

Assessing the Role and Significance of Chiefs in the Governance of Cape Coast, Teshie and Kumasi Societies in Ghana

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The study sought to assess the role and significance of chiefs in the traditional governance system of Cape Coast, Teshie and Kumasi communities in Ghana. This study employed the case study comparative approach. A total of 85 participants were selected for the study using the snowballing method of sampling. Data were collected using a four-point Likert scale questionnaire. Data analysis and presentation of results were done by using mean and standard deviation. The study revealed that chieftaincy as an institution is deeply rooted in the local communities. It further revealed that a chief is both the politico-military and religious head. It was recommended that there is the need for the modern state to go beyond just involving chiefs in only sod cutting ceremonies and other state functions to include them in the implementation of local development policies. Further to this, the roles and functions of traditional authorities and local government officials must be well-defined and agreed upon and the public must be made to understand this delineation of responsibilities brought by the government.

Keywords: chiefs, governance, district chief executives, public, traditional authorities, indigenous

Introduction

Effective public governance helps to strengthen democracy and human rights, promote economic prosperity and social cohesion, reduce poverty, and enhance environmental protection and therefore the sustainable use of natural resources; this situation reposes confidence in government and public administration. According to Action Aid (2011), governance is the process of exercising different sorts of power (social, political, economic, legal, and administrative) within various institutional arenas by a selected few who were either elected or appointed to office. The important challenge during a democratic system is to make sure that the method of governance does not seem to be subverted and appropriated by economic and political elites. Kahler and Lake (2004) stated that governance is characterized as “decisions issued by one actor that a second is anticipated to obey” (p. 409), and refers to the control of social interactions by non-government actors. It entails a normative assessment of the power of a non-state authority to control life within its territory and to produce certain public goods to the population under its control through the establishment of both institutions and practices of rule.

The World Bank’s (1989) report on Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth asserts that for good governance to occur, it requires “a systematic effort to build a pluralistic institutional structure that brings a broader spectrum of ideas and values to bear on policy making” (p. 61). Not very long ago, economic reforms

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were not associated with the governance structure of a country; in fact, many argued that authoritarian forms of government were needed for rapid economic development. Good governance is the making and implementation of policies that would impact positively on the citizens of the country (Ake, 1993). However, donor agencies and the Bretton Woods Institutions are using good governance as a “stick and carrot instrument” for keeping in line errant developing countries that must match their request for aid with good behaviour (Bamgbose, 2005). Although contemporary development discourse cannot be seen as monolithic and unchanging, there is nevertheless broad agreement on the fundamental elements of good governance as constructed by the World Bank.

This paper discusses the issue of whether the chiefs have played any role in the governance of the people in these study areas and assess whether in the modern system of democracy, the chiefs’ role in the governance of the people can be ignored.

Traditional Governance and Decentralization in Ghana

Traditional institutions command high loyalty among communities due to strongly held beliefs that a failure to look at taboos or rules governing them could cause misfortune. It regulates behaviour through an oath and it is believed that such oaths can subject a wrongdoer to undesirable consequences, like death, extreme poverty, and incurable diseases, while the society may experience severe droughts, pest outbreaks, loss of livestock, and consequently hunger (Kideghesho, 2008). Generally, traditional institutions are unambiguously accepted by society members, who believe that such institutions possess divine or religious power. Traditional rule or governance found expression in forms, like religious leadership, lineage leadership, leadership in extended families and chieftaincy (Assimeng, 1996; Ray & Reddy, 2003; Bekoe, 2007). Traditional institutions present the platform on which traditional authorities express their authority. These institutions in turn form the leadership structures within individual communities. Their roles and functions ensure that people comply with rules, norms, and beliefs. Despite several years of western domination, the decisions about governance and sustainable development still rest on traditional institutional concepts because the powers of traditional authorities are best expressed in these institutions. Kendi and Guri (2004) put it rightly by stating that the inability to reduce the growing incidence of poverty and underdevelopment can be attributed to the tendency of formal development partners approach to local knowledge systems and practices without any alternatives to include indigenous knowledge.

Owusu-Sarpong (2003) suggested that traditional leaders may act as intermediaries between their people and the government ministries to ensure that developmental programmes are initiated in their areas of rule. Ray (2003) had argued that traditional leaders may add their legitimacy to Ghana’s post-colonial state. Both Owusu-Sarpong (2003) and Ray (2003) agreed that not only do traditional leaders possess their own unique sources of political legitimacy and authority, but also that the exercise and co-operation of this legitimacy and authority in co-operation with the post-colonial state is necessary for the more effective achievement of development goals. Owusu-Sarpong (2003) argued that no central government decision directly affecting the Ghanaian people in matters, such as communal health, education, use and distribution of land, gender issues among others can be easily implemented without the active involvement of the chiefs. Also, there is considerable evidence that service delivery in rural areas has been smoother in areas where government structures had good relations with traditional leaders than in areas where relations are not good (Miller, 1968). The problem, however, is that if care is not taken to integrate the two systems of governance properly, a conflict of interest may arise.

Perceptions About the Institution of Traditional Leadership

Perceptions are shaped by our beliefs, values, and norms which form the culture of our communities. Knowledge about traditional institutions helps us to push behaviour according to our beliefs and feelings (Mensah, 2003). Popular views on chiefs and chieftaincy are acutely relevant since African governments, international institutions and donor countries are displaying a renewed interest in chieftaincy (Ubink, 2007). Whereas many post-independence African governments saw chiefs as impediments to modernisation and nation building and tried to curtail their role in government and national politics (Buur & Kyed, 2005; Sharma, 1997), since the 1990s an outsized number of African countries have enhanced or formalized the position of their chiefs (Englebert 2002; Ray 2003). Tangwa (1996) argued that traditional African leadership and authority systems may be understood as “the harmonious marriage between autocratic dictatorship and popular democracy” (p. 2). Specified formal practices position the citizenry to critique, authorise and sanction their rules, their continued reign and therefore the selection and ascension of their successors. For instance, A. Ritzenthaler and R. Ritzenthaler (1964) in a study of the practice of democracy by the Bafut People in Cameroon found that accountability to the people is key in governance. According to them, when a new chief is installed, he is presented to the people for stoning. This is to remind the chief that in the pursuit of good governance, he should be fair and frank or else he would be overthrown and pelted with stones thus making his ruler-ship illegitimate. Similarly, there are special festivals, like “Apor” celebrated in Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana during which the chief is publicly criticised, even insulted by ordinary citizens. The same can be said about the Ga people in Teshie and La during the annual Homowo festival. The townspeople are gathered at the chief’s palace and are made to advice the chief of governance issues and also made to promise that when he goes foul of the laws, he would be dethroned. This is an affirmation to the sacred oaths taken during the initiation and installation periods.

More importantly, citizens have a constitutional right of destooling their chiefs if they are found to have committed serious crimes or broken a taboo. In our current democratic dispensation, we are yet to see if a chief would be destooled due to the breach of taboo although some chiefs have been destooled for things unrelated to taboos. Crimes, like murder and theft; misdemeanours, like sleeping with someone’s wife were automatic grounds for destoolment of a chief within the Akan social group. Chiefs could also jeopardize their stools if they were seen as violating their oath to leadership like not consulting on decisions, not being available to the people and being despotic (Centre for Democratic Development [CDD], 2001). Within the Upper West Region (in Ghana) and other parts of Ghana, the principle of ascertaining transparency among the people is that a chief does not go anywhere alone; there is always someone with him as a witness. Again, there are customary codes that underline the limited power of the chief and therefore the power relations between the chief and his subjects like the following: “If a chief reprimands you for doing something, he does so by the authority of the citizens”; “There are not any bad chiefs, only bad advisors”; “It is when the state kills you that the chief kills you”. One gold-embossed emblem on top of the staff held by the chief’s spokesman during public ceremonies depicts an egg within the hand; the symbol likens power to an egg. When held too firmly, the egg breaks; and when held too loosely too, the egg falls out of the hand (CDD, 2001, as cited in Kangsangbata, 2006). Moreover, Dake (1996) held the view that African traditional authorities are autocratic which has been transferred to modern democratic ideas, making governance on the continent undemocratic.

Adjei (2001), in a trial to prove the existence of democracy in African traditional systems of governance, outlined the social group of Ashanti. For Adjei, (2001) the Ashanti traditional system is democratic, while Dake (1996) described African traditional systems, including that of Ashanti as autocratic. However, Appiah (1993) contended that the democratic aspects of traditional leadership were weakened by the colonial processes, because Kings and Queens did not generally allow the lay citizens' interests to require priority in national response to colonial invasion. Thus, if the King did not suffer much during colonialism, variety of his subjects clearly did. While this tradition-modernity debate within the broader context of development may contain some useful insights, its basic assumptions have limited applicability. The theories of Subsidiarity, Interactive Governance and New Institutionalism have very useful insights, particularly for works that have implications for governance.

Indigenous Governance

The presence of informal and/or formal institutions that are linked to cultural traditions is recognised as some of the factors that have set Indigenous peoples apart (Corntassel 2003), for example, from those holding claims to minority rights (von der Porten & de Loë 2014). When moving into discussion about indigenous governance, gradations, overlaps, and adverse criticisms proliferate. Generally, indigenous governance systems have three main hallmarks: developed locally, controlled by the local, elderly and experienced members of the society and use unwritten laws, ethics and values (Ulluwishewa, 1993; Warren, Slikkerveer, & Bronkesha, 1995; Mathias, 1995; Larson, 1998). In this study, indigenous governance is used during an identical context to African traditional or customary governance systems and processes. The term “indigenous” per Dei (2000) is defined as knowledge consciousness arising locally and in association with long-term occupancy of a vicinity.

It is often presented to or believed by contemporary Africans the birth of democracy is credited to the “West” and sometimes traced back to the Greeks. While this is often historically true, Tiky (2014), in his book *Democracy and Democratization in Africa*, looked back to history to ask where the Greeks learnt about democracy. Tiky (2014) concluded that Solon, an Athenian who launched the reforms that gave birth to the Athenian democracy, made numerous trips to Egypt where he learnt about the African group. This is often confirmed by Diodorus Siculus, a Greek writer of the primary Century who acknowledged that Solon, Pythagoras and Homer made trips to Egypt to seek out about politics, mathematics, and religion (Tiky, 2014).

Traditional legal knowledge (customary laws and traditional institutions) within the mid of 20th century and before has been considered by most of African states as archaic, uncivilised and obstacle to development. However, recently some African states and students seem to have recognised the drawbacks of discriminating policies towards customary laws and traditional institutions. As an example, Western democratic values and institutions (e.g., multi-party group or parliamentary democracy) appear to be functionally not pragmatic in sub-Saharan African countries. Hence native scholars nowadays tend to hunt another model to revive distinct African democratic values and institutions (Ayittey, 1999). One driving factor behind this view is additionally the actual fact that the majority peoples of sub-Saharan African states live under traditional system and divorced from the mainstream society. Furthermore, the unfulfilling group across African states has also forced politicians and students to look into the relevance of traditional institutions and possibly for its revitalisation provided such traditional institutions are worth maintaining. Specifically, some African states have come to understand the role of traditional system in democratisation process and had begun to recognise them constitutionally and accommodate them into the fashionable political systems.

The concept of indigenous governance would, during a broad sense, talk of with the strategy and structures through which a bunch, community or society makes decisions, dispenses and employs authority and power, defines strategic goals, organizes corporate, group and individual behaviour, develops institutional rules, and assigns responsibility for these matters (Mathias, 1995; Larson, 1998). Literature on indigenous African cultures reveals that there are two major varieties of systems through which Africans governed themselves. These are, first, the use of tribal groupings which existed as detached political entities and governed themselves independently through chiefs, said as chiefdoms. Second, is that the imperial rule where conquered tribes came under the hegemony of others as vassal states with extensive local autonomy (Ayttey, 1999). The common indigenous governance systems took the shape of chiefdoms, tribes and band polities (Lewellyn, 1992; Schapera, 1984; Agrawal, 2002). It is envisaged that traditional rulers govern their subjects in a way that conforms to modern culture as the two go hand in hand.

Local government in rural areas has different challenges to those in urban areas. Most of the land in rural areas falls under tribal authorities. Since traditional leaders were previously not part of the local government and now that they have been included in the system, there is a concern as to how the new system is functioning. There is a concern in terms of representation in the local council, degree and areas of participation in the development or planning processes, as well as in terms of the roles, functions, and responsibilities. The position that Ghana's traditional rulers occupy and play in local governance has been the subject of debate in recent years. Traditional rule represents the indigenous and authentic African form of governance, because it has been with the people throughout history. Not much work has been done concerning the relationship that exists between the traditional authorities and the state institutions in regarding decision-making on development matters since the inception of the New Local Government System in 1988 (Guri, 2006). Traditional authorities have been voicing their discontent at the way they have been neglected by central government in decision-making. A number of studies have affirmed the legitimacy and relevance of African traditional institutions in the socio-cultural, economic, and political lives of Ghanaians, particularly in the rural areas. Institutions, like cultural values, are rarely static as they change with changes in their socio-economic context. African traditional institutions are no exception (Mengisteab, 2008). It therefore cannot be denied that the traditional system can be adapted to be more relevant to socio-economic development, especially in maintaining law and order which is a necessary condition for development in every part of the world. The traditional system still remains the centre of decision-making, allocation of resources, and conflict management and it is adhered to principally, although not exclusively, by the population in the traditional sectors of the economy. It was not until fairly recent reflections on development policy failures, especially in Africa, that the realization dawned that traditional authority is indispensable for peace and socio-economic development in Ghana. Little attention has therefore been paid to the relevance of traditional authority in development by researchers especially in Cape Coast, Teshie, and Kumasi. It is on the basis of this that this research is deemed very necessary and will therefore help in assessing the extent to which governance is practiced by traditional authorities in these three communities.

Research Questions

1. Is traditional authority and the chieftaincy institution relevant in Cape Coast, Teshie, and Kumasi?
2. What is the indigenous understanding of what constitutes governance and good governance?

Methodology

The case study comparative approach was adopted for this study which gave the views of the actors in governance in Teshie Nungua, Cape Coast, and Kumasi to avoid the risk of generalities on issues which according to Rohlfing (2012), regardless of how similar cases are they can never be perfectly identical. Again, the design lent itself to gathering information from a larger population in order to provide descriptive and inferential information on variables related to the study. It also helped to obtain information that concerns the current status of phenomena, in this case, how traditional authorities perceive governance. According to Flyvbjerg (2006), scientific discipline without a large number of thoroughly executed case studies is a discipline without systematic production of exemplars and a discipline without exemplars is ineffective. Owing to this, the design involved the collection of data from all participants captured for the study by administering a questionnaire and incorporating a semi-structured interview guide on the variable of governance among the traditional rulers in the three communities.

The target population for the study were the traditional leaders, traditional priests/priestesses, heads of family, and some selected opinion leaders of Asanteman (Kumasi) in the Ashanti Region; Agona, Elmina Eguafo Effutu, Oguaa (Cape Coast) in the Central Region and Gas of Teshie La Asere and Nungua in the Greater Accra Region. This population was targeted because they play vital administrative roles in decision-making as far as governance is concerned in the Akan and Ga areas of the country (Ghana).

Malhotra and Birks (2007) stipulated that a sample is the sub-group of the population selected for participation in a study. A sample size of 85 participants was selected for the study. A multistage approach was used to select the sample. In all, the cluster sampling, stratified sampling, purposive sampling, simple random sampling, and quota sampling methods were used to select the sample. The snowballing was employed in the sampling process where a small pool of initial informants to nominate other participants who meet the eligibility criteria for the study. This technique, according to Morgan (2008), is a useful way to pursue the goals of purposive sampling in situations where there are no lists or other sources for locating members of the population of interest, but it requires that the participants are likely to know others who share the characteristics that make them eligible for inclusion in the study.

Data were collected from respondents using a questionnaire. The questionnaire had a number of statements that elicited information on variables that determined respondents' perceptions on governance in their communities. The research questions were analysed using means and standard deviations.

Results and Discussion

This study sought to assess the extent to which governance is practiced by traditional authorities in Cape Coast, Teshie, and Kumasi.

It was revealed that traditional governance contributes to participants' understanding of what constitutes governance and good governance. Most of the statements that pointed to governance had mean scores between 1.8 and 1.9 which indicates a moderate response. Participants agree that governance is about how people are to behave in a given society, decision-making processes rest in the hands of those involved in governance, actors in governance are accountable to the people of the community as well as leaders are encouraged to make tough decisions that are in the interest of the people. Again, participants' knowledge on governance is based on the statement that those in charge of governance are chosen from a particular lineage in the society ($M = 2.14$, $SD =$

1.09) indicating a positive response which supports the fact that participants know what constitutes good governance and who that actors of governance are. The results also indicated that participants have knowledge of governance ($M = 2.12$, $SD = 0.918$) and this further proves that the participants are aware of what constitutes governance in their societies.

Table 1

Traditional Governance

Statement	M	SD
I know that:		
Chiefs are in charge of governance in my area.	1.95	0.872
Governance is about how people are to behave in a given society.	1.80	0.799
Those in charge of governance are chosen from a particular lineage in the society.	2.14	1.09
Chiefs and family heads are involved in the politics of the society.	1.94	0.777
Decision-making processes rest in the hands of those involved in governance.	1.80	0.799
Taboos are associated with the position of being an actor in governance in the society.	2.40	1.3
Actors in governance obtain their authority from different sectors.	2.12	0.918
Actors in governance are accountable to the people of the community.	1.94	0.904
Actors are committed to the safety and security of the people in the community.	1.86	0.789
Leaders are encouraged to make tough decisions that are in the interest of the people.	1.75	0.815

Source: Field survey (2019).

Discussions

The data showed that a traditional leader is a person who by virtue of his ancestry occupies the throne or stool of an area and/or who has been appointed to it in accordance with the customs and tradition of the area and has traditional authority over the people of that area. Traditional authority is built up by roles, customs, and practices that are accepted into the ritual of life. Certain things do occur because they used to happen that way. Traditionalism in this regard is then seen as a psychic attitude-set for habitual workaday life and the belief in everyday routine as an inviolable form of conduct. Responses from the respondents emerged that the understanding of the term “governance” is “*amanbu*, and *manɔnokwɔmɔ*”. Governance to the participants is about *omanhene* or *manɔsɔ* (the paramount chief) faithfully accounting for the things and people (in the state) entrusted in his care. It was observed that governance occurs not only at the level of the state. It has multi-level nature starting from the lineage, towns, and villages up to the state (paramountcy) level. At each level, leaders are expected to give account of their stewardship. Among the Akan, Fante and Ga’s, leaders are seen as trustees holding properties in trust of the community and especially the ancestors and the yet un-born. The Paramount Chief of Oguaa Traditional Area Osabarima Kwesi Atta II explained governance as:

Governance is a structure put in place to steer the affairs of the people following stated procedures and rules. Those in charge of governance are the chiefs, elders, opinion leaders. Elements of good governance are free movement, eliminations of intimidation, following stated procedures in solving problems, fair judgment and peace. Bad governance on the other hand is not following stated procedures in dealing with issues, e.g. discrimination, difficulty in getting things done, biases in agitating cases. Those in charge of governance are not tabooed, they appear tabooed due to perceptions and positions they acquire at certain given times (Interview Session with Osabarima Kwesi-Atta II, July 17, 2019)

Another sub-chief alluded to the fact that “Governance basically deals with any set of laws and activities which brings progress to a given people at a given time” (Nana Kodwo Addae II, Aburahen of Cape Coast, June 13, 2019).

These two ideas in addition to the etymology of the word reveal that governance among the indigenous Ghanaian societies concerns not only the process of setting and utilising some basic ground rules but also the outcomes of the process. The outcomes of the process are progress in the life of both the individual and community. This theme of progress will be further discussed because it bothers on the people's understanding of what constitutes good or bad governance. With reference to the actors in charge of governance, the study revealed that the actors are the paramount chief (*Omanhen or manɔse*), queen mother (*ohemaa*) elders in the chief's palace who are representatives of the various lineages and the Asafo companies (*mpaninfo*) family heads (*abusua mpanyinfo*), heads of towns and villages and linguists (*akyeame*). They form the traditional council of each paramount area. However, the activities of agents of the modern state, such as the Regional Ministers, District or Municipal Chief Executives, Assemblymen, the District or Municipal Unit Committee Members have all come to impinge on traditional governance. Implicitly the traditional governance structures cannot act in isolation to bring needed progress.

Governance comes from the people and it is all about making sure that the laws in the country are obeyed. Stakeholders of governance include the executive, the judiciary and the legislature at the national level, locally, governance is vested in the hands of the chiefs. One can say they are affected by taboos because they are in positions of authority. Good governance deals with regulation, participation, interaction, freedom, good living, food, shelter provided for the citizenry. Bad governance on the other hand, is selfishness and denial of goods and services to the people. Orientation is normally given at the installation of the chiefs on how to communicate with the outside world, comportment of oneself in public. Taboos are not being held in high esteem because of socio economic problems, however when they are put in place, they help in that direction. One who is in charge of taboos and breaks must be punished severely (Interview Session with Osabarima Kwesi-Atta II, July 17, 2019)

Even though traditional authority in Ghana finds expression in different forms, like religious leadership, custodians of earth shrines (*tindaana*), lineage headship, and chieftaincy, the chieftaincy institution is the dominant form of traditional authority (Assimeng, 1996; Ray, 2003). The current highest chieftaincy institution, the National House of Chiefs, was created by the 1971 Chieftaincy Act introduced under the broadly pro-chief Busia government and reaffirmed by the 1992 Constitution. The 1992 Constitution sought to insulate the institution from the state in order to ensure the political neutrality and hence survival and prestige of chieftaincy. It forbade the state appointment of chiefs (Article 270, Paragraph 2a) and the active participation of chiefs in party politics (Article 276, Paragraph 1) and conferred on the National House of Chiefs the right of recognition of any chief which had previously rested with the state (Article 270, Paragraph 3b) (Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992). The legal framework that guides Ghana's recent decentralization process is rooted in Chapter 20 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana.

The chieftaincy institution in Ghana, as described by Oseadeeyo Addo Dankwa III (2004), is nobody's creation and therefore cannot be easily destroyed. In the traditional governance set-up, the chief has legislative, judicial, administrative, political, and executive functions. Before any one ascends to the throne to become a chief, his life is his own; however, the moment he ascends the throne his way of life is tied to the demands of the stool which he occupies and the traditions and customs of the people he is supposed to lead. A chief is supposed to be a man or woman with an unblemished character, one whose character embodies decency, hard work and diligence. A role model for the community, a chief is highly respected because he is considered very capable to lead and speak on behalf of his people. In recent years, modern institutional frameworks have taken over virtually all the functions that chiefs performed, leaving the position of the chief as merely ceremonial and

ineffective. Chiefs have been the unifying factor not only in their communities but also the nation as a whole. Chiefs and religious leaders have been relied upon to mediate disputes at all levels of the nation.

According to the participants, traditional authorities use their social capital (personal or ethnic connections) advantage to access projects for their communities. According to Daasebre Kwebu-Ewusie VII (2019), chiefs continue to hold a symbolic cultural role to have become informal administrators and points of liaison between local communities and state. The root identity of Ghanaian chiefs is that of sovereign community leader. However, for his institutional survival the chief does not depend on charisma or leadership competence. Once enstooled (appointed), chiefs are in that position for life, protected by the state and ultimately by the power other chieftaincies wield across the country—the legal-rational authority of the state supports the chiefs' traditional authority.

In a related way, the Gbobuwulomo (2019) remarked that: “our custom is that if you deny your community of something that we know you can provide, then you automatically deny yourself of our assistance in your leadership position in the society” (Personal interview, August 29).

Traditional authorities in collaboration with the District Security Council (DISEC) maintain law and order, and make bye-laws. According to the traditional authorities in the study area, they collaborate with the DISEC, Forestry Service Commission and the Game and Wildlife Department to restrict people from entering the reserved areas to farm or hunt. Confirming the position of traditional authorities, the focus group discussants said that traditional authorities play significant roles in educating the public of the need to show compliance by not going to farm or hunt in prohibited areas at the Game and Wildlife restricted areas. According to the respondents, all traditional authorities said that they would not shield anybody including children of the royal gates found farming or hunting in the prohibited areas. Traditional leaders are the trustee of community resources. If they do not take good care of it then, they fail in their leadership roles.

Various people are opposed to traditional institutions for a variety of reasons. Some see them as backward instruments of social oppression and lack of progress in areas, such as political organisation, women's rights, social mobility, and economic rights (Senyonjo, 2004). Some critics also see them as instruments of exclusion (Nkwi, 1976). The underlying fears in all these perceptions are the assumption that traditional institutions are static, frozen in time, and cannot be modified. Nonetheless, critics of traditional institutions have not provided convincing argument to explain why the people choose to continue to adhere to the institutions of chieftaincy (Ayee, 2006).

Traditional authorities are indispensable, because they form a major part of the country's history, culture, political and governance systems. Although, some people may hold a different view and would not consider this potential, there is evidence to suggest that service delivery in rural areas has been smoother in areas where government structures had good relations with traditional leaders, than in areas where relations were not good (Miller, 1968). Good governance can only materialise through the articulation of indigenous political values and practices and their harmonisation with modern democratic practices (Ayittey, 2002). Understanding the dynamics of traditional authorities entails distinguishing between the social positions of the chiefs and that of the elders in providing some protection for the interests of their communities in order to maintain the legitimacy of their leadership. Irrespective of the powers they wield, some chiefs are not pleased with the fact that they have not been given direct role in the governance at the local level. The institution of chieftaincy together with its allied divisions has found its place in modern governance with well demarcated functions and roles. Although the Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462) provides for consultation with traditional

authorities in relation to the 30 per cent of district assembly members who are government appointees, the reality is that over the years chiefs have not been consulted (IDEG, 2007). Even when they are consulted, their nominees are usually not considered on the final list of appointment by the President (Aye, 2006). This exclusion has not been well accepted by chiefs. Bofo-Arthur (2006) agreed that the neutrality of chiefs can be guaranteed only when they desist from descending into the muddy arena of partisan political activities and rather channel their energies and influences into other development activities.

Conclusion

Chieftaincy as an institution is deeply rooted in the local communities. Thus, the institutional representation of chiefs on the District Assemblies must be considered as a necessary process of integration into the formal local governance system. Chieftaincy is not based on high satisfaction with the way chiefs perform their tasks. People can simultaneously support the institution of chieftaincy and be highly critical of the performance of certain chiefs or certain tasks. The study revealed that a chief is both the politico-military and religious head. The stool (throne) he occupies, which is the symbol of his political power, is an ancestral stool. This partly accounts for the spiritual/sacred aspect of the throne and the source of the great dignity, respect, and veneration the chief is accorded.

Recommendation

It is recommended that there is the need for the modern state to go beyond just involving chiefs in only sod cutting and other state functions to include them in the implementation of local development policies. The District Chief Executives (DCE's) and the Members of Parliament (MPs) in particular should take up the initiative of working closely with their chiefs. This will help in enhancing project sustainability. A good working relationship between the two systems of governance will also go a long way to promote good governance. There is therefore the need for government to put in place measures that will ensure a smooth working relationship.

It is also recommended that the roles and functions of traditional authorities and local government officials must be well-defined and agreed upon and the public must be made to understand this delineation of responsibilities. Traditional authorities must be fully involved in the implementation of programmes and projects in their area of jurisdiction to enhance the legitimacy of those projects and programmes to the local people.

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