

Bases of Chieftaincy Disputes in Juaso in the Asante Akyem South Municipality in Ghana

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Abstract

This study focused on the issues surrounding the chieftaincy dispute in Juaso and its developmental implications. It involved 12 participants who were sampled through purposive, snowballing, convenient, and maximal variation for interview. Semi-structured interview and participant observation were employed in data collection. This study adopted a qualitative content analysis to analyze data from interviews and participants' observations. Narrative analysis based on themes under which literature was reviewed was done. Using content analysis, salient points from recorded responses from oral interview and field notes from non-verbal cues were described with some table presentation where necessary or when required. The study revealed that, competition among the ruling gates, intruders desiring to ascend the stool and the quest for Omanhene's status and opposition from political powers were some causes of the chieftaincy dispute in Juaso prior to the reign of Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh. The study recommended that, the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) should take up campaigns to educate people on chieftaincy affairs. This might help to reduce the vulnerability of the chiefs and their people to manipulation by intruders. It is also recommended that, royals should be groomed and brought up in the spirit of respect from childhood, during installation and after installation.

Keywords

Chieftaincy, Disputes, Juaso, Asante Akyem South Municipality, Ghana

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1. Introduction and Background

Chieftaincy has been described as the embodiment of our culture and the custodian of the best in our traditional institutions. It is an institution from which modern democratic rule can take some fundamental lessons [1]. Just like the liver, chieftaincy irrespective of its numerous gains has bile attached to it. Thus, it requires tactics to obtain more if not only gains. However, the chieftaincy institution in Ghana has been bedevilled with numerous conflicts.

Conflicts are not recent developments and neither are they restricted to only one traditional area. Almost every traditional area has encountered a chieftaincy dispute in one way or the other. Some of such conflicts recorded in recent times include the Ga Mantse succession dispute, the Anlo chieftaincy conflict, the Adoagyiri crisis, Princess and Aketekyi towns' troubles, the eruption of the Tuobodom chieftaincy conflict, Dagombas and Kusasis and the Mamprusis, Kokombas and Nanumbas, Nkonya and Alavanyo, Akropong and Abiriw, Gonja and Nawuri, Peki and Awudome, the Zongo community at Hohoe and the local Gbi of Hohoe, the Anloga chieftaincy dispute among many

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others [2, 3]. In the year 2002, an age-long chieftaincy conflict between the two ruling gates of Dagbon, the Abudu and the Andani, led to violent clashes resulting in the death of the overlord of the area, Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II and several others [4]. Whereas some of these conflicts have been successfully resolved, others tend to be protracted. The predominant types of conflicts in Ghana are so-called “Chieftaincy Conflicts”, which are centred on the chieftaincy institution [5]. Juaso, the district capital of the Asante Akyem South district in the Asante region is of no exception and has had its share of chieftaincy disputes. In the 1980s, the admired and elegant looking chief, Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh popularly known as Nana Akwasi, the Queen mother; Nana Abenaa Frempomaa and their able sub-chiefs like Nana Akosah Amaniampong (Akwamuhene), Nana Oware Kankam (Saanaahene), Nana Osei Boansi Kuffuor II (Kwadwo Sereboɔ) (Denkyemmoosohene), Nana Frimpong Manso (Kyidomhene) and many others ruled the Juaso Township with majesty. They added a special touch to the celebration of independence days. It was hilarity to watch them in their regalia on all occasions.

For well over two decades ago, all these being recollected with nostalgia and their externalities have eluded the people of Juaso due to chieftaincy dispute leaving the once vibrant traditional community in an indescribable state. Many have researched into chieftaincy disputes across the country, however, none has written about the Juaso chieftaincy disputes. Only pockets of media reports have been made concerning clashes in the community and adjudications at Manhyia. It is against this milieu that the researchers hope to delve into the issues surrounding the chieftaincy dispute in Juaso.

After battling adjudication back and forth at both social and traditional courts, the Otumfoɔ Osei Tutu Ababio resolved the over 20-year conflict of Juaso. He did so upon affirmation of the decision taken by his predecessor, the late Otumfoɔ Opoku Ware II on February 17, 1994 declaring Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh destooled and asking him not to dare step foot at Manhyia as a chief. Also, asserting his authority, Otumfoɔ annulled the purported installation of Nana Sarpong Safrotwie, saying his installation was not proper. He added that Safrotwie had the liberty to re-contest for the stool if he so desired. He has since ensured proper nomination and installation of a new chief and a new queen mother upon the demise of Nana Abenaa Frempomaa, the then queen mother.

Having to go through the bitter dispute with its attendant problems for over two decades, Juaso, the once beacon of hope in the Asante Akyem South district is in an indescribable state yet to be found on the path of socio-economic development [6]. The question is what caused the almost two-decade dispute for Juaso in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Though a lot of work has been done on international

conflicts and little attention has been paid to local conflicts. Scholarly work on internal conflicts tends to concentrate on those conflicts that involve the state and a sub-group(s). In the specific case of the Juaso chieftaincy dispute, no scholarly work has been done. Only pockets of media reports have been made in relation to clashes and adjudication at Manhyia. It is against this milieu that the researchers hope to research into the issues surrounding the dispute in the Juaso community. The main purpose of this study is to delve into the issues surrounding the chieftaincy dispute in Juaso. The study was guided by this research question - What are the causes and the issues surrounding Chieftaincy disputes in Juaso?

2. Review of the Literature

2.1. The Concept of Chieftaincy

Chieftaincy is the indigenous political system. The concept of chief is defined as a “person elected or selected in accordance with customary usage and recognized by the government to wield authority and perform functions derived from tradition or assigned by central government within specified areas” [7]. Article 27 of the 1992 Republican Constitution defines a chief as “a person who hailing from the appropriate family and lineage, has been validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, en-skinned or installed as a chief or queen mother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage”. An essential element of this definition is that, chieftaincy is directly linked to a family, hereditary or appropriate lineage. A chief is an individual who has been nominated, elected and installed as a chief in accordance with customary law and is recognised as a chief by the Minister responsible for local Government. The term chief *ɔhene* (pl. *ahene*) is applied to chiefs ranking above a village head (*odikro*). It is also used as a suffix in order to describe: a) the specific area of a chief’s jurisdiction (Asantehene: the ruler of Asante; Agonahene: the chief of Agona); b) rank and function of particular offices (*asafohene*: a military commander or the head of an *asafo* company; *gyaasehene*: the head of the chief’s servants, etc.). Referring to chiefs as *ahenfo* and chiefly families as a social body you say ‘*adehyee*’. *Togbe* or *Torgbui* is a chiefly title in the Ewe-speaking areas [8].

It is however important to know that conflict does not always denote war. While all wars are a state of conflict, all conflict situations may not be a war situation. Why is this so? War is a state of mutually declared aggression between two or more parties prosecuted by conventional (uniformed and armed) soldiers, with the knowledge and observation of a third (neutral) party who sees to it that acts are within the rules of engagement [9]. Conflict thus manifests in disagreement,

anger, quarrel, hatred, destruction, killing, or war. Any untoward attitude capable of charging up the political or social environment is likely to culminate in conflict. Greed, covetousness, self-centeredness, discontent, envy, arrogance, rudeness, impunity, among other acts, are capable of producing a breakdown of human relations. In a way, these vices are innate attributes of the 'conflict nature' of man. Conflict may also connote hostility or physical confrontation [10]. When goal incompatibility or perception/value differences reach a crescendo, a manifestation of actual hostility or clashes is possible. In general literature, conflict is interchangeably used with other terms. This is where it becomes pertinent to mention words or terms that represent synonyms of conflict. These include dispute, contrast, disharmony, discord, struggle, contest, strife, antagonism, controversy, clash, rivalry, contest, contention, brawl, fisticuff, fight, battle, feud, combat and war.

2.2. Causes of Chieftaincy Disputes in Ghana

The institution of chieftaincy, as a traditional leadership system among ethnic groups in Ghana, is one of the revered customary legacies that survived colonial, past and present independent political dispensation. It has survived and retained the essential elements of authority and respect among the people of Ghana all these years [11]. However, it is bedeviled with disputes which tend to retard developments and in many cases claim lives of women and children. Chieftaincy disputes are the misunderstanding that occurs between two or more fractions on the instalment of a chief, or the misunderstanding between an incumbent chief and some of his subjects. The continuous deteriorating economic conditions in some African countries have been attributed to violent political, ethnic and chieftaincy conflicts, which have destabilized many peaceful countries [12].

Traditional rule in Africa in general and Ghana in particular is the preserve of a small group of privileged people of a patrilineal (Northern Ghana) or matrilineal (Southern Ghana) descendants of the founding family of the community. These traditional communities are categorized into a small group of royals constituting the ruling class and on the other hand are the majority referred to as the commoners [13]. Several studies highlighted the emerging identities and particular conflicts in Ghana [14]. These deepen the discussion about communal conflicts and different elements of the identity, inequalities and conflict nexus. The conclusion drawn is that the cause of conflict in Ghana include; an intra-ethnic succession/chieftaincy dispute Dagbon enskinment-, an inter-ethnic secession dispute-Konkomba conflicts-, a religious/political dispute-the Ga traditional area versus religious bodies- and an interethnic boundary dispute-

Alavanyo/Nkonya conflict [15]. The factors that lead to chieftaincy disputes include:

2.2.1. Large Number of Contenders

Since it is the desire of every royal to become chief and eventually rise to the kingship position, there is bound to be conflict which is sometimes due to the large numbers of contenders [16]. Generally, chieftaincy disputes erupt when there are two or more rival claimants to a vacant skin, the symbols of kingship or chieftaincy in the Northern traditional states and stool in Southern Ghana respectively [13]. Such disputes turn to be violent when the rival claimants are from different gates (clans) since the entire members of the clans are involved [17]. The bone of contention that kingmakers find difficulty choosing a candidate for enthronement to a vacant stool lies, now in the expansion in population of qualified royals who are all eligible to the position of the throne [18]. Like other parts of Africa, it is currently estimated that there are over 100 chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana centred on ethnicity, succession to traditional political office and the struggle over land [17]. It must be stressed that within the institution itself, there have been succession disputes following the death of an incumbent chief, some of which defied solution and lingered on in various forms to date [19].

2.2.2. Educational Qualification and Wealth

The post-colonial period has seen the emergence of new political, economic and social groups as well as the creation of state institutions [20]. In many countries, political power has been largely transferred from the traditional elite to a new crop of leaders emerging from the political leadership, the military, religious and professional groups as well as civil society organizations. This new elite group consists mainly of wealthy businessmen, professionals, high ranking security officials and top civil and public servants [20]. When such people succeed in being enskinned as chiefs, they create other royal gates and this brings in a lot of misunderstandings between such gates and the original gates. One result of these developments has been the scramble for chieftaincy titles amongst Ghana's new elite since the 1970s. This development has increased the competition for chieftaincy positions as more and more persons, including non-royals, consider themselves eligible for office by virtue of their high educational qualification and/or their wealth [21].

2.2.3. Sour Relationship between Chiefs and Political/National Leaders

Initially, the relationship between the traditional elite who were mainly chiefs and the new elite who wrestled power from the colonialists was quite sour as both groups competed for political power and attempted to establish their dominant

position in the newly independent countries [20]. The expansion of the capitalist economy as well as the emergence of a new elite group transformed the chieftaincy institution and the nature of chiefly rule in Ghana and elsewhere. The exploitation of Ghana's natural resources, the growth of export crops, and the expansion in the services sector boosted the economy and substantially increased the wealth of the new elite group of leaders. There were frequent conflicts between the national leaders and some prominent chiefs in the post-independence period [20]. Notably, espouse that in the process of instituting the British colonial administration, chiefs and their councils, especially in southern Ghana and Northern Nigeria came to dominate local administration. As a result, chiefs were branded as imperialist collaborators [22]. This policy is a major cause of chieftaincy dispute in Ghana and other countries in Africa.

2.2.4. Quest for Power and Fame

The quest for power and fame at all costs has also been cited as a major cause of chieftaincy conflicts. As the saying goes; "power corrupts but absolute power corrupts absolutely", the people try to strengthen their grip on power and thereby controlling the system. They therefore make all efforts to prevent their rivals from ascending to the skin [23]. A study on Chieftaincy Conflict in Akuapem a Case Study of Awukugua (1934-2004) revealed that, chieftaincy is associated with political power, which also translates into the control of economic wealth in the form of stool properties such as land, mineral deposits, regalia and servants who work for the chief. The pomp and pageantry that accompany the position of the chief make the institution so attractive that, both royals and non-royals desire to use every means to ascend to the throne, thus leading to conflict [24].

2.2.5. Territorial and Cultural Claim

The very nature of conflict in Africa, and Ghana in particular arises from cultural claim, demand for share of power, territorial autonomy, self-determination and mass response, if any to (ethos) nationalist appeal [25]. One common case of disputes in early settlements were boundary disputes [26]. Similarly, several studies indicate that inter-ethnic conflicts in the Northern Region involve two or more ethnic groups (Mamprusi and Kusasi conflict in Bawku) claiming a particular territory or authority to select a divisional or paramount chief of the traditional area [27]. The conflict, as indicated, is experienced among indigenous ethnic groups which are recurrent, involving the same ethnic groups, clans or families in different ways [28].

Furthermore, a research study on an Ethnographic Study of Northern Ghanaian Conflict: Towards a Sustainable Peace points out that land and boundary disputes are other common source of conflict in the northern part of Ghana. They occur

over the right of ownership to land on which a communal resource stands or is to be sited. Citing as an example, he recounts that the conflict between Kandig and Nirigu in the Navrongo District was fought over what name the health centre sited in the area should be called. He stressed that traditional leaders may be deemed to have known their boundaries but difficulties crop up when that knowledge is put to the test by the application of modern scientific measures and devices. Sometimes the government acquires land from natives but does not use the land for its purpose, infuriating the original owners and generating prolonged conflict within the state. This particular issue is prevalent in Grater Accra Region, where apart from individual and family conflicts over land, there is also re-occurring disputes between the natives of the Region and the Government [27].

2.2.6. Proliferation of Arms and Inadequate Security Presence

Furthermore, the proliferation of armed conflicts in Africa is perceived as rooted in the underlying features and differences among the heterogeneous communities and ethno-cultural groups arbitrarily bunched together to form sovereign states [29]. Studies revealed that the Northern Region is very wide and sparsely populated with very few state institutions and public personnel like the security forces and inadequate police stations [30]. The presence of these factors coupled with high concentrations of unemployed youths, and limited access to complete, accurate and timely information from credible sources are important push factors for the eruption of conflict especially, when the presence of security forces, courts and police station in the area is very minimal [31].

2.2.7. Validity of Installation Process

Studies conducted attribute the causes of chieftaincy conflicts in the Dagbon Kingdom to enskinment process [13]. Recent studies also made reference not only to enskinment process but also whether the chief designate has gone through the appropriate rituals [31]. This process must also be done by the appropriate traditional king makers because they determine the best qualified candidate to occupy a particular chieftaincy. The validity of installation of a chief becomes an issue and may result to conflict if the contestants come from different gates (clan), or lineages [27]. Among the Nanumba of the Northern Region two persons from the royal gate of *Gbugmayili* lay claim to the position of the Bimbilla Na, the king of the Nanumba people. In this conflict which has been ongoing since 1999, both contestants claim to have been selected and enskined by the appropriate traditional authority [13, 27]. In the West Mamprusi District the rejection of a candidate selected to be the paramount chief of Wungu by his competitors and the youth of the town resulted in a decade-long dispute that frequently turned violent [13].

2.2.8. Politicization of Chieftaincy Institution

The current highest chieftaincy institution, the National House of Chiefs was created by the 1971 Chieftaincy Act and reaffirmed by the 1992 Constitution. The 1992 Constitution insulate the institution from the state to ensure the political neutrality and survival and prestige of chieftaincy. However, the violent and protracted northern chieftaincy conflicts have been politicized by the ruling government and the main opposition either directly or indirectly by supporting the feuding factions [32]. The attempts at conflict resolution by traditional leaders, NGOs, civil society and governments have not been possible due to the perceived complicity of politicians [33]. Studies revealed that ethnic conflict is evident when there is unequal national economic development and that the differences in which resources for development is allocated foster ethnic mobilization and makes society vulnerable to polarization along ethnic lines [34]. Indeed, some of the current chieftaincy conflicts could be traced to the situation described above.

2.2.9. Over-exploitation and Widespread Poverty

In addition, the nature of conflict in Dagbon is attributable to the long period of colonial and post-colonial exploitation. Besides, neglect of the area as well as low education resulting to widespread poverty and dearth of socioeconomic infrastructure are other factors [35]. Studies revealed that the likelihood of ethnic groups or clan engaging in conflict is high when they are excluded from access to power and economic resources by the structures and systems of chieftaincy institution [31]. The main motive for ethnic conflict in Ghana is to secure resources from the central administration for the community's development. This implies that, the uneven development resource allocation therefore increases prevalence of conflict and in turn leads to poverty and vulnerability to economic hardships.

However, misappropriation of communal resources, such as royalties paid to the royal house, by incumbents as a cause of these chieftaincy disputes [24]. A study on "Chieftaincy in Ghana: Challenges and Prospects in the 21st Century" indicates that new forms of succession challenges have also emerged. He points to the growing tendency towards direct and indirect encouragement of absentee chiefs as another challenge that has cropped up as a result of the high education of chiefs and the varied expertise they possess which make it impossible for them to stay in their palaces in their areas of jurisdiction. Thus chiefs with expertise of any form practice their professions in the cities and this implies leaving their palaces for long periods. In effect, they become absentee chiefs and the problems inherent in this practice is

quite enormous even though the practice cannot be halted given the demands of modern development and sound educational background required of aspirants to chieftaincy status [19]. The most pronounced response of chiefs in this category is reliance on stool fathers or council of elders to take charge in their absence [19]. The result is that the absentee chief is sometimes seen as ineffective and this creates the opportunity for others to usurp his authority and thus creating conflict situation.

Chieftaincy and ethnic conflicts are not restricted to only one part of the country. The five (5) northern regions of the country have undoubtedly witnessed the majority of these conflicts. To quote Mr Issahaku Ibrahim, a former president of the Northern Students' Union (NSU), addressing a news conference in Accra in the aftermath of 2002 Dagbon clashes; "ethnic and factional conflicts have become monthly occurrence in the North." He cited conflicts in Bawku, Bunkurugu and Yendi, among others, as examples, similarly, the number of chieftaincy disputes in the Upper West Region is equal to the number of paramouncy in the region. He writes, "there are seventeen (17) paramouncy in the Upper West Region and there are seventeen (17) chieftaincy disputes pending before the Judicial Committee of the Upper West Regional House of chiefs." Of the Upper East Region, he notes: "This region ... is now experiencing several chieftaincy and land problems – small and large." For the Northern Region, he remarks: "this region has experienced a number of conflicts, new and old, small and large. These conflicts include religious, chieftaincy and land conflicts. These are both intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic conflicts" [27]. While admitting that the three northern regions of the country have undoubtedly witnessed the majority of these conflicts, there are several age long chieftaincy disputes scattered in other parts of the country such as the Juaso chieftaincy dispute.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research approach. The population for this study consisted of current chief, queen mother, the sub-chiefs, abusupananin, okyeame and adult males and females above the age of 30 were selected for this study. Purposive, Snowball and convenience Maximal Variation Strategy techniques were employed to select twelve (12) respondents for the study. Three (3) respondents were purposively sampled, five (5) respondents selected through snowball sampling technique and four (4) respondents also selected through convenience with maximal variation strategy. This age group was sampled because, they were considered old enough to have lived through, experienced and understood the issues surrounding the chieftaincy dispute at Juaso. For this reason, chiefs and the queen mother in the

community who are rich of information as far as chieftaincy dispute in Juaso is concerned were sample with the rest of the respondents. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used as the instrument for data collection for the study. The primary source of data covered interviews of chief, queen mother, elderly statesmen, king-makers, and ordinary citizens in the Juaso traditional area. Personal observations were also employed. A secondary data consisting of books, articles, journals and thesis on chieftaincy institution and conflict resolution were sought. The World Wide Web was also assessed for information that was relevant to the research. The data were analysed into different categories and subsequently developed into themes by making use of an inductive data analysis. Themes and categories were then used to present the research findings based on the research question.

4. Findings and Discussions

This section present findings on the causes and the issues surrounding Chieftaincy disputes in Juaso. Various themes emerged out from the research question - What are the causes and the issues surrounding Chieftaincy disputes in Juaso?

4.1. The Juaso Dispute

To establish whether there has been or there is any form of dispute in Juaso as well as its nature, all the twelve respondents were in agreement that there had been disputes.

4.2. The Root Cause of Dispute and Others That Promote Its Existence

In addition, they all explained that the dispute is about traditional leadership, that is, chieftaincy. They explained that in the past, the disputes involved the chiefs and the colonial masters and/or the chiefs and the political leaders (those who took over after political independence) struggling for power. This confirms a similar study that postulates that, “initially, the relationship between the traditional elite who were mainly chiefs and the new elite who wrestled power from the colonialists was quite sour as both groups competed for political power and attempted to establish their dominant position in the newly independent countries” [20]. The authors however said that, the current disputes have revolved around a struggle for power between royals and imposters (non-royals/intruders), among royal gates and within royal gates, an assertion in agreement with current study that, “since it is the desire of every royal to become chief and eventually rise to the kingship position, there is bound to be conflict which is sometimes due to the large numbers of contenders” [16]. This is also supported by study on Chieftaincy Conflict in Akuapem a Case Study of Awukugua (1934-2004) affirms that, “the pomp and pageantry that accompany the position of the chief make the institution so attractive that, both royals and non-royals desire to use every means to ascend to the throne, thus leading to conflict” [24]. They said that inappropriate ruling (abuse of power and misappropriation of resources) by traditional leaders has also led to dispute between the existing chief and his cohort and those who are not in support of his ruling in recent times.

Table 1. Causes of Chieftaincy Dispute.

Causes of Dispute	Respondents											
	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12
Mismanagement of the community resources	√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Disrespecting council	√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Disregarding advice of kingmakers	√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Squandering of funds meant for projects in the community	√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Indiscriminate sale of assets (land, regalia)	√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Engaging in fake and dubious deals	√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Multiple sale of land resources	√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Squandering of allowances of teak plantation workers	√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Opposition from factions who contested but were not selected		√	√	√								
Claims that some Ayokofoɔ were intruders		√		√								
Visiting Ayokofoɔ (intruders) desiring to ascend the stool			√								√	√
An attempt by Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh II to destool the Ayokohene and enstool an intruder			√			√	√		√		√	√
Competition among the ruling gates and even within ruling gates			√		√			√		√	√	√
The quest for Omanhene’s status and the attempt to rebel and gain freedom						√						
Disregarding the needs of the queen mother, council members or subchiefs and refusal to give them their share of resources.						√						
Disrespecting and insulting his elders.						√			√	√		
Ordinary people with financial and political powers desiring the throne									√		√	√
Opposition from colonial masters and or ruling government												√

Source; Researcher’s field notes, 2018 As shown in Table 1, with the exception of Yabam and Akosa, all other respondents cited “Mismanagement of the community resources, disrespecting council, disregarding advice of kingmakers, squandering of funds meant for projects in the community, indiscriminate sale of assets (land, regalia), engaging in fake and dubious deals, multiple sale of land resources and squandering of allowances of teak plantation workers as some of the reasons behind the dispute in Juaso. For example;

“Akwasi Prempeh (Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh) secretly sold wires, poles and other thing that ‘Juasomma’, an association of natives of Juaso in overseas brought to put the community on the national grid’ (Okag, 2018).

“‘Juasomma’, an association of natives of Juaso overseas desiring to enjoy their stay whenever they visited their root contributed to provide electricity to Juaso. They bought all the necessary things like wires and light poles and put a committee in charge of the project. It will shock you to hear that by the time the community members realised, Akwasi Prempeh had sold all the things and was unable to account for the money” (Nobok, 2018).

“Well-meaning natives outside the country in search of greener pasture out of their sweat purchased poles and wires to provide their beloved community with electricity to facilitate development. But what did we see? Owusu Akyaw Prempeh sold all the items meant for the project and the money, ‘yaamutu’ to wit squandered (Osica, 2018).

The above statements are all to affirm the point that, one of the causes of chieftaincy dispute in Juaso is, squandering of funds meant for projects in the community. There is sure to be disagreement between the incumbent chief and the subject when resources meant for the whole community with the chief as the custodian are not utilised for the benefit of all or are not accounted for but to the benefit of the chief alone or few people. It is in conformity to the theoretical underpinning of the research that is, the Social Class Conflict theory. According to Marxian perspective, systems of stratification are derived from the relationships of the social groups to the forces of production. Thus in all the stratified societies, there are two major social groups: a ruling class and a subject class. The power of the ruling class is derived from its ownership and control of the forces of production. The ruling class exploits and oppresses the subject class. As a result, there is a basic conflict of interest between the two classes.

“To ensure the sustainability of the forest reserve of Juaso, the government rolled out teak plantation policy. By this, farmers were assigned portions of deforested land to cultivate only approved crops alongside given quantities of teak seedlings. They were provided with protective clothing like over-raw and wollentin boots as well as some allowances to motivate the farmers. Nana Prempeh however diverted the items including the money. This incurred the displeasure of the farmers making some abandoning their portions of the project (Osica, 2018)”.

“Monies and protective clothing meant to motivate farmers to execute re-afforestation project never got to the farmers. Akwasi

Prempeh who was the custodian of the resources couldn’t

account for them (Macq, 2018)”.

“Akwasi Prempeh managed to take delivery of items like over-all, wollentin boots, machetes and even monies which were to be used to motivate farmers who were to help redeem the forest portions that had been encroached upon but the items never got to the hands of the end users or beneficiaries (Nafot, 2018)”.

The above statement by Osica, Macq and Nafot are indicative of the fact that squandering of allowances of teak plantation workers by Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh is one of the causes of the dispute in Juaso. These claims were supported by similar study that postulates that, misappropriation of communal resources, such as royalties paid to the royal house, by incumbents as a cause of these chieftaincy disputes. In the Marxist paradigm, conflicts between classes arise out of differing material interests. In a capitalist society, two main classes can be identified; one is the strong, rich and noble, business class and bear the tag of bourgeoisie who control the instrumentality of state which in this case can be likened to the chief; and the other is the deprived, socially deflated, financially infantile, working class and is called the proletariat which can also be likened to the farmers in the teak plantation business. The theory opines that there is a constant struggle between the two, but he that has the financial muscle controls both the state and the poor, and that is the structure of society. The business class dominates the working class until the latter organize to protest exploitation. The protest in this case is some farmers abandoning their portions of the plantation, some making official complaints to traditional council members as well as forestry department and others casting insinuations and engaging in rumour mongering. The attempt to ensure justice in this instance is what led to the council members pitching camp against the chief when he refused to pay heed to their council [24].

These are what Pada, Nabok and Nafot had to say as proofs of the fact that the acts of Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh disrespecting and disregarding advice of council members and kingmakers are some causes of the chieftaincy dispute in Juaso.

“When issues of squandering funds are questioned by some council members including the queen mother, Akwasi Prempeh will always go by the saying, ‘monim afutuo a, monkaka nkyere akokohwedee se ne nnua ne akoko enti amra fie’ to wit, if they are counsellors enough to advise him, then they should channel their expertise in convincing the bush-hen to settle at home because the hen is its relative (Nafot, 2018)”.

“Anytime Nana Owusu Akyaw falters and is advised or questioned, he would say, ‘mowo mu a enye mma, na mo

firi mu nso a ento sini' to wit, I am complete with or without you (Nabok, 2018)''.

''When things started going wayward and elders wanted to intervene, Nana Akwasi told them to leave him alone since he was a matured man enough to know what is good for himself (Pada, 2018)''.

The above statements are clear signs that, the then chief of Juaso, Nana Owusu

Akyaw Prempeh had no respect and regard for his elders and council members. This is a possible cause of dispute in any society or human set up. To support the situation above, a researcher said that, sometimes too, the right of the sitting chief to continue holding himself out as the legitimate traditional ruler comes under question due to circumstances surrounding his relationship with his people [27].

''There were frequent complaints by town dwellers of Akwasi Prempeh selling land to them but other people claiming ownership of the same parcels of land (Okag, 2018)''.

''Parcels of land that had been genuinely bought by people from council members were resold by Akwasi Prempeh. Mostly, council would have to replace for the new person at no cost though Akwasi Prempeh could not account for the monies collected in such circumstances (Nabok, 2018)''.

''When things got out of hands, even when he needed chop money he would trade off parcels of land at any cost and regardless of the fact that that parcel of land has already been sold by himself or even council members (Nafot, 2018)''.

''Because Akwasi Prempeh was a spendthrift, he sold royal regalia like palanquins, umbrellas, head gears, sword, drums, bangles and even gold dust on the stool. This he did to the extent that he had to borrow from neighbouring communities' chiefs before he could appear descent and majestic enough at functions. 'Maame, obiara nni hɔ a ne ho so no akwankorɔ oo nanso, saa animguaseɛ woyi dee, na enye adee a yebetena hɔ aye nhwehann' to wit, no one is self-sufficient but this was too shameful to our royalty for us to overlook (Nafot, 2018)''.

''Even though council agreed to sell the parcel of land on which was situated the old palace to Ghana Commercial Bank to put up their office building so to get better value to build a more befitting palace at another location, Akwasi Prempeh cunningly went behind the council members to collect the money from GCB but could not account for the money neither was the palace, the reason for selling the parcel of land even built (Nafot, 2018)''.

''Akwasi Prempeh convinced the council to sell the portion of land on which the old palace, made of mud was built since the location was good and attractive so that we could get appreciable amount to build a modern and befitting palace. He however went behind the elders to collect the money but could not account for it neither was the proposed palace built (Nabok, 2018)''

These statements point to the fact that, multiple sale of land resources, engaging in fake and dubious deals and indiscriminate sale of assets (land, regalia) were some causes of the chieftaincy dispute in Juaso. Just like the Social Class Conflict theory, there is a basic conflict of interest between the two classes that is the chief and his followers. These interests may be social prestige, religious objectives, or political power or economic advantages. The basic conflict of interest here is the fact that the then chief, Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh took economic advantage of his position as against the subjects. They took exception to this social discrimination and abuse. In support of this, studies have revealed that the likelihood of ethnic groups or clans engaging in conflict is high when they are excluded from access to power and economic resources by the structures and systems of chieftaincy institution [31].

Three respondents, Yabam, Nabok and Akosa cited opposition from individuals and factions that contested the throne but lost as one of the causes of the chieftaincy dispute in Juaso. For instance;

''In this world there are people who always want to be in charge other than them, no one else. So, some of those who contend for the throne and loose, always instigate others to find fault and sabotage the ruling of the one in charge. This has always been the case (Akosa, 2018)''.

''There are many qualified royals who are all interested in the throne. Because of this anytime there is enstoolment, oppositions erupt. They falsely accuse and exhibit constant dislike for the one who gets the nod. This has always led to dispute with respect to chieftaincy in Juaso (Yabam, 2018)''.

The statements above clearly show that there are many contenders to the throne and since only one can get the nod to rule at any point in time, the rest who fall out of selection go all out to oppose their rule. Since it is the desire of every royal to become chief and eventually rise to the kingship position, there is bound to be conflict which is sometimes due to the large numbers of contenders [16]. The validity of installation of a chief becomes an issue and may result to conflict if the contestants come from different gates (clan), or lineages [20]. In the West Mamprusi District the rejection of a candidate selected to be the paramount chief of Wungu by his competitors and the youth of the town resulted in a decade-long dispute that frequently turned violent [13].

When this happens, people get irritated and they feel that they must fight to get what rightfully belongs to them. While they try to win back their positions, there is resistance from the other side and this leads to confrontations which normally end in conflicts. Another identified cause of chieftaincy dispute in Juaso is the claim that some

Ayokofoɔ are intruders. Akosa and Mpaku had this to say;

“For whatever reason, some members of the royal family claim that others are intruders in the sense that, though Ayokofoɔ they are sojourners who sought to rest but found comfort and have stayed up till date desiring to ascend the throne (Akosa, 2018)”.

“The whole dispute of Juaso is intra gate and inter-gate. This is to say that it is the royals who are litigating among themselves. Some section refers to others as intruders or visiting Ayokofoɔ who wants to go beyond their limit and ascend the royal throne of Juaso meant for the descendants of Fobri Tiwaa or better still Juaso Kesewaa (Mpaku, 2018)”.

The above statements make those who claim to be the direct descendants of Fobri

Tiwaa resist any attempts by the supposed intruders to ascend the royal throne of Juaso while the supposed intruders also fight their way through to enjoy what they claim to be their right. In support of this, studies have revealed that the likelihood of ethnic groups or clans engaging in conflict is high when they are excluded from access to power and economic resources by the structures and systems of chieftaincy institution [31]. Similar to this cause of chieftaincy dispute is the claim that visiting Ayokofoɔ's desire to ascend the royal throne of Juaso. For this claim, this is what Nafot, Nabak, Osica and Naat had to say

“Our ancestors out of hospitality accepted some sojourning Ayokofoɔ who needed resting place into their mists. Today, after decades, their descendants want to compete with us for what does not belong to them. ‘nanso, yerentena hɔ mma mfofo nnane yen kwaebrentuo’ to wit, we shall not allow the afforested land to be presented to us as virgin forest (Nafot, 2018)”.

“When Christianity came to Ghana, many of our royal women converted and had the impression that chieftaincy was paganism. They therefore prevented their children from ascending the throne. This led to non-royals having the opportunity to ascend the throne. These people have now become a thorn in the flesh of the three royal gates of Juaso. Some realising the dignity associated with royalty managed to write down history twisting thing in favour of their lineage. They now claim to be royals with equal right to the throne. They have forgotten that ‘se obi de ne ba begya wo na abɔfra no nsui a eno nkyere se emfa no nkɔma

ne maame’ to wit, if someone leaves her baby in your custody and the child does not cry, that does not suggest that do no return the baby (Naat, 2018)”.

“In their attempt to promote development, our ancestor allowed non royals who had economic power to ascend their throne so that such people who also had strong desire to enjoy the pageantry associated with chieftaincy can realise their dreams while using their personal resources at their disposal for the community to enjoys development. They should not forget that, ‘mpamimfoɔ se deɛ ɔde n’adeɛ no de benkum na ɛgyeɛ’ to wit, the rightful owner receives without conditions (Osica, 2018)”.

“In the past, slaves who rendered dedicated services to their masters were sometimes incorporated into the family, some were even named after some royals. Today, some of these people are claiming lineage to the royal ancestry and their generations are competing ascension to the royal throne but the truth is that, ‘okusie se ɔbedane ahwea a, ne dua deɛ, epoma no’ to wit, the rat cannot change its identity (Nabok, 2018)”.

The citations above are clear indications of the fact that certain category of people found their way into the royal domain of Juaso either by their economic power, bravery, hard work and even negligence of kingmakers. These categories of people consider themselves as eligible occupants of the throne while those who claim to be the true royals are also bent on taking their rightful inheritance without compromise even with the last drop of their blood. Today, chieftaincy titles, particularly those involving high offices, are mainly given to wealthy, educated and politically influential persons who can use their contacts with government officials, local and international NGOs, donors, foreign embassies and Ghanaians abroad to bring in development projects and raise funds to administer the palace and their territories.

It is in support of this claim a previous study affirms that, the pomp and pageantry that accompany the position of the chief make the institution so attractive that, both royals and non-royals desire to use every means to ascend to the throne, thus leading to conflict. He contends that the appointment of non-royals to stools/skins in the country provides the grounds for chieftaincy conflicts. He observes that some of these people are foreigners who are recognised as a result of their immense contribution to the state in terms of infrastructural development. In the past, slave who rendered dedicated services to their masters were sometimes incorporated into the family. Some of them were rewarded with women in the community with whom they had children [24]. The descendants of these slaves who are now part of the royal lineage could one day emerge at the forefront to contest the

vacant position of the stool. Problems occur when some members of the royal family try to discriminate against this crop of people, sometimes referring to them as ‘intruders’ or ‘foreigners’ [24]. A book titled “Institution of Chieftaincy in Ghana: An Overview” further stressed that corruption within the institution makes it possible for people with dubious royal background to ascend to stools/skins in some traditional areas. This phenomenon is causing a great deal of chaos, instability, bloodshed, misery and lack of progress in some traditional areas. Judicial committees of National House of Chiefs and Supreme Court of Ghana have records of individuals who were not royals but found their way to stools/skins [1]. Six out of the 12 respondents, Nabok, Pada, Osica, Macq, Nafot and Naat cited an attempt by Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh II to destool the Ayokohene and enstool an intruder as the major cause of the protracted dispute which started after the community had come out of frequent dispute resulting from legitimacy of aspirants and enjoyed peace for quite an appreciable year. These are some of what they had to say;

“Legitimacy of an aspirant of the throne and friction between political powers and traditional leaders were common cause of chieftaincy disputes in Juaso in the olden days. However, due to the fact that the 1992 Constitution of Ghana recognises and establishes the institution of chieftaincy, Akwasi Prempeh was a true royal and also had an appealing personality. The enstoolment of Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh saw Juaso enjoying peace for appreciable period of time. It is true that power corrupts. It happened that a quarry company ABU, discovered rocks that they showed interest in tapping at Yaakwei a farming site of Juaso. As part of the agreement, ABU was to construct and tire all the town roads of Juaso, a move that was to give a face lift to the community as a district capital and also open it up for economic and other benefits. The company started and tapped the resource for few years without any sign of working on our roads rather, with their heavy duty machines and trucks plying the town roads day in and day out to supply their clients, the town roads deteriorated. Constant approach to them was fruitless.

The then Ayokohene, Nana Akwasi Obour did his own investigation and realised that Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh, the then Juasohene had taken delivery of substantial amount of money from the company under the pretence that the community had rescinded on their decision to have their roads tired but channel their gains into other ventures which would be done by a supposed committee. When Nana Akwasi Obour confronted Nana Prempeh, it created a bone of contention between them. Nana Owusu Akyaw seeing Nana Akwasi Obour was a

thorn in his flesh decided to destool him. This move made the whole unscrupulous deal known to king makers, council of elders and even the royal family. This action of Nana Prempeh met strong opposition from the rank and file of the council of elders, kingmakers and the royal family at large. Despite the opposition, he conferred the position of Ayokohene on a non-royal. This incurred the displeasure of the then Abusuapanin, Nana Yaw Sarpong, the then Queen mother, Nana Abenaa Frempomaa some sub chiefs like the Saanaahene, Akwamhene, Denkyemmenasohene, Benkumhene, Nnifahene, Baamhene and many of the elders dividing and creating two main factions (Akwasi Prempeh and Nanahemaa) within the ruling class. Akwasi Prempeh had shown disregard for authority but this act broke the camel’s back hence, the dispute (Nabok, Pada, Osica, Nafot and Naat, 2018)”.

“With the appealing personality of Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh, he enjoyed the full support of the whole Juaso community and the township enjoyed peace for considerable years. However, the once peaceful reign turned sour when Akwasi Prempeh destooled the Ayokohene and bestowed the position on a non-royal over a case that Akwasi Serebbour was faultless. The bone of contention was enstooling a stranger into a position over royals, ‘akoa ntumi nsene ne wura’ to wit, a servant cannot be greater than his master) (Macq, 2018)”.

As far as these participants are concerned, the attempt by Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh to destool the Ayokohene and enstool a non-royal to that position was the main cause of the chieftaincy dispute in Juaso even though other actions had led to that move. The above situation upholds that, corruption within the institution makes it possible for people with dubious royal background to ascend to stools/skins in some traditional areas [1].

Another cause of the dispute in Juaso that the respondents spoke about was disregard for the needs of the queen mother, council members or sub-chiefs and refusal to give them their share of resources. Pada and Nafot noted.

“In all the financial misappropriation cases, Nana Prempeh refused to let the queen mother have her share as well as the sub chiefs and the council members. He forgot the fact that ‘mpanimfoɔ se adidigya wɔ hɔ yi ene mmuna na enam’ (Pada, 2018)”.

“As a chief you attend functions of varied prominence so do the queen mother and other sub chiefs. You don’t expect to dress elegantly for a function while your accompanying queen mother and entourage are in a mess. But as custom demands it is the chief who has the right to sign land documents and other official documents. ‘Mpanimfoɔ se Offe mu nnam, yede emu nsuo na enoa’. It is a common

reason for dispute in many Traditional Councils. You may see a chief drive in fleets of cars bought out of community resources while the queen mother walk or sits in trotro to attend functions. No normal human being will agree with this. Definitely there will be disagreement which when not handled appropriately will result in dispute such as this, 'efiri se, yemfa ayaase mpae nhyen aben' (Nafot, 2018)".

Apparently, Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh irrespective of getting monies from various sources refused to part with any amount for the benefit of the queen mother and the council of elders. This action according to the respondents incurred the displeasure of the queen mother and the council of elders hence, the dispute. Other identified causes of chieftaincy dispute in Juaso are the quest for Omanhene status and the attempt to gain freedom from Juaben, and opposition from colonial masters and or ruling government. On these, Naat and Pada explained that;

"The colonial masters disregarded and destooled traditional leaders who did not see eye to eye with them and did not support their policies. Even after independence the CPP led by Nkrumah harassed many traditional authorities who were seen not to share in their ideology (Naat, 2018).

"Oral tradition has it that traditionally, Juaben and Juaso were cousins and Otumfoɔ is the direct nephew of Juaso. Therefore, Otumfoɔ always had great respect for Juasohene. However, it happened that Asanteman waged war against the then Okyehene who was also the biological father of Juasohene (Nana Antwi Boasiako). Therefore, Juasohene feigned sickness in order not to join the Asante warriors to fight against his own father but rather organised his warriors and ammunition in support of his father's force. This act of Nana Antwi Boasiako which was seen as a betrayal infuriated Asanteman. Thus, upon their return, they beheaded Boasiako. Hence the adage, 'enye obi na okum Antwi, Boasiako no ara na ɔde ne ti akɔgye akyerema and captured the then queen mother Obiyaa Kusi whose hand was given in marriage to the then Bantamahene and the rest of the town thrown into fear and near collapse. Based on this development, Otumfoɔ placed Juaso under the custody of Kumawu who also for proximity sake declined and requested Juaben to be the overlord of Juaso. For this historical reason Juaso has always resisted the lordship of Juaben and rather agitated for an Omanhene status just as Juaben is an Omanhene. It on record that Nana Yaw Amagyei who once sat on the royal stool of Juaso at one time seized the dawuro (gongon) of the town crier of Juabenmanhene who had been ordered to disseminate messages throughout his traditional area saying they have trespassed (Naat, 2018)".

The above citations indicate that the struggle with either political leaders as well as traditional overlord for freedom have contributed to existence of chieftaincy disputes in the community in the past. A case in point is the Konkombas who in 1993 petitioned the National House of Chiefs to elevate the chief of Saboba to a paramountcy without passing it through the Ya Na, the overlord of Dagbon in which Saboba is situated. This created tension between the Dagombas and the Konkombas [15]. In addition, there was violence at TanosoSubin, Brong Ahafo Region, following the elevation of four traditional areas to paramountcy status by the Asantehene. These areas had hitherto been under the Tachiman stool (GT 2/9/1996) [15].

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study revealed that, competition among the ruling gates and even within ruling gates, opposition from factions who contested but were not selected, visiting Ayokofoɔ (intruders) desiring to ascend the stool and claims that some Ayokofoɔ were intruders were some causes of the chieftaincy dispute in Juaso prior to the reign of Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh. Ordinary people with financial and political powers desiring the throne and the quest for Omanhene's status and the attempt to rebel and gain freedom from Juaben Divisional Council also included the cause of the pre Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh era dispute. Others included opposition from colonial masters and or ruling government. It came out that, Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh was a true royal with appealing personality so, he enjoyed the total support of the whole Juaso community and as such Juaso came to know peace.

The study also revealed that, the reign of Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh after sometime, was characterised by abuse of power in the form of mismanagement of the community resources, disrespect for council, disregard of advice of kingmakers, squandering of funds meant for projects in the community and indiscriminate sale of assets (land, regalia). Others included engagement in fake and dubious deals, multiple sales of land resources and squandering of allowances of teak plantation workers. In addition, he disregarded the needs of the queen mother, council members or subchiefs and refused to give them their share of resources. He also disrespected and insulted his elders. However, the council members were trying to find solutions to these behaviours until Nana Owusu Akyaw Prempeh destooled the Ayokohene and enstooled an intruder. This resulted in an over 20 years' chieftaincy dispute in Juaso with its attendant implications.

It is recommended that, the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) should take up campaigns to educate

people on chieftaincy affairs. This might help to reduce the vulnerability of the chiefs and their people to manipulation by intruders. It is also recommended that, Existing traditional areas or royal gates should endeavour to trace their lineage or lines of succession and compile or codify and document their customs. In view of this king makers should endeavour to follow due process and custom devoid of personal interest and corruption. This will reduce if not totally prevent instances where intruders will violate the traditional order and pave their way through to be enstooled, a situation that will create tension and resistance from the royals.

It is recommended that, royals should be groomed and brought up in the spirit of respect from childhood, during installation and after installation. This is to avoid the situation whereby contenders will disagree with and backbite whoever emerges to be enstooled even though that person would be a true royal who also qualifies by all standards. All stake holders in the Juaso chieftaincy dispute should make it a point allow peace to prevail by given off their stand and accept efforts that aim at ensuring peace which will provide the conducive environment for peace, unity and development.

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