

Communal Conflicts in Ghana: A Case Study of the Dagbon Conflict

Winfred Kanda

Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Ghana

Abstract:-The main purpose of the study was to examine the Dagbon conflict as a type of Communal Conflict in Ghana. A descriptive survey was used for the study based on qualitative research method. Purposive sampling method was used to collect data. Data was also sourced from books and journal articles. The study revealed that there was non-adherence to the laid down succession plan, political interference and socio-economic problems as the main causes of the Dagbon Conflict. Also, output of productivity was affected badly. Even though there is relative peace, there is still tension between the leadership of the Abudu and Andani gates after several mediation efforts were used to maintain peace. The study therefore recommended that, politicians should desist from meddling in the traditional affairs of Dagbon Kingdom; government should create an enabling environment for investors to invest. The government and traditional authority of Dagbon Kingdom should organize the performance of the final funeral rites of the late chiefs to pave way for the selection and enskinment of the new Ya Na and finally leadership of the two gates should come to agreement and bury their differences in the interest of peace.

Keywords: Conflict; communal conflict; conflicts in Ghana; and Dagbon conflict.

I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The continuous deteriorating socio-economic conditions as well as unstable political environment in most African countries have been a source of worry to African leaders (Gati, 2008). These socio-economic conditions as well as unstable political environment have been attributed to ethnic and communal conflicts, among others. The conditions have destabilized many peaceful countries in Africa leaving serious consequences including political, social, economic and humanitarian problems (Ahiave, 2013). Countries such as Nigeria (1967), Liberia (1990), Somalia (1991), Sierra Leone (1998), Rwanda (1994), Cote d' Ivoire (2002) among others have been the most affected (McGowan, 2005). According to Alimba (2014) the causes of these communal conflicts have explanation in colonialism, politics, greed, inequity, corruption, injustices and leadership problems.

As a result of these communal conflicts, there were loss of lives, destruction of properties, hunger and displacement (Ahiave, 2013). Ghana as a country within the sub-region has been relatively peaceful (Gati, 2008). However, Ghana has been witnessing series of long standing communal conflicts (Brukum, 1999). Almost every community in Ghana has experienced some form of communal conflicts. According to Brosche` and Elfversson

(2012) communal conflicts are violent conflicts between non-state actors that are organized along shared communal identity. Some of these communal conflicts include Peki-Tsito conflict, Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, Tuobodom conflict, Akropong-Akwapem conflict, Bawku conflict, Kokomba-Nanumba conflict and Dagbon conflict, among others (Tsikata and Seini, 2004).

Various authors have classified the Dagbon conflict differently. While Awedoba (2009) and Ahiave (2013) have classified the Dagbon conflict as mainly chieftaincy conflict, Ahorsu and Gebe (2011) perceive the conflict as governance and security issues. The research looks at the Dagbon conflict as a form of communal conflict. According to Tonah (2012) the Dagbon conflict has been in existence for over five centuries.

Some authors believe that the Dagbon conflict is protracted due to political interference; others are also of the view that the main actors involved in the conflict (Abudu and Andani families) are not ready to settle their differences in the interest of peace. This has led to many clashes in the past which have resulted in loss of lives and destruction of properties. Many interventions have been put in place to ensure peace. However, this has yielded little results. The study, therefore, seeks to examine Dagbon conflict as a type of communal conflict comprehensively by identifying the causes, effects, challenges faced in resolving the conflict and to employ conflict resolution efforts to resolve the conflict.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since 1948, the Dagbon Kingdom has experienced many conflicts (Awedoba, 2009). Various scholars have attributed the conflict to many reasons such as the manipulation of the Ya Na succession structure by kingmakers, the relegation of Dagbon customs and traditions (Awedoba, 2009). Others are also of the view that the involvement of politicians in the traditional affairs of the Dagbon Kingdom has negatively affected the Kingdom (Tonah, 2012). These and many other factors have led to clashes between the Abudu and Andani families and their sympathizers in the past resulting in loss of lives and properties (Ahiave, 2013).

As a result, many interventions such as Commissions, Committees, State Security Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, and Eminent Chiefs, among others,

have been put in place by the state to bring about relative peace and stability. In spite of the various interventions, the conflict seems to be prolonging which is affecting development in the area. The study therefore intends to identify the causes of the conflict, examine its effects, analyze the challenges faced in resolving the conflict and employ mediation efforts to resolve the conflict.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study sought to:

1. Identify the underlining causes of the Dagbon conflict;
2. Examine the effects of the Dagbon conflict on the people of the Northern Region;
3. Analyze the challenges in resolving the Dagbon Conflict; and
4. Use mediation efforts to resolve the Dagbon Conflict.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study sought to find answers to the following questions:

1. What are the underlining causes of the Dagbon Conflict?
2. What are the effects of the Dagbon Conflict on the people of the Northern Region?
3. What are the challenges in resolving the Dagbon Conflict?
4. What mediation efforts can be used in the Dagbon Conflict?

V. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Conflict and Human Needs theoretical frameworks were used to justify the research study for better understanding.

5.1 Conflict Theory

According to Karl Marx (1818-1883) human society consist of systemic and interrelated parts which are always changing largely through internal contradictions and conflicts which are an inherent characteristic of all human society. Karl Marx explains that, conflict theory sees society as made up of individuals or groups who compete for scarce resources as a result of disagreement. Barash and Wabel (2002) argue that conflict occurs in human societies when different social groups are rivals or when they are in competition with each other. Brecher (1993) posits that conflict is an overt phenomenon where contending groups use coercive means to eliminate each other. Shapiro (2006) opines that conflict is a process of social interaction which involves a struggle over claims to resources, power, status, beliefs, preferences and desires.

According to Brinkerhoff, Weitz and Ortega (2014) the assumptions behind the conflict theory are that between individuals or groups, conflict emerges from having opposing interests or competing for limited resources; struggle and

conflict typically lead to some groups and individuals controlling and dominating others and that patterns of subordination and domination are self-perpetuating and dominant groups disproportionately influence resource allocation and societal structure.

The conflict theory explains the reasons why the Abudu and Andani families use any means to eliminate each other in order to have access to the valuable resource which results in conflict. Again, the conflict theory is appropriate for the study because the Abudu and Andani families who were the main actors involved in the Dagbon conflict are competing for a limited resource which is the Ya Na skin title. Additionally, the Abudu family are of the view that the Andani family have controlled and dominated the Yendi kinship for more than 40 years and these pattern of domination is self-perpetuating. This led to the 2002 conflict which resulted in the death of the sitting Ya Na, Yakubu Andani II.

5.2 Human Needs Theory

According to Human Needs Theory (HNT) conflicts and violent conflicts are caused by unmet human needs which occur when certain individuals or groups do not see any other ways to meet their needs or when they need understanding, respect and consideration for their needs (Gert, 2005). Burton (1990) explains that human needs are often neglected leading groups to use violence to claim their rights and satisfy their needs. Rosenberg (2003) explains that human needs are universal, and meeting them is essential to human survival and well-being.

The main arguments in human needs theory are that, in order for humans to live and attain well-being, they need certain basic essential needs such as respect and understanding, title and statues. If these basic essential needs are denied any individual or group that rightfully deserves it, violence is used to claim the need. The human needs theory fits into the Dagbon conflict because it is a conflict over a basic essential need that one family feels they have been denied the rightful ownership which led to the two families using violence to claim what rightfully belongs to them.

According to Marker (2003) the assumptions behind the human needs theory are that human needs unlike interest, cannot be traded, suppressed or bargained for. Thus, the human needs approach makes a case for turning away from traditional negotiation models that do not take into account non-negotiable issues. These include interest-based negotiation models that view conflict in terms of win-win or other consensus-based solutions and conventional power models that construct conflict and conflict management in terms of factual and zero-sum game perspectives.

The human needs theory fits the study in the sense that, neither the Abudu nor the Andani family was ready to trade or bargain for the Ya Na kinship because the two families believe that they are the rightful heir to the kinship.

The Abudu family are of the view that the Andani family have denied them their human need (kinship) of ascending the throne and they cannot trade or bargain for the throne which led to the conflict.

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

6.1.0 Introduction

The literature review focuses on eight thematic variables that are related to the study. These includes: Concept of Conflict; Concept of Communal Conflict; Communal Conflicts in Ghana; Dagbon Conflict as a form of Communal Conflict; Causes of the Dagbon Conflict; Effects of the Dagbon Conflict; Challenges in resolving the Dagbon Conflict and Mediation efforts to resolve the Dagbom Conflict.

6.1 Concept of Conflict

According to Kendie (2010) conflict occurs when individuals fail to live according to their values. Burton (1990) posits that conflicts are expressed through the manner in which people react to differences and reflect their frustrations concerning each other's behaviour. Sandole (1993) explains that conflict is a dynamic phenomenon characterized by phases of initiation, escalation, control, maintenance and an end stage that is normally reflective of settlement, resolution and transformation. Sandole (1993) explains that conflict is also a process that goes through stages and each stage is dependent of the other. Sandole (1993) adds that conflict becomes aggressive when it manifests in some form of physical destruction of property and high value symbols. Burton (1990) argues that the potential for conflict being destructive of persons, properties and systems makes it more deeply rooted in human nature. Burton (1990) emphasized that when actor's aspirations are frustrated in a given situation by others it may result in violent conflicts that may have negative consequences.

Also, the domination of the political system by the privileged elite as against marginalized groups polarizes the system thereby leading to violent conflict (Enu-Kwesi and Tuffour, 2010). Conflict again is described as a situation in which the concerns of two or more individuals operating within the unit appear to be incompatible (Darling and Fogliasso, 1999).

To Hoelecher and Robert (2002) conflict is viewed as the underlying power that stimulates innovation. Angaye (2003) posits that conflict is an escalated competition at any system level between groups whose aim is to gain advantage over groups. Angaye (2003) adds that conflict occurs when deprived groups and individuals attempt to increase their share of power and wealth or to modify the dominant values, norms, beliefs or ideology.

Otite and Albert (1999) see conflict as a situation of contention and incompatibility involving two or more parties over access to or control of commonly prized and valued limited resources. According to Uzuegbunam and Nwofia

(2014) conflict is the dysfunctional multi-level relationship between two or more interdependent groups or parties for achieving mutually satisfying but incompatible and disproportionate goals. Akpenpuun (2013) opines that conflict refers to dispute, disagreements, quarrels, struggles, fights and wars between individuals, groups and countries. Akpenpuun (2013) adds that conflict may involve the use of verbal attacks or arms in a struggle and lead to warfare or to social disorganization and disharmony.

Gray and Starke (1984) look at conflict as the behaviour by a person or group intended to inhibit the attainment of goals by another person or group. Hellriegel and Slocum (1996) posit that conflict is an opposition arising from disagreement about goals, thoughts or emotions with or among individuals, teams, departments or organizations. Donohue and Kolt (1992) define conflict as a situation in which interdependent people express (manifest or latent) differences in satisfying their individual needs and interest and they experience interference from each other in accomplishing these goals.

Wilmot and Hocker (2011) describe conflict as a felt struggle between two or more independent individuals over perceived incompatible differences in beliefs, values and goals or differences in desire for esteem, control and connectedness. Lindelow and Scott (1989) define conflict as an element that conjures negative connotation, invokes negative feelings and often leads to destruction.

6.2 Concept of Communal Conflict

According to Brosche` (2014) communal conflict is a conflict between non-state groups that are organized along a shared communal identity. Gurr (2000) explains that communal identity is based on common history, culture or core values, common ancestry, descent, historical experience or background. Alimba (2014) posits that communal conflict is a social conflict that relates to a group or groups in a society. Alimba (2014) adds that communal conflict is state of incompatibility that emanates from a commonly shared or used property or resource by a group or groups in a society. It occurs within or between groups that are defined by some form of social ties over resources that are jointly owned or shared in a community.

Azuonwu (2002) explains communal conflict as a conflict that occurs between two or more communities. Oboh and Hyande (2006) describe communal conflict as involving two or more communities engaging themselves in disagreement or acts of violence over issues such as claims for land ownership, religious and political difference leading to loss of lives and destruction of properties. Horowitz (2000) sees communal conflict as a situation where violence is perpetuated across ethnic lines and victims are chosen based upon ethnic group membership. Oji (2014) notes that communal conflict in any social system results from differences in perception, limited resources, role conflicts, inequitable treatment, and violation of territory among others.

6.3 Communal Conflicts in Ghana

There exist in several parts of the country some form of communal conflicts particularly over land and chieftaincy titles and others such as ethnicity, politics and religion. Most of these conflicts sometimes attract the attention of the whole country and even the international community. Notable among these conflicts are the Kokomba-Nanumba conflict, Nkonya-Alavanyo conflict, Peki-Tsito conflict, Tuobodom conflict, the Dagbon conflict among others. The pattern of conflicts in Ghana is the way elections have become the conduit through which the already-existing simmering tensions explode into violent conflict (Tsikata and Saini, 2004). The formation of political parties along ethnic lines in Ghana has created latent conflicts which normally manifest themselves during campaigning and electioneering periods. Awadobe (2009) identifies religious differences as a trigger of conflict in some parts of Ghana particularly Northern Region. Awedoba (2009) observes that conflict erupts between worshippers of different faiths and denominations. For example, the conflict between the Orthodox and Ahmaddist in Wa and Al-Suna and Tijjaniya Islamic in Gonja (Awedoba, 2009).

Again, communal conflicts in Ghana are complex and have varied causes ranging from religious differences to land, chieftaincy, ethnicity, political and economic marginalization. These causes do create conditions for conflicts. Ethnic conflicts are also largely cultural conflicts in nature. These are often intractable and difficult to resolve because they border on the very survival of a social group. For instance, Kokomba-Gonja ethnic conflict and Gonja-Vagala ethnic conflicts. However, this worsens in the introduction of political dimension in exploring the causes and resolution efforts. Chieftaincy conflicts over the years have also been an issue in the country. The Tuobodom conflicts, Dagbon conflicts, Anlo chieftaincy conflicts, Ga-Mantse conflict have all been of great concern. Other communal conflicts involving land include: Peki-Tsito conflicts, Alavanyo-Nkonya conflicts, Adaklu-Agotime conflicts are also of equal importance (Ahiave, 2013). The effects of these conflicts are that scarce resources are diverted to deal with security issues and there is also mistrust among community members. According to Brukum (1999) and Awedoba (2009) there is heavy loss of life, injury, destruction of properties and polarization of every aspect of social life. The Dagbon conflict, Kpandai chieftaincy conflict, Bimbila ethnic conflict, Nkonya-Alavanyo land conflict, Peki-Tsito land conflict, Bawku chieftaincy conflict, Nadowli chieftaincy succession have all been relatively resolved through various conflict resolution efforts such as the use of dialogue and the court system.

6.4 Dagbon Conflict as a form of Communal Conflict

Communal conflict is a social conflict that relates to a group or groups of people in a society. When conflict occurs within a group, it is known as intra-communal conflict and

inter-communal conflict is when conflict occurs between different groups of people (Alimba, 2014). Dagbon conflict has been identified as an intra-communal conflict between the Abudu and Andani royal gates from the same royal family that are in competition over a common resource. Alimba (2014) explains that, these groups have common social ties which makes the competition fierce. This research study examines Dagbon conflict as a type of communal conflict because as the tradition of the people of Dagbon evolves, it became the practice that any son of a former Ya Na who occupied any of the royal gates of Mion, Savelugu and Karaga either Abudu or Andani was qualified to be considered a Ya Na in a rotation manner (Brukum, 2004).

However, the regent of Karaga gate cannot become Ya Na, King of Dagbon because Yakubu, the grandfather of Abudu and Andani gave birth to three sons; Abudu, Andani and Mahami. Abudu and Andani managed to become Ya Na of Dagbon in Yendi but Mahami could not because Mahami could not make it to Yendi before dying. Therefore, his children could not become a Ya Na over Dagbon since their father Mahami did not make it to the ultimate throne in Yendi (Abdul Karim, 2015).

Nevertheless, Mahami's descendants can serve as a regent of Karaga because the successor of Mahami was able to migrate from where his father ended at Kore to Karaga (Aikins, 2012). This custom existed until 1954 when Abudu family tried to import the primogeniture practice which was the right of inheritance belonging exclusively to the eldest son into the Ya Na throne (Sibidow, 1970). The conflict manifested itself when Ya Na Abudulai III succeeded the father, Na Mahama Bia III. After fifteen years on the throne, he died and Mahamadu Abudulai IV, a regent from the Abudu gate succeeded his late father (Sibidow, 1970). Due to the primogeniture practice, there were complaints by the Andani gate of the pro-Abudu strategy that was adopted to protect the interest of the Abudu family and ultimately eliminate the Andani family from the contest of the throne (Sibidow, 1970). Meanwhile, the Mionlana, a regent of Mion was the right person to succeed the late Ya Na Abudulai III as custom demands but Mahamadu Abudulai was selected. Aikins (2012) explains that since 1948, the Abudu family have occupied the throne to the exclusion of the Andani family. Mahamadu Abudulai was later deskinned by impartial kingmakers from Dagbon Traditional Council to allow the Mionlana Andani from the Andani family to be installed as the Ya Na (Aikins, 2012; Mahama and Osman, 2005).

In accordance with Dagbon traditions, a king is not deskinned (Tsikata and Saini, 2004) and this created so much conflict between the two families (Abdul Karim, 2015). However, Mahamadu Abudulai IV and his Abudu sympathizers did not recognize the Mionlana Andani when he was enskinned as the Ya Na Yakubu Andani II (Tonah, 2012). After thirty years, Mahamadu Abudulai IV, the deskinned chief died and there was the need to bury him. The Abudu family wanted to perform the funeral rites of the late chief in

the Gbewaa palace (Abdul Karim, 2015). Meanwhile, to benefit from such legitimate burial, one must have been a legitimate Ya Na who passed on. The Andani family prevented the Abudu family from performing the funeral rites in the Gbewaa palace because he was not a legitimate King before his death. This brought severe clash between the two families in 1969 and it took the intervention of state security to bring about relative peace in the area (Abdul Karim, 2015; Aikins, 2012).

In an attempt to trace the origin of the conflict, events enacted in 1968 and earlier cannot be omitted. In September, 1969 fighting between the two gates had led to considerable loss of lives and destruction of properties (Awedoba, 2009). Ladouceur (1972) accounts that, there were two days of fighting and on the third day, there were as many as 23 people dead and 40 wounded. Ladouceur (1972) adds that in 1967, a vacancy had occurred with the death of Abudulai III from Abudu gate which was during the regime of the National Liberation Council government. In 1968, the Abudu family had installed Mohamadu Abudulai, Gbonlana and son of Abudulai III and the Andani family also installed the Mionlana Andani who had been designated by a Legislative Instrument (L.I 59) as the heir-apparent and who had been selected by the soothsayers was eventually enskinned. The Abudu faction did not agree and petitioned the government against the decision. Consequently, the Mate Kole Commission was set up to investigate the issue. However, Andani III passed away before the Commission completed its work. The Commission's final report was in favour of Abudu gate and Mohammed Abudulai IV was enskinned (Awedoba, 2009).

In 1974, the National Redemption Council regime revoked the decision to install Mahamadu Abudulai IV as the rightful King and rather implemented the L.I 59. As a result, Mahamadu Abudulai IV was deskinning and NaaYakubu Andani II was enskinned (Asiedu, 2008). In 2000, following the assumption of power by the New Patriotic Party (NPP), members of the Abudu clan sensing that there was now a government more sympathetic to their cause, gradually resuscitated their demand for the performance of the final funeral rites of their deposed king, Mahamadu Abudulai IV (Tonah, 2012). They also challenged and tried to undermine the authority of the reigning king, Ya Na Andani II by organizing a parallel celebration of key traditional festivals and ceremonies particularly Bugum festival and Eid-ulAdha in 2001 and 2002 (MacGaffey, 2006).

In 2002, Tonah (2012) adds that, there were reports in the Ghanaian media that two families were preparing for war. On 23rd March, 2002, the government acting upon the recommendations of the Northern Regional Security Council (NRSC) imposed a curfew on Yendi, the capital of Dagbon Kingdom and cancelled the celebration of the Bugum festival. However, the curfew was unilaterally lifted by the Regional Minister following assurances by Ya Na Andani II that there would be no disturbances during the celebration of the

festival. The Ya Na was unhappy about attempts by government officials to scuttle efforts to celebrate the festival in 2002 and saw this as another support for the Abudu family.

The lifting of the curfew and the ban imposed on the celebration of the festival was therefore considered a victory by the Andani family. Tension, mistrust and stockpiling of arms in Yendi town during the celebration of the Bugum festival created the conditions for the outbreak of violence (Tonah, 2012). On March, 25th 2002, an attack on an emissary of the Ya Na by a group of Abudu youth and the destruction of his bicycle ignited the violent conflict between the two clans. It was reported that, the conflict had started with intermittent exchange of gunfire on 25th March, 2002 and continued till the morning of 26th March, 2002. Towards the evening of the 26th March, 2002 instant fighting became intense with more shooting from both sides. Fighting escalated till the 27th March 2002 instant and reached its peak with the setting of the royal palace ablaze. Nobody in the Ya Na's palace was able to escape because the palace had only one entrance.

The Abudu members finally entered the palace, killing anyone they met in the palace including the Ya Na. Three days of fighting between the two clans resulted in the death of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II and more than 30 of his supporters as well as the destruction of 36 houses. The Wuaku Commission (2002) report said the king was not just killed but dismembered. Parts of his body were chopped off and used as trophies of victory to be paraded in the streets of Yendi (Wuaku Commission, 2002). The violence has been described as the worst dynastic conflict since Ghana's independence (Awedoba, 2009).

6. 5 Causes of the Dagbon Conflict

According to Tonah (2012) following the death of Ya Na Mahama II from the Andani clan, his son who subsequently became the regent, failed in his bid to succeed his deceased father as the king of Dagbon. Ya Na Mahama III from the Abudu clan was instead installed as king. In accordance with the principle of rotation, after the death of Mahama III, the next king should have been chosen from the Andani clan since the deceased king was from the Abudu clan. Instead, another member of the Abudu clan-Abudulai III was selected to be the Ya Na. This selection generated considerable dissatisfaction particularly amongst the Andani clan who felt they have been robbed of the high office and the Andani clan refused to recognize the king as such.

Again, the turbulence and divisive political situation since independence till now had an impact on the Dagbon conflict. The elite within the two clans aligned themselves with the two main political parties in the country. The Andani clan aligned to the National Democratic Congress (NDC) while the Abudu clan aligned to the New Patriotic Party (NPP) (Tonah, 2012). Another cause of the conflict was the non-recognition of the sitting king by the other clan which often than not results in clashes and disrespect to each other.

The splitting of Dagbon Youth Association (DYA) along the two clans also rendered their non-functioning as an organ of mediation in dispute (Awedoba, 2009). The educated elite were also divided along the two clans which fueled the conflict by their uncompromising stance on the impasse.

6.6 Effects of the Dagbon Conflict on the people of the Northern Region

In attempting to trace the origin of the present conflict, events enacted in 1968 cannot be omitted. In September, 1969, fighting between the two factions led to considerable loss of lives and property (Awedoba, 2009). Awedoba (2009) also accounts that, three days fighting resulted in the death of 23 people and 40 wounded. Tonah (2012) also explains that, the 2002 incident claimed several lives including the Ya Na and the destruction of properties running into millions of Ghana cedis. In fact, Brukum (2004) claims that the cost of maintaining peace and security, provision of humanitarian assistance and other logistics for support was more than 6 billion Ghana cedis. Since the Northern Region (NR) is regarded as the bread basket of the country and Dagbon is no exception, the conflict has seriously affected farming activities. The conflict also forced many people to migrate to the south, especially young girls who have ended up becoming head porters (Ahorsu and Gebe, 2011). Again, there is break in social cohesion between the two gates due to fear, suspicion and mistrust. Social services, like schools, health care were difficult to access. Dagbon state has been a divided traditional state especially among the youth (Awedoba, 2009).

The killing of the Ya Na has further polarized the state, royals and non-royals alike. The division has political, social, religious and even economic undertones. Marriages and kingship relationships have broken down and the children caught in-between. Religiously, they both have their separate mosques where they worship. This separation reflects the level of intolerance which have prevented the two clans from coming together. Awedoba (2009) again explains that the youths are deeply divided along party lines such that they cannot talk of a DYA. Productive activities take second place while people stockpile sophisticated weaponry. The proliferation of arms increases the security problem. There is also a considerable destruction of personal property and personal injury, sense of insecurity remains high. There is also a sense of fear amongst the vulnerable especially the elderly, women, children and those who cannot escape when trouble starts. The unlikeliness of the area to have fair share of investment and infrastructural development until peace returns. This means youth unemployment remains high with its cyclic effect which predisposes the youth to acts of violence on the least provocation.

6.7 Challenges in Resolving the Dagbon Conflict

Abdul Karim (2015) observes that the Abudu and Andani families do not attend each other's social gatherings because they feel insecure. The conflict has also been

politically motivated, where the two gates aligned themselves to the two main political parties in the country, NPP (Abudu) and NDC (Andani). The role of the youth and the educated elite too has influenced the conflict negatively which has delayed the peace process over the years. The Dagbon Traditional Council (DTC) resolution efforts used to resolve conflict in the past have been relegated to the background. Either the Kuga-Na or Nayiri mediates and resolves disputes between the two gates but this has been relegated due to political influence and the role of the educated elite (Yakubu, 2005).

The lack of justice is also a factor that is protracting the conflict. Both gates feel they are not being treated justly. The Abudu clan are of the view that they have been denied justice to perform the final funeral rites of their king, Ya Na Mahamadu Abdulai IV and it was their turn to ascend the throne since the Ya Na was dead. The Andani clan are also of the view that, since Ya Na Yakubu Andani II did not die a natural death, they feel that justice is denied because government has not located the killers (Abdul Karim, 2015). The Abudu clan are demanding access to the palace for the performance of the appropriate final funeral rites for their late king, Mohammed Abdulai IV, but the Andani clan alleged that the Abudu clan have said several times in the past that once admitted into the palace they would not leave it again, not even after the final funeral rites for their late king had been concluded. This kind of mutual suspicion was not reassuring and creates fear that another outbreak of violence was imminent (Awadoba, 2009).

It is also very disturbing that despite progress made in trying to resolve the problem by at least getting the late king Andani II buried peacefully, there were no signs that either of the two clans would relent in its effort to secure the throne. Over the years, various Commissions were set up to inquire into violent clashes, recommendations made but not all were implemented (Awedoba, 2009). A "road map" to peace was established through the intervention of the three wise kings-Asantehene, Yagbonwrya and Nayiri. The road map stipulates the re-building of the palace and burial of the late king among others, some of the steps were not being complied with fast enough and frustration was evident. There was the expectation from Andani clan that the culprits and others implicated in the king's murder would be dealt with according to the law but this did not seem to have happened (Awedoba, 2009). The delay in the implementation of the Wuaku Commission's recommendations also threatens the peace of Dagbon state.

6.8 Mediation Efforts to Resolve the Dagbon Conflict

A roadmap to peace in Dagbon was established through the intervention of three eminent chiefs in the country. They stipulated the re-building of the palace and the burial of the last king, Ya Na Andani II, the installation of the regent of the late king, the performance of the final funeral rites of the deposed king, Ya Na Mahamadu Abdulai IV,

performance of the final funeral rites of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II and finally, the selection and enskinment of a new Ya Na for Dagbon Kingdom among others (Awedoba, 2009; Tonah, 2012). A state of emergency was declared and curfew imposed throughout the state of Dagbon.

This was to contain the fighting and to protect lives and properties (Awedoba, 2009). Suspension of political activities likely to degenerate into violence was for some time suspended. There was the recommendation by the Wuaku Commission that regulation governing the importation, use and manufacturing of firearms in the country should be enforced and an exercise to retrieve unlicensed arms in the Dagbon area should be launched and vigorously pursued. Another effort was that, the Wuaku Commission recommended the promotion of reconciliation. The interventions of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) have also played significant role in the peacebuilding process through workshops and capacity building.

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.1 Introduction

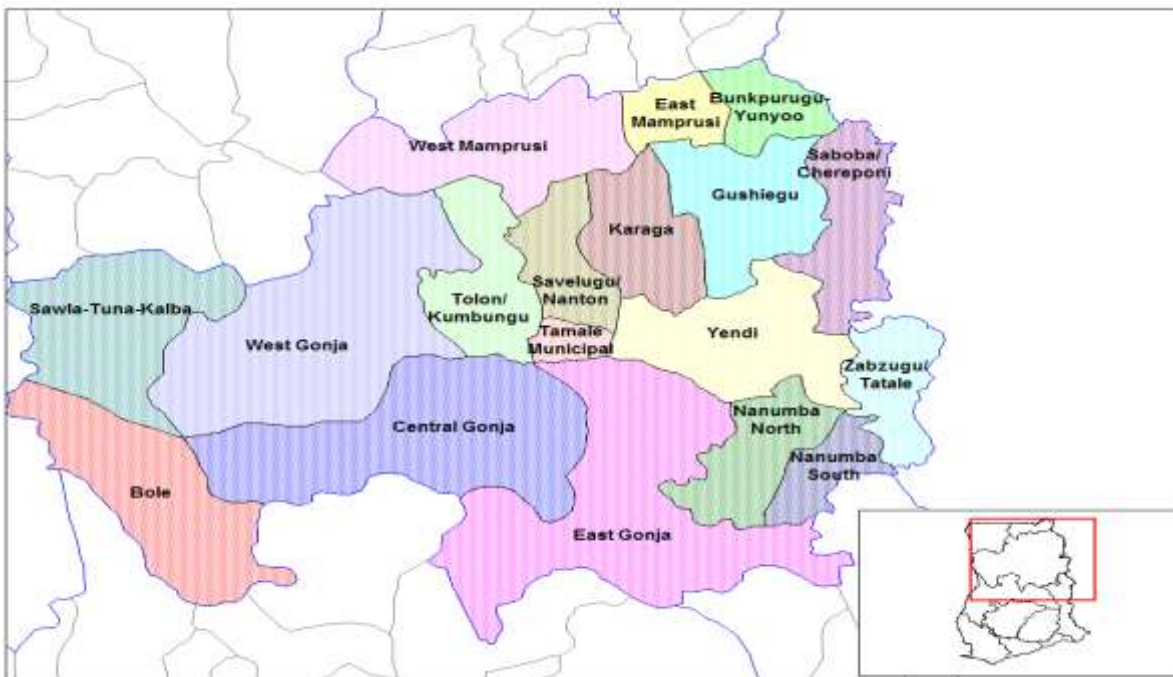
The research methods include: Study Area, Research Design, Sources of Data, Study Population and Sampling Procedure, Data Collection Instruments, Data Processing and Analysis, and limitations of the study.

7.2 Study Area

The Dagbon Kingdom accounts for more than half of the total population of the Northern Region of Ghana (Ahorsu and Gebe, 2011). The focus of the study area was Yendi and Tamale. The people are called Dagomba with Yendi as the traditional capital and the seat of Ya Na. The Dagbon Kingdom is a multi-ethnic society with a population of more than one million inhabitants, mainly rural with few urban settlements (Tonah, 2012). The population is mainly Muslim (80%) with ancestor worship common among the rural population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). Yendi, the traditional capital is located about 98kms to the east and 47kms to the north of Tamale respectively (Awedoba, 2009). The people are mainly farmers and traders (Tonah, 2012; Awedoba, 2009). The vegetation cover of the area is largely savannah with tall grasses and small trees mainly shea, acacia, baobab and mango tress dotting the entire landscape.

The area experiences two seasons, the rainfall season (April-October) and the dry season (November-March) (Tonah, 2012). Tamale is the commercial capital. The chiefs of Tamale are subservient to the Dagomba paramount chief in Yendi. According to the Statistical Service (2012) population census, Tamale has a population of 360,579. Tamale is located 600km north of Accra with residents mostly muslims. Tamale is the administrative capital of the Northern Region with a total land area of 750km². Figure 1.1 shows the map of the study area of Yendi and Tamale in the Northern Region of Ghana

Figure 1.1: Map of the Study Area



Source: (www.ghanadistrict.com, 2017).

7.3 Research Design

A descriptive survey design was used for the study to understand the perspective of respondents about the Dagbon conflict. Descriptive research design is mainly to observe, describe, and document situation as it naturally occurs (Asamoah-Gyimah and Anane, 2013). The design was based on qualitative research method which is a scientific research method that seeks to find answers to questions, collect evidence, produce findings and to understand a given problem from the perspectives of the local population involved (Patton and Cochram, 2002).

7.4 Sources of Data

Data for the study were collected from two main sources: Primary source, which includes respondents mainly chiefs, opinion leaders, the youth, households, workers, state security agencies and civil societies. This was complemented with secondary sources from books, journal articles, internet and newsletters.

7.5 Study Population and Sampling Procedure

Table 1.1: Sample Population

Category of Sample Population	Number
Regent	1
Youth	7
Opinion Leader	2
Sub-Chief	4
Civil Society/NGOs	2
Andani family	3
Abudu family	3
State Security Agency	4
Public/Civil Servant	8
Residence/Household	6
Total	40

Source: (Fieldwork, 2017).

Table 1.1 shows categories of sample population from Yendi and Tamale used for the study with a total sample population of 40. The number of sample population was selected due to data saturation. According to Patton and Cochram (2002) data saturation is when there is enough information to replicate the study when the ability to obtain additional new information has been attained and further coding is no longer feasible. A purposive sampling procedure was used to select the respondents for the study. The purposive sampling procedure was specifically directed towards targeted respondents for specific responses. In purposive sampling, the researcher handpicks the cases to be included on the basis of the specific knowledge of the issue under study (Asamoah-Gyimah and Anane, 2013).

7.6 Data Collection Instruments

The instrument used for the study was interview guide. The interview guide was developed based on the objectives of the study. The interview guide contains five sections with 22 items. Section A contains biographic data of respondent, section B examines the causes of the Dagbon conflict and the actors' role in the conflict. Section C

describes the effects of the conflict which includes how the conflict has affected work/business, livelihoods, quality of education and health care delivery, state of security and infrastructure. Section D examines challenges faced in resolving the conflict. Section E deals with mediation efforts to resolve the conflict. These include mediators in the peace process and the type of mediations used.

7.7 Data Processing and Analysis

The data collected was summarized into tables of frequencies and percentages of information, discussed and inferences made to reach the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

8.1 Introduction

The key elements discussed include the sex and educational background of respondents. Additionally, the causes of the conflict, the effects of the conflict on the people of the Northern Region, the challenges in resolving the conflict and finally mediation efforts used to end the conflict were also discussed and analyzed.

8.1.1 Sex Distribution

Table 1.2: Sex Distribution of Respondents

Sex	Number	%
Male	32	80
Female	8	20
Total	40	100

Source: (Fieldwork, 2017).

Table 1.2 represents the sex distribution of respondents. It was evidently clear that males 32 far outweighs females 8. This confirms Awedoba (2009) when he explains that the high profile role taken up by the so-called spokesmen (apparently no women) who are educated elites based in Accra is common knowledge. This also confirms the violent nature of the conflict especially in 2002 due to the dominance of males in the conflict which resulted in the death of many people including the Ya Na.

8.1.2 Educational Background of Respondents

Table 1.3: Frequency Distribution of Respondents by their Educational Background

Educational Background	Number	%
Tertiary	24	60
Pre-Tertiary	16	40
Total	40	100

Source: (Fieldwork, 2017).

Table 1.3 shows the distribution of educational background of respondents. Respondents with tertiary education 24 far outweighs the respondents with pre-tertiary

education 16. The educational background of respondents confirms what Awedoba (2009) identified as the high profile role taken up by the so-called spokesmen who were educated elites based in Accra.

The educational background of respondents show that the people of Dagbon Kingdom were highly educated who also belong to the political elite class of the country. Wuaku Commission (2002) confirms this when it identified the former vice president, Alhaji Aliu Mahama, former Interior Minister, Malik Yakubu, former National Security adviser, former Northern Regional Minister, the District Chief Executive of Yendi and many others dominated the National Security apparatus in the NPP administration as Dagomba from Dagbon Kingdom who happen to be Abudu sympathizers (Ahorsu and Gebe, 2011). It was revealed by the respondents that the two gates (Abudu and Andani) were dominated by highly educated elite with political background who had much influence on the Dagbon conflict.

8.1.3 Causes of the Dagbon Conflict

Table 1.4. Causes of the Dagbon Conflict

Causes	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Non-adherence to succession structure	24	60%	16	40%	40	100
Political interference	35	88%	5	12%	40	100
Unemployment	22	55%	18	45%	40	100
Actors in the conflict	30	75%	10	15%	40	100
Role of actors in the conflict	20	50%	20	50%	40	100
Changes in the course of the conflict	36	90%	4	10%	40	100

Source: (Fieldwork, 2017).

Table 1.4 shows the causes of the Dagbon conflict as responses from the respondents. On succession structure, 24 of the respondents were of the view that the conflict was mainly caused by not following the lay down succession structure of becoming a Ya Na by the two gates (Abudu and Andani). The respondents explained that the changes that took place in the succession structure, thus the change from soothsaying to rotational succession and the relegation of Dagbon traditional resolution efforts were also causes. Again, 16 of the respondents were of the view that apart from the changes in the succession structure, the changes led to the instalment of wrong chiefs. This led to the deskinment of chiefs which was against the customs and traditions of Dagbon Kingdom. Also, attempt to stop the celebration of the Damba festival, the removal of AbdulaiMahamadu IV in 1974 by the state and the violation of the Supreme Court ruling in 1986 that AbdulaiMahamadu IV should be recognized as a former Ya Na were causes.

About political interference, 35 of the respondents were of the view that politicians especially from NPP and NDC during campaign promised to end the conflict which often times does not happen. The respondents explained that, the two gates have monetary benefits from the conflict since political leaders flood them with money in order to gain

political power. The respondents added that during the 2000 electioneering campaign, the NPP promised the Abudu family that when the NPP wins political power, the Ya Na, Yakubu Andani II would be deskinmed and this message became a slogan for the market women.

It was a common knowledge that Abudu are pro-NPP while Andani are pro-NDC which the respondents confirmed to be true. The cause of the conflict was confirmed by Barash and Wabel (2002) when they argue that conflicts occur when different groups are rivals or are in competition with each other. The two families were in competition with each other over who becomes the Ya Na even though there were succession structures. The conflict theory and human needs theory were used to justify the study because the conflict occurred due to the fact that there was domination of the limited resource (the skin-ship) by one of the royal families and the other family's basic need of becoming the Ya Na was denied them. Human needs unlike interest cannot be traded, suppressed or bargained for and this resulted in the 2002 conflict. The Abudu family felt they cannot trade the skin-ship which was their turn to rule Dagbon Kingdom.

Regarding unemployment, 22 of the respondents also explained that due to the high rate of unemployment especially among the youths, they stockpile arms in anticipation of war. The unemployed youths also most often than not sit under tress to play draft, cards and discuss politics and the Dagbon conflict which created tension.

Again, 30 of the respondents agree that the main actors involved in the conflict were the Abudu and Andani families while 10 also believe that their sympathizers were instrumental in fueling the conflict. The role of the actors was mainly to incite the youths to cause violence, engage political leaders for monetary gains, present gifts such as smock, sheep and use their political sympathizers in power to influence court rulings in their favour. This was confirmed by Tonah (2012) where he identified the fact that a losing gate reluctantly accepts the decisions of a ruling government while it bids its time for a favourable government to be in power so that it can attempt to reverse the unfavourable decision of the previous government.

On changing nature of the conflict, 36 of the respondents explained that due to the historical context of NPP (pro-Abudu) and NDC (pro-Andani), this has changed the course of the conflict where the state could not manage the various phases of the conflict. Dagbon Kingdom was divided along party lines with mistrust and suspicion among the two gates. The respondents confirmed that the causes of the conflict have polarized the Dagbon Kingdom to the extent that both gates were having their regents separately that they took instructions from which were affecting the smooth development of the Kingdom. The respondents again explained that due to the political alignment, there was so much tension among the two families due to the change in government. Again, the respondents admitted that most of

their local activities such as football games, marriage ceremonies, friday worships have all been separated along the family lines. The respondents added that the causes have changed the course of the conflict such that anytime a public servant was posted to the Yendi Municipality, the sympathizers try to align the public servants to any of the families thereby undermining their work and creating insecurity.

8.1.4 Effects of the Dagbon Conflict on the people of the Northern Region

Table 1.5: Effects of the Dagbon Conflict on the people of the Northern Region

Effects	Very Bad		Bad		Not too Bad		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Work/Business	4	10%	29	73%	7	17%	40	100
Living conditions	8	20%	31	78%	1	2%	40	100
Quality of education	18	45%	20	50%	2	5%	40	100
Quality of healthcare	18	45%	20	50%	2	5%	40	100
Community security	7	18%	21	53%	12	29%	40	100
Infrastructure	13	33%	11	28%	16	39%	40	100

Source: (Fieldwork, 2017).

Table 1.5 represents the effects of the Dagbon conflict on the people of the Northern Region. On business, 29 of the respondents were of the view that work and businesses were affected badly due to this most workers relocated to nearby towns. Some workers also fled for fear of their lives. The two gates do not do business together any longer until recent times. Market women could not travel to buy goods for sale and this affected business in the market. People took advantage of the conflict situation and looted shops and residence of people. Again, the respondents explained that during working hours, there was no trust among the workers because the workers do not know which of the families they belong to. Due to this some workers took transfer to other towns. Newly posted public servants such as teachers and nurses refused postings to the Yendi municipality because of fear of their lives. Again, the respondents claimed that some businesses closed down because the owners were involved in the conflict and they lost their lives. The respondents also added that, most of the youths especially who were involved in the conflict, migrated to other towns after calm had been restored due to fear of been victimized.

On living conditions, 31 of the respondents explained that the conflict affected their families negatively. There was separation of families who belong to the different gates, and this affected their children. As a result of the conflict, basic needs such as food stuffs, water, electricity became scares which affected living conditions. Families, groups and unions no longer meet to take decisions for the development of the community. Some families do not talk to each other anymore because they belong to different gates. Some of the respondents explained that workers who engaged house helps

to take of their children have to terminate the appointments of the house helps because the workers do not know the gate they belong to due to fear. This situation affected their living conditions because they have to take care of the children during working hours which affected productivity badly. Again, the respondents explained that due to scarcity of basic needs like food, food stuffs became expensive. There were also interruptions in supply of basic needs like water, electricity, telecommunication and even transportation.

About the effects on education and health care delivery, 20 of the respondents explained that, teachers, nurses and other health care workers fled the town during the incident, others took transfer to other towns, and schools were closed down. The few schools that were opened, teachers were not at post to work and this affected pupils' academic performance badly. Eventually, teachers who reported to work were afraid so the conflict took centre stage of their discussions rather than work. Health workers were not attending to patients, and these affected the health status of patients. Medical officers who were posted were aligned to the various gates, due to this they took transfer. Respondents added that as a result of the conflict, casualties during the conflict were kept at the Yendi government morgue including the Ya Na. This affected the morgue attendants because they have to work over time to keep the bodies safe. A twenty-four-hour security was also provided at the morgue by the state due to the body of the Ya Na. This also had an effect on the security agencies. This created so much inconveniences at the hospital and resources were over stretched. Most of the respondents, 21 agreed that there was state of insecurity at the time of the conflict. Residents were living in fear, people abandoned their homes, took refuge elsewhere and others migrated to the south.

As a result of the conflict, the respondents said there was a twenty-four-hour security at the chief's palace for the regent, and the regent of the Abudu family. There were night and day patrols by both the military and police personnel. The respondents also explained that residents could no longer stay into the night to do evening business because of curfew and road blocks. On the other hand, 12 respondents explained that because the 2002 incident took place at the palace and its surroundings, where they resided, no shooting incident occurred and they went about their normal duties even though there was fear and tension in the town. The respondents added that they could hear bullets been fired around the chief's palace which was engulfed with smoke and shooting went on throughout the day and night for three days.

On infrastructure, 16 of the respondents explained that there was destruction of properties, especially, houses but not all houses were destroyed, rather the chief's palace and some selected houses around the palace which belonged to Andani family members and their sympathizers. This created inconveniences for the affected families, due to that they took shelter in school buildings, churches and mosque. The Ya Na's body was chopped into pieces and dragged in the palace

with blood spill on the ground. The dead body of Ya Na was dragged and left outside the palace.

8.1.5 Challenges in Resolving the Dagbon Conflict

Table 1.6: Challenges in Resolving the Dagbon Conflict

Challenges	Agree		Disagree		Not too Bad		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Delay in the performance of the final funeral rites of the late chiefs is affecting the peace process negatively	22	55%	55%	25	8	20%	40	100
Government interventions in the conflict brought about relative Role of the youth and educated elite has influenced	35	88%	88%	-	5	12%	40	100
Role of the youth and educated elite has influenced the conflict negatively	30	75%	75%	7	3	71%	40	100
Relegation of traditional conflict resolution has negatively affected the peace efforts	27	68%	68%	8	5	12%	40	100

Source: (Fieldwork, 2017).

Table 1.6 presents the challenges faced by stakeholders in resolving the Dagbon conflict. About the final funeral rites, 22 of the respondents were of the view that the delay in the performance of the final funeral rites of the late chief(s) was creating tension, state of fear, insecurity especially among members of the two gates while 10 disagree because they believe that there was relative peace. The respondents claimed that the Andani family believes that if they allow the Abudu family to the palace to perform the final funeral rites of their late king, Mahamadu Abdulai IV, they would not leave the palace again. The Andani family were also of the view that until the killers of the late Ya Na were found, they would not allow the performance of the final funeral rites. The respondents were of the view that the two families were not ready to make progress of unity and this was creating antagonism among the two families.

Regarding government interventions, 35 of the respondents were also of the view that the interventions have brought about relative peace and stability since state security agencies (police and military) were stationed in the town specifically at the palace of the regent(s) while 5 of the respondents were also of the view that the conflict still remained unresolved because of its historical nature and the entrenched positions taken by the two gates.

Also, on the role of the educated elites and the youth on the conflict, 30 of the respondents were of the view that the educated elites of the two gates incited the youth to engage in violence acts. The respondents also added that the elders did not tell the youths the truths about the true history of Dagbon customs and traditions and this led the youth to be involved in the conflict while 7 of the respondents were also of the view that the educated elites usually educate the youths about peace and the negative effects of conflict. The respondents explained that the educated elites were the main actors who were delaying the peace process because they influenced stakeholders and the conflict was still persisting.

With regards to resolution of the conflict, 27 of the respondents explained that the relegation of Dagbon traditional conflict resolution efforts have negatively affected the peace process because the state has taken over the resolution process. The custodians were not involved in some of the peace processes by the state, the customs and traditions were not followed in the peace process as it used to be in the past and this has been a challenge to the peace process. Also, 8 of the respondents were of the view that some sub-chiefs who were members of the traditional conflict resolution efforts were not involved in the conflict resolution processes because they were perceived not to be sympathizers of the ruling chief. The respondents were also of the view that anytime the state engages the two families on a peace talk, any decision taken and agreed upon by the parties, after briefing their sympathizers, the sympathizers would not agree to their decisions which was also a challenge to the peace process.

According to the respondents, the two families complained that most of the mediation talks were held outside the Yendi town which was a sign of disrespect to their customs and traditions. Again, the respondents said anytime there was a mediation talk, it resulted in the exchange of words, verbal abuse and also because of interpretation which sometimes delays the peace process, meetings have to be called off. Also the respondents agree that sometimes when mediators called for peace talks, some of the key family members do not turn up due to ill-health or they would give reasons that would not allow them to be part of the process which also delays the peace process. The respondents confirmed that the traditional council members were made up of sub-chiefs who were both Abudu and Andani family members but most of them were denied place in the palace thereby rendering the council non-functional to perform their duties as mediators. Some respondents also explained that in the past since the traditional council used genuine processes to mediate, some sub-chiefs saw it as a threat to their chances of becoming a Ya Na so these sub-chiefs created situations that rendered the work of the sub-chiefs useless which eventually led to their relegation. Some respondents were also of the view that the traditional council resolution efforts were a waste of time that they did not play any better role because the sub-chiefs who constituted the council were made up of

members from both gates and they were bias in their decisions.

8.1.6 Mediation Effortsto Resolve the Dagbon Conflict

Table 1.7: Mediation Efforts to Resolve the Dagbon Conflict

Mediations	Yes		No		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mediators	40	100%	-	-	40	100
Types of mediation	40	100%	-	-	40	100
Resolving the conflict	35	88%	5	12%	40	100
Role of Dagomba in the resolution of the conflict	37	93%	3	7%	40	100
Involvement of state and civil society	30	75%	10	15%	40	100
Opinion on the resolution of the conflict	24	60%	16	40%	40	100

Source: (Fieldwork, 2017).

Table 1.7 identifies the mediation efforts used in resolving the Dagbon conflict. All the respondents mentioned different mediators who were involved in the peace process. They included the Eminent Chiefs, State Security, Catholic Mission of Yendi, Yendi Peace Committee, MUSEC, State Commissions and Committees, the courts, traditional council, civil society organizations, skin makers and opinion leaders. All the respondents explained that, the mediators used dialogue mainly and the court system of the state and the traditional council to settle the conflict. About 35 of the respondents admitted that in spite of the various mediation efforts, the mediators have not been able to resolve the conflict but there was relative peace.

Concerning the role of Dagomba people in resolving the conflict, 37 of the respondents believe that Dagomba themselves have to come to agreement and bury their differences and work towards peacebuilding. The respondents explained that the people of Dagomba need to show and demonstrate love, forsake magic powers, resort to the use of traditions and customs, educate the public about the effects of conflict and work towards peace. Again, the respondents added that the two families have to come together in the interest of peace by following the customs and traditions of Dagbon to perform the two final funerals rites of the late chiefs and subsequently select a new Ya Na while 3 also believe that Dagomba people alone cannot bring about peace but needed the support of stakeholders to achieve the peace process.

About the involvement of stakeholders to resolve the conflict, 30 of the respondents believed that the involvement of government and civil society organizations was in the right direction while the other 10 respondents also believe it was only the traditional council that could resolve the conflict. The respondents also believe that the presence of the government and civil society organizations have brought about relative peace and stability due to the presence of state security agencies, the active role of MUSEC in maintaining law and order and the various training workshops on peacebuilding organized by the organizations. The respondents explained

that, MUSEC was always meeting to identify early warning signs and quickly deployed security men to maintain peace.

There was also community policing and night and day patrols by the security agencies and always interacting with the local people to minimize crime and other violent related issues. On the opinion of respondents about how to bring about lasting peace to Dagbon, there were divided opinions, 24 of the respondents were of the view that the government should step in and arrange for the performance of the final funeral rites of the late chiefs, Mahamadu Abdulai IV and Yakubu Andani II while 16 of the respondents were also of the view that the reconciliation process ruled by the supreme court in 1986 should be followed and the custodians of the land should be allowed to perform their duties. Some of the respondents said that the Abudu family should apologies to the Andani family about the 2002 incident to bring about lasting peace so that the final funerals rites would be performed for the chiefs. The custodians should be allowed to apply the custom and traditions of Dagbon, politicians should not meddle in Dagbon traditional affairs and members of the two royal families should tell the truth about Dagbon customs and traditions to the people especially the youth.

IX. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Based on the objectives and data analyses, the following findings were obtained: The Dagbon Kingdom is headed by a king called Ya Na. Ascension to the throne as a Ya Na is rotational between the descendants of the two sons of Ya Na, Yakubu I (Abulai and Andani). The Dagbon Kingdom is dominated by males with high educational qualifications. The causes of the conflict are as a result of not following the laid down succession plan, political interference and socio-economic problems.

The conflict has negatively affected output of productivity in all areas of the economy and social interactions in the Northern Region. The conflict has affected businesses, health care delivery and quality education badly. There is high insecurity in the communities even though there is there relative peace and security.

It was found out that the delay in the performance of the final funeral rites of the late chiefs has created tension, fear and insecurity among the two family members. Even though government interventions have brought about relative peace, the conflict is still on-going. It was again found out that the youths and the educated elite influenced the conflict both negatively and positively. The Dagbon traditional council resolution efforts used to mediate the conflict has been relegated. It was found out that different mediators have used various mediation efforts to resolve the conflict but have yielded little result.

X. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were made about the Dagbon conflict. It is concluded that the

causes of the conflict were as a result of the frequent changes in the succession structure over the years, political interference in Dagbon traditional affairs by politicians, high rate of unemployment and poverty among the youths. The main actors involved in the conflict were the Abudu and Andani families and their sympathizers. The educated elite influenced the youths both positively and negatively.

The conflict has affected socio-economic activities in the communities badly. Quality education and health care delivery have been badly affected too. There is a state of fear, tension and insecurity in the community. The Dagbon Kingdom is divided among the two royal families.

The delay in the performance of the final funeral rites of the two late chiefs has created tension especially among the two families. Even though there was relative peace in Dagbon as a result of government interventions and other civil society organizations, the conflict still remains a challenge.

Different mediation efforts were used to resolve the conflict. Dialogues were mainly used in the mediation processes. In spite of the various mediations used the conflict is still unresolved. Dagomba themselves were the right people to resolve the conflict using their traditional conflict resolution efforts. Government interventions in the conflict were good since it has brought about relative peace.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were made: The Dagbon traditional authority should see to it that the laid down succession structure is followed strictly by both families. Politicians should not meddle in the traditional affairs of Dagbon Kingdom. The government should use the Youth Employment Agency (YEA) Programme and the One District One Factory (ODOF) Programme to create employment and employ the youths especially. The government should pass a legislation banning people from the use of arms in the community. The Ministry of Interior (MOI) in collaboration with Ghana National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapon (GNACSA) should retrieve all unlicensed guns from the people in the community. The educated elite should educate the youth positively and also tell the youth about the true history of the Dagbon Kingdom.

The leadership of the two families should work with the government to create a conducive environment for workers to accept postings to the community. Investors should be encouraged by government and Dagbon traditional authorities to invest in the community to raise the standard of living of the people in the community. Workers especially teachers and nurses should be motivated by government to stay in the community to improve on education and health care delivery. The state security agencies should engage in community policing so that residents would be guaranteed safety, to reduce the tension in the community.

Government and traditional authorities of the Dagbon Kingdom should organize the performance of the final funeral rites of the two late chiefs to pave way for the selection and installation of the new Ya Na. Government should intervene whenever there is conflict in the community. The traditional council resolution efforts should be brought back to resolve the conflict.

Civil society organizations should organize regular training workshops for the two families, the youths and residents at the grassroots level by involving the Dagomba themselves to facilitate the peace process. Leadership of the two families should compromise each other's position and work together in the interest of peace. Custodians of Dagbon should be allowed to apply the customs and traditions of Dagbon to resolve the conflict. The government and other organizations such as West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) should train personnel to identify early warning signs of conflict and be able to stop the conflict before it turns violent.

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