

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA



**CHIEFTAINCY SUCCESSION DISPUTES IN AWUTU SENYA:
IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**



GERALD KWEKU PENNIE

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

2025

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA



**CHIEFTAINCY SUCCESSION DISPUTES IN AWUTU SENYA:
IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**



**GERALD KWEKU PENNIE
(200027114)**

**A Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial
Fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Conflict, Human Rights, and Peace Studies)**

**Centre for Conflicts Human Rights and Peace Studies
Faculty of Social Sciences Education**

NOVEMBER, 2025

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Gerald Kweku Pennie, 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 has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:



Supervisors' Declaration

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

Name of Supervisor: PROF. ISAAC ESHUN

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

To my family and my lovely wife, Adwoa Bentumaa.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I express my deepest appreciation to my supervisor Prof. Isaac Eshun for his exceptional mentorship, expertise, and unwavering support. His guidance and insightful feedback have been instrumental in shaping the direction and quality of this research.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the traditional authorities, community leaders, elders and individuals of Senya who graciously participated in this research. Their willingness to share their knowledge, experience, and perspectives has been fundamental to the success of this study.

I would like to acknowledge the support and encouragement of my friends and classmates who have been a course of inspiration and motivation throughout this journey. Their unwavering belief in my abilities and their willingness to lend a listening ear has been invaluable.

I cannot express enough gratitude to my family for their love, understanding and unwavering support. Their sacrifice and encouragement have been bedrock of my academic pursuits. I am eternally grateful for their belief in me and their constant encouragement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Page
DECLARATION	iv
DEDICATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
ABSTRACT	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	6
1.3 Purpose of the Study	8
1.4 Research Objectives	9
1.6 Significance of Study	9
1.6.1 Contribution to Knowledge	9
1.6.2 Contribution to Theory	10
1.6.3 Contribution to Policy and Practice	11
1.7 Scope of the Study	11
1.8 Definition of Key Terms	12
1.9 Organization of the Study	13
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	14
2.0 Introduction	14
2.1 Theoretical Framework	15
2.1.1 Historical Institutionalism	16
2.1.2 Conflict Theory	20

2.3 Conceptual Review	24
2.3.1 Chieftaincy succession disputes	24
2.3.2 Political Polarization	25
2.3.3 Social cohesion	27
2.3.4 Community development	31
2.4 Causes of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes	32
2.4.1 Historical causes of chieftaincy succession disputes	33
2.4.2 Legal and customary causes	33
2.4.3 Socio-economic factors	34
2.4.4 Cultural and religious influences	35
2.4.5 Political interference	36
2.4.6 Other Factors Leading to Chieftaincy Succession Disputes	37
2.5 Political Alignments and Their Influence on Chieftaincy Disputes	40
2.5.1 Political interference in traditional governance	40
2.4.2 State involvement in chieftaincy disputes	41
2.5.3 Elite manipulation and political alignments	42
2.5.4 Impact of political alignments on conflict resolution	43
2.5.5 Broader implications for social cohesion and community development	43
2.6 Impact of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes on Social Cohesion	44
2.6.1 Disruption of community unity	44
2.6.2 Intergenerational and inter-ethnic tensions	45
2.5.3 Conflict resolution and mediation mechanisms	46
2.6.4 Gender and social inclusion in succession conflicts	47
2.7 Implications of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes on Local Development Projects	48

2.7.1 Traditional leadership and development	48
2.7.2 Governance disruptions	49
2.7.3 Resource allocation and mismanagement	50
2.7.4 Development partnerships	51
2.7.5 Case studies	52
2.7.6 Resolving chieftaincy disputes for development	52
2.8 Research Gap and Justification for the Case Study	54
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	56
3.0 Introduction	56
3.1 Research Paradigm and Philosophy	56
3.2 Research Approach	58
3.3 Research Design	59
3.4 Research Setting	60
3.5 Study Population	61
3.6 Sampling and Sample Size	62
3.7 Data and Data Collection	63
3.7.1 Data Collection Methods	64
3.8 Data Analysis	65
3.9 Trustworthiness	66
3.10 Ethical Considerations	68
3.11 Positionality	69
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDING AND DISCUSSION	71
4.0 Introduction	71
4.1 Causes of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes in Awutu Senya	71

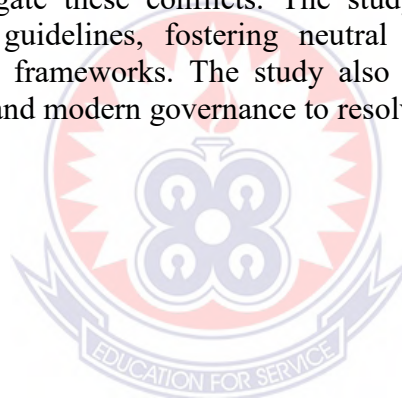
4.1.1 Conflicts over Succession Rights	72
4.1.2 Leadership Failures and Lack of Consensus	74
4.1.3 Disruption of traditional rituals	75
4.1.4 External and Political Influences	77
4.2 Politicization of Clan Loyalties in Chieftaincy Succession Disputes	79
4.2.1 Political Affiliations as Catalysts for Division	79
4.2.2 Politicization undermining traditional authority	81
4.2.3 Ripple Effects on Community Cohesion	82
4.3 Effects of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes on Social Cohesion and Community Development in Awutu Senya	83
4.3.1 Chieftaincy, Social Unity, and Communal Life	84
4.3.2 Effects on Social Relations and Cultural Practices	85
4.3.3 Leadership Contestation and Its Implications	86
4.3.4 Consequences for Community Development	87
4.3.5 Erosion of Developmental Confidence and the Need for Resolution	87
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	89
5.0 Introduction	89
5.1 Summary of the Study	89
5.2 Key Findings of the Study	91
5.3 Implications for Theory and Practice	93
5.3.1 Theoretical Implications	94
5.3.2 Practical and Policy Implications	95
5.4 Conclusions	96
5.5 Recommendations	97

5.6 Limitations	99
5.7 Suggestions for Future Studies	101
REFERENCES	103



ABSTRACT

Chieftaincy succession disputes pose significant challenges to traditional governance, social cohesion, and community development. This study explored the chieftaincy succession conflict between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya, examining its causes, political dimensions, and implications for social and developmental outcomes. Using qualitative research through exploratory case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with sub-chiefs, politicians, community members, and opinion leaders, as well as through document analysis. Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns and themes within the data. The findings revealed that the dispute is rooted in ambiguous succession practices, historical grievances, and leadership failures, compounded by disrupted enstoolment rituals. Political alignments, with the Twedan clan associated with the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the Anona clan with the New Patriotic Party (NPP), have intensified the conflict, transforming it into a broader socio-political struggle. The dispute has significantly fragmented social cohesion, eroded trust, and stalled community development, with rival factions obstructing initiatives perceived as benefiting opposing groups. The study concluded that there is an urgent need to depoliticize traditional governance, restore ritual practices, and strengthen leadership accountability to mitigate these conflicts. The study's recommendations included codifying succession guidelines, fostering neutral mediation, and implementing inclusive development frameworks. The study also emphasized the importance of integrating traditional and modern governance to resolve such disputes effectively.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

The chieftaincy, as a traditional institution, has significantly influenced the social, political, and economic governance of numerous African nations. Historically, chiefs have acted as community leaders, managing conflict resolution, land administration, and the enforcement of justice. In numerous African regions, the institution of chieftaincy has endured colonization and contemporary state-building efforts, maintaining a crucial role in governance and communal solidarity. Nonetheless, despite its endurance and importance, the institution has frequently been entangled in succession conflicts, which can erode social cohesion and hinder community growth. Chieftaincy disputes, especially around succession, are common in numerous African countries and frequently escalate into larger battles that can destabilize entire regions. In precolonial African communities, chieftaincy constituted a vital institution for governance, especially at the local level.

Chiefs possessed substantial authority, administering their communities with executive, legislative, judicial, and religious authorities. They were tasked with upholding peace and order, adjudicating conflicts, overseeing land and resources, and galvanizing communities for social and economic advancement. Chiefs served as guardians of cultural values and traditions, safeguarding the rituals and conventions of their people for transmission throughout generations (Issifu, 2015). Colonial administrations both weakened and co-opted the system of chieftaincy. Chiefs frequently served as middlemen between colonial authorities and the indigenous populace, often placing them in hazardous positions as they navigated the tension between traditional authority and enforced colonial frameworks. Colonialism

implemented new governance systems that frequently clashed with established traditional institutions, resulting in tensions and, in certain instances, the diminishment of chief power (Boakye & Béland, 2018).

Post-colonial African nations also contended with the function of chieftaincy. Numerous nationalist leaders, such as Ghana's inaugural president Kwame Nkrumah, regarded old institutions as obstacles to contemporary nation-building. Attempts were undertaken to diminish the authority of chiefs and curtail their impact in both local and national politics. Nonetheless, despite these initiatives, the institution of chieftaincy has persisted and, in several instances, has reaffirmed its significance within contemporary governance frameworks (Anamzoya, 2017).

Currently, chiefs maintain a crucial role in local government, especially in rural regions where official institutions may be feeble or nonexistent. Succession is one of the most problematic challenges confronting the institution of chieftaincy. Disputes over chieftaincy succession are prevalent in numerous African nations, frequently resulting in violent confrontations, the disintegration of social cohesion, and the devastation of property and livelihoods. These disagreements stem from various sources, including disputed claims to traditional leadership roles, conflicting interpretations of customary laws, and the commercialization of chieftaincy titles. In Ghana, chieftaincy succession disputes have significantly contributed to conflict in many regions, resulting in community splits and, in certain instances, prolonged violence (Yaro & Ngmenkpieo, 2020).

The Mamprusi region in Northern Ghana has faced multiple succession issues that have weakened the power of traditional rulers and strained the relationship between chiefs and their constituents. These disputes frequently center on issues of legitimacy,

with numerous claimants competing for the same title. The conflicts have undermined conventional governing institutions and diminished the power of chiefs, resulting in social disintegration and discord (Tonah, 2005). Chieftaincy disputes are occasionally exacerbated by the presence of political players who exploit traditional leadership competitions for their benefit. The politicization of chieftaincy succession conflicts has been noted in both Ghana and Nigeria, where national political elites frequently manipulate local disagreements to obtain votes or enhance political power. This leads to the intensification of conflicts that could have been settled by conventional mediation methods (Albert, 2008).

Chieftaincy is crucial in community development. Chiefs frequently act as the principal connection between local communities and the national government, facilitating resource mobilization and coordinating development initiatives. Chiefs frequently exercise their authority to initiate and supervise community development initiatives, including the establishment of schools, health facilities, and roads (Bukari, 2016). Chieftaincy succession issues can hinder growth by redirecting attention and resources from critical projects. When communities are fractured by conflicts, mobilizing collective action for development becomes challenging. In such instances, competing factions may deliberately obstruct development initiatives launched by rival parties, hence prolonging delays and exacerbating divides (Bukari et al., 2021).

The examination of chieftaincy succession disputes in Awutu Senya is essential for comprehending the wider ramifications of these conflicts on social cohesion and societal advancement. This study enhanced the comprehension of how conventional governance frameworks might be fortified to foster peace and development. In regions where chieftaincy is a fundamental aspect of local governance,

comprehending and resolving the origins of succession disputes is essential for fostering cohesive and thriving communities.

Senya, situated in the Awutu Senya West District of Ghana's Central Region, occupies an important position within the extensive historical narrative of the Guan people. The Guan, recognized as one of the earliest ethnic groups to establish their presence in contemporary Ghana, undertook a migration southward from the Mossi region of Burkina Faso around the year 1000 A.D. During their journey through the Volta valley, they founded settlements, including one named Senya, situated on the coastal plains. The designation "Senya" originates from the Indigenous phrase "ani na ani so ani nya bo iye," which translates to "let us rest here," symbolizing their extensive journey in search of a settlement (Ephirim-Donkor, 2019). The Guan people, particularly those residing in Senya, belong to the broader Guan linguistic and ethnic group that is distributed across multiple regions of Ghana, encompassing the Effutu, Awutu, and Senya areas within the Central Region. The Senya people, part of the wider Efutu-Bireku group, exhibit linguistic and cultural affinities with other Guan communities, while simultaneously maintaining a distinct identity within this expansive ethnic context. The Guans, especially in Senya, have experienced significant influence from adjacent groups such as the Fante, which has shaped their language and customs throughout history (Boahen, Ajayi & Tidy, 1966).

The chieftaincy structure in Senya has been historically influenced by a distinct division between two primary royal families: the Anona Royal Family and the Twidan Royal Family. The early chieftaincy in Senya was characterised by the dominance of the Anona family, with historical records indicating that from 1315 to 1828, the throne was perpetually occupied by members of the Anona family. For more than 500

years, this royal family has generated successive chiefs, referred to as "Oma Odefeys," demonstrating their substantial influence over the governance and leadership of the Senya people (Ephirim-Donkor, 2019).

In 1829, a significant transition occurred as the Twidan Royal Family ascended to the throne, marking the end of the Anona family's prolonged rule. The chieftaincy evolved into a competition between the two royal houses, characterized by alternating periods of succession. This initiated a more competitive and at times contentious succession process, especially as the Twidan family solidified its position as a significant contender for leadership. From 1829 to 2002, the Twidan family maintained chieftaincy across six generations, illustrating their ascent to power and influence (Senya Traditional Council, 2020). The continuous succession between the Anona and Twidan families established a multifaceted dynamic within Senya's chieftaincy. Historically, the Anona clan experienced extended periods of dominance; however, the rise of the Twidan clan introduced additional competition and potential for conflict.

The political landscape in Senya has undergone significant evolution, especially with the engagement of external political entities that are in alignment with these royal houses. The Twidan clan has distinctly affiliated itself with the National Democratic Congress (NDC), whereas the Anona clan is linked to the New Patriotic Party (NPP). The political affiliations have not merely intensified the rivalry between the two families but have also resulted in a fragmentation of the community along ideological divisions. The schism among the clans has exacerbated the complexities surrounding chieftaincy succession, with each clan vying for not merely traditional authority but also political influence via its national connections (Tonah, 2012).

The amalgamation of conventional leadership and contemporary political affiliations engenders a complex dynamic in Senya, wherein chieftaincy transcends its traditional confines and is significantly shaped by national political currents. The support that each clan garners from political entities can fortify their assertions to the throne, exacerbating conflicts and extending durations of instability within the community (Tonah, 2012).

Despite these challenges, the people of Senya have preserved a strong bond with their cultural heritage, especially through the chieftaincy institution. The title "Oma Odefey" carries great importance in Senya, representing both leadership and the preservation of traditional practices. The Anona and Twidan clans, though rivals, both honor the cultural importance of chieftaincy and engage in the preservation of age-old customs (Boahen, Ajayi & Tidy, 1966). The historical account of the reigns of the different "Oma Odefeys" in Senya showcases a profound reverence for tradition and highlights the significance of maintaining continuity in leadership. Nonetheless, the current disputes illustrate the increasing friction between established governance systems and the impact of modern political dynamics. The chieftaincy in Senya is characterized by a duality, where the quest for power reflects both a historical legacy and an adaptation to the evolving socio-political context of Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The chieftaincy institution remains a central pillar of traditional governance in Ghana, serving critical roles in land administration, cultural preservation, social regulation, and community development. Chiefs are widely regarded as custodians of communal values and symbols of unity, and their authority continues to shape political and social life across the country. Despite this enduring relevance, the chieftaincy institution has

been persistently challenged by succession disputes, many of which have generated tension, prolonged instability, and governance difficulties within affected communities.

Across Ghana and other parts of Africa, scholarly work shows that chieftaincy succession disputes are often driven by competition over resources, elite manipulation, politicization, and ambiguities in customary succession rules (Boakye & Béland, 2018; Bukari et al., 2021; Yaro & Ngmenkpieo, 2020). These disputes have been linked to weakened traditional authority, social fragmentation, and obstacles to effective community development (Issifu, 2015; Tonah, 2012). Studies also highlight how political actors increasingly intervene in traditional leadership struggles, blurring the boundaries between chieftaincy and partisan politics and, in some cases, prolonging conflicts for electoral or strategic gain (Owusu-Mensah, 2014; Bukari et al., 2021).

In Awutu Senya, the chieftaincy succession dispute between the Twedan and Anona royal clans is particularly complex. The dispute has persisted over time and is widely perceived within the community as intertwined with partisan political affiliations, with each clan aligned with a different major political party. This situation raises important concerns about how political alignment may be shaping succession processes, influencing community relations, and affecting cooperation among traditional leaders, local authorities, and residents. While similar dynamics have been examined in other traditional areas, there is limited empirical research that systematically explores how such politically polarized chieftaincy disputes operate at the local level in Awutu Senya.

Although existing studies provide valuable insights into chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana, they offer limited understanding of how succession disputes that are closely linked to partisan politics may affect social cohesion and community development within specific local contexts. In the case of Awutu Senya, questions remain about how the Twedan–Anona rivalry interacts with political competition, how this interaction shapes communal relationships, and what implications it has for governance and development efforts. Addressing these gaps is essential to deepen scholarly understanding of chieftaincy succession disputes and to inform policies and interventions that promote stability, inclusive governance, and sustainable community development.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the chieftaincy succession dispute between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya and examine its broader implications for social cohesion and community development. The study specifically investigated the root causes of the dispute, including the political alignments of the two clans: the Twedan clan aligned with the National Democratic Congress (NDC), and the Anona clan with the New Patriotic Party (NPP). It also sought to assess the effects of the dispute on social cohesion within the community, exploring how these conflicts divided the population along political and familial lines. Furthermore, the study examined how the ongoing chieftaincy conflict impacted the implementation of local development projects and provided insights into the political, social, and developmental challenges posed by chieftaincy succession disputes in contemporary Ghana.

1.4 Research Objectives

The research was anchored on these specific objectives:

1. To explore the causes of the chieftaincy succession dispute between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya.
2. To analyze the political alignments of the Twedan and Anona clans and their influence on the chieftaincy dispute.
3. To assess the effects of social cohesion and community development projects in Awutu Senya.

1.5 Research Questions

The study attempted to find answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the primary causes of the chieftaincy succession dispute between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya?
2. How do the political alignments of the Twedan clan with the NDC and the Anona clan with the NPP influence the chieftaincy succession dispute in Awutu Senya?
3. What are the effects of social cohesion and community development projects among the people of Awutu Senya?

1.6 Significance of Study

1.6.1 Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes original empirical findings to the literature on chieftaincy succession disputes and traditional governance in contemporary Ghana. While previous studies have examined chieftaincy conflicts largely in terms of elite manipulation, institutional weaknesses, or historical grievances, this research advances understanding by systematically examining the intersection of chieftaincy succession disputes and partisan political affiliations at the local level. By focusing on

the Awutu Senya case, the study demonstrates how political party alignments within royal clans intensify succession conflicts, deepen social divisions, and disrupt community development processes.

Furthermore, the study provides a detailed, context-specific account of how national political dynamics are reproduced within local traditional institutions. This localized perspective enriches existing scholarship, which often treats traditional authority and modern politics in generalized terms, by showing how political polarization directly shapes succession outcomes, community relations, and governance effectiveness. In doing so, the study fills a critical empirical gap and broadens academic discourse on the evolving role of chieftaincy institutions within plural political systems.

1.6.2 Contribution to Theory

The study makes a notable theoretical contribution by advancing a more integrated framework for understanding chieftaincy succession disputes. Rather than relying on single-theory explanations, the research adopts a synthesized approach that combines institutional and conflict-oriented perspectives to explain the persistence and escalation of these disputes. This integration shows that chieftaincy conflicts are not merely the result of immediate local rivalries but are embedded in historical institutional legacies and contemporary power struggles.

By situating succession disputes within broader political and social structures, the study shows how colonial and post-independence institutional arrangements, together with modern partisan competition, shape conflict dynamics within traditional leadership systems. This approach deepens theoretical understanding by framing chieftaincy succession disputes as multidimensional conflicts that are simultaneously historical, political, and social, thereby offering a more comprehensive lens for analyzing similar conflicts in other traditional governance contexts.

1.6.3 Contribution to Policy and Practice

The findings of this study have important implications for policy formulation and practical interventions in governance, conflict management, and community development. At the policy level, the study underscores the urgent need for clearer institutional safeguards to prevent partisan political interference in chieftaincy succession processes. It offers evidence-based insights to inform reforms that strengthen the autonomy and legitimacy of traditional leadership institutions within Ghana's democratic framework.

In practice, the study offers guidance for traditional authorities, local governments, and development practitioners working in conflict-prone communities. By identifying how succession disputes undermine social cohesion and delay development initiatives, the research underscores the importance of collaborative, non-partisan engagement between traditional leaders and local governance structures. The study also emphasizes the continued relevance of indigenous conflict-resolution mechanisms and advocates integrating them into formal governance systems to promote sustainable peace and inclusive development.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study is geographically confined to the Awutu Senya area of Ghana's Central Region, focusing on the ongoing chieftaincy succession conflict between the Twedan and Anona clans. This spatial constraint limited the research to the distinct social, political, and developmental dynamics of Awutu Senya, enabling a comprehensive examination of how localized chieftaincy disputes affect social cohesion and community development. The findings provided significant insights into the relationship between chieftaincy disputes and political polarization, but they may not be entirely applicable to other regions with distinct cultural, political, and traditional

governing frameworks. Nevertheless, the study established a basis for comparative analysis with analogous issues in other regions of Ghana and Africa.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Chieftaincy: A traditional governance system led by chiefs who hold authority over specific communities or regions.

Succession Dispute: A conflict arising over the rightful appointment of a new chief following the death or removal of the previous one.

Kingmakers: A group of individuals, often elders, responsible for selecting and enstooling a new chief according to customary laws.

Enstoolment: The formal process of installing a new chief in Ghanaian traditional governance.

Twedan Clan: One of the two royal clans involved in the chieftaincy succession dispute in Awutu Senya.

Anona Clan: The original custodians of the Senya Bereku stool, engaged in the current succession dispute with the Twedan Clan.

Political Polarization: Division of community members based on allegiance to different political parties, influencing the chieftaincy dispute.

Social Cohesion: The bonds that hold a community together, which can be weakened by chieftaincy disputes.

Traditional Authority: The customary leadership structure in a community, headed by chiefs, with social, judicial, and political influence.

Development Projects: Initiatives aimed at improving infrastructure and social services in a community, often stalled by conflicts.

Informed Consent: In the Awutu Senya context, Informed Consent means that any community member—whether a Kingmaker, a claimant, or a local citizen—must fully understand the purpose of sharing information before they participate.

Neutrality: Neutrality requires that any mediator, researcher, or government official remains impartial, showing no preference for one "Gate" (royal family branch) over another.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality is the commitment to protecting the identity of sources and the specific details of sensitive discussions.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The study comprises five chapters structured as follows: Chapter One presents the study, offers contextual background, highlights deficiencies in the literature, delineates the research aims, and examines the study's significance. Chapter Two examines the theoretical framework supporting the study, investigates essential practical concerns, and offers a synthesis literature analysis to contextualize the research within the current academic debate. Chapter Three delineates the research methodologies utilized, encompassing the exploratory case study design, study population, sample approaches, data collection methods, research ethics, and strategies for assuring trustworthiness. Chapter Four delineates the findings, providing an in-depth discussion and triangulating the data with existing literature to either corroborate or contest the study's conclusions. Chapter Five summarizes the study by summarizing essential findings, examining theoretical implications, formulating conclusions, offering recommendations, identifying topics for further research, and delineating study limits.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

Chieftaincy succession disputes frequently occur in numerous African societies where traditional leadership is an essential institution. In areas where chieftaincy significantly influences local governance, succession processes are closely linked to cultural, political, and economic factors (Tonah, 2012). Disputes frequently arise from conflicting claims to authority and leadership, leading to conflicts that can undermine community cohesion and impede development initiatives. The significance of traditional authority in preserving order and resolving conflicts at the grassroots level has garnered increasing scholarly attention (Ray & Reddy, 2003).

Numerous studies have investigated the factors contributing to chieftaincy succession disputes, emphasizing ambiguous customary laws, political interference, and economic interests. Bofo-Arthur (2006) indicates that succession disputes frequently occur due to the absence of explicit guidelines regarding hereditary rights and succession procedures in traditional communities. The ambiguities present opportunities for contesting claims, further intensified by external political influence. Politicians may leverage these disputes to gain local support, thus involving traditional leadership in wider national power conflicts (Lentz, 1998). These alignments frequently exacerbate disputes, as opposing parties obtain external backing to bolster their claims to chieftaincy. Chieftaincy disputes, independent of political interference, significantly impact social cohesion. Succession conflicts frequently lead to community fragmentation, resulting in factions that weaken unity (Ubink, 2007). These divisions are especially detrimental in areas where chieftaincy functions as the

principal mechanism for maintaining order and resolving disputes. The economic consequences of these disputes are substantial. Research indicates that chieftaincy disputes impede local development initiatives, as conflicts regarding resource management and leadership obstruct advancements in infrastructure and social services (Ayee, 2007). This research examined the complex dynamics of chieftaincy succession disputes, emphasizing their causes, political implications, and impacts on social cohesion and local development within the context of historical institutionalism and conflict theory.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The research was grounded in two fundamental theories: historical institutionalism and conflict theory, which were utilized to examine the complexities of chieftaincy succession disputes and their effects on social cohesion and community development. Historical Constitutionalism explores the development of legal and political frameworks through a historical lens. This framework highlights the significance of established laws, cultural practices, and the development of governance systems in influencing political conflicts, particularly succession disputes (Berman, 1983). Historical constitutionalism examines the interplay between indigenous legal traditions, frequently unwritten, and formal state laws. In numerous African contexts, chieftaincy institutions function within dual legal frameworks customary and statutory resulting in potential friction and ambiguity in succession processes. This perspective underscores how colonial and post-colonial legal changes influence the governance of chieftaincy, frequently resulting in conflict when historical traditions intersect with contemporary constitutional frameworks (Ubink, 2007).

Conflict Theory, conversely, asserts that societal discord emerges from disparities in power, wealth, and resources. Formulated by Karl Marx, this theory posits that social order is upheld through mechanisms of domination and coercion, with the interplay of power dynamics among groups perpetuating continuous conflict (Marx & Engels, 1848). Within the framework of chieftaincy succession disputes, conflict theory elucidates the dynamics through which rival elites and families, motivated by economic, social, and political interests, contend for dominance over leadership roles. The complexities of these disputes are frequently intensified by external influences, particularly political actors who manipulate local grievances for their benefit, thereby reinforcing pre-existing hierarchies and tensions (Coser, 1956). The theory highlights the implications of disparate access to power within conventional frameworks, which ultimately fosters instability and conflict.

The intersection of conflict theory and historical constitutionalism provides a comprehensive framework for understanding chieftaincy disputes. Both emphasize the significance of power dynamics be it socio-economic, as illustrated by conflict theory, or legal-historical, as articulated by historical constitutionalism in sustaining these conflicts. Collectively, they provide a comprehensive perspective on the interplay between structural inequalities and the changing legal frameworks in chieftaincy succession disputes.

2.1.1 Historical Institutionalism

Historical Institutionalism (HI) is an effective framework for comprehending how institutional legacies influence current political and social dynamics. HI elucidates how historical political frameworks, especially colonial and postcolonial institutions, have shaped the patterns and causes of chieftaincy succession disputes. This theory

highlights how "path dependence" and "critical junctures" in history result in enduring institutional practices, complicating and entrenching disputes in traditional government. Historical Institutionalism originated as a theoretical framework in political science and sociology to elucidate the evolution of institutions, both formal and informal? and their impact on political behaviour. HI asserts that decisions made at important junctures create enduring institutional patterns that are challenging to alter, even when circumstances change (Pierson, 2000). This theoretical framework highlights the significance of history in influencing the regulations, standards, and practices inside institutions, elucidating the persistence of specific conflicts or governance structures. HI is particularly valuable for analyzing chieftaincy succession issues as it highlights the enduring impact of colonialism and how governance structures established by colonial authorities have shaped the contemporary chieftaincy system. In numerous African civilizations, the colonial enforcement of indirect authority disrupted traditional governance frameworks by modifying the processes of chieftaincy selection, resource management, and local power relations (Boone, 2003). The outcome has been a legacy of conflicts around succession and governance that endures in post-colonial Africa, including areas such as Awutu Senya.

Colonialism was a pivotal moment that drastically transformed the course of traditional governance in Africa. The chieftaincy system in pre-colonial African communities was intricately rooted in local customs and traditions. Chiefs were historically appointed by intricate procedures of genealogy, merit, and communal agreement. Colonial authorities, especially the British in West Africa, aimed to regulate indigenous institutions to streamline colonial governance (Mamdani, 2018). Colonial powers employed indirect control by co-opting chiefs as intermediaries

between the colonial authority and the indigenous populace, frequently neglecting or distorting traditional governance and succession procedures (Boone, 2003). In Ghana, as in numerous other African nations, colonial powers interrupted the established selection processes by enforcing foreign frameworks that favored political dominance over native legitimacy. Chiefs who collaborated with colonial administration were frequently elevated, regardless of their lack of valid claims to the stool or skin (Rathbone, 2000). The legacy of disruption caused rifts in conventional governance structures since colonial rule brought external elements such as wealth, political allegiance, and property ownership that now affected succession conflicts. The remnants of colonialism endure since some traditional organizations remain inadequately integrated with postcolonial governance systems, resulting in ongoing succession disputes such as those seen in Awutu Senya. A key term in Historical Institutionalism is "path dependence," indicating that once institutions adopt a specific trajectory, diverging from that path becomes progressively challenging. In Ghana, chieftaincy institutions, influenced by colonial involvement, have entered a trajectory characterized by more complicated and challenging issues around succession, resource management, and legitimacy (Pierson, 2000). During colonial authority, these institutions were co-opted and exploited, resulting in altered systems of succession. Post-colonial administrations frequently preserved these skewed frameworks, resulting in a situation where path-dependent chieftaincy practices perpetuate succession conflicts.

In Awutu Senya, this path dependence is evident in the ongoing conflicts between the Twedan and Anona clans. The political exploitation of the chieftaincy institution, both under and after colonial administration, has solidified divisions and incorporated new participants and political parties into the chieftaincy succession process. Political

groups, like the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), currently affiliate with distinct factions within the chieftaincy institution, intensifying tensions. Boakye and Beland (2019) contend that these external political alignments illustrate the vulnerability of chieftaincy institutions, influenced by their colonial history, to manipulation by foreign political entities. HI, posits that these disagreements are improbable to resolve autonomously without substantial institutional reform, given the historical processes that produced the institutions persist in exerting effect. The political support for the Twedan and Anona clans from opposing parties signifies that these conflicts extend beyond traditional administration, becoming entangled with national political processes, so complicating resolution efforts.

A significant insight from Historical Institutionalism is that institutions demonstrate "institutional resilience," indicating their capacity to persist despite challenges to their effectiveness or legitimacy. In Ghana, the system of chieftaincy is profoundly esteemed, notwithstanding its entanglement in various succession issues and political confrontations. This resilience may serve as both an asset and a liability. Although it preserves conventional governance systems, it also renders these institutions resistant to reform, even when they exacerbate social instability (Mahoney & Thelen, 2010). In Awutu Senya, this institutional resilience is reflected in the sustained significance of the chieftaincy institution, notwithstanding the persistent conflict between the Twedan and Anona clans. The enduring nature of the chieftaincy institution, despite political manipulation and societal division, reveals its profound historical foundations.

Nonetheless, this resistance complicates the implementation of policies that could alleviate conflicts and foster social cohesiveness. The legacy of colonialism, coupled with the institution's path-dependent characteristics, has resulted in feeble systems for resolving succession conflicts, while external political players exacerbate the challenges in achieving consensus. Utilizing Historical Institutionalism to analyze the chieftaincy succession issue in Awutu Senya offers an extensive framework for comprehending the fundamental roots of the conflict. This theory elucidates the persistence of these disagreements and the challenges associated with their resolution. The hypothesis asserts that, in the absence of substantial institutional changes, the course of these disagreements is improbable to alter. Furthermore, HI facilitates a more nuanced comprehension of the interaction between traditional governance systems, such as chieftaincy, and contemporary political frameworks. In the instance of Awutu Senya, it is insufficient to regard the issue as merely a customary conflict. The participation of political parties and the entrenchment of historical traditions indicate that chieftaincy succession issues are integral to a broader, path-dependent institutional process influenced by Ghana's colonial and postcolonial past.

2.1.2 Conflict Theory

Conflict Theory, as formulated by Karl Marx, asserts that social disputes emerge from disparities in power, wealth, or status among groups or classes (Orsini, 2024). This theory has developed to elucidate not only class conflicts but also problems in wider societal contexts, including political struggles, ethnic difficulties, and conflicts over traditional leadership. Conflict Theory is vital for comprehending chieftaincy succession disputes, especially in areas where traditional authority converges with political connections, social disparities, and resource competitiveness. The persistent

conflict between the Twedan and Anona clans, rooted in political and social differences, shows the mechanisms that Conflict Theory aims to clarify.

Conflict Theory fundamentally perceives society as continuously engaged in competition for scarce resources. These resources may be real, such as wealth and land, or intangible, such as power and authority. In Marxist theory, this conflict often transpires between the bourgeoisie (the ruling class) and the proletariat (the subjugated class) (Orsini, 2024). In chieftaincy succession disputes, the power battle transcends economic class divisions, instead aligning with familial, political, and social alliances. Coser (1956) posits that conflict emerges when groups with divergent interests confront one another, and this conflict may either catalyze change or reinforce prevailing power systems. Chieftaincy disputes sometimes entail competing clans contending for leadership roles, each aiming to dominate the power and resources linked to chieftaincy. In Awutu Senya, the Twedan and Anona clans are engaged in a struggle for dominance over traditional leadership, driven by aspirations for power, status, and access to communal resources. The chieftaincy succession conflict in Awutu Senya is fundamentally a contest for dominance between two royal clans, each aligned with distinct political factions. The Twedan clan, associated with the National Democratic Congress (NDC), and the Anona clan, affiliated with the New Patriotic Party (NPP), exemplify a microcosm of national political conflict that has infiltrated traditional leadership frameworks. This alignment intensifies the battle, as each clan endeavors to establish supremacy not just over the chieftaincy but also over the political trajectory of the community. Bukhari et al. (2021) assert that political manipulation frequently catalyzes chieftaincy conflicts, as national political figures leverage local disagreements for electoral advantage, exacerbating tensions within communities.

Marx's concept that those in authority endeavor to preserve their supremacy to the detriment of others is evident in the involvement of political elites in chieftaincy disputes. Chiefs, traditionally seen as caretakers of land and cultural values, are today perceived as significant political allies. The politicization of traditional leadership engenders a power struggle among clans, as the control of the chieftaincy is viewed as a means to access political and economic resources. Bukari et al. (2021) discovered that local elites often exploit succession issues to fortify their political influence in their examination of chieftaincy conflicts in Northern Ghana, a phenomenon also observed in Awutu Senya.

The power struggle between the Twedan and Anona clans may be analyzed using Conflict Theory, as both factions participate in a zero-sum game in which the advancement of one party inevitably results in the detriment of the other. This dynamic is exacerbated by the overarching political affiliations of each clan, rendering the quarrel not merely a local concern but one with national political ramifications. Conflict Theory highlights the role of societal divisions, especially those rooted in identity or group connections, in perpetuating conflict. In chieftaincy succession contests, clan identification is crucial in establishing group loyalties. Horowitz (1985) observes that identity-based conflicts are frequently intractable due to their foundation in not only pecuniary concerns but also strongly entrenched views regarding group membership and position. In Awutu Senya, the delineation between the Twedan and Anona clans is not just a governmental separation but also a social schism that influences all facets of communal existence. The disagreement has disintegrated the community, adversely impacting social functions, communal events, and developmental initiatives.

Yaro and Ngmenkpieo (2020) discovered that in Bunkpurugu, a comparable chieftaincy succession issue resulted in the evasion of social functions, including funerals and naming ceremonies, hence exacerbating tensions within the community. The participation of youth organizations in the chieftaincy issue in Awutu Senya further exemplifies the social components of the conflict. Issifu (2015) asserts that youth participation in chieftaincy conflicts frequently exacerbates tensions, as young individuals are predisposed to engage in violent clashes to affirm the supremacy of their clans. The sympathy of the youth in Awutu Senya for the Anona tribe is clear, exacerbating the tension.

Conflict Theory examines not only social and political variables but also the influence of resource rivalry in sustaining conflicts. In Ghana, as in numerous African communities, chiefs serve as custodians of land and communal resources, rendering the control of chieftaincy a highly sought-after position. The competition for dominance over these resources is a significant catalyst for succession conflicts. According to Tonah (2012), chieftaincy disputes frequently extend beyond the title itself; they pertain to the ownership of the resources associated with that title. The discord between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya has impeded local development initiatives, as both factions endeavour to dominate the resources essential for communal advancement. The stagnation of growth is a frequent outcome of chieftaincy disputes, as evidenced in various instances throughout Ghana. Boateng and Bawole (2021) observe that chieftaincy disputes sometimes lead to postponements or cancellations of development projects, as competing factions obstruct initiatives linked to their adversaries.

Conflict Theory posits that disputes can result in change, either by supporting current power systems or by facilitating their transformation. Conventional conflict resolution methods, such as mediation by elders or kingmakers, present a viable approach to addressing chieftaincy disputes. Issifu (2015) underscores the significance of traditional mediation in adjudicating chieftaincy disputes, contending that these methods frequently surpass official legal procedures, which may be regarded as external impositions. In Awutu Senya, the engagement of impartial traditional leaders or mediators may facilitate the de-escalation of the conflict by providing a culturally suitable method for resolving the succession issue. Nonetheless, as Conflict Theory suggests, any resolution will probably include confronting the fundamental power dynamics and resource competition that instigate the conflict initially.

2.3 Conceptual Review

2.3.1 Chieftaincy succession disputes

Disputes regarding chieftaincy succession constitute a profound and persistent challenge within various African societies, particularly in Ghana. Conflicts emerge from opposing assertions concerning customary leadership positions following the demise or ousting of a chief. Disputes over succession often emerge from differing views on eligibility, longstanding rivalries between royal families, and diverse interpretations of customary laws. In recent years, the intricacies of these disputes have escalated, influenced by political affiliations and modern governance frameworks, thereby complicating resolution efforts and profoundly impacting social cohesion and community development. Disputes regarding chieftaincy succession emerge from a multitude of factors, particularly the differing interpretations of customary laws and the importance attributed to family lineage. Traditionally, the selection of chiefs has been rooted in lineage, with particular royal families

possessing the sole authority to propose candidates for succession. Disputes often arise among different factions within these families concerning the rightful heir to the throne, leading to prolonged conflict and violence. Studies suggest that succession disputes have the potential to destabilize communities, creating substantial divisions and obstructing local governance and development (Yaro & Ngmenkpiewo, 2020).

The Awutu Senya chieftaincy dispute encompasses a contention between the Twedan and Anona clans concerning the rightful possessor of legitimate authority. This illustrates comparable circumstances across Ghana, where different families or clans within a traditional region compete for chieftaincy. The discord between the Jamong and Jafouk families in Bunkpurugu, Northern Ghana, exemplifies how rivalry over traditional leadership positions can intensify into violence, consequently disturbing communal harmony and eroding social unity (Yaro & Ngmenkpiewo, 2020). These conflicts reflect a broader phenomenon in which the commercialization of power and the quest for resource dominance intensify rifts within royal lineages.

2.3.2 Political Polarization

The current environment surrounding chieftaincy succession disputes is characterized by a notable increase in the involvement of political parties. Political actors frequently manipulate traditional leadership disputes to augment their sway within communities, thereby intensifying the conflict. The connection between the Twedan clan and the National Democratic Congress (NDC), alongside the association of the Anona clan with the New Patriotic Party (NPP) in Awutu Senya, exemplifies a wider trend of politicization. This form of political involvement often exacerbates tensions and distracts from traditional resolution strategies, consequently prolonging conflicts and fracturing the community (Bukari et al., 2021). The occurrence of political

polarization in traditional leadership contests has been observed in multiple areas of Ghana. The Dagbon chieftaincy dispute in Northern Ghana serves as a pertinent illustration of politicization, with national political parties aligning with differing factions, leading to violent confrontations and intensifying the conflict (Tonah, 2012). These instances illustrate the intricate challenges that emerge when political interference disrupts traditional affairs, consequently obstructing the capacity of kingmakers and elders to resolve disputes via customary practices. Customary law plays a crucial role in determining the qualifications of individuals aspiring to hold chieftaincy positions. Nonetheless, the interpretations of these laws often vary among different factions, leading to conflicts. Throughout history, the individuals responsible for appointing a leader, such as kingmakers and elders, based their decisions on lineage and long-standing cultural traditions.

Nonetheless, varying interpretations of these precedents may give rise to uncertainty and conflict. Boakye and Béland (2018) note that historical institutionalism clarifies how colonial and postcolonial governance structures have contributed to the fragmentation of customary practices, leading to varied interpretations of succession rules. Succession disputes frequently persist due to the absence of clearly articulated legal frameworks or the political exploitation of established regulations. The lack of a cohesive and universally accepted method for resolving these conflicts intensifies the disunity within communities. While traditional mediation is often utilized to resolve these disputes, it is often undermined by political motivations or differing interpretations of what constitutes genuine customary law (Boakye & Béland, 2018).

Conflicts surrounding chieftaincy succession have profound consequences for the progress of communities and the strength of social connections. Unresolved disputes may lead to the stagnation of development projects, as illustrated in Awutu Senya. Communities embroiled in chieftaincy disputes often experience a fragmentation of social cohesion, as different factions demonstrate an unwillingness to engage in collaborative local governance and developmental initiatives. This fragmentation obstructs collaborative endeavors and diminishes the efficacy of strategic planning and execution of development initiatives, such as the creation of educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and vital infrastructure (Boateng & Bawole, 2021). Moreover, the cohesion of communities is significantly compromised, as conflicts regarding chieftaincy often lead to the disintegration of families and clans along political or tribal lines. This division erodes trust, undermines social capital, and fosters an environment of discord and uncertainty, ultimately obstructing the formation of a unified community. Yaro and Ngmenkpieo (2020) emphasize that unresolved chieftaincy disputes can profoundly impact the social fabric of communities, leading to the avoidance of social functions, diminished respect for traditional leaders, and a decline in communal cooperation.

2.3.3 Social cohesion

The essence of social cohesion constitutes a crucial foundation for the stability and progress of any society. This relates to the relationships that bind a community together, fostering unity, mutual trust, and shared values among individuals and groups (Chan et al., 2006). In traditional African societies, the maintenance of social cohesion often hinges on the institution of chieftaincy, where chiefs serve not only as political and judicial leaders but also as symbols of cultural continuity and unity. However, when conflicts concerning chieftaincy succession arise, such disputes can

significantly undermine social cohesion, leading to divisions within the community and obstructing developmental efforts. In various African societies, particularly in Ghana, chieftaincy functions as a crucial institution that embodies the cultural and historical identity of the community (Odotei & Awedoba, 2006). Chiefs serve as custodians of customs and play a crucial role in resolving conflicts, allocating resources, and mobilizing community members for collective initiatives. The institution of chieftaincy acts as a unifying force, fostering social cohesion by linking individuals and families through shared traditions and cultural practices (Issifu, 2015).

Nonetheless, when succession disputes emerge, as evidenced in the case of Awutu Senya, the chief's role as a cohesive force is compromised. The community finds itself fragmented, as diverse factions advocate for rival claimants to the position of authority. This division erodes social unity, as conflicting groups become deeply rooted in their perspectives, fostering distrust, hostility, and occasionally, aggression (Bukari, 2016). The Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya have formed political alliances with the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP), respectively, which has intensified the existing divisions within the community (Boakye & Béland, 2018). The political alignments exacerbate the already existing divisions arising from the chieftaincy dispute, leading to a decline in communal harmony. The impact of chieftaincy disputes on social cohesion is profound, as these conflicts often erode the social networks that bind individuals and groups together.

Yaro and Ngmenkpieo (2020) highlight that conflicts surrounding chieftaincy succession in the Bunkpurugu Traditional Area of Ghana have resulted in the evasion of communal events, such as funerals and festivals, which typically serve to

strengthen social connections. The discord not only disrupted familial relationships but also eroded the once-unified sense of community. In a similar vein, the chieftaincy conflict in Northern Ghana, particularly among the Dagbon, has fostered significant mistrust and hostility between rival clans, leading to lasting effects on social cohesion (Tonah, 2012). The findings correspond with established theoretical frameworks concerning social cohesion, underscoring the importance of shared values, trust, and collective action in maintaining social harmony. Durkheim's theory of social solidarity asserts that the unity of society emerges from shared beliefs and norms that promote cooperation and cohesion (Durkheim, 1997). The disturbance of these collective values, especially apparent in disputes over chieftaincy succession, leads to a disintegration of the social fabric, thereby promoting social isolation and conflict (Issifu, 2015). The fragmentation of social frameworks could produce lasting effects on community progress, as the cohesion of individuals is crucial for stimulating collective endeavours aimed at developmental initiatives. The intricate dynamics of political polarization intensify the repercussions of chieftaincy disputes on social cohesion. The circumstances in Awutu Senya exemplify how the affiliations of the Twedan and Anona clans with opposing political factions have exacerbated the succession dispute and deepened the divisions within the community (Boakye & Béland, 2018).

Political polarization erodes social cohesion by introducing external influences into a process that has traditionally been grounded in community involvement. This phenomenon has been observed across multiple regions, where political elites manipulate chieftaincy disputes to further their interests, thereby eroding established mechanisms of conflict resolution (Bukari et al., 2021). The engagement of political interests in chieftaincy succession conflicts tends to divide the community and

undermine the credibility of traditional authority. The function of chiefs, designed to serve as neutral arbiters in disputes, is undermined when they partake in political rivalries, leading to a loss of legitimacy and a breakdown of trust (Owusu-Mensah, 2014). This, in turn, erodes social cohesion, as individuals within the community start to doubt the ability of established institutions to resolve conflicts fairly. The association of competing clans with national political entities in Awutu Senya has led to fragmentation within the community, obstructing developmental initiatives and undermining social unity and confidence in both traditional and contemporary governance structures (Boateng & Bawole, 2021).

Restoring social cohesion in communities affected by chieftaincy disputes requires a thorough approach that addresses both the underlying causes of the conflict and the broader political dynamics at play. Traditional approaches to resolving conflicts, such as mediation by neutral elders, have proven effective in specific cases for restoring social harmony (Issifu, 2015). Nonetheless, it is imperative that these mechanisms are insulated from political influence to operate optimally. The interaction between traditional and modern governance structures is crucial for fostering social cohesion and promoting progress (Tseer & Sulemana, 2022). Strategies aimed at eliminating political influences from chieftaincy disputes and reinforcing the role of chiefs as neutral, nonpartisan figures are essential for restoring social harmony in areas like Awutu Senya. This involves the restructuring of the primary selection process to ensure its protection from political meddling, in addition to the promotion of community-focused conflict resolution strategies that prioritize social unity over political gain (Boateng & Bawole, 2021).

2.3.4 Community development

Community development represents the systematic approach through which local communities elevate their economic, social, and cultural well-being by engaging in collective action and effectively mobilizing resources. The essence of local leadership is intricately linked to governance, as it profoundly shapes the trajectory of development initiatives, ensures the judicious distribution of resources, and fosters a sense of unity among members of the community. In traditional African societies, chiefs and local leaders have historically been pivotal in development initiatives, acting as intermediaries between the community and external authorities or development agencies (Mawuko-Yevugah & Attipoe, 2021). Disputes regarding chieftaincy succession pose significant challenges to the advancement of community development. Conflicts in leadership among communities siphon off energy and resources that might otherwise be dedicated to developmental initiatives, channelling them instead into resolving disputes and sustaining factional loyalties. As a result, community initiatives, such as infrastructure development, healthcare services, and educational improvements, often encounter postponements or total discontinuation (Yaro & Ngmenkpico, 2020).

The fragmentation of social unity in communities impacted by chieftaincy disputes makes collective efforts toward development impractical. Bukari et al. (2021) suggest that chieftaincy disputes can foster distrust among community members, leading to reluctance to participate in collaborative efforts that require cooperation between conflicting groups. The conventional function of chiefs as guardians of communal land and resources is an essential element in understanding the interplay between chieftaincy and community development. The role of chiefs in the allocation of land for agricultural endeavours or public projects is significant, as their support or

opposition can profoundly influence the success of development initiatives (Boakye & Béland, 2018).

In communities facing chieftaincy disputes, the management of resources can become a source of contention, leading to inefficiencies and the accumulation of resources. The ongoing succession dispute in Awutu Senya has significantly obstructed the implementation of vital development initiatives, as rival factions within the Twedan and Anona clans vie for control over land and leadership (Issifu, 2015). The intensification of political polarization exacerbates these challenges. The alignment of chieftaincy factions with national political parties, exemplified by the Twedan clan's association with the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the Anona clan's affiliation with the New Patriotic Party (NPP), can lead to a complex interplay between community development and partisan politics. This polarization could lead to the marginalization of certain groups in terms of development opportunities or the biased distribution of resources towards politically favored factions (Boateng & Bawole, 2021).

2.4 Causes of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes

The disputes over chieftaincy succession are complex issues that are deeply intertwined with historical, legal, socio-economic, and political dimensions. These conflicts often involve disputes over the legitimacy of succession to traditional authority and can have significant impacts on social cohesion and development. In numerous African countries, chieftaincy is crucial for governance, local conflict resolution, and community development. However, the frequent occurrence of succession disputes poses a threat to the effectiveness of this traditional institution.

2.4.1 Historical causes of chieftaincy succession disputes

The history of chieftaincy succession in Africa reflects the influences of colonialism and subsequent political restructuring in the postcolonial era. Colonization significantly transformed traditional governance systems by imposing new power structures that were at odds with established indigenous practices. The colonial administration often intervened in chief selection, resulting in distortions in the succession process. In regions like Yorubaland in Nigeria, colonial laws governing chieftaincy disputes significantly altered succession processes to conform to colonial interests, frequently superseding traditional customs (Alo, 2012).

The enduring impact of colonial legacies in postcolonial Africa significantly influences chieftaincy succession. The imposition of state structures on chieftaincy institutions has resulted in critical junctures that generate conflicts stemming from incompatible governance systems. Historical institutionalism is evident in conflicts like the Ga Mashie chieftaincy dispute in Ghana, where differing interpretations of succession customs have resulted in persistent disputes (Boakye & Béland, 2018). In Northern Ghana, chieftaincy disputes serve as a mechanism for different actors to contest power, utilizing historical grievances to validate succession claims (Tonah, 2012).

2.4.2 Legal and customary causes

Legal frameworks governing chieftaincy succession frequently intensify disputes instead of providing a resolution. Numerous African nations have implemented legislation to govern the succession of chiefs, exemplified by Ghana's Chieftaincy Act of 2008. The laws intended to establish a systematic framework for succession and dispute resolution often conflict with the customary laws regulating chieftaincy in

different regions. The Chieftaincy Act in Ghana created the Houses of Chiefs as judicial entities for dispute resolution; however, these mechanisms frequently exhibit inefficiency and delays, resulting in prolonged conflicts that jeopardize national security (Assanful, 2021). Customary laws, which differ markedly among various regions and ethnic groups, add to the complexity of chieftaincy disputes. The interpretation of customary laws concerning succession rights is often ambiguous, resulting in multiple claimants for the same chieftaincy title. Succession disputes in Mamprugu, Northern Ghana, exemplify the challenge to traditional authority, demonstrating how such conflicts undermine the power and legitimacy of chiefs and foster divisions within communities (Tonah, 2005). In the Bole Traditional Area, the misalignment between traditional and central authorities in managing succession disputes complicates the resolution process (Tseer & Sulemana, 2022).

2.4.3 Socio-economic factors

Socio-economic factors significantly influence chieftaincy succession disputes. The chieftaincy institution frequently regulates access to essential resources, including land, mineral wealth, and royalties, rendering it a highly advantageous position to occupy. The commodification of traditional authority results in heightened competition among prospective successors, as control of the chieftaincy grants access to economic advantages. In the Bunkpurugu Traditional Area of Northern Ghana, the aspiration to manage resources has been recognized as a key factor contributing to chieftaincy disputes (Yaro & Ngmenkpiewo, 2020). Economic disparities among communities further intensify succession conflicts. Affluent families frequently possess the resources to assert their claims to the throne via political influence and legal disputes, thereby marginalizing less wealthy contenders. The economic aspect is apparent in chieftaincy disputes throughout Nigeria, as the rising value of land and

natural resources has transformed traditional authority into a contested economic resource (Ukase & Abraham, 2016).

In Awutu Senya, land ownership and control over development projects are likely critical factors in the Twedan and Anona dispute. Ubink (2008) posits that the commodification of land, driven by market pressures, has led to new conflict dynamics, especially in contexts where traditional land tenure systems intersect with contemporary economic interests. Chiefs possessing economically valuable land are positioned to gain from heightened development, either via land sales or collaborations with investors. The economic power plays a significant role in the ongoing chieftaincy disputes in Ghana, likely serving as a driving factor in the Twedan-Anona conflict.

2.4.4 Cultural and religious influences

Cultural and religious factors complicate chieftaincy succession. In numerous African societies, chieftaincy is closely linked to cultural identity and spiritual beliefs. The selection of a chief encompasses not only political considerations but also rituals and customs that are thought to possess spiritual significance. Succession disputes are regarded as violations of sacred traditions, transcending mere political or legal concerns.

In the Waala chieftaincy institution of Northern Ghana, disputes have emerged from varying interpretations of cultural customs related to succession. The deviation from established processes has resulted in persistent conflicts that are challenging to resolve, as they are rooted in deeply held cultural beliefs (Salih, 2018). In the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, the institution of chieftaincy is regarded as sacred, with succession disputes characterized as contests for "customary capital"—the

legitimacy derived from traditional rites and origin myths (Hoffmann et al., 2020). Religious differences within communities can exacerbate chieftaincy disputes. Competing religious factions may support various claimants to the throne, transforming succession disputes into sectarian conflicts. This is especially apparent in areas where Islam and Christianity coexist, as competing factions frequently employ religious arguments to substantiate their claims to leadership (Bukari et al., 2021).

2.4.5 Political interference

The significance of politics in disputes regarding chieftaincy succession is profound and cannot be diminished. In numerous instances, both local and national political figures engage in chieftaincy disputes to further their agendas. Chieftaincy, while historically regarded as a nonpartisan entity, has increasingly become entangled in the political landscape of nations such as Ghana and Nigeria, where political factions frequently endorse opposing candidates for chieftaincy in return for electoral backing. The intertwining of politics with chieftaincy has resulted in heightened conflicts, as aspirants leverage political affiliations to secure an upper hand against their competitors (Tonah, 2012). The Dagbon chieftaincy dispute in Northern Ghana serves as a notable illustration of how political interference can intensify succession conflicts. The discord between the Abudu and Andani royal families has been exacerbated by political figures aiming to manipulate the resolution of the conflict for their electoral advantage. The engagement of political elites has extended the duration of the conflict, resulting in violent confrontations and eroding the credibility of established authority (Ahorsu, 2014). This is especially apparent in instances where disputes over chieftaincy succession become entangled with national politics, as illustrated by the conflict between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya.

The affiliation of these clans with the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP), respectively, has intensified the succession dispute, transforming it into a matter of significant political contention (Tonah, 2012). Politicians frequently exploit traditional leaders or competing factions to enhance their political advantage, particularly in rural regions where chiefs exert considerable influence over their communities. Bukari et al. (2021) highlight how political elites in Northern Ghana have used chieftaincy disputes as a tool to secure electoral support, further deepening divisions within the community. The politicization of chieftaincy has elevated succession disputes from mere local governance matters to significant political conflicts, resulting in profound implications for community cohesion and stability.

2.4.6 Other Factors Leading to Chieftaincy Succession Disputes

Disputes over chieftaincy succession are prevalent in numerous African civilizations, especially in Ghana, where traditional leadership is integral to governance, social solidarity, and community advancement. Disputes generally stem from various grounds, including disputed eligibility, misreading of customary laws, the commercialization of chieftaincy titles, and the interference of other actors, such as political elites, in traditional leadership elections. Comprehending the circumstances that precipitate such disagreements necessitates an examination of both the conventional frameworks governing chieftaincy and the wider socio-political milieu in which these disputes arise. A primary source of chieftaincy succession problems is disputed eligibility for the monarch. In conventional Ghanaian society, the entitlement to inherit the chieftaincy is generally dictated by ancestry and customary regulations.

Conflicts frequently emerge when numerous claimants from other royal houses, or even within the same family, contest their entitlement to the crown. This is especially troublesome in circumstances when the customary norms regulating succession are ambiguous or open to diverse interpretations by various groups within the community (Issifu, 2015). Boakye and Béland (2018) contend that the imposition of colonial and postcolonial political frameworks on established traditional governance systems in the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict in Accra resulted in divergent interpretations regarding the legitimate successor to the Ga Mashie throne. The divergent interpretations have sustained the disagreement throughout generations, with each party asserting the validity of its understanding of customary laws. The ambiguity in conventional succession protocols is a prevalent problem in numerous chieftaincy conflicts, as historical precedents and oral traditions frequently lack clarity or are susceptible to distortion.

The commercialization of chieftaincy titles is a notable contributor to succession problems. In some instances, the role of chief has evolved into a highly profitable position, granting access to valuable assets such as land, political clout, and social status. Bukari et al. (2021) observe that the commercialization of chieftaincy has resulted in fierce competition among opposing factions, each striving to obtain the throne for its economic and political advantages. Chiefs, historically seen as guardians of land and cultural legacy, today possess considerable economic influence, especially in rural regions where they oversee extensive landholdings and can affect local development projects. In areas like Bunkpurugu in Northern Ghana, Yaro and Ngmenkpieo (2020) noted that the aspiration to dominate these resources has been a primary factor in chieftaincy succession conflicts. Their research indicated that competing groups, namely the Jafouk and Jamong families, have been engaged in an

extended conflict, mostly driven by the ambition to dominate the region's territory and the economic advantages associated with chieftaincy.

The monetization of the monarchy thereby alters a function that could be merely ceremonial or administrative into a highly sought-after position of economic influence, thereby exacerbating conflicts. The influence of colonial legacies on current chieftaincy issues is significant. Throughout the colonial era, European powers reorganized indigenous governance systems to suit their administrative requirements, frequently appointing chiefs to roles of authority that were incongruent with established power structures. The alterations have produced enduring consequences, as numerous current chieftaincy conflicts are grounded in the disturbances instigated by colonial governance. Boakye and Béland (2018) contend that the implementation of Western legal and political frameworks has established pivotal moments that have irrevocably transformed the course of traditional leadership in Ghana. Consequently, succession disputes frequently correlate with these colonial legacies, as communities endeavor to harmonize traditional administration with contemporary legal and political structures. Chieftaincy succession disputes are often intensified by enduring rivalries among royal lineages or families. These conflicts are frequently transmitted between generations, with each side competing for dominion over the crown. Issifu (2015) observes that historical animosities between the Abudu and Andani royal houses have exacerbated the Dagbon chieftaincy war, as both factions assert their rightful claims to the throne. These rivalries are frequently exacerbated by additional elements, including political manipulation and the commercialization of chieftaincy titles, rendering the resolution of these disputes more difficult.

2.5 Political Alignments and Their Influence on Chieftaincy Disputes

Chieftaincy disputes are deeply ingrained in the socio-political structure of many African societies. In the past, chieftaincy played a crucial role in traditional governance by linking local communities with the state. However, the political dynamics surrounding chieftaincy have changed over time, with modern political actors and institutions often involved in disputes over succession. The politicization of chieftaincy succession, particularly in countries like Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa, has turned what was once a traditional issue into a politically charged one, affecting social unity and community development.

2.5.1 Political interference in traditional governance

The phenomenon of political interference in chieftaincy succession is prevalent throughout Africa. In numerous instances, political elites have intervened in the selection process of traditional leaders, frequently motivated by electoral advantages or the desire to strengthen their political authority. This interference not only intensifies pre-existing conflicts but also redefines the function of chieftaincy within the political arena. An exemplary instance is the discord in Dagbon, Northern Ghana. The conflict over succession between the Abudu and Andani clans was significantly exacerbated by the involvement of Ghana's principal political entities, the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP). The involvement of chiefs and royals in Dagbon in national politics is a long-standing tradition, which notably intensified following the restoration of civilian governance in 1992. In their quest for electoral success in fiercely contested elections, politicians endeavored to garner the backing of traditional rulers, resulting in the entanglement of chieftaincy disputes within the political arena (Tonah, 2012). This phenomenon extends beyond the borders of Ghana. In South Africa, the institution of chieftaincy, although it has

experienced considerable transformation post-apartheid, continues to be influenced by political opportunism. Leaders in areas like KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape have encountered political obstacles stemming from their participation in both local and national electoral processes. According to J. Williams (2004), even with the prevalence of democratic practices, numerous communities continue to anticipate that chiefs will engage in the formal electoral process, whether to provide legitimacy or to champion their interests (Williams, 2004).

2.4.2 State involvement in chieftaincy disputes

The state's engagement in disputes regarding chieftaincy succession represents a significant consideration. Governments frequently engage in disputes, either to uphold tranquility or to fortify political alliances. Nevertheless, such interventions may result in the intensification of conflicts instead of their resolution. In Ghana, the Chieftaincy Act of 2008 was established to govern succession disputes through the provision of legal frameworks for resolving such conflicts. Nevertheless, the efficacy of this Act has come under scrutiny, as numerous disputes persist unresolved owing to the political influences exerted on the judicial committees tasked with arbitration (Assanful, 2021). The involvement of the state is observable in Nigeria, as exemplified by the Owo crisis in Ondo State, which serves as a pertinent case study illustrating how political alignments can exacerbate chieftaincy disputes. The upheaval, ignited by the selection of a new monarch, witnessed political parties aligning with various factions among the ruling elite. Similar to the Dagbon conflict in Ghana, political figures have exploited the succession process for electoral gain, resulting in violent confrontations and property damage (Albert, 2008).

2.5.3 Elite manipulation and political alignments

The intricate dynamics of elite manipulation are pivotal in chieftaincy succession disputes, especially regarding how political elites leverage traditional institutions to advance their agendas. In Northern Ghana, chieftaincy conflicts are frequently influenced by a complex interplay of various actors, such as local elites, political parties, and other significant stakeholders. The alteration of conventional frameworks by those in power may extend conflicts and weaken the legitimacy of chieftaincy institutions (Bukari, Osei-Kufuor & Bukari, 2021). An intricate instance of elite manipulation is evident in the Bunkpurugu Traditional Area located in Ghana's Northeast Region. The political alignments among competing families vying for the throne have played a crucial role in exacerbating the conflict. The contention between the Jafouk and Jamong families is intensified by their political alignments with national parties, as noted by Yaro and Ngmenkpieo (2020). The political support has enabled both families to persist in their assertions to the throne, notwithstanding efforts at mediation and conflict resolution (Yaro & Ngmenkpieo, 2020).

Furthermore, in instances like the Mamprugu chieftaincy succession conflict, the authority of traditional rulers has been undermined by shifting political alignments. Chiefs, previously regarded as neutral and independent, have found themselves ensnared in political conflicts, resulting in a deterioration of trust between them and their constituents. The diminishment of authority can be attributed to the meddling of local political elites, who endeavor to manipulate succession for their political advantage (Tonah, 2005).

2.5.4 Impact of political alignments on conflict resolution

The impact of political affiliations on the resolution of chieftaincy succession disputes frequently proves to be adverse. Political actors, driven by their interests, can obstruct the mediation process, thereby extending disputes and cultivating division. In numerous instances, the intervention of the state is regarded as partial, particularly when political elites possess vested interests in the results of the succession. Boakye and Béland (2018) elucidate how political alignments have sustained the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict in Ghana. The establishment of colonial and postcolonial political frameworks, which lacked foundations in traditional political institutions, resulted in divergent understandings of succession customs. The various interpretations have been strategically influenced by political elites, thereby complicating the state's ability to intervene effectively and address the dispute (Boakye & Béland, 2018).

2.5.5 Broader implications for social cohesion and community development

The dynamics of political alignments in chieftaincy succession disputes greatly influence social cohesion and the progress of community development. As traditional rulers engage in politics, communities increasingly fracture along political lines, undermining the social cohesion that chieftaincy once fostered. When disputes remain unresolved, the absence of effective leadership can obstruct the execution of local development projects, resulting in stagnation and heightened poverty. In Northern Ghana, the division of communities along political lines has resulted in severe repercussions for local development. Bukari, Kendie, Sulemana, and Galaa (2016) contend that chieftaincy and land conflicts in this region have led to both loss of life and property, while also obstructing decision-making on essential community development matters. The involvement of politics in these conflicts has hindered traditional rulers from delivering the essential leadership needed to promote unity and

development (Bukari et al., 2016). The transformation of these disputes from traditional matters into politically charged issues has been driven by political interference, state involvement, and elite manipulation, resulting in far-reaching consequences. Chieftaincy institutions, previously regarded as neutral and apolitical, have seen their authority undermined and their conflict mediation capabilities weakened due to their involvement in national politics. The politicization of chieftaincy disputes poses a significant threat to social cohesion and hinders community development. This situation underscores the necessity for more effective mechanisms to remove politics from the succession process and to restore the integrity of traditional leadership.

2.6 Impact of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes on Social Cohesion

Disputes over chieftaincy succession, prevalent in numerous African communities, significantly impact social cohesion. Disputes frequently stem from conflicts regarding the legitimate heir to a chieftaincy position, resulting in divisions within communities. The disruption of social unity caused by these conflicts can be significant, impacting both community ties and development efforts.

2.6.1 Disruption of community unity

The most pressing consequence of disputes surrounding chieftaincy succession is the disintegration of communal cohesion. In numerous African societies, chieftaincy transcends mere political or administrative roles; it serves as a pivotal figure that encapsulates the cultural and spiritual essence of a community. Conflicts regarding succession frequently result in schisms within the community, as various factions emerge to advocate for distinct claimants to the throne. This fragmentation undermines the formerly cohesive community structures. Yaro and Ngmenkpieo

(2020) analyzed the chieftaincy succession conflicts within the Bunkpurugu Traditional Area of Ghana, elucidating how the commodification of thrones, control over resources, and political influences intensified internal divisions. The formerly unified community became fragmented into competing factions, resulting in a reluctance to engage in social gatherings, including funerals and naming ceremonies, which had historically served to unite the populace. This division is evident in social disloyalty, as individuals choose to align themselves according to their chieftaincy loyalties, rather than as constituents of a cohesive community (Yaro & Ngmenkpieo, 2020).

In a similar vein, Tonah (2005) emphasized the enduring consequences of succession disputes within the Mamprusi community of Northern Ghana, noting that the traditional authority experienced considerable erosion as a result of the rising incidence of such disputes. The intricate social structure of these communities, previously anchored in mutual respect and loyalty to traditional leaders, has grown increasingly tenuous, resulting in social disarray and diminished governance (Tonah, 2005).

2.6.2 Intergenerational and inter-ethnic tensions

Disputes over chieftaincy succession frequently exhibit intergenerational and, at times, inter-ethnic characteristics, thereby undermining societal cohesion. The hereditary institution of chieftaincy can generate generational conflicts when traditional values conflict with contemporary perceptions of governance and leadership. Younger generations may contest the validity of conventional hierarchies, whereas older generations endeavour to preserve established institutions. The generational difference may lead to overt conflict and societal strife, as seen in

Assanful's (2021) study, which revealed that the clash between modernity and tradition in succession disputes eroded community trust in both traditional and judicial institutions. Moreover, succession disputes can intensify pre-existing ethnic tensions, especially in multi-ethnic communities where many groups may vie for the chieftaincy title. The Dagbon chieftaincy problem in Northern Ghana exemplifies how disagreements can acquire ethnic dimensions since the competition between the Andani and Abudu families mirrors wider ethnic and political divisions. Ahorsu (2014) asserts that the struggle between these two royal families has incited bloodshed and political machinations, eroding social cohesiveness and perpetuating an unsolved dispute (Ahorsu, 2014).

2.5.3 Conflict resolution and mediation mechanisms

The re-establishment of social cohesion after chieftaincy disputes frequently depends on the implementation of effective conflict-resolution strategies. Conventional mechanisms for resolving conflicts, including those facilitated by councils of elders or judicial committees, are essential in mediating these disputes. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these mechanisms can fluctuate significantly based on the resources at hand and the readiness of the involved parties to pursue a peaceful resolution. Bukari (2016) examines a scenario in the Balsa Traditional Area of Ghana, where the implementation of a consensus-based voting system for chief selection contributed to the preservation of peace and the prevention of violent disputes. The implementation of voting facilitated greater community engagement in the decision-making process, thereby diminishing the potential for social fragmentation and cultivating a shared sense of ownership regarding the succession of the chieftaincy (Bukari, 2016). Conversely, in areas where conventional systems have been compromised or disrupted by political meddling, the restoration of social cohesion has proven to be

more challenging. Tseer and Sulemana (2022) highlight that in situations characterized by minimal collaboration between traditional authorities and central government institutions, disputes may become extended, resulting in enduring phases of social unrest. They contend that a more cohesive strategy incorporating both conventional and formal institutions may yield more enduring resolutions to succession conflicts, thus reinstating communal harmony (Tseer & Sulemana, 2022).

2.6.4 Gender and social inclusion in succession conflicts

Disputes around chieftaincy succession are frequently characterized by male dominance, resulting in the exclusion of women and other marginalized groups from decision-making processes (Dade, 2023). This exclusion not only perpetuates existing gender inequities but also intensifies the social disintegration resulting from succession disputes. Women may experience social marginalization despite frequently assuming vital roles in community development and conflict resolution. While the literature on women's roles in chieftaincy conflicts is sparse, research on conflict resolution in African communities suggests that women's participation in peacebuilding can facilitate unity and promote reconciliation. The African Union's emphasis on women's involvement in peacebuilding underscores the potential for enhanced societal cohesion when women participate in decision-making processes (Shulika, 2016). By omitting women from deliberations on chieftaincy succession, societies may forfeit the chance to utilize their social capital to reinstate community cohesion. Disputes over chieftaincy succession present considerable obstacles to societal cohesion. They undermine community cohesion, intensify intergenerational and inter-ethnic conflicts, and may result in enduring societal divisions. Traditional conflict resolution processes can facilitate peace restoration, but their efficacy depends on stakeholder support and resource availability. The exclusion of

marginalized groups, especially women, from these procedures constrains the possibility of achieving a more inclusive and durable conclusion. A comprehensive strategy that incorporates both traditional and formal institutions, including enhanced female involvement, is vital for sustaining social cohesion. Ultimately, addressing the effects of chieftaincy succession disputes on societal cohesiveness necessitates a comprehensive approach that takes into account the historical, sociological, and political aspects of these conflicts. As these conflicts persist in undermining community cohesion throughout Africa, it is imperative to address them in a manner that fortifies, rather than diminishes, the social fabric.

2.7 Implications of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes on Local Development

Projects

Chieftaincy succession disputes are a major sociopolitical issue in many parts of the world, especially in Africa and other areas where traditional authority structures coexist with official state rule. These disputes are sometimes caused by differences over leadership succession, resulting in political instability, social disintegration, and disruptions in local governance. Such arguments have serious consequences for local development efforts, since they can delay or completely halt development endeavors, damage governance institutions, and disrupt resource allocation.

2.7.1 Traditional leadership and development

Traditional leaders, such as chiefs, are essential to local governance and development, especially in areas where state institutions are ineffective or have restricted influence. Chieftaincy institutions function as intermediaries between local communities and the state, aiding in the execution of development projects, overseeing communal resources, and upholding social order. Logan (2011) asserts that traditional leaders are

intricately woven into the social structure of their communities, with their authority frequently regarded as more legitimate than that of elected officials. This legitimacy enables the mobilization of resources and the coordination of development efforts, especially in rural areas where state institutions may be lacking or ineffective. The effectiveness of traditional leaders in promoting development is significantly dependent on the stability of the chieftaincy institution. Succession disputes compromise the ability of chiefs to fulfill their roles, resulting in delays in development projects and a breakdown in local governance. Boone (2003) indicates that succession disputes frequently result in the fragmentation of authority within a community, as competing factions contend for control of the chieftaincy. The fragmentation may lead to conflicting claims regarding communal resources, thereby hindering the progress of development projects. The dispute diverts attention and resources from development initiatives, as community leaders focus on conflict resolution.

2.7.2 Governance disruptions

The immediate consequence of chieftaincy succession disputes is the disruption of local governance structures. Traditional leaders frequently function as local administrators, tasked with land management, dispute resolution, and the coordination of development initiatives. Succession disputes frequently disrupt administrative functions, as competing claimants to the throne may not acknowledge one another's authority. This may result in a stagnation of local governance, causing delays or complete abandonment of development projects. The deterioration of local governance often leads to diminished trust between the community and external development partners. Crook (2005) posits that traditional leaders function as gatekeepers to local communities, with their endorsement being essential for the

success of development projects. In the event of a succession dispute, development partners may hesitate to advance projects until the matter is settled, concerned about potential losses to their investments or the possibility of the project becoming entangled in local political issues. Significant delays in project implementation may occur as external partners await a resolution of the dispute.

The disintegration of governance may intensify pre-existing social tensions, resulting in heightened violence and instability. Ray (1996) indicates that succession disputes frequently result in the emergence of competing factions within a community, each possessing distinct agendas and visions for local development. The entrenchment of these factions complicates the advancement of development projects, as they may be perceived as favoring one faction over another. Development projects may, in certain instances, be targeted by rival factions to assert authority or undermine opponents.

2.7.3 Resource allocation and mismanagement

The implications of chieftaincy succession disputes significantly affect resource allocation and management. Traditional leaders frequently assume a significant role in the management of communal resources, including land and water, which are vital for local development. In the event of a succession dispute, control over resources may be contested, resulting in potential mismanagement or exploitation. Ubink (2008) indicates that succession disputes frequently result in the privatization of communal resources, as competing factions attempt to establish dominance over land and other assets. This may lead to the depletion of communal resources, thereby complicating the advancement of development projects. Moreover, the improper management of resources can intensify pre-existing inequalities within a community. Lund (2001) asserts that succession disputes frequently result in the concentration of resources

among a limited number of influential individuals, leaving the broader community deprived of essential services. This may result in heightened poverty and social unrest, thereby further jeopardizing local development prospects. Mismanagement of resources can result in environmental degradation, as competing factions exploit natural resources for immediate benefits, neglecting long-term implications.

2.7.4 Development partnerships

External development partners, including international NGOs and donor agencies, frequently play a significant role in local development initiatives. Their capacity to implement projects frequently depends on the stability of local governance structures. The emergence of a chieftaincy succession dispute can complicate the political landscape for development partners, resulting in project delays or cancellations. Olivier de Sardan (2005) notes that external development partners frequently depend on traditional leaders to aid in project implementation, especially in rural regions where state institutions may be ineffective or lacking. In the event of a succession dispute, development partners may hesitate to engage with local communities due to concerns that their participation could be perceived as partiality in the conflict. Furthermore, external development partners may encounter difficulties in establishing trust with local communities following a succession dispute. Eriksen (2018) notes that traditional leaders frequently act as intermediaries between external development partners and local communities, aiding in the establishment of trust and the facilitation of project implementation. A succession dispute can undermine trust, complicating engagement between development partners and local communities. In certain instances, development partners may be compelled to withdraw from projects entirely, concerned that their participation could intensify the conflict.

2.7.5 Case studies

Examining specific case studies effectively illustrates the impact of chieftaincy succession disputes on local development. Chieftaincy disputes in Ghana have consistently been a significant issue, particularly in the Northern and Ashanti regions. Mahama (2009) indicates that succession disputes in these regions frequently result in violence and hinder local development projects. The Dagbon chieftaincy dispute, which has persisted for several decades, has led to repeated delays or abandonment of development projects due to the conflict-induced instability. External development partners, including NGOs and donor agencies, have been reluctant to engage with the region, as their involvement might be perceived as partiality in the dispute. In Nigeria, chieftaincy disputes significantly affect local development, especially in the Niger Delta region. Watts (2004) indicates that succession disputes in this region are frequently associated with conflicts over oil resource control, resulting in violence and hindering development projects. Rival factions have, in certain instances, targeted development projects to assert control over local resources. The withdrawal of external development partners from the region has exacerbated instability and undermined prospects for local development.

2.7.6 Resolving chieftaincy disputes for development

Considering the significant influence of chieftaincy succession disputes on local development, it is crucial to evaluate viable governmental solutions. One strategy is to enhance the legal and institutional foundations for adjudicating succession conflicts. Ubink (2008) asserts that numerous succession issues emerge from discrepancies in ancient rules and practices, resulting in conflicting claims to the chieftaincy. Clarifying succession rules and instituting formal dispute-resolution methods may prevent conflicts from turning into violence and mitigate their effects on local

development.

A further potential governmental approach is to enhance coordination between traditional leaders and state institutions. Crook (2005) asserts that traditional leaders frequently function alongside state institutions, resulting in a deficiency of coordination in development initiatives. Enhancing coordination between traditional and state authorities may facilitate the seamless progression of development projects, despite succession issues.

Ultimately, foreign development partners can contribute to alleviating the effects of succession disputes on local development. Olivier de Sardan (2005) asserts that development partners must recognize the political dynamics associated with succession issues and exercise caution to prevent involvement in local conflicts. By collaborating with both traditional leaders and governmental officials, development partners can facilitate the continuation of programs despite local instability. Disputes over chieftaincy succession have considerable consequences for local development, especially in areas where traditional leaders are integral to governance and resource management. Such disputes can undermine local government frameworks, result in the misallocation of communal resources, and pose difficulties for external development collaborators. To mitigate these effects, it is imperative to strengthen legal and institutional frameworks for adjudicating succession disputes, foster greater cooperation between traditional and governmental authorities, and ensure that external development partners are cognizant of the political dynamics surrounding these disputes.

2.8 Research Gap and Justification for the Case Study

Existing scholarship on chieftaincy succession disputes in Ghana has provided important insights into the structural, political, and historical drivers of conflict within traditional leadership institutions. Studies in areas such as Dagbon, Ga Mashie, Bunkpurugu, Balsa, and parts of Northern Ghana have shown that factors such as elite manipulation, ambiguities in customary law, resource competition, and political interference frequently underlie succession disputes (Boakye & Béland, 2018; Bukari, 2016; Bukari et al., 2021; Issifu, 2015; Tonah, 2012; Yaro & Ngmenkpiewo, 2020). Collectively, this body of work shows that chieftaincy conflicts are not isolated cultural phenomena but are deeply embedded within broader political and governance structures.

However, much of the existing literature has focused on either the historical roots of chieftaincy disputes or their broad national implications, with comparatively limited attention given to how partisan political alignments shape succession conflicts at the local community level. While several studies acknowledge political interference in general terms, they often do not sufficiently examine how sustained affiliation between rival royal clans and specific political parties influences social relations, governance processes, and development efforts within particular traditional areas (Owusu-Mensah, 2014; Mawuko-Yevugah & Attipoe, 2021). As a result, the everyday social and developmental consequences of politically polarized chieftaincy disputes remain underexplored.

The case of Awutu Senya offers a distinctive and analytically valuable context for addressing this gap. Unlike many documented cases in which political involvement in chieftaincy disputes is intermittent or externally driven, the succession dispute

between the Twedan and Anona royal clans is widely perceived to be closely intertwined with enduring partisan political alignments. This creates a unique setting to examine how chieftaincy succession disputes interact with competitive party politics within a single community and how this interaction may shape social cohesion, governance relationships, and development initiatives. Yet, despite the persistence of the dispute and its prominence in the area, Awutu Senya has received little systematic scholarly attention.

By focusing on Awutu Senya, this study directly addresses the need for localized, empirical investigations that move beyond generalized accounts of chieftaincy conflicts. The case study approach enables deeper exploration of how national political dynamics are negotiated within traditional institutions and how they influence community life at the grassroots level. In doing so, the study fills an important gap in the literature by providing context-specific evidence on the intersection of chieftaincy succession, partisan politics, and community development, thereby extending existing scholarship on traditional governance in Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological framework and tactics used in the study. It describes in detail the research paradigm, approach, and design utilized to investigate Senya chieftaincy succession disputes and their implications for social cohesion and community development. The chapter opens with an outline of the interpretivist and social constructivist philosophical foundations that will guide the study. It then outlines the qualitative research methodology and exploratory case study design used to acquire a thorough grasp of the topic. The chapter goes on to explain how the study population was chosen, how purposive sampling was utilized to pick participants, and how data collection and analysis were carried out. As a result, it provides a clear reason for the decisions made to ensure the rigor and dependability of the study's findings while simultaneously complying to ethical guidelines.

3.1 Research Paradigm and Philosophy

This research was based on the interpretivist paradigm, supported by social constructivism. The interpretivist paradigm posits that reality is constructed socially, is subjective, and is contingent upon context (Creswell, 2017). This paradigm emphasizes the co-construction of knowledge between the researcher and participants, highlighting diverse interpretations of reality shaped by individual experiences and social contexts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This perspective aligns with the current study, which aims to examine the complexities of chieftaincy succession disputes in Senya and their wider effects on social cohesion and community development. Social constructivism, as defined by Vygotsky (1978), asserts that knowledge is constructed

by individuals through social interactions within particular cultural contexts. Within this framework, meaning is established through discourse, and understanding is collaboratively constructed. This philosophy corresponds with the research objective of examining how various stakeholders—chiefs, sub-chiefs, politicians, and community members—interpret succession disputes and their effects on the community. The research seeks not to identify a singular objective truth but to reveal the subjective meanings that participants construct regarding their lived experiences (Berger & Luckmann, 2016). This paradigm and philosophical stance are justified by the research's exploratory nature. Yin (2018) posits that case studies are especially valuable in interpretivist research, enabling researchers to examine intricate social phenomena within their actual contexts. The exploratory case study design facilitates the analysis of chieftaincy succession disputes within the distinct sociocultural and political context of the Senya community. Interpretivism facilitates a comprehensive understanding of disputes by considering the perspectives of participants. Their experiences, emotions, and perceptions are essential for understanding the impact of these disputes on social cohesion and community development.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) highlight that the interpretivism paradigm promotes a close relationship between the researcher and participants, facilitating reflexivity and mutual influence throughout data collection and analysis. This relational approach facilitates the study's aim of understanding the subjective experiences and interpretations of community members and leaders. The research aims to understand the meanings and narratives that participants associate with succession disputes. Interpretivism serves as an appropriate framework for analyzing these complex and multifaceted social issues.

3.2 Research Approach

This study utilized a qualitative methodology to investigate the complex dynamics surrounding chieftaincy succession disputes in the Senya community. A qualitative approach is particularly appropriate for investigations that aim to understand complex social phenomena from participants' perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This research aimed to explore the nuanced experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of community members, chiefs, politicians, and opinion leaders concerning disputes and their ramifications for social cohesion and development. Qualitative research is esteemed for its capacity to capture the depth of human experiences and the significance individuals ascribe to them (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), rendering it a suitable choice for this study. This research is grounded in the interpretivist paradigm, which prioritizes the comprehension of participants' subjective experiences (Creswell, 2013).

Interpretivism aligns with the objectives of qualitative research, recognizing that reality is a social construct shaped by individuals' interpretations of their experiences (Bryman, 2016). The research examined the varying perceptions of succession disputes among stakeholders in the Senya community and their subsequent impacts, thereby illuminating the community's multifaceted realities. Viewed from this perspective, the research sought not to generalize findings but to provide a comprehensive understanding of the particular social context in which these disputes arise. Furthermore, a qualitative methodology allows for the implementation of adaptable data gathering techniques, including interviews and focus group discussions, which played a pivotal role in this research. These approaches enabled

participants to articulate their perspectives openly and according to their own criteria, thereby yielding more comprehensive and intricate data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The use of semi-structured interviews and focus groups facilitated a comprehensive exploration of participants' experiences while allowing the researchers to delve deeper into emerging issues during the discussion (Roulston, 2021). The selection of a qualitative approach is further supported by the need for an exploratory design, which is particularly valuable in research domains that have not been thoroughly examined (Yin, 2018). The limited research on the Senya chieftaincy succession disputes presents an opportunity for qualitative inquiry, facilitating the discovery of novel insights and patterns that may have eluded prior examination. Moreover, it embraces the intricate and contextual aspects of the disputes, along with their social and cultural ramifications (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

3.3 Research Design

This investigation utilized an exploratory case study design. A case study design is particularly suitable for investigations that examine intricate, real-world phenomena within a particular context (Yin, 2018). Case studies provided a thorough examination of current issues in their authentic contexts, making them an appropriate method for this study, which aims to explore the intricate dynamics of local chieftaincy disputes and their wider social implications. The exploratory nature of the case study design aligns with the objective of generating insights into a phenomenon that has not been extensively studied in the academic literature (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Exploratory case studies are appropriate when the inquiry centres on questions of "how" and "why" (Yin, 2018), which are essential for comprehending the impact of chieftaincy succession disputes on community development and the reasons behind the ongoing nature of these disputes. This design allowed for an in-depth examination of the

viewpoints of different stakeholders, including sub-chiefs, politicians, and community members, who are directly impacted by the disputes. The rationale for employing a case study design is enhanced by its capacity to integrate various data sources, such as interviews, focus groups, and document analysis (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The triangulation of data enhances the validity of the findings by offering a thorough understanding of the issue from various perspectives. As Stake (2005) emphasizes, case studies enable the exploration of the complexity of social phenomena, which is essential for grasping the intricate interplay between chieftaincy succession and social cohesion. Consequently, the exploratory case study design provided both depth and context, facilitating a comprehensive examination of the elements influencing the conflicts within the Senya community.

3.4 Research Setting

The study was carried out in Senya, a coastal town located in the Awutu-Senya West District of Ghana's Central Region. The district is situated between latitudes 5°20' and 5°42' north, and longitudes 0°25' and 0°37' west (Osae, 2005), bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the south and adjacent districts to the north, east, and west. The district encompasses 417.3 square kilometers and recorded a population of 169,972 in 2000, indicating substantial growth compared to earlier decades (GSS, 2010). Senya, situated around 60 kilometers from Accra, is a significant settlement within the district.

The population of Senya is predominantly Guan, with fishing as the primary occupation, supplemented by agriculture, commerce, and small-scale industries. Senya holds historical and cultural significance as the ritual home of the Guans, characterized by deep-rooted traditions and spiritual practices. Rituals and festivals are integral to the community, with "ode na inu" (kenkey and fish) serving as a staple

dish. Fort De Goede Hoop, constructed by the Dutch in the 17th century, serves as a significant historical landmark in Senya, established to facilitate gold trade activities. The socio-political structure of the community is organized around two royal families, Twidan and Anona, which act as custodians of the stool land. The town possesses two Asafo companies, Dentiwo and Tuawo, which are of social and political importance.

3.5 Study Population

The study population consisted of the members of the Senya community, focusing on key stakeholders who are directly involved in or impacted by chieftaincy succession disputes. This encompasses chiefs, sub-chiefs, prominent politicians, community members, and opinion leaders. Chiefs and sub-chiefs are essential to this study due to their central role in the chieftaincy institution and their direct knowledge of disputes within the system. Politicians from the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC) offered perspectives on the intersection of these disputes with local governance and broader political dynamics, which is crucial for comprehending the socio-political context. Community members, especially those recalling previous conflicts, shared narratives of their lived experiences, whereas opinion leaders contributed an authoritative viewpoint on community development and social cohesion.

The choice of this population is warranted due to the localized nature of chieftaincy disputes, which impact various dimensions of community life, such as governance, social relations, and economic development (Odotei & Awedoba, 2006). This study employs criterion-based selection to ensure participants are chosen for their relevance to the research questions and their unique insights into chieftaincy disputes (deMarrais, 2004). Criterion-based sampling is crucial in qualitative research as it

improves the depth of inquiry by concentrating on participants who can offer rich, detailed accounts of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The population facilitated an in-depth analysis of the Senya chieftaincy disputes, assessing both direct and indirect effects on social cohesion and community development. The inclusion of diverse stakeholders in the study facilitated the exploration of multiple dimensions of the issue, thereby offering a comprehensive understanding of the problem (Flick, 2014).

3.6 Sampling and Sample Size

The study utilized purposive sampling, a non-probability technique commonly applied in qualitative research. Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to selectively choose participants according to their knowledge, experience, and connection to the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2015). This method is effective in exploratory case studies, ensuring the inclusion of individuals who can provide rich, relevant, and in-depth information regarding the chieftaincy succession disputes in Senya. Palinkas et al. (2015) assert that purposive sampling is suitable for research aimed at obtaining insights from individuals possessing particular characteristics or experiences. This approach is consistent with the study's objective of examining the viewpoints of sub-chiefs, community members, politicians, and opinion leaders directly engaged in or impacted by the disputes. This study included a sample size of 12 participants. This decision was informed by the principle of data saturation, defined as the stage at which no additional information or themes emerge from the data (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

Qualitative research aims to comprehend the depth and complexity of issues within specific contexts rather than generalizing findings to a broader population. Small sample sizes, like 12 participants, are often suitable for studies aimed at examining nuanced perspectives and detailed personal experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The chosen participants comprised four sub-chiefs, two prominent politicians (one representing each major political party, NPP and NDC), four community members with direct knowledge of the events, and two opinion leaders with considerable influence in the community. The rationale for this sample size was based on theoretical saturation, indicating that additional interviews would not provide further insights (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A sample size of 12 was adequate to achieve saturation, given that participants were selected for their capacity to offer detailed and varied insights on chieftaincy disputes. This aligns with Mason's (2010) recommendations, which indicate that qualitative studies in case research typically necessitate smaller, more targeted samples to facilitate rich and meaningful data collection.

3.7 Data and Data Collection

The research data were primarily collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The selection of primary data was driven by the necessity to obtain detailed, firsthand narratives regarding the chieftaincy disputes and their effects on social cohesion in the Senya community. Primary data is essential in qualitative research, offering a comprehensive understanding of participants' perspectives, experiences, and narratives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research incorporated secondary data sources, such as newspaper articles, online news resources, and traditional documents, to enhance the primary data, thereby providing a

more comprehensive contextual understanding of the disputes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

3.7.1 Data Collection Methods

The data collection process utilized semi-structured interviews alongside focus group discussions. Semi-structured interviews were selected for their adaptability, enabling participants to articulate their perspectives while maintaining focus on essential research inquiries (deMarrais, 2004). This method was well-suited for the study, facilitating the exploration of individual experiences and nuanced insights into chieftaincy disputes. The interviews with chiefs, sub-chiefs, and opinion leaders had a duration of approximately 45 minutes each. This duration facilitated the necessary depth in qualitative inquiry, consistent with Rubin and Rubin's (2012) recommendation that qualitative interviews should provide adequate time for reflection and elaboration on discussed issues. Focus group discussions were conducted with community members directly impacted by the disputes. This method promotes participant interaction, facilitating the development of collective perspectives and shared experiences (Krueger & Casey, 2014). The implementation of focus groups facilitated participants in expanding upon one another's ideas, which is especially beneficial for comprehending community-level issues like social cohesion (Morgan, 1997).

The discussions extended for two hours, allowing participants to thoroughly engage with the topic. The data collection methods were implemented in both English and the Effutu dialect, allowing participants to communicate in their preferred language, thereby improving the depth and authenticity of the data. The timing and location of interviews and discussions were negotiated with participants to ensure their

convenience and consent, adhering to ethical guidelines (King & Horrocks, 2010). The data were transcribed verbatim and analyzed through thematic analysis, following the principles established by Braun and Clarke (2006), which facilitated a systematic identification of patterns and themes within the data. This methodological rigor enhances the credibility and reliability of the findings (Nowell et al., 2017).

3.8 Data Analysis

This study employed a combination of qualitative methods and modern digital tools for comprehensive data analysis. The qualitative data acquired from semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were initially transcribed into text and subsequently analyzed with the Advanced NVivo AI Tool, a software specifically intended for qualitative data analysis. NVivo was chosen for its ability to handle, code, and thematically arrange extensive qualitative data, which corresponds with the study's objectives to obtain nuanced insights from participants. The initial phase of the study entailed transcription, during which audio recordings of interviews and discussions were transcribed verbatim. This method was crucial for maintaining the fidelity of the data to the participants' original statements, hence safeguarding its integrity and trustworthiness (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The transcriptions were subsequently put into NVivo for initial coding.

Coding is an essential phase in qualitative research, facilitating the categorization of data into significant units, and enabling the researcher to discern patterns and themes pertinent to the study questions (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). This study utilized thematic analysis as the primary analytical method, suitable for discovering, interpreting, and reporting themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes were generated both inductively from the data and deductively from established theoretical

frameworks concerning chieftaincy succession disputes and societal cohesion. This dual approach ensured that the study was anchored in the facts while being guided by pertinent literature. The analysis process used triangulation to augment the validity of the findings. Triangulation, as articulated by Lincoln and Guba (1985), entails the cross-verification of data from many sources to ascertain credibility and reliability. This study employed triangulation by contrasting results from interviews, focus group discussions, and secondary data sources, including newspaper articles and historical documents. This method alleviated prejudices and facilitated a more thorough comprehension of the phenomena being examined (Flick, 2018). The detected themes were ultimately synthesized and analyzed about the research objectives. NVivo's sophisticated AI techniques enhanced the thematic organization by systematically clustering codes, hence facilitating a more profound study. The themes were substantiated by direct quotations from participants, guaranteeing that the perspectives of community members were genuinely represented throughout the research.

3.9 Trustworthiness

Guaranteeing the reliability of qualitative research is essential for upholding its rigor and credibility. This study utilized the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to bolster the trustworthiness of the findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) assert that these four criteria are crucial for establishing the validity and reliability of qualitative research, serving as counterparts to the conventional quantitative standards of internal validity, generalizability, reliability, and objectivity. Credibility was established by employing various data collection methods, including interviews and focus group discussions, which facilitated triangulation.

Triangulation, as observed by Patton (2015), enhances the study by validating data through multiple sources. Furthermore, member checking was employed, allowing participants the opportunity to review and offer feedback on the transcripts of their interviews and the discussions held in focus groups. This approach guaranteed that their viewpoints were precisely recorded and understood, a technique endorsed by Birt et al. (2016) as essential for upholding the integrity of qualitative research. The issue of transferability was tackled through the provision of detailed descriptions regarding the context, participants, and social environment surrounding the Senya chieftaincy succession disputes. Geertz (1973) contends that thick description allows readers to assess the transferability of findings to different contexts or settings. This comprehensive examination of the cultural and social dynamics within the Senya community provides a foundation for future researchers or practitioners to evaluate the relevance of the findings in analogous contexts. Dependability was established through the meticulous maintenance of a comprehensive audit trail, which documented every phase of the research process, encompassing data collection and analysis. Shenton (2004) highlights that transparency in documenting methodological decisions enables others to replicate or critique the research process, thereby augmenting its reliability. Moreover, peer debriefing was undertaken, during which the researcher engaged with field experts to deliberate on the research process and outcomes, thus reducing the potential for researcher bias.

Confirmability pertains to the impartiality of the findings, accomplished through the triangulation of various data sources, including interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. This mitigates researcher bias and guarantees that the findings emerge from the participants' viewpoints by integrating substantial quotations from them, rather than reflecting the researcher's preconceived notions (Patton, 2015).

Reflexivity, as suggested by Dowling (2006), was utilized consistently throughout the research, with the researcher maintaining a reflective journal to critically evaluate the impact of personal biases on the research process.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are essential in research, safeguarding the rights, dignity, and well-being of participants, and ensuring the validity and integrity of research findings (Bhandari, 2020). This study examined chieftaincy succession disputes within the Senya community. Strict adherence to ethical standards was crucial to protect participants' welfare and uphold the research's credibility. Ethical approval was initially requested and granted by the University of Education Ethics Committee via the Center for Human Rights, Conflict, and Peace Studies (CHRAPS). The approval guaranteed that the research adhered to established ethical guidelines and legal requirements. The committee's approval was essential, particularly due to the sensitive nature of the disputes under examination, which have significant implications for community cohesion and political stability. The study's ethical framework prominently included the process of informed consent.

All participants, comprising sub-chiefs, community members, and opinion leaders, received comprehensive information regarding the study's purpose, potential benefits, and any associated risks of participation. Participants were made aware of their right to decline participation or withdraw at any time without facing negative consequences. This ensured that participants made voluntary and informed decisions regarding their involvement, thereby upholding their autonomy and agency throughout the research process. Confidentiality was strictly upheld to safeguard participants' privacy, especially given the research's focus on potentially contentious

and politically sensitive topics. Personal identifiers were eliminated during the transcription and analysis of data to ensure the anonymity of responses, thereby preventing any linkage of participants to specific statements or shared information. Data storage adhered to stringent protocols to mitigate unauthorized access, and the final report exclusively incorporated anonymized data.

3.11 Positionality

Reflexivity was essential in this study, necessitating the researcher to recognize and evaluate personal experiences, assumptions, and possible influences on the research. This approach was essential for accurately representing participants' perspectives and conducting the research impartially, especially considering the sensitive nature of chieftaincy succession disputes. The research was based on an interpretivist paradigm that acknowledges the subjective realities of individuals and emphasizes understanding their lived experiences. This philosophical approach was well-suited to the study, enabling the researcher to capture diverse viewpoints from participants, including sub-chiefs, politicians, and community members, on the impact of the Senya chieftaincy succession disputes on social cohesion and community development. The researcher sought to offer a detailed and thorough representation of these diverse perspectives.

The researcher, as a member of the Senya community, has personal connections to certain individuals and cultural dynamics being examined. This connection may introduce subjectivity or bias, particularly in the interpretation of sensitive political and social issues. The researcher has a personal investment in community development, potentially affecting his perspective on the dispute outcomes. Conscious efforts were implemented to reduce potential bias. Strategies utilized involved

ensuring transparency throughout the research process, engaging in critical self-reflection, and applying rigorous data analysis methods to confirm that the findings were based on the data rather than individual viewpoints. Additionally, various perspectives were solicited to guarantee a comprehensive and equitable evaluation of the chieftaincy disputes. The measures implemented acknowledged the researcher's positionality without overshadowing the participants' voices or compromising the integrity of the research findings.



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This study sought to address four critical questions related to the chieftaincy succession dispute between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya. Specifically, it aimed to:

1. Explore the causes of the chieftaincy succession dispute between the Twedan and Anona clans.
2. Analyze the political alignments of the Twedan and Anona clans and their influence on the dispute.
3. Assess the effects of social cohesion and community development projects in Awutu Senya.

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms were employed for all participants. The study gathered insights from four sub-chiefs (CH1–CH4), two prominent politicians (POL1–POL2)—each representing one of the two major political parties, NPP and NDC—four community members (COM1–COM4) with direct knowledge of the events, and two influential opinion leaders (OP1–OP2). This approach safeguarded participants' identities while facilitating an in-depth and nuanced exploration of the multifaceted issues surrounding the succession conflict.

4.1 Causes of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes in Awutu Senya

The chieftaincy succession dispute between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya serves as a vivid example of the complex interplay of historical grievances, leadership failures, ritual disruptions, and external political interference. These conflicts arise from contested succession rights, rooted in ambiguous traditional

arrangements, and are further complicated by ineffective mediation and the politicization of traditional authority. The disturbance of customary enstoolment rituals diminishes the spiritual and cultural legitimacy of leadership, while the involvement of national political parties exacerbates divisions within the community. Collectively, these factors illustrate the multifaceted origins of the conflict and their broader implications for social cohesion and traditional governance. The following themes encapsulate the primary causes of chieftaincy succession disputes in Awutu Senya.

4.1.1 Conflicts over Succession Rights

The historical alternation of succession between the Twedan and Anona clans has created a contentious dynamic, fostering disputes over succession rights. The alternation, while intended to promote balance, is now a source of disagreement due to inconsistent adherence and contested interpretations. Participants repeatedly pointed to the rivalry stemming from these arrangements:

—It was meant to be a succession process... after one clan rules, the next is the other clan.” (Participant CH1, Field Interview, 2024)

—We know about Twidan‘ clan being the heir to the throne; later on, Anona‘ came in, and Twidan‘ resumed their position.” (Participant CH4, Field Interview, 2024)

—The disputes started from their first kingship or reign up to about the sixth... till now.” (Participant, CH3, Field Interview, 2024)

Such testimonies emphasize the persistent nature of the conflicts and illuminate profound grievances associated with the succession model. The aforementioned disputes reflect overarching trends in Ghana, where the absence of well-defined, codified succession protocols facilitates the emergence of competing claims (Yaro & Ngmenkpieo, 2020). The legal ambiguities present in Ghana's Chieftaincy Act of

2008 further complicate these matters, as the mechanisms designed to address disputes frequently intensify them due to delays and inefficiencies (Assanful, 2021). The study disclosed that conflicts regarding succession rights between the Twedan and Anona clans are deeply embedded in historical discrepancies and debated understandings of traditional customs. Historical Institutionalism elucidates how colonial and postcolonial disruptions have solidified divergent traditions and succession patterns, which persist in exacerbating contemporary disputes. Prior to 1829, the Anona clan's supremacy was unquestionable; however, the ensuing shifts in power among clans created a state of uncertainty, leading to ongoing challenges in succession (Boakye & Béland, 2018). This conflict reflects overarching trends recognized in academic discourse. Yaro and Ngmenkpiewo (2020) contend that the historical commercialization of chieftaincy titles, coupled with the dilution of well-defined succession lines, intensifies conflicts. The absence of well-defined succession laws, as highlighted in Ghana's Chieftaincy Act of 2008, results in numerous claimants vying for their entitlements to leadership (Assanful, 2021). The presence of these legal ambiguities, combined with the alternating succession model of the Twedan and Anona clans, engenders a precarious dynamic that cultivates factionalism. Participants reflected these sentiments, with one stating,

—It was intended to be a succession process... after one clan governs, the subsequent clan takes over” (Participant CH2, Field Interview, 2024).

The disputes are exacerbated by longstanding historical grievances. As observed by Bukari et al. (2021), unresolved disputes regarding the legitimacy of succession can solidify distrust, as exemplified in Awutu Senya. In this context, conflicting assertions

reveal profound societal rifts, resulting in fragmented communities in which disputes over succession symbolize a broader quest for cultural and political identity.

4.1.2 Leadership Failures and Lack of Consensus

Failures in leadership and mediation have further entrenched the succession disputes. Conflict Theory explains how power struggles among elites hinder resolution and perpetuate discord (Coser, 1956). Participants expressed frustration over the lack of decisive leadership in Awutu Senya:

—The elders and council members must see to it that the case is brought before authorities and settled.” (Participant COM1, Field Interview, 2024)

—No one wants to put forth the truth so that it can be settled for peace to reign.” (Participant COM2, Field Interview, 2024))

—They don’t do anything together or simply put aren’t united.” (Participant POL1, Field Interview, 2024)

These sentiments reflect the inability of traditional authorities to mediate effectively, leading to a breakdown in trust. The literature corroborates this observation, noting that leadership disputes often arise from ineffective governance structures that fail to adapt traditional practices to contemporary realities (Tseer & Sulemana, 2022).

Leadership challenges in Awutu Senya are further exacerbated by political affiliations. As one participant lamented:

—The current chief... formed his subordinate traditional council, neglecting that of our community.” (Participant OP2, Field Interview, 2024)

The current chief who is ruling now is the cause of all these disputes. When they wanted to enstool him, the other group of people denied him of that and did not agree for it to happen, which has led to conflicts

and disputes as we have today. Everyone wants to claim supremacy and no one is concerned about the betterment and growth of our community (Participant POL3, Field Interview, 2024)

Participants often referenced deficiencies in leadership and the failure to effectively mediate conflicts as contributing elements to the escalation of chieftaincy disputes. Conflict Theory, as articulated by Marx and Engels, emphasizes that disputes frequently emerge from power struggles among elites striving to preserve their dominance (Orsini, 2024). In Awutu Senya, the inability of leaders to partake in impartial mediation has exacerbated divisions, as highlighted by the participants. The deficiencies in leadership observed in Awutu Senya resonate with wider research regarding the influence of governance on succession conflicts. Tseer and Sulemana (2022) assert that the lack of neutral leadership exacerbates conflicts by cultivating mistrust among various factions. The lack of consensus underscores a more extensive challenge in harmonizing established practices with contemporary governance structures (Boakye & Béland, 2018). The complexities of leadership challenges are exacerbated by external influences. The convergence of traditional and contemporary political frameworks introduces further obstacles to achieving consensus, as rival political allegiances weaken the legitimacy of traditional councils (Tonah, 2012). The leadership conflicts in Awutu Senya, where one clan aligns with the NDC and the other with the NPP, serve as a pertinent illustration of how political dynamics intensify succession challenges, as highlighted in existing literature.

4.1.3 Disruption of traditional rituals

The integrity of traditional enstoolment ceremonies is critical to the chieftaincy institution in Awutu Senya, yet interruptions in these customs have fueled mistrust and conflict. Rituals, which are firmly ingrained in cultural and spiritual traditions, are

frequently regarded as necessary for legitimizing leadership. Participants emphasized the significance of these ceremonies and their contentious execution.

—The ‘Asafo’ members are those who saw to the enstoolment of the chief and slaughtered a sheep to honour that.” (Participant COM3, Field Interview, 2024)

—The right decision was for the ‘Asafo’ members to withdraw their decisions and perform the rites in order to abolish what has been done.” (Participant CH3, Field Interview, 2024)

—They didn’t meet the chief/king... they met one of the elders in the family.” (Participant CH4, Field Interview, 2024)

These accounts demonstrate that ritual disruptions weaken traditional authority, fostering an environment conducive to the emergence of competing claims. Salih (2018) highlights that deviations from established ritual practices frequently result in ongoing disputes, as such deviations are viewed as infringements on sacred traditions. Participants highlighted the spiritual consequences of disrupted rituals.

—The whole situation is reliant on the one the ‘Asafo’ members slaughtered the sheep.” (Participant CH4, Field Interview, 2024)

—They carved their own throne... because the original throne would reject the one who’s not meant for it.” (Participant CH1, Field Interview, 2024)

The findings by Ephirim-Donkor (2019) indicate that the spiritual dimension of chieftaincy conflicts complicates their resolution. The perceived illegitimacy of leaders resulting from ritual deviations intensifies mistrust among factions and solidifies the conflict. The conflicts between the Twedan and Anona clans are closely linked to disturbances in traditional enstoolment and associated rituals, which possess both spiritual and cultural importance. Participants consistently noted the symbolic

significance of these rituals. This is consistent with Salih's (2018) findings, which emphasize the significance of ritual adherence in legitimizing chieftaincy. The disruption of rituals in Awutu Senya highlights the decline of trust in traditional practices, mirroring the wider challenges confronting traditional institutions throughout Ghana. Ephirim-Donkor (2019) posits that deviations from these practices frequently arise from colonial disruptions that prioritized administrative efficiency over Indigenous customs. The historical context establishes a basis for comprehending the contested nature of modern interpretations of ritual significance, which contributes to ongoing conflicts. The erosion of trust in conventional authority is exacerbated by political polarization. Yaro and Ngmenkpiewo (2020) observe that the politicization of rituals reduces their efficacy in dispute resolution. In Awutu Senya, disputes regarding ensoulment rituals represent not only cultural grievances but also function as political instruments for competing factions seeking dominance.

4.1.4 External and Political Influences

The involvement of external entities, particularly political parties, has intensified the succession dispute in Awutu Senya. Participants frequently cited court cases and political affiliations as factors prolonging the conflict:

—The case is currently at the court being settled.” (Participant OP1, Field Interview, 2024)

—Even when the chief is summoned by the National House of Chiefs, he doesn't show up.” (Participant COM3, Field Interview, 2024)

—The court always keeps adjourning the case here and there causing delays.” (Participant COM1, Field Interview, 2024)

Research indicates that political interference frequently converts local disputes into entrenched conflicts. Tonah (2012) and Bukari et al. (2021) illustrate the exploitation

of chieftaincy disputes by political elites for electoral gain, which consequently weakens traditional mediation processes. The alignment of the Twedan clan with the NDC and the Anona clan with the NPP in Awutu Senya illustrates this phenomenon.

A participant expressed concern regarding the negative impacts of such affiliations:

–Politicians don't involve themselves too much into it because it could cause them a lot of damage.” (Participant POL2, Field Interview, 2024)

The politicization of chieftaincy disputes undermines trust in traditional authority and creates divisions within the community. This dynamic frequently results in extended conflicts and obstructs the execution of development initiatives (Boateng & Bawole, 2021). Political interference emerged as a significant theme, with participants consistently indicating the influence of political parties in exacerbating disputes. One respondent stated, *–The case is currently at the court being settled,*” highlighting the limitations of local mechanisms in resolving conflicts without external influence. Conflict Theory elucidates this dynamic, suggesting that elites exploit disputes for political and economic advantage, thereby sustaining conflicts (Coser, 1956). The convergence of traditional chieftaincy and contemporary political frameworks complicates dispute resolution, as demonstrated in Tonah's (2012) research on Dagbon.

The connections of Dagbon royal families with national political parties, akin to those of the Twedan and Anona clans, intensified local disputes into larger political crises. Bukari et al. (2021) contend that these alignments convert local governance challenges into entrenched political conflicts, obstructing conflict resolution and exacerbating societal divisions. The intertwining of chieftaincy and politics in Awutu Senya exemplifies this wider phenomenon. The alignment of the Twedan clan with

the NDC and the association of the Anona clan with the NPP demonstrate how external affiliations can undermine traditional authority, thereby eroding trust in its ability to mediate disputes (Owusu-Mensah, 2014). The politicization of conflicts extends their duration and diverts attention from resolution efforts, resulting in increased social fragmentation.

4.2 Politicization of Clan Loyalties in Chieftaincy Succession Disputes

The qualitative analysis findings indicate a significant impact of political alignments on the chieftaincy succession disputes between the Twidan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya. The affiliation of the Twidan clan with the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the Anona clan with the New Patriotic Party (NPP) has converted a traditional succession dispute into a politicized arena. This analysis examines how political affiliations intensify existing tensions, distort traditional processes, and generate ripple effects on community cohesion and development.

4.2.1 Political Affiliations as Catalysts for Division

The politicization of clan loyalties adds complexity to the chieftaincy disputes, intertwining national political allegiances with local conflicts. Respondents frequently noted that political leaders subtly fuel these tensions to gain influence. One respondent stated,

—Some members of the political elite align themselves with either side to gain influence, which stirs disputes further rather than resolving them” (Participant COM2, Field Interview, 2024)

Such interference often prevents impartial conflict resolution, as political interests overshadow traditional customs. The alignment of the clans with opposing political parties appears to deepen historical grievances. According to a participant, the Twidan

clan was historically recognized as heirs to the throne, but political manoeuvring allowed the Anona clan to reclaim leadership. The participant explained,

—We know about Twidan being the heir to the throne, later Anona came in and Twidan resumed their position; Anona secured a slot again, and lastly, Twidan—till now, there are disputes” (Participant COM4, Field Interview, 2024)

This cyclical pattern of succession, driven by political favoritism, upsets the equilibrium intended by traditional conventions. This conclusion is consistent with Tonah's (2012) interpretation of the Dagbon war, in which political meddling entrenched existing rivalries and exacerbated community tensions. Furthermore, because the Twidan clan is affiliated with the NDC and the Anona clan is affiliated with the NPP, external actors can use these issues to gain political power. This meddling not only exacerbates tensions but also prolongs disputes as different factions seek political backing to strengthen their positions. A participant reflected,

—Most of the political leaders live in Accra and deprive this community... Only one MP who supports our cause has made any commendable effort” (Participant OP1, Field Interview, 2024)

This suggests a discerning involvement by political entities, highlighting their utilitarian perspective towards regional disputes. The historical institutionalist viewpoint elucidates how colonial and postcolonial political frameworks established the groundwork for contemporary chieftaincy conflicts. Boakye and Béland (2018) contend that the colonial implementation of indirect rule undermined traditional governance, instilling political manipulation within the chieftaincy institution. In Awutu Senya, these legacies are evident in the deeply rooted clan rivalries, intensified by political affiliations. A participant noted,

—We know about Twidan being the heir to the throne, later Anona came in and Twidan resumed their position; Anona secured a slot again, and lastly, Twidan—till now, there are disputes” (Participant COM3, Field Interview, 2024)

This cyclical pattern of contested leadership illustrates the enduring impact of historical disruptions on succession practices.

4.2.2 Politicization undermining traditional authority

Traditional authorities, such as clan elders and kingmakers, have struggled to maintain their roles as impartial arbiters due to political influences. A respondent shared that the chieftaincy succession dispute is exacerbated by political elites, stating,

—People claim that one part or clan is associated with NPP and another to the NDC, which isn't so because it's a mixed relation or denomination of people in every clan. However, it's often perceived this way” (Participant COM3, Field Interview, 2024).

Such perceptions, whether accurate or not, erode the trust in traditional authority and its capacity to mediate. Traditional authorities have historically served as custodians of peace and mediators in disputes. However, political affiliations undermine their perceived neutrality, limiting their ability to resolve conflicts impartially. A respondent stated,

—People claim that one part or clan is associated with NPP and another to the NDC, which isn't so because it's a mixed relation... However, it's often perceived this way” (Participant COM4, Field Interview, 2024)

These views undermine attempts to reach a consensus and damage the legitimacy of conventional leaders. Political meddling undermines the legitimacy of traditional government structures, leaving them vulnerable to outside manipulation, as noted by Owusu-Mensah (2014). Members of the community become disillusioned, which breeds distrust and makes resolving conflicts more difficult. Beyond traditional administration, chieftaincy disputes have become politicized, causing societal disintegration and impeding development projects. Respondents explained how social isolation results when opposing factions refuse to work together on group projects. For example, one participant lamented,

—Even the Presbyterian Church also wanted to do a project for Senya, which was aborted. The whole situation relies on the enstoolment of the chief” (Participant OP2, Field Interview, 2024)

This highlights the far-reaching implications of unresolved disputes, where developmental progress becomes contingent on resolving succession conflicts. Bukari et al. (2021) emphasize that chieftaincy disputes often obstruct community projects, as rival factions prioritize political gains over collective well-being. In Awutu Senya, this dynamic is evident in the cancellation of essential infrastructure and social services, further entrenching divisions and perpetuating underdevelopment.

4.2.3 Ripple Effects on Community Cohesion

Political elites exploit chieftaincy disputes to consolidate their influence, often at the expense of community stability. A respondent highlighted the subtle involvement of politicians, stating,

—The politicians don’t involve themselves too much in the disputes directly... but still manipulate from behind the scenes” (Participant OP1, Field Interview, 2024)

This observation corresponds with the argument presented by Bukhari et al. (2021) that political actors utilize traditional conflicts to gain electoral benefits, thereby exacerbating local tensions. This selective involvement illustrates a wider pattern of political clientelism, in which traditional authorities serve as instruments for promoting partisan objectives. Ayee (2007) contends that these practices undermine the integrity of governance frameworks, rendering communities susceptible to extended conflicts and hindering development. To effectively tackle the politicization of chieftaincy disputes, it is essential to remove political influences from the succession process and strengthen the role of traditional authorities. Participants advocated for a cooperative strategy in addressing conflicts, highlighting the importance of reaching consensus among traditional leaders and political figures. One participant urged,

“I’ll urge our leaders and everyone involved in these issues to come to a consensus and agree so that peace and stability can reign”
(Participant POL2, Field Interview, 2024)

The literature underscores the importance of integrating traditional and modern governance systems to mitigate disputes. Issifu (2015) advocates for localized mediation mechanisms that prioritize community needs over political interests, providing a model for resolving conflicts in Awutu Senya.

4.3 Effects of Chieftaincy Succession Disputes on Social Cohesion and Community Development in Awutu Senya

Chieftaincy succession disputes in Awutu Senya have had far-reaching effects on both social cohesion and community development. The prolonged contestation between the Twedan and Anona clans has not only weakened interpersonal and inter-clan relations but also undermined the community's collective capacity to pursue and sustain

development initiatives. This section examines how the erosion of social unity intersects with stalled development projects, drawing on participant narratives and relevant literature to demonstrate the interconnected nature of leadership legitimacy, social trust, and development outcomes.

4.3.1 Chieftaincy, Social Unity, and Communal Life

Chieftaincy remains a central institution for fostering unity and collective identity within Ghanaian communities. Chiefs traditionally serve as symbols of authority, mediators of conflict, and coordinators of communal affairs, thereby promoting social harmony and cooperation (Boafo-Arthur, 2006). In Awutu Senya, however, the unresolved succession dispute has compromised this unifying role. Participants consistently described the community as fragmented, with weakened bonds between clans and diminished cooperation in communal activities. One participant captured this sentiment succinctly:

—It's uncouth and nothing to write home about. They don't do anything together or simply put aren't united.” (Participant OP2, Field Interview, 2024)

The dispute has its roots in long-standing rival claims between the Twedan and Anona clans over stool legitimacy and succession rights. Historically, succession followed an alternating pattern that ensured balance and representation. However, disagreements over legitimacy and procedural inconsistencies disrupted this arrangement, intensifying rivalry and mistrust. As one participant observed:

—The Twedan and Anona clans both want to claim ownership of the stool lands and the chieftaincy succession.” (Participant CH3, Field Interview, 2024)

These dynamics mirror broader patterns in Ghana, where traditional conflicts are increasingly exacerbated by modernization, economic interests, and political interference, making resolution more complex (Awuah-Nyamekye & Sarfo-Mensah, 2014).

4.3.2 Effects on Social Relations and Cultural Practices

The succession dispute has significantly affected social relations in Awutu Senya, extending beyond elite circles into households and everyday community interactions. Participants reported strained family relationships, persistent hostility between clans, and reliance on legal processes rather than traditional mediation. One respondent explained:

—The case has been summoned to the court, but the families don't agree, causing broken relationships.” (Participant CH2, Field Interview, 2024)

Tensions have also disrupted cultural practices that traditionally foster unity. Festivals, rituals, and communal celebrations, important spaces for reconciliation and collective identity, have been cancelled or scaled down due to fear of conflict escalation. As noted by one participant:

—Even the end-of-year celebration is cancelled and not celebrated as it should be.” (Participant OP1, Field Interview, 2024)

The absence of these social platforms has reduced opportunities for dialogue and reconciliation, further deepening divisions. From the perspective of social capital theory, this reflects a decline in trust, networks, and norms of reciprocity that are essential for collective action (Putnam, 2000). In Awutu Senya, the erosion of social capital has weakened the community's ability to mobilize around shared goals, including development initiatives.

4.3.3 Leadership Contestation and Its Implications

Participants frequently linked the persistence of the dispute to leadership style and authority struggles. Several respondents attributed the escalation of conflict to perceptions of exclusion, consolidation of power, and marginalization of dissenting voices. One participant remarked:

—The current chief who's ruling now is the cause of all these disputes.

Everyone wants to claim that they are authentic and powerful.”

(Participant COM3, Field Interview, 2024)

Such leadership dynamics weaken the legitimacy of traditional authority and intensify factionalism. Ayithey (2006) similarly argues that chieftaincy disputes tend to persist where leaders prioritize personal or factional interests over communal well-being. Although chieftaincy remains male-dominated, participants also recalled historical narratives in which women played critical roles in protecting the stool and safeguarding communal heritage:

—The daughter of the chief at the time protected the throne with her life when the Ashantis came for it while her father was away.” (Participant

COM4, Field Interview, 2024)

This highlights the often-overlooked role of women in sustaining traditional institutions, reinforcing arguments that inclusive approaches to conflict resolution can offer alternative pathways to reconciliation (Amadiume, 1997).

4.3.4 Consequences for Community Development

The weakening of social cohesion in Awutu Senya has had direct consequences for community development. Participants consistently cited stalled or abandoned development projects as a result of leadership disputes and internal divisions. One participant explained:

—There was a time when Winners Chapel wanted to build a university here, but the project was stopped by the authorities.” (Participant OP1, Field Interview, 2024)

Others noted that land disputes and factional resistance discourage external assistance and investment:

—Sometimes even if the land is given to such persons, other members of the community will rise against them to claim the land, so no one will be willing to offer any help to the society.” (Participant COM3, Field Interview, 2024)

These accounts align with Abdulai’s (2017) argument that unresolved chieftaincy disputes create uncertainty, deter investment, and limit access to public goods. The absence of a widely accepted leader capable of coordinating development efforts has resulted in infrastructural neglect and missed economic opportunities.

4.3.5 Erosion of Developmental Confidence and the Need for Resolution

Persistent conflict has eroded confidence among residents, investors, and development partners, reinforcing a cycle of stagnation. Participants repeatedly emphasized that peace and legitimate leadership are prerequisites for development:

—If there’s a chief (leader) of the community, that is when the growth or development of the community is able to rise to higher levels.” (Participant POL2, Field Interview, 2024)

This underscores the central role of traditional leadership in mobilizing resources and fostering development at the local level (Ray, 1996). In Awutu Senya, the breakdown of social unity and leadership legitimacy has weakened collective action, discouraged investment, and slowed development. The findings demonstrate that social cohesion and community development are deeply interconnected, and that unresolved chieftaincy succession disputes undermine both.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

Chapter Five of this study synthesizes the various elements of the investigation aimed at understanding the factors and implications surrounding the chieftaincy succession disputes between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya. The document offers an in-depth overview of the study's results. Additionally, it considers the study's implications for the foundational aspects of chieftaincy disputes and the practical strategies necessary for enduring conflict resolution. In conclusion, the chapter offers practical recommendations for stakeholders such as traditional councils, political actors, and community leaders aimed at addressing succession conflicts and promoting unity and development in Awutu Senya. This highlights the study's limitations and suggests directions for future investigation.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This research delved into the origins and consequences of chieftaincy succession conflicts between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya. Chieftaincy, an essential institution within Ghana's traditional governance framework, has historically been instrumental in fostering social cohesion, managing resources, and preserving cultural heritage. Nonetheless, succession disputes have progressively undermined this institution, especially in areas such as Awutu Senya, where rival assertions of traditional authority have intensified into considerable socio-political conflicts. The research was driven by the ongoing competition between the Twedan and Anona clans, whose fluctuating succession arrangements have been compromised by political affiliations and disputes regarding legitimacy, thereby diminishing community unity

and hindering developmental efforts. The primary issue examined was the persistent dispute over chieftaincy succession, which has polarized Awutu Senya along both familial and political dimensions, leading to societal fragmentation and hindering local development. The research was grounded in four primary objectives: (1) to investigate the underlying causes of the chieftaincy succession conflict between the Twedan and Anona clans; (2) to evaluate the effect of the political affiliations of these clans on the dispute; (3) to assess the effects of social cohesion and community development projects in Awutu Senya. The conceptual foundation of the study integrated Historical Institutionalism with Conflict Theory. The analysis utilized Historical Institutionalism to explore the influence of colonial legacies and institutional path dependencies on the dynamics of traditional governance and succession practices in Awutu Senya.

Conflict Theory, conversely, provided a nuanced understanding of the dynamics of power struggles, resource contestations, and elite manipulations that sustain the ongoing disputes among the clans. Collectively, these theories offered a comprehensive framework to dissect the intricacies of chieftaincy disputes, their politicization, and their effects on the community. The study employed a qualitative exploratory design, incorporating in-depth interviews and document analysis to collect nuanced, context-specific data. The study encompassed a varied group of participants, comprising sub-chiefs, opinion leaders, politicians, and community members, who were chosen through purposive sampling methods. This methodology guaranteed the inclusion of insights from essential stakeholders possessing firsthand understanding of the conflicts. Thematic data analysis was undertaken, wherein recurring patterns were meticulously coded and interpreted to elucidate the underlying causes, political influences, and social ramifications of the succession conflict. The

foundation of the study rested on trustworthiness, which was attained through the principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The processes of member checking and triangulation of data sources were employed to ascertain the accuracy and reliability of the findings. The meticulous documentation of data collection and analysis methodologies significantly bolstered the reliability of the study, while the incorporation of direct participant quotations served to augment its credibility. The research process was conducted with a steadfast commitment to ethical considerations. All participants provided informed consent, and confidentiality was meticulously preserved by employing pseudonyms. The research meticulously followed ethical protocols, upholding the rights of participants and acknowledging the cultural nuances associated with chieftaincy disputes. This study enhances our comprehension of chieftaincy disputes by rigorously examining ethical, theoretical, and methodological aspects, thereby offering insights that may foster social cohesion and community development in Awutu Senya and beyond.

5.2 Key Findings of the Study

This study revealed that the chieftaincy succession dispute between the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya is not a singular or isolated traditional conflict but a multilayered phenomenon shaped by historical succession practices, leadership dynamics, and contemporary political alignments. The findings demonstrate that the interaction of these factors has weakened traditional governance, intensified factionalism, and produced adverse consequences for social cohesion and community development.

1. The study found that the chieftaincy succession dispute is rooted in contested interpretations of customary succession rights between the Twedan and Anona clans. Although the alternating succession arrangement was historically intended to promote fairness and balance in leadership, its implementation has become a source of dispute rather than stability. Ambiguities about legitimacy, disrupted enstoolment rituals, and unresolved historical grievances have weakened consensus on succession procedures. Additionally, the findings indicate that the growing commodification of chieftaincy has transformed the stool into a symbol of political influence and economic opportunity rather than solely a cultural and moral authority. Control over land, development opportunities, and external recognition has raised the stakes of succession, intensifying competition among the clans. Leadership failures—particularly the inability of traditional authorities to serve as neutral arbiters—have further undermined mediation efforts, allowing the conflict to persist and deepen over time.
2. The study found that partisan political alignments have significantly escalated the chieftaincy succession dispute in Awutu Senya. The association of the Twedan clan with the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the Anona clan with the New Patriotic Party (NPP) has transformed the dispute from a customary leadership issue into a politically charged contest. Political actors were perceived to exploit the dispute to consolidate local influence, thereby reinforcing clan loyalties and hardening factional positions. This politicization has weakened the neutrality and legitimacy of traditional authority, as leadership decisions are increasingly viewed through partisan lenses. As a result, trust in traditional institutions has declined, decision-making processes

have become unstable, and reconciliation efforts have been undermined. The findings suggest that political involvement has entrenched the conflict, making resolution more difficult by linking succession outcomes to broader national political struggles rather than customary consensus.

3. The study found that the prolonged chieftaincy succession dispute has had significant negative effects on social cohesion and community development in Awutu Senya. Social relations within the community have deteriorated, with increasing mistrust, weakened inter-clan relationships, and reduced cooperation among residents. Communal activities such as festivals, social gatherings, and collective decision-making forums have been disrupted or cancelled, limiting opportunities for dialogue, reconciliation, and shared identity. The erosion of social cohesion has directly affected community development. The findings indicate that leadership paralysis and factional rivalry have stalled development initiatives, hindered resource mobilization, and discouraged external investment. Development projects related to education, infrastructure, and social services have been delayed or abandoned, often due to land disputes, lack of unified leadership, or deliberate obstruction by rival factions. The absence of a widely accepted traditional authority has made it difficult to coordinate development efforts and sustain long-term planning.

5.3 Implications for Theory and Practice

This study carries significant theoretical and practical implications for understanding chieftaincy succession disputes and their wider consequences in contexts where traditional governance coexists with modern political systems. By examining the Awutu Senya chieftaincy dispute through the combined lenses of Historical

Institutionalism and Conflict Theory, the study demonstrates that succession conflicts are not merely localized cultural disagreements but are embedded within enduring institutional legacies and contemporary struggles over power, legitimacy, and resources.

5.3.1 Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, the study reinforces the relevance of Historical Institutionalism in explaining the persistence and complexity of chieftaincy succession disputes. The findings show how colonial and postcolonial institutional arrangements reshaped traditional succession systems, introduced ambiguities, and created path dependencies that continue to influence present-day conflicts. Succession disputes in Awutu Senya cannot be adequately understood without reference to these inherited institutional structures, which constrain current choices and shape how actors interpret legitimacy and authority. This underscores the value of Historical Institutionalism for analyzing traditional governance systems as evolving institutions rather than static cultural relics.

At the same time, the study advances the application of Conflict Theory by showing how competition for power, land, and political influence sustains and intensifies chieftaincy disputes. The findings show that when rival royal clans align with opposing political parties, customary succession becomes a broader political struggle, reinforcing factional identities and prolonging conflict. This extends Conflict Theory into the domain of traditional governance, highlighting how modern political incentives interact with customary authority to reproduce inequality, exclusion, and social fragmentation.

Importantly, the integration of these two theoretical perspectives offers a more comprehensive analytical framework than either theory alone. While Historical Institutionalism explains why disputes persist over time, Conflict Theory clarifies how actors mobilize power and resources within those institutional constraints. Together, they provide a nuanced understanding of chieftaincy disputes as historically grounded yet dynamically shaped by contemporary political and social forces. This integrated approach contributes to theory by demonstrating how traditional institutions in transitional societies are simultaneously shaped by historical legacies and ongoing struggles for power.

5.3.2 Practical and Policy Implications

From a practical perspective, the study underscores the urgent need to depoliticize traditional governance structures to restore trust, legitimacy, and functionality within chieftaincy institutions. The findings indicate that political interference not only escalates succession disputes but also undermines the credibility of traditional leaders and weakens community confidence in customary authority. For policymakers and traditional governance institutions, this underscores the need for clearer regulatory frameworks that limit partisan involvement in chieftaincy matters and safeguard succession processes from political manipulation.

The study also underscores the importance of context-sensitive, culturally grounded conflict resolution mechanisms. Rather than relying primarily on formal legal processes, which often prolong disputes, the findings point to the potential effectiveness of neutral mediation structures that include respected traditional elders, councils of chiefs, and credible community representatives. Such mechanisms can

help rebuild dialogue, restore trust, and re-anchor succession processes in shared cultural norms while adapting them to contemporary governance realities.

For development practitioners, the study provides a critical reminder that social cohesion is a foundational prerequisite for sustainable community development. The findings demonstrate that unresolved chieftaincy disputes weaken collective action, discourage investment, and disrupt development planning. This implies that development interventions in conflict-affected communities should not focus solely on infrastructure or service delivery but must also incorporate reconciliation, trust-building, and inclusive governance strategies. Addressing the underlying social and leadership tensions is essential for ensuring community ownership, participation, and long-term project sustainability.

5.4 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following key conclusions are drawn:

1. This study concludes that chieftaincy succession disputes in Awutu Senya are not isolated customary disagreements but structurally embedded conflicts shaped by historical legacies, contested interpretations of tradition, and contemporary political dynamics. The succession dispute between the Twedan and Anona clans reflects deeper institutional weaknesses within traditional governance systems, where ambiguous succession norms and disrupted customary practices have undermined consensus and legitimacy. The findings show that historical succession arrangements, originally designed to promote balance and fairness, have become sources of contestation due to leadership failures and unresolved grievances.
2. The study further concludes that the politicization of chieftaincy succession has fundamentally transformed the nature and trajectory of the conflict. The

alignment of rival clans with opposing political parties has shifted succession disputes from the realm of customary negotiation into broader arenas of political competition. This has eroded the perceived neutrality of traditional authority, entrenched factional identities, and weakened the capacity of customary institutions to resolve disputes internally. Political involvement has therefore not merely intensified existing tensions but has altered the institutional character of chieftaincy itself, making reconciliation increasingly difficult.

3. The study also concludes that weakened social cohesion directly undermines community development. Leadership paralysis, land disputes, and factional resistance have constrained resource mobilization, discouraged external investment, and stalled development projects in Awutu Senya. The absence of a widely recognized and legitimate traditional authority has limited coordination among traditional leaders, local government institutions, and development partners. As a result, development initiatives have been delayed, abandoned, or contested, reinforcing a cycle in which social division and developmental stagnation mutually reinforce one another.

5.5 Recommendations

To address the chieftaincy succession disputes in Awutu Senya and foster unity and development, a series of actionable recommendations are proposed for stakeholders, including traditional councils, political actors, and community leaders.

1. Given that chieftaincy succession disputes in Awutu Senya are rooted in ambiguous succession norms, disrupted customary practices, and leadership failures, it is recommended that traditional authorities, particularly the Awutu Traditional Council and the Houses of Chiefs, take primary responsibility for

clarifying and codifying succession procedures. This process should include transparent documentation of customary succession rules, with clear guidelines on eligibility, enstoolment rites, and dispute resolution mechanisms. To ensure legitimacy and communal acceptance, the exercise should be undertaken through inclusive consultations with royal clan representatives, traditional elders, and respected community leaders. The objective should not be to rigidly fossilize tradition but to reduce interpretive ambiguities that fuel contestation. The National House of Chiefs should provide oversight and technical support to ensure that locally agreed rules align with broader customary and constitutional frameworks. By strengthening institutional clarity and leadership accountability, traditional governance structures can regain their capacity to manage succession disputes effectively.

2. In response to the finding that political involvement has fundamentally altered the nature of chieftaincy succession disputes, it is recommended that national political actors, political parties, and state institutions take deliberate steps to disengage partisan interests from traditional leadership processes. The Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, in collaboration with the National House of Chiefs, should develop and enforce clear guidelines that prohibit overt political interference in succession disputes. Political parties, particularly at the local level, should exercise restraint and avoid aligning with or sponsoring rival royal factions. This responsibility rests with party leadership at the regional and constituency levels, which must enforce internal discipline and promote respect for traditional neutrality. Additionally, traditional leaders must uphold non-partisanship by refraining from political endorsements or affiliations that compromise their legitimacy. Protecting the

institutional autonomy of chieftaincy is essential to restoring trust and enabling customary reconciliation mechanisms to function effectively.

3. Given the demonstrated link between weakened social cohesion and stalled community development, it is recommended that local government authorities, development partners, and traditional leaders adopt an integrated approach that prioritizes reconciliation and unity-building alongside development planning. The District Assembly, in collaboration with traditional authorities and civil society organizations, should initiate community dialogue forums to rebuild trust, address grievances, and foster inter-clan cooperation. Development partners and non-governmental organizations should conduct conflict-sensitivity assessments before implementing projects in Awutu Senya to ensure that interventions do not exacerbate existing divisions. Projects should be designed to promote inclusivity, shared ownership, and cross-clan participation. Once legitimacy is restored, traditional leaders should play a central role in mobilizing community support and coordinating development efforts. By treating leadership disputes and social fragmentation as prerequisites rather than side issues, stakeholders can create an enabling environment for sustainable community development.

5.6 Limitations

Despite the contributions of this study, certain limitations must be acknowledged, as they may have influenced the scope and depth of the findings. These limitations arise largely from the complex and politically sensitive nature of chieftaincy succession disputes in Awutu Senya.

First, the study was constrained by the non-implementation and contested status of court verdicts in the chieftaincy dispute. Although judicial rulings exist, their inconsistent enforcement and ongoing contestation within the community complicated efforts to establish a definitive legal or institutional resolution framework. This situation limited the study's ability to assess the practical impact of judicial interventions on conflict resolution and governance outcomes. The persistence of the dispute despite court rulings reflects broader institutional challenges in enforcing legal decisions within traditional governance contexts and constrained access to official records and authoritative interpretations of these verdicts.

Second, the research faced significant access limitations to key stakeholders, particularly paramount chiefs, sub-chiefs, kingmakers, and influential political party leaders and activists. Many of these actors were either unwilling to participate or difficult to reach because the dispute was sensitive and politicized, litigation was ongoing, and there were concerns about misrepresentation or repercussions. As a result, the study relied more heavily on interviews with community members, elders, and non-partisan informants. While these perspectives provided valuable grassroots insights, the limited direct engagement with elite decision-makers may have constrained the depth of institutional perspectives captured.

Third, the case study's focus on the Twedan and Anona clans in Awutu Senya necessarily limits the generalizability of the findings. The historical trajectories, political alignments, and customary arrangements examined in this study are context-specific and may not fully reflect the dynamics of chieftaincy succession disputes in other regions of Ghana with different socio-political or institutional configurations. Nonetheless, the case offers analytical insights that are transferable to similar contexts

where traditional authority intersects with partisan politics and unresolved legal contestation.

Finally, the study acknowledges the potential for response bias among participants. Given the emotive and contentious nature of chieftaincy disputes, some respondents may have framed their accounts to reflect personal loyalties, strategic narratives, or concerns about confidentiality. Although measures such as pseudonyms, assurances of anonymity, and open-ended interview techniques were used to encourage candid responses, the influence of subjective perceptions cannot be entirely eliminated. Future research could address this limitation through longitudinal designs, expanded stakeholder engagement, and triangulation with archival, judicial, and observational data.

5.7 Suggestions for Future Studies

In light of this study's findings and limitations, several directions for future research are proposed to deepen understanding of chieftaincy succession disputes and their broader societal implications.

First, future studies should adopt a comparative research design that examines chieftaincy succession disputes across multiple traditional areas in Ghana or in other African contexts. Such comparative analyses would help identify both common patterns and context-specific dynamics by accounting for variations in customary practices, institutional arrangements, and political environments. A broader comparative perspective would enhance the analytical generalizability of findings and support the development of more context-sensitive conflict management and governance frameworks.

Second, further research is needed to examine the socioeconomic consequences of chieftaincy succession disputes in greater depth. While this study established that disputes undermine social cohesion and hinder community development, future studies could systematically investigate how such conflicts affect livelihoods, local economic activities, investment flows, land use, and access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Employing mixed-methods approaches that combine qualitative insights with quantitative socioeconomic indicators would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term developmental costs of unresolved chieftaincy conflicts.

Third, future studies should examine the implementation and effectiveness of judicial and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in chieftaincy disputes. Given the challenges identified in this study regarding the enforcement of court verdicts, further research could examine why legal decisions are often resisted or ignored and how formal legal processes interact with customary authority structures. Such studies would inform policy debates on strengthening the relationship between traditional governance systems and state institutions.

Finally, future research could examine the roles of political actors and elites in shaping the trajectory of chieftaincy succession disputes. Greater access to political party leaders, traditional elites, and state officials would enable a more nuanced analysis of how political incentives, power relations, and elite interests shape the persistence or resolution of conflict. This line of inquiry would further illuminate the intersection between traditional authority and contemporary democratic politics.

REFERENCES

- Abdulai, R. T. (2017). The impact of chieftaincy disputes on socio-economic development in Ghana. *Journal of Development Studies*, 53(3), 123-145.
- Albert, I. (2008). From 'Owo crisis' to 'Dagbon dispute': Lessons in the politicization of chieftaincy disputes in modern Nigeria and Ghana. *The Round Table*, 97, 47-60.
- Amadiume, I. (1997). *Reinventing Africa: Matriarchy, religion, and culture*. Zed Books.
- Amenumey, D. E. K. (2011). *Ghana: A concise history from pre-colonial times to the 20th century*. Woeli Publishing Services.
- Anamzoya, A. S. (2017). Chieftaincy is dead: Long live chieftaincy: Renewed relevance of chieftaincy in postcolonial Ghana. *The African Review*, 40(1), 115-139.
- Ansah-Koi, A. (2016). Festivals and social integration in Ghana: A study of the role of traditional celebrations in communal unity. *African Studies Quarterly*, 17(4), 45-64.
- Arhin, K. (1985). *Traditional rule in Ghana: Past and present*. Sedco Publishing.
- Arhin, K. (2001). *The political and economic causes of chieftaincy succession disputes in Ghana*. Ghana Universities Press.
- Assanful, M. (2021). Legal frameworks and succession disputes in Ghana. *Ghana Journal of Legal Studies*, 12(1), 15-28.
- Ayee, J. R. A. (2007). Traditional leadership and local governance in Africa: The Ghanaian experience. *Institute for Democratic Governance*.
- Ayittey, G. B. N. (2006). *Indigenous African institutions*. Brill Academic Publishers.
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559.
- Bazeley, P., & Jackson, K. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis with NVivo*. SAGE.
- Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (2016). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. Penguin Books.
- Berman, H. J. (1983). *Law and revolution: The formation of the Western legal tradition*. Harvard University Press.

- Berry, S. (2001). *Chiefs know their boundaries: Essays on property, power, and the past in Asante, 1896-1996*. James Currey.
- Bhandari, P. (2020). Ethical considerations in research. *Scribbr*.
<https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/ethical-considerations>
- Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(13), 1802–1811.
- Boafo-Arthur, K. (2001). Chieftaincy and politics in Ghana since 1982. *West Africa Review*, 3(1).
- Boafo-Arthur, K. (2003). Chieftaincy in Ghana: Challenges and prospects in the 21st century. *African and Asian Studies*, 2(2), 125-153.
- Boafo-Arthur, K. (2006). Chieftaincy and politics in Ghana: Challenges in contemporary times. *African Affairs*, 105(3), 301-320.
- Boahen, A. A., Ajayi, J. A., & Tidy, M. (1966). *Topics in West African history*. Longman.
- Boakye, K., & Béland, D. (2018). Historical and institutional elements of chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana. *Journal of African Governance Studies*, 11(2), 19-36.
- Boakye, P., & Béland, D. (2018). Explaining chieftaincy conflict using historical institutionalism: A case study of the Ga Mashie chieftaincy conflict in Ghana. *African Studies*, 78(3), 403-422.
- Boateng, K. K., & Afranie, S. (2020). Chieftaincy: An anachronistic institution within a democratic dispensation? The case of a traditional political system in Ghana. *Ghana Journal of Development Studies*, 17(1), 25-47.
- Boateng, K., & Bawole, J. (2021). Are two heads better than one? Challenges and prospects of chiefs and local government collaborative community development in Ghana. *Community Development*, 52(5), 554-572.
- Boone, C. (2003). *Political topographies of the African state: Territorial authority and institutional choice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Botchway, S. K., & Owusu-Sekyere, S. A. (2015). The role of traditional councils in conflict resolution in Ghana. *Journal of African Studies*, 19(2), 58-74.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Brobbeey, S. A. (2008). *The law of chieftaincy in Ghana*. Advanced Legal Publications.

- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Bukari, F., Kendie, S., Sulemana, M., & Galaa, S. (2016). The effects of chieftaincy and land conflicts on the socio-political development of Northern Ghana. *International Journal of Social Science Research*, 5(1), 101-119.
- Bukari, K. N. (2016). A concomitant of conflict and consensus: Case of a chieftaincy succession in Ghana. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 23(1), 5-27.
- Bukari, K. N., Osei-Kufuor, P., & Bukari, S. (2021). Chieftaincy conflicts in Northern Ghana: A constellation of actors and politics. *African Security*, 14(2), 156-185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2021.1932244>
- Bukari, K. N., Osei-Kufuor, P., & Bukari, S. (2021). Chieftaincy conflicts in Northern Ghana: A constellation of actors and politics. *African Security*, 14(3), 156-185.
- Busia, K. A. (1951). *The position of the chief in the modern political system of Ashanti*. Oxford University Press.
- Chan, J., To, H. P., & Chan, E. (2006). Reconsidering social cohesion: Developing a definition and analytical framework for empirical research. *Social Indicators Research*, 75(2), 273-302. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-005-2118-1>
- Coser, L. (1956). *The functions of social conflict*. New York: The Free Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Crook, R. (2005). State courts and the regulation of land disputes in Ghana: The litigants' perspective. *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 37(51), 1-28.
- Dade, F. (2023). Hybrid but One sided: Women and hybrid peace orders in Dagbon, Northern Ghana.
- deMarrais, K. (2004). *Foundations for research: Methods of inquiry in education and the social sciences*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- deMarrais, K. (2004). Qualitative interview studies: Learning through experience. In K. deMarrais & S. D. Lapan (Eds.), *Foundations for research: Methods of inquiry in education and the social sciences* (pp. 51-68). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2018). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Dowling, M. (2006). Approaches to reflexivity in qualitative research. *Nurse Researcher*, 13(3), 7–21.
- Dowling, M. (2008). Reflexivity. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 747–748). Sage Publications.
- Ephirim-Donkor, A. (2019). Chieftaincy institutions and their spiritual dimensions in Ghana. *African Cultural Review*, 10(2), 32-48.
- Eriksen, T. H. (2018). *Overheating: An anthropology of accelerated change*. Pluto Press.
- Fenrich, J., & Higgins, T. (2001). Promise unfulfilled: Law, culture, and customary law in Ghana. *Fordham International Law Journal*, 25(3), 1182-1224.
- Flick, U. (2014). *An introduction to qualitative research* (5th ed.). Sage.
- Flick, U. (2018). *An introduction to qualitative research*. SAGE.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. Basic Books.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105–117). SAGE Publications.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59-82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903>
- Horowitz, D. L. (1985). *Ethnic groups in conflict*. University of California Press.
- Issifu, A. K. (2015). An analysis of conflicts in Ghana: The case of Dagbon chieftaincy. *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, 8(6), 28-44.
- King, N., & Horrocks, C. (2010). *Interviews in qualitative research*. SAGE.
- Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2014). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (5th ed.). SAGE.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2015). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Lentz, C. (2006). *Ethnicity and the making of history in northern Ghana*. Edinburgh University Press.

- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE Publications.
- Logan, C. (2011). The roots of resilience: Exploring popular support for African traditional authorities. *African Affairs*, 110(441), 353–376.
- Lund, C. (2001). Precarious democratization and local dynamics in Niger: Micro-politics in Zinder. *Development and Change*, 32(5), 845–869.
- Mahama, I. (2009). *The chieftaincy institution in Ghana: Causers and effects of chieftaincy and land disputes*. Amazon.
- Mahoney, J., & Thelen, K. (2010). *Explaining institutional change: Ambiguity, agency, and power*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mamdani, M. (2018). *Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism*. Princeton University Press.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1848). *The Communist Manifesto*.
- Mason, M. (2010). Sample size and saturation in PhD studies using qualitative interviews. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 11(3). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-11.3.1428>
- Mawuko-Yevugah, L., & Attipoe, H. A. (2021). Chieftaincy and traditional authority in modern democratic Ghana. *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 40(3), 319-335. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02580136.2021.1964206>
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. SAGE.
- Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus groups as qualitative research* (2nd ed.). SAGE.
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1), 1-13.
- Obeng, P. (2006). *Chieftaincy and local governance in Ghana: The challenges of democracy*. In I. Abdulai (Ed.), *Ghana's democracy: Critical perspectives*. University of Ghana Press.
- Odotei, I. K., & Awedoba, A. K. (2006). *Chieftaincy in Ghana: Culture, governance and development*. Sub-Saharan Publishers.

- Olivier de Sardan, J. P. (2005). *Anthropology and development: Understanding contemporary social change*. Zed Books.
- Orsini, A. (2024). Marxism and Conflict Theory. In *Sociological Theory: From Comte to Postcolonialism* (pp. 361-434). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Owusu, M. (1996). Tradition and transformation: Democracy and the politics of popular power in Ghana. *The Journal of modern African studies*, 34(2), 307-343.
- Owusu-Mensah, I. (2014). Politics, chieftaincy and customary law in Ghana's Fourth Republic. *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, 6(5), 261-275.
- Owusu-Mensah, J. (2019). Chieftaincy and its discontents: The challenges of succession disputes in Ghana. *Modern Ghana Studies*, 7(1), 112-129.
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533-544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Pierson, P. (2000). Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics. *American Political Science Review*, 94(2), 251-267. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2586011>
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Simon & Schuster.
- Rathbone, R. (2000). *Nkrumah and the chiefs: The politics of chieftaincy in Ghana, 1951–1960*. Ohio University Press.
- Ray, D. I. (1996). Divided sovereignty: Traditional authority and the state in Ghana. *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 28(37-38), 181–202.
- Ray, D. I. (2003). Chiefs in their millennium sandals: Traditional authority in Ghana. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 21(1), 27-45.
- Roulston, K. (2021). *Reflective interviewing: A guide to theory and practice* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (3rd ed.). SAGE.

- Salih, M. (2018). Ritual significance and succession disputes in Northern Ghana. *African Traditional Leadership Review*, 5(1), 44-57.
- Senya Traditional Council. (2020). *Succession and Conflicts in the Chieftaincy System of Senya*. Senya Traditional Authority.
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2), 63–75. <https://doi.org/10.3233/EFI-2004-22201>
- Shulika, L. S. (2016). Women and peace building: from historical to contemporary African perspectives. *Ubuntu: Journal of Conflict and Social Transformation*, 5(1), 7-31.
- Stake, R. E. (2005). *The art of case study research*. Sage.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Tonah, S. (2005). Chieftaincy succession disputes and the challenge to traditional authority in Mamprugu, northern Ghana. *Research Review of the Institute of African Studies*, 21(1), 45-57. <https://doi.org/10.4314/RRIAS.V21I1.22932>
- Tonah, S. (2005). Chieftaincy succession disputes and the challenge to traditional authority in Mamprugu, northern Ghana. *Research Review of the Institute of African Studies*, 21(1), 45-57.
- Tonah, S. (2012). The politicisation of a chieftaincy conflict: The case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 21(1), 1-20.
- Tseer, A., & Sulemana, J. (2022). Mediation mechanisms in chieftaincy disputes in Ghana. *Conflict Studies Journal*, 7(2), 21-36.
- Tseer, T., & Sulemana, M. (2022). Collaboration between traditional and central authorities in chieftaincy succession conflicts management in Ghana: Evidence from Bole traditional area. *Frontiers in Human Dynamics*, 4, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fhumd.2022.934652>
- Tsikata, D., & Seini, W. (2004). Identities, inequalities and conflicts in Ghana. *CRISE Working Paper No. 5*. Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity.
- Ubink, J. M. (2007). Traditional authority revisited: Popular perceptions of chiefs and chieftaincy in peri-urban Kumasi, Ghana. *Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, 55(1), 123-161.
- Ubink, J. M. (2008). *In the land of the chiefs: Customary law, land conflicts, and the role of the state in peri-urban Ghana*. Leiden University Press.

- Ukase, P. I., & Abraham, V. (2016). The political economy of land and chieftaincy disputes in contemporary Africa: Examples from central Nigeria. *International Journal of English and Literature*, 1(1), 452-477.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
- Watts, M. (2004). Resource curse? Governmentality, oil and power in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. *Geopolitics*, 9(1), 50–80.
- Williams, J. (2004). Leading from behind: democratic consolidation and the chieftaincy in South Africa. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 42(1), 113-136.
- Yaro, S., & Ngmenkpiewo, F. (2020). Chieftaincy succession conflicts in the Bunkpurugu Traditional Area, North East, Ghana. *UDS International Journal of Development*, 7(2), 285-295. <https://doi.org/10.47740/439.UDSIJD6I>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.

