. The lineage is composed of related families that trace their descent to various sons and grandsons of the founder.



## **2.14 The Introduction of Chieftaincy in Navrongo and Chieftaincy Succession**

Chieftaincy, though a foreign institution, had long been introduced into the political set up of Navrongo before the advent of the Europeans in the region. This happened probably in the second half of the seventeenth century by immigrants from Zikku in the North-East Territory of the Burkina Faso. This is evidenced by the fact that the British first came to meet the twelfth of the chiefs in Navrongo. As depicted in the Navrongo District Commissioner's Report in 1908, when he stated: "Navarro, a Kasena (Grunshie) town. Paramount over all Kasena Grunshies. Chief Kwara an old but active man wants constant backing to encourage him to give orders to his people". The origins of chieftaincy here like most part of the Northern Territories is shrouded in myth and mystery. The most popular and well known legend about the evolution of the institution is the account which traces the royal descent to Butu the son of Kambongwana.

According to this legend, Butu was a very good hunter. One day, he got lost in the forest while he was chasing a bull. It threatened to rain and in his search for shelter, he saw a group of people weeding in an open field. Suddenly, these people vanished as the clouds got darker. In his shouts for help, some strange hands pulled him away and he soon found himself in a cave with people all around him warming themselves up and some having a meal. He was given some food to eat and a warm place to sleep. The next day, Butu thanked them for their hospitality and left for home. On his return, he told his people about these hole-dwellers at Navoro-Pungu. However, Butu quarrelled with his people over one of his favourite hunting dogs that had been killed and eaten while he was away. In bitterness and anguish, Butu left Zikku (his Home Town) to permanently live with the hole-dwellers.

Being a royal and the eldest son of his father, he took along the *Kwara* (horn) which is the symbol of chieftaincy. After narrating his story to the hole-dweller, he was welcomed and allowed to settle with them. Butu was given a wife and eventually was allowed to become a chief, probably because of his royal inclinations. He called his new home *Pung*, meaning thick forest. Today, this area is known as Navoro-Pungu. Butu introduced the hole-dwellers (that is the indigenous people) to permanent buildings of swish houses with roof tops made of grass or swish concrete as seen in most parts of Navrongo today.

It is believed that Butu later moved to Navrongo and settled at the area known as Noghsenia. Here, he made his permanent home after several years wandering in search of a fertile area to settle. Significantly, *noge* is a *Nankani* word which means to move entirely with one's belongings and the Nankana happen to be one of the ethnic groups of the Navrongo Traditional Area. It has been established that the royal house of Navrongo are Nankana. That is why *Nankani* is spoken during the pouring of libation, instead of *Kasem*.

Meanwhile, a terrible plague befell Butu's people at Zikku. They immediately attributed this to the loss of the *kwara* and decided to follow Butu. They came to settle at Noghsenia with Butu. They built houses, made farms and increased in numbers. During the slave raiding activities of Babatu, many immigrants who had been displaced in Burkina Faso also took shelter at Navrongo. They were soon assimilated into the society and have since lost their original identity. Butu was made chief with his brothers as his advisors. His children were given areas to settle with their families and have subsequently become headmen of those areas or sections. In all, sixteen chiefs have ascended the throne since the introduction of chieftaincy into Navrongo.

The current chief Pɛ Denis Asagepaare Balinia Adda II is the sixteenth on the skin. The rest are, Butu the founder of Navrongo, Noksi, Dumazoya, Yifue, Basina, Birekem, Afa, Kyigibe, Gyampia, Kadatua, Kwara, Awe, Adda, Kogozua and Dr Augustine Atudeko III in that order.

### **2.15 Summary**

This chapter looked at the literature on ethnic conflicts, chieftaincy conflicts, theoretical explanations of conflict, chieftaincy in Ghana, chieftaincy and succession conflicts in the Northern part of Ghana, and how Ghana tries to solve conflicts. Literature has said that, unlike most of Ghana's African neighbors such as south of the Sahara, the country has not had much violence on a national level. Since the country became independent, she has had to deal with violent conflicts in many parts of the country. In general, these conflicts are caused by disagreements over chieftainship and land, political and religious extremists, and ethnocentrism. Literature revealed that, even though Ghana as a whole has a lot of conflicts, most of them have happened in the northern part of the country. Most of the time, security interventions, the legal system, and state institutions have not been able to help find long-term solutions to the conflicts. Certainly, the information found in this chapter is important for this investigation.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on explanation of research methods and procedures that were used in the data collection. The study sought to mainly identify and analyse chieftaincy succession disputes in Navrongo traditional area. Research methods are of great importance in any research process. They describe the various steps to be adopted in solving a research problem, such as the manner in which the problem is formulated; the definition of terms; the choice of subject for investigation; the validation of data gathering tool; the collection, analysis and interpretation of data and the processes of inference and generalisation (Bryman, 2016). Characteristics of a research methodology is seen to as qualitative, quantitative, or as involving both qualitative and quantitative methods, in which case it is typically referred to as mixed method (Curty, 2016; Sourial et al., 2010).

#### 3.1 Research Approach

This study employed qualitative research approach. A detailed method of the research problem being addressed. Myers et al., (2010) defined the word qualitative as an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. Qualitative researchers emphasize the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Hanson et al., 2005).

Matyas and Kamargianni, (2019) also defined qualitative research as: a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world and hidden things visible. These are made through series of representations including field notes, conversations, interviews, photographs, recordings and memos. Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This simply means that, qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

Matyas and Kamargianni, (2019) and Clement Nangpiire et al., (2018) on their part point out that the term Qualitative Research is confusing because it can mean different things to different people. They note: “By the term ‘qualitative research’ we mean any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification.” They insist that even though some researchers quantify data collected through techniques such as interviews, observations and the like, that are normally associated with qualitative method, qualitative analysis refers not to quantifying of qualitative data but rather to a non-mathematical process of interpretation, carried out for the purpose of discovering concepts and relationship in raw data and then organising these into a theoretical explanatory scheme. Qualitative research seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves.

This study adopted the qualitative research approach and therefore relied on an interview guide for the purpose of primary data collection. The qualitative research approach was appropriate for this study because it offers the researcher the ability to gather data by allowing the respondents to narrate the issues surrounding chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area. The researcher gathered data

from the respondents by listening to various narrations and explanations of history of chieftaincy and the causes of chieftaincy succession disputes. Among other research approaches, the qualitative research approach provided the required data collection tools to enable the researcher to gather data qualitatively. Hence, an interview guide was prepared to gather the primary data from the respondents.

### **3.2 Research Design**

A research design is termed as a plan, structure and strategy of research conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions or problems. In other words, a research design is a systematic plan that is used by a researcher to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately and economically. Amaratunga et al., (2002) asserted that, the choice of any research design is influenced by the study units available and what the design seeks to achieve. For the purpose of this study, a narrative research design was adopted. This gave the researcher enough room to paint a comprehensive and vivid picture concerning the topic under study. The design was chosen in view of the fact that, it was a study covering a relatively short duration and it involved a systematic approach to data collection and presentation to reflect a given situation within the period of study. This design specifies the nature of a phenomenon and reports the way things are. The design used semi-structured interviews as part of its data collection techniques. The recorded voices in native tongue were translated later to support the study. Focus group discussions were held as an essential component of the data collection exercise which aided the researcher in obtaining in-depth information relevant to the objective of the study from respondents.

### 3.3 Study Area

As comprehensively captured in the literature review concerning Navrongo traditional area (study area), Navrongo is the administrative capital of the Kasena-Nankana people of Ghana, which is located in the northern part of Ghana in the Upper East Region. Navrongo's landscape is a flat terrain. It is five hundred miles from the National capital, Accra. Chuchuliga bounds the area to the west and Kandiga to the east. To the north is Paga and Biu to the south. It must be put across clearly that, the Kasena and Nankana constitute two different ethnic groups who have been living peacefully in the same geographical area (Navrongo). The Nankana is mostly located on the south and south-eastern part of Navrongo, while the Kasena have lived mostly to the north and north-western parts of Navrongo.

#### 3.3.1 Historical, Administrative, and Socio-Economic Background

The study area of this research work is the Kasena-Nankana of Navrongo traditional area. Prior to the arrival of the colonialists, Kasena-Nankana of Navrongo had chiefs but their powers were limited. The chief was more of a ritual spiritualist who sacrificed to the *kwara* (Horn) shrine for the community's well-being. The chief was the sole official whose ritual powers stretched over several clan-settlements in a particular parish that evolved into chieftaindom. His position was not a consequent of conquest as the chieftaincy institution was brought into this area by small migrant groups. *Kasena-Nankana* traditions hold that the acceptance of this institution was on the basis of consent and a realization that the community stood to gain by incorporating the chieftaincy institution into its politico-religious set-up. Unlike other chiefs in the northern part of Ghana, the *Kasena Nankana* chief had no armed guards or bodyguards. He was as well forbidden to be violent, in spite of the fact that in times of war he had to lead his people. He seemed to be dependent on his people when it

came to resources to meet ritual requirements. He was also offered help to work on his farms by his subjects as custom prohibited his active engagement in active labour. If wealth accrued to him, it was from gifts from people who needed his services or those of the *kwara*. The chief also mediated in conflicts between lineages and individuals (Awedoba, 2000).

According to the District Commissioner, O'Kinealy's report in 1st November, 1907, Chief *Kwara* of Navarro (Navrongo), if complaints were made to him or he heard of disputes taking place, he, would send for the people concerned. He then would hear the case and settle it and order the people to cease quarrelling. For doing this, each side would give him a present. If the matter was a very serious one involving weapons, such as a fight with bows and arrows between sections, the present or fines exacted by the chief would be many cattle, so that they would not do so again and deter other people from doing similar things: The people have always obeyed the chiefs decision according to O'Kinealy, through fear of his fetish. To him the chief is a fetish man and if people refuse to obey him, he would talk to his fetish and it would kill the people who would not obey him. But the people obeyed the chief not because he was a fetish man as O'Kinealy stated but because he was a priest and possessed the *kwara*, which is a ritual object with spiritual powers. Again, it also symbolized his judicial authority.

With the emergence of colonialism, things had to change. Regarding the passage in London of an Order-in-Council in 1901, Navrongo with the rest of the three northern regions by then became an annexed British Protectorate from 1st of January, 1902, and named the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. Subsequently in 1960, the Northern Territories were divided into the Northern Region with Tamale as its capital and the Upper Region, Bolgatanga as capital. Later in 1983, the Upper Region was



further split into the Upper East and Upper West regions, with Bolgatanga and Wa as regional capitals respectively. The Upper East Region in which Navrongo is located, comprised an area of 8,842 square kilometers and is relatively overpopulated and has annual rainfall figures of between 740 millimeters and 1,030 millimeters (Yaro, 2019). Navrongo lies approximately on latitude 10°52'N and longitude 1°04' W and is 30km North-West of Bolgatanga the Upper East Regional capital.

Similar to the rest of towns in the Upper East Region, the town lies on the margins of the Sahel and the ecosystem is fragile. Seasonal burning, felling of trees for farming, building and fuel and animal grazing have resulted in only remnants of forest remaining in small groves of trees (Dzivenu, 2018). Owing to bush fires, the vegetation is stunted but it grows vigorously alongside the streams and in other places, when not interfered with. What remains is a wooded savannah with the main trees being acacias, Shea, baobab, ebony, and the less common *dawadawa* trees. Certain grass species like the elephant grass grows up to three meters in places in the wet season. In 1938 the government implemented rules against grass burning on a wide scale for the first time, which were then acclaimed as an unquestionable success' (Annual Report for Navrongo, 1938-39). This success, however, was short-lived and seasonal burning of grass occurs in spite of continued government efforts to ban it. This contributes to the continued decrease in soil fertility.

The rivers are flooded soon after the beginning of the rainy season and empty and dry for some two or three months before it. The area itself is sodden and water-logged after the rains and parched and dry before them. Soils in the Navrongo area are mostly ground water laterite; they are shallow and become waterlogged in the rainy season. Life in this area is surrounded by uncertainty. The Navrongo Annual Report for 1945-46 indicates that there was little potential wealth in the land and what it does possess

it yields to the individual only with the most painstaking labour', O'Kinealy's report of 01-11-07 had earlier described the same soil as rich and easily cultivated'. This shows the level and rate of degradation.

The people are mostly small holders growing a wide range of rain-fed crops like maize, rice, sorghum, millet, groundnuts, beans, potatoes and vegetables especially tomatoes, cabbage, lettuce and the like in the dry season. The dry season cultivation has been made possible mainly through the construction of the *Tono* Irrigation Project in the 1970s. Dry season farming in the area was possible to few villages like *Pungu* and *Saboro* who did mostly tomatoes, okra, and leafy vegetables. Some of the farmers in the area also engage in fish farming and livestock and poultry production.

According to Yaro, (2019), It is believed that, the early inhabitants of Navrongo are the people of *Pinda*, *Biu*, *Telania* and *Gani*. She continued to narrate the story of how *Butu*, the founder of Navrongo met *Gullu Bu* (the *Telania* ancestor) and his people living in holes underground. *Butu* is supposed to have introduced chieftaincy to this area, thereby himself becoming the first chief. The people of *Navrongo* are believed to be *Nankana* but now speak both *Kasem* and *Nankani*. In fact, some of them have completely lost their original language and speak only *Kasem*. This they explain resulted from marriages to *Kasena* women from neighbouring *Paga* and *Pinda*. They are said to have moved into their present location from *Zeko*, *Kolo* and *Chibeli*, all in present-day Burkina Faso. They did not come in large numbers nor with the intention of conquest, but in scattered families, due to disagreements at home. Fortunately, the autochthones were welcoming and so they settled amongst them. It would appear that the migrants were technologically more advanced and soon introduced the building of houses to their hosts, whom they found dwelling in holes underground. The latter soon recognised the former as their overlords. The strangers, however, did not keep

together with one chief over a large area. They split up into small villages and the foreign family became supreme only in its own particular village, having nothing to do with the others (Yaro, 2019).

History has it that, the name *Navrongo* includes all surrounding communities mentioned and was named by king *Butu* when he first arrived in the Navrongo land. There are three stories of the derivation of the word *Navorogo*. The first is that *Butu's* particular section of *Zeko* was called *Nambera* or *Nimborongo* in some accounts and he gave this name to his new found home. This has eventually changed to *Navoro*. The second story is that upon arrival, *Butu* realized that the people are 'wild' and asked the people what their word was for 'wild'. The reply was 'voro' and the name of the place was called *Navoro* from that point in time, *Na* being a *Kasem* prefix with no meaning but placed before very many words. A third story has it that, as *Butu* travelled from *Telania* to *Navrongo*, he got to a spot around the stadium area (*Abelori*). The area to this day is mostly mouldy in the rainy season. *Butu's* leg is believed to have sunk and he exclaimed, *Naga voro*, meaning a sunken leg in *Kasem*. This seems to imply that when *Butu* left *Telania*, he was *Kasem* speaking person, but *Telania* say their ancestors were originally *Nankani* speaking. Their apical ancestor was called *Weytinga*, a *Nankani* name. Of the three accounts, the second seems most probable. The present Chief of *Navrongo* is a direct descendant of *Butu Doba*, close to the centre, *Sirigu* and *Yua* in the northeast of *Navrongo* have Chiefs who are of the same family as *Butu* from *Zeko* (Yaro, 2019).

### **3.4 Population**

Poth, (2018) defined a population as the entire aggregation of cases that meet designated set of criteria. It must be noted that whatever the basic unit, the population always comprises the entire aggregation of the elements in which the researcher is

interested. The population of the study comprised Royals, King Makers, the Elders, and Landlords. The royals are those who directly relate to the royal lineage of a particular division or the paramount skin, the king makers are the selected traditional leaders of royal lineage that are responsible for selecting of chiefs, and the elders are old people of the various divisions who are not necessarily royals but have rich knowledge of the divisional area, while the landlords are the people who own most of the lands and properties in the various divisions.

These categories of people in the Navrongo traditional area were interviewed to give a narrative of the chieftaincy succession disputes that have so far occurred in the area. Information was also taken from the royals and king makers on the causes of chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area. The researcher through the interview was able to gather information from landlords and elders on the effects of chieftaincy succession disputes on the development of the Navrongo traditional area.

The estimated number of the population of the study was around 450 people. This number includes: the elders, the kingmakers, landlords, chiefs and royals.

### **3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques**

Sampling involves taking a portion of a unit of a sample for analysis from which the knowledge gained from the study can be generalized about the entire population (Yin & Zhou, 2018). The essence of sampling is therefore to make judicious use of the limited time available and reduce cost associated in dealing with the entire population. In simple terms, the sampling technique highlights the technique used in choosing the respondents for this particular study. The Kasena-Nankana traditional area is made up of eight (8) divisions and one paramount seat. Out of the eight divisions, three were purposively selected for the study together with the paramountcy.

In this research work, the researcher worked with a sample size of fifty (50) respondents. The researcher wished to work with relatively larger number, but availability of respondents with the required knowledge on the issue at hand compelled the researcher to settle on using fifty (50) respondents. Out of fifty respondents four (4) were chiefs from three (3) divisional areas and the paramount chief of the traditional area. The three divisional areas were chosen because they have had and still having issues of chieftaincy succession in their areas. Moreover, These people from those divisions are directly from the royal families with rich knowledge of divisional council and paramouncy they represent as far as succession issues are concerned. Eight (8) of the respondents happen to be king makers in the various divisional councils and paramouncy. The remaining thirty-eight (38) respondents were elders and old indigenous citizens of the various divisional areas who possessed useful knowledge.

Park, (2016) explains that, in purposive sampling, researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon. The respondents that were selected by purposive sampling were the chiefs, king makers and elders whereas landlords were selected by convenience. Due to the qualitative nature of the study and the problem at stake, respondents (chiefs, royals, traditional leaders) selection was quite judgmental since they were selected based on the assumption that, they have knowledge on the issue at hand.

Cochran, (1977) has explained that a sample should be able to provide a better option to a complete coverage of the population in a relatively short period of time and yet produce equally valid results. In research the rationale is to make generalization based on samples, about the parameters of population from which the samples are taken (McCusker et al., 2015; Park & Park, 2016). Hence, Yin and Zhou, (2018) agreed that

the researcher needs to select only few items from the universe for the study purpose. The size of a sample should neither be excessively large, nor too small. This however, according to Cochran, (1977), should be at the discretion of the researcher. While deciding on the size of a sample, the researcher must determine the desired precision and also an acceptable confidence level for the estimates (Sarantakos, 2012).

### **3.6 Data Collection Methods**

Basically, there are two main sources of data in social research (Saunders et al., 2016). These are the primary and secondary sources. It is important to note however that, the usage of a particular approach to collect data must be decided upon on the basis of one's problem at hand, the purpose of the study, the resources readily available and the characteristics of the study population also play an important role. For a number of reasons, some respondents may not feel comfortable expressing opinions in a questionnaire, therefore, in making a decision on the type of data collection tools, the researcher must keep in mind the type of people he is dealing with, the nature of the social situation, the mood of the social environment and the psychology of the people (Sarantakos, 2016).

Bell, (2005) asserted that, using secondary data has an advantage over the use of primary data because the data already exist and can be evaluated before it is used. They went ahead to argue that, time spent on evaluating potential secondary data is worth it. On the basis of this, earlier works that provide the required information on the subject matter was reviewed. The researcher did analysis of secondary sources used to complement the primary data gathered from the Navrongo traditional area. The secondary data were obtained through documentary sources such as books, journals, magazines, internets and other earlier research works on the subject matter. For the purpose of collecting data for this work, interviews and focus group

discussions were used. Nidadhavolu, (2018), in support of this decision identified interviewing, observing, documents, records and personal experience methods as data collection tools in qualitative research. The researcher first collected the data from the landlords, kingmakers and chiefs through the guided interviews. The researcher followed up with focus group discussions with elders and royals selected purposively for the study.

### **3.6.1 Interviews**

The researcher made enough and adequate preparations to utilize the chances during the times spent with the interviewees. Key informants such as the chiefs, royals, and other traditional leaders were written to, informing them of my study and to request interviews with them at their convenience. The researcher attached copies of the interview schedules to the letters of introduction to inform potential interviewees the issues to be covered during the interviews. Phone calls were made to remind the participants of our meeting appointment by the researcher a day before each appointment with the interviewees.

A total of twelve respondents (four chiefs and eight king makers) were engaged by means of interview to gather general information regarding the selection processes of a chief. The twelve were believed to be the custodians of tradition in the traditional area. Structured interviews were used to first and foremost help the researcher to stay focused in order to gather responses that directly responded to the research questions.

Alongside the structured interviews, semi-structured interviews also gave the respondents some appreciable space to respond to questions in a little detailed way that aided the researcher to unraveling more information.

Finally, the instrument had questions that were strictly based on the objectives of the study for easy categorization and that afforded the researcher the opportunity to gather the required data needed to analyse the issues at stake.

### **3.6.2 Focus Group Discussion**

A Focus Group Discussion is an in-depth interview with a group of people. In this study, particular members of a traditional area with in-depth knowledge in the study area were brought on board and those who expressed interest were selected to participate in the discussion of the succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area. As Dong & Peng, (2013) have noted that, Focus Group Discussion provide immediate results within a short period of time at a relatively low cost. For Buchan & Croson, (2004), Focus Group Discussion presents an avenue for a better understanding of issues pertaining to a particular community in terms of their belief system and their experiences and practices. Focus group discussions were held to obtain data for this research. There were four separate focus group discussion sessions. Participants for each session were members of three divisional councils and the paramouncy. For Navrongo chief palace there were 11 respondents while the three divisional areas had nine respondents each.

The focus group discussions presented the researcher the opportunity to collect data from different viewpoints. Rovai et al., (2012) asserted that, more than one focus group discussion can be organized in a study area. He implied that; one focus group discussion may be inadequate to produce the desired results for a study. The discussions with groups were recorded using the researcher's smartphone with the consent of group members. The notes were later cross-checked, interpreted (where the



interviewees spoke their local dialect) with what was recorded to arrive at an accurate information to solve the problem at hand.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

The researcher adopted qualitative (descriptive) approach to analyse key issues at stake. Nidadhavolu, (2018) described qualitative research methodology as any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedure or other means of quantification. Both data from interviews and focus group discussion was analyzed under themes with detailed description of events from the research questions.

Saunders et al., (2016) say descriptive research describe a given state of affairs as fully and carefully as possible. Descriptive studies describe a given state of affairs, so the researcher adopted it to help him describe everything that he heard in detail. The method was to afford the researcher the opportunity to record and describe in detail. A total of 50 respondents were successfully engaged, twelve (12 Royals and King Makers) were engaged by way of interviews and the remaining thirty-eight (38) were engaged through focus group discussions. But it is important to note that, most of the royals due to the interest in the topic under study came back to take part in the focus group discussions.

According to Matyas and Kamargianni, (2019), qualitative research data analysis begins while the researcher is out in the field conducting interviews, observations, or both as they look for issues and concepts that can help them understand the situation.

When conducting data analysis, the following procedures were followed:

1. Procedures for gathering data and documenting them
2. Organizing or categorizing data into thoughts

3. Making links between data points to explain how one idea may influence another.
4. Validating or confirming the data by evaluating alternate interpretations, seeking for evidence that contradicts the data, and searching for negative cases.
5. Speaking out in support of the account (reporting the findings).

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Research ethics relates to questions about how we formulate and clarify our research topic, design our research and gain access, collect data, process and store our data and write up our research findings in a moral and responsible way (Sarantakos, 2012). Ethical issues were anticipated and were adequately dealt with at every stage of the research. For example, in seeking access, the researcher avoided applying unnecessary pressure on intended participants and made it clear to the respondents that, they were at liberty to withdraw from participating if they were feeling uncomfortable through the process.

The research approach led to data that was mostly anonymized. The researcher employed the most appropriate methodology in conducting this study in order to arrive at valid conclusions, as a result the researcher made all necessary effort to avoid bias in interpretation of data and reporting the findings of the study. This was made possible by presenting the findings as they were without manipulations. The researcher made it emphatically clear to the respondent that, the information that was taken from them on the topic and its related objectives will not be used in any way to the detriment of participants or the study area (*Kassena-Nankana of Navrongo* traditional area).

In view of the fact that the researcher comes from Navrongo, he has positioned himself as a neutral researcher who is looking for empirical data that can help resolve chieftaincy issues in Navrongo traditional area. In addition, the researcher does not belong to any of the royal gates and does not align himself to any of the gates that would have influenced this study.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents and analyses both the primary and the secondary data that were collected for the study from the Navrongo traditional area. In accordance with the various objectives raised, emerging and common themes were noted to ensure proper analysis and presentation of data. Discussions were made and tied up to the conceptual and theoretical frameworks applied for the study. Qualitatively, the various objectives are put under themes which afforded the researcher clarity in committing the data through rigorous analysis among other things to establish the causes of chieftaincy succession dispute in the Navrongo traditional area.

#### **4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

The traditional area consists of one paramount chief and eight divisional chiefs. In no particular order, below are the names of the divisions; “Yua”, “Manyoro”, “Pindaa”, “Nyangua”, “Pungu Wusugu”, “Pungu Bavugunia”, “Natugnia”, and “Doba”. Traditionally, the paramountcy is ruled by the Paramount chief together with the divisional chiefs who are all supported by elders and landlords. The elders and landlords are the custodians of the history of their various areas and so they hold very rich information and always make sure things are done as per the traditions.

##### **4.1.1 Gender of Respondents**

The respondents of this research work were strictly indigenes of Navrongo traditional area who are the royals, elders, and King Makers of the various traditional councils. Only male respondents are engaged and this was as a result of how tradition has

shaped and accommodated male engagement in chieftaincy matters, irrespective of how women have been instrumental in selection of chiefs (Hafis-Deen, 2019).

**Table 1: Age of Respondents**

<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
20-39	5	10
40-59	33	66
60 and above	12	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

(Field Data, 2022)

As seen in Table 1, 66 percent of respondents, or an overwhelming majority, were within the age range of 40 to 59. This is due to the fact that the some of the chiefs formerly served in the civil service and other labour related jobs but are now retired.

The general age range of all respondents ranges from twenty (20) to sixty years and above (60+) years. Specifically, the current chiefs of the traditional area are middle aged, ranging from ages forty (40) to seventy (60) years, whereas the elders, king makers and landlords are currently a mixture of middle and old ages ranging from 60 years and above.

**Table 2: Occupation of the Respondents**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Civil Servants	8	16
Farmers	26	52
Retired	9	18
Students	2	4
Trade	5	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Data Analysis, 2022)

16% of the respondents who responded to the inquiries were government employees. 18% are retired civil servants who are not currently engage in any active activity. 52% of them are farmers, while 4% and 10% are students and traders respectively. From Table 2, Most of the respondents are farmers who do not practice large scale farming, while few are retired educationists and retirees of other professions. This results are similar with the results of Sicilia, (2017) and Yaro (2020), whose studies are also on the subject of chieftaincy succession disputes and revelations from their findings also depict the most the most respondents are farmers and beneficiaries of royalties.

#### **4.2 Procedure for Selecting a Chief in Navrongo Traditional Area**

Chieftaincy has remained the most enduring Ghanaian traditional institution that has existed for centuries (Nayiri Tonal, 2018). With a very stormy history, it has survived all kinds of manipulations and interference and has evolved to assume its complex status in our contemporary world. The complex nature of chieftaincy succession disputes calls for a well-respected procedure for selection of chiefs. No wonder the 1992 Constitution of Ghana has clearly defined the identity of chiefs by outlining the process of the *'enskinment'* and *'enstoolment'* in Ghana in accordance with the customs of a particular traditional area.

The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana also recognizes the customs of the various traditional areas as very important in the selection of chiefs. That is why Article 270 (3a & 3b) of the 1992 constitution outlines clear guidelines for the ascension of a person to a stool or skin of a particular traditional area. It states as follows: (a) the determination, in accordance with the appropriate customary law and usage, by a traditional council, a Regional House of Chiefs or a Chieftaincy Committee of any of them, of the validity of the nomination, election, selection, installation or deposition of a person as a chief; (b) a traditional council or a Regional House of Chiefs or the National House of Chiefs to establish and operate a procedure for the registration of chiefs and the public notification in the Gazette or otherwise of the status of persons as chiefs in Ghana. (Republic of Ghana, 1992).

Now, to give a vivid picture of how the system works in Navrongo traditional area as far as selecting a chief is concerned, it will be very beneficial to throw light on the step by step process of selecting a chief till the time of installation. And from the perspective of king makers, elders, royals, and traditional leaders of aforementioned traditional area, the selection process is narrated as follows;

- a. The process of selecting a new king is triggered when the incumbent is dead, destooled, disenskinned, or abdicated his skin. In any of the three stated cases above, example death, the elders discuss and inform the king makers to come and perform some rituals to enable them burry him silently without making people aware.

” Pɛ na wo tege naa o na wo chɔge o teterɛ de baa wane de tiŋi o dwoŋi‘ ba seigi mo ba suli pɛ yera. De yeini de we pɛ weele mo” (focus group of Pindaa).

Literally meaning *“it is only when a chief die or does something against the throne that we can enskin another chief and when that happens the public is told that the king is sick and not dead until they are ready to perform the funeral.”*

- b. The elders will consult a soothsayer to direct the way for the funeral right of the late chief and also to follow up on some uncompleted traditional sacrifices/assignments that the deceased chief might have started and not completed. More specifically, the elders with the pivotal support of the soothsayer will look out for unfulfilled promises the chief made to gods and try to fulfill them. This will not take just a year; sometimes it might take years before announcing the funeral to the general public. This is what a chief said:

*“Nakwa mo yeini ba nuji ba ni sŋŋ kom yiga se fŋgere na wora se ba fŋge. Pɛ wom wae o jege nia se o kwei ye o wo wane o ke , ba na nuji ba wo na te maama ye ba kwe te se ba laam daare ba ja o lua”* ( Pungu Bavogonia chief).

Meaning: *“We consult a soothsayer to know what is supposed to be done and that it is only after settling all that needs to be done that the funeral can be announced.”*

- c. A traditional war dance is performed to bury the chief. Meanwhile, the elders had thought of whom to succeed him or have fair idea of the successor. Whiles the elderly male child is temporarily made to be responsible for all rituals in the palace no matter how long it takes to get the new chief elected if due process is followed.

*Wogo maama na kwe ye chwoŋa peini, de wo ja lua kam mo de laare lera ye de di ka. Se lua kam maama ke to de maama yei we lua kam na ti de wo tinji pɛ. Ko dage wo dongo beŋwane beera kam ne voro gwoli*



*dem wo baase de ta wonjo ne de na tOge naga kam lanyeran (Elder of Navrongo chief palace).*

Meaning: “when due process is followed, we announce the funeral and perform a war dance to bury the late chief formally. Before the funeral is performed it would have been revealed through consultation with the gods and the soothsayers who will succeed the late chief.”

- d. The entire deceased chief’s sons and his brothers’ sons are eligible to contest, although the elders upon consultation may have prior knowledge as to whom would be the next king long before the actual contest but would remain a secret till the final day of confirmation. But those from the Nakani side usually consider the eldest child of the generation as a sign of respect and honour. Any qualified person who fails to contest automatically denies his lineage the royal opportunity to become a chief. That is to say his children and grandchildren can never contest for chieftaincy title. So even if the person is not interested in becoming a chief he is advised to contest because his children might want it in the future.

*Pe-bu maama wo wane o cha paare dem o di. Ko ba fe se ko taa ye bu Kwea mo wo di paare dem debam nabaare dem ne wolo na wo wane teo kom o ja to mo”(Manyoro elders).*

Meaning; Any of the chief’s sons or his brothers’ sons can be made chief. It does not matter which position in birth you are. What matters is who can look after the community well.

Contrary to the Manyoro situation Navrongo elders had this to say:

*“Debam paare dem tOge bu-kwea mo. Pɛ lua na kea , wolo na ye o bu-kwea to na wo chOge o tetere naa o ba jege jaweo kolo na wo che se o ye wane o ji pɛ to wonto mo wo ji pɛ”*

Meaning “Our skin is based on who is the eldest son /nephew. If the eldest son/nephew of the chief is eligible, he becomes the next chief”

At this stage all the eligible sons and nephews go into the contest

- e. Afterwards, the kinsmen are invited to let the children know that there is one more step left out in the performance of the final funeral rites that can only be done by the next selected chief. That last step in kasem is called **“Pɛ Chwoŋa Kweim”** which is done by the next chief elect. When this happens all the children from the royal gates are allowed to contest, that is, if their fathers took part in the previous contests. All the contestants are at this stage called calabash wearers (**Zom Pura**). Customarily, certain calabashes must be picked on behalf of all contestants, so if you have your mother alive, she picks the calabash for you but if your mother is not alive you will have to get a mother figure who will select and present it to you on the day of the picking. The mother or the mother figure is required to pray for the contestant to be successful as she gives the calabash to him.

*“Pɛ-bia bam niina mo wo kuri zwe sem ba pa ba se ba pu. Pɛ-bu wolo nu na tera to wo wane o kuri kaane o na bwonji we o nu to se o kuri o pa o.Niina bam laam wo bore ba pa ba bia bam se ba laam pu ba zwe sem”* (Manyoro chief.)

- f. The eldest daughter of the family performs a ritual to pave way for a peaceful contest.

“Kadikɔ laam wo lwo sworo se paare charem dem ke lanyerane”(Pindaa elders)

The gods of the community who are believed to reside in the heap of sand and refuse in front of the house (*Tampuuri*) receives a sacrifice to ensure a peaceful contest. After this, all the contestants wear their calabashes with the skin of a sheep or cow depending on which one you can afford

.”De laam wo nuji de kaane tampuuri dem se charem dem ke de yeizura”  
Navrongo chief

- g. The contestants then go round to greet the elders and the most important elder is the “*Kwara Yigino*” (the keeper of the symbol of the throne). For example, in Manyoro, the keeper of their symbol is from *Chibeili* (Burkina Faso). So, after the funeral of the late chief and the process of wearing of the calabash and skin, the contestants are made to visit and greet him in “Chebeili”.

The elders together with the “*Kwara yigino*,” go out to consult soothsayers and perform all rituals to know who has been selected by the gods. When they know this then the next chief is selected on a set date where the king makers vote on who should be next king as a sign of confirmation of what the gods said. “*It must be noted that, we have never had a situation where the king makers vote contrary to what the gods said*”. (Pindaa Elders). After all, said and done, a ceremony is held to announce the new chief by the elders and the king makers.

#### **4.3 How are Chiefs Selected in the Navrongo Traditional Area?**

In the absence of unbiased and well-structured procedure, people tend to be subjective and partial in conducting such sensitive and crucial contests. As outlined by Osei-kufuor et al., (2019), lack of proper documentation on the mode of selection

of chiefs, (i.e. when there is basically no proper written down procedure) becomes an avenue where the process of selecting a chief is compromised. Oduro-Awisi, (2018) again posits that, legitimate royals have increased in number over the years. This as a result may bring about intense competition among the families and lineages. Consequently, when the due process is not followed, some aggrieved stakeholders are prepared to use fire-arms in the settling of disputes regarding election of occupants to the skin.

Most of the divisional chiefs claimed that, the due process is always followed. This is evident in Pungu Bavogonia's chief response to the above question;

*It can never happen. The due process has always been followed. If it does not happen per the laid down processes, then it is considered as cheating which we do not entertain. If the due process is not followed, the gods and the "Kwara" do not accept the person who is forcefully chosen. Thus, there would be consequences. The community might suffer drought, famine, and other calamities because the gods have not accepted the chief. The new wrongly selected chief may not be able to give simple judgment to cases. So many things will happen to the chief to prove that he is not qualified to occupy the skin. He may face a lot of spiritual attacks and rejections from the gods. If a chief is imposed on the people so many things will go wrong. The people will not respect him and the gods will not support him.* Navrongo Chief.

It was also noted that, if the due process is not followed and a chief is selected it will eventually lead to conflicts. But if the process is followed no matter the number of people who contested there will be peace if the chief is finally selected. It is clear from the responses gathered that, if the processes of selecting new chief lack transparency, violence or dispute are likely to break out. This assertion is therefore in sharp agreement with Patrick et al., (2020), who argued that, when the rules of succession become unclear and biased due to lack of proper documentation on the mode of selection as stated earlier, chieftaincy succession crisis are more likely to occur. He further argued that, the struggle to become a chief may turn more violent when the historical, political, economic and social circumstances around the

establishment of the chieftaincy institution in a traditional area become heavily contested and when successive national governments and political parties support one group against the other in a bid to serve their own parochial political interest.

On the issue of fairness regarding the selection of new chief, respondents strongly believe it is fair because the gods give them direction as to who should be chosen and they have been using it for centuries without any major issues. And anyone who decides to go against that long standing tradition is punished by the gods.

#### **4.4 Causes of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes in Navrongo Traditional Area**

Dispute is certainly part of human interactions as it is bound to happen whenever people gather. It could be a family gathering, international collations, club, teams, and political parties (Cobb, 2018).

A dispute is defined by Mohammed, (2018) as a kind of conflict, which manifest itself in distinct justifiable issues. This involves disagreement over issues capable of resolution by negotiation, mediation or third party adjudication. According to Slater, (2019), dispute is an assertion of opposing views, claims, a disagreement as to right; especially one that is subject of proceedings for resolution. Gumbi, (2021), identified categories of disputes as follows; property dispute, family dispute, corporate dispute, commercial dispute, interpersonal dispute arising between individuals, organisational dispute, and labour dispute.

There have been several studies conducted on the causes of chieftaincy disputes in Ghana but the prominent among them are heavily featured in this research work as coming from Asante and Blewushie, (2021), Gondwe, (2018) and Haruna, (2021). Mohammed, (2018) posits that, in Ghana, the struggle to become a Chief may

become more violent when the political, historical, economic and social circumstances surrounding the establishment of the chieftaincy institution in a traditional area become contested; when the rules of succession lacks transparency; when there is political interference in the process; and the influx of small and light weapons available to the factions in the dispute. From the perspective of respondents in this study, the following were identified as the major causes of chieftaincy succession dispute in the Navrongo traditional area;

#### **4.4.1 Political Interference.**

The kind of politics (Democracy) that is practiced in Ghana is mainly about numbers. Thus, politicians try all avenues to get the majority on their side. Respondents asserted that, chieftaincy succession disputes have something to do with partisan politics. One elder from Pungu Bavogonia division had this to say about political interference as being one major cause of chieftaincy succession disputes;

*The politicians always cause the conflicts. They want to amass votes during elections and as a result look for contestants who are from their political parties and attempt to influence the process in favour of their contestant to be selected as a chief. They use a lot of money to influence the selection process and that brings about conflicts. Ideally, they are not supposed to be part of the process but because they know the chiefs have power and command respect among their people, they try so much to influence the process to get the chiefs and if possible other traditional leaders on their side. (An Elder of Pungu Bavogonia Division).*

Again, the chief of Pindaa division argued that, the political interference is a recent occurrence which is hurting the chieftaincy system, where he went further to raise some more fundamental issues as follows;

*Now NDC and NPP's interference in the selection process is too much, sometimes they encourage people to take chieftaincy cases to court so that they can support them win but that is not right. To tell you the truth, in the past, politics was not part of the chieftaincy process but now the story is different. They (politicians) openly give every necessary material and monetary support to their favorite contestants*

*but at the end of the day these interferences do not overturn what the gods have said. That is why it all turns chaotic when the person who has spent so much money is not selected. (Chief of Pindaa).*

#### **4.4.2 Lack of Unity and Rivalry Among Families and Clans**

Most of the conflicts are typically chieftaincy succession disputes, involving two or more gates laying claim to a chieftaincy position or title. Such conflicts usually involve determining who is the best qualified person to occupy a particular position, which traditional rituals constitute the "enskinment" process, and whether the individual selected has gone through the appropriate rituals administered by the traditionally designated persons (Cobb, 2018; Nyamnjoh, 2018; Oduro-Awisi, 2018; Osei-kufuor et al., 2019; Patrick et al., 2020).

The highly competitive nature of the selection process becomes a fertile ground of disunity among the clans, families, and the contestants themselves.

*“We don’t understand ourselves and all the contestants want to be made the chief at all cost, and this is what brings conflicts.” (An Elder of Manyoro Division).*

In a typical situation where two or more gates who are laying claim to a chieftaincy position are not ready to compromise to allow a contestant from one gate to occupy the skin, conflict is likely to emerge between rival claimants who are seeking to capture the traditional authority.

#### **4.4.3 Lack of Pro-activeness and Negligence**

Disputes and conflicts have always emerged in the process of selecting chiefs, but when they are quickly attended to and resolved all challenges to the elected chief are quickly dropped, (Ashahadu, 2018; Brukum, 2018; Nayiri T., 2018). Some of the respondents admitted that, in many cases leaders fail to address grievances at the early stages which end up resulting into a major conflict.

*I cannot completely tell but the little I know is that when the chief is selected and there is a protest from one or some of the contestants it is the duty of the elders to settle it because they know what is involved but if they fail to settle it and protestants go on to worry the selected chief then there are conflicts. Even if it becomes a court issue the elders owe it a duty to go to court and defend the selected chief because they understand the process better and they did all the consultations with the gods (King Maker of Pungu Bavogunia Division).*

King Makers and traditional authority lack of pro-activeness to quench or settle disputes at the early stages or engage the right institution or agency hugely contributes to the chieftaincy succession disputes in the traditional area.

#### **4.4.4 The Tradition of War**

Tradition has it that, the process of selecting a chief is synonymous to war, and so it is no news when war breaks out in the selection process.

*“To tell you the truth, enskinment of a chief now is a good thing. In the past our ancestors used to go to war before enskinning a chief but today it is peaceful and better. Chieftaincy is about war.” (An Elder of Pungu Bavogunia Division).*

The oral tradition handed down from ancestors to the current generation never enskinned a chief without going for war. The researcher was well informed that, the wars in the olden days in connection with chieftaincy was fought for freedom.

*When our ancestors could no longer bear the harsh treatment melted against them by bigger traditional authority that was where they look within themselves for a leader to rule over them and this was one of the basis for war before enskinning a chief in the olden days (Landlord of Navrongo paramount seat).*

The tradition of war was as a result of the people fighting for freedom and justice, also, as a means used in opposing all form of ambiguous claims to a particular skin.

#### **4.4.5 Bribery and Corruption**

In an attempt to gain favour in the sight of leaders and king makers for a particular skin, some contestants resort to bribery. Bribery and corruption is one of the major causes of chieftaincy disputes. The elders and king makers are mostly linked with this



monetary influence. *“They receive monies from contestants and other people to influence the process when they know very well that they cannot go against the gods and this is where the problem starts”* (Chief of Pindaa Division). When the process is influenced and the wrong person is selected, there is a high likelihood that he would be rejected by the people. The overall mandate to accept or reject a particular person resides with the people. When the gods have actually chosen someone, the people will definitely accept him. On the contrary, when the process leading to the selection is compromised and the wrong person is announced as the chief, the gods as I was told will anger the people to rise against that chief.

Responses retrieved align with major related research works conducted in this scope. I therefore conclude this session with a research work by Hagan, which throws light on other three fundamental factors could also cause disputes in the chieftaincy succession as when the; affluent personalities in society with ambiguous claims to royal stools and skins fiercely contesting the position with the poorer royals who refuse to succumb to the illegitimate contenders; legitimate royals have increased in number over the years. Hence the competitive-claims have become highly intense among the families and lineages and, the tenure of a chief terminates only at death and this generates a lot of anxiety among legitimate royals who are potential candidates to the stools and skins (Hafis-Deen, 2019).

The study revealed that majority of the responses perceived that ascending the throne is a cause of many chieftaincy succession disputes in royal houses at the Navrongo traditional area. These causes were confirmed by the eight key participants who were interviewed. It was revealed that the major causes of the conflict were divisions

among kingmakers of the various thrones and successions to the chieftaincy stools.

An interview with Manyoro royal family head confirmed that:

*“the causes of these sort of conflicts are due to power and greed for lands and properties of the communities”*

Interviews and focus groups discussions with the chiefs, elders and key stakeholders revealed the following:

*“The other seven family heads of the royal families asserted that the chieftaincy succession disputes were always as a result of rightful successor to the throne”.*

The focus group discussion with Yua Royal Family member confirmed the above assertion that the rightful person to ascend a throne often causes succession disputes among community members. The chief stated below:

*“the rightful successor of a throne is can cause succession disputes among family members and communities.” And “who are the proper kingmakers? Is one of the questions that can chieftaincy succession disputes in a community”*

An interview with the chief of Pungu revealed the below assertion from the chief:

*Politicians for their selfish interest (power) act as conflict entrepreneurs (supporting with their resources). Also, the practice where the two main political parties always try to install their preferred candidates as chiefs when they are in power has resulted in the unending nature of the chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area.*

#### **4.5 Forms of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes in the Navrongo Traditional Council**

Disputes and conflicts have always been part in the process of selecting chiefs not only in Upper East Region of Ghana but across the country. But particularly in the northern region, there is a widespread perception that, the northern Ghana is prone to such conflicts. Knierzinger, (2017) argued in favour of the above assertion such that,

some conflicts in the North have been very violent and protracted, involving several ethnic groups living over a wide geographical area.

The several succession disputes in fact have blemished the chieftaincy institution portraying it as volatile and turbulent. For instance, there have been many of such succession conflicts between 1980 and 2002. In 1991, Dagombas fought among themselves at Voggu and Zabzugu. Between 1980 and 1986 the Mamprusi and the Kusasi fought three times in the Bawku area over succession to the Bawku chieftaincy all these conflicts claimed the lives of many people.

From the perspective of respondents, these are the two main forms of how chieftaincy succession conflicts/disputes are manifested in the Navrongo traditional are

#### **4.5.1 Physical Attacks**

Broadly speaking, most of chieftaincy succession disputes involve two or more lineages claiming to a skin or title. Such conflicts usually arise as a result of the elders or king maker's inability to properly set the rules and determine who is the best qualified person to occupy a particular skin or position and whether the individual selected has gone through the appropriate rituals administered by the traditionally designated persons (Ayensah, 2018; Bashiru, 2020; Dankwa et al., 2021; Hardi, 2017; Tobias, 2020; Tonah, 2020). This is a result degenerates into a serious violence where lives and properties are wasted. The aggrieved party usually deploy armed men with weapons to demand or forcefully overthrow the selected chief. The violent conflicts thus, set developmental clock for the area in backwards and drive away potential resources necessary for the people's development as asserted by an Elder from Pungu Bavugunia.

*Frankly speaking, these conflicts have cost us a lot. Some of the young men in the course of the conflicts burn and destroy their opponents' properties like houses, farm produce, and even source of water for the community. It is heart breaking moment to see your property being burnt. Something must be done about it (Pungu Bavogoniaia elder).*

In support of this argument, Prah and Yeboah posit that, these devastating effects physical attacks include loss of lives, the displacement of people, loss of property, outright lawlessness which results in the imposition of curfews, a move that constrains the fundamental human rights of the people and impedes on economic activities. They further add that these conditions create an atmosphere of anxiety, insecurity and distrust, posing a threat to the peace and stability of the entire nation, (Adjei, 2019).

#### **4.5.2 Spiritual Attacks**

Spiritual attacks are common during the highly competitive process of selecting the chief, some contestants are believed to attack opponents spiritually to either cause them to be disqualified, injured, disgraced, and even dead in some extreme cases. Knowing this, contestants are taking to various powerful shrines to fortify themselves against such attacks.

*“In Navrongo traditional area we scarcely engage in physical violence. What is known here concerning chieftaincy succession disputes are mostly spiritual” (Navrongo Elder).*

The spiritual attacks among contestants seem to be popular within the Navrongo traditional area and many consider it as the most common and efficient way to launch an attack on the opponent. A chief (Pungu Bavogonia) had this to say;

*There are different types of conflicts which lead to death during eskinment. The physical and spiritual. The physical brings conflicts among all relations like wives, cousins and other relatives. Another type is the spiritual war fare among the contestants. They do not use weapons but they attack each other spiritually. They sometimes succeed in killing themselves or make each other incapacitated to occupy the skin and this type is very common (Pungu Bavogonia chief).*

In the unlikely events where one is attacked, the supporters and family members of the victim take revenge in every possible way, this time it could be physical, especially when they are not successful spiritually. The conflicts and attacks sparking out of spirituality I was told are more dangerous, since it may cause a lot of harm and even bring catastrophe like famine, diseases, death etc to the traditional area especially when the one selected by the gods is being attacked.

#### **4.5.3 The Usual Disagreements and Confrontations**

It can be said that, there are always disputes arising from the process of selecting a new chief. Whiles some conflicts turn bloody and serious, other disputes or conflicts are manifested as moderate which are easily addressed amicably either by the traditional arrangement or through the court system.

*We are lucky in the Navrongo traditional area. We see what happens in other areas where people are killed in the process but in our area it is not so much to the point of killing even though there are conflicts they have not gotten to that stage where people lose their lives physically (An Elder of Pinda Division).*

However, these usual moderate confrontations, disagreements, and disputes if not well resolved at the inception could degenerate into uncontrollable and full-scale conflicts marked with violence that could end many lives. Again, most of the chieftaincy succession disputes/conflicts are manifested as prolonged conflicts. “*We try to solve the problems but sometimes the parties involved are not ready to compromise, there are similar cases where disputes have lasted for years*” (Manyoro Chief).

When conflict is prolonged, it automatically retards development in the area. Anamzoya and Tonahr, (2018) noted that, collaboration between the chiefs and the District Assembly puts a traditional area in a better position to mobilise resources for

the development. Thus, chiefs are seen to be contributing to development in the area of revenue mobilisation in collaboration with the District Assembly and its sub-structures such as the Area Councils and Unit Committees. So, a traditional area will be developmentally deficient if there is absence of traditional authority and have cases of consistent and prolonged chieftaincy succession conflicts.

#### **4.6 Ways of Resolving Chieftaincy Succession Disputes in the Navrongo**

##### **Traditional Area.**

This scope falls within conflict management which refers to the application of variety of plans and methods to curb tension during periods of conflicts to make peace possible. This approach involves the process of identifying signs of possible conflicts or disputes and encouraging people to iron out their differences to avoid small disputes or disagreement degenerating into full-scale violence. Now, the important starting point in this process is to prevent conflict before it starts.

Obviously, this is a step-by-step process to engage stakeholders to solve a dispute or a conflict and identifying different factors and arriving at a point where parties have mutually benefited. Mahama and Longi, (2018) says an actual dispute does not exist until assertion of a claim by one party and disputation has occurred by the other. This disagreement may be resolved by mediation, negotiation, or any other dispute resolution mechanism, which may involve a neutral third party. Below are the three methods of conflict resolution which are also known as Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

#### 4.6.1 Negotiation

Negotiation is a good first step for almost all types of disputes, including business, organisational, international and in personal situations such as family, marriage and divorce as well as chieftaincy disputes. This I believe is the surest way of dealing with disagreements between conflicting parties thus the –‘jaw jaw’ is better than war (Crook, 2019).

It was evident from the responses retrieved from the Navrongo traditional area that, the traditional arrangement for settling disputes includes negotiation.

*There are ways to handle the conflicts. The best way is to consult the ‘Kwara’ and soothsayer for direction. After the consultation, we (the traditional leadership) meet to discuss the way out by getting the families or the contestant agree on the decisions that are taken and to appreciate the fairness in the process leading to the selection of a particular contestant. (Pindaa Chief).*

As noted from the above, discussions are held between two or more people who are trying to work out a solution to their problem. Negotiation takes place directly between the people in the dispute, but there are presence of fair and unbiased personalities or authorities to ensure that consensus is reached. According to Adu and Obiri the presence of trained negotiator or authority is crucial because, when parties decide to engage in negotiation, they are usually expected to display a give-and-take attitude. Each disputant will either attempt to convince the other side to comply with his opinion, the trained negotiator or independent authority then modify the opposing wishes and move toward a settlement, or to create a solution that meets the needs of all sides (Tem, 2017). Proper negotiation helps the parties admit that there is some conflict between them and they prefer to look for agreement rather than fight openly.

#### 4.6.2 Mediation

Mediation is a process in which a neutral person (the mediator) helps people to negotiate with each other and resolve their disputes. Generally, the mediators have a good knowledge of the issues and the types of disputes, causal factors and broadly experienced to deal with the issue. Regarding disputes among families, clans and lineages, mediation may be very useful when parties have a relationship they want to preserve.

*If selection process comes to an end and there are problems, or problems emerge in the course of selection, the elders first sit and hold a discussion if there is the need to involve other stakeholders, if there is, they then bring the factions together to listen to both sides. If one of parties think they are wrong and want to solve the problem they consult a **mediator** like '**Bagwe bu**', to mediate and solve the problem. He in turn gets the other traditional authorities involved to consult the various gates so that they meet and dialogue as to how they can reach an agreement ... (Navrongo Chief).*

The above is a clear method of mediation approach that is used in the traditional area to settle chieftaincy succession disputes. And this is so because in mediation, stakeholders in the dispute come together for a face-to-face meeting. Each of the parties is allowed to explain its position in the dispute. The mediator then helps them identify issues or problems. He does not decide the result of the dispute but helps the parties talk about their problems. The people in dispute therefore work out a solution with the help of the mediator. Mediators often use persuasion to get people to soften strong stance (Buur & Kyed, 2018).

#### 4.6.3 Arbitration

Arbitration is a process in which the people in dispute present their case to an independent person (the arbitrator), whose decision the parties to the dispute have agreed will be final and binding. Binding in arbitration means that, the parties surrender their rights to a trial and agree to accept the arbitrator's decision as final.



*“There are so many ways to handle these issues. Sometimes, such disputes are referred to the paramount chief for a determination but some people prefer to take it to the law court” .....(Manyoro chief).*

The parties must agree to use arbitration, and on their choice of arbitrator, but more often one person will apply for arbitration and the other person is required to participate. The people in disputes present their case to the arbitrator. The arbitrator then makes the final decision. The people in the disputes are bound by the arbitrator’s decision. Arbitration is used where the parties want another person to decide the results of their disputes for them. It may be appropriate for complex matters where the parties want a decision maker who has training or experience in the issues of the disputes (Kwarkye & Owusu, 2019).



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of major findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the study. The conclusions were derived from the findings of this study on chieftaincy succession disputes in Navrongo traditional area of the Kasena-Nankana municipality are presented based on the purpose, problem statement, and the research questions raised at the preliminary stages of the study. The findings and the resultant recommendations to get the situation improved are well outlined as per the findings and the conclusions reached.

#### 5.1 Overview

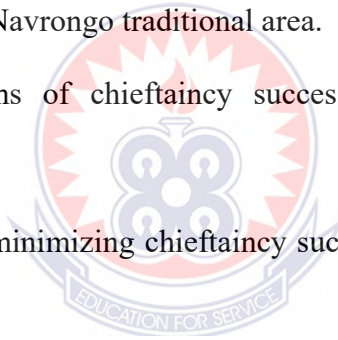
The study employed the qualitative approach for the study. The researcher adopted the stated approach to achieve the objectives of the study through structured, open ended qualitative interviews and focus group discussions which were conducted with three (3) selected divisional areas in the Navrongo traditional council. The interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in both English and the widely spoken local languages (*Kasem & Nankani*) of the traditional area. The recordings were then transcribed, interpreted, and analysed.

An experienced independent research assistant was employed to help in the focus group discussions as well as the interview administration. According to the research questions and its corresponding problem statement raised, emerging and common themes were noted to aligning the conceptual and theoretical frameworks applied for the study to the overall research purpose.

Themes and categories that emerged from the data were augmented with literature, including literature from the Internet, books, journals, news articles etc. Thus, trustworthiness of the data was assured and ethical considerations respected. The findings and recommendations presented below are centred on the experiences and rich knowledge of the chiefs, king makers, landlord, Elders and royals of the various divisions in the Navrongo traditional area.

**The study sought to achieve the following objectives;**

1. How are the procedure that is followed in selecting a chief in Navrongo traditional area.
2. Explore the causes of chieftaincy succession disputes during the enskinment of a new chief in Navrongo traditional area.
3. Unravel the forms of chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area.
4. Identify ways of minimizing chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area.



**5.2 Summary of Major Findings**

From the study, the following main findings emerged;

**The Procedure for Selecting a Chief in Navrongo Traditional Area**

A person is qualified to be selected as a chief if he is a son of the deceased chief, or his brother's son. The person must not have any form of deformity and should be of sound mind, and of good character.

The process of selecting a chief is triggered when the incumbent is deceased, overthrown, or has abdicated his skin. Any attempt to select a new Chief outside the above stated reasons is highly 'treasonable' and it is a rebellion against the gods.

The elderly male child of the deceased king is temporarily made to be responsible for all rituals in the palace until a new chief is selected. It should be noted that, the ‘acting’ elderly male child has equal chances to contest for the skin.

Any qualified person who fails to contest automatically denies his lineage the royal opportunity to become a chief. All the children from the royal gates that are allowed to contest are referred to as calabash wearers. “*Zom Pura*”. Tradition demands that, a mother or the mother figure is required to pray for contestant to be successful as she presents the calabash to her son on the day of contest.

It was revealed that, prior to the commencement of the contest, only the eldest daughter of the family can perform a ritual to the gods of the community who are believed to reside in the heap of sand and refuse in front of the family house (*Tampuuri*) to ensure a peaceful contest.

And finally, the contestants are arranged to meet and greet the most important elder who is known in Kasem as “*Kwara Yigino*” (the keeper of the symbol of the throne). Then the elders together with the “*Kwara yigino,*” go out to consult and perform all rituals to know who has been selected by the gods, upon which they (Elders) will vote to confirm what the gods have said. After all said and done, a ceremony is held to announce the new chief by the elders and the king makers.

### **The Causes of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes in Navrongo Traditional Area**

Four (4) main factors were identified as causes of chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area. These are:

**Political Interference:** Respondents asserted that, political influence the process in favour of their contestant with all the needed resources to be selected as a chief. The politicians do this because they know the chiefs have power and command respect among their people, and thus, they try so much to influence the process to get the chiefs and if possible other traditional leaders on their side. Again, respondents asserted that, political interference in the chieftaincy is a recent phenomenon and is mainly occasioned by the two major political parties in the country, i.e. (NDC and NPP).

**Rivalry and Disunity among Families:** Respondents attributed this to the highly competitive nature of the selection process as being a fertile ground for rift and disunity among clans, families, and even brothers (the contestants themselves).

**The tradition of war:** Tradition has it that, the process of selecting a chief is synonymous to war, and so it is no news when violence breaks out in the selection process. That is why a war dance is performed to commence the selection process. Respondents asserted that, in the past their ancestors used to go to war before enskinning a chief but today it is changing. The notion still remains; “Chieftaincy is about war.”

**Bribery and Corruption.** The King Makers are mostly accused to have received monies from contestants and other people to influence the process. And again, rich people in their quest to capture power from the “poor royals” go the extra mile to bribe the traditional leadership to “buy” the skin even though they do not come from the royal lineage.

### **Forms of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes in the Navrongo Traditional Area**

Chieftaincy succession disputes manifest itself in three main forms in Navrongo Traditional Area as follows;

**Physical Attacks:** The findings revealed that; this form of attack is mainly violent in nature which comes about as a result of parties deploring armed men with weapons to attack or forcefully overthrow the selected chief.

**Spiritual Attacks:** The researcher found out that, before or during the highly competitive process of selecting the chief, some contestants are believed to attack opponents spiritually to either cause them to be disqualified, injured or incapacitated, and even dead in some extreme cases through spiritual means.

**The usual disagreement and confrontations:** These are inevitable, people have always disagreed to agree on some of the approaches and preferences traditional leadership uses. However, these disagreements are short-lived.

### **Ways of Minimizing Chieftaincy Succession Disputes in the Navrongo Traditional Area**

The first and their ultimate preventive measure taken to avoid conflict tendencies is that, they follow strictly in accordance of tradition, the process of selecting a new chief. But in the unlikely event where conflicts/disputes emerge, the following conflict management approaches are applied depending on a lot of factors to bring the situation under control;

**Negotiation:** It was revealed that the Navrongo traditional council leadership applied negotiation approach in resolving conflicts directly engaging the parties involved in the dispute in the presence of fair and unbiased personalities or authorities to help ensure that consensus is reached.

Mediation: This is where parties involved in a dispute confide in a mediator and in the case of Navrongo traditional area it is the '*Bagwe bu*'. If a party is aggrieved, consult a mediator (Bagwe bu), to mediate and solve the problem. He (*Bagwe bu*) in turn gets the other traditional authorities involved to consult the various gates so that they can meet to engage in a dialogue on how they can reach an agreement.

Lastly, they use arbitration: Parties in dispute present their case to an independent person (the arbitrator), whose decision the parties to the dispute have agreed will be final and binding. The parties, thus, surrender their rights to a trial and agree to accept the arbitrator's decision as final. It was revealed that, sometimes, such disputes are referred to the paramount chief for a determination but some people (few) also prefer to take it to the law court.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Data retrieved and supported literatures that were reviewed aligned in a particular direction that chieftaincy succession disputes are not only an enemy to the development of Navrongo traditional area alone but to the entire nation. The chieftaincy system in the Ghanaian traditional setting is one of the most important developmental agents considering its administrative and collaborative role with the local government in raising resources for the betterment of the people.

This research was conducted to examine the chieftaincy succession dispute in the Navrongo traditional area in the Kasena-Nankana Municipality. It was evident from the responses from the traditional leaders that, the laid down procedure for selecting a new chief in accordance with tradition is clear and unbiased and if strictly adhered to, there would be very little chances of conflict breaking out of the selection process. But unfortunately, the selection process is mostly tainted with political interference,

corruption (use of money), disunity and unnecessary rivalry among contestants etc which ends the supposed beautiful display of tradition and culture in serious conflicts.

The effects of these conflicts are clearly known to all. Aside the fact that these violent nature of conflict constitutes a violation of the basic human rights of the person through physical actions like beating, burning of property, rioting, shooting and killing, the disregard and destruction of social infrastructure like water, schools, health facilities, police stations, private properties during violent conflicts, it severely impacts on the development of the area and leads to internal displacement of people and migration of the youth to other parts of the country, mostly the southern sector in search of jobs and security (Tijani, 2019).

Disputes and conflicts have always been part of the process of selecting chiefs, there are traditional arrangements to deal with such issues. The ultimate preventive measures are to ensure that these conflicts do not occur at all. But in the unlikely event where they occur, the traditional leadership step in to encourage parties to iron out their differences. And this is mostly efficient when a step-by-step process is followed with an independent entity or person in between to engage stakeholders to identifying different factors and arriving at a point where parties have mutual benefit.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

1. The Navrongo traditional area must not only rely on oral tradition as a means of recollecting traditional information, especially, the process of selecting a new chief must be well documented to avoid possible alteration of the traditions and customs.
2. Broadly speaking, chieftaincy succession conflicts/disputes are threat to national development and security. Thus, local government, the ministry for



chieftaincy and national and regional houses of chiefs must have a clear understanding and prior information on every pending chieftaincy succession to ensure peaceful installation.

3. Regarding the resolution, a win-win dispute approach must be applied. Both parties must be recognized by the kingmakers, especially the losers must be given some chieftaincy titles by kingmakers and elders. This could keep them in an advantageous position in the winner's administration since they are all from the same royal gate. This will unite even their supporters and minimize divisions.
4. The most important voice in the selection process is the voice of the gods. Then, the diviners of the gods must ensure that there is clarity and transparency per the communication between the gods and the people such that information regarding the selected candidate would not be tempered with and candidates should be made to receive the information first hand.
5. To ensure fair contest among the candidates, the eldest son of the deceased chief who is made to be responsible or as a care-taker chief of the house should be looked at again. The kingmakers and elders should ensure that an independent elder from the royal gate is temporarily appointed as the care taker until a new chief is selected.

### **5.5 Suggestion for Further Studies**

Further studies may concentrate on the role of the national and regional house of chiefs in minimizing chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area. In addition, future researchers who are interested in chieftaincy related issues in Navrongo Traditional area could examine the major role of the gods in the selection process and why the elders still vote if they believe in the gods. Finally, researchers

can examine why females are not playing active roles in the chieftaincy selection process within the Navrongo Traditional area.



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## APPENDICE

### APENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

#### Interview Guide for chiefs and king makers

I am Dominic Webakea Kanyagele, a final year M.Phil student of department of Social Studies, University of Education Winneba, Winneba campus with the following student ID 8180140009. I am carrying out a research on the topic: *Chieftaincy succession disputes in Navrongo traditional council of the Kassena-Nankana Municipality* as part of the requirement for the award of an Mphil Degree at the university, and wish to solicit your views and knowledge relating to the above stated research topic. The objectives of the study are;

1. Examine the procedure that is followed in selecting a chief in Navrongo traditional council.
2. Assess the causes of chieftaincy succession disputes during the enskinment of a new chief in Navrongo traditional council.
3. Explain the forms of chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional council.
4. Examine ways of minimizing chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional council.

Kindly be informed that, I will be recording the session because I do not want to miss any of your comments. Although I will be taking some notes as well during the session, I cannot possibly write fast enough to get it all down. Remember, you are not obliged to talk about anything you do not want to talk about and you may discontinue the interview at any time if you feel uncomfortable with it. I wish therefore to assure you that confidentiality is guaranteed for your responses and thus your response will be treated purely for academic purposes only. Thank you for your acceptance to participate in this research.

**OBJECTIVE 1: THE PROCEDURE THAT IS FOLLOWED IN SELECTING A CHIEF IN NAVRONGO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL.**

1. What are the processes of selecting a chief?
2. What is/are the qualification(s) for becoming a chief in the Navrongo traditional area?
3. Have there been instances when the processes have not been followed? Why were the processes not followed?
4. In your opinion, what amounted to disregard of adherence of the due processes?
5. What was the outcome of not following the laid down processes?
6. What do you make of the whole of processes of selecting a chief in the Navrongo traditional area?

**OBJECTIVE 2: CAUSES OF CHIEFTAINCY SUCCESSION DISPUTE IN NAVRONGO TRADITIONAL AREA**

7. Navrongo traditional area has some record and pending issues of chieftaincy succession disputes, can you please share with me the root causes or sources of these conflicts?
8. Do you think these chieftaincy conflicts have become so widespread in the Navrongo traditional area?
9. Do you think some of the chieftaincy succession disputes have something to do with partisan politics? If you do, what makes you think so and how does it affect the chieftaincy institution in Navrongo traditional area?

**OBJECTIVE 3: THE FORMS OF CHIEFTAINCY SUCCESSION DISPUTES IN THE NAVRONGO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL.**

10. The chieftaincy succession disputes are said to be everywhere in Ghana which Navrongo traditional area is no exception. I humbly want us to have a discussion on how the disputes manifest specifically in the Navrongo traditional area.
11. Do the conflicts/disputes take the form of open and continuous conflicts and destruction in the traditional areas?
12. Do we have cases where some of these conflicts/disputes remain latent /not openly displayed in the in the traditional areas? How do you know this?
13. How involved are the community members in instances of chieftaincy succession conflict?

**OBJECTIVE 4: WAYS OF MINIMIZING CHIEFTAINCY SUCCESSION DISPUTES IN THE NAVRONGO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL.**

14. Are there ways that the chieftaincy disputes can be resolved through a typical localized traditional arrangement in the traditional area?
15. Are the methods of resolving the chieftaincy succession disputes effective enough?  
Please you reasons.
16. Do you agree the divisional chiefs with the support of the paramount chief team up to solve these chieftaincy disputes without a third party? Kindly tell us the position behind your views in this regard.
17. Are the contemporary institutions like the House of Chiefs and the Court system the way to resolve the conflicts amicably among the people? Are there any evidence to that effect?

## **APPENDIX B:**

### **GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

#### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR ELDERS**

##### **SECTION (B)**

#### **Assessment of the Procedure that is followed in Selecting a Chief in Navrongo Traditional Council.**

1. Discuss the process of selecting a chief in the Navrongo traditional area
2. What happens when the due processes are not followed?
3. What is/are the qualification(s) for becoming a chief in the Navrongo traditional area?
4. Are the processes of selection a chief fair? Discuss.



##### **SECTION (C)**

#### **Examination of the causes of chieftaincy succession dispute in Navrongo Traditional Area**

5. What are the main root causes of chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo traditional area?
6. Comparing of chieftaincy conflicts elsewhere to Navrongo traditional area, what are the similarities and differences in the causes?
7. Do you think some of the chieftaincy succession disputes have something to do with partisan politics? Discuss.

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##### **SECTION (D)**

#### **Forms of chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo Traditional Council**

8. In the manifestation of the chieftaincy succession dispute, how violent does it appear?
9. Do the conflicts/disputes take the form of open and continuous conflicts and destruction in the traditional areas?
10. How involved are the community members in instances of chieftaincy succession conflict?

#### SECTION (E)

#### **Ways of minimizing chieftaincy succession disputes in the Navrongo Traditional Council.**

11. Are the current methods of resolving the chieftaincy succession disputes in Navrongo traditional area effective enough
12. Discuss ways in which chieftaincy disputes can be resolved through a typical localized traditional arrangement in the traditional area.
13. Discuss how unity among chiefs in the traditional area will go a long way to bringing lasting solutions to succession disputes in the traditional area.