

**DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF PUBLIC GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**



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**TABOOS AND GOVERNANCE IN ASANTE FANTE AND GA  
SOCIETIES IN GHANA**

**Supervisor**

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In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that this PhD thesis entitled “Taboos and Governance in Fante Asante and Ga Societies in Ghana” is the product of my own work. It contains no material that has been previously presented in whole or in part to any institution of learning for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Any already published materials that have been used in this thesis to the best of my knowledge have been duly acknowledged. Unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged

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### **Supervisor’s Declaration**

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the National University of Public Service, Budapest, Hungary.

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## **Abstract**

The study sought to explore Taboos and Governance in the Asante, Fante and Ga Societies in Ghana. The specific objectives were to have a good understanding of what constitutes governance and good governance in the context of the indigenous set-up; to assess the current nature of governance related taboos; to evaluate the impact of contemporary society on taboos and the consequence of any impact of contemporary society on the taboos on indigenous governance. The study was guided by the Creswell's knowledge on research paradigm to describe a researcher's philosophical view and conceptualisation of reality. The study adopted mixed method approach in achieving the objective of the study by obtaining empirical data for the research questions. Two sets of instruments were adopted for data gathering. The first instrument was an interview guide that was used to solicit structured data from the respondents in order to elicit more candid and objective replies. The second instrument was a questionnaire, which was used by the researcher to enable him gather the exact responses relevant to the study, from participants. The main findings of the study disclosed that the people in the study areas are uniquely structured as far as their traditions and cultures are concerned. Secondly, it came to light that traditional rulers occupy unique position, hence in order to maintain certain standards to please their subjects on whose authority they rule, they cannot avoid observing taboos. Thirdly, taboos remain the key factor for guiding principles of moral conduct towards the exploitation of property belonging to the community. Fourthly, the study revealed that there is lack of co-ordination between Traditional Authorities (T.A's) and Local Government Institutions (L.G. I's) necessitating the call by the TA's to be involved in all deliberations of governance in their area of authority. Fifthly, the Chiefs are calling for a means to make real the dictates of the 1992 constitution to be part of the local governance structure. Finally, the study showed that, the Chieftaincy institution is an institution that cannot be done away with. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher made a number of recommendations, which could have far-reaching results on the chieftaincy institution and the local government system in Ghana. The suggested recommendations are; the chieftaincy institution should be assisted financially by the government, Non-Governmental Organizations, (NGOs) the District Assembly and private individuals to organize training workshops and durbars to increase people's awareness about the importance of taboos on indigenous governance system as part of governance of the society. Added to that, one potential area which should be of concern to Ghana as a nation is chieftaincy conflict and this comes about because people who are not

members of the royal families and lineages are using their influence and wealth to usurp power. With reference to this, the study recommends that the National House of Chiefs (NHC) should intensify the codification of all succession lines of chiefs in the study areas and the country as a whole, this will prevent usurpers from fomenting troubles in the traditional areas studied and largely the country. Last but not the least, the study recommends that, the process of limiting leadership to only members of the royal houses deny these traditional areas where the study took place of all the leadership potential available to them, Until that practice is changed the areas would be denied of services of the general members of the society.

## Absztrakt/Összefoglalás

A disszertáció arra törekszik, hogy feltárja a Ghánában található Asante, Fante és Ga törzsi rendszerek tabuit és kormányzati rendszereit. A disszertáció konkrét célkitűzése, hogy

- képet adjunk arról, mit jelent a kormányzás és a jó kormányzás az őslakos társadalmi szerkezetben;
- felmérje a jelenlegi kormányzáshoz kapcsolódó tabuk rendszerét;
- megvizsgálja, hogy milyen hatást gyakorol a jelenlegi, modern társadalom az őslakos kormányzati rendszerek tradícióira, különös tekintettel a tabukra;

A disszertáció a Creswell kutatási paradigmájának ismeretein alapul, amelynek célja, hogy feltárja a kutató hipotéziseit a kialakult gyakorlattal összefüggésben. A tanulmány vegyes módszerű kutatási megközelítést alkalmazott a tanulmány céljának eléréséhez, amikor empirikus adatokra alapozta a kutatási kérdések megválaszolását. Az empirikus adatgyűjtéshez két módszert vettünk alapul.

Az első egy interjú-útmutató volt, amelyet arra használtunk fel, hogy strukturált adatokat kapjunk a válaszadóktól, annak érdekében, hogy azok minél őszintébb és objektívebb válaszokat adjanak.

A második módszer egy kérdőív volt, amelyet a kutató arra használt, hogy a résztvevőktől összegyűjtse a disszertáció szempontjából releváns, pontos válaszokat.

A tanulmány fő ténymegállapítása, hogy a disszertáció által vizsgált területeken élő emberek hagyományai és kultúrájuk egyedi vonásokat mutatnak.

Másrészt, a kutatás rávilágított arra a tényre is, hogy a hagyományos uralkodók egyeduralkodó pozíciót töltenek be, ami azt jelenti, hogy a nép, amely az uralmuk alatt áll, engedelmeskedni köteles neki, bizonyos előírások betartása érdekében, mely utóbbiak legfontosabb formái a tabuk.

Harmadrészt, a tabuk továbbra is kulcsszerepet játszanak az erkölcsi normákon alapuló magatartási elvek megtartásában, különösen a közösséghez tartozó vagyon hasznosításával kapcsolatban.

Negyedrész, a disszertáció rámutatott arra, hogy hiányzik a koordináció a hagyományos hatóságok (TA-k) és az önkormányzati intézmények (LGI-k) között, amely azt eredményezi, hogy

az önkormányzati intézmények nem teszik lehetővé, hogy a TA-k részt vegyenek a kormányzati tanácskozásokon, amely egyébként a hatáskörükbe tartozik.

Ötödrészt, a törzsfőnökök ragaszkodnak azokhoz a jogaikhoz, amelyeket az 1992. évi alkotmány szabályoz, és ami a helyi önkormányzati részvételüket garantálja.

A kutatás eredményei alapján a kutató számos olyan ajánlást fogalmazott meg, amelyek bevezetése hasznos eredményeket hozhat a Ghánában lévő törzsfőnöki intézményi és az önkormányzati rendszerben.

A javasolt ajánlások a következők: a kormánynak, a nem kormányzati szervezeteknek (NGO-knak), a Kerületi Közgyűlésnek és magánszemélyeknek pénzügyi segítséget kell nyújtaniuk a törzsfőnöki intézmény számára képzési műhelyek és dűrbárok szervezésével, annak érdekében, hogy az emberek figyelmét felhívják arra, hogy az őslakos kormányzati rendszerben lévő tabuk milyen fontos szerepet töltenek be a helyi törzsi szervezetek kormányzati rendszerében.

Van azonban egy olyan probléma, amely Ghánának mint nemzetnek sok gondot okoz: a törzsfőnöki pozícióval kapcsolatos konfliktusok, amelyek azért jönnek létre, mert azok a törzsi tagok, akik nem a királyi családok tagjai, vagy azok leszármazói, befolyásukkal és vagyonukkal sokszor a királyi hatalom megszerzésére törekszenek.

Ez utóbbira tekintettel, a disszertáció azt javasolja, hogy a Nemzeti Törzsfőnökök Házának (NHC) támogatnia kell a törzsfőnökök utódlásának hagyományos módját, olyan módon, hogy ezt kodifikálják az alkotmányban, vagy valamely más jogszabályban, annak érdekében, hogy a trónbitorlókat megakadályozzák abban, hogy fegyveres konfliktusok és ezáltal instabilitás alakuljon ki az ország törzsi területeien.

Végül, de nem utolsósorban, a disszertáció azt javasolja, hogy a disszertáció által vizsgált területeken csak azokat a vezetési formákat ismerje el az állami kormányzat, amelyek a királyi házak tradicionális utódlásán alapulnak, és azokat ne, amelyek ennek nem felelnek meg. Amíg ez a gyakorlat bevezetésre nem kerül, azok a potenciális vezetők, akik ugyan alkalmasak lennének a vezetésre, de a királyi család utódlási hagyományai szerint nem választhatók meg, nem tölthetnek be vezető funkciót.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to Professor Naana Jane Opoku-Agyemang (Nee Sam) for believing in me and giving me a lifeline.

To my wife Abigail Maame Esi Tawiah Essel, my son Papa Kwaku Gyan Essel (Prof.) and daughter, Maame Ama Eduwaa Essel. (Lady) Your sacrifices for me to pull this work through means a lot to me and I promise you, I shall also sacrifice the rest of all I have now for your growth and development. This I pledge and may God be my help.

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**Appreciation can change a day, even change a life. Your willingness to put it into words is all that is necessary.”**

**(Margaret Cousins - 1878-1954 - Indian-Irish Poet)**

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## **List of Abbreviations**

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
AIR	Akan Indigenous Religion
ATR	African Traditional Religion
AU	African Union
AWGIPC	ASEAN Working Group on Intellectual Property Cooperation
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
DA	District Assembly
DCE	District Chief Executive
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
EU	European Union
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GTZ	German Technical Co-operation
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
ILGS	Institute of Local Government Studies
IPACC	Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee's
LGI's	Local Government Institutions
MMDAs	Metropolitan/ Municipal/ District Assemblies
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council

RCCs	Regional Co-ordinating Councils
SfDR	Support for Decentralisation Reform Programme
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNPFII	UN Permanent Forum on indigenous Issues
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
TA's	Traditional Authorities

## **Introduction**

### **Topicality of the Issue**

There are many kinds of African Traditional Religion (ATR) belief systems amongst the various groups of individuals on the African continent. In Ghana, diverse religious beliefs and expressions are portrayed within the celebration of spiritual festivals, rites of passage, funerals, etc, among various, ethnic groups, clans and families. This does not allay the point that while various ATR expressions are found in different ethnic communities in Africa, the core philosophies in African Traditional Religion, namely the assumption in an exceedingly supernatural being, lesser deities or spirits and ancestors, as practiced in geographical area and, particularly, by the Akan in Ghana are virtually the identical. Megasa (1997) states that the varieties are more of these of expressions than basic belief. In terms of expression, therefore, religious fusion has been with African societies before the arrival of other foreign religions like Christianity and Islam which are the two dominant religions in the world over. However, the differences found within ATRs don't end in religious conflicts and divisions thanks to what common thread in indigenous values (Opoku, 1978).

African Traditional Religions place emphasis on practical living rather than doctrines that reinforce exclusive claims to truth and beliefs. The differing traditional religious systems open up, in mutual exchange, to diverse religious elements, which equip them to retort to such practical challenges of life as diseases, poverty and death. ATRs aren't in competition and conflict, but, rather, in complimentary roles in meeting the social, psychological and spiritual needs of the people. While it should be true, to some extent, that the presence of Christianity and Islam has had the effect of reducing the prevailing influence of ATR on African people, I do not think that these two religions have, actually, flounced away any evidence or any vitality of ATR in African societies. ATR and its cultural values are the most important factors that have formed and shaped African thoughts and expressions, no matter religious persuasions. They are rooted within the very being of Africans, and are expressed in various styles of behaviour and conduct.

In Ghana, chieftaincy is one among the few traditional institutions that also exist irrespective of the influx of western cultures and its resultant neglect and discard of some Ghanaian traditions. The African Traditional Institutions of governance is unique (Mengisteab, 2008). Chieftaincy in Ghana is thought to be a male dominated sphere. Many of Africa's nationalist, first-generation leaders, like Houphouet-Boigny, Sekou Toure, Leopold Senghor, and Kwame Nkrumah, saw

chiefs as functionaries of the colonial State and chieftaincy as an anachronistic vestige of the old Africa that had no place within the post-colonial political landscape (Busia, 1968). Skalnik (2004) notes that chieftaincy provides a bedrock which is constructed in include a new mixed governance structure. In the traditional realm, the roles of chiefs are purposely to act as custodians of traditions and also to advocate for the interests of the communities they govern within the broader national political structure. At the grassroots level, chieftaincy systems, for the foremost part, overlap with the consensual systems. Chiefs at the grassroots level are accountable to the higher-level chiefs and infrequently have the ability to subvert the community's interests. Despite these variations, the literature portrays chieftaincy as a standardized system and therefore the skeptics posit, with little acknowledgement of the democratic practices--especially at grassroots levels--that chieftaincy cannot be reconciled with modern democratic institutions.

A taboo will always have something to try to do with "sacredness" something which will be "forbidden". Taboos apply to "persons" or "something". The chieftaincy institutions used taboos in ensuring that good governance prevails in an exceedingly given society in Ghana. Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) rely solely on indigenous ways of constructing life meaningful to people. Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) per Millar (1999), are defined as local knowledge held by indigenous people or local knowledge that's unique to a given culture or society. Miller, Kendie, Apusiga and Haverkort, (eds) (2006) further affirmed that conventional science (Western knowledge) and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) have the common objective of negotiating nature. They both seek to formulate the laws and rules that govern nature and also the universe. While the natural sciences formulate laws, principles and theories that designate nature, Indigenous Knowledge Systems come up with interdicts (do's and don'ts), values, beliefs, customs, furthermore as rituals and ceremonies that purport to be supported an understanding or theory of how nature and also the universe work. One particular area where this can be well evident is that the development and governance in solving problems in Africa, thus making IKS a subject matter for serious academic pursuit in recent times. Within the world of governance, IKS is receiving attention and also the focus is essentially on the chieftaincy institution (Agyemang, 2009; Ayittey, 1991; Bekker and Jeffery, 1989; d'Engelbronner-Kolff, Hinz & Sindano (eds.), 1998; Donald & Reddy (eds.) 2003; Miller, 1968; Odotei & Awedoba (eds.) 2006). Thus, IKS from the angle of the people within the study areas is that the systems, rules and norms that help them to grasp the globe around them. Another aspect of IKS, which is additionally gaining grounds and

has attracted interest in academia, is taboos and governance. Within the African traditional setting, governance is seen within the chieftaincy institution and also the citizenry, where each complements the opposite in adhering to the varied taboos outlined for harmonious and peaceful existence of the society. It also helps to control life and property. However, this unique element of African Traditional Religion (ATR) has been watered down in recent times thanks to the influx of science and technology and influences from some religious beliefs, especially Christianity and Islam in Ghana.

According to Khan and Parvaiz (2010, p5), a “taboo could be a strong social prohibition (ban) against words, objects, actions or discussions that are considered undesirable or offensive by a gaggle, culture, society or community”. Steiner (1956, p. 21) concludes that “taboo is anxious (1) with all the social mechanisms of obedience which have ritual significance; (2) with specific and restrictive behaviour in dangerous situations. One might say that taboo deals with the sociology of danger itself, for it's also concerned (3) with the protection of people who are in peril, and (4) with the protection of the society from those endangered, and thus dangerous, persons”. However, Osei (2006) stated that taboo means “an akyiwade; that which is forbidden or prohibited”. Some taboos are considered to be global, but each culture even have their own set of taboos. Allan and Burrige (2006:105) mention that new taboos on sexuality, religion, gender, disability, race and ethnicity have appeared in English-speaking societies. This phenomenon is additionally visible in Germany where under the info protection law it is forbidden act to reveal the ethnicity of criminals in newspapers. To elaborate on this, German courts allow the names and ethnicities of criminals to be suppressed in news reports once they need paid their debt to society (Schwartz, 2009; Arthur, 2009).

Taboos do not remain the same over the years. New taboos appear constantly whereas old ones are taking various shapes (Farberow, 1963:2; Allan & Burrige, 2006:105). Crystal (1995:173) suggests that a transparent line must be drawn between the language of taboo, the language of abuse and also the language of swearing. Crooks (2006:214), however, notes that for non-native speakers, all taboo words and phrases usually have the same impact. In fact, despite its tendency to embrace universal canons our society continues with behaviour dominated by purely archaic taboos. Whether this tendency is criticized or accepted, it is mostly known as an indispensable entity for the understanding of contemporary life in Ghana and Africa. Per Omobola's (2013), view, within its historical context, taboo is a sacred term for a group of cultic or religious

prohibitions instituted by traditional religious authorities as instruments for moral motivation, guidance, and objectivity for shielding the sanctity of their shrines and also the wellbeing of their worshipping communities. The term is additionally applicable to any form of social prohibition imposed by the leadership of a community regarding certain times, places, actions, events, and other people especially, but not exclusively, for religious reasons and also the well-being of the society.

Taboo may therefore be applied in two senses. The first, which is the narrow sense represents the cultic usage and the second, which is the broader sense depicts its usage in the socio-economic and political contexts. Furthermore, a taboo (both cultic and religious) is part of a set of taboos, but does not represent the entirety of taboos. For an equal reason, religion is beneficial to everyone as they subscribe to one form or the other, but not a necessary condition for the existence of taboos (Osei, 2006). Part of the matter in any discussion of taboo is that the kind of definitions and uses of the word it is associated with. However, the term typically refers to prohibitions placed upon particular people, objects or deeds, and is employed within the noun form. Nonetheless, “taboo” can also be utilized in the “predicative and adjectival sense” to talk over with “persons, places, things, or conditions invested a mysterious attributes and also the prohibitions arising from the identical attribute” (Levine, 1986:995). Both the narrow and also the broad usage of the term are evident in Akan (Fantes) and Ewe discourses on taboos. The closest equivalent to taboos within the Akan community is ‘akyiwade3’ or ‘musuo’ which translates to “that which is forbidden or prohibited” (Gyekye, 1995).

In Ghana for example, the role of taboo in solving the contemporary environmental crisis is an ongoing debate. Some people are of the conservationist stance, and reckon that traditional beliefs and practices played a big and positive role in traditional societies and still exercise its influence on the fashionable society additionally. The impact they exercise, however, appears to have lessen as compared with traditional societies, thanks to factors like western scientism and modernity - western hegemonic tendencies that have demonized African traditional and cultural values and promoted the concept that they are diabolic, savage and regressive. This school of thought posits that reviving such traditional values are of benefit to the fashionable society. On the opposite hand, there are others who are of the view that traditional beliefs and practices have outlived their usefulness in modern society. Yet, there are the centrist who hold moderate view about the relevance of such traditional values to the times. Douglas (1966) notes that, with “modern”

societies, pollution may be a matter of aesthetics, hygiene or etiquette, which only becomes grave and it may create social embarrassment. The sanctions are social sanctions, contempt, ostracism, gossip, and possibly an action from the police in the community. However, within the “primitive” societies, the results of pollution are rather more wide ranging.

### **Reasons of Choosing the Subject**

Taboos in “primitive” societies, by virtue of their religious status and sanctions from the supernatural, become reinforcement of reverence for status. Douglas (1966) notes that primitive religions are inspired by fear and at the identical time are inextricably confused with defilement and hygiene. By this distinction between “primitive” and “modern” societies, anthropologists relegate the importance of traditional beliefs and practices to the “primitive” society. Thus, “taboo” has little to contribute to modern society since it relates solely to the “primitive” world. Moreover, one may argue that the association of taboo with “primitive” societies is inaccurate on the premise of its universal nature. Durkheim (1963:70) calls taboos a “phenomenon that is universal.” It must however be shown that, this view is not without criticism. Supported by this is the universal nature of taboos, which Holden (2000) has disagrees with anthropologists who assume a while ago that, taboos are a feature of “primitive” society. To Holden (2000), taboos are a major characteristic of any given society. However, certain taboos are also prevalent within particular cultures. For example, while environmental taboos, generally speaking, perform distinctly environmental functions of preserving vegetation and wildlife (Barre, Miriam and Dianne, 2009), what constitutes such taboos and therefore the sanctions for breaking them may vary from one culture to the another. For instance, within the Ghanaian context, taboos vary among tribes. Nevertheless, one can say that such variations neither discredit the universal nature of taboos nor reduce it to the status of a “primitive” belief. Rather, taboos may be a worldview that exists and functions in numerous ways supported by a fundamental attribute in addition to the social and ecological contexts during which cultures exist.

Taboos and governance are embraced as being one entity within the notion that without taboos the governance of a community cannot be firmly achieved. Odotei and Hagan (2002) postulates that when one is installed as a chief if the said individual doesn't swear, his legitimacy as a chief is questioned. Since governance is about legitimacy, the oath sworn gives legitimacy to leadership. It follows that, to date as a chief adheres to the oath of office his actions remain legitimate. It can

even be said that, an oath contains a spiritual force that brings dire consequences when broken. Likewise, that of taboo and governance seems to be the identical. An authority holder must adhere to the principles and norms of a society because these are there for a protracted time. Failure to stick to those, as an example, swearing of oath of office, will see a pacesetter responding to the wraths of the ancestors. He would be judged by his subjects by group action of the law if he conducted himself during a way that may bring this high office into disrepute. Taking a better study the weather and therefore the assertion by Busia (1968) that on the installation of the chief he swears an oath to control supported laid down rules that are fashioned on elements of fine governance, their absence or non-adherence by such leaders amounts to a violation of contract. Odotei and Hagan (2002) make an identical observation among the Asante. In their own words, the oath of the King-designate placed him under the law and therefore the power of the people.

His subjects would judge him by group action of the law if he conducted himself in a very way that may bring this high office into disrepute. It had been also these oaths, that the King wielded power as supreme judge, law-maker and supreme military commander (p.7). It is amply clear that non-adherence to oath of office is tantamount to breaking a taboo and breaking a taboo is invariably a breach of the law. As noted earlier on a breach of any the laws enshrined within the oath of office could make a frontrunner to lose legitimacy and hence cannot govern again. The bottom rules which give legitimacy and regulate the behaviour of leader in relevance the governed are transgressed. Elements of fine governance are found within the exchange of taboos between a chief and also the governed through their representatives within the chief's council of state. The relevant literature reviewed though not exhaustive reveal pertinent issues in relevance the study. It reveals that taboos prescribe certain basic ground rules that are necessary for governance in indigenous societies in Africa. They regulate the behaviour of both the rulers and also the ruled to confirm effective interaction of all actors to realize the target of society. Thus, one cannot have any discourse on governance in indigenous African societies without having recourse to taboos. The literature also reveals the threat contemporary society of plural values pose to indigenous culture, which, obviously, includes taboos. However, the questions posed as a part of the background to the current study remain un-answered within the literature. What is the present nature of the taboos, which are associated with governance? What role, if any, do they (the taboos) play within the indigenous governance of traditional African societies? These issues demand empirical data to possess an informed discussion on taboos and governance in contemporary African and for that

matter, Ghanaian societies. This is often exactly what this study seeks to try to do. It can be concluded to some extent that efforts made by early theorists and researchers towards taboos and governance within the Ghanaian society was deemed necessary in shaping the lives of the people and ensuring that some laws don't seem to be broken. The researcher therefore deemed it appropriate and important to research the present state of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) because it relates to governance and taboos.

Effective public governance helps to strengthen democracy and human rights, promote economic prosperity and social cohesion, reduce poverty, enhance environmental protection and therefore the sustainable use of natural resources, and reposes confidence in government and public administration. In keeping with the Action Aid, (2011) Government is that the process of exercising different sorts of power (social, political, economic, legal and administrative) within various institutional arenas. The important challenge during a democratic system is to make sure that the method of governance don't seem to be subverted and appropriated by economic and political elites. The inquiries to ask are what the 'common good' is and who decides that common good? Kahler and Lake (2004) state that governance is characterized as "decisions issued by one actor that a second is anticipated to obey," and refers to the control of social interactions by non-government actors (p.409). 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. Since governance is that the process of decision-making and implementation, an analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal stakeholders involved in decision-making and implementing the choices made, additionally as specializing in the formal and informal structures that are set in situ to make and implement the choices

## **Chapter I: Description of Scientific Problem, Research Questions and Hypothesis**

### **1.1 Description of the Scientific Problem**

It is observed that though taboos defy categorization, grouping them is of benefit to the understanding of taboos. The categorization clearly shows that these sanctions on do's and don'ts regulate every aspect of the human behaviour. They vary from the legal, social, through the economic, environmental to the moral dimension of human existence. Brempong (2006: p3) asserted that “taboos are leadership icons for all those in charge of governance, thus at the beginning of office they ought to swear an oath which is a seal of approval and assurance to the state that as a leader all taboos in the community would be observed”. Following from the observations made by Brempong (2006) that taboos were leadership icons and Busia (1968) that taboos regulated the behaviour of chiefs, one can infer that taboos is obviously encapsulated and contains some of the elements of good governance as advocated by the World Bank and they were used in the governance of indigenous societies.

Sarpong as cited by Nukunya (2016) on the abbreviation of aspects of African culture due to the negative impinging role of contemporary society and a hindsight that despite cultural continuity certain factors lead to changes and adaptations in culture, some basic questions come to mind on taboos: What is the current nature of taboos related to governance? Are the taboos still adhered to? What is their current place in the indigenous governance system? What is the impact of contemporary society on these taboos? It can be inferred that the observation of taboos is one unique feature in ATR. Thus, one is not far from right in alluding to the fact that the life and thought of the African revolve around taboos. One particular area where this is well manifested is governance, where all who matter in leadership such as chiefs, queen mothers, priests, priestesses and family heads avoid having a dysfunctional relationship with the supernatural through the strict observation of taboos. Such imbalances, as a result of taboos, create hardship not only for the leaders but also for the societies they govern.

Despite the decrease in the beliefs and adherence to ATR, Africans still practice and observe aspects of their culture, which include taboos. According to Chazan (1992), civil society refers to the segment of the society, organisations, groups and associations that interact with the state, influences the state and yet is distinct from the state. Since governance is the process of decision-making and decision implementation, an analysis of governance focuses on the formal and

informal actors involved in decision-making and implementation, the decisions made and the formal and informal structures that have been set in place to arrive at and implement the decision. Behind the consensus on the importance of governance, there is a world of difference in the actual meaning and essence of it. Depending on the angle from which governance is viewed, this can vary from the administrative efficiency and the quality of basic services to the community at one end of the spectrum through to principles of democratic decision-making and participatory development somewhere in the middle, and a human rights-based approach to development at the other end. This is reflected in the way the concept is defined by various donor and support agencies. Thus, good governance in the context of this paper refers to the conscientious manner of governing, guiding or directing people. In the world today, democracy and good governance are topical issues, which occupy central place in contemporary debate (Warren, 1998).

The World Bank (1989:p61) assert 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”. Not very long ago, economic reforms 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.

Good governance, therefore, implies the existence of competent and effective institutions respecting democratic principles. It extends democratisation into the sphere of resource management. Critics of the good governance discourse and the role it gives to civil society assert that its representation de-legitimizes state-led development by overemphasizing the internal deficiencies of the African state so as to impose neoliberal policies (Abrahamsen, 2000). Within the concept of good governance lies civil society. The objective of civil society, therefore, is to discipline and mobilise the ordinary people to bring them in line with the prevailing dominant paradigm. Moreover, there are issues with the very concept of civil society. Civil society is supposed to represent the interest of the community. But how are today’s civil society, which is

dominated by NGOs and organisations with international links who pursue the agenda of their international donors, representative of the local communities they seek to represent (Igoe & Kelsall, 2005; Hagberg, 2004)?

Although governance have been part of the Ghanaian societies, to the best knowledge of the researcher, it appears the aspect of taboos and governance has been left unattended. The questions of what is the current nature of taboos related to governance?; Are the taboos still adhered to?; What is their current place in the indigenous governance?; What is the impact of contemporary society on these taboos? are begging to be answered to throw light on contemporary traditional governance of the African societies such as the Akan, Fante and Ga Societies of Ghana since not much studies have been conducted using the three study areas. Existing literature indicates that most of the works carried out already have been conducted in the areas of governance. This has made it timely and imperative for a study of this kind to be undertaken most especially, to investigate the nature and place of taboos in indigenous governance in contemporary society. It uses the indigenous governance of three (3) selected societies from different regions in Ghana as its focus. These are the people of Kumasi, Cape Coast and the Accra.

## **1.2 Justification of the Research**

There is a large body of scholarly research on issues surrounding the issue of governance and taboos in the African context. Osei (2006) groups taboos into cultic, moral (Ofosuhene, 2006), economic, political, scientific and environmental taboos. Others group them under religious, social, those referring to the prevention of criminal behaviours (Cassier 1972) and thereby ensuring discipline in society. For instance, environmental taboos which ensure conservation of the environment and bio-diversity (Hyland & Ikumenne, 2005; Elmqvist, 2007; Toledo, 2000; Chemhuru & Masaka, 2010) also can represent economic and scientific taboos due to the economic role they play in highly agrarian or pastoral communities which largely indigenous African societies are and, more importantly, they have been proven to have a scientific bases. Within the same way the examples Osei (2006) gives as moral taboos have political and social relevance. On their social relevance, Manyike and Evans (1998) note that “within an African context, taboos play a very important role between the interaction of living members” (1998, p.223). Haralambos and Holborn (2000, p.4) also talk about taboos serving as "guidelines that direct conduct in specific situations".

It is neither the aim nor the scope of this thesis to detail on the question of indigeneity in Africa or in Ghana. However, so as to link the concept of indigeneity to indigenous knowledge and to attach indigenous knowledge to indigenous governance in Africa, it is necessary to focus on the approaches indigeneity in Africa is also addressed normally which *mutatis mutandis* applies to Ghana. In the traditional setting of Africans, taboos played significant and positive roles. They provided a collection of rules serving as an ethical guidance or a law within the community to confirm that peace and security were present within the community. Every moral system requires the existence of guiding principles, source(s) of motivation, and a few grounds for objectivity. Although formulated as 'negative' principles stressing 'do not...' and teaching people about what wasn't acceptable within the society, by implication, they were also saying to the actions that were presupposed to be done. In a society where there was no police, taboos served as a guardian of ethical values. To a specific extent, they were better than modern law enforcing agencies, because, in most cases, breaking of a taboo was related to an automatic punishment, one did not have to be caught to be punished; They helped within the upbringing of kids and provided rules for marriage: they may be described as 'teaching aids' when explaining some moral principles to them. When one lacked an intellectual ability to impart the importance of some moral principles, taboos were a useful way of transmitting the identical value from a unique perspective.

This research initiative is developed from the complexities in governance and the different forms of taboos in the society, which has made scientific research especially in this field to be treated as a phenomenon. The phenomenon inspire the research on taboos and governance in Asante Fante and Ga societies in Ghana; it presented evidence-based information on the practices of governance and the place of taboos in the settings of a society in Ghana and how these activities impact on the lives of the people in the community. In order to better inform policy discussions and public debate, it is also essential to understand why some specific taboos are observed amongst the three societies.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

Following the identified problem statement above the following are the research questions addressed by this research;

1. What is the indigenous understanding of what constitutes governance and good governance?
2. What is the current nature of governance related taboos?

3. Do taboos play any role in the contemporary indigenous governance of the study areas?
4. What are the ways indigenous governance system had been affected by contemporary society on taboos?

#### **1.4 Research Hypothesis**

While there is an extensive literature on social norms, human behaviour is not governed only by rational decision making. A culture or a society guides the behavior and the thoughts of their members by agreed upon expectations and rules. Knowing that violating a taboo is problematic in the governance structure of a society and also a taboo being a form of “thought police” that governs not just human behaviour and thoughts, the research raises the following hypothesis:

**1<sup>st</sup> hypothesis:** *In view of the nature of taboos and governance in the societies, there should be a significant difference in the enforced by social punishment when the governance structures are not adhered to. For such social punishment to be effective, behaviour must be observable.*

**2<sup>nd</sup> hypothesis:** *Some taboos are prohibited under the law, and transgressions may lead to severe punishment. A taboo has a meaning only if there are potential benefits attached to deviating from it. The benefits may materialize only in some special circumstances. An individual who considers violating a taboo will observe the realization of his own private benefits from such a deviation. It is assumed the chiefs in the three traditional areas use taboos to rule.*

**3<sup>rd</sup> hypothesis:** *The adequacy of the information emanating from the heads to inform the people of the society needs to be ascertained since codification knowledge management strategy supports the use of explicit knowledge primarily in a society, a strategy should be formally established to make taboos and governance more effective in the area of knowledge management. Chiefs and kingmakers are well-versed in the traditions on their communities and know the taboos that govern the communities in which they live in.*

**4<sup>th</sup> hypothesis:** *Taboos are described as social mechanism that helps in the management and protection of the environment although they are sometimes viewed as irrelevant, it is hypothesized that local governance would include measures to control resources as well as mechanisms for monitoring and enforcement that regulate human behaviour in relation to the sustainability of the society. Indigenes are expected to make the right decisions per their governance in the three communities.*

I shall therefore reflect predominantly on these challenges and seek to suggest adequate recommendations thereto.

### **1.5 Research Objectives**

Taboos, one can say is not isolated from governance and an attempt to separate one from the other would amount to placing illegitimate actors in charge of governance. Thus the overall objective was to find out the role taboos play in the indigenous governance of the people of Asante, Fante and Ga and to assess the impact of contemporary society on taboos which are related to governance. Specifically, the objectives of the study is therefore:

1. To have a good understanding of what constitutes governance and good governance in the context of the indigenous set-up. Although there is broad consensus on the elements which form the basis of good governance, societies and countries use and apply the concept of governance in different ways as governance is a process and carries no moral value as it depends solely on its efficiency and participation.
2. Social taboos represent good examples of informal institutions which are based on cultural norms that do not depend on government for either promulgation or enforcement. Informal institutions, such as taboos, have largely been neglected when it comes to traditional governance and this study seeks to assess the current nature of governance related taboos societies.
3. Taboos and cultural laws are social institutions that govern behaviour within communities and all human societies ascribe to some form of social taboo that is maintained as an informal institution by the cultural standards of its members. The impact of contemporary society on taboos is huge and can lead to a combined initiative of policies between proponents of governances and taboos that will depend greatly on the society's position
4. The consequence of any impact of contemporary society on the taboos on indigenous governance is overwhelming. In Ghana, indigenous belief systems have played significant roles in the governance system and taboos that serves to support official regulations.

## **1.6 Significance of the Research**

Chieftaincy is in fact a highly contested and politicised institution. Not all elements in Ghanaian society see it as legitimate or are prepared to allow it more than symbolic or ritual functions. Even where the legitimacy of traditional leaders is not challenged, their mode of selection and the way they carry out their functions often generate deep local conflict. The outcome of the study will show the extent to which taboos are essential to the governance of a society in Ghana. The study will inform policy makers to ensure that some aspects of taboos are inculcated into the governance system of the country especially in the area of local governance. These will therefore eradicate the corrupt practices that is bedevilling the country. It will give government the knowledge of providing the necessary logistics, infrastructure and funding to enhance and develop the traditional systems to continue to be relevant in the governance of the country.

The study will unearth the fact that taboos are the bedrock of the indigenous governance system among the three societies chosen for the study. Ghana is surrounded by numerous countries that believe in taboos. Nigeria for instance has a lot of certain cultural practices that goes in tandem with that of Ghana. This study will thus benefit the two countries and these days contemporary society have made both positive and negative in-roads into the knowledge and observance of taboos. The knowledge of the key role taboos play in society provides a platform for avoiding aspects of chieftaincy disputes. The reason is that some of the disputes emanate from the non-observance of some taboos in the installation process. Furthermore to that, the study will come out clearly as to how taboos ensure transparency, accountability, participation of citizenry in governance, checking corruption, checks and balances and bringing morality into leadership as well as ensuring legitimacy.

## **1.7 Scope of the Research**

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) rely solely on indigenous ways of making life meaningful to people. Within the area of governance, IKS is receiving attention and the focus is largely on the chieftaincy institution. However, the interest to investigate Taboos and Governance in Asante, Fante and Ga Societies in Ghana would help understand the concept of taboos and governance. The study will be delimited to taboos which are related to the indigenous governance of the Asante, Fante and Ga of Ghana. The study would not concern itself with taboos related to environmental conservation, health and social behaviour of people. The reason of this purposeful delimitation is

that the other categories of taboos have received much academic attention. Therefore, the researcher would avoid working on the same overworked field. However, the most important reason is that Africa is faced with many governance challenges and the understanding of the governance in its indigenous societies would be of tremendous help in understanding, if not addressing, some of these challenges.

According to Best and Kahn (1993), limitations are conditions beyond the control of the researcher, which place restrictions on the conclusions of the study and their application to other situations. The major limitations that the researcher envisages include respondents' unwillingness to reveal the information. Some respondents may also feel reluctant to respond to the questionnaires and that can cause a delay for the researcher to finish on time. In addition, the researcher cannot check whether the respondents are telling the truth since some respondents may deliberately be falsifying their replies

Moreover, the researcher would only interview the major actors in governance in Kumasi, Cape Coast and its surrounding towns and Gas in Asere and its surrounding areas for their views on the topic under investigation. This would reduce the impact of this limitation with other actors in the study area.

## **1.8 Definition of Terms**

Some key terminologies of the study have been operationalised as follows:

- Chief:** a traditional ruler who has been duly nominated and installed in accordance with all the tradition and custom of an area.
- Development:** implies the improvement in the lives of people as a result of enhancement in their self-esteem and aspirations. The improvement in lives is also based on complex cultural and environmental factors and their collaborations.
- Governance:** refers to the processes of maintaining state intervention, increasing the capacity of civil society and, elected officials in key decision-making and enhancing a continuous interaction between stakeholders.

- Indigenous Knowledge:** referred to as traditional and local knowledge rooted in culturally based values, ethics, production and consumption systems, relationships, rituals and community practices.
- Integration:** means making aspects of separate systems function in a coordinated and collaborated manner.
- Local government:** refers to sub-structure of the national government. The use of term *local* therefore applies to the district and the community levels of the national government.
- Traditional Authority:** refers to Chiefs at all levels (paramountcy, divisional, sub-divisional, odikro, village) together with their elders, family heads, leadership of youth and community vigilante groups.

## 1.9 Study Plan

To substantiate the content, the work comprises of eight major parts. At the beginning of the research, the Introduction serves as a brief overview of the topicality of the issue. Chapter one discusses the problem statement, thesis questions, hypothesis which are challenged throughout this doctoral thesis in an attempt to contribute to the wider knowledge, the objectives and the scope of the study. Chapter two discusses the methodological decisions and steps in the research.

Chapter Three focuses on the literature review which describes and evaluates the extensive literature I consulted, suggesting gaps and room for further research.

Chapter Four offers a theoretical framework which seeks to provide a deeper understanding and theoretical context of the Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Governance approach that I applied throughout the research.

Chapter five is on the belief systems of the Akans and Ga's of Ghana. It delved into their traditional worldviews, the relevance of traditional authority in Africa and the typical Ghanaian chief. Chapter six is the analysis of the interview and survey and the analysis explaining the interview and its implication for policy making for the integration of the target group.

Chapter seven consists of the presentation and discussion of the results and findings which is the role of chiefs in the governance structure through the observance of taboos.

The final chapter eight is conclusion and recommendation, limitations of the study and recommendation for further research.

### **1.10 Conclusion**

This first chapter has looked at the connection between taboos and governance in the Ghanaian society. How exclusive taboos has impacted on governance has had its toll on theory. Theorizing on the process of taboos in the societies is based on scholarly contribution to discourse. Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS), has in recent times also become the learning tool for the study of a phenomenon peculiar to given people. What constitutes such taboos and therefore the sanctions for breaking them may vary from one culture to the other. Taboos may be a worldview that exists and functions in numerous ways supported by a fundamental attribute in addition to the social and ecological contexts during which cultures exist. The evidence based role that taboos have in the governance structure as a consideration justifies this research. This Chapter discussed the problem statement, thesis questions, hypothesis which are challenged throughout this doctoral thesis in an attempt to contribute to the wider knowledge.

The next chapter (two) is the research method. It discusses the methodological tools applied in this research to achieve its goals. It gives an overview of the literature that discusses the methods and the reasons for adopting the methodological strategy used in the dissertation, why certain methods are chosen over others and the justification for choices made.

## **Chapter II: Research Methodology**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This section discusses the methodological tools applied in this research to achieve its goals. It gives an overview of the literature that discusses the methods and the reasons for adopting the methodological strategy used in the dissertation, why certain methods are chosen over others and the justification for choices made. This involves setting out the underlying assumptions guiding the research process and detailing what was done and why. The scientific tools available for investigating social problems are as numerous as they are varied (May 1993), though each approach to research has its own strengths and weaknesses. Because of the epistemological and ontological assumptions underpinning different methods, their suitability for investigating social problems depends very much upon the research context in question. The philosophical assumptions underlying this research come from the interpretive tradition. This implies a subjective epistemology and the ontological belief that reality is socially constructed. The fieldwork was conducted at the sites during the period from July 31, 2019 and September 30, 2019 after a steady correspondence has been maintained with the different informants at the sites. The main data collection techniques used in the research study were semi-structured interview guide, participant observation, group discussion, documentation analysis and questionnaires.

Reflecting this view, the thesis has been informed by and situated within an emerging tradition of mixed methods research. The discussion that followed the methodological issues and challenges of doing ‘real-world’ research was outlined, as is the utility of designing research based philosophically on a principle of methodological pragmatism. The first part of the chapter discusses key elements of the research process, which in this study used a pragmatic mixed methods framework. In the second part of the chapter, the specific methodological and research design choices made in the conduct of this study are detailed.

## 2.2 Research Design

Research design sets the philosophical foundation and orientation of an investigative process. According to Brewer and Hunter (1989) diversity of methods implies rich opportunities for cross-validating research procedures findings and theories. To exploit these opportunities means developing a broad-based research strategies exploring new avenues that methodological diversity presents. According to Creswell (2007), research paradigm is used to describe a researcher's philosophical view and conceptualisation of reality. This worldview about reality is the perspective, or thinking, or school of thought, or set of shared beliefs, that informs the meaning or interpretation of research data (Alise & Teddlie, 2010). Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) defined research paradigm as the conceptual lens through which researchers examine the methodological aspects of empirical investigative processes to determine the research methods that will be used and how the data will be analysed. This has significant implications for every decision made in the research process, including choice of methodology and methods.

A paradigm comprises four elements namely: epistemology, ontology, methodology and axiology. According to Healy and Perry (2000) ontology is about realities which are investigated by the researcher. According to Scotland (2012), it is imperative for researchers to have a firm understanding of these elements because they comprise the basic assumptions, beliefs, norms and values that each paradigm holds. As a result, a researcher is expected to uphold the tenets, assumptions, norms, values and beliefs of a selected research paradigm. However, in a research, the choice of the methodology mostly centres around and is to some extent determined by the research questions and the depth of scope of the study. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) stated that in educational research, there are three methods: qualitative methods, quantitative methods, and mixed methods. Quantitative methods for educational research were adopted from the natural and physical sciences. The greatest strength associated with quantitative research is that its methods produce reliable and quantifiable data that can potentially be generalized to a large population. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) pointed out that, "quantitative research is weak in understanding the context or setting in which people talk...the voices of participants are not directly heard in quantitative research (p.9). Further, quantitative researchers are in the background, and their own personal biases and interpretations are seldom discussed.

According to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009), qualitative research seeks to probe deeply into the research setting to obtain in-depth understanding about the way things are, why they are that way, and how the participants in the context perceive them. They further explained that the central focus of qualitative research is to provide an understanding of a social setting or activity as viewed from the perspective of the research participants (informants). Qualitative approach focuses on the depth of information rather than generalization about a much smaller number of people and cases. Qualitative researchers are interested in exploring and/or explaining social phenomenon as they occur in the natural setting. Although qualitative research methods have become increasingly popular, it has not yet been fully accepted by all members of the educational community. Thus, by combining qualitative and quantitative methods the weaknesses in one method can be offset by the strengths in the other method (Creswell, 2003; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Effective mixed methods research involves making purposeful and logical decisions about what types of data and analysis techniques will be most appropriate for answering the research questions (Creswell et al. 2003). Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti, and McKinney (2012) posit that mixed method approach is the core component which is complete in itself and must be published alone”. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) asserted that as a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process.

Within the qualitative paradigm of this research, the study utilized the phenomenological approach. I was deliberate in choosing a research methodology that best aligned with my research interest. Phenomenology is a relevant philosophic methodology that was utilised to describe the phenomena. A phenomenological inquiry “is an attempt to deal with inner experiences unprobed in everyday life” (Merriam, 2002, p. 7). Phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the commonality of a lived experience within a particular group. The fundamental goal of the approach is to arrive at a description of the nature of the particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Phenomenology, rooted deep in the works of philosophers such as Kant, Hegel, and Mach, was formally introduced by Edmund Husserl at the beginning of the twentieth century (Moran, 2000; Guignon, 2006). Husserl defined individuals as connected meaningfully with everything else in the world (Vagle, 2014). Phenomenological principles assert that scientific investigation is valid when the information gained comes about through rich description that allows for understanding

of the essences of experience (Moustakas, 1994). The philosophical phenomenological method is comprised of four intertwining steps: 1) the epoche, 2) phenomenological reduction, 3) imaginative variation, and 4) synthesis (Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenological data are the participant's descriptions and perspectives related to the phenomenon to be researched (Groenewald, 2004). This also served as a tool that helped the researcher to remain objective in order to be involved with the observance of taboos and governance among Asantes, Fantes and Gas so as to be able to view their worlds just like a believer. This ensured an in-depth study of taboos of the Asante Fante and Ga traditional believers and their significance for the governance of people.

### **2.3 Methodological Strategy**

This research adopted a case study comparative approach to be able to see 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. The use of taboos in governance may be similar in certain respects to specific research questions. Many researchers support the use of case study as a strategy of inquiry when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly defined (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Yin 2003). A case is either designed as an instance of a class of events (George & Bennet 2005, p.17) or it may be theoretical or empirical or both; it may be a relatively bounded object or process, it may be generic or universal or specific in some way (Ragin & Baker 1992, p.3). A case is a bounded empirical phenomenon that is an instance of a population of similar empirical phenomena (Rohlfing 2012, p. 24). What constitute a case is largely dependent on the researcher's demarcations as a result of choices made. A case is never given the researcher defines the case (Keman & Woldendorp 2016 p. 422). It is a phenomena or one of events (Vannesson 2008, p. 22) chosen, conceptualised and analysed empirically as a manifestation of a broader class of phenomena or events. Stake (2006) defined case study as a "qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case). . . over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (p. 73). In this study, the cases are bounded by time and place/activity (Creswell, 2003; Stake, 2006).

Case studies are detailed examinations of one setting or one group of individuals (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Case studies are not necessarily purely qualitative, but can contain quantitative

components as well (Yin, 2003). Along with semi-structured interviews of the participants, the researcher examined the phenomenon of taboos in the governance structure of the selected areas for comparison as the study unfolded. The research has selected three societies from three different regions in Ghana as the main focus of the research, but this is not to say that some generalizations are not made in the research about historical applications of thought as it relates to taboos and 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. A case study is used when the researcher is interested in investigating a problem within a real life context. When studying a contemporary issue in which the phenomenon and its context are closely interwoven, a case study is an appropriate methodology (Yin, 2003).

To the best knowledge of the researcher, no formal research case studies have been done that involved communities that use taboos in their governance structure and its effect to the community. This type of case study could be described as heuristic since it is focused on providing new insights within a specific population (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010). This study could also be described as an instrumental case study since this group can possibly represent other societies in similar situations, although that would be determined by the reader and not the researcher. The study took place over a period of six weeks which allowed the researcher to interview the participants under different conditions and achieve a deeper understanding of how they understand the role of taboos in the governance structure in the society. While this study has depth, as with most case studies, it does not necessarily have breadth. The reader will determine how the information fits into similar situations and how it applies to him or her.

Again, the study was done in three different regions thus the need to use the mixed methods to solicit information from the participants. In using the mixed method approach to the case study, three main phases were used: observations, traditional rulers' interviews and questionnaire surveys. The site observations were conducted to understand attributes of the traditional leaders and the physical sites, as well as to get a sampling frame for the study. The approach chosen for conducting the questionnaire survey was a concurrent approach, with the survey and interviews being conducted simultaneously. Therefore, six research assistants and a driver were employed to help the researcher to distribute the questionnaires. The sample selected for the qualitative interviews was a "parallel sample" (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007); the respondents who

participated in the interviews were different from the quantitative survey respondents. This approach was chosen as a result of the researcher's own experience whilst conducting the pilot study in Winneba, when it was difficult to get respondents who had answered the questionnaire to be interviewed afterwards. This was caused by the respondents being unwilling to give up more of their time to the research because, for example, they needed to go back home early, or wanted to get on with the activities they had planned for the day.

#### **2.4 Justification for using a Mixed Methods Approach**

Given the increasingly complex nature of contemporary social problems, the responses of investigators have been ever more multifaceted. Researchers are expected to respond to the research context innovatively and use whatever data types and analysis techniques necessary to answer their research questions. The result has been a surge in demand from researchers to be equipped with appropriate skills to conduct any type of research. Indeed the incompatibility of data types and approaches to their analysis are so engrained in social research (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003, p.6). Mixed method designs are not however just the arbitrary collection of both qualitative and quantitative data to see what each tell us about a given social problem.

The use of mixed methods as distinct from either qualitative or quantitative methodology is growing in popularity and this approach has been more widely recognised with the publication of a number of texts dealing specifically with mixed methodologies (Creswell, 2003; Greene & Caracelli, 1997; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Based upon the overall purpose of the study and the research objectives identified, the researcher used a mixed method in a case study approach relating to factors of taboos and governance in Ghana. Rocco et al., (2003) suggest that studies utilizing mixed methods for this reason are “explicitly seeking a synergistic benefit from integrating both the post-positivist and constructivist paradigms. The underlying assumption is that research is stronger when it mixes research paradigms, because a fuller understanding of human phenomena is gained” (Rocco et al., 2003, p. 21).

The combination of methods adopted in this study is widely used in social science research. Doyle et al. (2009) identified eight benefits or rationales for using mixed methods, namely, “triangulation”, “completeness”, “offsetting weaknesses and providing stronger inferences”, “answering different research questions”, “explanation of findings”, “illustration of data”, “hypothesis development and testing” and “instrument development and testing”. Creswell et al.

(2003) claimed that the triangulation design is the most common and well-known design. The mixed methods approach has been used as a means of triangulation in order for quantitative and qualitative approaches to help validate each other. It is a strategy to provide a wider evidence base (Baker, 1999) and “improve the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings” (Golafshani, 2003, p. 603). As Bryman (2007) said:

*“Bringing quantitative and qualitative findings together has the potential to offer insights that could not otherwise be gleaned. Thus, even when a fusion of the two sets of findings was not envisioned at the outset of a project, it may be valuable to consider whether the findings suggest interesting contrasts or help to clarify each other” (p. 9).*

Triangulation means “that the same phenomenon is investigated from different angles to determine its exact location, in the present context by including different informants and methods to determine its precise meaning and validity” (Kvale, 1996, p.219). However, others asserted that the mixed methods approach is not just about triangulation. Bryman (2007) argued that mixed methods research functions not only as a validation approach; it is also used to achieve a holistic perspective that combines the findings of different methods. This is supported by Jick (2006) who mentioned that triangulation can help researchers to improve the precision of their judgements and compensate for the shortcomings of each single method by the counterbalancing strengths of another.

In this study, the mixed methods approach was used as a triangulation to confirm and to verify quantitative results (from questionnaire surveys and site observations) with qualitative findings (from interviews). Its objective was to supplement the questionnaire results in instances where the questions asked during the interviews differed from the questionnaire. It was hoped that by using this approach, the multi-faceted nature of human experience in using taboos to compliment governance in the traditional setting in Ghana could be revealed comprehensively.

## **2.5 The Study Areas**

Three areas were used as the research sites for the data collection, These are Cape Coast, Kumasi and Accra.

### 2.5.1 Cape Coast

In the words of Buah (1998) when the term “Fante” is used, one refers to a section of the Akan, in a number of traditional states found along the coastal belt of Ghana from areas around the Pra on the West to about 25km west of Accra. To him the name Fante originally was used to a few petty states within a 50 kilometre radius of the ancient Fante capital of Mankessim. These towns included Kurentsi, Abora, Enyam, Ekumfi, Nkusukum, Adjumako and Gomoa. Their most important neighbours who are also today referred to as Fante are Eguafu, Shama, Ekitekyi (Komenda), Edina (Elmina), Efutu the then capital of present day Oguana state (Cape Coast), Asebu, Etsri, Agona and Efutu.

Like most other groups of the Akan, Buah (1998) asserted that the Fante trace their original home to Bono. Their migration to the coast must have taken place well before the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. According to Fante oral tradition, the founders of the Coastal State: Obunumankuma, Odapagyan and Oson first settled in Mankessim with their people. Out of this settlement grew a number of cities which in due course expanded into some of the kingdoms that absorbed the aboriginal settlements such as the Etsii and Asebu settlement which to a large extent dates back to the Pre-Christian era. Reasons behind the emigration of Fante to neighbouring lands were the following:

1. By the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, population growth had made it necessary for sections of the people to settle elsewhere and the first to do this were the Abora.
2. Records available also affirm that at about the same time, civil wars compelled some other groups to move away from Mankessim to establish peaceful settlement elsewhere for themselves.
3. One can also say that those leaving Mankessim felt they would benefit more from trading with European merchants if they made independent settlements in the immediate hinterlands or close to the coastal towns with European trading posts.
4. In addition, the immigrated Fante in their new homes in the hinterlands hoped to control the trade routes and serve as middlemen between the white traders and people of the hinterland.

The Fante upon their settlement in Mankessim had the town divided into quarters. Each quarter had a leader, whom the early European referred to as Brafo. On the other hand, these petty rulers

that were established presided over similar political organisations. Each Brafo was responsible for the general welfare of people under his charge, and was the captain of the Asafo Company. As a means to supervise the work of the Brafo, the position of the Supi was created who was to coordinate all the Asafo companies in the town or locality. Under the authority of the king, the Supi led the entire army unit in times of war. As the leader of military forces, the Supi occupied an important place in the royal court (Nana Supi Mina, Cape Coast, 2013).

With time, when the different city states grew into Kingdoms, each city state had its own local autonomy, though a sort of configuration emerged with the king of Mankessim as the acknowledged head of all Fante people. The rise of conflicts among different states resulted in the creation of a single monarchy as it happened for the Denkyira and Ashanti in the first three decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In these first three decades, certain external force compelled the rival states to bury their differences and present a united front against their common enemies. The Fante were disunited most of the time, yet they had one national identity which kept them together albeit rather loosely. This is evident in the burial of their founding fathers at Mankessim, the site which later was preserved as sacred shrine called “Nananompow” meaning “the grave of our fathers” consequently it became the seat of the Fante gods who were revered as all knowledgeable and all powerful.

The people of Oguaa and Edina who settled along the coast came into contact with the European merchants: Their settlements along the coast benefited them in a number of ways:

1. They became wealthy both from selling their own wares and from transitions as middle men.
2. This development forced those inland to immigrate to swell up the population of the coastal towns like Abandze. The name is derived from two words (“Aban” – which means Government and “Ase” which means-Below) which means “at the foot of the European fort”.
3. Thirdly, as a result of Coastal European trade, a new merchant class emerged which included “mulattos”. These were the offspring of marriage between whites and their black wives. Their wealth enabled them to become the elite of society and to give their children formal education both locally and overseas.

4. It then become fashionable for the new class to inter marry. This perpetuated their upper class affluent position and to exercise a great influence on the political economy and social life of society.

One can therefore say in summary that, the Fante to a large extent on the eve of Ghana's independence played a leading role in the affairs of the nation with particular references to nationalist movement which eventually led the country to independence (Ghana Districts, 2010).

### **2.5.2 Kumasi**

Kumasi has known an enormous explosion in growth over the last decades. Today, Kumasi has a population of about 2 million people. It is therefore the second biggest city in Ghana. With a grow rate of over 3.5 percent per annum, it is today growing much faster than the capital Accra. The Asante were one of the Akan-speaking peoples who settled in the forest region of modern Ghana between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The separate Asante chiefdoms were united by Osei Tutu in the 1670s and in 1696 he took the title of Asantehene (king) and founded the Asante Empire. His nation rapidly became more powerful by forming alliances with neighboring peoples, leading to the formation of the Ashanti Union around 1700. He built a capital, Kumasi, and created the legend of the Golden Stool to legitimize his rule.

The throne became the symbol of Ashanti authority. By 1750 the Asante Empire was the largest and most powerful state in the region. The empire's wealth and prosperity was based on mining and trading in gold and trading in slaves. The Asante also became famous for woodcarvings, furniture, and their brightly coloured woven cloth, called 'kente'. The kingdom continued to expand until, under King Osei Bonsu (1801-1824), Asante territory covered nearly all of present-day Ghana. Among the most powerful and dominant Akan -speaking people of Ghana nowadays, the Asante seemed to have emerged within the forest region to make up well-organized groups of people able to control, to direct and to manage their day-to-day activities. The identification of the Asante groups of people and the brief examination of their political and economic aspects of life before 1731 will then help as a historical background to the study of the evolution of the Asante's political, judicial, military and economic institutions up to 1824. In the eighteenth century, the Asantes were identified as people resulting from the amalgamation of five ethnic groups known as the Akans, the Ga, the Ewe, the Guan and the Mole-Dagbani who spread over three different regions of the Gold Coast.

The Akans counted eighteen clans known as the Oyoko (considered as the Asante's royal clan), the Aduana, the Agona, the Asakyri, the Asenie, the Asona, the Bretuo, the Ekoona, the Dako, the Asokore, the Tena, the Dwum, the Atwea, the Adaa, the Kuona, the Atena, the Toa and the Abrade clans (Akwabi –Ameyaw, 1989). In 1669, most of the Akans spread over the core of the forest region called the Tafo country (Claridge, 1964). The members of the Oyoko clan were located in Kumasi, Dwaben, Kokofu, Bekwai, Nsuta. Thirteen other non-Oyoko clans were situated in Mampon, Asumengya, Ofinso, Adansi, Edweso, Kumawu, Denyaase, Kwahu, Akwamu, Denkyira, Wassa, Nzima, and Assin while the other four Akan clans were situated in the south east and the north west of Kumasi in Akim, Accra, Gyaman and Bono, respectively.

The Asante's ethnic groups spoke different languages with distinguishable sub-cultural traits and origins, while some of these sub-cultural groups were small and compact, some others were large and strong enough to organise their kingdoms of varying sizes and degree of autonomy, to make up three main divisions within the core and the periphery of what was known at that time as the Asante empire. These three divisions comprised the central, provincial and local divisions known as the *Metropolitan Ashanti* or the *Ashanti Confederacy*, the *Provincial Ashanti* (with its *Internal* and *External Provinces* and the *Local Division*), respectively. What were the criteria chosen by the main authorities to set up their political organization? And what kind of political control was then instituted into the divisions of the empire to unite the different ethnic groups altogether? Within the empire, the Asantehene held a sacred position. Through the creation of the Golden Stool by the priest Akomfo Anokye, the Asantehene was the most venerated living person in Ashanti. The people of the empire, mainly the Akans feared and believed that the Stool embodied the spirit or soul of the whole Ashanti nation and that the Asantehene was the sole and perpetual guardian of the Stool. The latter represented the ties of kinship that gave ultimate sanction to the different opponents.

It was a fictitious extension of control among the king's subjects so that different states could be easily incorporated within the Asante Empire and through which the Asantehene became the guardian of the Asantes' spirit and unity (Otumfo Nana Agyeman Prempeh, op.cit, pp.100-101). By the institution of the Golden Stool, the Asantehene gained the support of the religious chiefs and became the centre to which all the authority holders of the Asantei Empire were connected (K.A.Busia, op.cit, p .96). In Metropolitan Ashanti, mainly in the capital Kumasi, the eight traditional elders were given the name of Office Holders and had definite stools (special Asante's

wooden chairs) that differentiated them from other authority holders in the exercise of their functions close to their king. In 1720, they attended a new established council, the Advisory Council that was instituted and presided by the Asantehene Osei Tutu to maintain the political organization of the whole empire (K.A.Busia, *ibid*, p.232).

The Asantehene and his six Omanhene were cautiously attributed the control over eighteen Ashanti States. The Kumasihene (the king) controlled Ofinso and Bono. Four other Omanhene including, the Dwabenhene, the Kokofuhene, the Bekwaihene and the Nsutahene controlled respectively, Adansi, Edweso, Akwamu and Denyaase and the other Omanhene: the Mamponhene controlled Kwahu, Kumawu, Denkyira, Amansi, Gonja, Dagomba, Gyaman and the Asumenyahene took Wassa, Nzima, Assin, Akim and Accra. It was mainly through hereditary membership that the Kumasihene, the Dwabenhene, the Kokofuhene, the Bekweihene, and the Nsutahene were chosen to rule the Akan groups surrounding Kumasi.

The king was the supreme authority in judging his subjects. They could be publicly condemned to death during their revolts and non -assistance in times of war or to the payment of special sums given in gold dust during any hostility or insults against the king, the administrative or the military agents (Hagan, 1980). The Asantehene's judgments and laws were then applied by the Abontendom members at the royal court. The latter were engaged to make the Asante people obey the Asantehene's sentence and punishment. They exercised their functions within a sphere of jurisdiction that comprised both the Metropolitan and Provincial people.

On the whole, the Asante's political organization before 1750 was a methodological and thoughtful effort used to strengthen the beginnings of a centralized political system within the Ashanti's empire through hereditary attribution of political control over each state and community. This strengthened system witnessed numerous processes of state formation and consolidation under Osei Tutu's reign to become integrally tied by the newly devised constitutional and traditional and military institutions while under Opoku Ware's reign, the consolidated empire was coterminous with the existence of a functionally discrete political center which regulates activities in order to firmly enlarge the bases of the central government by the association of an increasing number of people of different origins (either Akans or non-Akans) indirectly left to their deliberation and responsibilities. As Asante tradition was related to the matrilineal form of social organization, it allowed maximal individual mobility, and at the same time, enabled the assimilation of people.

However, as most of the people of the empire were subdued ones, they were gathered under a new confederacy that was military in purpose and character and improved the application of new institutions which showed the supremacy of the authority holders, namely the Asantehene and his Office Holders.

### **2.5.3 Accra (Teshie-Nungua)**

According to Odonkor (1971), the Ga's are of Jewish origin. This account maintains that intermarriages took place between the ancient Israelites who entered and lived in Egypt for a period of four hundred years and the local Black African population of Egypt before the Exodus. It further stresses that there is the possibility that remnants of the Jews would have been left in Egypt who then embarked on migratory journeys into Central and Western Africa. Scholars who believe that there is a historical connection between the Ga's and the Jews maintain that critical observers of the Ga society, culture and religion would discover a striking resemblance between the pentateuchal religion of the ancient Israelites and that of the Ga's. They argue that circumcision, the celebration of the Passover, baptism of infants, personal names, death-bed declarations, forms of prayer, nomenclature, and idea of the unclean person as well as personal salvation through purity all seem to constitute points of similarity between the Ga and the Jews.

Some elements used to substantiate the connection between the Ga's and the ancient Jews are theocracy among the Jews, in which foretelling-prophets dictated social conduct through revelations from the Almighty, and a similar theocratic arrangement in among the Ga's, in which the people essentially lived in a religious community with the Wulomo as supreme leader; and economic prowess. Others are the resemblance between the staff used by Moses and those of the Wulomo; non-wearing of footwear as required of Moses at his commissioning at the Burning Bush and the same applying to the Wulomo; circumcision; the use of a ram's horn during ceremonies associated with the leading Ga priests and by the Jews in commemoration of the command to sacrifice of Isaac when a ram caught in a thicket was used as a substitute; the Seven Commandments Ayi Kushi and the Ten Commandments of Moses (ibid). Yet other similarities between the Jews and the Ga could be found in the pouring of libation (I Samuel 7: 5-6); the presence of sword-bearers in the court of the Ga rulers; the intra-mural sepulchre of ancestors in places where the resurrected bodies might be re-united with kinsmen; and even common names, including Amasa, Annan, Amon, etc (Kilson, 1971).

However, on their arrival in Ghana, the Ga people settled at Ayiwaso which they developed as their principal town. Their settlement on the Accra plains saw them made agriculture their dominant economic activity. In the early seventeenth century, the economic prospects which developed as a result of the European trade on the coast compelled many of the Ga inland settlers to move to the coast. The Ga Mashie, Nungua and Tema were the first to move. The La and Osu people followed afterwards and settled in the Adangbe territories of Ladoku and Osudoku respectively (Parker, 2000). Led by their Mankralo Numo Okrang Nmashi, a section of the La people moved out from the main group to settle at Teshie. Geographically, the Ga area is bounded on the east by the Tshemu lagoon near Tema, on the west by the Sakumofio River, the north by the Akuapem Mountains and the south by the *Gulf* of Guinea. Primarily, the Ga had six traditional towns, which comprised the Ga Mashie – in the central part of Accra, Osu—where the Christiansburg Castle is situated, La, Teshie, Nungua and Tema (Coleman, 1984).

Ga Mashie, which served as the seat of power of the Ga Mantse, comprised seven divisional stools which were the Gbese, Asere, Abola, Otublohum, Sempe, Nleshie (Jamestown/Alata) and Akanmaiadze. Traditionally, the Ga Mantse was the paramount chief of all the various Ga states. He saw to the well-being of his subjects and took decisions which benefitted the people of Ga Mashie. The wuolomo, who was the chief priest and also second in command, served as the spiritual head of the stool. The wuolomo also served as the intermediary between the ancestors and the people of Ga Mashie. The Ga Mantse had a stool linguist who assisted in facilitating conversation. The linguist's staff symbolised their authority. The Asafotse played very important roles in the administration of the Ga state. The Asafotse were able-bodied youth who served as the military heads of the stool. Their main duty was to defend the various traditional areas against both internal and external aggression.

## **2.6 The Journey Back Home**

African migrants that return to conduct fieldwork in their homelands is on the rise (Diawara, 2011). The debate of natives conducting phenomological studies is ongoing and this gives the African Researcher the opportunity to construct and deconstruct his/her history. This helps to bring out alternative narratives and the actual meanings of events from the practitioner's perspective. It is therefore not out of context to return to write about my origin and to document the governance and taboos of my own people. This is to let seekers of knowledge know and understand what goes on

in the everyday lives of actors of governance in the traditional setting. In my own view, a researcher who is familiar with the language and culture of the group being studied, may interpret life histories from within than an outsider. Oral sources have been used as means for the writing own of histories thereby leading to the documentation of the lives of a group. However, the use of oral traditions as sources of texts is still being challenged (Henige, 2009) as much as native researchers researching among their own. Nonetheless, researching within one's familiar geographical boundaries affects the quality of interpretation and analysis to data collected. For example, a native researcher is already familiar with the people and as such would be able to identify the subtlest ways of his or her people. Both spoken and unspoken words would be understood and interpretations to them are most likely to be closer to accuracy thereby boosting the credibility to the data analysis.

These advantages notwithstanding, one cannot rule out the challenges associated with using native researchers in their own environments (Diawara, 2011). There is the tendency for native researchers to either over present or under represent events and actions. In as much as the researcher admits this challenge, the principle of validity and reliability ought to be met for the work to pass the replicable condition. It therefore behoves on the researcher to give a fair representation of the data collected and its associated interpretation. By minimizing this challenge, one reduces the scholarly criticisms on the research work.

Generally, when someone is conducting a research among natives, the person awakens his family and communal affiliations. Sometimes, because s/he is seen as a son or daughter, he or she is expected to abide by the rules of the family or society. This situation usually puts native researchers at a tight corner since they would have to balance this affiliation with scientific standards. A native researcher should know how far he or she has to go; when to jump in and out in order to maintain objectivity without faulting on family standards. For example, during the fieldwork in 2019, before arriving in Kumasi, the research assistant based there who had already been briefed about the research intentions, had already identified some chiefs and people as research participants for the study.

The belief in taboos and governance at the three research sites was very prominent in the everyday thinking of the people. The research assistants were so worried about the researcher that as a result, looked for people they think would be safe with and work with them. I accepted their suggestions

but upon reaching the field, at some instances I identified my own research participants progressively without them being offended. There are challenges in the proximity of every research place to the researcher. Natives have a good insight when doing research. Brannick & Coghlan (2007) in their research emphasizes that an insider research (native researchers) is worth reaffirming. Nevertheless, there is also this issue of the “blind spots” for people who do research in their own environment. Such scholars may not see certain things being practiced by their own people because they are part of the system. Such observations may be seen as normal. I am very much aware of some of these blind spots in conducting research in my hometown and in a known environment, nonetheless, there are these positive aspects which I deemed important. With the above in mind, I set off back to Ghana to begin the fieldwork.

How can I deny the joy it brought when I finally set off from Hungary back to Ghana to begin my field work? Although I was happy going to be among my own people of familiar culture, meet family and old friends, I still could not hide the anxiety of the field research. The thinking of going back to do my research among my fellow citizens had with it various challenges as well. These were some of the challenges which brought anxiety in me. There was the uncertainty of how my own people were going to accept me. The idea of going to play a double standard as a native and stranger (a person not part of their family) kept me thinking throughout my journey back to Ghana. The idea that this research could have been easier for a foreigner kept running through my mind. A foreigner could easily be accepted because they are mostly associated with this kind of research. Ghanaians are abreast with this phenomenon of foreigners and research but a reversal of it is not common; their own son coming to ask them questions about their roles in the community and the way they saw taboos was going to raise some concerns. What is he up to? Does he want to learn from us and expose our ways to the outside world? How was I going to approach the chiefs and *mantsemei*? Do I send some tokens to them before they grant me access to their homes for the interviews? All these kept running through my mind.

The comforting aspect of my journey back home was the understanding of the people, the language and the culture of my research areas. I can always have family and friends to talk to when the going gets tougher on the field. The uncertainty of doing research among one’s own people has its setbacks as well. As experienced by (Somé 2010) he confirmed of having such experience on the field when it comes to his participants declaring their goods. With all these thoughts in mind, I

arrived in Accra and was met by my family to be picked to my family house in Accra and then to Takoradi to my wife and kids

## **2.7 Population**

Sekaran (2003) posit that population is the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher would like to investigate in a study. Polit and Hungler (1996) stated “that, it is the entire aggregation of cases that meet a designed set of criteria”. Simply put, it deals with a target group about which the researcher has the interest in gaining information and drawing conclusions. 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, Elmia Eguafu 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.

## **2.8 Sample and Sampling Procedures**

A sample is defined as a subset of the portion of the total population and it must always be considered as an approximation of the whole itself (Sarantakos, 2005). Sekaran (2003) also states that it is a subset of the population since it consists of some members who are selected from the population. “It is the process of selecting a sufficient number of elements from the population, so that, the study of the sample and understanding of its properties and characteristics would make it possible for one to generalize such properties or characteristics to the population elements (Sekaran, 2003, p. 267)”. This implies that a sample consists of carefully selected subset of the units that comprise the population. Therefore, by observing critically the characteristics of the sample, one can make certain inferences about the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn. The main reason for sampling was because the researcher could not cover all the respondents given the short period of the study as well as the huge financial requirement for travelling and conducting interviews (Barreiro & Albandoz, 2001).

As this study proposed to use Traditional Leaders, Traditional Priests/ Priestesses, Heads of Family and members of the communities who are opinion leaders in Asanteman (Kumasi) in the Ashanti Region, Agona, Effutu or Oguaa (Cape Coast) in the Central Region and Gas of Teshie in the Greater Accra Region as the sample for the study, the snowballing technique 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 many 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. The reason for this is that it allowed the researcher the discretion to select respondents who to his estimation are sources of relevant data that would meet the objectives of the study (Sarantakos (1998; Fraenkel & Wallen (2003).

Morgan further advances the argument that Snowballing is particularly useful for locating hidden population. However, the danger to the tool is the risk of capturing a biased subject of the potential participants because any eligible participants who are not linked to the original set of informants will not be accessible for inclusion in the study. Table 1 depicts the sampled respondents chosen for the study.

***Table 1: Summary of Sampled Respondents***

<b>Study Area</b>	<b>Traditional Rulers</b>	<b>Traditional Priests/Priestesses</b>	<b>Heads of Families</b>	<b>Members of the community</b>
Kumasi	5	2	5	35
Cape Coast	5	2	5	35
Teshie Nungua	5	2	5	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey (2019)

The traditional leaders were chosen because of the position they occupy in the community. With the traditional rulers, the researcher purposively selected all of them from the study areas in each region since each of the study areas was a paramountcy with its own Omanhene (paramount chief). Brempong (2006) posited that, it is taboo which shapes a chief (what he should be). A chief must have an aura of culture. He must also have charisma as well as picturesque figure. Since chieftaincy

is a spiritual duty, all these qualities cannot be achieved without being guided by taboos. Among the traditional priests and priestesses of the target study areas, there is a state priest for each of the traditional councils. According to Kangsangbata, Kendie and Gharthey (2008), traditional priests promote sustainable development by serving as custodians of natural resources. The priests enact laws to protect economic trees and use charms to protect environmental resources in order to prevent their misuse and to ensure continuity. Since these priests are seen as intermediaries between the physical and the spiritual worlds and custodians of taboos, they were identified and purposively selected for the study.

Kangsangbata, Kendie and Gharthey (2008), state that family heads are recognised as the custodians of the culture of a particular group of people in a settlement. They (family heads) ensure cultural transmission by keeping and ensuring that the values, practices and tradition of the people are sustained. Like chiefs, family heads also protect family property by mobilising family members to protect family property; especially the lands. They are the custodians of all family property, it is a religious duty in traditional societies for all types of property to be husbanded properly for utilisation by the living as well as future generations. Sarbah (1896) acknowledged that Akans have seven great families (Ebusua Esuon) who perform the roles as indicated by Kangsangbata, Kendie and Gharthey (2008). The views of selected community members would be sought to ascertain whether taboos and governance are adhered to.

## **2.9 Data Collection Instruments**

The aim of this research has been to find out the role taboos play in the indigenous governance of the people of Asante, Fante and Ga and to assess the impact of contemporary society on taboos which are related to governance. The idea was to find out if geographical, environmental as well as the availability of taboos could influence governance. In order to get a fair idea of issues, five traditional rulers and five heads of families were selected from each research area. The nature of phenomenology work and the availability of time informed my chosen number, thirty. However, some traditional priests and priestesses, and members of the community were added to know their views about the subject matters. In all 100 participants were used for the study.

In as much as in studying a smaller sample, care has to be taken to avoid misrepresentation of the people and their culture, in much the same way, a large sample could be a hindrance to a detailed study of the participants (Small, 2009). A good phenomenological work demands a critical

observation of every detailed and smallest experience, which demands staying, and observing actions and inactions of participants. For a meaningful contribution to be made, care should be taken for the data collected to have a rich basis. For this reason, I adopted a combination of in-depth interviews and questionnaire to attain data saturation. According to Briggs, (2007), interviews are commonly portrayed not just as ordinary conversations but as carefully structured to elicit inner worlds of people with minimal intervention and to maximize their value for public discourse. The facial expression and body language of the person being observed should all inform the researcher answers to a given question. Knowledge gained to understand a phenomenon does not always require huge numbers. Sometimes, good and tactful skills and personal contact with just a few people can do the work.

But as a good researcher, one has to decipher the relationship between things said in interviews and the situations surrounding what has been said. A researcher can only do this by adopting other research means to serve as checks and balances on some of the information received from interviews. Most often, anthropologists are often called to account by their colleagues from other disciplines to demonstrate whether what people say in interviews can be adopted as generalized information regarding a particular culture. Brigg (2007) criticizes such an ideology from such scholars and urges that ethnologists should specifically indicate their intentions and ideologies to other scholars. Colleagues should be made aware from the beginning, the intentions of the works of ethnologist to avoid misunderstandings of approaches adopted. This should be transparently communicated to the reader. `

### **2.9.1 Interview**

The aim of using interviews (see Appendix 3) was as a complement to and a means of triangulation with the questionnaire surveys. It was hoped that the interviews would give a more holistic view of the role taboos play in the indigenous governance of the people of Asante, Fante and Ga. The interview guide was considered appropriate because it provided a way of gathering structured data from respondents in a standardised way as part of a structured interview (Somekh & Lewin, 2005). Interview guide was used because it elicited more candid and more objective replies. The interview guide had both open-ended and closed questions.

### ***Qualitative Interviewing Rationale***

The qualitative interviews were used to elicit additional details relating to the issues covered in the questionnaire. The researcher explored similar variables to those covered in the questionnaire. However, any differences encountered or new insights gained were also explored. In addition, the interviews gave further in-depth understanding of respondents' feelings and emotions concerning the role taboos play in the indigenous governance. However, there were also questions asked under themes which were different from those covered in the questionnaire, such as "impact of contemporary society on taboos and governance", "consequences of Taboos" and "what are the taboos attached to the position as an actor in charge of governance" in order to give a comprehensive understanding of role taboos play in the indigenous governance to the respondents. As one of the research questions is about the consequences of taboos in traditional societies, the researcher believed that a qualitative approach is one of the best options to take because he could also explore the underlying meaning of the interviewee's subject of interest in his or her own words.

### ***Approach to Interviewing***

The researcher used structured interviews because he believed that "with reasonably specific topics combined with being very flexible in the order and follow-up questions" (Beaney, 2009, p. 90). They are also less time-consuming to analyse compared to unstructured interviews (Silverman, 1993). Throughout the interview process, the researcher also asked open questions to "generate data which gave an authentic insight into people's experiences" (Silverman, 1993, p. 91) in the communities. In addition, the open questions were designed to encourage the interviewee to keep on cooperating with the interviewer. These open questions provided variations in terms of questions asked and to achieve different insights from the interviews.

As Baker (1984) mentioned that interviews are actively constructed and are as self-evident about the person that the researcher is interviewing as about the subject under discussion. It means that each interviewee has his/her own characteristics and should be dealt with differently. An interview topic guide was used to structure the interviews. The researcher (interviewer) asked the main questions as stated in the topic guide and in the same order as in the guide for reliability purposes (Silverman, 1993). However, the interviewees were allowed to talk more freely about topics that interested them or that seemed important to them.

### *Obtaining Interview Sample*

As the research approach used mixed methods for triangulation purposes, the researcher had intended to interview 5 people per site or to carry on increasing the sample until he felt that the answers given were saturated. Guest et al. (2006) found that the data was saturated when they completed and analysed 12 interviews. Data saturation occurred when no new data were gained from the interview process. However, they mentioned that their findings were not applicable to unstructured and highly exploratory interview techniques. Difficulties in finding traditional leaders, who were willing to be interviewed, combined with time constraints, meant that this researcher could not get data saturation for some of the questions asked.

The interviews were conducted by the researcher himself concurrently with the field survey in August, September and October 2019. He had intended the interviews to last for at least 30-50 minutes but the duration of the interviews ranged from a minimum of 30 minutes to 1 hour 20 minutes. This was due to some constraints faced by the researcher during the interviews, such as respondent who wanted to be interviewed for a short time. In addition, some respondents were not willing or able to express their opinions regarding the questions asked. Despite the issues faced by the researcher, he believed the interview data to be valid because when the interviews were disrupted, he ended them as soon as possible to avoid any bias occurring. Furthermore, the researcher had to make use of all the interview data even though the duration of some interviews was short because of the time constraints and difficulties faced in getting users who were willing to be interviewed. There were eventually 18 respondents from all the three sites who were interviewed for the study.

**Table 2: Respondents and Duration of Interviews**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Daasebre Kwebu-Ewusie VII	Male	51minutes
Ekua Baaka (Chief Priestess)	Female	27minutes
Naase Aba Kokor II	Female	34minutes
Naase Akyere II	Female	33minutes
Neenyi Ghartey VII	Male	1hour, 12 minutes
Neenyi Kojo Obirifo Tetteh III	Male	31minutes
Neenyi Obor	Male	26minutes
Dompoasehen	Male	43minutes
Eguafohen	Male	35 minutes
Nana Amuasi	Male	1hour, 44 minutes
Gbobu wulomo	Male	1hour, 04 minutes
Osabarima Kwesi Atta II	Male	44minutes
Nana Afrakoma kosi Boadum III	Female	1hour, 05minutes
Nana Boakye Yam Ababio	Male	57 minutes
Nana Ossi Kofi Abiri	Male	1hour, 04minutes
Nii Kwatei II	Male	30minutes
Nii Lantei Otanka II	Male	1hour, 03minutes
Nii Quao Donkor Asere tsur Chief	Male	41minutes

**Source:** Field Survey, 2019

### **2.9.2 Questionnaire**

Questionnaires are resourceful mechanisms for data collection, provided that the researcher knows exactly what is required and how to measure the dependent and independent variables of interest. The questionnaire as a data gathering type of instrument was used as the researcher believed it would enable him get the exact responses he was eliciting from the participants. The questionnaire, which has a close-ended type of questions, was used for this study, the researcher developed the questionnaire, to enable him solicit the desired information that covered the specific objectives of the study. The close ended type of questionnaire, according to Gray (2004), is one that gives participants pre-determined responses to choose from a set of numbers that represent strengths of

feeling or attitude. Close ended type of questionnaire has the advantage of making data analysis simpler by making coding of responses easy and quickly. Besides, since it does not require any extended writing, it is time saving. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993), a questionnaire is relatively economical, has standardized questions, can ensure anonymity and questions can be written for specific purposes. These are the reasons why the close-ended type of questionnaire was used for the study.

A self-administered questionnaire was chosen after considering the cost and time of using an interviewer-administered questionnaire. It is costly in terms of both time and money to train interviewers and pay them, in comparison with the resources needed for a self-administered questionnaire. The participants generally completed the questionnaire by themselves without any assistance from the researcher or research assistants. The questionnaire (See Appendix 4) was devised based on a review of previous studies that have progressively built up an understanding of the nature of people's experience (Jorgensen & Anthopoulou, 2007a). The questionnaire was an easy way of analyzing information and it offered the participants an opportunity to respond accurately.

The questionnaire was divided into two main parts. The first part explained the purpose of the study to participants, as well as assured participants of anonymity and confidentiality (ethical issues). The second part was sub-divided into eight (8) main sections (A to H). Section A dealt with demographic data of correspondence such as gender, age, academic status and religious background; Section B dealt with Traditional Governance; Section C dwelt on Taboos; and Section D was on taboos and Governance. Apart from Section A that comprises of four (4) statements, the remaining sections B and C has ten (10) statements each while section D had seven (7) statements.

The Likert scale was used as a form of measure for the responses. Tuckman (1994) asserts that Likert-type scales are used to register the extent of agreement or disagreement with a particular statement of attitude, beliefs, or judgement. The Likert-type response alternative of four point gradation was used to measure responses. "Strongly Agree" = 1, "Agree" = 2, "Disagree" = 3, "Strongly Disagree" = 4.

### ***Response Rate and Questionnaire Completion***

The questionnaire surveys were conducted during August and October 2019. The questionnaires were distributed by the researcher and research assistants. The survey was carried out during three

two-hour sessions: morning (8.00 am-10.00am), afternoon (12.00 pm-2.00 pm) and evening (4.00 pm-6.00 pm). Due to the spatial location of the study sites, the surveys were conducted at different times. Potential respondents were approached at the pre-determined focal areas. Respondents who were present in groups were given at least two questionnaires. This was an attempt to prevent “group completion” and the respondents either returned the questionnaires in person to the researcher and research assistants or the research assistants collected the documents on site from the respondents. In total, 85 questionnaires were returned. Ten of them were excluded due to missing information and five because they were not completed by members of one of the three target ethnic groups. In the end, there were a total of 100 respondents surveyed in the three study sites.

### **2.9.3 Focus Group Discussion Guide**

A guide is described as a ‘tool or path setter’, which is not the main questionnaire but guides the interviewer to obtain information leading to answering the objectives of a study (Orkin, 2010). Focus group discussion involves the selection of persons because of their expertise or position in the community in an attempt to collect qualitative information on the objectives of the study. Community members took part in the focus group discussion. Prior to the date for data collection the researcher sent an introductory letter to an opinion in the area for the study who informs the public of the intended assignment the researcher wants to undertake and those are willing, voluntary assembles for the exercise.

### **2.10 Pilot Test of Instrument**

A pilot test was conducted to serve as a means of refining the questionnaire. As stipulated by McMillan and Schumach (2010), pilot test brings about an informal critique of individual items, as they are prepared as well as a pilot test of the full questionnaire. A pre-testing exercise was carried out at the Denkyira Traditional Area. The Denkyira Traditional Area was elected for the pre-testing because it had similar cultural characteristics like the selected ethnic groups under study. Thus, the Denkyira Traditional Council was geographically located between the Kumasi Traditional Council and the Oguaa and Ga Traditional Councils. Due to the geographical characteristics between the Denkyira Traditional Council and the selected traditional council, there were a lot of cultural exchanges among them. The Asantes, for example, broke away from the Denkyira Traditional Council.

The aim for the pre-testing exercise was to ensure the adequacy of the questions as well as the validity and reliability of the questions in addressing issues about taboos and indigenous governance in Ghana. In ensuring the validity and reliable of the questions in addressing the issues under investigations, the researcher was largely guided by issues in the reviewed literature. The aim was to afford the researcher the opportunity to compare findings with issues in the literature to ascertain their level of agreement or disagreement as well as their implications. The Chiefs and Elders at the Denkyira Traditional Area were also allowed to make inputs into the research instruments to enhance their validity and reliability. In addition, colleagues, supervisors, and other academics in traditional governance were also made to make inputs in the research instruments to improve their validity and reliability.

The timing for the data collection exercises were monitored to ensure that the actual data collection exercise does not take lengthy time to discourage the respondents from given much data to enhance the findings of the study. All the experiences during the pre-testing exercises were used to improve the final research instruments for the actual data collection exercise. Thus, some of the questions were rephrased, others were taken out, while some were added. The order of some of the questions were also changed to reduce sensitivity in the data collection exercise. A total of 30 respondents were captured during the pre-testing exercise. The pre-testing was done between December 20, 2018 and January 10, 2019.

### **2.11 Validity and Reliability of Instrument**

According to Sekaran (2003), validity of an instrument relates to the extent to which it actually measures what it is supposed to measure. Siniscalco and Auriat (2005) state that an instrument has content validity when an agreement is obtained from a panel of judges or experts on a topic that the statements in the instrument do not relate to what they are supposed to measure. The concept of validity is described by a wide range of terms in qualitative studies. This concept is not a single, fixed or universal concept, but “rather a contingent construct, inescapably grounded in the processes and intentions of particular research methodologies and projects” (Winter, 2000, p.1). Although some qualitative researchers have argued that the term validity is not applicable to qualitative research, but at the same time, they have realised the need for some kind of qualifying check or measure for their research. For example, Creswell & Miller (2000) suggest that the validity is affected by the researcher’s perception of validity in the study and his/her choice of

paradigm assumption. As a result, many researchers have developed their own concepts of validity and have often generated or adopted what they consider to be more appropriate terms, such as, quality, rigor and trustworthiness (Davies & Dodd, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mishler, 2000; Seale, 1999; Stenbacka, 2001).

The discussion of quality in qualitative research initiated from the concerns about validity and reliability in quantitative tradition which “involved substituting new term for words such as validity and reliability to reflect qualitative conceptions” (Seale, 1999, p. 465). The interview guide and questionnaire were given to experts who are well versed in research for scrutiny, taking into consideration how well the items are developed and whether the objectives of the study, research questions and hypotheses, as well as the variables of interest. This will help ascertain the face and content validity of the research instrument. This purpose was to examine whether the items are related to the research questions and also if they comprehensively cover the content needed to provide appropriate response to the research questions. In addition, it is to determine if any of the items is ambiguous and misleading. Suggestions and corrections made were adopted and incorporated into the questionnaire to enhance its validity.

Reliability is concerned with how reliable and accurate the research methods and techniques for collecting data are. The reliability is a way of measuring how well a method provides a researcher with the same results, if the method were to be repeated under the same circumstances. If a method is not reliable, it also lacks validity, but high reliability does not automatically mean high validity. It is possible to use a method that would provide the researcher with the exact same results under different occasions, without actually measuring what was intended (Yin, 2003). According to Denscombe (2003) the meaning of reliability is whether research instruments are neutral, and if in doing a similar study the same results will be achieved. Reliability as indicated by Sekaran (2003) is the consistency and stability of a measuring instrument regardless of the stability of test takers. Stangor (2004) stipulates that the reliability of a measuring instrument is the extent to which the instrument is free from error, thus measuring consistency over time variables of interest.

## **2.12 Data Processing and Analysis**

The data collected from research becomes meaningful only when it is organised, summarized and observations explained in order to determine its essential causes, statistical relationships, pattern and trends (Dane, 2011). The process requires the researcher to analyse the data that have been

collected (Leary, 2004). Thus, the statistical programme used for the analysis and interpretation of data was the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Prior to this, copies of the questionnaire were coded for the data analysis. The coding ranged from 001 – 85. For categorical data, frequencies and percentages (%) were used to describe each variable for the population. Demographic information from the questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used where data was organised into frequency counts and converted into percentages while means and standard deviations were used for the research questions. The results were then presented in tables to answer the research questions. This went for all the research questions, 1 to 5. A Mann-Whitney test was used for examining the gender differences. For some results, the categories were collapsed to facilitate analysis. The purpose for the use of descriptive statistics as a tool of analysis is to describe the phenomenon of interest (Sekaran, 2003). Besides, descriptive statistics involves the transformation of new data into a form which provides information that describes factors of a particular situation which is achieved through the ordering and manipulation of raw data collected (Sekaran 2003 as cited by Dane, 2011). The research's purpose for using means and standard deviation was also to make the interpretation of the results more meaningful for conclusion and recommendation to be made from the data.

With the interviews, the researcher decided to use open coding, inspired by a grounded theory approach, for the analysis stages. The researcher believed that it was easier to analyse data by grouping them into categories or subcategories before combining them into themes, rather than developing themes and then fitting all the data into the themes. Open coding was used at the beginning to open up the data to every potential and all possibilities contained within them. Open coding, as defined by Corbin and Strauss (2008), is: “breaking data apart and delineating concepts to stand for blocks of raw data. At the same time, one is qualifying those concepts in terms of their properties and dimensions” (p.195).

After considering meanings related to the data and examining the context, interpretive conceptual labels can then be put on the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). They stated that identifying the meaning of data is more important than the actual procedures used for analysing data. This researcher selected most of the key phrases that were special to the interviewees and gave coding to the phrases that were relevant to fit research questions and the issues in which the researcher was interested. As Corbin and Strauss (2008) stated, “...coding requires searching for the right

word or two that best describe conceptually what the researcher believes is indicated by the data” (p.160). In the examples below, the researcher used different colours for different coding to make it easy to recognise the same coding as the same colour was used throughout the coding process.

**Figure 1: Examples of quotations and keywords**

Quotations	Coding Keywords
<p><b>Interview er:</b> Is there a mechanism to check false accusation</p> <p><b>Nii Kwartei II:</b> Yes. “Well we talked to people to be honest all the time and when you see you just accused somebody, which is very common. <b>You have to have evidence</b>”.</p>	<p><b>Evidence</b></p>
<p><b>Interview er:</b> When judgement is passed, how is the offence redeemed</p> <p><b>Nii Kwartei II:</b> “If the one is a good person and disciplined, they may caution him, <b>sanction</b> him or if he somebody who is fond of doing that and it calls for <b>discipline</b>, they may do so”.</p>	<p><b>Sanction, Discipline</b></p>

**Source:** Author’s own construct, 2019

When the process of coding was completed, cross-case analysis was done to look for patterns and themes that cut across individual experiences (Patton, 2002). According to Glaser and Strauss (1967) cited in Patton (2002) “this helps ensure that emergent categories and discovered patterns are grounded in specific cases and their contexts” (p.57). The researcher extracted themes and sub-themes for all the sites separately. The purpose of doing that was to understand the relationship between individual cases and sites and to look for any similarities, nuances or differences in themes or sub-themes between sites. The process of data coding and analysis was done repeatedly until the researcher felt satisfied that data gathered was saturated and that he could build up a logical explanatory story (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Some themes that emerged were influenced by the researcher’s initial thematic structure (used in the questionnaire). However, several new themes also emerged from the interviews: “Value of taboos”, “the preservation of culture”, and “issues

and concerns regarding governance”. The researcher also looked for patterns in the qualitative data based on the ethnicity and/or gender of the research participants. This was to look at the relationship between those two factors and the emergent themes in accordance with the overall research objectives.

### **2.13 Ethical Considerations**

It is imperative and necessary for every researcher to put into consideration ethical issues governing the research. This is for the fact that social researchers need to prepare themselves in terms of all ethical issues in the design of a study in order to build a sound, ethical practice (Neuman, 2006). In this study, the participants’ privacy was respected by seeking their consent to choose to participate or not first, as one of the tenets in social research requires voluntary participation of participants. In this regard, there were explanations of the objectives of the study, as well as its significance to boost participants’ voluntary participation. There is the belief that subjecting participants to answering items in a questionnaire could cause physical and emotional harm to them. Thus, statements in the questionnaire were framed in a way that presented a variety of options and free will to participants so that, they could select items appropriate to them. Participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The researcher revealed his identity to participants of the study for the purpose of clearing their minds of all doubts and deceptions of the study and also, assuring them of not sharing information they provide with anyone. Concerning anonymity, participants were not asked to provide their identity on the questionnaire.

To avoid the scientific misconduct in research, called plagiarism, the study followed strictly the prescribed standards of scientific behaviour to avoid plagiarism. The researcher ensured that ideas, works and writings made use of were acknowledged and referenced appropriately. Before going to the field to collect data, the researcher sought clearance from the Institutional Review Board. In doing this, the researcher applied for clearance through the Head of Department and with a summary of the proposal for scrutiny to the University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board for ethical approval. Data collection was carried on receipt of the ethical clearance (See appendix 2 for clearance letter).

### **2.14 Summary of the Chapter**

This chapter outlined a systematic approach of the processes engaged in by the researcher to arrive at the detailed and rich data collected from the participants. A brief introduction to bringing out

the aims of this method. Developing a research question in an attempt to explain the impact or influence of various actors has implication for analysing empirical evidence, with a view to bring some form of change positively or otherwise to a challenge. Berg and Lune (2012) posit that qualitative research refers to meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things, while quantitative research refers to counts and measures of things through experiments and surveys. The systematic description and analytical accounts produced in a qualitative research brings about the social understanding of the issues discussed which cannot be measured quantitatively involving the study of focused groups and interviews. Qualitative research is not carried out solely for amassing data but to seek answers to questions by examining various social settings.

The study used the mixed method approach, which according to Cresswell and Plano Clark (2011) combine at least a strand of quantitative and a strand of qualitative method. Stages in a research can be said to have elements of design, mixed method approaches are not a kind of research design nor does it entail or privilege a particular design. This research adopts a mixed methodological approach to achieve its set out objectives. The mixed methods offered a great promise for practicing me as I wanted to see methodologists describe and develop techniques that are closer to what researchers actually use in practice. The initial steps in this research, involve the knowledge gathered for proper understanding of the topic from the academic discourses, the various laws, political and policy challenges. However, the researcher was hesitant to make the decision for mixed methodology because of the admonition in (Silverman 2013), about not rushing into the decision for mixed methods because of the challenge of moving from one data set to another during analysis.

Careful attention was given to the process of choosing the setting for this research and the method of data collection and analysis. The three societies had diverse groups of people which were covered in this research. First a selection of the three regions was carried out from the experience of the researcher who had lived in these societies all his life. Interviewing was a central methodology in this research, which is described as the essential tool kit in social science research. The place of interview in this research is first as guide through semi-structured interview as a way to generating and testing choices of hypothesis in a rough and ready manner as well as the main data source for triangulation. The questions for the interviews were developed from information by theoretical findings; therefore, the questions were chosen based on what pertains in the study

areas. During the interview the researcher also focused on important issues that were not captured in the initial questions but were mentioned by the interviewees in some cases follow-up questions had to be generated on the spot to clarify issues raised in the previous answers.

The interview analysis was done through qualitative data analysis (open coding). In the course of the interview the interviewees were relatively open to speak, so they divulged information without reservation. Thematic analysis helped the researcher in the identification of patterns in the data. In academic studies, a researcher looks out for possible ways to make up for the knowledge gap in governance. One way of doing this is through data interpretation. Without interpretation it is impossible to make sense of data. The role of the researchers is to find out more about people, actors, institutions and governments experiences, and social practices, so that all of these can be interpreted through analysis. Here, interpretation was about making sure those ancient texts which had been revered and held sacred for a long time continued to play their traditional role within a culture despite the fact that their literary meaning did not make any obvious sense to a contemporary audience. The next chapter (three) is the review of literature, analyzing scholarly research on the topic, with a view to identifying the gaps and how the present research makes up for certain gaps in literature.

## **Chapter III: A Review of Literature**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on examining previous research on the topic under scrutiny. It captures the views of various authors to ascertain if the topic has been sufficiently dealt with, identifies the gaps in the literature and reflects on how this research can fill the gaps. Closely related research by scholars on the topic is also reviewed and their varying perspectives brought into account. Other aspects are literature relating to the variables on the topic, synthesizing their relationships in relevance to the study. The chapter is therefore divided into 4 sessions with session one looking at literature on the local governance in Ghana, literature that reflects the direct impact governance at the grassroots. The second is about the concept of taboos and its effects on the people in the community. The third looks at Perceptions about the Institution of Traditional Leadership. The final part of this chapter discusses Culture and Morality.

### **3.2 The Local Government Structure in Ghana**

An increasing number of countries are decentralizing the administrative, fiscal, and political functions of the central government to lower-level governments. Though these decentralization efforts are typically politically motivated, they have profound impacts on economies by influencing, among other things, governance in the public sector, including public services; decentralization is often thought to “bring government closer to the people.” As Landau and Eagle (1981, p.10) point out in their survey of the literature, “decentralization is presented as a solution to a rather large number of problems”. Crawford (2004) also opines that decentralization has become an increasingly widespread and significant dimension of political and administrative reform in many developing countries since the late 1980s, supported by diverse actors ranging from international development agencies to national governments to non-governmental and grassroots organizations. Decentralization is acknowledged to be one of the most acceptable forms of governance that allows for greater participation of the citizenry for good governance and participatory democracy (Offei-Aboagye, 2004; Ayee, 2003).

Many scholars have undertaken historical reviews of the term decentralization and provided good accounts of the ways this word has been applied to a rapid expanding array of changes in institutional structure (Conyers 1983; Mawhood 1983; Mawhood and Davey 1980). Accordingly, the first modern referent for the term in the development literature can be traced back to the set of

institutional changes introduced in the 1950's in preparation for the granting of independence to many African countries (particularly in the former colonies of Great Britain). Empirical studies on local governance have been on its effects on economic performance (Saito, 2011), benefits of decentralisation as an aspect of good governance (Smith, 2007), local governance and changes in local politics and government (Denters, 2011).

This classic decentralization, as Mawhood and Davey (1980, p.405) describe it, was organized around five principles. First, local authorities should be institutionally separate from central government and assume responsibility for a significant range of local services (primary education, clinics and preventive health services, community development, and secondary roads are the most common). Second, these authorities should have their own funds and budgets and should raise a substantial part of their revenue through local direct taxation. Third, local authorities should employ their own qualified staffs, who could be temporarily transferred from the civil service as necessary in the early stages. Fourth, the authorities should be governed internally by councils predominantly composed of popularly elected members. Fifth and finally, government administrators should withdraw from an executive to an advisory, inspectorial role in relation to local government.

Olowu (1999) posits that the concept of decentralization evokes different images among policy makers, administrators, political scientists, and the public. The arrangement for decentralised governance in Ghana has been well documented by Ghana (1988), Ayee (1994) and Crawford (2004) as pulled together during this section. The legal framework that guides Ghana's decentralisation process is rooted within the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Chapter 20 of the Constitution entitled "Decentralisation and native Government" states that: authorities' administration shall be decentralised and therefore the functions, powers and responsibilities and resources shall be transferred from central government to authorities units (Article 240 (1) and (2) of 1992 Constitution of Ghana). The Constitution further envisages grassroots participation in governance and downwards accountability when Article 240 (2) (e) states that: to make sure the accountability of authorities authorities, people particularly authorities areas shall, as far as practicable, be afforded the chance to participate effectively in their governance. The critical question that demands empirical answers is whether or not these virtues of participation and downwards accountability as envisaged by the country's constitution are being fulfilled. Other

legal provisions that guide Ghana's decentralisation process include the authorities Act of 1993 (Act 462) and therefore the subsequent authorities Establishment Instrument of 1994 (L.I. 1589).

According to Tordoff (cited in Crawford, 2004), local government witnessed a generally weak system and subjected to the centralization of power that was typical of the post-colonial state in the post-independence epoch from 1957 onwards. Ahwoi (2006) notes that Ghana's local government and decentralization program envisaged participation as summarized in Policy Guidelines in 1982 as follows:

- I. "The urgent need for participatory democracy to ensure that the bane of remote government that had afflicted Ghanaians since independence is done away with effectively, to render government truly responsive and accountable to the governed.
- II. The assumption of power by the people cannot be complete unless a truly decentralized government system is introduced, that is, the Central Government, in all its ministerial manifestations, should empower Local Government Councils to initiate, coordinate, manage and execute policies in all matters affecting them in their locality".

The argument that decentralization improves resource allocation, accountability, and cost recovery relies heavily on the assumption that subnational governments have better information than the central government about the needs and preferences of the local population, and that the population is more aware of the actions of subnational governments than those of the central government. There are various arguments when it comes to the concept of political participation. Whatever the impulse for engaging people in the governance process, for a very long time, people were seen as the mere recipients of government services without having any (active) role in policy-formulation, decision-making and in program implementation. Within development, perhaps the overriding concern with participation has been related to the community or social sectors. In a highly influential study in the late 1970s, participation was defined as the "organized efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations, on the part of groups and movements hitherto excluded from such control" (Stiefel and Wolfe: 1994, p. 5). In recent times, the definition of participation in development has often been located in development projects and programmes, as a means of strengthening their relevance, quality and sustainability. The World Bank (cited in Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999, p. 2) defines participation as "process

through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them”.

### **3.3 Local Governments and Partnerships for Local Development**

Despite the fact that development actors interpret the concept of good governance in different ways, there is growing consensus that it involves more than just the institution of government itself. Currently, the development community is seeking innovative strategies to address the challenges of local development and poverty alleviation, decentralization, local governance and improvement of aid transfer effectiveness. Local governance refers to a polycentric system in which a variety of actors are engaged in local public decision-making process (Denters, 2011, p.313). Olowu and Wunsch (2004, p.4) defined local governance as a rule-governed process through which residents of a defined area participate in their own governance in limited but locally important matters; they are the key decision-makers in determining what their priority concerns are; how they will respond to them, and what and how resources will be raised to deal with those concerns; and are the key decision makers in managing and learning from those responses. They continued to argue that the representatives of the local residents may and frequently perform these decision making functions as agents and remain accountable to (and removable by) the people through procedures specified by law (Local Governance Act, 2016, Act 936 as in Ghana).

Democratic decentralisation is commonly related to governance virtues like political participation, responsiveness and accountability (Blair, 2000; Smith, 2007). The presumption is that decentralisation will bring governance closer to the people at the local level and thus provides better opportunities for local residents to participate in decision-making. Also, local citizens are ready to hold their elected representatives accountable through the facility of their thumb, which local public servants also will be accountable to the elected representatives (Smith, 2007). the fact however, is that the varying and sometimes conflicting interests among the assorted actors within the decentralisation process, similarly as their power differentials often get play to come up with results that don't seem to be according to good governance principles. For instance, Smith (2007) reported of the tendency of civil servants at the authority's level, who thanks to their aspirations, lifestyles and professionalism wish to retain their links with the central government and can like better to account to the central instead of the authorities. Smith provided an example of teachers in Pakistan who successfully opposed a reorganisation of education that may place them under

bureau control, thanks to their fear of reduced career opportunities in other areas similarly as fear of reduced prestige of their profession. Such interests, hostile to decentralisation, may additionally be exhibited at the national level as politicians and bureaucrats at the centre are reluctant to giving up their power and control of resources to the periphery within the name of decentralisation.

Tam (2005) adds another dimension to the present debate when he argues that the offering of fabric goods in political clientelism may sometimes take the shape of threats instead of inducements. He cited the instance of the government of Singapore threatening to withhold improvements of housing in districts that elect opposition legislators. In my opinion, many countries in the Sub-Saharan Countries, some communities wallow in poverty and this goes to weaken state institutions because the government of the day find it difficult to ensure that the needed support are given. Some community leaders are also reluctant to meddle in politics thereby depriving the community the needed structures that would propel them from poverty. Through the Traditional systems, communities are able to cater for some amenities but lag behind in development. In Ghana, it is perceived that devolution of power to the local level can cause rural development and poverty reduction because it allows the state apparatus to be more exposed to the local context and so more awake to local needs, thereby improving efficiency of resource allocation (Crook & Sverrisson, 2001; Ribot, 2002, Smith, 2007). Although there seems to be an ambiguous linkage between decentralisation and development, it is commonly agreed that decentralised local governance contributes to development in terms of promoting local participation within the development process and therefore the design of policies that are adapted to local needs (Crook, 1994; Sharma, 2000; Azfar et al, 2004; Mehrotra, 2006). Besides, local resources for social and economic development will be more easily mobilised and efficiently applied within the development process similarly as tailoring the activities to the precise needs of the local population (Rondinelli, 1981; Ayee, 1994; OECD, 2004; Smith, 2007). The rationale is that decisions about public expenditure that are taken by a government closer to poor communities are likely to be more awake to local situations than a far off central government.

Indeed, Mehrotra (2006) reported that democratic devolution of primary health care service to locally elected health committees in Ghana, Mali and Benin increased access to affordable health services, which has successively increased immunisation rates and reduced fatality rate. Although one would accept as true with the principles underlying the potential benefits of democratic decentralisation, much also will rely on the political will and the way the institutional framework

for decentralisation is fashioned. Another concern is that the capacity of the citizens within the locality to effectively participate in decisions and hold local politicians and public servants accountable (Cloete, 2002; Crawford, 2004). Cloete (2002) reports of low levels of development in situations where there's half-baked decentralisation with little power or authority devolved to the lower levels and where there's weak administrative systems and weak civil society to carry local authorities accountable. Crook (2003) contends that in Africa and other developing countries, the achievement of authentic participation of rural people in development depends on the devolution of power to the authority's structures.

However, Smith (2007) cautions that locally elected government, as envisaged in devolution, is not a guarantee to people's participation. He argued that in many aggregation countries democratic elections are easily captured by local elites like businessmen, public servants and wealth farmers, whose interests aren't to empower the poor, but to require care of their privileged positions. A USAID study on Ghana's decentralisation found that participation within the districts assemblies is dominated by elite groups like nurses, teachers and businessmen (USAID, 2003). These elites also tend to capture resources for development and allocate such resources in ways within which will maintain the prevailing patterns of power and wealth (Blair, 2000 cited in Smith, 2007). This might take the form of deflecting expenditures towards local elites under the influence of patronage, corruption, electoral manipulation, fraud and misappropriation (Helmsing, 2003; Smith, 2007). A number of writers point to a weak correlation between democratic decentralisation and poverty reduction (Blair, 2000; Crook & Sverrisson, 2001; Oluwu & Wunsch, 2004; Blunt & Turner, 2005; Robinson, 2007). As an example, despite the great strides in decentralisation in Columbia and Brazil, in terms of devolving power to local democratically elected bodies, these countries have achieved relatively little within the way of poverty reduction further as reducing or improving regional disparities (Crook & Sverrisson, 2001). Manor (1999) equally made pessimistic conclusions about experiences in Bolivia, India and Bangladesh. Similar conclusions are drawn by Adamolekun, cited in Francis and James (2003) who reported that despite the several years of implementing decentralisation by some African countries like Uganda, Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Ghana, there are not any real success stories as far as improved development performance at the local level is anxious.

Nonetheless, various explanations are provided to elucidate the poor performance of decentralisation in region. in line with Wunsch (2001), the failure is because of the over

centralisation of resources, limited transfers to sub-national governance, a weak local revenue base, lack of local planning capacity, limited changes in legislation and regulations further because the absence of a meaningful political process. Oyugi (2000 cited in Jain, 2007) explains the poor performance of decentralisation in region to poor design of decentralisation programmes, imitative nature of decentralisation programmes which fail to want into serious consideration their feasibility within the prevailing political environment and also the lingering culture of central hegemony over the localities, both politically and administratively. An extra administrative constrain as argued by Kotze (1997) is that some operatives at the decentralised administration are political appointees, who may have little administrative capacity. Such appointees are more inclined to tow the party line at the expense of community interest, thereby compromising development efficiency and effectiveness for political expediency. This case is exemplified in Ghana where there are perceptions that ruling party executives in some districts usually put undue pressure on the politically appointed District Chief Executive (DCE) to release some district resources to support local political activities. Where the DCE is reluctant to comply, he or she is typically branded as not good and consequently the local party executives may make recommendations to the President for the removal of such a DCE.

This view is corroborated by Crawford (2004) when he reported that the shortage of fully elected District Assembly, including the DCE, in Ghana's decentralisation process, entails a significant deficit within the system of democratic representation and within the accountability of local representatives to the electorate. In other words, the democratic principle of popular control is severely compromised. Theoretically, the policy of devolution has potential for the relatively rapid development of sub-Saharan African. However, implementation failures have accounted for the poor performance of decentralisation efforts in some African countries. Such implementation failures are mainly caused by the weak institutional framework under which decentralisation is undertaken. In this regard, a notable dimension is that the tendency for Africa countries to borrow Western models of decentralisation without adequately adapting them to suit the local context with inherent traditional attributes. Unfortunately, such institutional bottlenecks militating against effective decentralisation haven't attracted sufficient scholarly studies. Given the pros and cons for decentralisation and development, as discussed above, it is recognised that decentralisation may be a fancy, multidimensional process which takes place within a particular political context then evolves differently in numerous countries looking on the context (Smoke, 2003; Oxhorn, 2004;

Dauda, 2006). Understanding the local context and brought this into consideration within the decentralisation policy holds the key to its success in terms of rural development and poverty reduction.

### **3.4 Traditional Governance and Decentralization in Ghana**

Traditional institutions are common in virtually all traditional societies. They are often categorized into an age-based hierarchy, traditional leaders, traditional healers and members of society who have excelled in content. They set, oversee and enforce tribal rules/regulations or taboos. In enforcement, they act as a supreme court with the last word say in all tribal matters. The 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, 2004; Bekoe, 2007).

In the view of Mukyala-Makiika (1998), there exists some form of duality of authority at the local level of governance. One form of the authority consists of people who derive their legitimate right to govern from the fact that they have been elected and they consider the people as collection of individuals, each with a set of specific rights. The other group comprises those who derive their right to govern from inheritance and tradition and perceive people to be part of a cultural unit with collective rights. Traditional authorities belong to the latter group and continue to remain important in areas such as cultural leadership, control of natural resources, community identity and political leadership. Arguments advanced for the institutional representation of traditional rulers in the local government system have been demonstrated by their ability to mobilise support for local level development projects. They also have the capacity to encourage participation at the grassroots level. This is evident in their democratic credentials where they are seen as the last resort when the central government and the district assemblies have failed (Ayee, 2006). Closing the gap between the district assemblies and the sub-district structures on one hand, and the traditional authorities

on the other, has the potential of reviving the enthusiasm of the traditional rulers in the operations of the DAs and the sub-district structures. 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. As has been rightly stated by Kendie and Guri (2004), the inability to reduce the growing incidence of poverty and underdevelopment could be attributed to the tendency of formal development organisation's approach to local knowledge systems and practices without recourse to including indigenous knowledge. 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, 2002). 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).

Today, the chieftaincy institution is that the dominant variety of traditional rule (Assimeng, 1996; Nabila, 2006). However, traditional authorities in Ghana are stated by the generic name as "chiefs" (Boateng, 1994; Ray & Reddy, 2004). Scholars who have enriched our knowledge about traditional rule Ghana include Bentsi-Enchil (1971); Fynn (1974); Ollennu (1977); Arhin (1985); Gyekye (1996); Kendie and Guri (2004); Odotei and Awedoba (2006). These authors generally agree on two major styles of traditional rule. These two major classifications are the centralised kind of government (cephalous societies) and so the acephalous societies or what is described because the 'lose decentralised' kind of government. Abotchie (2006) suggests that pre-colonial indigenous administration in cephalous societies in Ghana was bureaucratic therein there are highly formalised systems or procedures within the hierarchy of chiefs. The traditional bureaucracy had elements of decentralization and participation of citizens (Lutz & Linder, 2004). Furthermore, there was wide scope of adult participation in decision-making within the standard

bureaucracy as issues like village projects and settlement of cases were often decided through open forum, debates and consensus building.

The stylish State is purported to be highly centralized and bureaucratic (Agyemang, 2009). Linking indirect rule and modern governance, Buah (1998) explains that, country colonial officials sought to modernize “traditional” African political institutions by gradually modifying their practices. However, on the contrary, it seems to possess modified African political structures for the convenience of the colonial administrator. Arhin (1985:89) posit that, “the assumption of these powers put an end to the traditional states as independent, political communities”. Consequently, Sovereign Kings and other office-holders were converted by the European masters into chiefs or traditional leaders. Generally, the European colonial states in Africa often attempted to use chiefs, both traditional and neotraditional as auxiliaries to colonial rule. In effect, the indirect rule strengthened the authority of country while partially displacing and decentralising the authority of local chiefs (Aikins, 2012). The Native Authority Ordinance of 1944 heralded the beginning of the erosion of the ability of chiefs in local administration and a continuation of the tactic of change from chieftaincy based government towards democratically elected government (Ray, 2003). Following the recommendations of the Coussey Constitutional Reform Committee appointed in 1948, the colonial government passed the govt. Ordinance in 1951 (Cap 64).

This Ordinance provided for one comprehensive framework for state within the country through the establishment of a two-tier government structure at the local and district levels. Governance at the local level was vested in local councils in rural areas, and municipal councils in municipalities. Governance at the district level was vested in district councils. Two-thirds of the council members were democratically elected and one-third represented the traditional authorities (Ayee, 1994). The participation of chiefs in local governance was restored after the overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966 with one-third of state units being nominated to represent chiefs and so the two-thirds being elected members. This composition of state was maintained by subsequent governments until the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) stopped formal representation of chiefs within the District Councils/Assemblies in 1981 (Ayee, 1994; Nkrumah, 2000 and Crawford, 2004). Consequently, under the govt. Law (PNDC Law 207), 1988, the PNDC government regarded the representation or active participation of Chiefs in decentralised institutions, like DAs, or in organs of power, as undemocratic and counter-revolutionary. Hence, within the composition of the DAs, the Chiefs, unlike previously, lost the one-third membership

usually reserved for them by previous governments. In other words, the PNDC decentralisation reforms did not forget a part for traditional authorities within the structures of state. The Chiefs however, were just one of the groups to be covered by the clause permitting the Central government to appoint one-third of the District Assembly members (Ayee, 1994).

### **3.5 Integration of Traditional Authorities in Local Governance**

Various studies are drained the realm of the role of traditional authorities in local governance. This study critically examines five of these empirical studies from Ghana and two from outside Ghana- Western Samoa within the Pacific and Botswana by McPherson (1997) and Lutz and Linder (2004) respectively.

The five from Ghana include the works of:

1. Knierzinger (2011): Chieftaincy and development in Ghana: From political intermediaries to neotraditional development brokers;
2. Taabazuing (2010): Towards effective participation of chiefs in Ghana's decentralization process: the case of Wenchi district;
3. Kendie and Enu-Kwesi (2008): The role of traditional authority in the decentralised system in Brong Ahafo and Central Regions;
4. Institute of Local Government Studies (2008): Guidelines for managing relationships between local and traditional authorities at the district level; and
5. Bouton (2004): Interactions between the Local Government and the Traditional authorities.

Comparatively, the work of Knierzinger (2011) gives a detail account of how the institution of Chieftaincy was positioned under the varied regimes of state in Ghana. His argument is that, contrary to several prophecies of doom since independence, chieftaincy remains very talked-about. One in every of the explanations for this persistence is that the remarkable malleability and fluidity of traditional authority system. His paper focuses on the intersections between the normal actors (e.g. chiefs, queen mothers, stool fathers, elders, 'linguists' and development chiefs) and development actors of which they are part. It discusses how traditional authorities interact with (and act as) politicians, business men, NGOs and development agencies and the way these intersections is described on the national level. So as to derive empirical evidence on the intersection between chieftaincy and politics, Knierzinger (2011) surveys the views of over 1,000

people in Greater Accra in 2005 on the comparative relevance of chiefs and members of parliament (MPs). The chosen respondents (1005 valid cases) were predominantly of the opinion that chiefs are more trustworthy, more caring and more powerful than MPs as far as the well-being and everyday lives of the people are concerned. The response given by Professor George P. Hagan, CPP presidential candidate in 2000 elections and a key informant to the Researcher described this relationship between traditional authorities and the politicians of the modern political system quite bluntly:

*You cannot win an election in Ghana if the chiefs do not support you, because while you are asleep, they are with the people. A chief said to me you cannot win if you have no money to give to the chiefs. If you give me money I can go from village to village in my domain and tell people to vote. At times the voting is done even in the chief's palace. And people go to the chief's house to greet him in the morning and ask him how they should vote. He would not open up his mouth; he would give them a sign. [...] So let's be realistic: The theory is that they should not participate, and that is the idea (Knierzinger, 2011: 35).*

In practice, however, many chiefs have circumvented this constitutional provision calling for it to be amended or expunged from the constitution of the republic of Ghana. Although Knierzinger (2011) used an oversized sample size which has positive implications for the end result, his work doesn't sufficiently explain how respondents were selected. Taabazuing (2010) explores the interactive process between decentralised structures and traditional authorities in Wenchi district, with a view to generating lessons and insights which will guide the advice of a more appropriate decentralisation framework to tap the strengths of traditional authorities towards accelerated rural development. Within the framework of action research methodology, he employed the mixed-methods to triangulate his findings. Specific methods employed were focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth interviews (IDIs), and observation, complemented by context analyses of relevant documents. It was found that the interactive processes between traditional authorities and decentralised structures are characterised mainly by competition for power and legitimacy, resulting in mistrust and an inability to require advantage of the synergy effect between the two systems of local governance in accomplishing accelerated rural development.

The study established that the outcomes of decentralisation and development in Wenchi district are shaped by the local context like the values, perceptions, institutions and relationships among the varied actors. Consequently, the exploration for a more practical decentralisation process and sustainable development points to inclusiveness and variety instead of to universal blueprints. Key recommendations are that traditional authorities shouldn't be fused with the decentralised structures, but should remain as countervailing institutions to test the misuse of power by the decentralised structures. This recommendation, however, contradicts certain aspects of his own conclusions yet because the work of ILGS (2008) during which traditional authorities have advocated for a greater presence in local administration. For example, Taabazuing concluded that the connection between traditional authorities and district assembly operatives may well be strengthened if opportunities were created for the chiefs to own a greater say on who was selected to represent their communities within the decentralised structures. It is therefore no surprising when Taabazuing (2010) further recommended that traditional authorities should incline the ceremonial role of the correct to deal with meetings of the District Assembly and also the Area Councils.

Additionally, the author recommended that chiefs should incline the prospect to nominate a minimum of two people onto the Unit Committees. in a very nutshell, Taabazuing's work kicks against the concept of integration as it is mainly advocates for the establishment where traditional structures remain as ceremonial figureheads. The work by Kendie & Enu-Kwesi (2008) was initiated by the Support for Decentralisation Reform Programme (SfDR) of German Technical Co-operation (GTZ) as a response to the necessity to come up with empirical data that may inform policy reforms to effectively integrate the normal authorities into Ghana's decentralisation system. The study was distributed within the Central and Brong Ahafo regions where four districts and their corresponding four paramountcies yet as four communities were selected for the info collection. Additionally, the study employed a mix of descriptive and cross-sectional surveys. Moreover, a mix of methods like focus group discussions by district assembly staff, and traditional authorities, yet as household surveys using interview schedules were adopted for data collection from relevant stakeholders. At the end, a complete of 397 interview schedules were completed and analysed at the household level. The study confirmed the existence of a spot between the TAs and state institutions, and suggested the necessity for co-operation between these institutions so as for local level development to occur. It had been also acknowledged that, although some efforts are

being made to integrate TAs into Ghana's decentralised administration and planning system, the mechanisms put in situ to make sure that this happens are unclear. Although, the study finally gave some specific areas where the 2 institutions is integrated, the standards used for the choice of the study paramountcies and districts were too broad and have implications when defining the boundaries of integration. In a problem paper developed from reviewing reports emanating from various consultations and studies on traditional authorities and native governance in Ghana, the ILGS (2008) situate the anomaly within the role of traditional authorities in local governance among the subsequent key issues: (a) Protocol at the local level between traditional and native authorities (b) Representation of Traditional authorities on MMDAs (c) Relations between Traditional authorities, Unit committees and native government sub-structures (d) Platforms of engagement between local authorities and Traditional authorities (e) Infrastructure management, monitoring and evaluation (f) Peace-building, Security and Conflict prevention (g) resource management (h) tax revenue mobilization (i) Human rights observance and reduction of the practice and impacts of negative socio-cultural practices, and (j) Capacity building for Traditional authorities. Having identified these areas of lack of synergy between the normal and assembly structures, the paper further proposes desirable outcomes and specific guidelines geared toward achieving the issues outlined.

The final empirical review relates to the work of Tara Bouton. As earlier stated, Bouton's work was also about the interactions between the conventional authorities and also the authorities in Ghana. Just like the work of Johannes, Knierzinger, Tara also approached the interface from the historical context which created a foundation for better understanding of current perceptions on the problem. Using In-depth Interviews, Tara engaged eight (8) members of traditional authority and six (6) past and current officials of authorities. His data analysis was purely qualitative. In the end, Bouton (2004) concluded that stress on the authorities may perhaps be effectively alleviated through increased conversation with the conventional authorities, specifically by defining representation of the conventional authority within the district assemblies and at the local council level, additionally as promoting adjudication by the conventional authority as a viable option for alternative conflict resolution within the district courts. Although Tara Bouton's conclusion confirms what other writers have said on the subject, his generalizations supported only Komenda traditional area may perhaps be problematic. His study also fails to point the particular working places of the authorities' officials he interviewed. Having tested five empirical reviews majority

of which are from Ghana and Ghanaian authors, it is vital to also take a glance at some examples outside the country. Two foreign models are adopted from Macpherson (1997) additionally as Lutz and Linder (2004). The framework looks at the leverage points for the mix of traditional and native government structures at state and Botswana in an exceedingly more formalistic manner. The instances by McPherson concerns a situation where the authority is empowered to act because the authorities.

### **3.6 Traditional Authority's Relevance to Socio-Economic Development**

Consensus on the relevance of the institution to development in the midst of a modern nation-state may be far from being reached at least in the near future, as the debate on it rolls on. In fact, it appears that some of the analyses seem to be suggesting that the institution is incompatible with modern forms of governance and must therefore be done away with. On the other side of the coin, there are those who think that the institution is indispensable for progress in Africa and for that matter Ghana. This therefore brings into play various strands and schools of thought. It is significant to note at the outset that the history of the debate about the relevance of the institution goes back to the colonial era when the British colonial administrator in the northern Nigerian Caliphates, Lord Lugard, concluded that in view of the fact that the institution was an essential element in Africans' cosmology, it was to be maintained. This conclusion about the relevance of chieftaincy led to the introduction of the indirect rule system of administration in most of the British colonies throughout our continent including Ghana. According to Mengisteab (2008), four broad strands can be identified in the chieftaincy centred discourse on traditional institutions and development. One pessimistic strand contends that chieftaincy is anachronistic, a hindrance to the development and transformation of the continent, undemocratic, divisive, and costly. The arguments advanced by this view include the following:

1. chieftaincy has been corrupted by the colonial state and by the clientelism of the despotic post-colonial state and is, thus, no longer subject to accountability to the populace (Zack-Williams, 2002; Kilson, 1966);
2. the populations under traditional authorities, as in South Africa, live as "subjects" rather than as citizens of the state, and democratic governance would not be achieved while such systems continue to exist (Mamdani, 1996; Ntsebeza, 2005);

3. chieftaincy heightens primordial loyalties as chiefs constitute foci of ethnic identities (Simwinga quoted in van Binsberger, 1987, p.156);
4. chieftaincy impedes the pace of development as it reduces the relevance of the state in the areas of social services (Tom Mboya, in Osaghae, 1987); and
5. that the hereditary nature of chieftaincy renders it incompatible with democratic governance, which requires competitive elections as one of its cornerstones (Ntsebeza, 2005).

Mamdani perhaps has the loudest voice in this school of thought. In line with the discourse, several countries including, Uganda, Guinea, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Zambia, and Zimbabwe attempted either to strip chiefs of most of their authority or to abolish chieftaincy altogether. This also happened in Ghana under the first republic as indicated in the background of chieftaincy in Ghana. These efforts have, however, proved largely unsuccessful. Abolishing chieftaincy does not eradicate its underlying broader institutions and chiefs have been reinstated in most of those countries and even given constitutional guarantees as in Ghana. The resilience of these institutions, when chiefs do not have formal powers to sustain their authority, poses a serious challenge to critics of chieftaincy. Chiefs must either be providing services at lower transaction costs than the state to the members of their communities or they must be providing services in a manner that their communities identify with for them to continue to command the allegiance of large segments of the rural population (Mengisteb, 2008). Moreover, the critical view of chieftaincy fails to differentiate between different types of chieftaincies and the different hierarchies within the same types. Additionally, this view has failed to consider what democracy and accountability actually means to different cultures and people in the world. The above strand also has no grounding in the face of other researches. Chiefs bear responsibility for religious functions, custody over lands, communal well-being, participatory grassroots democracy and settling of disputes (Mireku 1991; Pobe 1991; Owusu 1997).

The chiefs are elected in most cases, with some minor exceptions to their positions. Decisions are made, for instance in the Akan chieftaincy through consulting all the families involved in the issue. Everyone has the right to express his views. A few representatives are then selected to consult the queen mother, who is a very important old lady in the community but not the chief's wife to reach a consensus. The chief must also heed the queen mother's views, and he, finally, pronounces their joint solution. Despite the power, the chiefs are also removable from their positions (Pobe, 1991;

Mireku, 1991). This shows that traditional authorities are not after all despotic and untouchable. A second view or strand asserts that traditional institutions are indispensable for political transformation in Africa, as they represent a major part of the continent's history, culture, and political and governance systems. This view attributes the ineffectiveness of the African state in bringing about sustained socioeconomic development to its neglect of traditional institutions and its failure to restore Africa's own history (Davidson, 1992). Englebert (2000) also makes a forceful argument that institutional dichotomy has undermined the legitimacy of the African state. This view adds to the assertion that democracy and development must be adapted but not imported wholesale. Unfortunately, the studies that view traditional institutions to be relevant provide little detail on the specific dynamics of these institutions and how they might be incorporated or reconciled with the formal institutions (Mengisteab, 2008). A clear policy direction is therefore needed in this direction. A third, and more balanced strand of traditional institutions, acknowledges their limitations. It notes that the colonial state largely transformed chieftaincy into its intermediate administrative institution, and that the post-colonial state often co-opts chiefs to facilitate the extension of despotic control over its citizens. This view, nonetheless, contends that traditional institutions constitute crucial resources that have the potential to promote democratic governance and to facilitate access of rural communities to public service. This perspective makes the following arguments:

1. chieftaincy can provide the bedrock upon which to construct new mixed governance structures since chiefs serve as custodians of and advocates for the interests of local communities within the broader political structure (Sklar, 1996; Skalnik, 2004);
2. the conception of traditional institutions that the source and *raison d'être* of power is the collective good, enables them to provide a strong philosophical basis for establishing accountable governance, (Osaghae, 1987); and
3. given that over-centralization of power in the hands of predatory states often obfuscates community-based initiatives and democratic practices at the grassroots, good governance can materialise only through the articulation of indigenous political values and practices and their harmonization with modern democratic practices (AJID, 1996; Ayittey, 1992; Ake, 1987).

A fourth view on the relevance of traditional institutions is provided by legal pluralists. This view acknowledges that African traditional legal systems, customary courts, and customary property

rights are an empirical reality and need to be recognised and respected (McAuslan, 1998). In Dagbon for instance, a lot of customary and family cases are settled amicably at the chief's palace/court. Thus without the traditional legal systems, the modern ones would have been overwhelmed with a lot of cases which could lead to instability in the long run. This fourth view does not, however, provide mechanisms for integrating the two sets of institutional systems to correct the problems of institutional duality and conflicts. Apart from the above strands given by Mengisteab (2008), on the relevance of traditional authority, there exists another approach given by Chinsinga. Chinsinga (2006) contends that two broad schools of thought can be distinguished concerning the relevance of traditional authority. The first school of thought perceives traditional institutions as being incompatible with democratisation and decentralisation. This school of thought is the same as the earlier pessimistic strand given above by Mengisteab. The second school of thought argues for co-existence of some kind. This is because traditional leadership institutions are an important part of the historical heritage of local communities and cannot therefore just be wished out of existence (Ray, 1996, Blom, 2002, Ntsebeza, 2003a). The critics of traditional leadership institutions argue that traditional authority is an anachronism that should not have survived the twentieth century let alone exist in the twenty first. Traditional leaders are thus characterized as leftovers from a time that is swiftly fading away. The thrust of the discourse against traditional leadership institutions hinges on Mamdani's thesis of the bifurcated state (Chinsinga, 2006). The colonial state according to Mamdani (1996) was bifurcated because it had different modes of rule for urban citizens and rural subjects. In his view therefore nothing less than dismantling the bifurcated state would ensure complete democratisation of developing countries, and consequently, facilitate the potential success of decentralisation policy reforms since only then can both rural and urban areas enjoy a common citizenship.

This would be impossible to achieve if traditional leadership institutions remain intact since this would mean the continuity of a "series of binary opposites such as rights and custom, representation and participation, centralisation and decentralisation, civil society and community" (Ntsebeza, 2003b). Traditional institutions are thus seen as instruments of social oppression entirely devoid of progress especially in such areas as political organisation, women's rights, social mobility and economic rights. But one can argue that this same label of accusation has been brought against the formal state in many countries including Ghana. Besides, it can be argued that this is the time traditional authorities are needed like never before, considering the level of moral

decadence in the country. Customary institutions are further criticized as being undemocratic principally on the grounds that the right to choose one's representatives is a fundamental and basic human right in contemporary democracies. This is the case because chieftaincy is more or less "a caste in which only birth members can postulate to the role of chiefs" (Ribot 2002, p.69). Elected officials on the other hand get their authority by means of a popular vote" (Molotlegi, 2002, p.1). The issue here therefore is that as long as chieftaincy is based on heredity and ascription then it is inherently undemocratic. The possibility of rural residents having the freedom to choose which institutions or individuals should rule is automatically excluded.

The major concern is that ascendancy to chieftaincy on the basis of ascription makes incumbents hardly accountable to their subjects, and as such, empowering or working with them may not serve the efficiency, equity or development aims so often strongly idealized by somewhat naive decentralisation advocates (Ribot, 2002, Ntsebeza, 2003a). The argument is that working with or empowering chiefs may simply amount to the continued encapsulation of individuals within communities through the administratively driven empowerment of customary decision makers to represent local people (Mamdani, 1996). The hallmark of this school of thought therefore is that traditional and modern forms of leadership cannot co-exist because they draw their legitimacy from two distinct sources (Chinsinga, 2006). Traditional leaders derive their claims to legitimacy, authority and, indeed, sovereignty from their pre-colonial roots while the contemporary African state is a creation of, and a successor to, the imposed colonial state. It can however be seen that most "so-called" democratically elected leaders in Africa try to stay in power till the rest of their lives as in Zimbabwe and Cote D'Ivoire among others. On the contrary, the other school of thought; the supporters of traditional leadership institutions contend that these institutions can neither be simply legislated out of existence nor merely be relegated to being part of a traditional social sphere distinct from the modern world of civil society (Owusu, 1997; Blom, 2002; Senyonjo, 2004). The major thrust of the argument of this school of thought is that traditional leadership institutions are not static and frozen in time. Like all aspects of culture and tradition, it is argued that the institution of traditional leaders grows and adapts itself to the changing values and aspirations of its people since it does not exist in a vacuum. It is the ordinary people who condition it and reshape it to be constantly relevant. The values of democracy, participation, respect for human rights, mutuality and cooperation with others all influence the nature and functioning of the institution of traditional leaders in the contemporary society. In order to appreciate the

relevance of chieftaincy, Owusu (1997) and Blom (2002) for instance argue that it is extremely vital to understand how it is based on customary village institutions involving general norms and ideas about leadership.

They contend that a ruler's subjects are fully aware of the duties he owes to them as they are of the duties they owe to him and are able to exert pressure to make him discharge these duties. In some cases, according to Moto (1998), a chief may in fact, by popular will, be stripped of his chieftaincy if his behaviour is not that expected of a chief and associated with the office. In this sense the power of chieftaincy largely rests with the chief's subjects and should a chief not live and lead as expected, the subjects have the mandate to ask for their removal. Chieftaincy is therefore widely perceived as an embodiment of virtues of political accountability, transparency, service and probity. It is further argued that traditional leaders play a very critical role in the livelihoods of their subjects in the sense that:

1. they inspire and motivate their people for development in every aspect;
2. advocate cooperative action; and
3. extols the commitment and total involvement of all members of a community in forming and implementing policies for overall community welfare.

They are able to achieve these goals because "their word is much respected, their praise is much appreciated, and their example is emulated" (Lule, 1995, p.18). Lule (1995) in fact argues that the institution of traditional leaders being part and parcel of the cultural heritage of African people is an essential part of their fundamental right to culture. Once the people who are affected by it freely choose to have it, it can therefore not be legislated out of existence simply because it is incompatible with democratisation and decentralisation (that is the western canon of democracy). This school of thought takes recourse to the apparent resilience of customary authorities to argue for a critical role that traditional norms, values and practices may play in domesticating the twin processes of democratisation and decentralisation. The fact that the suppression or even the abolition of traditional institutions and leadership could not wipe their importance in the eyes of the grassroots, it is argued, should be taken as a starting point for any attempt to mediate the interface between tradition, democratisation and decentralisation. From this vantage point, domesticating democracy thus entails "a dynamic and continuous process of institutionalisation in which democratic ideals, beliefs, values, practices, actions and relationships, and new forms of

political behaviour gain acceptance and popular support in society and become successfully integrated with other features of culture and society endowing them with popular legitimacy” (Owusu, 1997 cited in Chinsinga, 2006). Supporters of this school of thought therefore argue that traditional institutions provide an adaptation mechanism of new ideas through reference and contrast to pre-existing ones. In this sense traditional institutions thus form the foundation on which new concepts are built and this foundation “enables the people to incorporate new ideas into their body politic without losing the essential elements of their own tradition and also makes the new concepts understandable” (Senyonjo, 2004, p.5). Consequently it is argued that any hope for sustainable democratisation and decentralisation very much depends on “courage, honesty and imagination with which [the interface between tradition, democratization and decentralization] is addressed” (Owusu, 1997, p.132). The key issue here is that “the western models of governance should be complemented with political forms rooted in African imageries” (Obario 2002, p.5) since “to disregard or trample on traditional institutions is to antagonise the people and perhaps even earn their opposition” (Senyonjo 2004, p.5) and perhaps even “more critically tradition gives us our identity, our values, and a way of discriminating between change as progress and change for the sake of change” (Molotlegi 2002, p.11).

As von Trotha (1996) notes, chiefs and village heads under civil chieftaincy constitute a forum where local interests are debated and articulated. Thus, they can constitute a valuable resource in informing the state about the interests of local communities as well as in mobilising rural populations for active engagement, not only in development activities and the distribution of public services, but also in the national political process. Unlike government-appointed administrators, lower-level chiefs and village leaders live in conditions largely similar to those of their communities. They share common interests and think like their people. As a result, they are better equipped to represent the interests of their communities than are government-appointed administrators, who are accountable only to the political élite. At the district and community levels, national governments share the responsibility of governance with traditional authority, mainly that of the Chiefs. The chief assumes a very central role to the people, being therefore a vital and strategic partner for development. It has been pointed out that chieftaincy as an institution can be adapted to encourage increased popular participation at the grassroots. This is because Ghanaian chiefs do not, as a rule, see central authority as their adversary but as a partner. In the words of Owusu (1997, p.335):

*They (chiefs) are ready in the national interest to work with and offer advice in any government in power, whatever its professed ideology. Symbolically, chiefs see themselves as “fathers” of all their people to whom they are ultimately accountable*

Now that the government, Chiefs and the people are rising to the challenges of modernisation, democratisation and the role of the chief as an agent of development, a new initiative is needed to facilitate and accelerate the growth of a system of governance sensitive to the culture and history of Ghana. This may provide the answers for stability, alternative dispute resolution, peace-building, poverty alleviation and wealth generation. Admittedly, the chief of today cannot act in the way his predecessors behaved. He is neither the military leader nor the legislator that he once was. Except in very limited areas, he has no judicial functions or executive powers of any significance. But this does not mean that the chief has no meaningful role in the modern era. Perhaps, the roles to be played by the modern day chief have been summarized by the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II (2002) as follows:

*Our predecessors engaged in inter-tribal wars, fighting for conquest over territories and people. Today, the war should be vigorous and intensive against dehumanization, poverty, marginalization, ignorance and disease. ... Chieftaincy must be used to propel economic development through proper lands administration, through facilitating investments in our communities, and through codification and customs and traditions making it impossible for imposters to get enstooled and creating unnecessary situations for litigation (cited in Ayee, 2007).*

This shows that the modern day chief has a vital role to play not just in his own domain, but also at the national level. This fact is recognised in the governmental system of Ghana, where the institution of chieftaincy is given an entrenched status in the 1992 Constitution. Among other duties, chiefs are expected to provide advice to the central government and to participate in the administration of regions and districts. Apart from these constitutional functions, chiefs have the moral obligation to contribute to the lives of their individual citizens in particular, and to the nationals of their country at large. These days, a chief is expected to lead his people in organizing self-help activities and projects, and take the initiative in establishing institutions and programmes

to improve the welfare of his people in areas such as health, education, trade and economic or social development. These institutions and programmes are not intended to replace those that must be provided by the central and regional government, but rather to supplement them, especially in these days when the demands of the people are such that it is unrealistic to expect that they can all be met from central government resources. However, it must be indicated that this positive role of chiefs can only be actively taken up by chiefs who are industrious, enlightened and development-oriented.

In the words of the Report of the Committee of Experts, 1991 it is said that; the institution of chieftaincy at the level of local government has a “more easily perceivable role to play in offering counsel and in mobilising the people for development” (Republic of Ghana, 1992, p.150). Similarly, the National Decentralisation Action Plan, 2003-2005 also recognises that “traditional authorities are important partners in ensuring judicious natural resource management” (MLGRD, 2003, p.17).

Owusu-Sarpong (2003) suggests that traditional leaders may act as intermediaries between their people and the government ministries. Ray (2003) has argued that traditional leaders may add their legitimacy to Ghana’s post-colonial state. Both Owusu-Sarpong (2003) and Ray (2003) agree 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) argues 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.

### **3.7 Indigenous Governance as Nation Building**

Nation building and self-determination are key topics within the international literature about Indigenous governance (von der Porten & de Loë 2014b). The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, as an example, identified attention on nation building because the key

condition under which self-determined economic development could succeed on Indian reservations within the America (USA) (Cornell & Kalt, 1998). The findings from the Harvard Project informed and influenced the event of a related Australian project, which similarly identified self-determination, along with leadership and cultural underpinnings, as key factors for achievement in Indigenous communities (Dodson & Smith, 2003; Hunt, 2008; Hunt et al., 2008a; Bauman et al., 2015; Cornell, 2015; Cornell, Jorgensen & Kalt, 2002).

Among the studied American Indian communities, it absolutely was the communities who asserted deciding from their position of control (and therefore ‘implemented’ their own self-determined governance) that were more likely to achieve success, particularly from the angle of achieving development (Cornell & Kalt 1998). On the opposite hand, those communities whose decisions were mostly made for them by the nation-state’s government weren't as successful in aspects of development. Cornell (2002a) found that fundamentally for these Indigenous groups, nation building was about wellbeing and success for the state, as a bunch of individuals, not as individuals, and “long-term survival as a collective is that the primary concern.” (Cornell, 2002a, 1). The nation building approach identifies five primary characteristics:

1. communities assert decision making power (sovereignty);
2. decisions are supported by effective governance institutions;
3. governing institutions reflect their political cultures;
4. strategic decision making occurs; and
5. strong strategic leadership is in place (Cornell & Kalt 2007).

Evidence from both Australia and internationally supports the proposition that Indigenous people self-determine their own governance structures in keeping with their own cultural institutions (Cornell, 2002b; Hunt & Smith, 2006). Indigenous leadership within the international literature tends to be linked to Indigenous governance and related issues like sovereignty, cultural identity issues, institutional and constitutional arrangements and concerns (Dodson & Smith, 2003; Rowse, 2005, 2012; Smith, 2005a; UNEASCP, 2013). For example, Sweden’s Indigenous peoples, the Sámi People, identify and promote Indigenous governance and leadership as major forces behind their self-determination (Balto & Kuhmunen, 2014). In Canada, Indigenous People’s sovereignty rights also arose with an analogous emphasis on governance and leadership (von der Porten, 2012).

Components and ideas like sovereignty and minority rights, and recognition of their application within traditional approaches to traditional Indigenous governance, are important (von der Porten, 2012). Factors like institutional impact, culture, group action and also the ability to develop formal and informal conditions relevant to effective governance are key influences on the success of yank Indian communities (Cornell & Kalt 1990). How people and communities then deal and interact with these influences results in their empowerment (Cornell & Kalt 1990).

Identifying good Indigenous governance principles in Australia has revealed that power, relationships and processes of representation, deciding, accountability, legitimacy of participation, fairness, and performance and leadership, are key features to the success of governance in Indigenous communities (Dodson, 2007; Dodson, 2009; Dodson & Smith, 2003; Hunt et al., 2008a; Smith, 2005a; Sullivan, 2006; UNEASCP 2013). Based on systematic and international comparative case study analysis, the Harvard Project concluded that three factors are fundamental to Indigenous nations' success: practical sovereignty; capable governing institutions; and a cultural match (between formal institutions of state and Indigenous conceptions of authority) (Cornell, et al., 2002). Less systematic research also highlighted two further factors: strategic orientation and leadership (Cornell, et al., 2002). However, Indigenous People are empty control over their lives and fundamentally disempowered when denied access to resources, suitable incomes and basic needs (such as clean water and sanitation, among other things) (Marmot, 2015). The lack to regulate one's own life can have devastating impacts on health, wellbeing and relationships, undermining the impetus and empowerment potential of people and communities through nation building approaches (Marmot, 2016a). Therefore, empowerment of Indigenous Peoples must address and encompass broader social and economic elements for successful Indigenous governance and nation building.

Empowerment in nation building must encompass a holistic approach that features social, cultural, economic and political factors. As Marmot et al. (2008) explains, inequality of power, money and resources are social determinants impacting on the health and well-being of Indigenous Peoples. Marmot et al. (2008) further explain that inclusion in society and fulfilment of rights are determinant conditions necessary to realize the best attainable standard of health. When these conditions are all met, political empowerment, inclusion, having a voice, material equality, psychosocial empowerment occurs. Ongoing social injustice and marginalisation, and impacts from inherent power imbalances and inequalities around resisting the nation-state, stymie nation

building (Marmot et al., 2008). Power and power imbalances must be addressed for successful empowerment of Indigenous peoples and communities, particularly in respect to Indigenous governance. Opportunities for empowerment must be realistic, so as not “to ignore or hide the realities of power, inequality, and oppression ... [which] is precisely those realities which shape the lives of poor and marginalised people and also the communities during which they live.” (Rowlands, 1995, p.106).

For Indigenous governance to emancipate, Indigenous Peoples must transition to “focusing not on opposing external power, but on actualizing their own power and preserving their intellectual independence” as “an indigenous approach to empowerment.” (Alfred, 2009, p.72). Without addressing the difficulty of power imbalances, and redirecting the perceptions inflicted upon Indigenous Peoples, true empowerment, and successively, good governance, remains difficult to realize. The relationship between nation-states and Indigenous Peoples is likened to the “tension inherent within the professional-client relationship [which] is probably going to undermine empowering interventions unless that relationship itself is reconstructed and also the professional mental object upon which it rests is subjected to critical scrutiny” (Pease, 2002, p.144). Subjugated Indigenous knowledges exist and sometimes still be denied legitimacy within the broader context, creating barriers to links between individual and community empowerment with Indigenous governance (Pease, 2002). Therefore, to halt dominant discourses and practices it is necessary for these subjugated knowledges to be elevated through strategy building, redirection of power and inequalities (from nation-states) and also the redefinition and reconstruction of the notion of empowerment (Pease, 2002).

### **3.8 Concept of Taboos**

A taboo (sometimes spelled ‘tabu’) is also a ban or prohibition. The word comes from the Polynesian languages, where it means a spiritual restriction (forbidden), which when violated would entail some automatic punishment (Douglas, 1989). It is comparable the concept of Sacer in Latin, Nso within the Igbo language of Nigeria, and Mmusu within the indigenous Akan language of Ghana (Osei, 2006). Sometimes taboo is remarked as a ‘phenomenon that is universal’, which accurately means ‘marked off’ or ‘off-limits’ (Durkheim, 1963; Holden, 2000). Taboos may additionally be particularly employed within the noun form to go to as “persons, places, objects, or conditions which are endowed with a mysterious attribute and also

the prohibitions arising from the identical attribute” (Levine 1986, p.995). Taboos are going to be seen as an obligatory task more rather than an option, which successively validates the need for punishment for breaking or not observing since “a taboo is an offense against ancestors and Supreme Being” (Fisher, 1998). Punishment from flouting of taboos could come from the supernatural being, ancestors or spirits (Scanlan, 2003).

According to Douglas (1989), it absolutely was argued that primitive tribes observed countless taboos as an element of the ultimate ignorance about the physical world. However, opposing arguments state that taboos aren't a feature of ‘primitive’ societies’, because it absolutely was assumed by some anthropologists, but are a fundamental characteristic of any society (Holden, 2000). In an African context, a taboo is perceived as something that is designated as ‘sacred, placing prohibition or restriction on a particular thing or person, and so, when breached, it'll unleash dangers, while abiding by the principles would amount to avoiding dangers and sickness’” (Douglas, 1966). Hence, the breach of these taboo will result to crop failures in farmland, sickness, hunting accidents, famine, drought, epidemic etc. These taboos are said to be “prohibitions which, when violated, produce automatically within the offender a state of ritual disability; and might only be relieved whenever possible, by a ceremony of purification” (Barre et al, 2009:31). Taboos are arguably expressed as an interconnectedness of two inseparable dimensions within the African worldview: the ‘visible and also the invisible world’. This interconnectedness can also be seen as a variety of mutuality whereby the quality of lifetime of the living within the invisible world (ancestors) and of people living within the visible world depends on each other's actions.

This may be because ancestors are seen as originators and custodians of taboos (Parrinder, 1969, p.89 cited in Boamah, 2015). The connection between taboos and ancestors has valid implications for how humans cohabit and relate with their natural environment, considering the particular proven fact that these ancestral spirits, supposedly board objects like trees, rivers, and rocks as study among the Akan people of Ghana revealed (Aye-Addo, 2013). Sometimes the taboo appears in ways within which seem aloof from their point of origin. For example, among the Lele tribe of Congo, it absolutely was observed a taboo to bring fishing equipment direct into the village from the streams or lakes where it had been in use. All around the village, fishing traps and baskets would be hung in trees overnight. People practiced this because they say coughs and disease would enter the village if the fishing equipment wasn't ignored each night (Douglas, 1966). In some tribal

societies, it is thought that shedding of animal blood will cause severe droughts and other environmental disasters.

Elsewhere, any contact with the dead or menorrhea is assumed to be very dangerous and in other places adultery is in danger of cause illness. while the previously mentioned belief in punishment from ancestors, including death, accidents, and incurable illnesses, has been highly criticized as irrational and unscientific by the fashionable society, it is worth noting that these notions still thrive in most an element of Africa, including Ghana (Sarpong, 1974). The taboos therefore in an exceedingly way, portrays that the concept of “spirituality” is integral to African community. Taboo are going to be applied in two various ways, that is to say, the narrower sense which represents the cultic or purely religious usage, whilst the broader sense represents its usage in socio-economic and political situations (Boamah, 2015). In the narrow perspective, taboo has been a term for a ‘set of cultic or religious prohibitions established by traditional religious authorities as instruments for moral motivation, guidance, and means for shielding the sanctity of shrines and nonetheless the wellbeing of their worshipping communities’ (Boamah, 2015). On the broader sense, the taboos are made applicable to any variety of social prohibition imposed by the heads of a community regarding certain times, places, actions, events, and folks particularly, but not restricted to spiritual reasons and also the well-being of the society. In this context, there has been extensive research on sociocultural practices regarding social taboos and beliefs that include informal institutions.

These institutions simply visit working-rules or rules-in-use, meaning "the set of rules actually utilized by a collection of people to arrange repetitive activities" (Ostrom, Walker, & Gardner, 1992). As such, these social taboos are embedded within the ruling pattern of most traditional societies. Following these taboos is taken into account to be highly beneficial because it helps solve complex issues in these societies of developing countries by conserving nature and also the environment (Becker & Ostrom, 1995). This can be because of certain fear and punishment instilled on defaulters who intercommunicate disobey the norm. Social institutions play a key component during this respect, therefore viewing social taboos as a casual institution is taken into account to be very beneficial (Berkes & Folke, 1998). These taboos are further described as social mechanism that helps within the management and protection of several threatened species in their biological habitat although they'll are viewed by many critics as irrelevant to the conservation of natural resources, and consequently, a drawback toward development (Edgerton, 1992; Rea,

1981). Consequently, there has been various debates today centred on the importance of taboos and their role in solving emerging communal problems. In Ghana for example, some people are of the conservationist stance, and reckon that traditional beliefs and taboos played a positive and important role in grassroots societies and still subtly influence the fashionable society. In line with Magesa, who quoted Webster, (Magesa, 1997), taboos from various African communities are often classified using four categories.

- i. **Taboos about people:** for instance, women are not to sit with men, not respecting elders, son-in-law is not supposed to greet his mother-in-law, youngsters are not supposed to drink alcohol.
- ii. **Taboos about acts:** for instance, stealing, getting pregnant without having had a marriage ceremony, cheating others, incest, adult children having sex before the funeral of their recently deceased parents, singing at night during having a bath.
- iii. **Taboos about things:** for instance, eating certain food, raising cows of certain colour, sitting on cooking stones.
- iv. **Taboos about situations:** for instance, looking at one's sister bathing, referring to genitals directly, a younger wife planting or harvesting before the first wife.

In the Ghanaian community, there are taboos and sacred days related to lagoons, which are set to guard the lagoon habitats and also restore the trust in people. For instance, most sacred groves reserved with specific days in Ghana (referred as dabɔne) are kept in commemoration to certain historical relics like tribal war during which the deities within the sacred grove played a big role (Adomako, Adomako, & Bayliss-Smith, 1998; Falconer, 1992). Their existence, in step with the Ga tribe, may additionally be related to the idea that the deity provides some beneficial services like manufacturing of hoes and cutlasses by the blacksmith god within the Guako sacred grove of Pokuase, Ghana (Adomako et al., 1998; Sarfo-Mensah & Oduro, 2007). Some food-related taboos are described as a mechanism used as a way of resource management strategy as they regulate over-exploitation of species to a substantial degree (McDonald, 1977). A decent example is that the taboo customarily imposed on the consumption of snails among the Ga's and Ewe's Traditional community, while it absolutely was also a brief food taboo for pregnant women among other ethnic groups in Ghana (Gadegbeku, Wayo, Ackah-Badu, Nukpe, & Okai, 2013).

Within the Ghanaian context, it absolutely was believed that folks have died as a consequence from breaking these taboos and by subsequently refusing to pay requisite fines to pacify the gods (Ntiamoah-Baidu, 1991). However, what constitutes such taboos and also the sanctions for breaking them may vary from one culture to the opposite, since taboos vary among tribes within Ghana (Barre, Grant, & Draper, 2009). Lastly, there's a large range of prohibitions associated with the use of the natural resources that are considered to be against the fertility of the land. Similarly, some days are considered to be sacred (no farming or visiting the bush), as this days are reserved as resting periods for the goddess of the land (Boaten, 1998). Belief is defined because the representation during which someone thinks something to be the case, with or without there being empirical evidence to prove that something is that the case with factual certainty (Schwitzgebel, 2006). Belief is additionally perceived because the phenomenon of admitting or accepting of any proposition as true, upon arguments or proofs that are found to steer us to receive it as true, without certain knowledge that it is so (Leicester, 2008; Locke, 1975).

### **3.9 Chieftaincy and Taboos**

Due to the chief's royal and regal position which was symbolic and linked with divinity, the chief observes many taboos. He was, therefore, forbidden to try to do obeisance to anybody. The chief must not see a natural object, also he must not eat outside or publicly (Akosile, 2010change). There have been repercussions to be faced if he went against any of those taboos; it'd originate strange diseases to the chief, his household or the community at large and peace and tranquillity might elude the community. It absolutely was forbidden to mention directly that a Ghanaian chief ate, drank, slept, washed, fell ill or died. All things must be said euphemistically. The chief, sort of a father, is closely linked with the concept of the preservation of law, peace and order within the dominion. Whenever the death of the chief was announced, there was breakdown of law and order (Arifalo & Okajare, 2005). The palace could be a sacred place; this can be demonstrated in various restrictions and taboo with which it is treated. An act of immorality in or round the palace is regarded a taboo. For instance, no man except the Chief could have an affair with a girl on the palace ground. Births and deaths are completely taboo within the palace. The chief must not set eyes on anything which is taken into account unclean. The most reason is that the chief as a royal person being a vital and first citizen mustn't house anything that is dead or stinking except the living. Either touching the walls of or pointing towards the palace was also forbidden.

For all practical purposes, the palace is treated as a holy of holies (Atandare, 1973). Any violation of the taboo is met with a sanction. It is a taboo for anybody to wear the king's paraphernalia. It is also considered improper for the chief to combine freely together with his subjects, being ordinary mortals. It absolutely was a taboo for people of the identical family to marry one another. Certainly, it is repercussions. It is an abomination to own sexual dealings with a Chief's wife; anyone caught during this act was punished by death. The repercussion for that, if not punishable by death, was that such someone would live a miserable life. It is a taboo for a baby to beat his parents; severe calamity would be the repercussion of such (Osei, 2006). In other words, incest was a heavy taboo among various communities during the pre-colonial times. This is often still things in present. Sexual act within the family was an abomination. This offends the ancestors and also the gods; it could breed conflicts which will cut families but also breed inexplicable abnormal births, birth defects and diseases.

In Yorubaland, for instance, it absolutely was a taboo to permit twins to ascend the chiefship throne (Olubola, 2009). The Chief again is seen as a god and second in rank only to the gods. The Chief must not see the inner part of his crown; and also the crown must not be worn by another person (Adedoyin, 2010). It absolutely was a taboo for any title holder to try to do anything contrary to the oath he took during coronation. Oath taking was a part of coronation rites in Yorubaland. It absolutely was compulsory that a solemn declaration to a god or the next authority be carried out; one would speak the reality, be loyal to the community and keep to the promise. Oath taking is one among the world's oldest practices that has stood the test of the many epochs and generations (Ilesanmi, 123-125) binding peoples' conscience, sometimes willingly, sometimes against their will, stultifying them and making them obey sheepishly, the illumination of every epoch. Oath taking by a standard institution was finished an emblem of traditional symbols. It is a taboo to commit murder among the people. Custom and traditions of the people frowned at this; it absolutely was viewed as a sin against the gods and humanity. Culprits were summarily killed if found guilty after investigation. Suicide was a taboo; it absolutely was not common among the people to determine people kill by hanging. Anybody found to own done this, was believed to own committed great offence against the gods, humanity, and also the community. It absolutely was also believed that the person must have contravened some societal taboos and he or she must have decided to kill to avoid public ridicule. The bodies of these that committed suicide were usually handed over to the priest for burial.

The denial of the family to present the victim a correct burial was viewed as a grievous penalty because it absolutely was viewed as a disgrace to the family and also the victim within which generations yet unborn would still talk over with. In other words, murder and suicide were viewed as serious taboos among the people (Fawehinmi, 2007). Hitherto, some taboos were devised significantly to market the economy and productivity at personal and communal levels. Among these was the cutting of forbidden trees without the permission of the leadership of the community. It absolutely was a belief of the folks that some trees were sacred, that the divinities or gods occupied them. So, if those trees were to be impede, they believed that libations must be poured dead set appease the spirits of the gods. Anybody who cut a sacred tree without appeasement would bring calamity to the community, most importantly drought that might eventually snowball into low economic productivity and sicknesses (Osei, 2006). Also, stealing of belongings, destroying and farming within the grove and sacred bushes, eating of totem animals like tortoise, parrots, eagles, sacred fish, then on were forbidden. Of these were viewed as taboos, a violation of which they believed would affect the economic process of the community (Osei, 2006). However, most of what formed a part of our culture like one, that an elder brother or sister mustn't inherit the property of his/her younger ones; two, that one must not be rude to the elders; and three, that husbands mustn't maltreat their wives might be considered taboos, for enduring peace, understanding and unity among the people (Olabitan, 1986).

However, taboos enabled the people to take care not offend the gods and do something which will bring the name of the family to disrepute. For instance, taboos associated with the deity, it was explained that it is a taboo to carry corpse in front of the deity. Concerning the significance of the deity, the respondent enumerated several of them. One of them is that it protects the Akwamu community from their enemies; from spiritual attacks. It also protects the chief from any calamity. Another important role of the deity is that it represents the main source of rules regulating and directing the behaviour of individuals and the community towards the gods and ancestors. To contribute to the discourse on the relevance of chieftaincy institution in Africa, Abotchie summarizes the roles of chiefs in Ghana as leader, chief priest, agent of development, symbol of identity, and also as custodian of stool lands and property; as performing these multiple roles, he's seen as an embodiment of the beliefs, hopes, fears and aspirations of the people. As a result of modern governance, Ghanaian chiefs have lost significant aspect of their functions to the central government. This notwithstanding, chiefs still play important roles in Ghanaian societies. Because

of the many component of chieftaincy in ensuring good governance and development, the institution and its mandates and limitations are well enshrined within the constitution of the Republic of Ghana since independence. Taboos related to chieftaincy have not been completely wiped out but some maintained, others modified, whilst others toned down to satisfy all and sundry in a given society. According to Sarpong, the consequences of breaking a taboo may befall a whole society and an individual both mystically and physically.

### **3.10 Indigeneity in Africa**

Generally, the increase of indigenous peoples' civil rights movement in Africa is closely tied to the United Nations' efforts to boost global awareness round the issue and therefore the opening from public forums for peoples to share their stories (Crawhall 2006). Inevitably, issues debated on the conception and definition of indigeneity at global level also recurs just in the case of Africa. The term "Indigenous" may appear strange in the African context, yet it emerged as a crucial point for highly marginalized indigenous communities (ibid 2006). At the same time, contrary arguments such as, who isn't indigenous in Africa, categorizing peoples as indigenous and non-indigenous would trigger conflict between ethnic groups, and recognizing as marginalized minorities rather than indigeneity (ibid 2006). These are the most arguments against recognition of indigenous peoples in Africa.

It is therefore worthy to understand some issues associated with indigeneity in Africa. First and foremost, it is misleading to conceive indigeneity only in an exceedingly relevance European settlers and domination alone, especially when it involves Africa and Asia. Indigenous peoples in Africa are victims of conceptual definitions espoused by non-African, and maybe non-indigenous, experts (Barume, 2000). In this regard, Kingsbury argue that though the claims of indigenous peoples are similar across the continent, the characterization of the concept indigenous peoples and their rights thereof would considerably vary supported by their historical background and socio-cultural constitutions (Kingsbury, 1998: 414). In other words, indigeneity isn't an absolute state of being, rather it's a political claim that takes place within the context of perceived marginalization and vulnerability (Crawhall, 2006). Hence it's a relative concept that ought to be perceived case-by-case. In this sense, it is defective to define indigeneity only based on the Blue Water Theory (i.e. conquest by Europeans who crossed the ocean and conquered the New Worlds"). To the contrary, the S'ami people's case (e.g. S'ami people of Norway), disproves the

Blue Water Thesis since the subjugation of the S'ami people was internal than external by the mainstream societies. Despite the source of subjugation they are recognised as indigenous people and successfully established the S'ami Parliament (Saugestad, 2001b).

Secondly, given greater attention to definition at the detriment of realities on the bottom obscures the reason for indigenous peoples in Africa. To bridge the conception of indigeneity within the West and Africa, the historic experiences indigenous peoples of Africa have had is seen vis 'a vis indigenous peoples in western countries. For example, the colonisers regarded the Aborigines of Australia and indigenous peoples of Africa as uncivilised "savage other" and their lands were considered as ownerless (*terra nullius*). The difference between the 2 is that, while the settlers' dominance in Australia still persists, in the case of Africa, however, the colonisers have withdrawn. For example African politicians would argue that, the actual fact that white colonialists withdrew following decolonization meant all African people are indigenous or that the concept "indigenous" itself is not applicable to Africa in any respect (Saugestad, 2001a). Such conclusion would arise from misunderstanding of the history and therefore the realities of indigenous people of Africa. After all, Europe withdrew politically from Africa, granting independence to African administrations and liberation movements. That is, the new African elite consisted of these with the capacity to run the 'new states' (Crawhall 2006).

Third, the historic-process of African states formation shall be considered. That is, all African states are created by colonial powers or with the assistance of European powers and therefore the current African states inherited the establishment. In this respect, Stewart-Harawira argues that the new African states established their authority over indigenous peoples within the frontiers created by former colonial powers (Stewart-Harawira, 2005, p.107). Furthermore, political leaders came from those peoples with closest relationship to Europeans (for example, emperor Haile Selassie I and emperor Menelike II of Ethiopia who trace their origin and authority back to Solomonic dynasty), namely the agricultural peoples who had been brought into European mode of capitalist (feudal) system (Crawhall, 2006). Furthermore, what African states inherited wasn't only multi-ethnic empires demarcated by Europeans but also the Western system and legal institutions, as against African traditional institutions and customary laws. The underside line is that the subjugation of African indigenous peoples and their political institutions have continued up to present. Stewart-Harawira contends that within the newly created states, indigenous peoples' traditional cognitive and social patterns, modes of governance and ontological world views were

identified as obstacles to development and at odds with those of an economically based society" (2005: 108). Fourth, as per African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPRs) and international mechanisms coping with indigenous peoples' rights, indigenous peoples in Africa are generally understood as nomadic and semi-nomadic, pastoralists and hunter-gatherers marginalized and discriminated peoples (AWGIPC 2005, p.87-89). It goes also that "their cultures and ways of life differ considerably from the dominant society and their cultures are under threat, in some cases to the extent of extinction. A key characteristic for many of them is that the survival of their particular way of life depends on access and rights to their traditional land and therefore the natural resources thereon" (ibid). However, this fashion of characterisation is flawed in a very sense that it is relatively temporary. That is, where the means of livelihood of the people changes the question remains whether indigeneity will no more exist or not. Moreover, such characterization excludes the bulk of those that have already changed their means of livelihood but inherently indigenous people. The concept and therefore the concern of African indigenous peoples has not been taken seriously by African states. Until recently, the participation of African states and African indigenous peoples in international indigenous peoples' movement was almost non-existent. As an example, unlike the contentious debate within the process of adoption of international treaties like UNDRIPs among nations (for example: Canada, USA, Australia (Mattias, 2007; Minde, 2008)) ACHPR welcomes UNDRIPs declaring its importance to boost rights of indigenous peoples in Africa. In this respect African states are passive recipients of international instruments concerning indigenous peoples. Given the African indigenous people's voicelessness and given the very fact that African states aren't serious enough to air the side of indigenous peoples' claims; the adoption UNDRIPs can neither increase the moral responsibility of the state agents towards disadvantageous indigenous peoples nor it is legal force on them. However, regional organisations such as: Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee's (IPACC) role advocating the interest and arguing in favour of indigenous peoples of Africa can't be underestimated. By way of an example, IPACC put before UN Permanent Forum on indigenous Issues (UNPFII) that three points must be considered when it involves indigeneity in Africa: partnership, participation and pluralism (Crawhall, 2006).

It absolutely was a good system of preserving and transmitting moral values, keeping in mind that the on African land, culture was an oral one. They were a method of group action and without them there would be chaos: The motivation for abiding by the normative principles are provided

and reinforced by the religious sanctions from the gods and therefore the ancestors or directly from the Supreme Being. Keeping of taboos ensured good harmony between the visible and therefore the invisible world. Those found guilty of significant moral or legal violations are made to undergo ritual cleansing as a method of ethical or ontological purification and transformation. People gave the impression to remember that behind prohibitions laid verity meaning of taboos, preserving harmony and well-being in and of the community: Life and its quality was seen as crucial and therefore the society applied a spread of methods to preserve it and transmit it, especially through taboos. While well-being virtues include modernization, democratization qualitative education, and significant consciousness, the well-being vices include dependency, bribery and corruption, unwarranted military interventions, dictatorships and therefore the abuse of human rights etc.

Ayegboyin and Jegede (2009, p.1) confirm the actual fact that taboo is embedded within the myths and religions of Africans, and in most African countries and communities, taboos are numerous, they cover almost every aspect of Africans' life, and that they are taken seriously. In his study of the Akan people, Gyekye (1995) posits that the closest comparable to taboo within the Akan is "akyiwade" i.e. that which is forbidden or prohibited, and "musuo". The later term is however reserved for prohibitions against very serious or extraordinary moral evils like murder, suicide, rape, incest and spiritual sacrilege. Therefore, while all akyiwade are taboos, not all taboos are musuo. Among Akans, traditional rulers and chief priests are the custodians of taboos. The enforcement process of those taboos is in line with the oath Akans swear to the ancestors. The misuse of oath is that the transgression of an ethnic taboo. Taboos then become the normal commandments through which leaders are protected against social and spiritual ambivalences (Owusu, 2006). By this, taboo among the Akans is an obligation and not a choice. it is believed that among the Akan, breaking taboo ends up in either a punishment or laid low with bad conscience (e.g., feeling sick or guilty). It appears there's an inner force that comes into action. The violation may even end during a partial surrender to the taboo as Freud (as cited in Madu, 2002, p.65) wrote in Totem and Taboo: "A one who breaks a taboo are going to be tabooed himself or herself, because he or she has the damaging threat of luring others into following his or her example." Taboo among the Akan is faced with the matter of rationale and scientific verifiability within the face of modernity and globalization.

As Thody (1997) rightly argues, taboos, unlike laws, are for the foremost part irrational and hard to defend on practical or humanitarian ground. Christianity and Islam, not to mention modernity,

claim that taboos stem from myths that don't correspond to historical chronology, and thus, belief within the potency of taboo is tantamount to primitivism, backwardness, and superstition. To obey a taboo is therefore considered absurd and incongruous with development. But taboos in Africa are truth forms that are independent of the confines of your time. Taboo is sacred; the actual fact of its potency is found only within the depth of the mind, where merely rational thought cannot penetrate so on discover its reality (Ayegboyin & Jegede, 2009). Although Cassier (1992) saw taboos related to African Traditional Religion (ATR) as “savage taboos”, then sidelined from moral discourse, since ATR is not considered among the main religions, my analysis within the following discussion will illustrate that, on the contrary, taboos related to ATR don't seem to be savage as they need rational and scientific explanations and ethical values. Key among them is that the significant role of taboos in Akan people's indigenous ways of preserving the environment.

### **3.11 Perceptions about the Institution of Traditional Leadership**

Perceptions are shaped by our beliefs, values and norms which form the culture of country. Expectations guide perception and may arise from what others communicate about others experiences and desires. 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 2003b). Tangwa (1996) argues that traditional African leadership and authority systems may be understood as “the harmonious marriage between autocratic dictatorship and popular democracy”. Specified formal practices positioned the citizenry to critique, authorise and sanction their rules; their continued reign and therefore the selection and ascension of their successors. Thus, Ritzenthaler and Ritzenthaler (1964) describe the king making procedure of the Bafut kingdom of Cameroon because the exercise of democracy in traditional institutions where, when the new ruler has been installed, he's presented to the Bafut population for “stoning”. The ceremonial stoning may carries with it tiny, harmless pebbles within the case of an approved and revered new leader, or of enormous, injurious rocks hurled so on maim, chase or kill the undesired incumbent. In either case, it reminds the new ruler of what could happen if

his rule becomes 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 during the annual Homowo festival.

More importantly, citizens have a constitutional right of destooling their chiefs if they are found to possess committed serious crimes or broken a taboo. Crimes like murder, and theft; misdemeanours like lecture someone’s wife, or within the old days not biological process to a toddler, were automatic grounds for destoolment of a chief within the Akan social group. Chiefs could also jeopardise their stools if they were seen as violating their oath to leadership like not consulting on decisions, not being available to the people, being despotic and then on (CDD, 2001). Within the Upper West Region and other parts of Ghana, the principle of ascertaining transparency among the people is that, a chief doesn't go anywhere alone; there's 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 cited in Kangsangbata, 2006: 29). Moreover, Dake (1996) holds 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, outlines the social group of Ashanti. For Adjei, the Ashanti traditional system is democratic, while Dake (1996) describes African traditional systems, including that of Ashanti as autocratic. However, Appiah (1993) contends that, the democratic aspects of traditional leadership were weakened by the colonial processes, because Kings and Queens didn't generally allow the lay citizens’ interests to require priority in national response to colonial invasion. Thus, if the King didn't 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.

### **3.12 Culture and Morality**

According to Clarken (2010) morality is important in our societies because it dictates what makes up the ideal and whole person. The role of morality in defining personhood has been questioned and challenged. Coetzee and Roux (1998) cited moral questions which may be linked to the metaphysical conception of the person:

- i. The status of the right of the individual (whether these are so fundamental that they cannot be overridden in any circumstances).
- ii. The place of duty (how the person sees his/her socio-ethical roles in relation to the interest and welfare of others).
- iii. The existence and appreciation of a common life and a common good.

The morality factor in the African context requires that a person conforms to those requirements which are inspired by identification with the interests of others, even at the cost of a possible curtailment of one's interests. Nel (2009) argues that morals are embedded in people's practices, customs and rituals and are transmitted through generations. He goes on to note that morality is related to socially inscribed modes of action derived from experiences of what is in the interest and wellbeing of the community. The moral imperative is to achieve right relationships between individuals and the community.

Nel (2009) goes on to say that in morality, justification of good and bad is not in terms of reason only. The collective input of practice, custom and ritual makes the moral imperative and its justification. There is no moral reasoning for the sake of moral justification. Moral appraisals are made by reference to sets of values and standards prescribed by tradition, customs, practices as well as social and family codes. In Africa, the concept of morality is embedded in the Ubuntu philosophy. Even within the African context morality is relative with society. Different societies have different views about what is considered to be right or wrong.

Shaw (1999) says that these variations reflect differing factual beliefs and diverging circumstances rather than fundamental differences in values. Even within the same society there can be variations in moral standards between families. However, there are generally agreed moral norms. Lennick

and Kiel (as cited in Clarcken, 2010) see morality as embracing integrity, responsibility and compassion. Integrity encompasses acting consistently with principles, values and beliefs and standing for what is right. Responsibility encompasses taking personal responsibility and embracing responsibility for serving others. Compassion involves actively caring for others. Integrity, responsibility and compassion are inevitable for one to be accepted as a moral person with moral intelligence. Borba (as cited in Clarcken, 2010) says moral intelligence involve the capacity to understand right from wrong and to have strong ethical convictions to act and behave in the right and honourable way. She identified seven moral virtues to be nurtured in any society: empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance and fairness. The Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development Panel on Moral Education (as cited in Clarcken, 2010) defines a moral person as one who:

- i. Respects human dignity
- ii. Cares about the welfare of others
- iii. Integrates individual interest and social responsibility
- iv. Demonstrates integrity
- v. Reflects on moral choices

A person's moral uprightness is a product of affective, cognitive and social forces that converge to create a growing moral awareness. A person's social and cultural experience shapes his/her morality standards. Through the process of participation, observation and interpretation a person develops enduring moral values (Clarcken, 2010). However, the way people view morality differs between the liberalists and the communitarianists. Thus, Geisler (1971) divides morality into two perspectives. Geisler (1971) says that morality can be viewed from two perspectives, the teleological perspective and the deontological perspective. The teleological stresses a type of morality which is concerned with end results of an action. It is a utilitarian approach concerned with whether an action will in the end work. Duty is done for the sake of results and not for the sake of duty itself. Human action is based on its utility to man in general.

Geisler (1971, p.20) notes that the deontological perspective "is an ethic of principle which is concerned with one's duty to do what is inherently right apart from the foreseeable consequences." It looks at the intrinsic good in an act regardless of the good or evil it will produce. It looks at duty

for the sake of duty not for the sake of results. This perspective is in line with Kantian type of morality which stipulates that duty ought to be done for the sake of duty regardless of future dividends. One does one's duty because it is good to do what one ought to do. Geisler (1971) notes that deontological morality is prescriptive as it commands certain courses of action. This type of morality holds that there are certain things one must do whether or not one feels they should do it. Deontological morality takes precedence over both feelings and facts. It is the deontological type of morality which governs action in a communitarian system.

In accordance with African traditional values and morality Article 18 of the African Charter (1981) states that:

- i. The family shall be the natural unit and basis of society. It shall be protected by the State which shall take care of its physical health and moral.
- ii. The State shall have the duty to assist the family which is the custodian of morals and traditional values recognized by the community.

Because this moral imperative is embedded in African values, Famakinwa (2010) argues that the natural bond among members of a community gives rise to the need to fulfil certain responsibilities towards members of one's community. Famakinwa (2010) notes that in African morality, love not justice is the first virtue of social institutions. He goes on to say that there is no good reason to say that the majority view on moral issues is automatically right. The belief that it is automatically right has unacceptable consequences e.g. silencing the weaker group and the minority. In most societies the gendered perceptions of differential sources and requirements for happiness is unethical. It ignores considerations of justice and fairness. Shaw (1999) argues that an action that will be morally right could also be unethical. What is morally permissible is different from ethical. The very fact that something is unethical provides an ethical consideration for not doing it. If something is not good to be done upon one sex then there's an ethical imperative to not practice it on another sex. Morality within the African context is fulfilled through the utilization of hidden rules. Hazelton (2008) defines hidden rules because the unspoken rules that guide everyday behaviour and form the idea for higher cognitive process. While the principles are unspoken, they form a handbook for behaviour. Man as a cultural being is bound by hidden rules. The principles hover on the background implicitly affecting behaviour. In keeping with Abrahamson (1990) because the principles of a culture typically pass unnoticed, people are conditioned to reply without

even realizing that they are acquiring an arbitrary set of responses. To fulfil the morality factor, Maslow in Davidoff (1987) argues that almost all people are blind to our true potential. We conform to cultural rules instead of pursue personal needs. Concerns about safety makes one to become frightened of taking risk (challenging the status quo) and this makes us to remain closed to new and varying experiences.

### **3.13 Chapter Summary**

The chapter focused on reviewing various literatures on the concept of governance and taboos. Taboos are arguably expressed as an interconnectedness of two inseparable dimensions in the African worldview: the ‘visible and the invisible world’. This interconnectedness can also be seen as a sort of mutuality whereby the quality of life of the living in the invisible world (ancestors) and of people living in the visible world depends on each other's actions. It is further argued that primitive tribes observed countless taboos as part of the general ignorance about the physical world. However, opposing arguments state that taboos are not a feature of ‘primitive’ societies’, as it was assumed by some anthropologists, but are a fundamental characteristic of any society. The section further argued that primitive tribes observed countless taboos as part of the general ignorance about the physical world. Individuals that maintain the original identity have higher social concerns, and a higher percentage of these individuals would follow the traditional rules and taboos, which would make these taboos even stronger. However, a change in a taboo's strength is not reversible. When things change in the society, taboos become less observed. Again, having too many taboos may reduce the effectiveness of each one of them. Maintaining a taboo implies that people will not take certain actions that may benefit them. Societies may keep taboos even when they cease to provide any social benefits. In these cases, the taboos are strongly embedded into identity, and become symbolic even without providing any benefits to members of the society as the taboo may be viewed as a public good that all individuals enjoy.

An individual who considers violating a taboo will observe the realization of his own benefits from such a violation. A taboo has a meaning only if there are potential special benefits attached to it. But not all the taboos are of the same strength. The next chapter focuses on the theoretical background for the study.

## **Chapter IV: Theoretical Background**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter seeks to describe the theoretical framework which was applied throughout the research process, underpinning the rationale of the research objectives. Consequently, the indigenous knowledge system theory and governance theory were employed with the aim of providing a conceptual background of my empirical pondering which served as a solid basis for the key findings to be elaborated further to the aforementioned hypotheses and research objective and other perceptions I have set out in Chapter 1. The theoretical framework which was employed in this work ensure that the contemporary arenas in which Indigenous peoples' novel thinking and strategies are contributing urgently needed knowledge about sustainability (Johnson et al. 2016; Kealiikanakaoleohaililani & Giardina 2015; Lin & Liu 2015; Stocker, Collard, & Rooney 2015; Whyte, Brewer II, & Johnson 2015).

### **4.2 Theories of Governance**

#### **4.2.1 Indigenous Knowledge Systems Theory**

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) rely solely on indigenous ways of constructing life meaningful to people. Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) per Millar (1999), are defined as local knowledge held by indigenous people or local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. Indigenous Peoples across the planet still practice their culture and pass their traditional knowledges and customs on to younger generations (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). The “depth of Indigenous knowledge rooted within the long inhabitation of a selected place offers lessons which will benefit everyone” (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005, p.9). Further, Indigenous knowledge “reflects the dynamic way during which the residents of a neighborhood have come to grasp themselves in relationship to their natural environment and the way they organize that folks knowledge of flora and fauna, cultural beliefs, and history to boost their lives” (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999, p.3). Indigenous knowledge is recognised as being intertwined through all aspects of Indigenous People's lives, and framed by their ways of knowing (epistemology) and being (ontology) with the planet around them (Aikenhead & Ogawa, 2007). However, Indigenous ontologies are diverse, as are other ontologies like those regarding western and other non-Indigenous worldviews (Descola, 2014). Agrawal argues that the defining feature of Indigenous knowledge is that it remains under Indigenous control, and may not be appropriated against the

interests of the poor and marginalised (Agrawal, 2002, cited in Talbot, 2017). Indigenous People, as a results of their long occupation and unique social systems, have complex and deep understandings of the planet, holding very different perspectives to the societies that now dominate much of their territories (Daes, 2008; international organization 2009). Indigenous Peoples' knowledges are central to who they are i.e. their identity is central to their traditional lands, therefore knowledge of place is central to Indigenous knowledge (Johnson, 2012; Johnson & Larsen, 2013; Louis, 2007). Places act as anchors that stabilise identities, build a sense of non-public rootedness, provide local knowledge and enable social interaction (Babacan, 2006). Place is home and residential is place per Sarup (1994), and is defined "by locale whose form, function and meaning are contained within the boundaries of physical continuity" (Babacan, 2006, p.114).

Babacan and Gopalkrishnan (2017) suggest that the connection of land to Indigenous Peoples is multilevel. It includes physical, social, cultural, and spiritual aspects, and is usually linked with ancestry, kinship, and relationships to nature, animals and water. The close interaction between land, language and culture is central to the way during which Indigenous communities view the planet. These elements (land, language and culture) occur within the context of your time, place and relationships (Suchet-Pearson et al., 2013). The loss of anyone of those elements ends up in the destruction of the full. Furthermore, within the context of Indigenous Peoples, knowledge of place originates from place and connects someone to the place of their traditional ancestors, through cultural and customary rights to put or country (Rose, 1996; Sutton, 1998). In colonised societies, place could be a source of identity (Castree, 2004). However, for Indigenous People, it is different, it is the origin of lore (law), culture and society that defines cultural connections to it place (or country) through knowledge and kinship connections. Formal descriptions of 'Indigenous knowledge' of place first began to emerge within the works of anthropologists like Conklin (1957), who identified links between people and environment. Conklin's (1957) pivotal work highlighted Indigenous People's depth of data about their environment within the Philippines. He documented detailed information, including folk taxonomies of local plants and animals, held by local communities who had sustainably practiced rice-terracing and shifting agricultural systems for hundreds of years (Conklin, 1957).

Later, Hardesty (1977) discussed a shift from an 'objective' approach to examining ecological anthropology, to consideration of the 'participant's' viewpoint within the examination of ecological relationships (Hardesty, 1977). He illustrated this idea by showing how his Indigenous

informants described their interpretation of ‘folk classifications’ of nature supported the premise that the classifications hinted at the way during which people have adapted to changes within the environment (Hardesty, 1977). Indigenous knowledge, as a part of a whole living culture, includes many elements: governance; how Indigenous Peoples individually and/or communally make decisions; influences to culture, history, identity, rights and engagement; arrangements and institutions for inclusion and recognition of Indigenous ecological knowledge; and also the impact of traditional-new higher cognitive process and governance models, arrangements and processes. Dodson (2007) highlights that Indigenous knowledge is holistic and argues that it incorporates community laws, including knowledge regarding land and ecosystem management, that are often unwritten and are handed down orally from generation to generation, and thereby transmitted and guarded (Dodson 2007). The added aspect of ‘laws’ contributes to Indigenous peoples’ responsibility to still practice and maintain their knowledge. Responsibility, relationships, reciprocity and respect for knowledge (Kapyrka and Dockstator, 2012) are principles held by individuals, families, clans and across the complete Indigenous communities. The allocation of responsibilities and rights to knowledge is supported social and organisational aspects of an individual’s membership of a bunch. In many cases, membership of a knowledge-holding group is bestowed supported the identity of a land-holding group (Keen, 2004). Rules and laws govern the social interactions, establish the identity and determine the connections between members of a bunch, and between members and other groups; these are often described in oral, art and storyline knowledge depictions (Langton, 1989).

Indigenous knowledge is “held by individuals, clans, tribes, nations and different independent communities and also the use and sharing of this is often guided and controlled by complex collective systems and customary laws and norms.” (Tauli-Corpuz, 2003, p.67). Indigenous knowledge is described as having three key characteristics: being orally transmitted; holistic; and native to the people of a selected area (Maurial, 1999). “Indigenous ecological knowledge” and/or “traditional ecological knowledge” are among a variety of terms wont to articulate and explain the intertwined social, cultural and environmental understanding of the globe around Indigenous people (Aikenhead & Ogawa, 2007). As an example, content is “a complex of information, practices, and belief, content tends to be experiential and closely associated with the way of life. It is multigenerational and is passed on orally, instead of through book learning.” (Berkes 2004, p.627). Berkes (2009b) further describes four knowledge domains: local knowledge of land and

animals; land and resource management; social institutions; and worldview. Indigenous knowledge is recognised as inclusive of content, identified as a highly specific knowledge system that “is maintained and thrives within the context of the standard ways of social and economic life and customary practice of the standard communities.” (Khor 2002, p.15). Viergever (1999) collated the voices of Indigenous Peoples round the meaning of Indigenous knowledge, highlighting its systemic properties joined of three key elements: first, (Indigenous) knowledge is that the results of a dynamic system; second, it is a fundamental a part of the physical and social setting of communities; and third, it is a collective ‘good’ (Viergever, 1999). Difficulties in accepting Indigenous knowledge as its own distinct system have frequently resulted in attempts to validate the knowledge through the privileged Western systems of information (Cajete, 2000a). However, as Cajete (2000a) argues, “Indigenous knowledge is an internally consistent system. It validates itself. It doesn't need external validation.” (Cajete, 2000a, p.189). Indigenous Peoples today still hold their unique worldviews and examine the associated knowledge systems as a legitimate thanks to apprehend the globe. As Barnhardt and Kawagley (2005, p.9) note “...[m]any of the core values, beliefs, and practices related to those worldviews have survived and are starting to be recognized as being even as valid for today’s generations as they were for generations past”. Indigenous knowledge is mentioned as a ‘system’ because it is embedded in Indigenous epistemologies, worldviews and ontologies of Indigenous culture (Bird Rose, 1996, Talbot, 2005). Practices and traditions inclusive of information, governance, law (lore) and social cohesion form a multifaceted system highly influenced by lived and shared experiences, built on values and beliefs and manifested through various personal and communal expressions. This reflects a posh and elaborate set of practices, customs, values and beliefs that are connected as a ‘system’.

Banuri and Apffel Marglin (1993) argue that Indigenous knowledge systems show common features that include:

1. Embeddedness, reflecting the many dimensions of the traditional knowledge system as embedded in the cultural, social, political and moral aspects;
2. Contextuality, recognising its local rootedness and inseparable link to technical and local knowledge, being part of and tied to the local people of that local area in that particular time setting;

3. Individualism does not occur, as the systems rely on communally-socially accepted norms of thinking or being;
4. Subject/object dichotomy does not appear in the thought system, and there is a clear absence in the division between a subject and the observer; and
5. Attitudes to mobility reflect the innate connections and linkages people have to their lands – there is an inability to even contemplate moving or replacing their lands elsewhere (Banuri & Apffel Marglin, 1993, p.9-17).

However, recognition by Western society of the link between Indigenous knowledge, Indigenous knowledge systems and Indigenous governance and Indigenous governance systems is fragile (Agrawal 1995b, Cajete 2000b, Cornell, Curtis, and Jorgensen 2004, Cunningham and Stanley 2003, Dodson 2007). Understanding the existence of potential links, interfaces and parallels between Western and Indigenous knowledges systems can provide the muse from which to strengthen that recognition (Tengö et al., 2017). As Banuri and Apffel Marglin (1993) have argued, multiple systems of information exist among human societies, “signifying the multiple ways of defining reality.” (Banuri & Apffel Marglin, 1993, p.9). Human societies have developed multiple “communities of knowledge” (Banuri & Apffel Marglin, 1993, p.9). The same as other systems of information, Indigenous knowledge systems are embedded within specific worldviews (International Council for Science, 2002). Hence, bringing together knowledge systems that are different produces uncertainties that always lead to misunderstandings and misrepresentations (Alfred, 2009; Hemming and Rigney, 2010; Houde 2007; Hrenchuk 1993; Leonard et al. 2013; Svanberg and Tunon 2000). Uninformed individuals have claimed that Indigenous Peoples told ‘myths’ not ‘facts’, explicitly undermining their knowledge systems, and relegating Indigenous knowledges to a lesser value than Western knowledges (Watson, 2013).

When compared, Western knowledges were described as ‘superior’ and even ‘markedly superior’ thereto of Indigenous knowledges (Howes & Chambers 1980). The view of “indigenous and content as inefficient, inferior, and an obstacle to development” (Agrawal 1995a, p.413) finishes up in many misunderstandings. This view of the inferiority of Indigenous knowledge can be a mirrored image and remnant of colonial practices imposed on Indigenous peoples and their traditional lands and territories (United Nations, 2009). Post-colonial legacies remain within the relationships between place, power, race and knowledge that underpin ongoing political and social

inequities (Babacan & Gopalkrishnan, 2017; Sarup, 1994). As Neely and Samura (2011) show, “political struggles over space play out through structures of difference and inequality that outline and organise spaces in step with dominant interests”. Forming the nation-state involves reconstructing social spaces, including the materiality of places, and thus the recursive shaping of people’s identities, actions, and interactions with their physical and natural environment (Babacan & Gopalkrishnan, 2017; Babacan & Hermann, 2013). Indigenous knowledge systems still thrive and evolve in contemporary ways (Aikenhead & Ogawa, 2007; Battiste & Youngblood Henderson, 2000; Bohensky & Maru, 2011; Brayboy & Castagno, 2008; Doxtater, 2004; Semali & Kincheloe, 1999; Wilson, 2004). Integration of Indigenous and Western cognitive content systems is typically difficult to accomplish, due to profound epistemological and ontological differences (Nakashima, 1993). The challenges and difficulties of working with multiple knowledge systems, and particularly Indigenous knowledge and science, are frequently highlighted (Berkes, 2009a, 2012; Ens et al., 2012).

Agrawal (1995b) argues differences between Indigenous knowledge and Western or cognitive content occur on three grounds: substantive grounds, due to differences in subject material and thus the characteristics of both Indigenous and Western knowledge; methodological and epistemological grounds, where both sets of information engage different methods for investigation; and on contextual grounds, where Indigenous knowledge is deeply embedded in nature (Agrawal 1995b, 1). However, Agrawal goes on to conclude that whilst differences in perceptions of the two terms Indigenous knowledge and western and/or cognitive content exist, there is a desire to simply recognise “multiple domains and varieties of knowledges, with differing logics and epistemologies.” (Agrawal 1995b, 5). He further argues that, the recognition of a basic political truism is required without the “confounding labels of ‘indigenous’ and ‘Western’” (Agrawal 1995b, 5). Recognising that there are multiple knowledge systems can allow these differences to co-exist: sciences and/or other knowledges can sit alongside Indigenous ways of knowing (El-Hani & Souza de Ferreira Bandeira 2008). Indigenous knowledge systems are internal systems that have their own validation methods reflecting a practical and social legitimacy of information and thus the associated social and cultural norms, including historical experiences (Tengö et al. 2014). In other words, the validation process must support the knowledge system it represents; multiple knowledge systems can have multiple validation systems and then construct different criteria and methods to validate that knowledge (Tengö et al. 2014).

The changing perceptions towards the acceptance of IKS is largely based on utilitarian values. Evidence of this is how current IKS literature dwells on the stock of IKS, that is, documenting what indigenous knowledge is available in various fields that can be put to immediate use. Little attention has been paid to the generation, accumulation, storage and dissemination of IK. Njoroge and Bennars (1986), for example, argue that there was nothing like knowledge for its own sake in precolonial African society. Knowledge enabled people to cope with life at a practical and theoretical level. However, Levi-Strauss cited by Howes (1985, p. 3) argues that the so called primitive peoples demonstrate that the universe is an object of thought, at least, as much as it is a means of satisfying needs. Howes and Chambers (1985) conclude that indigenous technical knowledge can be seen as stock and process, and suggest that the process aspect should be analyzed to determine how IK is generated and hybridized. Atte (1989) provides some useful information in the understanding of the process aspects of IKS.

Knowledge and understanding of indigenous cognitive models and mapping processes can provide a basis for genuine dialogue between farmers on the one hand and researchers, extension workers and agricultural educators on the other (Freire, 1973; Howes, 1985). It is important to realize that as long as IK is seen from a utilitarian view, it will remain marginal and limited in application. It is apparent from the discussion above that IK is holistic in perspective and an integrated system of beliefs, values, practices, and cognition pervasive in all its dimensions. The recent flourish of IKS literature suggests that other knowledge hills have been buried, not levelled. IKS studies are attempts to excavate and recreate new knowledge hills for contemporary conditions. Each great civilization must create a knowledge structure based on its own unique world-view, on its own way of knowing.

According to Goodenough (1981, p. 16) . . . when we describe any socially meaningful behavioural system, the description is an emic one to the extent that it is based on elements that are already components of that system, and the description is an etic one to the extent that it is based on conceptual elements that are not components of that system. The Shona perception of and values on land and its management is an example of an emic view because it is based on the internal, functional and structural elements of a particular cultural system. On the other hand, the western view of freehold, private property as basis or motivation for land development when applied to the Shona cultural situation is an etic perspective. Ruttan (1988) indicates how in development literature cultural endowments (the emic perspectives) are often viewed as obstacles to technical

or institutional change. One reason for this view is that cultural endowments are analyzed from an etic perspective using predetermined general concepts. A large component of the emic perspective comprises of religion, taboos, myths and related ethnic ideologies and values. These elements of indigenous cultural systems appear irrational from an etic perspective. Howes (1985) summarizes the perceptions of the essence of IK in current literature as mystical/irrational, utilitarian or intrinsic. Reactions to IKS by researchers, educators, development professionals and institutions depends on which of these perceptions is held.

Benefits can derive from both knowledge systems by acknowledging that different perspectives can contribute to potential solutions (Kapyrka & Dockstator, 2012). Bringing these perspectives together equitably requires recognition that Western scientific and Indigenous knowledge “are two different systems of information, differentiated mainly by method and data analysis, and sharing many common aims” (Brokensha, Warren, & Werner, 1980). Recognising and respecting both knowledge sets, while acknowledging the synergies and potential parallels, can enable further understandings and collaborations to emerge (Secretariat of UNESCO, 2012; Tengö et al., 2014). Drawing on both Western scientific and Indigenous knowledge has successfully worked in many cases to spice up benefits to the environment and to the Indigenous communities (Bohensky, Butler, & Davies 2013; Cullen-Unsworth et al., 2012; Davies et al., 2013; Folke, 2004; Gadgil, Berkes, & Folke, 1993; Herman, 2015; Negi & Nautiyal, 2003; Pert et al., 2010; Wohling, 2001).

#### **4.2.2 Global Governance Theory**

The roots of world governance first arose in conjunction with the notion of world order within the 1970s (Overbeek, Dingwerth & Compagnon, 2010). Initially this was an idealistic normative/prescriptive radical response by theorists to deal with issues not being solved satisfactorily by traditional state governments, thanks to being beyond their individual reach (p. 697). During the subsequent years a “de-radicalizing transformation” occurred during which global governance was re-formulated faraway from questioning the establishment to reconciling “imperatives of a globalizing laissez-faire economy with the wants of sustainable development” (p. 698). Thus although primarily concerned with intergovernmental relationships, global governance now involves not only governments and intergovernmental institutions but also non-governmental organizations, citizens' movements, transnational corporations, academia, and therefore the mass media (Commission on Global Governance., 1995). The increase of governance

through interaction between these organisations has taken place whilst traditional state governments have experienced decreasing power and reach, a “disaggregation of authority” (Rosenau, 2007, p.88). This is often also described as “delegated governance” (Coen & Thatcher, 2008, p. 49). There are three broad sets of problems facing humanity which global governance attempts to deal with within this space, that of “sharing our planet”, “sustaining humanity” and “our rulebook” (p. 294). Increased interconnectedness leads to localised events having “almost instantaneous global consequences” (Held, 2010, p.296). Sharing our planet involves confronting the numerous environmental issues that the earth faces. Sustaining humanity involves eradicating poverty, preventing conflict and eliminating disease. Lastly, our rulebook involves the principles regarding issues like nuclear proliferation, trade and tax. These issues go well beyond the scope of anybody state or organisation to have interaction not to mention solve given the broad range stakeholders involved. Held (2010) notes numerous problems with global governance; that governance over any single issue will be “chaotic” with many organisations involved, no clear division of labour between them, conflicting mandates, blurred aims and objectives.

Additionally, problems with legitimacy, trust and democratic deficit also exist, especially within transnational governing organisations just like the EC. The European Union themselves note the paradox of their individual constituencies wanting the European Union to seek out global solutions to problems but simultaneously retaining a distrust of the institution, seeing it as both remote but intrusive (Commission of the European Communities, 2001). Ironically, Steffek, Kissling and Nanz (2008) believe that the European Union has less democracy than democratic states, but that appropriate solutions to mend this democratic deficit are contested. Alternatively, “the enormous size and heterogeneity of the worldwide citizenry make the democratization of world governance impossible...and...that international organizations be considered ‘bureaucratic bargaining systems’ that provide no prospects for democratization” (Dahl, 1999, as cited in Steffek et al., 2008, p. 5).

### **4.2.3 The Theory of Interactive Governance**

Interactive Governance Theory was developed by Kooiman and Bavinck (2005:3) who define the concept as “the whole of public additionally as private interactions taken to unravel societal problems and make societal opportunities”. It is a theory that highlights the interactions between the state and other societal parties from local to international levels. The speculation is an

integration of several other theories including systems thinking, complexity theory and system dynamics. Often diversity, complexity, and dynamics are seen as nasty complications for governance, and thus will be seen as potential sources of ungovernability (Kooiman, 2003). The interactive governance theory mainly supports this study because it facilitates an analytical understanding of the two systems of local governance that interact in ways in which does not seem to be well understood. The theory provides the way forward by emphasising on the diversity, complexity and dynamics of governance processes at the local level (Kooiman et. al, 2008) as follows:

1. Diversity relates to spatial variability in natural, social and cultural conditions in a given society.
2. Diversity demands that the governing system be sensitive involving an appreciation of variation, a perception of distinction and a compassion for difference.

Complexity on other hand refers to the actual fact that system elements are interactive, overlapping and interdependent and thus often in conflict. Complexity thus requires inclusiveness. Finally, dynamics is anxious with the fluctuation and alter that occur as a consequence of the strain within a system and/ or between systems. Dynamics therefore logically end in a desire for flexibility. Flexibility during this sense relates to the ability to adapt promptly to system dynamics and alter. Flexible systems are pragmatic.

### **4.3 Governance**

There is a growing consensus on the importance of governance as a functional principle for achieving sustainable development. It also provides a favourable environment for better decision-making. In line with UN Development Programme (2003, p.18) governance is “the exercise of political and administrative authority within the management of a country’s affairs the smallest amount bit levels. Governance comprises of complex mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, mediate their differences and exercise their legal rights and obligation”. Within the instance where governance emphasises an honest and symbiotic relationship between society and state; Weaver, Rock and Kusterer (1997) reiterate that governance should pay particular attention to issues touching on identity, community formation, ownership and collective action. One of the key contributors to the literature on governance was Kooiman (1994), who suggested the understanding of governance as a socio-cybernetic

system. He wrote two important texts on the topic, in 1993 and 2000. He began with three basic cybernetic categories, which applied to both nature and thus the fashionable society: dynamics, complexity and variety. Kooiman (1994) argued that in contemporary societies, where such a dynamic change process, complexity and variety exist, the conventional approach of presidency wouldn't work properly. So a replacement governmental approach, whose basic function would be steering the multi-dimensional interactions of the various diverse parties within the society towards common tasks should have developed. In such a system the responsibility of the tasks are visiting get on all three parties: the state, the private sector and thus the civil society (Kooiman, 1994, p.36-48).

Another important theoretical contributor was Rhodes (1996). He theorized governance as self-organising networks. In line with Rhodes, governance is steering of networks of actors that spring for providing services. These networks arise because of mutual dependency of the various actors, and current duty of governing is providing the coordination and supervision for cooperation (Rhodes 1996, p.658-661). The strain of Brown and Ashman was on partnerships. They argued that to beat the problems of the complex times is just possible by partnerships of the three sectors of society: public (the state), private and thus the civil society. So governance is steering of such partnerships, towards common tasks (Brown and Ashman, 1996, cited in Arikboğa 2004, p.94-98). Again, in a very context of governance, government is not the sole actor responsible of solving societal problems. It should when possible work along with private and social actors. Society contains a high potential to unravel societal problems (Jann & Wegrich, 2010, p.218). Government is not "...separated and doesn't stand above society, but is a component of it" (Jann, 2003, p.101). Governance stresses the change in conventional boundaries between the general public and personal sectors, between governments, markets, civil society and individual citizens (Jann, 2003, p.96). It recognizes the multitude of participants needed for governing. The roles of presidency include regulating and preventing abuse of power; commissioning and providing a variety of services; providing the resources to form things happen; managing markets; leading negotiations for desired outcomes; creating room for civic dialogue; enabling and supporting self-management; and setting the framework for democratic participation (Goss, 2001, p.24, 25).

The role of presidency is not decreasing but becoming more demanding. Government is now expected to be less a decision-taker and producer but more a co-producer and catalyst of social development. Government should be able to decide which role it should play to unravel collective

problems: leader; moderator or coordinator. Government has changed from a steering role supported constitutional power to a task of coordinating, moderating and facilitating. Negotiation and cooperation are key working methods for governance participants. In this way of governing, not only formal rules like constitution, law and regulations but the informal rules including codes of ethics, culture, customs and traditions are critical. Governance occurs at different levels of administration and in various fields (Hupe & Hill, 2007). It can start at any level - municipal, local, regional, country, or global – in several fields like culture, environment, health or education etc... Governance has no single theoretical foundation. Governance will be analysed under institutional theory, the interactions among governance actors, or the dynamics of the governance process will be approached by new institutionalism, decision theory, system theory, or network theory (Benz, 2004, p.27). All in all, governance concentrates on the structure of power and authority relationships to raise comprehend institutional linkages between government, private sector and civil society (Simonis, 2004, p. 2). It is about the changing kind of governing from doing things alone either by “state” or “market” to doing things together (Kooiman, 1993). Governance as a process of interaction among state and non–state actors via different governance mechanisms doesn't distinguish one as either “good” or “bad”. Good governance could be a normative approach which provides the framework with a large range of normal practices for governance actors and processes.

#### **4.3.1 Attributes of Governance**

Many writers identify the subsequent as hallmarks of governance; citizen participation, community ownership, accountability, transparency and stakeholder partnerships. These are identified not only as core features of governance for sustainable development but also as basic requirements to make sure meaningful democracy, social justice, consultation and equity (World Bank, 1996; Weaver, Rock & Kusterer, 1997; Swilling, 1999; Brown, 2000; Meadowcroft, 2004; Davids, Theron & Maphunye, 2005).

#### ***Citizen Participation and Civic Engagement***

Ideally, citizen participation provides a method wherein the means represent a democratic value in their claim. It is a method whose aim is redistribution of power and/ or control between agencies and also the people. The underlying principle for citizen participation is that communities are going to be guaranteed responsive and effective services given that they are in an exceedingly position

to influence policy decisions. In keeping with the planet Bank (1996) participation is an act through which various stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources that affect their livelihoods. within the same wave length, Brown (2000, p.173-175) stresses that community participation in development initiatives, including sustainability projects, could be a fundamental dynamic and credible strategy which must be placed as a cornerstone to any people centered activity. The contention is that as a process, participation allows for ownership of development initiatives by a community, and in and of itself, could ensure sustenance of such initiatives. Although during this thesis, civic engagement is considered participation in governance, and one in all the foundations of excellent governance and pillar of sustainable development, the concept of civic engagement is hospitable interpretation.

Some, like Oakley and Marsden (1984), stress that civic engagement signifies a top-down approach of involving communities in predetermined decisions about programmes that affect their lives. Unlike Oakley and Marsden (1984), UNDP (2002) contends that civic engagement could be a process that effectively involves people within the economic, social, cultural and political processes that affect their lives. Additionally, Gran in Davids, Theron and Maphunye (2005, p.107-108), emphasises that ‘engagement means being a part of the self-sustaining participatory development’. These interpretations of civic engagement offer conflicting prescriptions for the treatment of dissimilar communities. So as to clarify and to cut back the definitional confusion, thereof, this study adopts the definitions of civic engagement by UNDP (2002). Civic engagement, in keeping with UNDP (2002), is primarily focused on establishing channels of voice, representation and accountability at the state level. Supporting this argument, therefore, effective civic engagement as a process that amplifies governance requires a sustained effort to make viable institutions, capable of involving the populace within the production of information about their communities.

Mobilizing all stakeholders to place forward their aspirations and needs; and interlinking these needs and aspirations, and translating them into functional programmes could allow community members to cultivate an “independent locus of operations aloof from dependency on political organisations and government, while not precluding certain strategic alliances with them”(Foundation for Contemporary Research, 1994, p.102). In this way, civic engagement could be a process wherein the means represent a price in their claim, that value being good governance. The idea is that good governance promotes a more responsive and sustainable community, than

during which deciding is that the prerogative solely of presidency and also the so called development experts. To boost sustainable development, then, it might seem to be more practical to foster partnerships between multiple actors engaged in promoting governance that effectively involve communities and fulfill the requirements of ordinary community members. The rationale for civic engagement is that, it involves several inter-related but distinct processes (UNDP, 2002). In an exceedingly broad spectrum, civic engagement entails a process of involving people in decision making; eliciting their contribution to development interventions; and their participation in enjoying the advantages from the event process. This argument highlights on important element of peoples' involvement vis, engagement of citizens and citizens' organisations publically policy debates, or in delivery of public services and contributing to the management of public goods, that engaging people could be a critical think about making development initiatives and action awake to the requirements and aspirations of the communities, especially the poor. UNDP (2002, p.1) further argues that, civic engagement promotes:

- i) the growth of community life and capacity of groups to improve their own welfare through political, economic, cultural and moral resources of the state.
- ii) specific interaction styles which place a premium on flexibility, adaptability, collaborativeness, accountability and problem solving in relation to key participation opportunities.
- iii) generation of more accurate and representative information about local needs.
- iv) diversity of civil society interests and views to ensure that state is not held captive by few groups.
- v) adoption of interventions in accordance with the needs of the people.
- vi) mobilisation of local skills and resources.
- vii) accountability by the state, and
- viii) creation of institutional base to reduce the cost of access to various social groups in development interventions'.

Proponents of civic engagement like Putnam (1993) and UNDP (2002), assert that civic engagement, as a special sort of participation has unique impacts on governance, community ownership of development projects and on community life normally.

### ***Community Ownership***

The question of community ownership of social development projects is at the core of sustainable development. It is widely believed that for development programmes to realize desired outcomes, the community or beneficiaries must be involved in planning right up to the evaluation stage of such programmes. Additionally, Hall (cited in Ayre & Callway 2005, p.111-128) emphasises that there is a growing perception that the governance of resources and services functions effectively with an open social system that permits broader participation by civil society, private sector, media and other interest groups, all working as a network to support and influence government. Advocates of community participation in development, support the notion of community involvement in decisions that have impact in their livelihoods (Paul, 1987; Oakley & Marsden, 1984; Burkey, 1993; United Nations Agency, 1996; Kotze & Kellerman, 1997; Brown, 2000; Botchway, 2001; Mc Farlane, 2001). The idea is that community involvement breeds community ownership, and facilitates provision of services that responds to community needs. The foremost obvious good thing about community ownership is that communities gain control of the event initiatives, and thereby, ensuring that local interests are considered. This may, in turn, help in achieving sustainable development.

#### **4.3.2 Civil Society as Key to Good Governance**

Civil society refers to the segment of the society, organisations, groups and associations that interact with the state, influences the state and yet is distinct from the state (Chazan, 1992). It is considered a “countervailing power” to the state, the way of curbing authoritarian practices and corruption. Permanent governance to occur requires “a systematic effort to make a pluralistic institutional structure that brings a broader spectrum of ideas and values up-to-date on policy making” (World Bank, 1989, p.61) and keep the state under control. The Church has been a key element of civil society in Africa, and in some cases the sole organisation which could act as a check to state power and hegemonic (Gifford, 1998). Not very way back, economic reforms weren't related to the governance structure of a country; after all, many argued that authoritarian kinds of government were needed for rapid economic development and successive US administrations supported dictatorial regimes in every continent.

Now the political mantra is democracy and therefore the United Nations agency and Western donors require it almost as a condition of assistance. This U-turn happened when neoliberal

reforms contained within the Structural Adjustment Programme prescribed by the planet Bank within the 1980s did not produce the required results, the experts blamed the political structure of the time, which was mainly authoritarian political systems, claiming that political liberalization would unlock Africa's development potential. In general terms, Good governance is that the making and implementation of policies that might impact positively on the citizens of the country. In other words, the bringing of public policy in alignment with social needs (Ake, 1993), or what Atake and Dodo (2010, p.17) termed unpopular empowerment; that is, the empowerment driven by the interests of the normal people because it empowers them, makes government more accountable and fewer corruptible yet as brings public policy more in alignment with social needs. It is summarily interpreted because the exercise of authority through political and institutional processes that are transparent and accountable, and encourage public participation. It simply refers to the transparent and accountable management of a country's resources for its equitable and sustainable economic and social developments.

However, in additional technical terms, the concept of excellent governance was first introduced to international development discourse by the planet Bank's 1989 report on Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth. This document was a serious statement of the institution's intellectual leadership of the donor community (Gibbon, 1993), and ever since, the Bank has taken the lead within the articulation and ideological refinement of the new development doctrine. The 1989 report, along with the Bank's study Governance and Development (1992), and therefore the summary Bank report entitled Governance: the planet Bank's Experience (1994) still represent the foremost rigorous and assertive official pronouncement of current development thinking, the passage of the governance literature. While previous state-led development efforts failed because they failed to ride the strengths of traditional societies, the nice governance agenda claims to diverge (World Bank, 1989, p.60). The good governance agenda claims to possess a greater degree of cultural awareness and appropriateness, as there are close links between governance, cultural relevance and therefore the components of civil society (Landell-Mills, 1992, p.567). The new development paradigm recognizes, far away from impeding development, many indigenous African values and institutions can support it (World Bank, 1989, p.60). Accordingly, countries must devise institutions, which are in consonant with their social values. Good governance is being employed by donor agencies and therefore the Bretton Woods institutions as a stick and carrot instrument for keeping in line errant developing countries that has got to match their request for

aid with good behaviour. This means that countries with satisfactory record of excellent governance could calculate the international fund and therefore the United Nations agency for aid. On the contrary, those countries that have performed poorly in good governance, must improve to qualify for adequate support (Bamgbose, 2005).

Since then, good governance has become a hot topic due to the perceived critical role it plays in determining societal wellbeing. The concept of excellent governance, therefore, implies a political and institutional environment respecting human rights, democratic principles and therefore the rule of law. It also includes the role of the authorities in managing resources, promoting a favourable climate for economic and social initiatives and deciding the way to allocate resources (EU, 1989). Although contemporary development discourse can't be seen as monolithic and unchanging there's nevertheless broad agreement on the basic elements of excellent governance as constructed by the planet Bank. At the primary Annual African Governance Forum in Addis Ababa, on July 1997, the then Secretary General of the international organization, Kofi Annan, identified peace, democracy, human rights and sustainable development because the four pillars of excellent governance. within the same vein, Salim Ahmed Salim, the previous Secretary General of the previous Organisation of African Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU), had emphasised quality leadership, sound management of the economy, a powerful judicatory, an independent and responsible media nearly as good governance (Atake & Dodo, 2010). Good governance, therefore, implies the existence of competent and effective institutions respecting democratic principles. It extends democratisation into the sphere of resource management.

In keeping with the UNDP, the principles of excellent governance include: participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and strategic vision (UNDP, 2000). These UNDP based principles have a claim to universal recognition as they reflect the values that require to be implemented so as to justify the governance framework (Chowdhury & Skarstedt, 2005). The consensus and dialogue of elements embracing all the weather mentioned above, plus education and gender equality, is development and nation building (Atake & Dodo, 2010). Key to those features of excellent governance is market reforms and therefore the role of civil society. Good governance was identified as a structural necessity for market reform (Kaufmann & Kraay, 2008). By associating liberal democracy with neoliberal policy within the good governance discourse, the market and political space becomes a realm of freedom and liberty. The aim is to release the energies of ordinary people and to empower

ordinary people to require charge of their own lives, to form communities suffered for his or her development, and to form governments hear their people through the empowerment of civil society (World Bank, 1989: 54). It draws on emotive and forceful imagery and appeals to notions of rights and justice. This empowerment has far-reaching political consequences. It implies a challenge to local authority and yet as a national power structure. If people were empowered to carry those in power more accountable, they could demand more services and a more just distribution of income, and thus put into question the entire gamut of existing socio-economic arrangements (Abrahamsen, 2000).

Ghanaian chiefs enjoy a privileged status within the formal form of government. Chiefs are generally considered as trustees of customary law, land and property. Aside from preserving the identity, norms and values of cultural groups, their courts settle mundane disputes that are deemed fit customary law. Particularly litigations over land, customary inheritance, and marriage disputes are handled by chiefs. In terms of local public policy, which is their most potent narrative for legitimacy, chiefs are very active in communal mobilization for service delivery during a self-organized fashion. They convey together youth groups to satisfy public services that the state is unable to deliver. Chiefs often occupy their position supported claims of descent to a selected ancestor of a royalty that sets them aside from nobles and non-royals. Still, the nomenclature of Ghanaian chieftaincy is complex starting from Paramount, Divisional, and Sub-divisional chiefs through to lower chiefs in small towns and villages (so-called Adikro) (Republic of Ghana 2008). Hence, chiefs can't be seen as a monolithic category with interest in local politics. Despite resource endowments, there's an understandable trend of chiefs' interest in municipal councils in Ghana. Therefore, the term chief is employed generically to explain and analyze the interest of neo-traditional actors in municipal politics. Second, the complexity also highlights the various motives underpinning chiefs' interest in contemporary local politics.

Although some chiefs engage the sphere during a passive way, others use the space to jumpstart their career in national politics (Lentz, 1998, p.55). Colonization limited the ability of some chiefs. However, other chiefs enjoyed strong ethnic loyalty and therefore the colonialists in Africa thought it knowing rule indirectly through such chiefs. No matter colonialism and its features that have significantly influenced chieftaincy, chiefs in Ghana are still very powerful and command lots of respect from their subjects. These chiefs still enjoy local loyalty and have the flexibility to prepare their people for activities which will benefit the entire community like stop working exercises and

communal labor for development projects so on. Chiefs have now become “development ambassadors”. The most expectation of the many community members from their chiefs is to undertake developmental projects which will benefit everyone. Gelfand (1985) notes that each society has group action mechanisms (taboos) that are meant to socialize its members in order that their behaviour and ways of conducting themselves publically are within the expected norms as per their traditions and culture.

Consistent with Quarcoopome (1987), taboos constitute a very important source of maintaining moral values in traditional African societies therefore disobedience of taboos is strongly believed to bring evil to the society or the individual. In the good governance discourse, reforms need to be led by enlightened leaders operating ‘outside’ politics, hence, from civil society, to advance the final welfare interests of society against self-serving bureaucrats and other vested interests. Civil society, therefore, emerges because the key link between economic liberalization and democratization; it is both the locus of economic process and vitality, and therefore the seedbed of democracy. Civil society is considered a countervailing power to the state, the way of curbing authoritarian practices and corruption; hence the priority for strengthening or nurturing civil society. They will create links both upward and downward in society and voice local concerns more effectively than grassroots institutions. In doing this, they'll bring a broader spectrum of ideas and values in reality on affairs of state (World Bank, 1989, p.61). By deliberately supporting the event of plural institutional structures, external agencies can help create an environment which will tend to constrain the abuse of political power (Landell-Mills & Serageldin, 1991, p.313).

The problem here is that within the contest between the state and therefore the masses, the state is that the dominant one, therefore the idea is to weaken the ability of the state by increasing the ability of civil society (Igoe & Kelsall, 2005). Critics of the great governance discourse and therefore the role it gives to civil society assert that its representation delegitimizes state-led development by overemphasizing the inner deficiencies of the African state so on impose neoliberal policies. During this representation, the prevailing interventionist state becomes the enemy of the people, the rationale for Africa's underdevelopment and misery (Abrahamsen, 2000). The great governance agenda, then, emerges because the liberator which will allow not just for development but also for the discharge of society's true, indigenous values by empowering civil society. The target of civil society, therefore, is to discipline and mobilise the standard people to bring them in line with the prevailing dominant paradigm. Civil society is therefore accustomed

ensure stability, order and therefore the enabling environment for development as determined by international neoliberal and capitalist forces.

### **4.3.3 Functions and Constitutional Basis of Traditional Authorities in governance in Ghana**

The Constitution defines traditional authorities as a bunch of people who hail from “appropriate families and lineages and are validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as chiefs or queen-mothers in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage”. The place of traditional authorities has been guaranteed within the five constitutions which Ghana has had since independence, namely, the 1957, 1960, 1969, 1979 and 1992 constitutions. Additional to those, a Chieftaincy Act, Act 370 was lapsed Busia’s Progress Party government in September 1971 to amend the statute on chieftaincy to substantiate its conformity with the provisions of the 1969 Constitution and make other provisions pertaining to chieftaincy (Aye, 2007). It also created a National House of Chiefs which was included within the 1979 and 1992 constitutions. Chapter 22 of the 1992 Constitution guarantees the “institution of chieftaincy, together with its traditional councils as established by customary law and usage”. Consequently, Parliament is debarred from enacting any law which (a) confers on a person or authority the correct to accord or withdraw recognition to or from a chief for any purpose whatsoever; and (b) in any way detracts or derogates from the honour and dignity of the institution of chieftaincy. To keep with the Chieftaincy Act 795 (2008), a chief means a private who hailing from the suitable family and lineage has been validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as a chief or queen in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage. This can be often also stated in Article 227 of the 1992 Constitution. The categories of Chiefs as stated in section 58 of the Chieftaincy Act 759 are:

1. Paramount Chiefs
2. Divisional Chiefs
3. Sub-divisional Chiefs
4. Adikrafo/ Odikrowfo
5. Other Chiefs recognized by the National House

A person doesn't qualify to be a chief if that person has been convicted of law-breaking, treason, high crime or for an offence involving the protection of the state, fraud, dishonesty, or moral turpitude. Article 276(1) of the Constitution and Section 57(3) of the Chieftaincy Act (2008) state that a Chief shall not participate in active party politics. This can be often quite important because Chiefs are presupposed to be above reproach. They are the custodians of our Culture and Heritage. They play the fatherly figure role for all members within the community. They are therefore presupposed to be politically neutral and see thereto that there is peace, unity and understanding in their traditional areas. Chiefs have different titles in Ghana which reflect the geographical location of the chief. Within the Volta region, the foremost popular name (title) is Togbe (which also means an elderly man). Within the Akan speaking territories, the foremost common one is Nana (Chief) Ohema (Queen-mother). The people of Ga origin call their Chief "Nii". There are other titles. The Asantehene as an example is His Majesty Otumfou. Every chief includes a stool or skin which they sit on these stools and skins during special functions and occasions. Generally, Chiefs perform various functions. Culturally, they symbolize the Culture and Heritage of the people often projected at festivals. Politically, they are the quality heads and authority in their traditional areas. They see to the peace and unity of their people. They also exercise executive, legislative and judicial powers since pre-colonial times.

Chiefs also see to it that there are development projects in their areas for the advantage of their subjects. The only place you will be able to find them dressed elegantly and beautifully in their gold ornament (especially in Southern Ghana) is during festival times. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana also establishes a House of Chiefs system which consists of three levels, namely, the National House of Chiefs; Regional House of Chiefs; and Traditional Councils. The National House of Chiefs consists of 5 paramount chiefs elected by each Regional House of Chiefs from the ten regions of Ghana. In other words, it is 50 members. Where during a district there are fewer than five paramount chiefs, the Regional House of Chiefs is remitted to elect such number of divisional chiefs to make up the required representation of chiefs for the region. The functions of the National House of Chiefs are to:

1. advise a person or authority charged with any in command of any matter pertaining to or affecting chieftaincy;

2. undertake the progressive study, interpretation and codification of customary law with a view to evolving, in appropriate cases, a unified system of rules of customary law, and compiling the customary laws and features of succession applicable to each stool or skin;
3. undertake an evaluation of traditional customs and usages with a view to eliminating those customs and usages that are outmoded and socially harmful.

Additional to these, the National House of Chiefs has appellate jurisdiction in any cause or matter affecting chieftaincy which has been determined by the Regional House of Chiefs and appeal are made to the Supreme Court. This appellate jurisdiction is exercised by its Judicial Committee, which consists of 5 persons appointed by the House and assisted by a lawyer of not but ten years' standing appointed by the National House of Chiefs on the recommendation of the Attorney-General. The functions of the National House of Chiefs are onerous, especially once they pander to issues like succession disputes and outmoded and socially harmful customs and usages which are the bane of traditional authorities. The Regional House of Chiefs, on the alternative hand, consists of such members as Parliament may, by law, determine. Its functions are complementary to those of the National House of Chiefs.

Specifically, it is enjoined to: 1. hear and determine appeals from the standard councils within the region in respect of nomination, election, selection, installation or deposition of an individual as a chief; 2. have original jurisdiction altogether matters referring to a paramount stool or skin or the occupant of a paramount stool or skin, including a queenmother to a paramount stool or skin; 3. undertake a study and make such general recommendations as are appropriate for the resolution or expeditious disposition of chieftaincy disputes within the region; 4. undertake the compilation of the customary laws and features of succession applicable to every stool or skin within the region. The Traditional Council, the third layer, consists of a paramount chief and divisional chiefs. Its main function is to work out, in accordance with the suitable customary law and usage, of the validity of the nomination, election, selection, installation or deposition of an individual as a chief. In other words, it performs functions just like those of the National House of Chiefs and Regional House of Chiefs at the paramountcy level.

### ***The New Chieftaincy Law (Act 759) of 2008***

On June 16, 2008, the amendment to the Chieftaincy Act was passed and assented by His Excellency the President of the Republic. The new Chieftaincy Law (Act 759) of 2008, replaces

the old Chieftaincy Law (Act 370) of 1971. The passage of the Act has brought some changes to the conduct of the affairs of the Chieftaincy within the country. For example, the new Chieftaincy Law provides for the establishment of a replacement chieftaincy bulletin, the appointment of counsel to help the standard Council in adjudication and extension of the term of office of the members and presidents of the Regional Houses of Chiefs and indeed the National House of Chiefs from three to four years. The new Chieftaincy Act, 2008 (Act 759), elapsed Parliament has outlined procedures and guidelines for kingmakers on the installation, enskinment, destoolment and de-skinment of chiefs. With relevance installation of paramount chiefs, kingmakers are expected to grant two weeks' notice to the National and Regional houses of chiefs before the installation or enskinment. For divisional chiefs, the kingmakers are to grant advance notice to the standard and Regional houses of chiefs. The kingmakers are expected to grant two weeks' notice to the suitable authorities if they need to destool or de-skin a chief. Again, the Act stipulated that any aggrieved person should give a minimum of one week notice to the suitable authorities within the institution before filing an injunction against an installation or enskinment of a chief.

The Act guarantees the facility of a chief or queenmother to act as arbitrator in customary arbitration. A bit of the Act indicates that a chief is not at risk of a charge of contempt (in court proceedings) if he makes an announcement in straightness in respect of or during legitimate customary proceedings or practices which aren't in willful violation of a selected order of a court. Of these, are attempts towards addressing serious concerns about the myriads of chieftaincy disputes that affect development at the local level. However, the Act remains silent over problems with increased agitations for representation by traditional authorities in Local governance aside from the 30 per cent appointment of assembly members by the President in consultation with the standard authorities.

#### **4.4 Chapter Summary**

Good theories help to focus on what is important for understanding and not to be distracted by triviality. Good theories expose how different phenomena relate to each other. Good theories, in short, are an indispensable tool for any description or analysis of administrative reality. Still, theories are abstractions, a presentation of reality but certainly not reality itself. There is a gap to be bridged between the abstract ideas contained in the theory and the concrete phenomena of everyday administrative life. This chapter concludes that the prominence of Indigenous knowledge

Systems in the governance structure of any society is undisputable. It emerged from the review that, Indigenous Peoples across the world continue to practice their culture and pass their traditional knowledges and customs on to younger generations. Responsibility, relationships, reciprocity and respect for knowledge are principles held by individuals, families, clans and across the entire Indigenous communities. Indigenous knowledge is described as having three key characteristics: being orally transmitted; holistic; and local to the people of a specific area. It further emerged that Governance comprises of complex mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, mediate their differences and exercise their legal rights and obligation". The roles of government include regulating and preventing abuse of power; commissioning and providing a range of services; providing the resources to make things happen; managing markets; leading negotiations for desired outcomes; creating room for civic dialogue; enabling and supporting self-management; and setting the framework for democratic participation.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems represent the essential fabric of social, cultural, and economic developments within Indigenous communities. Today, when Indigenous peoples are in the way of economic or technological development, their traditional economies are undermined leaving their homelands dominated, ruined, or contaminated. In too many cases, the people frequently disappear and often massacred. Community development has become a rallying cry for dignity, peace, and sustainable development for communities by communities. Indigenous Knowledge Systems can play an important role within the larger society. Following this chapter is the belief systems of the Akans and Ga's of Ghana. It deals with their world view and how they come to form a society

## **Chapter V: The Belief System of the Akans (Ashantes and Fantes) and Ga's of Ghana**

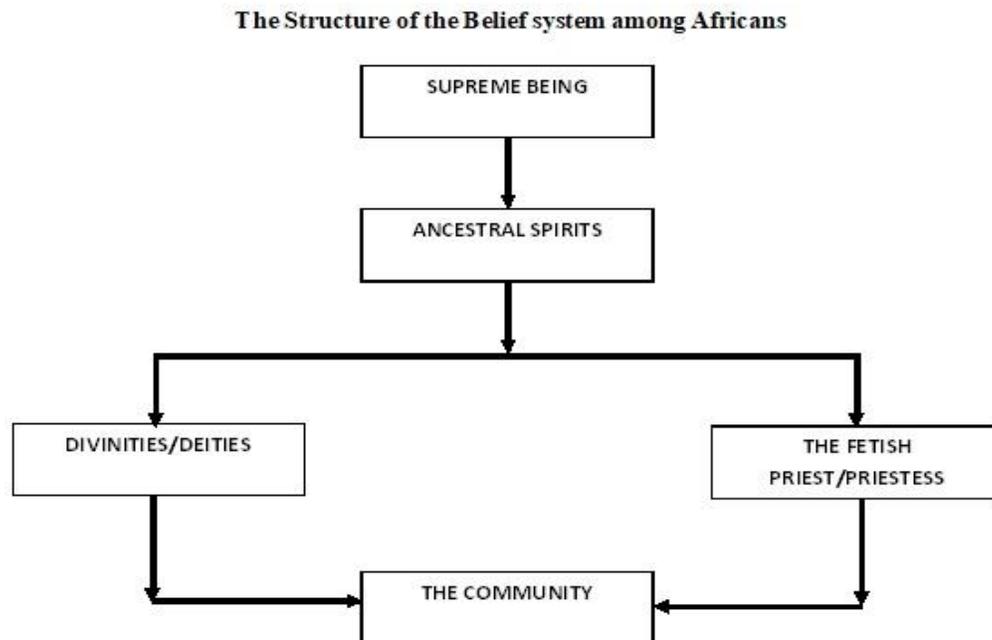
### **5.1 Introduction**

Central to Indigenous being and the collectivity of Indigenous Knowledge is reflected in the many ceremonies, teachings, and cultural expressions of the African. Traditionally, however, religion and its influence in society is seen as an artifact of an outmoded past. However, constituting the core of ATR is the belief in the Supreme Being, the lesser deities, ancestors and other spirits. Many theorists have highlighted the persistency of traditional values in spite of economic and political changes (Inglehart and Baker, 2000; DiMaggio, 1994). Belief systems refer to the way individuals understand and structure political attitudes. Individuals that identify with a particular faith or belief tradition which is being persecuted for political gains may feel unable to freely express their will to participate in a study concerning cultural beliefs and practices. Beliefs of the normal religion in Ghana has been presented in a very data structure of the spirit forces, and also the intersection of all the forces in deriving their ultimate source and power from the Creator. Religious traditions may undergo significant regeneration as old beliefs and practices are found applicable to new circumstances. Along with different types of belief system guided by different encompassing ideologies or themes, there may be variation in the extent to which cultural belief systems are integrated. This chapter looks at the belief systems of the Akans and the Ga's in relations to governance and Indigenous Traditional Systems.

### **5.2 The Belief systems of the Akans (Ashantes and Fantes) and Ga's of Ghana**

The Ghanaian believe in four types of spirits: the Supreme Being, the Ancestors, and Non-Ancestral Spirits. A majority of the people have categorised these spirits according to a scale of preference. At the top of the scale is the Supreme Being. Next are the ancestors whom are believed to look after the living in the society. The traditional religious and ethical teaching is primarily a result of their belief in the supernatural. In their descriptions of all these beliefs, practices and teachings, the Ghanaian explain and interpret the world around them and the place of humans in society. The Ghanaian believe that humankind is created with a spiritual entity which enables him/her to relate to a higher power or powers as a means of keeping in balance the supernatural, self, family, clan and the society. This structure (figure 1) also is a paradigm for the understanding of faith in other West African traditional societies (Assimeng, 2010).

*Figure 2: Belief System among Africans*



**Source:** Author's own construct, 2019

Generally, there are four fundamental components of the religious beliefs system that are essential to the interpretation of the African traditional religion (Turaki, 2000):

i. *the belief in Supreme Being*

The belief in Supreme Being is one in all the basic beliefs that cuts across the normal African religion. It is argued on the very fact that Africans have an idea of a universal God and a Creator, while the normal Africans exclusively don't worship the Supreme Being (Assimeng, 2010; Idowu, 1962). Thus, the idea in Supreme Being seems to be far remote and fewer functional within the Traditional settings of Africa since the religious activities of the normal African society revolve mainly round the beliefs in mystical powers, spirit beings and divinities. For example, the African divinities who are termed as "smaller gods" are actively involved in daily religious activities, since it is believed that they receive sacrifices, offerings and prayers made through divinities and ancestors. In some parts of Africa and also the contemporary world, special attributes to the Supreme Being are usually mentioned in prayers, songs and in some religious occasions as an indication to exalt the Supreme Being

ii. *the belief in impersonal (mystical) powers*

The belief within the impersonal (mystical) power is dominant within the traditional African religious perspective, and it is thought to consume the entire creation and its entirety. This same belief in mystical powers has been given several names like, ‘mana’, ‘life force’, ‘life essence’ and ‘dynamism’. Although this belief within the African context has some theological basis, the source of this impersonal or mysterious power is not always known, but usually attributed to the activities of upper ‘mysterious’ powers believed to come up with or deposit such powers in objects (Turaki, 2000, cited in Dosu, 2017). The uses of those impersonal powers are mostly associated with the practices of drugs men and ladies and also natural objects, plants and animals employed by soothsayers for magic, charms, amulets and medicinal purposes. For example, some spiritualists believe that these mysterious powers are embedded in things and might be extracted for special uses. Others also believe that these powers will be transmitted via pure spiritual means from one object medium to a different, and might be sent to specific destination for an intended good or evil. This is because people believe that ‘mystical powers are contagious by contact of an object carrying or mediating the power’ (Turaki, 2000). The idea in impersonal powers will be used for both good and evil, and is incredibly much reflected within the religious practices and behavior of the normal African life (Turaki, 2000).

iii. *the belief in divinities/deities*

The belief in divinities or deities although not prevalent remains practiced within the Traditional religions in Africa. Some ethnic groups in Africa believe divinities as their ‘gods’ whilst others also perceive them as an ‘intermediaries’ or point of contact to their Supreme Being (Turaki, 2000). These divinities were originally mythological figures in some African legends and primordial histories, while some were tribal heroes or heroines (Turaki, 2000). Thus, the African divinities and deities took the styles of mountains, rivers, forests, the mother earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, and ancestors. Some others, covering different aspects of life, society and community, were usually established, like divinities of the ocean or the waters, rain, thunder, fertility, health or sickness, planting or harvest, tribal, clan or family deities. For example, most ethnic groups in Ghana have beliefs associated with majority of water bodies as deities, since it is perceived that rivers

symbolize the gods of the people (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1991, 1995; Sarfo-Mensah & Oduro, 2007). Hence, most ethnic groups around these waterbodies worship them as these protect and function potable water source for the community dwellers. Some people regard the rivers as source of life and fertility, where barren women opt for cleansing within the hope of getting fertilized in line with Sarfo-Mensah and Oduro (2007). Within the Traditional African life, sacrifices, offerings and prayers are offered indirectly through divinities and ancestors to the Supreme Being.

iv. *the belief in spirit beings*

The belief in spirit beings play a key role within the concept of reality and destiny within the traditional African setting. Thus, most actions and also the activities within the imaginary place govern all social and spiritual phenomena. The imaginary place will be divided into two categories: a. non-human spirits, and b. the spirits of the dead. These spirit beings are ranked per their importance and power, depending upon their role within the belief (Oji, 1988:17 cited Turaki, 2000). This hierarchy of importance begins with the Creator (Supreme Being within the spirit world), then the deities, object-embodied spirits, ancestral spirits and other miscellaneous spirits that include both good and harmless spirits, and evil spirits. The embodiment of the spirit world is described as follows:

- a. *the whole world is full of spirits;*
- b. *the abode of spirits are numerous, such as the silk cotton tree, bachiefb tree, sycamore tree, burial grounds and other places;*
- c. *the spirits are classified into two categories, the bad ones and the good ones;*
- d. *a firm belief in reincarnation;*
- e. *a belief in and practice of exorcism or spirit possession;*
- f. *a belief in life after death, future reward and future punishment;*
- g. *evil spirits are always associated with Satan;*
- h. *a belief in spirit possession (Kato, 1975 as cited in Dosu, 2017).*

### 5.3 Indigenous Governance

According to Simiyu (1987) social organization in the traditional African setting is non-egalitarian, and this feature of African social structures deny some citizens an opportunity to rise in social and political ranks. Governance occurs in many alternative contexts, for example in corporations, governments, organisations and also the community. Governance could also be characterised by “self-organisation, emergence and diverse leadership.” (Pahl-Wostl 2009, p.356). The concept of ‘governance’ is multi- dimensional because it moves between aspects of institutions, actors (individual and groups), localities and discourses (Holcombe 2008). ‘Institutions’, relates to the formal and informal rules, the laws, policies, and sociocultural norms which shape social behaviour (Lebel et al., 2006). Informal institutions are socially shared rules that are usually unwritten, and created, communicated, and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels (Helmke & Levitsky, 2004; Pahl-Wostl, 2009).

The presence of informal and/or formal institutions that are linked to cultural traditions is recognised joined of the factors that has set Indigenous peoples apart (Corntassel 2003), for example from those holding claims to minority rights (von der Porten and de Loë 2014a). The challenge of defining indigenous governance is form of the identical because the one facing a buying deal of a worldwide acceptable definition of indigenous knowledge. When moving into discussion about indigenous governance, gradations, overlaps and adverse criticisms proliferate. Generally terms, however, 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 et al., 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 (p. 72). In Africa many ethnic groups have different sorts of governance; nonetheless Ayittey (1991) has created a summary of features of the African indigenous group (p.257). These features go hand in hand with Williams’ (1987) “African constitution.” They are:

1. Building blocks of government are the people
2. Decisions are made by public opinion
3. Checks and balances are implemented to curb despotism.

4. Decentralization of the political system
5. Freedom of Expression
6. Decision-making by consensus
7. Participatory democracy

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 often historically true, Tiky (2014) in his book *Democracy and Democratization in Africa* looks back to history to ask where the Greeks learnt about democracy (p. 10). Tiky (2014) concludes that Solon (594-3), 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 (p. 12). 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, p.11; Diop, 1974, p. xiv).

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 seems 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 (Ayttey, 1991). 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 have 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.

Further to this, Botswana, Republic of African nation and Namibia are typical examples. In Botswana, public policies are discussed in traditional public gatherings before they are adopted nationally (Sklar, 1999, p.115-119). Therefore, these are variety of the experiences of African states; that is looking back to their traditional institutions to handle the challenges of democratisation process. Hence, despite the ambiguous relation between traditional leaders and state official, indigenous system of governance among the sub-Saharan African countries are being re-inserted into national and regional political discourse (Kyed & Buur, 2006). At regional level, a report by African Commission for Africa report indicates that it reached on consensus that the quality African traditional system of governance has relevancy to modern governance (ECA, 2007). It seems also that ECA's position could also be a middle way that it is possible to accommodate the African indigenous systems of governance that converges to democratic values instead of leaving them at the peripheries. It was held by ECA that:

*the more traditional political values converge with democratic principles in their dispensation; the greater would be their potential to contribute to democratic transformation of the continent [ . . . ] the more advanced state building becomes, and the further African societies move away from their present pre-industrial mode of production, the more likely it is that their traditional mechanisms of democratic values would also evolve closer to the mechanisms of modern democracy (ECA 2007, p.19).*

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 (Ayittey, 1999). The common indigenous governance systems took the shape of chiefdoms, tribes and band polities (Lewellyn, 1992; Schapera, 1984; Agrawal, 2002):

*Chieftoms*: complex, autonomous multi-community political units that have a centralised form of government focused on the chief. The chief persona is also more or less sacralized. In an agrarian society, the chief and his close relatives (advisors) perform the administration of community resources. Chiefs redistribute surplus resources (which are normally collected within the kind of tribute) and redirect them to members of community during drought or for activities that promote identity building, solidarity and/or to commemorate success, victory and power (Lewellyn, 1992).

*Tribes*: formally organised kinship groupings (lineages, clans) and /or non-kinship institutions that unite residential communities into larger structures, and are considerably more cohesive and able to cater to external threats in a very more organised fashion. During this kind of governance, descent groups and /or non-kin groupings may have leaders who coordinate group activities to some extent or who represent the group externally, especially on governing bodies like councils, but with limited coercive powers. Leadership positions is also more or less hereditary (Schapera, 1984).

*Band Politics*: these include variety of families inhabitation and cooperating in economic activities throughout the year. In this style of governance, leadership is informal, with older male members of the family serving as leaders. Per Agrawal (2002), elders or headmen and influential individuals speak on behalf of bands and leaders emerge situationally within the context of assorted activities to coordinate such activities. The indigenous concept of governance is predicated on the humanistic compassionate value of botho/ubuntu (humanness). Osei-Hwedie (2005, p.3), botho 'is a cultural value that places humans at the centre of the universe, without making them superior to any or all things.' The sustenance and integrity of indigenous governance is held together by values instead of exclusive arrangements supported rules and regulations. One of the distinctive characteristics of indigenous governance is that the community concept of leadership and management. In this respect, the botho concept of community leadership is predicated on the African collective effort and practice of 'I am because we exist'. With this system of governance, members of the community including tribal leaders (chiefs and headmen) are expected to 'subordinate their egos to the communal interests of the community so they will survive successfully as a group' (Schapera, 1984, p.30).

Some discussion on perspectives and insights about indigenous governance reveal that indigenous governance has two points (Santoyo, 2006). First, that there is an inside point, which is defined in

terms of conflicts and challenges that affect group action and regulation, interaction with nature, spirituality and also the sacred, material and spiritual control of territories likewise as strategies for survival and also the future. Second, the external point involves strategies for self-determination, self-government, the creation and management of partnerships and networks for dialogue and negotiation with other communities and governments. Indigenous governance also includes democratic representation and participation in both legislative and executive domains, control and management of natural resources and ownership of land. Recognition and utilisation of indigenous knowledge and the way likewise because the extent to integrate such IKS into capitalist development and also the free enterprise also fall within the external prong features of indigenous governance. African political systems during the pre-colonial era knew about the risks of allowing a standard leader to realize uncontrolled power. In this regard Ayittey (1999) cites various examples where chiefs were surrounded by numerous institutions, which served as checks on their powers (p. 89). These institutional mechanisms of checks and balances manifested themselves in three forms: religious, institutionalized, and spontaneous (p. 126).

Ayittey (1991) points out that, under the religious style of checks and balances, because the guardian of the people the chief/king served as a bridge between the ancestors of the lands and also the people. This duty which is explicitly stated when the chief swore his oath during enstoolment enjoins him to confirm the security and wellbeing of his people, so as to be pleasing to the ancestors (Ayittey, 1991; Opuni-Frimpong, 2012). This transcendental responsibility, which is an element of traditions among indigenous leaders of the Akans of Ghana, the Yoruba of Nigeria, and also the Limba of African country, by its very nature constrains the actions of such leaders/rulers (Ayittey, 1991, p.126). In terms of institutionalized checks and balances, this took the shape of personal and public admonitions from the queen dowager, the inner or council of Advisers and also the Council of Elders (Ayittey, 1991, p.128). If a chief/king failed to hear these entities there was an opportunity of destoolment. For example, the Asante people destooled three kings - Osei Kwame in 1799 for absenting himself from Kumasi and failing to perform his religious duties during the Adaye festivals; Karikari in 1874 for extravagance; and Mensa Bonsu in 1883 for excessively taxing the Asante people (p.139).

#### **5.4 Traditional Worldview of the Akan People**

Ghana is created from lots of tribes, notably the Akan, the Ewe, the Ga's, Guan, etc. The Akan, occupy about six out of the ten regions of Ghana namely: Ashanti, Eastern, Central, Western, Brong-Ahafo, and a few a part of the Volta Regions. This group consists of tribes like Agona, Ahafo, Ahanta, Akuapem, Akwamu, Akyem, Aowin, Asante, Assin, Fante, and Kwahu. The 2010 population census reports that, the Akan constitute about 53% of the overall population of 24,658,823. They are mainly found within the southern and middle a part of Ghana. However, some minority Akan population is found in La Cote D'Ivoire. The standard occupation of the Akan are farming and fishing. However, as a result of movement of individuals from one region to a different in explore for jobs, some Akans could also be found within the northern regions of Ghana engaged in several occupations aside from farming and fishing (Omenyo, 2001). Traditionally, the Akan are matrilineal, that is they inherit from the mother side. The sole exception to the current sort of inheritance is that the Akuapem of Larteh and Mampong. Though the Akwapim's are Akan, they inherit from the daddy side (Pobee 1979, p.44). The implication of the matrilineal inheritance is that nephews inherit the properties of their uncles (mother's brothers) after their death. However, with the passing into law the Interstate Succession Law, PNDC Law 111, such system of inheritance has been abolished. According to Awuah-Nyamekye (2014, p. 60), the worldview of the Akan people is "the sum from their core ideas about the universe and their role within it". This understanding, mirrors Allan's (1985) view (as cited in Chalk 2006, p.45) that "a worldview could be a general way of looking upon the universe and our relevance it, a general set of assumptions about the meaning of life, about what is important, and about how things work".

Awuah-Nyamekye (2014) further notes that, the worldview of the Akan people is "the product of systematic reflections on phenomena and experiences that their forebears have bequeathed to them". Accordingly, a rational inference from the above is that, the Akan people's worldview is conjectural, but rather than remaining as something that exists merely at the theoretical stage, it is demonstrated in real world through the people's culture. As Kalu (2001, p.228) rightly illustrate, the Akan indigenous cultural pattern is influenced by worldviews which function a reservoir of information. They are stored in myths, proverbs and folklores. In Akan worldview, the globe comprises of the supernatural (or the spiritual) and therefore the living (or the physical), with the previous having control over the affairs of the latter. For human to enjoy the great things of life (such as fertility, bumper harvest, physiological condition etc.) and avoid all the negative things

of life (including sudden deaths, incurable diseases, recurring accidents etc), they need to ready to comprehend the varied constituents of both the spiritual and therefore the physical aspects of the universe and the way to relate to every (Ameh 2013).The Akan generally believe that there are evil spirits (Amoah 1998) that may inflict bad luck on humanity, and must therefore seek protection from superior beings beyond themselves. This help, within the view of Amoah (1998), is found in maintaining a harmonious relationship between humanity, nature and therefore the spirits. This partly explain why their being (life form) and thinking are influenced by the supernatural. In this regard, Larbi (2002) posits that: To the Akan, rather like other African peoples, whatever happens to the individual contains a religious interpretation. To them, behind the physical is that the spiritual; behind the scene is that the unseen.

Every event here on earth is traceable to a supernatural source within the spirit realm. Within the Akan traditional society, the supernatural (spiritual) plays a major role in their daily lives. Gyekye (1995) and Mbiti's (1990) study of the Akan people corroborate this view. In keeping with both Gyekye (1995) and Mbiti (1990), the Akan conceptualization of the universe conceives that the universe is unitary. Gyekye (1995) as an example, recounts that the universe is basically spiritual to the extent that there's continuous interaction between the imaginary place and individuals. Any try to make a distinction between the spiritual and therefore the physical within the Akan, is probably going to be met with mixed feelings, if not total disappointment. This is often because the consciousness of the supernatural permeates all thoughts and actions. Gyekye (1995, p.69) identifies with this when he accentuated that "what is primarily real is spiritual." In Mbiti's opinion, the spiritual and therefore the physical are "two dimensions of 1 and therefore the same universe. These dimensions dove-tail one another to the extent that sometimes and in places one is outwardly more real than, but not exclusively of, the other" (Mbiti, 1990, p.203). Moreover, several scholars (Mbiti, 1990; Dickson, 1965; Pobee, 1992) have observed that religion is deeply rooted all told aspects of lifetime of the African, and by extension the Akan. Primary observations of African people reveal that their worldviews are underscored by a standard system of religiosity.

African societies, Kalu (as quoted in Ogiezee, 2009, p.14) remarks, "(are) couched in religious, numinous terms: creation was the act of a supernatural being utilizing the services of subaltern gods." Accordingly, Mbiti (1990, p.1).observes, "Africans are notoriously religious" and every people has its own religious system with a group of beliefs and practices. Religion permeates into all the departments of life so it is challenging or possible to isolate it. A study of those religious

systems is, therefore a study of the peoples themselves all told the complexities of traditional and modern life. Consequently, the Akan worldview, one may argue, is underpinned by its indigenous religion. Elorm-Donkor's (2012, p.3-4) study on the African worldview confirms this assertion. In the traditional Akan community, almost every communal event is connected with religion... [and] wellbeing in life is guaranteed by a congenial moral relationship between human and therefore the spirit entities of their community. It is believed that when left on their own to produce for the spiritual, physical and psycho-social resources that they have for mastering their environment [including managing environmental problems], humans are found to be limited and inadequate. Therefore, there's constant need for an ethical relationship that is both interdependent and interconnected. Owing to the actual fact that the Akan worldview is underpinned by its indigenous religion, all aspects of creation are accorded respect. Consistent with Awuah-Nyamekye (2014, p.62), within Akan societies, while all aspects of the universe are seen as God's creation, and must be protected, elements of creation that are sources of sustenance for human life – trees, animals and rivers are given more attention. Similarly, Daneel (2001 as cited in Taringa, 2006, p.191-192) relate the environmental friendliness of indigenous religion within the African worldview. They opine:

*“...Traditional African ecology...is inseparably linked with traditional religion. Environmental protection is sanctioned by the creator God and the ancestors of the land” (Daneel 2001). “African religious ideas were very much ideas about relationships, whether with other living people, or with spirits of the dead, or with animals, or with cleared land, or with the bush” (Ranger, 1988 as cited in Taringa, 2006, p.191-192).*

However, the introduction of Western education and religions (which are underpinned by Western worldviews) in Ghana may have had effect on the worldviews of the Akan people of Ghana. Suggesting that the Akan worldview before their encounter with colonialism would not be exactly as it is today, thereby affirming Hart's (2010) observation about worldview's "susceptibility to vary." Nevertheless, one can still utter a singular Akan worldview. This is often because; the core constituents of the normal Akan worldview (including, the assumption within the supernatural being, cults related to various divinities, nature spirits, rituals, ancestral spirits, a belief in magic, and therefore the fear of witchcraft) still remain intact and still influence behaviour. Moreover, some studies among the Akan people have identified that, the encounter

between Akan indigenous religion and culture, and monotheistic religions like Christianity and Islam didn't result in a domination of the latter over the previous. Acquah (2011) notes: Although conversion of Akan indigenous religious adherents to those monotheistic religions was overwhelming in terms of numbers, these converts didn't completely abandon or denounce their traditional religious beliefs and practices; they still served as important religious mediation for expressing their new faith.

Their conversion to those monotheistic religions amounted to adding onto their old religion the relevant religious elements found within the new religions, which served their present need in life. Similarly, (Shorter, 1975, p.7) has contended that African Christian does away with “remarkably little of his former non-Christian outlook.” Furthermore, one can argue that, the influences of Western worldview on the Akan’s worldview have implications for the management of their ecological issues. This is often because people’s worldviews influences how they understand and evaluate things. As France (cited in Hart, 2010, p.1) rightly points out, “our worldviews affect our belief systems, higher cognitive process, assumptions, and modes of problem solving.” The Akan worldview is underpinned by its indigenous religion. And one can trust Awuah-Nyamekye (2014) that the Akan people have a “religious worldview”, even as Douglas (2015, p.42) rightly points out that, “religion permeate every aspect of [the African’s] life and shape how they perceive themselves and therefore the world.” This makes it vital to throw more light on some aspects of the faith of the Akan people. The Akan Indigenous Religion (AIR) comes under the larger umbrella of the African Traditional Religions (ATR). African Traditional Religions, also stated as African Indigenous Religions or African Ethnic Religions, may be a term bearing on a diversity of religions indigenous to the continent of Africa. The same as ethnic religions in other parts of the globe, African religious traditions are defined mainly along community lines. These traditional African religions also play an outsized part within the cultural understanding and awareness of the people of their communities (Amponsah, 2009).

Central to the Akan religious ideas is that the belief during a community of spirits. These several spirits range from the supernatural being or creator god (Nana Onyame/Onyankpon), gods/goddesses (Abosom), and therefore the earth deity (Asaase Yaa) to the ancestral spirits (Nananom Nsamfo). Onyankopon refers to the supremacy of God. He is seen because the creator of the universe. This belief in Onyankopon because the creator will be argued to possess ecological ramification because it suggest that every creation (including trees, animals and rivers) was created

by Onyankpon, and humanity as stewards have the responsibility to protect and conserve the environment or nature. Agyarko (2013) recapitulates the influence of the Akan concept of God (Onyankopon/Onyame) and its implications on the people's attitude towards creation thus:

*All human and non-human relations are affected by the belief that we all belong together in God. Onyame is immediately present to each creature through his or her sunsum (spirit). This view of the immediacy of God to creatures has consequences for the way the Akan, at least theoretically, value and treats one another and other creatures. Onyame nti (because of God or for the sake of God), one acts or refrains from acting against another person or non-human forms of life. AsaaseYaa, the earth goddess, is next to Onyankopon and is responsible for fertility. In some sense, AsaaseYaa is also the “custodian of morality and social decorum, the traditional ethical code” (Okorocho, 1987, p52).*

There are hosts of gods/goddesses (abosom) aside AsaaseYaa. These gods/goddesses are believed to be the youngsters of God. Within the Akan religious circle, variety of the well-known gods/goddesses are associated with mountains, forests, lakes, rivers and rocks. Next to AsaaseYaa is that the Nananom Nsamanfo (ancestral spirits), literally described because the “living dead”. Though they are the departed members of the community, they are still considered to be living, as they are still believed to influence the lives of the living. Not every decedent is taken under consideration an ancestor within the Akan society. For one to qualify as an ancestor within the Akan worldview, the person among other things should have died a peaceful death (abodweewuo), a human with children, had lived an exemplary life, etc. (Rattray, 1954; Opoku, 1978). The abosom (gods/goddesses) are another central element in Akan indigenous religion. These deities are believed to reside in natural substances like rivers, trees, mountains, caves and animals. Awuah-Nyamekye's study of the Akan people of Berekum brought out that “all the deities in Berekum have particular animals or trees as taboos. These beliefs influence Berekum people's attitudes towards natural objects, and thus the connection between object and deities explains why contravening any of the taboos in respect to natural objects can be a matter of concern to the entire community” (Awuah-Nyamekye, 2014, p.68-67).

This might explain why within the Akan society most taboos are taken seriously, as they are believed to possess been imposed by traditional rulers and priests on behalf of the people and within the overall interest of the community. Unlike ordinary wrongs, taboos are taken more seriously and thus the mmusu (serious sin) style of taboos may require blood sacrifices for the pacification and forgiveness of the gods and ancestors, who might, keep with the quality belief, otherwise visit their wrath on the living within the kind of epidemics, drought and infertility. While all the spirits play an important role within the Akan society, the Akan highly regards the spiritual being and thus the ancestral spirits far above the abosom (gods/goddesses). Religion, to the Akan, is generally perceived as a tool for survival and for enhancing life in its broad sense (Amoah, 1998). To be religious within the Akan worldview entails active participation in rituals like sacrificing, praying, and seeking esoteric knowledge from spirits additionally as maintaining an honest relationship with fellow groups of individuals. Moreover, it involves soliciting the assistance of diverse spirits to beat social problems and evil powers believed to exist within the planet. More importantly, being religious is maintaining the harmony not only between fellow person, but also nature (including the environment) and thus the spirits. The foregoing discussion has centred on the worldview of the Akan people. The Akan people's worldview, it has been argued, encompass a gaggle of basic ideas and assumptions that they have developed for explaining reality and their place and purpose during this world. These ideas and assumptions are expressed through their culture. It had been observed that worldview guides the behaviour and way of lifetime of the Akan people, and helps them to live consonant with their natural environment. Moreover, it also came to light that the worldview of the Akan people is underpinned by their indigenous religion.

### ***Taboo among the Akan's***

In African societies, taboo primarily serves the aim of ritual protection or ritual hygiene. Ayegboyin and Jegede (2009, p.1) confirm the actual fact that taboo is embedded within the myths and religions of Africans, and in most African countries and communities, taboos are numerous, they cover almost every aspect of Africans' life, which they are taken seriously. There are taboos associated with different initiations and celebrations like childbirth, marriage, death, and burial. In his study of the Akan people, Gyekye (1995) posits that the closest adore taboo within the Akan is "akyiwade" i.e. that which is forbidden or prohibited, and "musuo". The later term is however reserved for prohibitions against very serious or extraordinary moral evils like murder, suicide,

rape, incest and religious sacrilege. Therefore while all akyiwade are taboos, not all taboos are musuo. Among Akans, traditional rulers and chief priests are the custodians of taboos. The enforcement process of these taboos is in line with the oath Akans swear to the ancestors. The misuse of oath is that the transgression of an ethnic taboo. Taboos then become the quality commandments through which leaders are shielded from social and spiritual ambivalences (Owusu, 2006). By this, taboo among the Akans is an obligation and not a choice. Consequently, most taboos are taken seriously since they are believed to possess been imposed by traditional rulers and priests on their behalf and within the overall interest of the community. They will be promulgated and transmitted within the kind of spiritual ordinances, creeds or vows. For this reason, unlike ordinary wrongs, taboos are taken more seriously and thus the mmusu style of taboos may require blood sacrifices for the pacification and forgiveness of the gods and ancestors who might, keep with the quality belief, otherwise visit their wrath on the living within the kind of epidemics, drought and infertility. Since these taboo sanctions are believed to be instantaneous and “automatic” unlike sanctions in other religions that has to wait till the tip of life or stand to be mitigated by God’s mercy and forgiveness, the bulk won’t intentionally violate them, whether or not they are doubtful of their metaphysical presuppositions. The sins or offences which are believed to be taboo, because punishments for them are automatic, carry their own deterrents with them, and there is little question that the bulk people refrain from committing them for fear of the more or less inevitable consequences (Ackah, 1988, p.99). As a result, the value of taboos as a source of ethical guidance and motivation for social order cannot be dismissed theoretically (Osei, 2006).

Within some African societies (including the Akan), people are reserved to question or challenge taboos because they are embedded within their cultural and non-secular practices. When something is taken into account a taboo, it must not be talked about, done, mentioned, touched, or checked out (Madu, 2002, p.65). Thody (1997) identifies five categories of the “forbidden”: actions (do not make out, be it, or savours it); nourishment (do not eat or drink); words and themes (do not say it and don't speak about it); ideas, books, and pictures (do not think it, write it, paint it, print it or show it); and signs (do not make yourself look that). Therefore, taboo may be a precautionary principle that represses open dialogue because it compels adherents to comply or face punishment, which could either be moral (weighs on the breaker’s conscience) or stigma (be subject of ridicule). The religious roots of taboo themes connote that:

*...all prohibited acts or taboos are crimes in African traditional religion and any person committing any of them is regarded a criminal and is punishable. In traditional African society the sacred and the secular are inseparable... what religion forbids or condemns society also forbids and condemns (Adewale, 1994).*

It is believed that among the Akan, breaking taboo leads to either a punishment or stricken by bad conscience (e.g., feeling sick or guilty). It appears there's an inner force that comes into action. The violation may even end in a very partial surrender to the taboo as Freud (cited in Madu, 2002, p.65) wrote in Totem and Taboo: "A one that breaks a taboo are going to be tabooed himself or herself, because he or she has the harmful threat of luring others into following his or her example." Taboo among the Akan is faced with the matter of rationale and scientific verifiability within the face of modernity and globalization. As Thody (1997) rightly argues, taboos, unlike laws, are for the foremost part irrational and hard to defend on practical or humanitarian ground. Christianity and Islam, including modernity, claim that taboos stem from myths that don't correspond to historical chronology, and so, belief within the potency of taboo is tantamount to primitivism, backwardness, and superstition. To obey a taboo is therefore considered absurd and incongruous with development. But taboos in Africa are truth forms that are independent of the confines of your time. Taboo is sacred; the actual fact of its potency are often found only within the depth of the mind, where merely rational thought cannot penetrate so on discover its reality (Ayeboyin & Jegede 2009).

Although taboos, especially within the context of African societies, are related to the supernatural and religion, and infringement leads to an automatic penalty without human or divine mediation taboos are "overriddable" (Ayeboyin & Jegede, 2009). This means they are not construed as absolute or eternal and so unchanging rules. Among the Akans as an example, this overriddability of taboos is expressed in some ways. While it is (generally) a taboo to hold anything in a very palm leaf basket to the king's palace, it is also, emphatic that notwithstanding this prohibition, it is not a taboo to hold nuggets of gold in a very palm leaf basket into the king's palace (Ofosuhene, 2006). Taboos are therefore, over-ridable, since they enable reasonable exceptions as necessitated by special circumstances. Within Akan societies, and using development as a benchmark, one may argue that some taboos are counter-productive since they are doing not support the well-being of the people concerned. Taboos that encourage cruel widowhood rites and people that place

restriction on farming activities are dehumanizing and affect economic productivity respectively. Regardless of how unimportant or unreasonable taboos may appear to the fashionable mind in details, embedded in them are “germinant principles of social progress and moral order” and so “the cornerstone of the full social order” (Cassier, 1992, p.106). Although Cassier saw taboos related to African Traditional Religion (ATR) as “savage taboos”, and then sidelined from moral discourse, since ATR is not considered among the key religions, my analysis within the following discussion will imply that, on the contrary, taboos related to ATR aren't savage as they need rational and scientific explanations and ethical values. Key among them is that the significant role of taboos in Akan people's indigenous ways of preserving the environment.

### **5.5 Traditional Worldview of the Ga People**

The Ga people occupy the South-eastern coast of Ghana. The Ga area is created of six towns. These together form the town of Accra, which is that the present capital of Ghana. Because of its location as a coastal town and a capital city, the Ga's have over the years had lots of contact and interactions with various groups of individuals. First, they'd early contact with the European traders, colonial officials and with Christian missionaries. They also had contact with peoples from different parts of the country especially the neighbouring Akuapem and Fanti towns. These contacts and interactions impacted the social, political and non-secular development of the Ga. Evidence of this can be found within the development of chieftaincy, an establishment that was borrowed from the neighbouring Akan communities. Oral tradition on the origins of the Ga antedates any historical records. The few historical documents, which can be considered recent, are drawn from early European sources. Other materials available that also give hints are from archaeological and ethno-historical sources. Some people also consider the standard kpele songs, a number of which are documented, as authentic sources of the history of the Ga. The Ga state is often described as a heterogeneous community. The people that have now come to be called the Ga-speaking people don't comprise one group with the identical traditions and origins. While some communities in Osu, La, Teshie and a bit of Ga Mashie claim their origin from the modern-day Nigeria, others within the identical communities claim to own come from Osudoku and Ladoku,(Reindorf, 1966) both on the east of the Accra plains. The Ga's are patrilineal in their structure. Jean Barbot (cited in Odotei, 1991), an early European traveller to West Africa, comparing the Akan and the Ga, wrote:

*The right of inheritance all over the Gold Coast, except Accra is very strangely settled for the children born legitimate never inherit their parents' effect. Accra is the only place where the children are sole lawful heirs to the father's or mother's effects* (Barbot, cited in Odotei, 1991).

The social philosophy of the Ga accommodates foreigners and therefore the customs and traditions they carry, for as they assert 'Ablekuma abakuma wo' meaning 'may people come and join us' (Kropp-Dakubu, 1999). The Ga's believe that it is through the accommodation of others that one can develop a healthy community. It is within the context of this philosophy of hospitality and therefore the 'polytheistic nature of Ga religion along with the habit of toleration and consideration for other people's gods' (Field, 1937) that the Ga established good rapport and relationship with their neighbours. Like any social institution, leadership is incredibly crucial to the social organization of the Ga. per oral tradition, the Ga originally had no chiefs and were ruled by the Wuhmei (traditional priests), who also doubled because the political head of the community. The Wuhmo thus performed both religious and political functions. He was supported within the administration of the town by asafoiatsemsi (leaders of the military companies), akutseiatsmsi (leaders of the assorted quarters) and wekunukpai (family heads) likewise as Shia-onukpai (elders of the assorted households). The assorted families most frequently appointed these officers. The introduction of chieftaincy as an establishment was a later development that emerged within the prevailing circumstances. First it had been adopted as a matter of political expediency from the Akwamu and Akuapem, especially during the slave raiding expeditions and when wars were rampant. The religious and cultural influence of the Akan and therefore the Akwamu was so entrenched that even at the present a bit of the Ga, the Otublohum quarter that are considered the remnants of the Akwamu, celebrate the Akan Odwira alongside the annual Homowo festival. Another influence came from the Fanti, notably their fishermen who settled among the Ga and who though had been assimilated into the society, have maintained their identity. For example in La, the Abese Fanti quarter, because the name implies, have Fanti ancestry. There is also must mention the Kpeshi aborigines among whom the Ga settled likewise because the Obutu and Akuapem communities. Clear evidence of those influences is found within the development of chieftaincy, an establishment that was borrowed from the Akan communities. There are traces of Akan words and ideas in Ga traditional prayers and songs. This is often evident within the

traditional kpele songs, which are embellished with Guan and Obutu words (Kilson, 1971). The second major influence came from the contact with Europeans. For over five centuries, beginning from the 15th century, the Ga had plenty of interactions with Europeans of various backgrounds. With the exception of occasional suspicion and mistrust, which led to hostilities, the link was more or less cordial and harmonious as depicted on the symbol of the Ga state.

The Ga's believe a supernatural being or a high god they consult with as Nyorjmo. Their concept of Nyorjmo is of a being who may be a personified creative vitality, immortal, rational and mobile and at the apex of a hierarchy of beings within the Ga cosmology. Nyorjmo is taken into account because the one who created the universe and everyone that are within it, including divinities, people in general, animals and therefore the environment. For the Ga, Nyorjmo failed to only create the globe within the distant past but continues this creation within the present. They thus create mentally the act of creation as an ongoing process which Nyorjmo is not detached from the globe but actively involved in its daily affairs and acting because the source of all types of life. Judgment and punishment are attributed to Nyorjmo.

Nyorjmo punishes people for violating divine injunctions and causing disruption within the ordered relationship within the universe. Such punishment may be available in the shape of withholding rain, famine, natural disasters and even barrenness. Such a situation is often remedied by the performance of certain calendrical rites. Although Nyorjmo is taken into account because the source of all types of life, the Ga doesn't supplicate Nyorjmo directly but rather through divinities. This is often due to the conception that Nyorjmo is much far from people in general. It is believed that originally when people in general were morally good, Nyorjmo was near them but after they began to sin Nyorjmo moved off from them farther into the heavens. This view mostly held by the older generation, finds support in an exceedingly Ga myth of creation. per this myth, Nyorjmo was very near the world and regarding people in general but there was an old woman who accustomed pound fufu (a meal of pounded cassava, sometimes mixed with plantain) daily, and as she continued to boost her pestle she pushed Nyorjmo far into the heavens. Through this act Nyorjmo became far from people in general. The Ga-Mashie tradition as an entire had their pattern, traits and products that are considered with regard to a selected category; like a field, subject or mode of expression, religious culture, music and dance. The Ga Mashie as a conventional founded constitute seven clans called Sempe, Otublonhum, Abola, Asere, Akugmage, Gbese and Ngleshi Alata. of these clans have some common pattern, traits and

products in terms of their chieftaincy, festivals, marriage, outdoor ceremony, puberty rites, funerals music and dance etc. in their outdoor ceremony Ayerley (2009, p.5) stated that

*The outdoor ceremony, known as kpodziemo among the Gas, is performed on the eighth day after a child is born. The time is at dawn, about '5' O' clock. A child is not seen by the public until the naming is performed. The reason is that a child is regarded as a stranger and needs to be formally introduced. The other argument for keeping the child indoors is that for the first seven days of a baby's life, he/ she is not regarded as a human being. It is only after the eighth day that parents gather the courage and confidence to introduce the child to the public. Until the eighth day; the child is regarded as a visitor; he or she may go back to wherever he came from. On the other hand he may decide to stay if he finds that the new home is hospitable. This explains why no funeral is performed if a child dies before the eighth day.*

This effort reveals the custom, norms and tradition of the Gas supported their belief of the new born children. The transitions of the individuals from childhood to adult stage are observed in terms of puberty rites, marriage, profession, death, funerals etc.

### ***Taboos among the Ga's***

One feature of the Ga taboos is ritual prohibition as a rule of behaviour which is related to a belief that an infraction will lead to an undesirable change of formality status which is conceived in many alternative ways in numerous societies, but everywhere there's the thought that it involves the likelihood of some minor or major misfortune which can befall the person concerned. Ga taboos contain within them a specific quality of danger which will befall those that break it, therefore "taboo is worried with all the social mechanisms of obedience which have ritual significance; with specific and restrictive behaviour in dangerous situations. The importance of taboos to the Ga traditional communities (Kpele Religion), is maintaining harmony between God and spirits (invisible world) and personalities and therefore the remainder of creation (visible world). This harmony would be ruled "by moral order which is preserved by tradition and, if followed, have the ability or force to sustain the existence and operation of the universe, ensuring a bountiful life for humanity. To preserve that harmony is that the duty of somebody's being, which determines

his character and influences the standard of lifetime of a community and therefore the universe itself. Taboos are then seen as an ethical ambience or moral codes intended to make harmony and therefore the order of the existence of the universe. Taboos clarify which attitudes and behaviours don't seem to be acceptable because they are doing not assure the continuation of life in its fullness, don't enhance the standard of lifetime of the community and don't preserve the social code of behaving. In the traditional setting of the Ga's, taboos played significant and positive roles. They provided a group of rules serving as an ethical guidance or a law within the community to confirm that peace and security were present within the community. Every moral system requires the existence of guiding principles, source(s) of motivation, and a few grounds for objectivity. Although formulated as 'negative' principles stressing 'do not...' and teaching people about what wasn't acceptable within the society, by implication, they were also commenting to the actions that were imagined to be done. By preventing people from doing wrong things, they were helping them to concentrate on what was encouraged within the society.

In an exceedingly society where there was no police, taboos served as a guardian of ethical values. To a specific extent, they were better than modern law enforcing agencies, because, in most cases, breaking of a taboo was related to an automatic punishment – one didn't need to be caught to be punished; They helped within the upbringing of kids and provided rules for marriage: they might be described as 'teaching aids' when explaining some moral principles to them. When one lacked an intellectual ability to impart the importance of some moral principles, taboos were a useful way of transmitting the identical value from a special perspective. Those values, worded as taboos, were expressed at various occasions like circumcision, marriage negotiations and funeral rites. It had been an efficient system of preserving and transmitting moral values, keeping in mind that the Ga land culture was an oral one. They were a way of group action and without them there would be chaos: The motivation for abiding by the normative principles are provided and reinforced by the religious sanctions from the gods and therefore the ancestors or directly from the supernatural being. Keeping of taboos ensured good harmony between the visible and therefore the invisible world. Those found guilty of great moral or legal violations are made to undergo ritual cleansing as a way of ethical or ontological purification and transformation. People gave the impression to remember that behind prohibitions laid truth meaning of taboos – preserving harmony and well-being in and of the community: Life and its quality was seen as crucial and therefore the society applied a spread of methods to preserve it and transmit it, especially through taboos. While well-

being virtues include modernization, democratization qualitative education, and demanding consciousness, the well-being vices include dependency, bribery and corruption, unwarranted military interventions, dictatorships and therefore the abuse of human rights etc. Consequently, if one could show that a given set of taboos, promote some well-being, virtues and help diminish some well-being vices, one would have shown by implication that some taboos promote development and harmonious living.

## **5.6 The Relevance of Traditional Authority in Africa**

The relevance of the chieftaincy institution to development within the midst of a contemporary nation-state is also off from being reached a minimum of within the near future because the debate continues. Tradition embodies custom (a way of life– norms and values-) and is indeed the basis for the legitimacy of chieftaincy or traditional rule. Colonial administration and postindependence governments have failed to dislodge this basis of legitimacy of chiefs (i.e. tradition). The uniqueness of the chieftaincy institution in Ghana is that almost every community has a chief. They (chiefs) offer leadership and protection, peace and security for their people. As traditional heads, chiefs are the first port of call, even by politicians when on campaign tours. The chiefs represent the spiritual embodiment of the people, mediating between the living and the dead (Busia, 1951: 23-27). From time immemorial, the chiefs have been agents of development. Today, one can cite numerous examples of many development projects, which chiefs have initiated and completed in their areas of jurisdiction (Ray & Eizlini, 2011).

It appears that a number of the analyses seem to be suggesting that the institution is incompatible with modern varieties of governance and must therefore be done away with. Again, there are people who think that the institution is indispensable for progress in Africa and for that matter Ghana. This therefore brings into play various strands and schools of thought. Mamdani (1996) elaborated four broad features within the chieftaincy discourse on traditional institutions and development. The first feature contends that chieftaincy is anachronistic, a hindrance to the event and transformation of the continent, undemocratic, divisive and expensive (Kilson, 1966). The chieftaincy institution is criticised as being corrupted by the colonial state and by the clientelism of the despotic post-colonial state and thus, it is not subject to accountability to the populace (Zack-Williams, 2002). Despite the chief's power, he may be aloof from his position (Mireku, 1991; Pobe 1991). This shows that traditional authorities aren't despotic and untouchable.

It is also argued that the chieftaincy institution impedes the pace of development because it reduces the relevance of the state within the areas of social services (Mamdani, 1996; Ntsebeza, 2005; Osaghae, 1987). Furthermore, because of the hereditary nature of chieftaincy, it renders it incompatible with democratic governance, which needs competitive elections mutually of its cornerstones (Ntsebeza, 2005).

In line with this discourse, countries like state, Ghana, Guinea, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe attempted stripping chiefs of most of their authority or to abolish chieftaincy altogether. However, abolishing chieftaincy didn't eradicate its underlying broader institutions and chiefs are reinstated in most of those countries and even given constitutional guarantees as in Ghana. The second feature is that traditional institutions are indispensable for political transformation in Africa as they represent a significant a part of the continent's history, culture, political and governance systems. This view attributes the ineffectiveness of the African state in bringing about sustained socio-economic development to the neglect of traditional institutions and its failure to revive Africa's own history (Davidson, 1992). Chiefs even have the obligation to contribute to the lives of their citizens particularly and to the nationals of their country at large. A chief is anticipated to steer his people in organising self-help activities and projects and take the initiative in establishing institutions and programmes to boost the welfare of his people in areas like health, education, agriculture, etc (Boafo-Arthur, 2006).

A third feature of traditional institutions acknowledges the chieftaincy institution limitations. It notes that the colonial state largely transformed chieftaincy into its intermediate administrative institution which the post-colonial state often co-opts chiefs to facilitate the extension of despotic control over its citizens. This view nonetheless contends that traditional institutions constitute crucial resources that have the potential to push democratic governance and to facilitate access of rural communities to public service. This attitude makes the arguments that chieftaincy can provide the bedrock upon which to construct new mixed governance structures since chiefs function custodians of and advocates for the interests of local communities within the broader political structure (Skalnik, 2004; Sklar, 1996). The fourth feature on the relevance of traditional institutions is provided by legal pluralists. This view acknowledges that African traditional legal systems or customary courts and customary property rights are an empirical reality and want to be recognised and revered (McAuslan, 1998). In southern Ghana as an example, many customary and family cases are still settled at the chief's palace/court because the standard beliefs and practices

adore that the standard courts be exhausted for redress before utilising the formal courts. This can be manifest within the recent case between the Oguaa traditional Authorities and therefore the Journalist of Graphic Group of Communications. The case had to be settled at the Chiefs Palace. Thus, without the standard legal systems, the trendy ones would be overwhelmed with lots of cases, which may lead to instability within the long term (Owusu, 1997). Owusu-Sarpong (2003) argues that no central government decision directly affecting the Ghanaian people in matters like communal health, education, use and distribution of land, gender issues among others is easily implemented without the active involvement of the chiefs.

### **5.7 The Typical Ghanaian Chief**

In Ghana, chieftaincy is believed to be the foremost visible and prominent type of political leadership amongst the various ethnic groups found within the country (Akropong, 2006). The 1992 Constitution of Ghana defines a chief as a —person, who, hailing from the appropriate family and lineage, has been validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as a chief or queen mother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage (Article 277). This definition highlights four important features. First, the definition comprises both Kings and paramount chiefs. It does not take into account the different traditional rules that existed prior to colonialism. The chieftaincy institution likewise because the definition of who a chief is has competent many phases within the places where it still exists. For several groups, the chief personifies their beliefs, fears, hopes and aspirations; and functions as a spiritual, administrative, legislative, cultural, military and judicial head (Abotchie, 2006; Wilks, 1975). Chiefs are important actors and forefront of local development initiatives; some have created educational scholarship schemes; some have used their personal resources to make health centers, schools, provide facility systems for his or her communities. Likewise, the central government, chieftaincy institutions became agents for development in contemporary Africa. Also, chiefs played a crucial role within the struggle against colonial rule. Chiefs have served as traditional conflict resolution experts likewise as change agents and leaders of development in their communities, and it is against these and other reasons why in Ghana, the chieftaincy institution has shown most resilience that long after de-colonization, it exists as a viable parallel mode of recent governance.

According to Dankwa III (2004), a chief within the pre-colonial era was one who “in accordance with custom had been nominated, elected, enstooled or enskinned as a chief or, because the case

is also, appointed and installed as such”. This then meant that one could never become a chief if the customs and tradition of the community didn't deem the person appropriate the position. Chieftaincy therefore was very, if not solely, addicted to a community's custom: and also the installation or removal of a chief from office may well be done by members of that community only. Lord Chalmers, who was a Chief Magistrate and a Judicial assessor of the Gold Coast, in 1872 described the chieftaincy institution during this manner, “Every village has its headman who exercises a form of patriarchal rule over his few inhabitants; he again furthermore as his villagers, is subject to some chief, who has control over three, four, five or, more villages and this chief is again subject to the chief or king of an oversized district”. There however was a change when the colonial administration interfered with the institution of chieftaincy during the colonial era. A chief within the colonial era then became; “somebody who in accordance with custom, had been nominated, elected and installed as a chief or because the case is also, appointed and installed intrinsically and who, for the nonce was recognized by the government” (Dankwa III, 2004).

During this era, being recognized by the govt. was a really important clause. The only real right of community members to create and unmake a chief shifted to become a right of the govt.; since chiefs who although are rejected by their community members could still rule if their recognition by the government had not been withdrawn. This interference by the govt. continued even after independence. After independence, there was just a small change to who a chief was. The new definition however still kept the clause of being recognized by the government. The definition at that point in time became:

*“A chief is an individual who in accordance with customary laws, has been nominated, elected, enstooled or enskinned and installed as such or as the case maybe, appointed and whose name for the time being, appears as a Chief in the register of chiefs. Provided that no person shall be deemed to be a chief for the purposes of the exercise by him of any function under this Act or under any other enactments, unless he has been recognized as such by the minister, by notice published in the local government Bulletin”*  
(Dankwa III,2004).

Dankwa III (2004) further notes that a chief could be a one who hailing from the suitable lineage or family and who has been validly nominated, elected, enstooled or enskinned and installed as a

chief or as a queenmother, because the case is also appointed and installed intrinsically in accordance with the requisite applicable customary law and usage. Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1970), also defined a chief as “the administrative and judicial head of a given administrative district, vested often with final economic and legal control over land within his boundaries, everyone living within this boundary is his subject”. They believed a chief to be the chief head, legislator, supreme judge, the commander in chief of the military, and also the chief priest. Owusu-Mensah (2014) on his part indicates that in the pre-colonial era, chieftaincy was organized into ethnic states, and also the paramount chiefs served because the executive head with the support of their council of elders. A number of these states were the Asante; the Dagomba; the Gonja; the Anlo, and plenty of others with boundaries geographically different from their current regional demarcations (Owusu-Mensah, 2014).

The vast authority, power and functions of a chief seem to portray him as a dictator and an all-powerful being likening him to the Hobbesian “Leviathan”. However, there is considerable evidence to suggest that this is not the case. There are checks and balances on the powers and authority of the chief. One of such notable checks is the institution of the queen mother. As Arhin (2000, p.8) rightly notes, not only was ‘the queen mother a refuge for a fugitive from the chief’s court, but she was also the most effective adviser and she had the right to administer to him even a public admonition’. Other important institutions that check the chief are the council of elders and the ‘asafo’. In the administration of justice or implementation of policies and programs, for example, chiefs consult the council of elders for their opinions. The nature and challenges of the chieftaincy institution over the years are varied and ranges from colonially crafted mechanisms to break the authority of the indigenous monarchs to the imperceptible marginalization of the institution as they were transformed through constitutional provisions. The colonial administration was one of despotism, the suppression of the institutions of the people and the super-imposition of an alien institution.

For Busia (1951), the economic basis of chiefship during the colonial administration was also regulated, particularly with respect to their own views of customary taxes and levies and of desirable changes within the economic relations between chiefs and subjects. In fact, a chief had no private property on his assumption of office or installation, his private property, if any, only became the property of the state. Busia concluded that, under the critical circumstance the chief economically was hard pressed, a situation he said, was aggravated by the bureaucratisation of

“stool treasuries” let alone their closed supervision by the district commissioners (Busia 1951 in Brempong 2006:4). Anamzoya (2009), Acquah (2006), observed the judicial functions of the chiefs in Ghana’s Houses of Chiefs. In these Houses, Chiefs preside over cases referring to nomination, election and appointment of someone as a chief.

Anamzoya, (2009) posit that “besides the supreme court, the normal Councils and also the Houses of Chiefs are the official courts mandated by Ghana’s 1992 Republican Constitution and also the Chieftaincy Act, 2008 (Act759) to adjudicate and determine the substance of chieftaincy succession disputes” (Anamzoya 2009; Abotchie 2006). Abdulai in his “Ghanaian chief as a manager” indicates that chiefs aren't only expected to motivate their subjects on development initiatives but also expected to cultivate good human relations as a crucial factor for a harmonious life within the traditional system (Abdulai 2006). Yet, Frempong indicates in his analysis of the Akan Chiefship that, the chief as a point of interest of reference in Akan rule, has combined in his office supreme executive, judicial, military and non-secular powers (Frempong 2006). The chief was the top of presidency and along with his council of elders to blame for the upkeep of law and order. He indicates how a chief encouraged and emphasized the requirement for education that the chief perceived as a requirement or obligation (Addo-Fening 2006).

Osman (2006) on his part, points out that chief as traditional rulers make sure that resources are wisely exploited in order that generations yet unborn can have access to those resources. Before colonialism, chiefs managed all lands and its resources like water, minerals, forests and agriculture produce. Individuals who used the lands paid rent to the chief who successively uses it to require care of the community and also the socio-economic needs of the people (Osman: 2006:530). Traditional stools/skins aren't rigid or fixed portfolios, but rather new ones are constantly been created and old ones modified because the situation demands (Bob-Milliar 2009). Against this background, many varieties of traditional leadership exists especially in Ghana where the concept of chief is employed in an extended form. These quite leaders aren't necessarily chiefs within the classical sense; a chief with an outlined territory of chiefdom, village, town and with the people paying homage to him, but acquires such titles within their respective communities by virtue of their contributions to the event of such communities.

The involvement of chiefs in the indirect rule system worked perfectly for the colonialist as it strained the relationship between the chiefs and the local educated elites (intelligentsia). Sensing

the success that the unity between the chief and local elites (intelligentsia) can bring (that is opposing colonial policies/rule), it was only prudent on the part of the British colonial administrators to undermine any future partnership as such by craftily creating tension and mistrust between the chiefs and local elites.

## **5.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter elaborated on the views on the Akans and Ga's of Ghana. Indigenous religious beliefs and traditional cultural values such as taboos, undeniably, are indispensable to modern-day conservation and environmental protection efforts. Obviously, traditional practices disclose that African societies were conscious of the need to protect their environment in the past. This is enfolded in religious beliefs, partly because religion permeates nearly all aspects of African life. The Akan is found to be very religious. Their cult of the ancestors is the most powerful aspect of the religious life in traditional Akan society. The Akan's identity is therefore traced through the mother-bond since children are gifts from this common ancestress. The Akan have a religious worldview lies in the belief that people are surrounded by hosts of spirit- beings- some good, some evil which are able to influence the lives of the living for good or for ill. A close observation of Akan and its societies reveals that religion is at the root of Akan culture and is the determining principle of Akan life. Africans are engrossed in religion in whatever they do- whether it is farming, fishing or hunting; or simply eating, drinking or traveling. Religion gives meaning and significance to their lives, both in this world and the next. Religion is therefore part of an everyday life.

Again, from the literature, it was evident that chiefs occupy an ambivalent position, expected to bring about development but also potentially estranged from local culture and tradition. Chiefs also use their public authority when they endow recognition through praising actions congruent with notions of public virtue. The key to maintaining authority in these situations is the ability of traditional leaders to appeal to two different bases of legitimacy and authority. This permits them to operate differently towards the state and his people. Chieftaincy is conceptualized not as only an institution that performs particular functions, but one that promotes a particular set of norms, rules, institutions and processes that are distinct from those proposed by the post-colonial state. Chiefs, local population, and state officials are engaged in an ongoing process where specific

components of the different sources of legitimacy are borrowed, reproduced, altered and/or co-opted.

## **Chapter VI: Interview Research Analysis**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter deals with the results from the data analysis as well as the discussion of the findings. The analysis was done guided by the research objectives. Thus, relevant tables are used to display the data, which are also complemented with short descriptions. The discussion on each finding comprises the interpretation of the data supported with previous findings from the related literature coupled with its implications where possible. The study was undertaken to find out the role taboos play in the indigenous governance of the people of Asante, Fante and Ga and to assess the impact of contemporary society on taboos which are related to governance. The instruments used to collect the data were an interview guide and a questionnaire. In all, 100 respondents answered the questionnaire. However, after entering and clearing the data, 85 of them were desirable for use for the analysis with no missing observation making a return rate of 95%. Although the return rate was not a hundred percent as expected, it was still very high and within the range that could be worked with. This total number of participants does not in any way affect the population for the study as it was largely estimated to make room for any adversaries.

The results in this section is organized into two parts, with the first part dwelling on statistical analysis of demographic information of participants, while the second part dealt with the research questions for the study. The statistical programme used for the analyses and presentation of data in this research was the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 to facilitate the quantitative data analysis.

### **6.2 Result using Questionnaire on the concept of taboos and governance**

The data below is the result of the questionnaire submitted to the participants in the study areas to know if they understand the concept of taboos and governance in their society. The questions were developed based on information from the observations and literature on ATRs, taboos and governance.

#### **6.2.1 Basic Statistics**

Table 3 below shows the gender of the respondent. The presentation of gender distribution is explored in this study because it was envisaged that the gender of the respondents might influence the scope of the study.

**Table 3: Gender of Respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	56	65.9
Female	29	34.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2019.

Again 14 male Traditional Rulers, Priests and Heads of Clans and 4 female priestesses and chiefs were interviewed for the study. However, it was worthy to note that not all the traditional rulers, priests and priestesses, Heads of Families were included in the study due to their absence.

**Table 4: Age of Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-29	31	36.5
30-39	34	40.0
40-49	14	16.5
50-59	4	4.7
60 and above	2	2.4
71-80	1	4.5
Total	85	100.0

**Source:** Field Survey, 2019

Table 4 shows the ages of the respondents to the questionnaire. None of the respondents for the study was below 18 years of age. Of the respondents chosen for the study, only 2 (2.4%) were between the ages of 60 and above, 31 (36.5%) were also between ages 20 and 29, 34 (40.0%) were between the ages of 30 and 39 while 14 (16.5%) were between 40 and 49 years of age. The above age ranges indicate that all the respondents chosen for the study were above matured enough to

know the topic under discussion. It was therefore hoped that the true information would be given due to their maturity.

The respondents had an adult work force with a mean age of 1.96 with the minimum age at 20 and maximum age at 60. It however had a standard deviation of .969. The bulk of the respondents belonged to the 30-49 years age group (Table 2). If the distribution is done in terms of “youthful” (20-29), “active” (30-49), and “retiring age” (50-60) groups, it would be seen that only 17.05% respondents fall within the “youthful” age group, 75% fall within the “active” age and 7.95% within the “retiring” age group.

**Table 5: Academic Qualification of Respondents**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
MSLC	2	2.4
JHS	24	28.2
SHS	12	14.1
GCE O-Level	4	4.7
GCE A-Level	1	1.2
Diploma	14	16.5
1 <sup>ST</sup> Degree	25	29.4
Post Graduate	3	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2019.**

Out of a total of the 85 respondents chosen for the study, 24 representing 28.2% were Junior High School graduates, 14 representing 16.5% were Diploma holders. It is clear from the research that the academic attainment of the respondent is dominated by people with a degree. The implication here is that if educational qualification is anything to go by and also if it has a corresponding effect on development, then, it could be said that the knowledge base of the participants were high.

## 6.2.2 Indigenous understanding of what constitutes governance and good governance?

The research question sought to find out the indigenous understanding of governance and good governance. This research question found out participants responses to each of the statements under traditional governance in order to ascertain how participants agreed or disagreed to these statements as leading to their understanding of good governance. Their responses are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6:** *Traditional Governance*

<b>Statement</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
I know that:		
chiefs are in charge of governance in my area	1.95	.872
governance is about how people are to behave in a given society	1.80	.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	.777
decision making processes rest in the hands of those involved in governance	1.80	.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	.918
actors in governance are accountable to the people of the community	1.94	.904
actors are committed to the safety and security of the people in the community	1.86	.789
leaders are encouraged to make tough decisions that are in the interest of the people	1.75	.815

**Source:** Field survey (2019)

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 indicate that participants have knowledge of governance ( $M = 2.12$ ,  $SD = .918$ ) and this further proves that the participants are aware of what constitutes governance in their societies.

### **6.2.3 What is the current nature of governance related taboos?**

The research question sought to find out the nature of governance related taboos from the participants. This research question found out respondents responses to each of the statements under taboos and governance in order to ascertain how respondents agreed or disagreed to these statements as culminating into their being an indicator to taboos and governance in the Akan, Fante and Ga Societies. Their analysis are presented below.

*Table 7: Taboos and Governance*

Statement	N	Response				Mean	Std. Dev.
		SA	A	D	SD		
Governance is about how people are treated in their societies	85	22 (25.9)	36 (42.4)	24 (28.2)	3 (3.5)	2.09	.826
the elders, chiefs and clansmen are in charge of governance in the society	85	27 (31.8)	31 (36.5)	26 (30.6)	1 (1.2)	2.01	.824
to be an actor of governance, one has to be respected and held high in the society	85	24(28.2)	52 (61.2)	6 (7.1)	3(3.5)	1.86	.693
a governance personality can be tabooed	85	18(21.2)	46(54.1)	14(16.5)	7(8.2)	2.10	.837
the elders are those who train people to be in positions to govern people	85	26(30.6)	46(54.1)	10(11.8)	3(3.5)	1.88	.747
specific taboos are for specific people	85	18(21.2)	43(50.6)	17(20.0)	7(8.2)	2.15	.852
when I break a taboo, I have to face the repercussions of it	85	33(38.8)	44(51.8)	5(5.9)	3(3.5)	1.74	.726

**Source:** field survey (2019), Data presented as frequencies and percentage (%)

Participants stated that the nature of governance related taboos depended largely on leadership styles. This is evident in the frequencies, percentages presented in Table 7. Out of a total of 85 respondents who responded, 54.1% agree to the view that their governance personalities can be tabooed, while 11.8% disagreed with the view that the elders are those who train people to be in positions to govern people. On the other hand, 52(61.2%) agreed with the statement that to be an actor of governance, one has to be respected and held high in the society, with 7.1% being in disagreement with the statement. The mean score calculated for the statement is 1.86 (SD = .693) indicating a positive response. 38.8% of the respondents indicated that they strongly agree against 5.9% who disagree that the assertion that when they break a taboo, they have to face the repercussions of it. On that same view, 51.8% agreed while 3.5% strongly disagreed. On the whole, the mean score of the statement was 2.93 (SD = 1.275). Furthermore, it was realized that, governance is about how people are treated in their societies. This is evident in their responses as 42.4% agreed while 3.5% strongly disagreed. However, 28.2% were in disagreement with the statement with 25.9% strongly agreeing. The mean score of 2.09 (SD = .826) depict that respondents rated the statement positively. For the statement “specific taboos are for specific people”, 50.6% agreed while 20.0% disagreed but 21.2% strongly agreed. Using mean scores and standard deviation values proves that there are governance related taboos in Ghanaian societies.

#### **6.2.4 Do taboos play any role in the contemporary indigenous governance of the study areas?**

Before answering this question, which sought to know the roles taboos play in the contemporary indigenous governance of the study areas, it is imperative to know that each variable is represented by the collective means of the questions asked under them. The following table gives the results to that effect.

*Table 8: Role of Taboos in the contemporary indigenous governance*

Statement	N	Response				Mean	Std. Dev.
		SA	A	D	SD		
taboos are good for every society	85	38 (44.7)	24 (28.2)	13 (15.3)	10 (11.8)	1.94	1.039
Taboos put people in check	85	40 (47.1)	35 (41.2)	8 (9.4)	2 (2.4)	1.67	.746
when I break a taboo willfully, I will suffer the consequences	85	25(29.4)	48 (56.5)	9 (10.6)	3(3.5)	1.88	.730
when I break a taboo unwillfully, I will suffer the consequences	85	15(17.6)	44(51.8)	22(25.9)	4(4.7)	2.18	.774
the importance of taboos has been made clear to me in the society	85	24(28.2)	40(47.1)	16(18.8)	4(4.7)	2.12	1.358
there are mechanisms in place to check whether an offence is committed willfully or not	85	20(23.5)	32(37.6)	21(24.7)	12(14.1)	2.29	.986
punishment meted out to offenders are justified in the society	85	18(21.2)	51(60.0)	9(10.6)	7(8.2)	2.06	.807
punishment can be redeemed	85	15(17.6)	44(51.8)	21(24.7)	5(5.9)	2.19	.794
without taboos, the society cannot be governed	85	30(35.3)	33(38.8)	15(17.6)	7(8.2)	1.99	.932
Taboos are attached to governance positions in the society	85	26(30.6)	37(43.5)	12(14.1)	10(11.8)	2.07	.961

**Source:** field survey (2019), Data presented as frequencies and percentage (%)

This supported the assumption that taboos play any role in the contemporary indigenous governance of the study areas. Statistical data provided show that not all respondents agreed entirely to the various statements on the question. Out of a total of 85 respondents, 38.3% agreed that without taboos, the society cannot be governed while 17.6% disagreed to the issue. However, 35.3% strongly agreed with 8.2% strongly disagreeing. The mean score calculated yielded a result of 1.99 (SD = .932) indicating a positive response to the fact that respondents' thinks without taboos, the society cannot be governed. With 44.7% respondents strongly agreeing that taboos are good for every society, 15.3% strongly disagreed with this assertion. On the contrary, 41.2% agree that taboos put people in check in the society, which is very true because if one is not checked in the society, he/she may do things abnormally. 9.4% rather remained in disagreement to this statement because they felt this is not right to use taboos to check them in the society. Again, 43.5% of respondents agree that taboos are attached to governance positions in the society while 14.1% disagreed. However, 30.6% strongly agreed while 11.8 strongly disagreed. With a mean score of 2.07 (SD = .961) respondents again positively responded to the statement. Most of the respondents agreed to the fact that the importance of taboos has been made clear to them in the society, there are mechanisms in place to check whether an offence is committed wilfully or not, punishment meted out to offenders are justified in the society and punishment can be redeemed.

### **6.3 Analysis of the Interviews with the Chiefs in the Study Areas**

The history of traditional leaders will be discussed in detail in this chapter. Traditional leadership is an institution that has developed over many hundreds of years the world over. It has served the people of Africa including Ghana, through wars, periods of slavery, famine, freedom struggles, economic and political restructuring and during colonial periods. The institution of traditional leadership is rooted in Africa and in the hearts and minds of all ordinary Africans taking pride in its history, culture, origin and identity. Central to the institution of traditional leadership customs, traditions and cultural practices form the basis of the legal system which regulate the lives of the people. Every traditional community has defined territorial boundaries. Prior to the introduction of colonialism, social organisation in Ghana was characterised by a number of tribal regimes based on patriarchy and inscriptive norms. Each tribe or clan has a traditional leader as the central figure. The traditional leader was the highest authority in the territory and had various functions which

were not exercised autonomously by an individual, but in collaboration with a council that represented the people. The people saw the traditional leader not only as a link between people and the ancestors but also as a spiritual, cultural and judicial leader and the custodian of the values of the community. The Traditional leader was the co-ordinator of the various aspects of everyday life, the realisation of community dreams and aspirations and the creator of harmony between people and the natural, spiritual, social and economic environment.

With the advent of colonialism, the institution of traditional leadership was subjected to repression and was used as an instrument in the implementation of such colonial policies as indirect rule. However, notwithstanding oppression by successive colonial and apartheid regimes, the institution of traditional leadership pioneered resistance and led numerous struggles against colonialism. The advent of democracy in Ghana is also due to that pioneering role which traditional leaders played. Ghana is only one among many countries where traditional authorities persist within newer modes of governance. Sociologists have not, however, systematically considered how traditional authorities are implicated in the formation and functioning of modern states.

While chieftaincies are often regarded as archaic institutions, there are few signs that their significance is diminishing. One explanation stresses the enduring social, cultural and political significance of chiefs for their ethnic communities. In their efforts to modernize states, post-colonial governments have tried but largely failed to sideline chiefs, suggesting that chieftaincies are durable and deeply rooted institutions. This explanation is convincing in some contexts but fails to account for the proliferation of chieftaincies in urban neighbourhoods, especially in previously uninhabited areas, where many of the new suburbs develop.

Another common explanation for the enduring prominence of chiefs focuses on their significance in governing. Historically, chiefs had performed pivotal roles as proxies of colonial governments. Cloaked in the mantle of tradition, they were entrusted with the management of populations and the extraction of resources. Although the context changed with decolonization, it could be argued that chiefs remain indispensable for governments who seek to govern beyond the cities where they reside.

#### **6.4 Governance and Good Governance in the Context of the Indigenous Set-up**

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, omanbu and maɲnokwɲmc*”. Governance to the participants is about *omanhene or maɲtsj* (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 incharge 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 judgement 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. These incharge of governance are not tabooed, they appear tabooed due to perceptions and positions they acquire at certain given times.*

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.*

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 manɔtse*), queen mother (*ohemaa*) elders in the chiefs 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 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.*

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. 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 (276, 1) and conferred on the National House of Chiefs the right of recognition of any chief which had previously rested with the state (270, 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.

Other legal provisions that guide Ghana's decentralization process include the Local Government Act of 1993 and the subsequent Local Government Establishment Instrument of 1994. These legal provisions seek to promote popular participation in the decision-making process, good governance and development at local level. Consequently, a four-tier structure of decentralization was adopted, starting at the grassroots with a Unit Committee for every community or settlement with a population of about 500 to 1000 in rural areas, and of 1,500 people for urban areas. The other sub district structure, depending on the population size, is the Urban Council, where the population is over 15,000 people or the Zonal/Town/Area Council where the population is between 5,000 and 15,000. Central to Ghana's decentralization programme is the Metropolitan/Municipal/District Assembly. Above the District Assemblies is the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC), which is to co-ordinate, and harmonize the programmes of the District Assemblies within their jurisdiction.

Traditional authorities are indispensable, because they form a major part of the country's history, culture, political and governance systems. The institution of chieftaincy is a basic vehicle for mobilising people for development. It also serves as the most effective link between the people at the grassroots level and the central government. Chieftaincy constitutes crucial resources that have the potential to promote democratic governance and to facilitate access of rural communities to public services. However, 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.

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.

The study established that the institution of queens was parallel to that of the chiefs and queens play a prominent role in the administration of the state. The hierarchy has “obaahemaa” *manɔnyɔ* (queen mother) as the female counterpart of the “Omanhene” “*manɔtsɔ*”. The assigned reasons for their relevance included the promotion of the welfare of women, educating young girls on traditional values and seeing to the preservation of societal and cultural values. Again, the status of the clan heads in local governance cannot be over emphasised. When the respondents were asked about the relevance of clan/lineage heads in local governance in the traditional area, they indicated that they are still relevant in the governance of the society. The reasons given for their relevance included settlement of disputes and conflicts between family members, helping chiefs in decision-making and most importantly providing land for development purposes. Commenting on the roles of clan heads, majority of the contributors to the focus group discussion mentioned the key involvement of clan heads in the burial of a family member, and considered them as relevant to local governance. In an interview, one queen mother stated that

*Since governance is about the welfare of the people and the clan heads are always there for the people it wouldn't be out of place to say that they are relevant to local governance”.*

Both traditionalists and modernists often see traditional authority and elected political leaders competing for power in the community. The struggle between the two for political power and legitimacy is seen as a zero-sum game. This is because whatever powers a traditional Authority wrenches from the state is considered as a loss for state leadership. Far from being in competition with elected leaders for the public's regard, traditional leaders and elected leaders are seen by the public as two sides of the same coin. Popular evaluations of both traditional and elected leaders depend on the leader's leadership skills. An individual's level of modernization plays a much smaller role in shaping perceptions of traditional authority.

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,

*“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 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”.*

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, 2002). 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).

## **6.5 Good Governance**

The level of transparency, participation and accountability are indicators of good governance within a given society. To the respondents' in this study, good governance is "leadership which allows for the citizenry to be provided with all the necessary things they need to enable them go about their activities without any let or hindrance". This was affirmed by the Nana Afrakoma kosi Boadum 111 who asserted that

*"good governance encompasses everything that has to do with the citizenry of the society. How they are able to participate in decision making by the traditional authorities, they are not restricted when town hall meetings are called to deliberate on the issues of development in the society and the people having a peaceful environment to go about their activities".*

Nana Osei Kofi Abiri noted that "good governance is the one that we can access all that pertains to life without any difficulty. This includes provision of social amenities to the citizenry". The Traditional Councils have the mandate to settle chieftaincy disputes ranging from the positions of Headmen to Divisional chiefs. One aspect of good governance according to the participants is the conflict resolution mechanisms adopted by the traditional rulers. It is customary to put a disputed

issue to the test by making contesting parties submit to supernatural arbitration through oracles (such as the popular river god deity “antoo nyamaa” of the Asantes), sworn statements and oaths.

*“Governance is a very broad phenomena and it includes obeying laws in the community. Laws of governance differ from one area to another. Those responsible for governance are traditional rulers, assembly member, unit community and one need not show disrespect to them. Good governance involves tolerance, communal spirit, justice for all system and providing the citizens their basic needs. Bad governance is a situation of no tolerance, suppression of human rights, breach in communication and doing unprescribed things”.*

The fear for the sanction that comes from the oracles and the oaths deters disputants who know their claim is unjust and thus abandon their assertions. Juxtaposed with the existence of traditional leadership institutions are the parallel ‘modern’ state or new forms of societal organisation, vested with enormous authority in rule making, application, adjudication and enforcement. The whole debate about traditional authority and local governance is not whether the traditional and modern systems of governance are competing against each other, but rather how to integrate the two systems more effectively in order to better serve citizens in terms of representation and participation, service delivery, social and health standards, peace and security and access to justice.

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 (Ayee, 2006). This exclusion has not been well accepted by chiefs. Boafo-Arthur (2006) agrees 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.

## **6.6 Integration**

Traditional authorities have been involved in local governance in various capacities, ranging from the “indirect rule” approach adopted by the British colonial government to the current situation in which they participate in the District Assemblies. There have been increased advocacy for clearer roles by traditional authorities in local governance and development at the local level. It was known from the participants that there should be re-branding in the inclusion of chiefs in the Assembly representation to foster good governance in their traditional areas. The traditional chiefs indicated that Nananom must be allowed to actively partake in District Assembly deliberations. They argue that, the presence of Nananom should not be just ceremonial but be actively involved in the decision making process as their views represent those of their subjects. Also the traditional chiefs raised the concern that, there should be a relook into the Chieftaincy Act, (Act 759). The chiefs pointed out that, the Act gives Nananom the power to adjudicate on judicial matters but unfortunately, the decisions/judgments pronounced cannot be implemented or enforced because those decisions must be reported to the circuit courts or high courts for execution.

The implication is that, chiefs lack the power to execute orders of the judicial committees. Therefore, for chiefs to play a more prominent role such powers must be given to them. Again if someone violates the orders for communal labour chiefs must be given the power to punish those

recalcitrant. According to *Nana Amuasi*, there is a thin line between traditional rule and central government rule. For him, if traditional rule had been allowed to develop, the evolution of traditional rule would have brought us a better governance system than we are currently experiencing under democracy. If traditional rule had been allowed, all the politicization of national issues would not have been necessary. For the chief, “*traditional rule is a straight forward rule. There are no inhibitions to development*”. According to the chiefs, the people in their jurisdiction are called for development and they respond positively. The convergence between traditional leadership and local governance is, therefore, determined by the extent to which chiefs are brought into the governance system. A major concern of the chiefs was that, the provisions in the Chieftaincy Act that limit the powers of the chief to summon people to the palace for questioning and punishment must be restored. In an emotional mood, Neenyi Ghartey VII said the only solution to the problems traditional leaders face lies in the hands of those who really understand and appreciate traditional governance system.

### **6.7 The Concept of Decision Making**

Decision making is a cognitive or social process of selecting a course of action from among several alternative possibilities on the values and preferences of the decision maker(s). Making a decision implies that there are alternative choices to be considered and in such a case, a decision maker may not only want to identify as many alternatives as possible, but to choose the one that: i) has the highest probability of success or effectiveness and ii) best fits with the goals, desires lifestyle and values of the decision maker (Anand, 1993). Whereas classical and neoclassical theorists argue that the main goal of decision making is to be rational by first collecting all relevant information, Herbert Simon argues that this is not realistic and does not correspond with the real world situation (Simon, 1960). According to Simon, decision makers cannot be rational unless they have perfect control over environmental factors as well their mental capabilities. He reasons that rationality is bounded because of uncertainty about relevant exogenous events and inability to calculate the consequences. He therefore introduced the concept of “bounded rationality” as a process model that corresponds with real world practical decision making process (Simon 1960). In the domain of food security, deciding on which seeds to plant, food processing and storage by making use of indigenous knowledge require a careful choice depending on the individual farmer’s capability.

Based on the conditions in rural areas, farmers need to be helped to enhance their decisions on food security. In this research, a decision enhancement approach was proposed to help in addressing rural farmers' decision-making challenges in their effort to improve food security (Keen & Sol, 2008).

A decision is an outcome of the interplay between problems, solutions, participants and choices, all of which arrive independently and change continuously (Wang, Wang & Yang, 2014). Decision making is the process choosing the best from many alternatives based on the values and preferences of a decision maker (Kalantari, 2010). Making a decision implies that there are alternative choices from which one chooses judging which one has the highest probability of success and effectiveness and which fits the goals, desires, lifestyle and values of the decision maker (Knol, 2013; Aregu, 2014; Kalantari, 2010). Simon's model of decision making consists of three steps; intelligence which entails defining the problem and collecting information concerning it, design that involves developing several possible alternatives, and choice which is choosing the preferred solution (Simon, 1960; Aregu, 2014). Decisions are choices that can shape an individual or an organization's future (Keen & Sol, 2008). The effectiveness of a decision is more closely related to the effectiveness of the organization than any other factor. Every decision making process produces a final choice. The output can be an action or an opinion of choice. "Decision making is the process of making a choice between different options and committing to take a course of actions" (Sol, 1982). Classical and neoclassical theorists assume rationality in decision making processes first by collecting all the relevant information regarding the issue under investigation, generate all possible alternatives and examine the consequences of those alternatives and finally choose the optimal alternative. However, Simon (1960) argues that rationality in decision making is unrealistic because decisions are made in a complex environment that is influenced by a number of factors and constraints: time, limited information and individual's limited capacity (Simon, 1960; Sol, 1982; Kalantari, 2010). He thus advocates attention to bounded rationality arguing that human beings can only be partially rational and their ability to make decisions is limited to available information but where there is enough data to make good enough or satisficing<sup>13</sup> rather than optimal choice (Kalantari, 2010; Aregu, 2014). Simon reasons that, the human mind has a critical challenge in coping with the complexities of the world, and thus

constructs a simple mental model of reality and tries to work within that model (Simon, 1960; Sol, 1982; Kalantari, 2010). According to Sol (1982), decision makers often use rules of thumb and are likely to repeat what has worked in the past. Sol (1982) puts it that decision makers always avoid extensive use of big data because too much information does not necessarily mean ‘better’ decisions. According to Keen & Sol (2008), DES comprise of four major aspects; decisions that matter, studios, suites and stakeholders. Decisions that matter are made in response to problems that severely affect the decision makers.

Due to the complexity of decision making process, decision making must be collaborative and this plays an essential role in the design and communication at all levels in problem solving processes. Collaborative decision making refers to a situation where different people working together toward achieving a common goal. It is defined by Konate, Sahraoni and Kolfshoten, (2014) as a joint effort toward a common goal; a process in which stakeholders with different perspectives of a problem, can constructively explore the differences and can search for solutions that go beyond their own limited visions. It ideally involves a free exchange of ideas to allow creation of most innovative and strategic decisions (Kolfshoten, Lukosch, & Seck, 2011). Within collaborative decision making, there are many processes and best practices that can be employed and shared to ensure the best outcomes. Collaboration can be taken as a process or as a sequence of steps performed by a group of people to achieve a goal. A collaboration process provides a mechanism for engaging stakeholders in an effort to identify and address food security problems (Lasker, Weiss, & Miller, 2001).

Stakeholders are taken in this study as key players with skills, values, judgments and experience to make food security enhancement decisions. Stakeholders provide strength to collaboration decision making and execution (Konate et al, 2014). Poor stakeholder involvement is a challenge to problem solving (Amiyo, 2012). Collaboration stimulates comprehensive thinking. In the case of rural food insecurity, relevant stakeholders need to be involved to appropriately brainstorm, i.e. share their experiences on how they apply indigenous knowledge (Konate et al, 2014). Ranganathan (2004) argues that the strength of virtual community is that for any problem, there is a high possibility that at least one other person has encountered the same problem and perhaps has a solution. In collaborative decision making, multiple views are gathered in one place, which helps

to go beyond experts, who may have limited perspective or vested interest. Furthermore, a lot of ideas are generated through brainstorming and these ideas have to converge. Convergence is defined as the merging of distinctly separate things into unified whole. To make better decisions, everyone whose involvement will help produce high quality decisions should be brought on board (Kolfchoten et al, 2011; Konate et al, 2014). Kolfchoten et al (2011) describe collaboration support as tools, processes and services that support groups in their joint effort.

According to Agyeman-Duah (2001) decentralisation thrives on two assumptions. First, development should be a bottom-up rather than a top-down approach. Second, there should be popular participation in the development process instead of decisions being taken at the center. The main thrust of the policy to decentralise the governance system in Ghana was to promote popular participation in decision-making and ownership of machinery of government, by shifting the process of governance from the command to consultative processes, and by devolving power, competence and resources to the district level (Kokor & Kroes, 2000). Participation in development context includes people's involvement in decision-making processes, implementing programmes, sharing in the benefits of development programmes and their involvement in the effort to evaluate such programmes (Cohen & Uphoff, 1977). According to Kingdon (2003) decisionmaking requires political wisdom, diplomacy and prudence to bring diverse community interests together around a shared purpose. Decentralised decisionmaking process will allow for various and divergent views to be sought and this can contribute to empowerment. The meaning of governance embraces not only efficient management, but also the quality of civic engagement in the processes and structures of governance. This engagement allows the various actors to link their potential together to deal with the development problems, which hitherto would have been neglected. Canterbury and Tuffour (2008) argue that the relationship between rulers and the ruled in the political setting instigated the emergence of modern state. They emphasise that governance is a shared process which is centered on the partnership between the rulers and the ruled in the management of a society's developmental needs.

## 6.8 Chapter Conclusion

Indigenous governance relates to the variety of skills, teachings, wisdom, ideas, perceptions, experiences, capabilities and insights of people, applied to maintain or improve the governance of society. Such indigenous knowledge is seen to exist in a local context anchored to a particular social group in a particular setting and usually at a particular time period. Ghana is among the many African countries where traditional authorities persist within newer modes of governance. The chiefs have been folded into the Ghanaian nation-state, making the state the carrier of the chieftaincy system. The collected responses highlight the encultured agency of Indigenous people in constituting and interpreting the meaningful conditions of their own self-governance. Those insights are then extended into the intercultural space where Indigenous agency and power are challenged and contested. This thesis argues that particular governance commonalities are broadly relevant across Indigenous Ghana as a whole. Indigenous governance operates within a complex environment that stretches across communities. Power, authority, resources and decision-making are distributed unevenly across these layers of the governance environment. Where traditional authorities have survived, their position has stabilized in conjunction with the consolidation of the modern state. A central hypothesis here is that building and sustaining strong, legitimate Indigenous governance needs to be founded on both clear power authority and practical capability. It is worthy to state here that, the concept of governance blurs the boundaries between and within the public and private sectors. Governance focuses our attention outside the more formal realm of government, onto the wider set of actors and networks, those individuals, agents, organisations, private sector interests, and non-government organisations involved in delivering services, representing groups and negotiating resource allocation.

Chiefs are also described as the embodiments and mediators of local tradition, functioning as syncretic linchpins between the traditional and the modern. However, governance is not culture-neutral. When a chief nevertheless wants to assert his role as community leader, he now faces competition from a range of specialized organizations. Assessments or principles of what constitutes 'good', 'strong' or 'legitimate' governance, 'ineffective' or 'bad' governance, are informed by culturally-based values and traditions. There are cultural determinants of leadership, of what constitutes representation, participation and accountability. The rule of law for Indigenous

people is grounded in traditional law and values. For Indigenous groups, however, their governance power and jurisdictional control is also subject to many external conditions imposed by the wider societies in which they live. The conditions for both poor and good governance can therefore be perpetuated from within and from without. While some elements of globalization will undoubtedly have to be adopted in solving some of the contemporary governance and administrative challenges, efforts must be made not to immensely disadvantage the unique features in Africa's administrative systems. While a chief's role as a cultural leader fades, he keeps his locus as a local strongman. This is because the chief works as a local gatekeeper between formal institutions of the state and residents of his area. New approaches to Indigenous governance will require governments to re-think the way they carry out community development and capacity building for governance.

## **Chapter VII: Role of Chiefs in the Governance structure through the observance of taboos**

### **7.1 Introduction**

One can pronounce that chieftaincy, the once revered institution has changed due to modernity. The state manipulation of the chieftaincy institution began during the colonial era, for the indirect rule system adopted by the British colonial powers, subtly made chiefs appendages to the imperial power of Britain and thereby gradually lost their sovereignty. The traditional authorities are given administrative power over the territories they ruled and were paid a salary from a portion of the taxes and levies they collected from their subjects for the colonial government. However, the traditional institution has survived the era of colonialism. The powers of the chiefs, during the post-colonial era, were restricted to dealing with customary matters and playing an advisory role, and they were banned from politics despite their loyalty to the colony. But despite all the challenges that have been thrown at the chieftaincy institution, it retains the legitimacy it has held since the pre-colonial period to a significant extent: as representative of its people history, culture, values, religion and sovereignty. Chiefs as agents of development in their respective communities cannot be overemphasized. This, they do, by providing security in the areas, justice and mobilisation of the people to undertake communal labour for the execution of development projects. This explains why development becomes stalled in the areas where there are no substantive chiefs or there are protracted chieftaincy disputes. Even the land to be released for development must come from the chief, who is traditionally the custodian of the stool land in his/her, area of jurisdiction. This chapter deals with the results from the analysis of the interviews from the study areas

### **7.2 Selection of the Akan Chief in the Ashanti and Fante Society**

The selection of a chief among the Akan is first and foremost based on hereditary. That is, the person must be from the royal family of the community in which he aspires to become a chief. Anything short of this will result in resistance, which translates into chieftaincy disputes, which have become rampant today. When a stool becomes vacant, that is, when the reigning chief abdicates or dies, arrangements are made for his/her replacement. In the case of the death of a reigning chief, his/her replacement is made after burial has taken place. Here all those who qualify

may vie for the vacant stool. Several people may be interested but as stated, they must belong to the royal family. Royal lineage here means the family whose ancestors founded the community concerned. It is possible to find more than one family who may claim ancestry to the founding fathers of a place. In this case, more often than not, the position may pass alternatively from one family to the other or even on rotational basis among the kinship groups tracing their ancestry to a common mother.

The selection is very rigorous because the person selected must be acceptable to both the ancestors and the subjects. Therefore, as the names come up, the *Ohemaa* and her elders do some sort of screening. The screening is done both ‘spiritually’ and ‘physically’. This is done with the view to short-listing the candidates. The spiritual one is done mainly through divination to ascertain the right choice. Although the *Ohemaa* (the Queen mother) is the principal king-maker in the traditional Akan society, she does not do it alone, for she has to engage in a lot of consultations behind the scene with the *Adehyepanyin* (Royal Elders) and those who matter in the royal family. For instance, when the shortlisting is completed, the *Ohemaa* in consultation with the *Adehyepanyin* and a few trusted members of the royal family, secretly send trusted emissaries to some selected powerful diviners and shrines for consultation to ascertain which of the candidates will be suitable for the position.

The choice of the diviners is the one that will be acceptable to the ancestors. It must be stressed here that it is not only the ancestors who are consulted but also the subjects especially the opinion leaders to know their preference among the candidates. This is what I call the physical screening. Here the factors that come into play are moral character of the candidate, personal achievements, patriotism and general commitment to the cause of the community. I see the physical screening as pragmatism, for although the chief rules in the stead of the ancestors, the subjects (the living) are the direct beneficiaries of the policies and programmes of the chief. When all the background checks have been made and one of the candidates has been selected by the *Ohemaa*, she then officially presents the name of the selected candidate to the king-makers as custom demands, through the *Gyasehehe* (chief of the Royal Household). The *Gyasehehe* will also present the candidate to the *Kontihene* (the second in command of a traditional area), and the entire *Nsafohene* (sub-chiefs) of the traditional area concerned. After this, the chief – elect is handed over to the

Gyasehene for him to confine the chief-elect for preparation for his official installation (enstoolment) through the required rites followed by official coronation on an appointed day.

### ***Enstoolment***

Among the Akan the most visible symbol of office of the chief is the stool that is why when the Akan install a chief they refer to it as enstoolment. This shows why it is obligatory for anyone who becomes a chief to carve a stool for himself because the installation of a chief centres on the stool. In fact, the stool is even one of the first items that a would-be chief must provide before the enstoolment process begins. The stool, therefore, becomes a sacred location or the temple that represents the abiding presence of the founding ancestors. And in fact it is this stool that will be blackened after the death of the chief and added to the stock of stools in the stool room in the palace.

Religion does not end with the enstoolment process but it rather becomes more crucial in the day-to-day administration of the community. It is important to note that the role of a traditional chief is both religious and political. That is, he is both the political head as well as the religious head of the state. He pours libation on his own behalf and on behalf of his subjects. He officiates during the celebration of festivals and other state rituals. Though a state may have a priest or priestess, the religious role of the chief is paramount in the traditional Akan state. It has been demonstrated from the above that during the confinement period, the chief-elect has a lot of taboos to observe. Owusu Brempong puts this thus, ‘taboos are traditional commandments for every chieftaincy institution in Africa’. He adds that Kings and Chiefs are sacred and must be protected by taboos. He cites Malefijt as reporting that early kings were often magicians and priests or were custodians of important deities. The taboos relating to his conduct and mannerisms are all intended to remind him, his subjects, and others that the position he occupies is sacred. The stool (or throne) he occupies is believed to be an ancestral stool. For instance, a menstruating woman should not enter the palace or touch the chief. This stems from the belief that the menstrual blood is a source of danger to the chief and all powerful people in the traditional society such as, priests, medicine men, diviners etc.

One other occasion on which the chief's religious duties come to the fore is during sacred days of the stool he/she occupies, most especially on festival days. Also on every *Adae* or sacred day, the chief is expected to enter the *nkondwafieso* to pour libation to ask for blessings from the ancestors who he represents, for he has sworn an oath to carry out all religious rites connected with his office. It is this that legitimises his position as a chief. It is for this reason that a chief is destooled in the Akan society if he reneges on this important religious obligation. The chief being the true representative of the ancestors in the traditional area, makes the chief in a formal sense, the legal representative of the ancestors in whom is located the authority to and the power of the ancestors to rule. It is, therefore, sacrilegious for one to challenge the authority of the chief. This also explains why there was no organized opposition in Akan traditional society. Even the laws, customs, taboos and codes of ethics initiated by the chief have divine backing since they are believed to have been sanctioned by the gods and ancestors; therefore, they invoke divine sanctions on anyone who disobeys them.

There is compliance even when one is in solitude due to this firm belief of the people. Therefore, the system of government in Ghana before their encounter with Western culture can be said to be theocratic in a way and African Traditional Religion was the state religion. One can deduce from the above that the legal basis of authority for the traditional Akan chief is religion. And it is quite clear that the appointment or selection of a traditional Akan ruler- chief has religious underpinning. The religious influence on the governance in the Akan society also comes to the fore even after the installation, the Akan believe that the safest means by which a chief can protect himself, his people and state is through religion (divination). This explains why diviners, magicians, medicine men and other ritual specialists are attached to chiefs' palaces in the Akan traditional society. This belief seems to be endemic in Ghanaian society because from the time of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana to-date, it has been alleged that the heads of state of Ghana have in one way or the other consulted spiritualists or have a charm of some sort to protect themselves and their governments.

The religious role of the traditional leader is not limited to men but also it is extended to women. Thus the *Ohemaa* has the singular duty to make rain whenever the community faces drought. Whenever the need arises, councillors would tell her, 'the people are crying' and she has to act

accordingly. Parrinder continues that queenmother does not act alone in the rain-making ritual but has to consult or engage the services of a rain-maker who is always a man. The concern here is that women ritual specialists abound in the Akan traditional society, why can't one be engaged here since it is the sole responsibility of the queen-mother to ensure that rain falls? Can this also be one of the male chauvinistic tendencies that operate in traditional African societies?

The traditional Ashanti Empire of Ghana is a combination of localised lineages that form a political community. Each lineage head possesses his own blackened stool representing the lineage ancestors and to which the lineage head pours libations. The *Asantehene* presides over the Ashanti nation with his own royal stool believed to symbolise the ancestral spirits. The person of the *Asantehene* is sacred and he primarily fills a sacred role as the 'one who sits upon the stool of the ancestors'. He is hedged round with a number of taboos. In addition to his political role, he is the link between the living and the dead. He presides over important ritual sacrifices at the *Adae* and *Odwera* ceremonies. Thus, the Ashanti king is regarded as the first-born of the kingdom. He is the leader of the living and their representative before the ancestors, as well as the vicar of the ancestors among the living.

The aura of sacrality associated with the chief is embedded in the historicity of the chiefly office which is linked to the ancestors of the land whose stool the chief occupies. Traditional Akan chieftaincy institution is mostly based on the kingship system. Under this, the head of the family who is also the leader of the community is said to have derived his position from the link between the living and the departed ancestors who are also themselves the founders of the kingship group.<sup>148</sup> As has been argued earlier, though briefly, the Akan chief is held in high esteem not because he is a chief but because the position he occupies is a sacred position. He is the glue that attaches the people to the ancestral traditions of the land. Hence, his office is a combination of the mystical and religious position. The office is the sacred repository of several centuries of Akan philosophical wisdom, religious values and socio-political worldview. It is the embodiment of prosaic and sacred activities of the society. The metaphoric representation of the chief's personality has been likened to some of the mystical titles within world religions. Nana Kobina Nketsia V, a traditional ruler and professor of history, has observed that even the common title, Nana, associated with the Akan chief, is a religious one that is comparable to the Buddhist concept

of the Bodhisattva. The concept of Nana, he said, is similarly connected to “the purity of saints and also refers to a God-like existence. Nananom emanate a positive flow of energy from their space to the space of manifest existence in the perduring now” (Nketsia V). Nana is a symbolic representation of the sacred personality that the chief, by virtue of his enstoolment, has assumed. It is a title that “legitimizes his status as a de jure ancestor, who has the mandate of the ancestors to rule the people on their behalf...” (Akropong, 2006). The chief, therefore, is the central figure within the traditional society of the Akan religio-political and social system. The sacrosanct position of the chief evokes a sense of awe. Since the ancestors occupy a very special place within the religious ontology of the Akan, the position of the chief, by extension is a very crucial and significant one. According to the Catholic Archbishop (emeritus) and anthropologist, Peter Sarpong, the ancestors of the Akan are quite synonymous with the Christian saints. As such “When Christians call their dead saints and refer to those of pagans as ancestors, they are not expressing different ideas. Both words express ideas about people who once belonged to their religious groups, are now dead, and are supposed to be in a position of influence over the living.” The chief must not only be protected by societal taboos, but must also possess certain qualities befitting his status. Potential heirs or candidates have to be physically perfect (Parrinder, 1956) Failure to meet these criteria has been the basis of most chieftaincy disputes in Ghana.

### **7.3 Selection and Installation of the Ga Chief**

For a person to be selected and installed as a chief in the Ga Society, the person should be from one of the three royal houses among which the privilege rotates. Until early 1840s, Accra remained a confederation of seven separate units, each one having its own stool and *mantse* (chief), with the exception of the Akummadzie. After the elders of the appropriate house have selected a candidate, they inform the head of the council of royals who summons the royal councillors to "elect" the candidate. Following this confirmation of the candidate, the council of royals informs first the chief in whose division of Accra the king resides, then the chief who acts as royal regent, and finally the chiefs of other towns of its choice (Interview with Nii Kwartei, *akwashongtse* on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2019).

This office and the war stool associated with it were part of the military organizations copied from the Fante and Akwamu people. The mantse was installed by ritual enstoolment, which gave him and his followers, supernatural bravery and safety during periods of war. The mantse may be appointed from one patrilineage house, or from several patrilineage houses in rotation as in the case of the Ga Mantse. The members of the houses together form an electoral body known as the *dzase* (kingmakers), whose head is the *dzasetse*, without whose approval no one can be a mantse. The *dzase* elect the mantse, who is presented to the military officers of the town, collectively known as the *manbii*, for approval. The *manbii* could reject the mantse-elect by the *dzase*, who must then choose someone else. Once, approved by the *manbii*, the mantse-elect proceeded with the necessary rituals as prescribed by the customs and traditions of the Ga people (field notes and interview with Nii Kwartei, *akwashongtse* on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2019).

During peace times, the *wulomo*, but not the *mantse* wielded authority in the community. However, negotiations between the Europeans and the Ga people in the early days were carried through the mantse. This was because the senior *wulomo* was prohibited from leaving his town. This contributes to the mistaken idea of the Europeans, such as the British colonial administration, that the mantse was the ruler of a Ga town.

The installation of a Ga king thus follows the classic tripartite pattern of separation, liminality, and incorporation which characterizes status transition rites. Three days before the enstoolment, the council of royals sends the candidate a gift consisting of clothing, drinks, and money. This gift is similar to the bride wealth presented to a bride and her family by the groom's family. At the presentation, the royal candidate is referred to as the "bride of the state," for as Nii Kwartei explained, "As the wife of the state, the king is its first servant." The enstoolment occurs at midnight in the royal palace. Shortly before midnight the lights are turned out. The candidate is then led in darkness by the head of the council of royals, the stool priest, and several councillors into the stool room where he is placed three times on the royal stool by the stool priest and receives several insignia of office, including a bracelet and a necklace. Drums announcing the king's enstoolment begin to beat in the house and their charge is taken up by talking drums outside the palace informing the people that they have a new king. When the king emerges from the stool room, he exchanges oaths of allegiance first with the head of the royal council and then with each

of the Accra division chiefs. Swearing by the names of past rulers and bygone battles, king and chief pledge mutual aid to one another. Following a final libation by one of the priests, a drink is served to each participant before all depart for their homes. Three weeks later on the eve of the king's inauguration, the head of the council of royals crowns him with an antelope-skin hat prepared by members of one of the Asere division families. The antelope, symbol of the Ga kingship, appears on the king's spokesman's staff riding on the back of the elephant, representing the Ga state.

When the king has been presented to his people, oaths of allegiance are exchanged. Through his spokesman the king swears mutual aid with the head of the council of royals on the dais before descending with his retinue to exchange pledges of loyalty with each chief in the Ga state. These oaths offered in the names of past rulers and glorious battles are given by spokesmen standing before their respective leaders. When the king finally returns to his seat on the dais, the priest of Nai, god of the Sea, libates informing the gods and ancestral shades of what has transpired.

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contributes to the mistaken idea of the Europeans, such as the British colonial administration, that the mantse was the ruler of a Ga town.

### **7.3.1 Political Structure of the Ga People**

The people of Ga never developed a centralized state or political system. They comprised a number of autonomous and independent states. The Ga borrowed many of their political institutions from their closest neighbors (mostly Akyem, Fante and Akwamu). Consequently, the Ga people tend to have Akan-looking institutions (Interview with Nii Kwartei, *akwashongtse* on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2019). The Ga military organization, the stool, the mantse, the asafo, the dzase, were all copied from the Akans and dovetailed into the original Ga agricultural theocracy. The Ga Mashie group first learnt this from the Akwamu in the seventeenth century and by the end of the eighteenth century, it had reached the neighboring Osu, Tema, Nungua and La. The social organization of the Ga people, however, centers on “*We*” (or the family house) whose main chief physical characteristics are the separation of a woman’s compound from that of a man. A key feature of their social system is their inheritance or succession, which is patrilineal.

The Ga speaking people are not a single group of people either by tradition, language or in organization. Each of the six Ga towns with its strip of territory stretching northwards from the coast is an independent political unit with a constitution borne out of its unique history. Their political systems are however similar even though they differ in details. Until about the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Ga-speaking people formed discrete settlements of extended families, whose priestly heads (*wulomei*), assisted by hunters, were their only leaders. These farming settlements then gathered in groups for mutual protection and set up military organization, which they copied from their Fante and Akwamu neighbours. The priest leaders remained the heads of civil affairs, and in each Ga town one became head priest, his lineage god, usually a lagoon god of the aborigines, became the acknowledged god of the whole town. The hunters became captains (*asafoatsemei*) in the military organization (*asafo*). When warfare ceased and the population greatly increased, the *asafotsemei* took over the management of secular affairs. Each of the six resulting communities, anxious to maintain or increase its numbers, in order to repel inland raiders, allowed bands of friendly outsiders to join the town and receive benefits and protection in return

for military aid. Thus, each town presently consists of several quarters (*akutso*), each representing a separate party of colonists, which attached itself to the original group of settlers, preserving many of its own customs and the worship of its own gods, but acknowledging the supremacy of the senior god of the town and its priest, who was head of the town.

The influx of migrants into present-day territories of the Ga people has led to considerable debate about the customary law governing succession among the Ga tribes. However, a careful study of the literature on Ga customs and traditions suggests that succession among the Ga tribes is through the male line (*Nii Quao Donkor, Asere Chief*). Thus, among the Ga tribes, sons succeed in preference to nephews. However, tribes that migrated into Ga territories, particularly, the Akwamu and Fante tribes, brought along their own customs on succession, which was maternal or through the female line, hence a nephew succeeding an uncle. This (matrilineal) succession diluted the original succession laws of the Ga people (patrilineal). It has since being a source of dispute and conflict especially with regard to the succession to the Ga Mantse throne. Presently, of the seven Ga quarters, it is only the Otubluho quarter that follows the female line of succession. The remaining six quarters (*Asere, Abola, Gbese, Sempe, Alata, Akummadzei*) follow the male line of succession.

#### *Perceptions on Chiefs' Involvement in Politics*

According to the respondents, a considerable attention has been given to the roles chief play in politics in the country. Quoting Article 276(1) of the 1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana Neenyi Kojo Obirifo Tetteh 111 stated that although chiefs are not supposed to meddle in politics, a politician cannot win an election in a given area if the chief does not support the person. In this study, traditional leaders in the various paramountcies shared varying opinions of the constitution that chiefs should not play active role in politics such as mounting political platform and campaigning for a political party. For example, in the Komenda traditional area the opinion was that "Nananom" (Chiefs) exhibited "the real father-for-all" character and are able to suppress any affiliation to political party when it came to matters of development and not like politicians who make political capital out of what is due their people. The chiefs therefore argued that even if Nananom should be active in politics their style of politics should be confined to assembly

deliberations where they would be debating about development concerns of their various paramountcies and share practical solutions to the problems confronting their people and avoid the rhetoric of the politicians. At Teshie, the chiefs added that, meddling in politics could bring about insults on the noble institution so they thought that clause should be maintained. However, the situation is virtually the same in Kumasi although the chiefs indicated that they support their own “sons and daughters”.

*Everybody is a politician. Chiefs' vote and therefore nothing bans them from divulging information on their political affiliations (Nana Amuasi).*

The character of Ghanaian election campaigns makes it very hard for Traditional Authorities not to meddle in party politics. He explains that, many of the campaign events take place in traditional settings, at traditional festivals and at chiefly durbars, where the chiefs often declare their preferences openly.

#### **7.4 Current Nature of Governance Related Taboos and Contemporary Society on Taboos in the Akan, Fanti and Ga Society**

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 (precedent). 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. The domination resting upon this basis is called traditional authority. Those who for some reason of birth or ritual selection represent the traditional custom inherit authority and position as a commodity invested in them and they are not to be challenged. In this traditional set-up, the legacy of passing it on is mostly encouraged from one generation to another.

Traditionally, the functions of traditional leaders include, among others, leading tribal government, maintaining local culture, leading ceremonies, applying customary law, granting or confiscating land, confiscating stolen cattle and promoting the wellbeing of their communities. Traditional leaders have somehow lost some of their traditional functions but rather fulfil modern functions

such as, inter alia, advising central and local government, assisting in development planning and implementation. Chiefs have long been central to Ghanaian society. The Ghanaian constitutions provide evidence of this continuing trend. Even the most radical constitution did not abolish chieftaincy.

One major reason why traditional leaders continued to exist in this critical time is that their existence is deeply rooted in the culture of their people. They are much more closely associated with culture or the tradition of their people. They are the mediators; they are the mouthpieces of civilians who are unable to express themselves, and above all leaders of leaders. Even in pre-colonial times, the tribe was in some sense a category of interaction. Among other things, tribal loyalties explain certain divisions, oppositions, alliances, and modes of behaviour between, and towards, different human groups. This solidifies the loyalties that each man has to his tribe. Today, the tribe is still being seen as a category of interaction, but it operates within a different, and much wider, system. Social changes have given tribal loyalties a new importance and a new relevance.

The respondents were asked to identify the various chieftaincy taboos that they observe or practice in their traditional areas. The respondents indicated that it is a taboo for a chief to breach an oath sworn, a chief is forbidden to eat food prepared by a woman in her menstrual period, whilst all the respondents agreed that a chief is forbidden to set eyes on dead body. It is also a taboo to say that the “chief is dead”. With taboos related to dietary and conduct, the respondents answered saying that it is a taboo for a chief to eat fresh yam before ritual is performed to the gods and it is a taboo to mention the bare name of the chief respectively. Nii Quao Donkor Asere Chief had this to say:

*“oath swearing is a solemn promise which invokes divine witness regarding the action or the behaviour of the chief”. Oath swearing is to provide the political direction of the chief towards his subjects. “To him, when a chief is installed into office, he takes an oath before the elders and his subjects promising to abide by the moral and religious injunctions attached to the stool which he has willingly accepted to occupy”. He cited himself as an example saying that “when he became a chief, , he swore an oath to defend his people in times of war and also he declared his*

*preparedness to die for his people in a battle rather than to run away from his enemy. He further explained that oath swearing is a contract between the chief and his subjects that he is ever ready to defend them all the time, whether in rain or shine. He added that oath swearing is to serve as a reference point for destoolment of a chief should he breach the oath he has sworn”.*

Studies have shown that contemporary society with multiplicity of values poses a big challenge to indigenous culture. For example, taboos, which deal with the environment, are being eroded. As one participant puts it *“urbanization and its attendant privileges is to be accountable for the decline in the observance of taboos”*. All the respondents affirmed that they abide by the taboos associated with their position. Even in the situation where their religious persuasion will not allow them to adhere to the taboos, they delegate to other palace officiants. The fear of supernatural punishment was not a major factor. This is an indication that the reason of keeping to the taboos is more secular than religious. When a chief violates any of the taboos, such as, not taking the oath, he has shown disrespect and also meted with some of the elements seen as a taboo like removing his slippers and cloth. Actors in governance adhere to this act not because not doing so which is regarded as a breach of a taboo would attract supernatural sanctions. Rather, failing to swear the oath would deny actors the legitimacy to rule. It would make their action on the throne legally void and at any point in time they can be challenged. Even usurpers of political office would try to have a semblance of swearing the oath of office.

Some of the chiefs who were our respondents agreed that they side step some of the taboos when they were outside the watchful eyes of the community. One taboo which is under threat by contemporary society is the taboo against a non-royal lineage person ascending a stool. It came to light from the study that there have been instances where some people because of their wealth or education or connection with politicians have attempted to become chiefs. One chief mentioned that the numerous chieftaincy cases in the Central Region and in the Greater Accra Region among the Ga’s as compared to Asantes are partly caused by this development.

*“Repercussions of taboos are very fatal and there is the conscious effort to eliminate problems that comes about through acts of taboos, thus, anyone found out to have flouted a rule is severely punished to service as deterrent to others to refrain from such act. There is no discrimination in the punishment method out to people who break taboos, however, redemption of such taboos is the responsibility of the family heads to do it. The act of taboos when breached, the consequences affect the family, community and the offender himself. When a report of someone is made, eye-witness account is also rolled on, to deal with the problem”* (Focus group discussion).

The general notion was that since taboos in relation to governance were adhered to there was no effect on governance. A section of the respondents was of the view that because some chiefs did not adhere to taboos they had lost prestige in their communities. It came to light that it is a taboo to sell communal land but some chiefs did so. As a result their communities have no respect for them. Others also explained the numerous chieftaincy litigations in the study area were due to the non-adherence of taboos, especially the taboo against non-royals occupying royal stools. Breaking of the taboo against sale of land also came up in the discussion as having brought disrepute to the chieftaincy institution. "Chiefs are not supposed to be seen in public frequently," said a respondent. "It is a taboo," he continued. He observed that nowadays some chiefs go to beer bars, pubs and dance halls. "How can such chiefs command the respect of their subjects?" he questioned?

While generally, the taboos are adhered to and hence maintaining the prestige of the institution of chieftaincy and ensuring good governance, the few taboos, which are broken by some of the chiefs, are threatening the sanctity attached to the chieftaincy institution. This has implications for governance. It creates room for litigation. It makes the legitimacy of some chiefs to be questioned. In connection with a chief forbidden to eat food prepared by a woman in her menstrual period, there were diverse opinions among the respondents as far as the rationale behind it is concerned. For instance, one respondent said that

*“blood connotes uncleanness and so the woman is not supposed to get near the chief, lest she defiles the sacredness of his stool”.*

On the rationale explaining why a chief is forbidden to set eyes on dead body, all the respondents had the same idea with different explanations. For instance, five (5) of the respondents explained that the dead do not have life therefore it is unclean. Two other respondents explained that the chief is seen as a royal person therefore he should not deal with things considered unclean. The rest of the respondents also explained that seeing dead body would render the chief powerless, nevertheless depending on the relationship between the Chief and the dead, in some cases rituals could be performed to mitigate any misfortune that might befall the chief after seeing the dead. One other chieftaincy taboo which the respondents explained the rationale behind it is a taboo which forbids one to say that “the king is dead”. According to one respondent, when a chief die, you can say that “Ɔhene kƆ n’akura”, which means the king has gone to his village. Another respondent also said that when a king dies, you can say that “odupƆn atutu”, which also means a mighty tree has fallen. With the Ga’s they say “nuumo eya wc” (the Oldman has gone to sleep). Concerning the philosophy or rationale behind the above taboo, the respondents gave different explanations. For instance, one of the respondents explained that

*“the reasons why we the Ga’s regard our chief as mortal gods, is that, after death he who goes to rest with his ancestors after a job well done on earth. It is therefore very disrespectful to equate the king with a mere man who “dies” in the Ga traditional society. The funeral that would be held for the chief will not be the same for the ordinary man. We revere our chiefs”.*

The other informant explained that

*“the rationale for not saying the king is dead among the Akans is that, the king is in charge of the preservation of law, peace and order within his kingdom and therefore whenever the death of the king is announced, it will affect law and order in the community, so to forestall a breakdown*

*in law and order upon the demise of the chief that why such expressions are used”.*

The information given by the informant confirms previous findings that the dignity, which is associated with the chief and his office, is symbolised by particular prohibitions. In addition, why people are forbidden to mention the bare name of a chief in the Akan or Fanti Tradition, Osabarima Kwesi Atta II of the Oguaa Traditional Council explained that

*“When a chief assumes office, a ritual is performed to transform him from his original status to another status which is considered as sacred”.*

This is because he is named after a stool which has ancestral name. He said that *“after the installation of the chief, his former name has become a taboo which should not be mentioned in addressing him”*. When the researcher asked why it is a taboo to mention the former name, the respondent explained that

*“the philosophy behind this taboo is to prevent the chief from using the same name with other people in the community because of his status. He went further to say that if the chief’s bare name is mentioned, it will offend the ancestor whose name he now bears”.*

He again said that *“if the chief’s name is wrongly mentioned, it will attract serious punishment such as payment of fines in the form of schnnapps, sheep and money in a way to appease the gods and the ancestors”*.

An encounter with the another chief, postulated that when a person is installed as a chief, his name has been transformed to a status which is spiritually higher and that places him humanly higher than his subjects

One of the themes that emerged from the study was especially among the people in the coast area was taboos associated with the sea. The Chiefs indicated that since they are the custodians of the land, it is mandatory of them to ensure that all the natural resources in their communities are protected. They argued that the sea is one of the natural resources and that since the human being rest of a daily basis, the natural resource must also be left for some time to replenish themselves.

To most of the participants (traditional rulers and traditional priests), the sea is a sacred entity with many taboos. The taboos mentioned have to do with practices such as fishing on Tuesdays; going to bath in the sea after sexual intercourse without taking a thorough bath; after committing adultery; or while under a curse. With regard to the Tuesday taboo, most of the traditional leaders who area is covered by the sea affirmed that, that day of the week is set aside for the sea (sea god) to rest, and it is a crucial component of the laws regarding fishing. It is also a day when fishermen mend their nets and boats and replenish their depleted resources. If one goes sea fishing overnight and stays on till Tuesday, there is no violation, and one can return to land. However, it is a violation to sell one's catch on that day. A traditional religious leader puts it this way:

*Tuesdays are the special days for the gods of the sea and no fisherman is allowed to fish on this special day. This taboo has been in observance time immemorial however, if Tuesday meets a fisherman at sea, the crew must stay at sea until the following day or return to shore but not to sell the fish caught. One could incur the wrath of the sea god. Most fishermen have died at sea due to the non-adherence of this taboo (Neenyi Obor)*

Another respondent stated this:

*The sea hates people who are not clean, so if one engages in a sexual intercourse, the person should be cleaned of all "filth" before stepping into the sea. A case that I handled some time ago and had to pacify the god of the sea was that a fisherman committed adultery and when he was caught, he was cursed using the name of the sea god. In doing this it means that the fisherman cannot go to sea gain and this is a taboo. (Osabarima Kwesi Atta II)*

In a focus group discussion it emerged that it is also a taboo for a person on whom a known curse has been placed to go sea fishing. A cursed person is seen as spiritually unclean and as such cannot go fishing on the sea.

*"sj obi bc wu dua' ni mpo nua, ensjsjj wobjkc mpo esansjj, honhom mu nu, wuhu ayj fi na jsjsjj yenyi efi no jfiri wuhu ansaana woako po enyjsaa*

*wobjwo” this is translated to mean “If someone curses you, it is a taboo for you to go to sea. This is because the curse makes you unclean; therefore if you attempt going to sea without revoking the curses you might end up losing your life.*

These responses portray their cosmovision about the sea as a pure entity and any act of impurity related to it incurs the wrath of the sea gods. Such beliefs seem to be common in most fishing communities in Ghana and especially the areas under study. With the Ashantes, they revere the Lake Bosomtwi. It was found from the respondents that the Chief, Asantehene had decreed that nobody should enter the sacred lake during menstruation period and also entering the lake after being promiscuous. This is due to a belief that having intercourse or menstruating, dirties the river. On the contrary a behaviour which I observed from the coastal area was the behaviour of using the beaches as a places of convenience despite the fact that it has dire consequences on the environment. This taboo is strictly adhered to in order to avoid misfortune in the land. Taboos and cultural laws are social institutions that govern behaviour within communities. Unlike judicial law and other types of formal institutions, taboos represent unwritten social rules that regulate behaviour in humans that are bound together by common obligations to each person and a shared reverence for the sacred. Informal institutions such as, taboos are based on cultural norms that do not require government intervention for proliferation or enforcement. A good chief is expected to see to the welfare of his people by ensuring development in the town.

### **7.5 Knowing that a Taboo has been Breached and remedying it**

A discussion was held on the means of knowing that a taboo had been breached and the steps taking to remedy the situation. It was gathered from respondents that a breach of taboos could be detected through such signs like water shortage by way of river bodies drying up, low farm yields, low fish catch, irregular rainfall pattern, excessive thunder and lightning during rainfall. To buttress this assertion, one of the respondents the alluded to the that, *“anytime thunder strikes, a palm nut tree in my village and the tree begins to burn, it is an indication that a curse has been invoked on someone and the one who committed the act must confess, or else the thunder would in turn strike the offender”*. According to the Chief of Eguafu via Elmina curses are frowned upon

and steps are taken to eliminate it. It is not the wish of the gods to bring down curses on the people of the land because one cannot know the consequences that accompany these curses. Purification rites are done quickly to avert these curses because it is costly when one is struck down with a curse. "Steps are always taken to avert curses being rained down on a person. No matter what you do, you are not supposed to curse someone but rather seek redress from the Omanhen to amicably settle confrontations" (interview with Chief of Eguafu).

The study revealed that among Fante societies in Cape Coast and Elmina, people who breached taboos were detected through eye witness account. However, in a situation where acts point to the fact that a taboo has been breached and culprit cannot be detected or nobody reports about the act, the culprit can be detected through divination by the state priest and should this method be used to arrest the culprit, the penalty slapped on the culprit is usually expensive. On the part of leaders who breach governance taboos, respondents were of the view that often it is difficult to know except a whistle blower informs the community or the elders. Some also had the position that since political office is always under contestation, contestants are always on the lookout for a breach on the part of a leader to bring charges for his removal. "Your enemies are praying for you to make a mistake so that they can ask for your destoolment", said (Eguafuhene). An eye witness' account is seen as the principal means by which breaking of taboo is established. More so, anyone who falsely accuses someone in the presence of "Nananom" him or her is liable to have breached a taboo, because should his testimony go contrary to his accusation of someone she/he rather would be punished for giving false accusation. The study also revealed that, should an accused person firmly insist on being innocent in spite of an eyewitness' account, such a person is left to his/her conscience and must be ready to bear the consequences.

There are some signs, which indicate that a sin has been committed or a taboo had been broken in the community which calls for further investigation. The occurrences include mysterious death in the royal family or in the family of the chief or any member of the community, poor fishing harvest of fishermen and general lack of success in the community. The researcher heard of a rumour of one chief in the study area who wore sanitary pad because he was punished by the sacred for having breached a taboo. The appearance of a whale at the beach could also be a sign of presence of sin in the community. In all these instances divination is done to find out the cause or meaning

of the sign. These signs reflect the idea that though secular interpretations of taboos are creeping into the discourse on taboos in contemporary in the study areas, the link between the supernatural and taboos has not completely died out.

The link between taboos and religion is further buttressed by the distinction made between 'potent' taboos and 'non-potent' ones. Members of the Asafo Companies interviewed claimed that that some sins can be forgiven but not all and therefore the potent taboos are those, which are punished by the community to avoid any calamity befalling them. They contended that these “taboos have spiritual support and anybody who breaches any offends the gods of the land and it brings calamity to the inhabitants”. One of the chiefs explained, *“embarking on a fishing expedition on Tuesdays along our coastal belts is prohibited. If it comes to light that one has embarked on fishing expedition, such a culprit is seen as a nation wrecker, one who must not be tolerated and one whose actions must be followed closely to ensure that his actions do not incur the wrath of the gods or ancestors of the land”*.

In a situation where this is brought to the attention of the chief, the chief fisherman would be summoned and if it is revealed that he was aware before the expedition was embarked upon, it could cause his destoolment. The failure of a chief to take remedial measures is tantamount to the chief breaking a taboo. This clearly exposes the idea that it is the responsibility of all in the community to report those who breach taboos to the actors in governance, failing will lead to the entire society suffering. This makes it imperative that in our African traditional society, one does not exist in isolation. It is about the community. Osabarima Kwesi Atta II, Oguaamanhen, asserted that “any act committed by an individual will have its consequences affecting the community, the offender and their ancestors. It is this corporate responsibility which makes it mandatory for the whole community to arise and nip in the bud acts that stand the chance of bringing calamity into the community”.

Those taboos whose breach will not have any supernatural sanctions are regarded as minor ones and hence less potent. For example if a chief is seen drinking in a pub, though the act constitutes an infringement, it would not attract a supernatural sanction. As indicated earlier this distinction is clear indication that secularisation is yet to deal a death blow on the link between religion and

taboos. The idea that the supernatural jealously guide against the laws in the form of taboos still lingers on the consciousness of people in the study area. On the remedy for breaching taboos it came out that every offence is considered on its own merit and the gravity of the offence determines the punishment to be meted out to the offender. If it was detected that the act was committed unwillingly, the offender could be set free, but if it was an offence that would bring some calamity to the state, it is treated as a communal sin and the state bears the cost of pacifying the ancestors for mercy. The remedy depends on the kind of taboo breached, where it was breached and the person who breached it. As indicated earlier on a breach of a taboo by a chief is not taken lightly. Pacification in the form of sacrifice is made in the stool room to pacify the ancestors. Even if the chief is removed from the stool, he must atone for his sins through sacrifice of a sheep and a fine. It was learnt that in the past the lineage line of a chief could be tabooed from ascending to the stool for certain breaches of taboos. In the situation where the offence is minor for example a subject failing to heed to the summons of a chief, the culprit could be fined. A chief is not supposed to fall down in public. In case it happens, the place where he falls down must be purified with a sacrifice. The remedy further amplifies the link between taboos and religion in today's Fante society.

## **7.6 Chapter Summary**

This thesis does not assume to offer an absolute exploration of chieftaincy legitimation in Ghana. Nor can it claim to offer a representative view of chieftaincy-state relations at the grassroots, let alone the wider public. The researcher found out that taboos goes hand in hand with governance. Taboos restrict people to do the right things in the society. Without taboos, the society cannot function well. The starting point of this analysis is based on the current political reality that chieftaincy remains an important political force at the local level. This thesis offers a unique insight into the manner in which chiefs interact with the state and the local population. It also offers a portrait of the legitimation process of the chiefs in Teshie-Nungua, Cape Coast and Kumasi. Understanding the ways in which pre-existing notions of authority and state notions of authority intersect must always start with an examination of how people understand their political universe. What was also clear was that people living in the communities desired more cooperation between their leaders. Since the colonial state period, chieftaincy has been forced to share its authority with

a new set of institutions, which are based on a set of norms, rules and processes that are distinct from its own. In terms of what chiefs do on daily basis, the local population expect their chief to fulfil certain responsibilities. First and foremost, the chief is responsible for providing order and security and makes sure that those who break the rules are held accountable. Second, the chief helps to solve disputes. Where it is conflict over land, property, there is an expectation that the chief would be involved in the resolution process. The chief is also responsible for the lands and resources in the community. He also presides over ancestral rituals and ceremonies.

It was gathered from respondents that a breach of taboos could be detected through signs like water shortage by way of river bodies drying up, low farm yields, low fish catch, irregular rainfall pattern, excessive thunder and lightning during rainfall. With being at the helm of affairs in a society comes with great responsibilities like ensuring that laid down norms are adhered to. When taboos are broken it comes to the 'feet' of the chief who must ensure that whatever pacification that should be done to avert a calamity is done. This further goes to state that, the quest by individual societies for a cultural identity is not just to prove to the world that, they are the most important but rather to have a stage of development that would make them fit into the dynamism of the ever growing world. The importance of stools in the total lives of the people in most part of the indigenous Ghanaian societies is highly remarkable. Such stools cannot be used by the ordinary citizen who has not been ordained as a chief. The golden stool may be just one example however; every stool used by chiefs in any part of the indigenous society is believed to be imbued with the soul of the land. It also acts as a political symbol of power and authority.

## Chapter VIII: Conclusions

The goal of this research is to answer the question of taboos and governance in Asante, Fante and Ga societies in Ghana. The steps taken in this research were intended to show conceptual perspectives of actors in the discourse and how their action or inaction has impacted in the way of taboos and governance. One key objective of the study was to have a good understanding of what constituted governance and good governance in the study area. It was found out that governance to the people in the study area is putting the right structures in place so that the affairs of the state can be steered successfully. It also involves check and balances and decision making at various levels, which bring progress into the community. From the oath chiefs swear as part of their installation we noticed that governance also means legitimacy. The act of governance entails the main actors who are mainly chiefs galvanising all the resources in the community including the participation of all the members in the community to achieve progress. Thus, to the study area governance is both setting the ground rules and utilising the rules to arrive at certain outcomes.

The outcomes are what they called *mpuntu*, by the Akans and “*noyaa*” by the Ga’s, progress. By progress, they meant improvements in every aspect of the life of both individuals in the community and the collective wellbeing of all. Consequently, they saw good governance as the ability of the main actors in the indigenous set-up in conjunction with those in the state set-up galvanising the citizenry and using the ground rules to achieve progress in the community. Thus good governance includes transparency and accountability on the part of leadership, chiefs showing respect to their elders, participation of citizens, leaders respecting the rights of citizens which culminate into improving the life of the citizenry. Anything which falls short of these is bad governance. Thus, their understanding of governance is a combination of the process approach Olowu (2002), partnership approach (Kooimans, 1993) and outcomes approach which is favoured by the World Bank (1992) and UN agencies such as the UNDP (1997).

On the current nature of governance related taboos, the study found out that the taboos were largely intact though a few of them are ignored. Those which are intact are observed largely for non-religious reasons. The main one is that since some of the taboos confer legitimacy, breaking them would make the actions of the actors in indigenous governance illegitimate. It is more of the fear

of losing their positions as chiefs which motivate some of them to adhere to taboos. One can say that taboos are losing their sacred nature because they were seen as sacred prohibitions imposed on humans by the spirit powers. Abiding by taboos does not necessarily mean that people are scared of any supernatural reprisals but simply because the adherents would like to protect their political turfs. Some of the actors also break some of the taboos for convenient sake. To them when it is not practicable to abide by some of the taboos they break it but they make sure that their subjects do not become aware of the breach. However, one taboo which is currently under threat is the taboo against a person who does not come from the royal family becoming a chief.

It was observed that some of the chiefs were also working outside where they rule. Others were also Christians and some have an appreciable level of formal education. All these come to impact on their attitudes towards taboos, which govern the chieftaincy institution. On the effect of non-adherence to the taboos to indigenous governance it was found out that chiefly the effect was secular. Mention was made of litigation in the chieftaincy institution and the institution losing its prestige. This further buttresses our observation that taboos are losing their link with religion. However, the discussions on how to know that a taboo has been broken and steps to remedy the situation revealed that the link between religion and taboos was not completely decoupled. Though respondents mentioned that it was difficult to know if a chief had breached a taboo, a breach of a taboo is detected through an eyewitness account and the occurrence of certain events, which they explained as punishment from the supernatural. The occurrence of events such as lack of rainfall or unexplained deaths in the royal family calls for divination to identify the cause. Again, the distinction the people made between minor taboos and potent taboos brought out the link between taboos and religion. The potent taboos are those whose breach leads to supernatural reprisals but a breach of a minor one does not.

Breaking a taboo was regarded by the people in the study area as tantamount to sin, which must be remedied. If a chief is involved in the breach of a major taboo, the remedy is the removal of the chief from office and/or pacification of the sacred through the sacrifice of an animal usually a sheep. If it happens to be a citizen, the person is fined in addition to sacrifice if it is a major taboo. The use of sacrifice offered to the sacred to remedy a breach of a governance related taboo is a further indication that the link between religion and taboos is not completely decoupled. It is

therefore deduced that the etymology of the word taboo from its Polynesian or Tonga or Fijian origin which connotes sacred or holy (Blakemore and Shelia 2001) and therefore having a religious significance is still maintained in the study area.

One key objective of the study was to ascertain the role, if any, taboos play in the indigenous governance. The study found out that taboos play tremendous roles in the governance of the study area. Taboos were used as contract between the ruled and rulers because it is through taboos that the citizens formally transfer power to their leaders. Taboos therefore made the actions and decisions of rulers to gain legitimacy as breaking those related to governance makes chiefs to lose their legitimacy. Another link is in the area of check and balances and participation of citizenry in governance. Taboos discourage opacity and promote transparency and hence making leaders to become accountable. Breaking the ground rules in governance such as consensus building, consultation of elders and following due process is regarded as breaching taboos.

In some respect however, the study found out that taboos impeded governance. They made people with disability to be disqualified to become chiefs because their disability made them unclean to ascend a throne; restricting those who can rule mainly to royal lineages and thereby denied people with leadership qualities from becoming chiefs and largely blocking the opportunity of women becoming chiefs and fostering the image of women being inferior to men.

The multi-stage sampling procedure was employed. The snowballing technique 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. The traditional leaders were chosen because of the position they occupy in the community. With the traditional rulers, the researcher purposively selected all of them from the study areas in each region since each of the study areas was a paramountcy with its own Omanhene (paramount chief). Since these priests are seen as intermediaries between the physical and the spiritual worlds and custodians of taboos they were identified and purposively selected for the study. Two instruments were used. The first instrument was an interview guide that was used to solicit information from the participants. The second instrument, a questionnaire was used to solicit data response from participants. A pilot testing of the instrument was conducted to ensure its validity and reliability. The various ethical issues laid

down by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of Cape Coast (UCC) were strictly complied with. As proposed in the research protocol of IRB, UCC, the researcher presented the true research findings and used the results of the research study for only academic purposes.

The researcher believes that taboos have played an important role in the traditional African society and keep to exercise its influence on the modern society as well. They helped people to preserve moral rules that were helping them, as individuals and as communities, to live a peaceful and harmonious life. Though formulated in forms of “dos” and “don'ts” and sometimes being ambiguous, they enabled people to maintain the moral order and hierarchy in the society. The institution of traditional leadership has shown resilience throughout the ages, and while political dispensations with their ideologies have come and gone and will continue to come and go, the researcher is of the opinion that the institution of traditional leadership, which has been the rock of traditional governance, will endure.

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. Individuals or clans who heed taboo rules are expected to be blessed with protection, good health, fertility, wellbeing and long life; whereas those who breach taboos are invoking the ancestors’ anger and will be punished.

### **8.1 Summary of Results**

- The study revealed that the Akans, Fantes and the Ga’s are uniquely structured as far as their tradition and culture is concerned. This is so clear in their traditional administrative system as well as their beliefs and practices which promote unity and cooperation among them.
- With the observation of taboos in the three traditional societies with particular reference to chieftaincy, totems, deity, sacred grove, dog, “taboo days” and suicide, it was found out that traditional rulers occupy a unique position, therefore chiefs are expected to observe taboos in order to maintain certain standards to please their subjects.

- Taboos remain the prime factor of guiding principles of moral conduct towards the exploitation of natural resources in the community. Thus, the practice of taboos among the people of the three traditional societies remain very strong because it reinforces the communal values of solidarity, identity and unity among the people.
- The study revealed that in terms of institutional linkages between the two systems of government, there is a communication gap between the Traditional Authorities (T.A.s) and the District Assemblies (D.As). The communication gap is explained as a half-hearted attempts at co-operation, and accompanying these attempts are suspicions and mistrust between the Traditional Authorities (T.As) and government functionaries.
- Another key finding of the study is that there appeared to be no clear integration between traditional authority systems with all the other relevant local government institutions. For instance, there was no institutional arrangement for ensuring interaction between the traditional authorities and the Assembly structures at local level. The chiefs therefore would like to be truly involved in all important deliberations including being made to serve as or represented on all relevant sub-committees of the District Assemblies.
- 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. The taboos relating to his conduct and manners are all meant to remind him, his subjects, and other members of the society and sanctity of the position he occupies.

With respect to hypothesis One, the finding depicted that there is no significant difference in the types of taboos amongst the three societies based on governance. This indicates that the three societies practice the same type of governance with respect to the taboos on governance. Meaning that female had higher means in determining variables for career indecision. This confirms the finding of Ake (1993), who posit that good governance is the making and implementation of policies that would impact positively on the citizens of the country. It also confirms the assertion of Hall in Ayre & Callway (2005:111 -128) that there is a growing perception that the governance

of resources and services functions effectively with an open social structure that enables broader participation by civil society, private sector and other interest groups, all working as a network to support and influence governance.

**Hypotheses Two** predicted that there is no significant difference in the enforcement of taboos amongst the three societies based on governance. This prediction was rejected paving way for the alternate hypothesis that there is significant difference in the types of taboos amongst the three societies based on governance. Hypothesis Two was set to establish the differences among the enforcement of taboos. The differences lie between the three societies. Each society as a way of enforcing taboos. What may account for enforcement in one society will be different in another society.

Hypothesis Three predicted that there is no significant difference in the future of the taboo and governance system in the three societies. However, the null hypothesis was rejected and going for the alternate hypothesis on the basis that there is significant difference in the future of the taboo and governance system in the three societies. Literature indicates that, the aspects of culture that a group of people consciously or unconsciously share with the next generations form the cultural heritage of that group of people. According to the UNESCO's (2008) classification of cultural heritage, the evidence of cultural activities that can be felt and touched is seen as tangible culture. Tangible culture is mainly related to archaeology and urbanisation as well as objects in museums, archives and libraries. The concept of indigenous knowledge, relates to intangible cultural heritage, creating a relationship between a particular community and its ancestral territory (Qereqeretabua, 2008). Whether tangible or intangible, heritage provides valuable representations of a group of people. Various forms of principles, truths and ideas naturally develop as a cultural group interacts with their natural environment. Together, these elements are viewed by researchers as the indigenous cultural knowledge of that group of people (Ayiku, 21 1997; Kargbo, 2008; Moahi, 2012).

Hypothesis Four is predictive of the alternate hypothesis that there is significant difference in taboos being drivers of change in the three societies. This means that the surroundings of the group are very likely to influence what they hear, see, eat and wear Indigenous knowledge is also seen

as the cultural reference point for native people, especially in Africa. But this source of cultural identity seems threatened by globalisation and the notion of ‘appropriate’ cultures from Western societies (Hoppers, 2002). ATR arguably is a religion comparable to other world religions, and discourse involving it can be considered credible. ATR encompasses all African beliefs and practices that are considered religious. Taboos and cultural laws are social institutions that govern behaviour within communities. Unlike judicial law and other types of formal institutions, taboos represent unwritten social rules that regulate behaviour in humans that are bound together by common obligations to each person and a shared reverence for the sacred (Freud, 1913). Informal institutions such as, taboos are based on cultural norms that do not require government intervention for proliferation or enforcement

## **8.2 Recommendation**

In this section, I seek to recommend actions based on my main findings explained above.

1. One of the findings indicates how the beliefs and practices of taboos promote unity and corporation among the people. It is therefore recommended that the chieftaincy institution should be financially assisted by the government, Non-Governmental Organizations, (NGOs) the District Assembly and private individuals to organize training workshops and durbars to increase people’s awareness about the importance of taboos on indigenous governance to the society.
2. One potential area which should be of concern to Ghana as a nation is chieftaincy conflict. Through this study one cause of the conflict has come out clearly. This is people who are not members of royal lineages trying to usurp power. It is recommended that the central government through the National House of Chiefs (NHC) intensify the codification of all succession lines of chiefs in the study areas and the country as a whole. This will prevent usurpers from fomenting troubles in the traditional areas studied and to a large extent the country. While it is agreed that limiting leadership to only royal houses deny these traditional areas of all the leadership potential available to them, until that practice is changed, the codification would reduce chieftaincy conflicts and unnecessary litigation, which affect governance in the study area.

3. Another finding showed that the three societies still hold on to taboo days as days one is forbidden to go to farm or go for fishing. It is therefore recommended that both citizens and non-citizens in these traditional societies should be made to appreciate, respect and observe taboos associated with taboo days as a means to promote unity, peace and governance. This can be done by establishing cultural centers in the various communities to educate people about the need to uphold cultural values such as taboo days in the area.
4. Also, the study revealed the place of taboos as a guiding principle of moral conduct towards the governance in the three study areas. It is therefore recommended that the district assembly in collaboration with the traditional council of the traditional areas integrate the cultural values into policies and programmes by coming out with by-laws to guide the citizens towards proper governance structures with the aim of strengthening grassroot governance.
5. Further to that it came to light in the study that Ghana believes in grassroot governance and this is largely done through traditional local governance system with the involvement of the traditional rulers. Based on this, the study recommends that traditional governance system should be fused into the formal or central governance system for the traditional leaders to have a say and also become active participants in the governance space of the country.
6. The study again revealed that Chiefs continue to play a symbolic cultural role in the Ghanaian society, However, through the consolidation of the modern nation-state their roles have been transformed. It is worthy to note that as a way of educating the younger generation to also know their culture and traditions the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service should consider an introduction of the study of rituals and taboos in the school curricula at all levels of education. Owing to the fact that the main means of learning about taboos is through oral tradition, it will not be out of place for scholars in African Traditional Religion and philosophy, to begin to love and rigorously collect taboos from the various traditional areas analyze and have them codified for the consumption of the citizenry so as to enable them to know their limitations or otherwise in the face of taboos and its implication on the environment

7. The Traditional Chiefs are well respected hence the study recommends as noted by the Okyenhene, Osagyefo Amoatia Ofori Panyin, “we as chiefs, by virtue of our close-knit relationship with the people, are uniquely placed to become the perfect vehicles for modernization”. One can further say that there is a need to integrate the cultural and traditional values into modern government and society. He also added that there is the need for a fusion of traditional and modern forms of justice and adoption of a decentralized system of government, noting that it will strengthen the chieftaincy institution to enforce laws as per the norms and culture of the country. One can therefore recommend that, the Chiefs are the heart to the society, the very heartbeat of the society and if they are empowered, they will be in a position to transform their communities.
8. Finally, the researcher’s position as an insider researcher had positive effect in the data collection with regards to the survey and interviews as respondents were open to freely discuss their challenges. Therefore information revealed the true nature of the challenges; I recommend future research for the target group should consider using insiders as interviewers as truth is more easily revealed as against falsehood or half-truths especially in governance experiences and issues of specific taboos related to governance. Also, further studies can be conducted on a wider scope in the aspect of local governance and the role of the traditional council in helping the central government achieve its core mandate of inclusive governance.

### **8.3 Limitations of the research**

The major limitations that the researcher envisages include respondents’ unwillingness to reveal the information. Some respondents may also feel reluctant to respond to the questionnaires and that can cause a delay for the researcher to finish on time. In addition, the researcher cannot check whether the respondents are telling the truth since some respondents may deliberately be falsifying their replies. Moreover, the researcher would only interview the major actors in governance in Kumasi, Cape Coast and its surrounding towns and Gas in Asere and its surrounding areas for their views on the topic under investigation. This would reduce the impact of this limitation with other actors in the study area. Furthermore, interviewing higher number of representatives in the formal

governance sector would have revealed other measures or channels of integration not captured by the present population through the interview sessions and focus group discussions. Also hearing the side of institutional actors and political actors would have broadened the findings, but it would have compromised the desire to narrow the field of actors.

#### **8.4 Chapter Summary**

The study has discussed the various taboos that are observed among the people of Teshie-Nungua, Cape Coast and Kumasi and their governance structures. The study has highlighted taboos which are associated with chieftaincy, totems, taboo days, and governance among the people of study areas. The findings of the study indicate among other things how taboos have played significant roles in the lives of the people in the past and continue to play similar roles in contemporary times among the people. For example, taboos which were instituted by traditional leaders to direct the political directions of chiefs in the past are still relevant in contemporary times. These customary regulations worked very well in the olden days and are still relevant in contemporary times even though the sanctions attached to these taboos have been toned down as a result of respect for human rights which give some amount of freedom to individuals. A cursory examination of roles of taboos among the people of the study areas in the past and present makes one conclude that though some of the taboos have been modified whilst others toned down, the future of taboos in governance in the study areas prove sustainable because they have been embedded in their culture and since culture is dynamic, it is no surprise to see that some of the taboos are toned down, others transformed and the outmoded ones which retard human progress are discarded.

### List of publications

<b>Title</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Journal, Serial Number of the Journal and Year of Appearance</b>
Using Social Media to Campaign: Are Ghanaian Political Parties Getting It Right	Research Paper	English Language	Social Sciences 9(1), 32-39. (2020)
Comparative Analysis of Practice of Aspects of Governance in Ghana and Kenya	Research Paper	English Language	International Journal of Latest Research in Humanities and Social Science, 3(1), 96-105. (2020)
The Role of Taboos in African Governance Systems	Research Paper	English Language	In Polgári Szemle: Gazdasági és Társadalmi Folyóirat 14(4-6), 372-386. (2018)
The Role of Chiefs in Politics in Ghana	Research Paper	English Language	In Méhes, Tamás; Téglási, András (eds.) A jövő közigazgatás-tudománya : A Közigazgatás-tudományi Doktori Iskola doktoranduszainak jubileumi tanulmánykötete Budapest, Hungary : Dialóg Campus Kiadó, (2018) pp. 31-43. Chapter in Book (Study )
Practices of Taboos in Relation to Governance in the Traditional Setting of Cape Coast and Elmina in Ghana	Research Paper	English Language	In Chancellor, Vice; Kibor, Alfred K. (eds.) The 12th International Conference and Innovation Week: Knowledge and Innovation for Social and Economic Development: Conference Proceedings Njoro, Kenya: Egerton University, Faculty of Education Complex, (2018) pp. 254-258. , 5 p. 27th – 29th MARCH, 2018
Measuring the Quality of Government: Perspective of	Research Paper	English Language	In Horváth, Bálint; Khademi-Vidra, Anikó; Bakos, Izabella (eds.) 3rd International Young

Indigenous Fantes of Cape Coast and Elmina			Researcher Scientific Conference: Sustainable Regional Development - Challenges of Space & Society in the 21st Century Gödöllő, Hungary: Szent István Egyetemi Kiadó, (2018) pp. 112-120. , 9 p. 26 April, 2018
Impact of Land Conflict on Agriculture Production: A Case Study of the Alavanyos and Nkonyas of Ghana	Research Paper	English Language	In István, Benczes; Erzsébet, Kaponyi; Zsuzsanna, Szerényi (eds.) 1st International PhD Conference of the International Relations Multidisciplinary Doctoral School of CUB: Conference Proceedings Budapest, Hungary: Corvinus University of Budapest, International Relations Multidisciplinary Doctoral School, (2019) pp. 131-134

## Professional Curriculum Vitae



### **Permanent Residence:**

Orczy Út 1 Kollégium , 1089 Budapest, Room 422, Hungary

Telephone: +36204671537, +233244750047

**E-mail:** [abeabi@yahoo.com](mailto:abeabi@yahoo.com), [emmanuel.abeku.essel@hallg.uni-nke.hu](mailto:emmanuel.abeku.essel@hallg.uni-nke.hu)

### **EMMANUEL ABEKU ESSEL**

#### **On-going: 2016-2020**

PhD candidate; National University of Public service Budapest, Hungary

Doctoral School of Public Administration Sciences

Research Field – Public Administration in Governance and Society

#### **Qualifications:**

Master of Philosophy in Religion and Human Values

Master of Education in Management

Post Graduate Diploma in Education

Bachelor of Arts Degree in Religious Studies

#### **Studies**

##### **2018**

Magyar Nyelve Iskola, Hungarian Language School, Budapest

##### **2013**

Master of Philosophy in Religion and Human Values, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana

##### **2008**

Master of Education in Management, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana

##### **2002**

Post Graduate Diploma in Education, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana

##### **1994-1997**

Bachelor of Arts Degree in Religious Studies, Department of Religion, Faculty of Arts, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana.

## **Work Experiences**

### **2013-to present**

**Chief Administrative Assistant**, Dean's Office, School of Biological Sciences, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Support the Dean with daily clerical tasks
- Plan meetings and take detailed minutes
- Develop and implement office policies and procedures

### **2008-2013**

**Chief Administrative Assistant/ Relations Officer**, Alumni Relations Office, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Develops, coordinates and evaluates programs and projects to promote alumni relations and educational programs designed to connect alumni through academic channels such as programs/departments/schools/colleges.
- Plans, coordinates, and attends events, meetings, or other activities as requested by academic units
- Coordinates and produces reports, proposals, and analyses for management, to include monthly budget to actual reviews of areas of programmatic responsibility, periodic reports to reflect relevant data gathering and analysis, and post-event reports and recommendations
- Collaborates with other office staff on programmes which engage alumni through multiple channels such as academic program and geographic location combined

### **2001-2003**

**Senior Research/Teaching Assistant**, Department of Religious Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana.

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Attend course meetings and respond promptly to emails from the instructor or Head TA.
- Conduct tutorials, or review sessions
- Provide sufficient feedback to students
- Report any suspected academic integrity issues to the course instructor.
- Provide assistance to faculty members or staff with classroom work or field research
- Schedule and maintain regular office hours to meet with students
- Copy and distribute classroom materials.

#### **Language Skills:**

English - Native and Professional Working Proficiency

Fante - Mother Tongue

Hungarian - Intermediate Level

Others – Twi, Ga

#### **Skills and Expertise:**

- Human Resource Management
- Public relations
- Fund raising
- Events Organisation
- Educational Management
- Religion, Society and Governance
- Excellent communication skills with sensitivity to cultural communication differences
- Microsoft Word, Power Point, Microsoft Excel

### **Conferences**

2<sup>nd</sup> SACCOS Leaders Forum, Kigali, Rwanda

University of Ilorin and UCC Joint Int. Conference, Ilorin, Nigeria

SACCO Regulatory Workshop, Nairobi, Kenya

CASE Conference 2011: “Educational Advancement in Africa”. Nairobi, Kenya

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 - Introductory Letter from NUPS

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE**  
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SCIENCES

Date: 03/07/2018

To Whom it May Concern

**INTRODUCTORY LETTER**

The Bearer of this letter, Mr. Emmanuel Abeku Essel is a PhD student of the National University of Public Service, Budapest, Hungary, undertaking his training programme in Public Administration.

As Part of the programme, he is currently working on his thesis on the topic **Taboos and Governance in Ghana: A Case Study of the Asante, Fante and Ga** and he intends to visit your area or institution to collect data for that purpose.

We therefore write to introduce him to you and request that you give him the necessary assistance to enable him acquire the information he would need for his work.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Your faithfully,

  
Prof. György KISS PhD  
Head of Doctoral School

  
1083 Budapest, Üllői út 82. | Tel: (1) 432-9000/20899  
Postai cím: 1441 Budapest, Pf.: 60. | Email: kiss.gyorgy@uni-nke.hu

## Appendix 2: Request for Ethical Clearance Letter

National University of Public Service,  
Budapest Hungary,  
8<sup>th</sup> July, 2019.

The Chairman,  
Institutional Review Board,  
University of Cape Coast, Ghana.  
Dear Sir/Madam,

### **APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE (IRB Approval)**

In reference to the guidelines of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), University of Cape Coast (UCC), with regard to proposed research works that involve human participants, I, Emmanuel Abeku Essel a doctoral student of the National University of Public Service, Budapest Hungary, write to apply for an ethical clearance or IRB approval. This will serve as green lights that will enable me implement my proposal. I am seeking clearance to collect data on "TABOOS AND GOVERNANCE IN ASANTE, FANTE AND GA SOCIETIES IN GHANA".

In view of that, I would appreciate your prompt assistance in processing my application since it is essential in fast tracking my research work. Please find attached to this letter, a copy of the documents require with regard to protocol for review.

I count on your usual cooperation.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Emmanuel Abeku Essel  
Ph.D. Student

## Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance Letter

# UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

## INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

TEL: 0558093143 / 0508878309/ 0244207814

C/O Directorate of Research, Innovation and Consultancy

E-MAIL: irb@ucc.edu.gh

OUR REF: UCC/IRB/A/2016/531

YOUR REF:

OMB NO: 0990-0279

IORG #: IORG0009096



12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2019

Mr. Emmanuel Abeku Essel  
Department of Society and Governance  
Faculty of Public Administration  
National University of Public Service  
Budapest, Hungary.

Dear Mr. Essel,

### **ETHICAL CLEARANCE – ID (UCCIRB/EXT/2019/19)**

The University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) has granted **Provisional Approval** for the implementation of your research protocol titled **Taboos and Governance in Asante, Fante and Ga Societies in Ghana**. This approval requires that you submit periodic review of the protocol to the Board and a final full review to the UCCIRB on completion of the research. The UCCIRB may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the research during and after implementation.

Please note that any modification of the project must be submitted to the UCCIRB for review and approval before its implementation.

You are also required to report all serious adverse events related to this study to the UCCIRB within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.

Always quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence with us in relation to this protocol.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Samuel Asiedu Owusu'.

Samuel Asiedu Owusu, PhD

**UCCIRB Administrator**

ADMINISTRATOR  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**Appendix 4: Voluntary Respondents Declaration Forms (Personal and Group)**

**NOTE OF CONSENT**

I ..... out of my own will volunteered to be a respondent for **Mr. Emmanuel Abeku Essel** to enable him investigate the phenomenon of **Taboos and Governance among the Asante Fante and Gas of Ghana** for his PhD Studies.

**NOTE OF CONSENT**

We the undersigned out of our own will volunteered to be respondents for **Mr. Emmanuel Abeku Essel** to enable him investigate the phenomenon of **Taboos and Governance among the Asante Fante and Gas of Ghana** for his PhD Studies.

**Name**

**Signature**

## Appendix 5: Sample of Introductory Letter to Traditional Councils

Doctorial school of Public Administration Science  
National University of Public Service  
Budapest, Hungary  
24<sup>th</sup> December, 2018

The Registrar,  
Oguaa Traditional Council,  
Emintsimandze Palace  
Cape Coast

Dear Sir,

### APPROVAL TO COLLECT DATA

I am Emmanuel Abeku Essel, a PhD student of the National University of Public service, Budapest, Hungary. I am writing my thesis on the topic: **Taboos and Governance in Ghana: a Case Study of the Asante, Fante and Ga.**

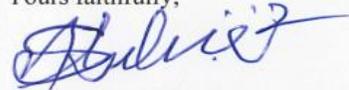
I would be very glad if permission is granted me to collect data from the Traditional Council. During the data collection period, I would be interviewing some selected chiefs and leaders in the Traditional Council including the Paramount Chief.

Sir, I hope to hear favourably from you and to know when I can have the opportunity to conduct the interviews with the chiefs.

Please kindly find attached an introductory letter from my head of department for your perusal and necessary action.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Emmanuel Abeku Essel

## Appendix 6: Interview Guide

### NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE

**FACULTY: Public Administration**

**DEPARTMENT: Society and Governance**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR: Members of the community**

**Dear Sir/Madam/ Nana**

This interview schedule is designed to collect first-hand information (or data) as part of a study on Taboos and Governance in Asante, Fante and Ga Societies in Ghana. I should be very grateful if you could take some time to respond to the items as most objectively as possible. I wish to assure, Sir/Madam/Nana that the information you provide would solely be used for academic purpose and your anonymity is assured.

Thank you.

#### **SECTION A- Socio Demographic Profile**

Please, respond by ticking the appropriate box provided or fill the space given below.

1. Gender      a) Male (    )              b) Female (    )
2. Age (as at your last birthday)  
a) 15-19 (    ) b) 20-24 (    ) c) 25-29 (    ) d) 30-34 (    ) e) 35-39 (    )  
f) 40-44 (    ) g) 45-49 (    ) h) 50-54 (    ) I) 55-59 (    ) k) 60-64 (    )  
l) 65+(    ).
3. Academic Status  
a) MSLC (    )                      b) JHS (    )                      c) SHS (    )  
d) GCE O 'Level (    )              e) GCE A' Level (    )  
f) Diploma/HND (    )              g) 1st Degree (    )  
h) Post Graduate (    )              i) Others (please specify).....
4. Religious Background  
a) African Traditional Religion (    )              b) Islamic (    )  
c) Christianity (    )                      d) Other .....

## **SECTION B- Identification of actors in Fante governance**

Here the researcher wants to find out who are the actors in charge of governance from the peoples perspective and the questions centered around:

1. Who are those in charge of governance in this traditional area?
2. If you are not then who are those in charge?
3. If you are, how were you selected?
4. Were you confined and trained?
5. What mechanisms are there for succession?
6. What are the taboos attached to the position as an actor in charge of governance?
7. How and where did you obtain your authority?

## **SECTION C-What is Taboo**

8. What is your understanding of Taboos
9. Name some
9. How did you hear or were you thought of Taboos
- 10 Are there Taboos attached to your position?

## **SECTION D- Consequences of Taboos**

With reference to consequences of taboos, the under listed questions enabled the researcher to elicit responses from the respondents:

- 11 What happens to a person who breaches a taboo?
12. What happens to the one who commits it unwillfully?
13. How is such a person regarded?
14. Who does a breach of taboo offend?
15. What signs indicate that a taboo has been broken?
16. How is the offender detected, found and dealt with?
17. Is there a mechanism in place to check whether the offence was committed willfully or out of ignorance?
18. Are punishments meted out to offenders of taboos discriminatory in nature?

19. How is the punishment redeemed?
20. Are there measures in place to check false accusations?

### **SECTION E – Governance**

Under governance, the researcher will seek from the respondent's information based on the following:

21. What is your understanding of governance
22. Who are the players in charge of governance?
23. How does one ascend the status of a governance personality?
24. Are these persons tabooed?
25. What makes them tabooed persons
26. What specific taboos are associated with them
27. What is good governance?
28. What is bad governance?
29. On what basis can one be removed from governance?

### **SECTION F –Taboos and Governance**

In order to find out from the respondents the relationship between taboos and governance, the following questions would be asked:

30. What do you do as a leader when there is a conflict about “Do’s and Don’ts?”
31. Whose responsibility is it to check if a leader has breached a taboo?
32. What is the implication of what one has done and has brought about dirt to the governance position?

### **SECTION G- Impact of Contemporary Society on Taboos and Governance**

As a way of finding out the impact of contemporary society on taboos and governance, the interview centred on the following questions:

33. Are taboos relevant in our contemporary society?
34. What can be done to bring back the observance of taboos?

35. Whose responsibility is it for leadership training in governance?
36. Has modernity affected the observance of taboos?
37. How necessary are taboos?
38. Are there some things impeding your governance as far as the current republican statutes are concerned?

## **Appendix 7: Focus Group Discussion Guide**

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIETY AND GOVERNANCE**

**TOPIC: TABOOS AND GOVERNANCE IN ASANTE, FANTE AND GA SOCIETIES IN  
GHANA**

### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

Dear Respondent,

*This questionnaire has been designed to gather information for a research work being undertaken on the topic above. You have been selected as one of the participants. The information you provide will not be made known to any other person or institution. Please kindly respond to the items/statements in this questionnaire by filling in the spaces provided.*

*Please do not write your name on any part of the questionnaire. I look forward to your participation and appreciate your effort in this important effort.*

1. Can any of you tell me how you understand taboos
2. Is taboos necessary in the society
3. What are some of the taboos of this community
4. Do you think those at the helm of affairs here in this community are tabooed.
5. When you commit a crime, especially break a taboo, how do you redeem yourself
6. What happens to the one who commits it unwillfully
7. How do you know if a taboo is broken
8. Do you think with modernity, taboos are irrelevant?
9. Do you know what governance is
10. Are there types of governance in this community
11. Who do you respond to in times of need in this community
12. How are the chiefs or those in charge of governance in this community chosen
13. Should we put taboos in our governance system

14. Are there some things impeding your governance as far as the current republican statutes are concerned?

## Appendix 8: Questionnaire

### NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIETY AND GOVERNANCE

#### TOPIC: TABOOS AND GOVERNANCE IN ASANTE, FANTE AND GA SOCIETIES IN GHANA QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

*This questionnaire has been designed to gather information for a research work being undertaken on the topic above. You have been selected as one of the participants. The information you provide will not be made known to any other person or institution. Please kindly respond to the items/statements in this questionnaire by filling in the spaces provided.*

*Please do not write your name on any part of the questionnaire. I look forward to your participation and appreciate your effort in this important effort.*

#### **Consent to Participate in Research:**

I understand that any information I share will remain confidential and that when the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal my identity. I am 18 years of age or older. By agreeing to continue with the survey and submit a response to the researcher in question, I am giving consent to participate in this study.

**I consent to participate in this survey:**     Yes     No

#### **SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

Instruction: Please, place a tick ( ✓ ) in the appropriate columns to indicate your response.

1. Gender            a) Male (    )            b) Female (    )
2. Age (as at your last birthday)
  - a) 20-24 (    )    b) 25-29 (    )    c) 30-34 (    )    d) 35-39 (    )    e) 40-44 (    )
  - f) 45-49 (    )    g) 50-54 (    )    h) 55-59 (    )    i) 60-64 (    )
  - j) 65 and above.

3. Academic Status

- a) MSLC ( )                      b) JHS ( )                      c) SHS ( )  
 d) GCE O 'Level ( )              e) GCE A' Level ( )  
 f) Diploma/HND                      g) 1st Degree ( )  
 h) Post Graduate ( )              i) Others (please specify).....

4. Religious Background

- a) African Traditional Religion ( )              b) Islamic ( )  
 c) Christianity ( )                      d) Other .....

**SECTION B: Traditional Governance**

Instruction: Please, place a tick ( ✓ ) in the appropriate columns to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

I know	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. that chiefs are in charge of governance in my area				
2. that governance is about how people are to behave in a given society.				
3. those in charge of governance are chosen from a particular lineage in the society.				
4. that, chiefs and family heads are involved in the politics of the society.				
5. that, decision making processes rest in the hands of those involved in governance				

6. that, taboos are associated with the position of being an actor in governance in the society				
7. actors in governance obtain their authority from different sectors				
8. actors in governance are accountable to the people of the community				
9. actors are committed to the safety and security of the people in the community				
10. leaders are encouraged to make tough decisions that are in the interest of the people				

### SECTION C: TABOOS

Instruction: Please, place a tick ( ✓) in the appropriate columns to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. taboos are good for every society				
2. Taboos put people in check				
3. when I break a taboo willfully, I will suffer the consequences				

4. when I break a taboo unwillfully, I will suffer the consequences				
5. the importance of taboos has been made clear to me in the society				
6. there are mechanisms in place to check whether an offence is committed willfully or not				
7. punishment meted out to offenders are justified in the society				
8. punishment can be redeemed				
9. without taboos, the society cannot be governed				
10. Taboos are attached to governance positions in the society				

**SECTION D: TABOOS AND GOVERNANCE**

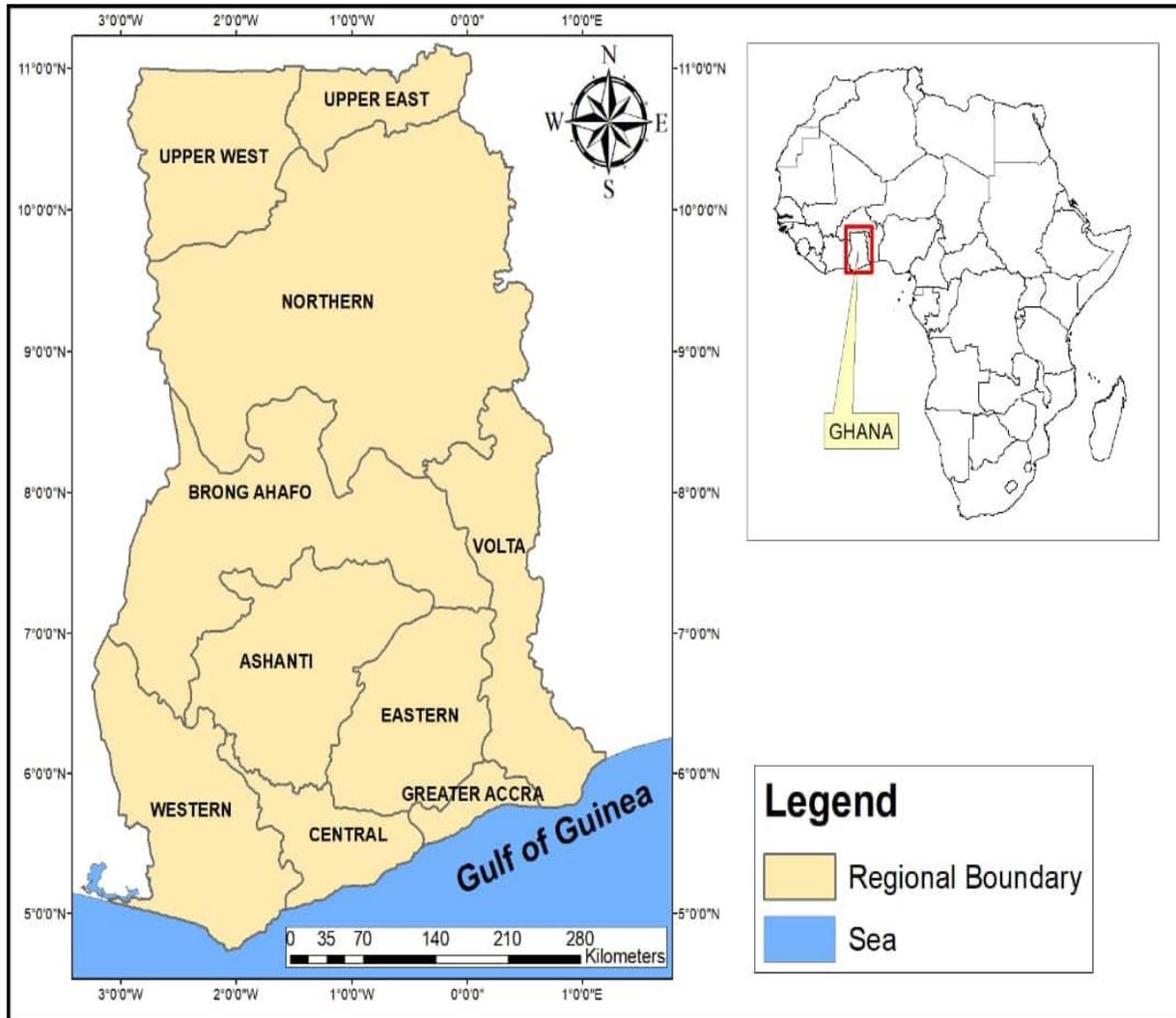
Instruction: Please, place a tick (✓) in the appropriate columns to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Governance is about how people are treated in their societies				

2. the elders, chiefs and clansmen are in charge of governance in the society				
3. to be an actor of governance, one has to be respected and held high in the society				
4. a governance personality can be tabooed				
5. the elders are those who train people to be in positions to govern people				
6. specific taboos are for specific people				
7. when I break a taboo, I have to face the repercussions of it				

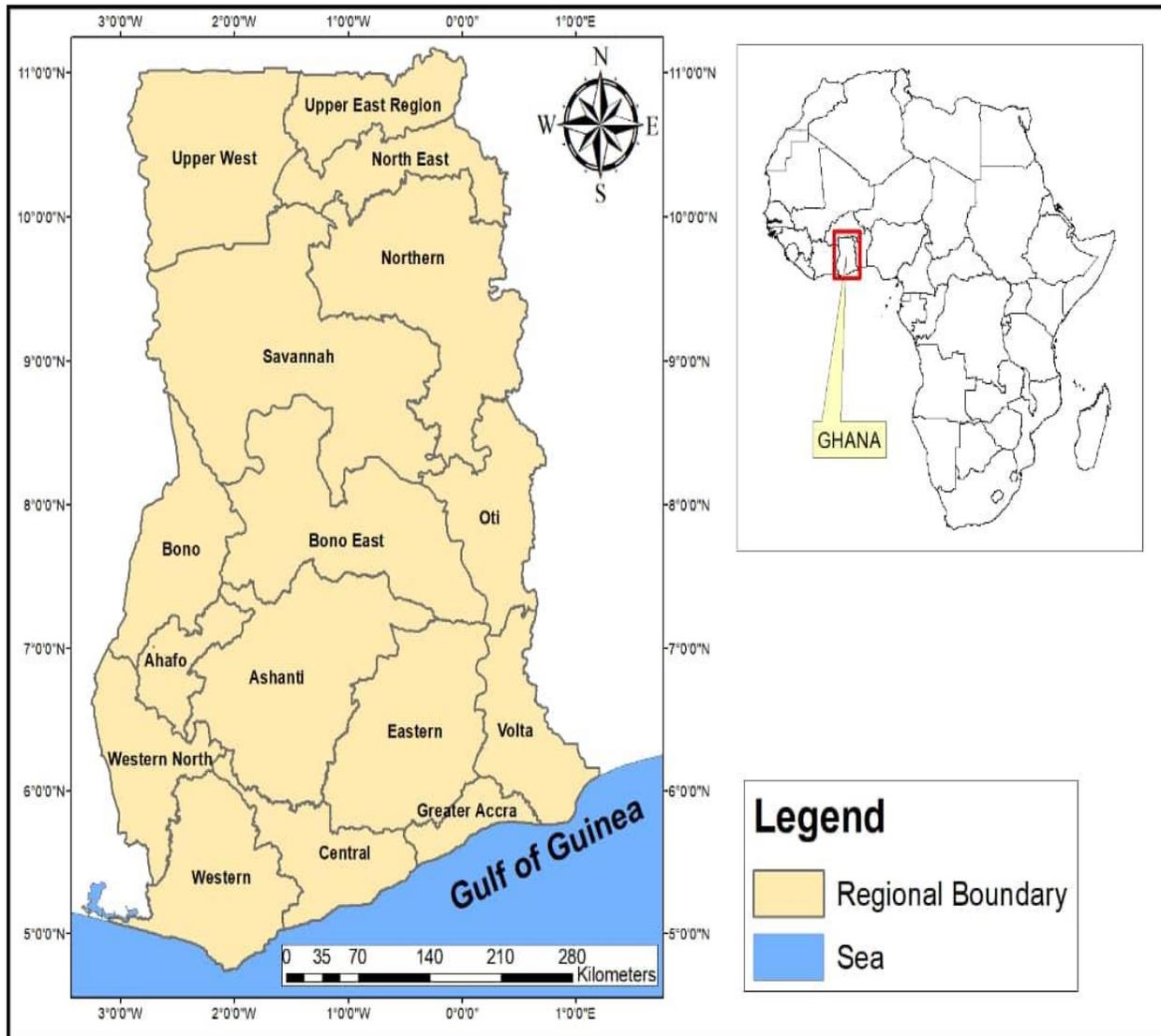
## Appendix 9: Maps of the Study Areas

**Map 1: Previous ten (10) regions of Ghana**



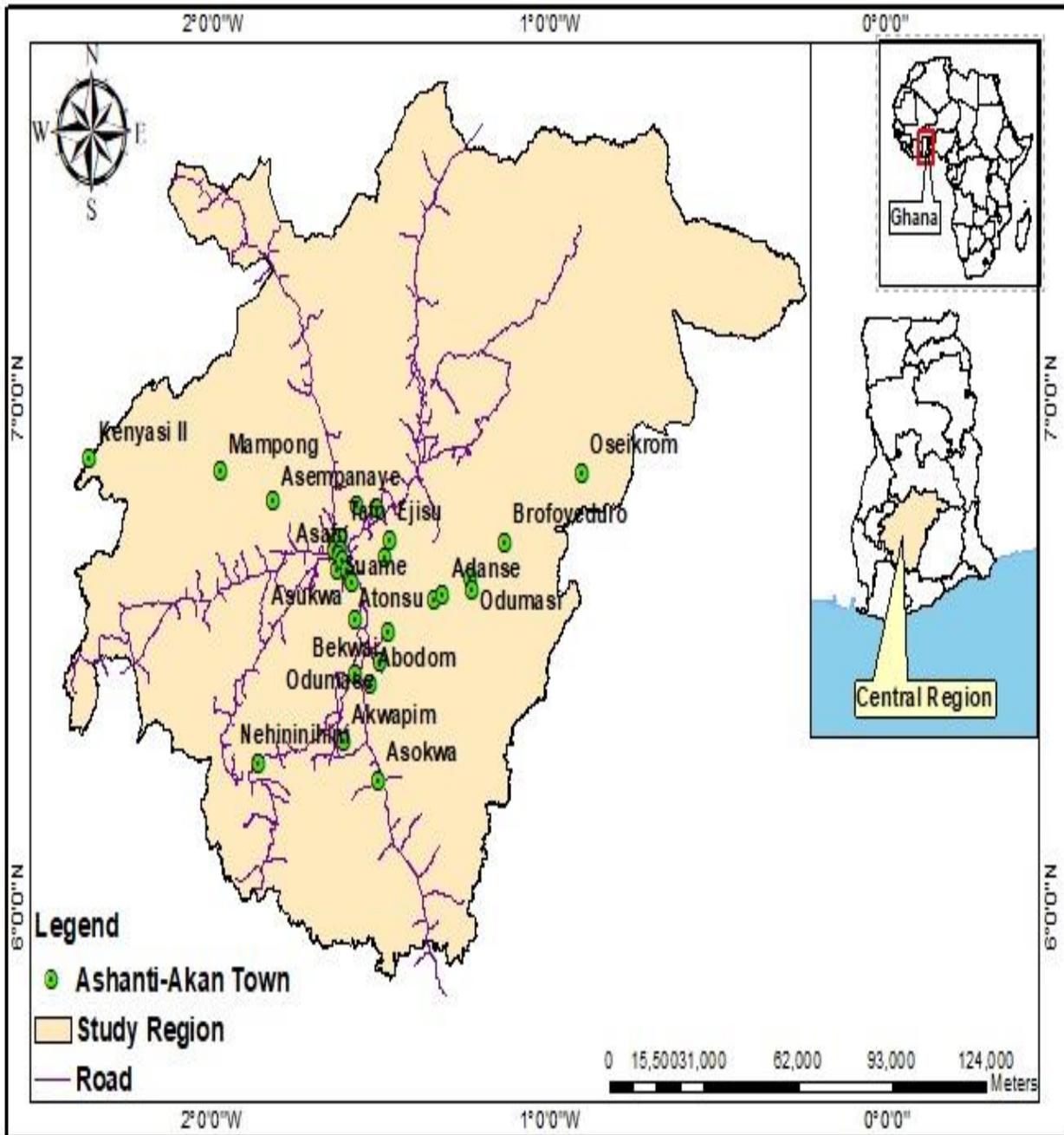
Source: Author's own construct, 2019

**Map 2: Current sixteen (16) regions of Ghana**



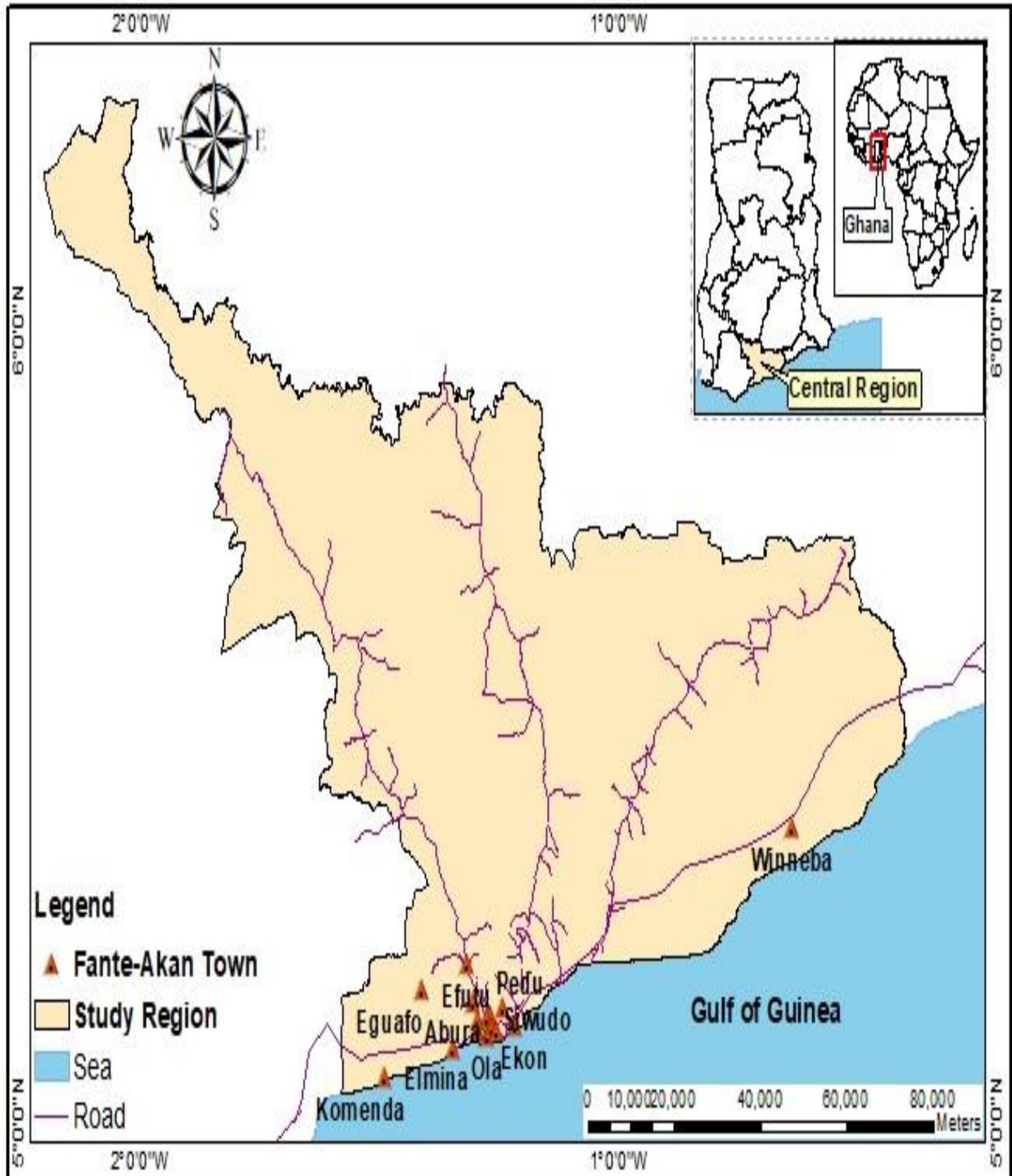
**Source: Author's own construct, 2019**

**Map 3: Study Area 1- Ashanti Region (Asante's)**



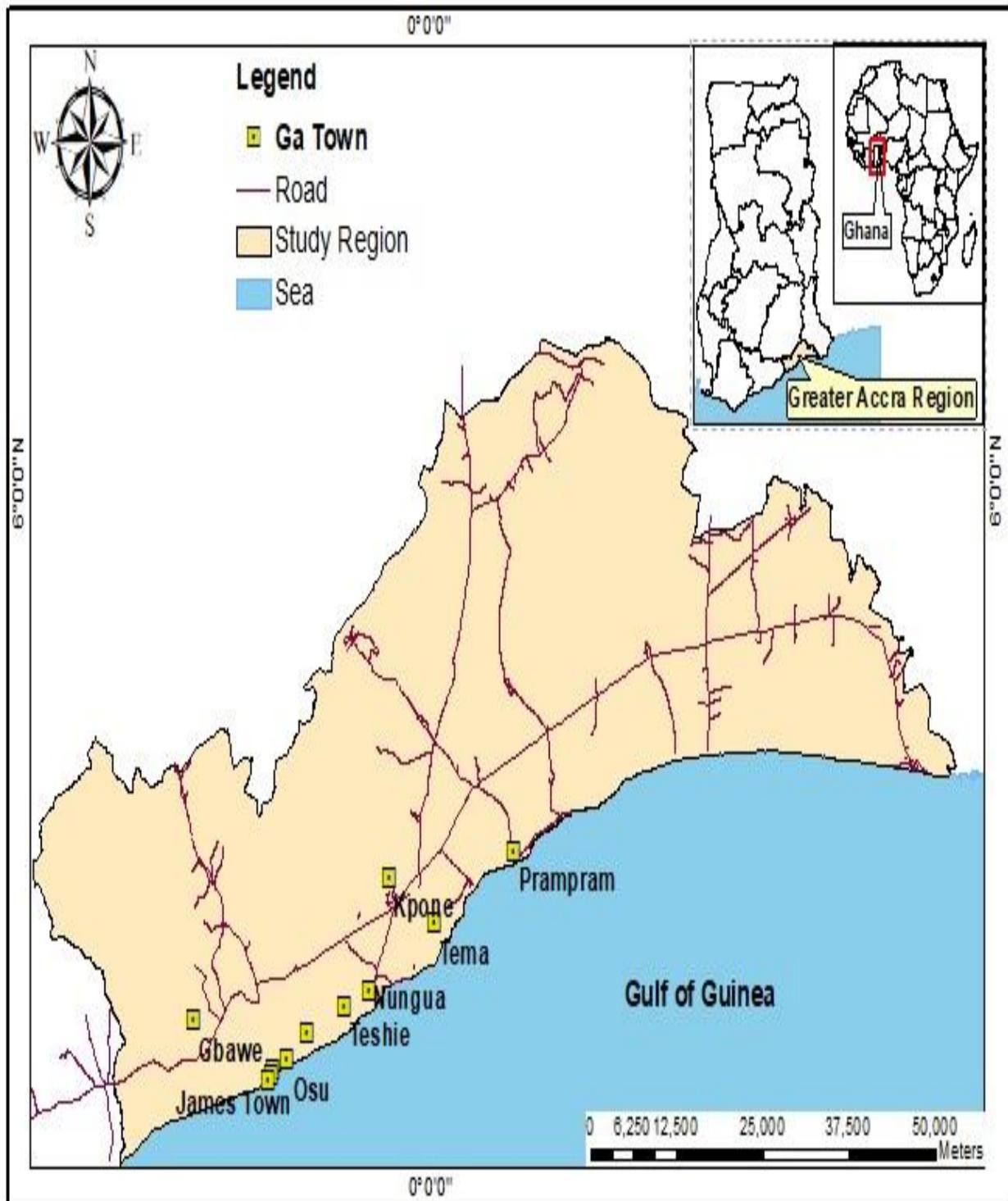
**Source: Author's own construct, 2019**

**Map 4: Study Area 2: Central Region (Fantes)**



Source: Author's own construct, 2019

**Map 5: Study Area 3: Greater Accra Region (Ga's)**



Source: Author's own construct, 2019

## Appendix 10: Photo Gallery



The lead researcher interviewing Rev. Dr. Gyasi Ankrah (A Ga historian)

The lead researcher interacting with Gborbu Wulomo- Shitse of the Ga Traditional Council.





The lead researcher interviewing Osabarima Kwesi Atta II – Omanhene of Ogua Traditional Council.



The lead researcher interviewing Daasebre Kwebu Ewusi VII (The Paramount Chief and President

of the Abeamde Traditional Area and currently the Vice President of the Ghana National House of Chiefs)



The researcher interviewing Neenyi Ghartey VII (The paramount Chief of Effutuman)



The chief priestess of Effutu and her entourage interacting with the lead researcher



The lead researcher with Nana Osei Kofi Abiri, Omanhene of Kenyasi No.2



Nana Afrakoma Kusi Buadum (Queen Mother of Asante Akim-Agogo) interacting with the lead researcher



The lead researcher leading a focused group discussion in the Ashanti Region.



The lead researcher leading a focused group discussion in Effutu (Central Region).

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