

## Chieftaincy and Development: The Effutu State in Perspective

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### Abstract

### Original Research Article

The purpose of the study was to investigate how chieftaincy system has been effective at facilitating grassroots mobilization in promoting socio-economic development in the Effutu community. The study employed the theory of functionalism as its theoretical framework to explain the functions that chiefs play in the society using the chieftaincy institution as a system with interrelated parts. The study employed a qualitative research approach and a descriptive case study design. Data was generated from fifteen (15) participants with the aid of interview-guide and focus group discussion. The purposive and accidental sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. Narratives approach was used for the analysis. Regarding the state of chieftaincy in Effutu, the study revealed that Gharthey and Ayiribi-Aquah families are the major actors of the Effutu chieftaincy disputes. Other actors include Asafo company, political parties, government and the police. Non-natives and business men have also become actors in one form or the other. Finding on the role of chieftainship in the development of Effutu Traditional Area revealed that the socio-cultural activities of the community have been affected negatively. The poor state of chieftaincy has led to low patronage of the Aboakyir festival. The study recommended that the government through the national house of chiefs and other stakeholders should endeavour to settle amicably the Effutu Chieftaincy dispute with immediate effect.

**Keywords:** Effutu community, Aboakyir festival, chieftaincy system.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The chieftaincy institution is an age-old institution that has been the pivot around which Ghanaians find their identity. Despite the entrenchment of constitutional rule and the expansion of state powers, the chieftaincy institution continues to enjoy enormous support from the populace. Chieftaincy embodies the preservation of culture, traditions, customs and values of the African people, while also representing the early forms of societal organization and governance. It appears to be one of Africa and Ghana's enduring cultural heritage and institution, which is deeply rooted in ethnic consciousness of communities. It provides the scope for leadership and exercise of authority. Consequently, chieftaincy is one of the major important traditional institutions in contemporary Ghana, symbolizing socio-political and shared power vested in chiefs in many parts of Ghana. The impetus for chieftaincy studies is given a further boost with respect to its legal and constitutional status in Ghana. The chieftaincy Act of 1971, for instance provides guidelines for the functioning of the various chieftaincy institution and authorizes the National House of chiefs

to 'undertake the progressive study, interpretation and coding of the customary law, with a view to develop, in appropriate case a unified system of rules of customary law'. (The act of parliament of the Republic of Ghana, entitled 'the Chieftaincy Act, (1971)').

In Ghana, the chieftaincy institution has preserved the rich cultural values of the communality, respect for the elderly, and the principles of reciprocity and hospitality among the citizenry. Indeed, it is through the leadership of traditional authorities that unity and the Country's cultural values are sustained. Ghana's traditional leadership structure is hierarchical. At the base is the clan head (Ebusuapanyin). Sitting above the clan head is the village or town chief, also known in some of the Akan dialects as the Odikro, literally the owner of a village or the town. The next in the hierarchy is the Omanhene or the Paramount chief, usually the traditional leader at the district level. At the apex is the head of a tribal group such as the King of Asante or Ga Mantse of the Gas or Nenyi of the Effutu, (Bortsie, 2014). Traditionally the role of the king, at the divisional level was to administer the division, look

after the spiritual, physical and emotional welfare of the people, maintain law and order, consult with elders and act as mediator between ancestors and the clans (Busia, 1951). Chieftaincy is of tremendous importance to local government in Ghana particularly, in the area of socio-economic development. Various reports of chiefs being involved in development (Ray, 1996, 2003a). Many traditional authorities have, for instance, helped in putting up markets and ensuring their functionality for economic activities in their localities. Sometimes, traditional rulers initiate development projects and secure the support of both internal and external development agents for the execution of these projects (Dauda & Dapilah, 2013).

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Chieftaincy as an institution is one of the unique features that informs our tradition and gives us a sense of belonging, it is the embodiment of our rich culture, agent of development and catalyst of change which must be maintained. In recent years, controversy has raged over the role of the chieftaincy institution in the developmental process of their various communities in Ghana. Most people hold the view that the rampant chieftaincy disputes in Effutu has hamper development in the community and for that reason the institution has no relevance in modern day life's. It is also argued that the chieftaincy institution is an impediment to development in Effutu community and nation building (Johannes, 2011), Goldman (2018) holds the view that since the "Effutu chieftaincy is a borrowed institution, it should be abolished so that the Effutu state can go back to take it original priest-king system of leadership to pave way for absolute peace, truth and development that had eluded the people in Effutu for over several decades", Some school of thought are calling for the abolishment of the chieftaincy institution and have therefore labelled it as a relic of the past. Those who have called for it abolishment also cites the numerous conflicts that have associated with the institution in recent times. Some have argued that it is a waste of the nation's resources as the chiefs especially of paramount status are paid allowances. For these and other reasons, many have called for the chieftaincy institution to be abolished.

Since colonial era, chiefs were deeply involved in the economic, social, political and cultural development of their people in their traditional areas or communities (Busia 1968; Bofo-Arthur 2001). They have made specific contributions to the development of their areas. For example, Togbe Afede XIV of the Asogli state educational development foundation of the Volta Region, the Asantehene's educational fund to promote education in the Asanteman and the country at large, the Okyehene's declaration of war against environmental degradation among others are real and tangible contributions chiefs have undertaken for the socio-economic development of their people as well as

their traditional areas (Tonah, 2012). In Asikuma – Odoben-Brakwa traditional area, chiefs have assisted in the development of the tourist sites (using forest reserve) in Asikuma and Brakwa. They have also instituted by-laws against bush burning and cutting down of economic trees as well as their joint support to the government for the establishment of urban water supply system from Brakwa to Odoben. Despite the fact that chiefs are instrumental in spearheading the development activities in their communities, chiefdoms and kingdoms, the institution is saddled with challenges. These include succession moves, chieftaincy disputes, struggle for land and other related issues in Ghana. Chieftaincy is either at the center or closely involved in one way or the other in each of these challenges. Non-governmental organizations and Government have all made great strides in addressing these challenges, by the creation of the ministry of chieftaincy Affairs, the establishment of National and Regional house of chiefs and commission with the aim of creating platforms for aggrieved parties to address their divergent views on all cases in point. However, many people still doubt the role of chieftaincy institution in the socio-economic development of their traditional areas as echoed by (Owusu-Mensah, 2013). Many scholars have done scholarly works in looking into the chieftaincy institution in Ghana, however many narrowed their works in looking at chieftaincy and conflict, chieftaincy and conflict resolution, chieftaincy and governance, and few others but little or no research has been produced on chieftaincy and development especially in the Effutu state and it is against this background that that the researcher is conducting this research to fill the knowledge gap.

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study sought to achieve the following objectives.

1. To identify the state of chieftaincy in the Effutu Traditional Area.
2. To ascertain the role of chieftaincy in the development of Effutu.

## IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Chieftaincy as an institution has played a major significant role as far as politics, socioeconomic and religious life of people of Ghana is concerned. The findings of this study will educate the chieftaincy institution to contribute to the democratization process and good governance towards socio-economic development, to oppose the abolishment of the chieftaincy institution, to showcase the significant contributions that the chieftaincy institution is making towards the development of their respective communities and also for the community to understand the role of the chieftaincy institution and the challenges with particular reference to the Effutu traditional area and beyond.

This study will provide the in-depth information that would be useful to development partners to ally with traditional authorities in their bid to work towards the needed development of the area and other traditional areas. Effutu Traditional Area was selected because such a study has never been done in the traditional area even though similar studies have been conducted in other traditional areas within the country.

## V. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Historically, the colonial masters used chiefs to get to the people for developmental projects (Busia, 1968; Bofo-Arthur, 2001). The colonial government relied on the chiefs to mobilise and collect revenues for all developmental projects. After independence, the state continued in a similar manner, to make use of chiefs and their leadership to ensure development at the local level and at the national level at large. Local governance or-decentralization was expected to lead to the active involvement of the people at the grass root level, because the government, through its agents, would act at the local levels with traditional leaders such as chiefs being intermediaries between the local people and the government agents (Dawda and Dapilah, 2013). This arrangement expected chiefs to provide support and advice to local government actors so that the living conditions of the people they represent are improved. Consequently, the local government system is a form of collaboration between the government agents and the chiefs and their subjects. In addition, the decentralization system enables local government agents to partner with chiefs so as to secure the support of their people for the implementation of development projects and programmes. Hence, traditional leaders are expected to partner with local government agents on policy decisions (Sackeyfio-Lenoch, 2014; and Dawda and Dapilah, 2013).

With infrastructural development, land is very important for the establishment of such projects including educational, health infrastructure and boreholes. Chiefs play an important role in the release of land for any development purpose. For instance, in Ghana, chiefs control eighty percent of the land with only ten percent reserved for government public development (Oneil, 2017). Land is an important asset on which all other projects depend and the assistance given by chiefs to make the acquisition of land easier makes their contribution to infrastructural development very important (Sackeyfio-Lenoch, 2014; and Dawda and Dapilah, 2013).

Chiefs and their elders also play a significant role in serving as links between their communities and other development partners. In addition, Chiefs link up their communities with other communities and serve as important channels of communication to development

partners such as NGOs that operate in the areas of health, educational infrastructural provision among others. Furthermore, chiefs are seen to be contributing in the area of mobilising communal labour for the construction of projects that are demand driven. For instance, chiefs have assisted the various District Assemblies in a number of communities to erect electricity poles in their communities under the Self-help Rural Electrification Project (SHEP) (Dawda and Dapilah, 2013).

A pre-eminent chiefs in Ghana, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II. Since his coronation or enstoolment as Asantehene a decade and half ago, he has initiated a number of development projects geared towards eradicating underdevelopment and poverty in Ghana. Notable among these projects was the establishment of the Otumfuo Educational Fund (OTEFund) in 2000 (Oduro-Awisi, 2013). The goal of the fund is to assist needy students and other deprived educational institutions in Ghana, particularly in Asanteman.

## VI. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a qualitative research approach and a descriptive case study design. The target population consists of persons from the Effutu Traditional Council members, the general public, and political activist in the community. Primary data was generated from fifteen (15) purposively selected participants with the aid of interview-guide and focus group discussion. The purposive and accidental sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. Narratives approach was used for the analysis.

## VII. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### State of chieftainship in the Effutu Traditional Area

To clearly understand the state of chieftainship in the Effutu Traditional Area, the researcher was determined to unearth some underpinning issues. Various issues emerged from the data regarding two families who claim allegiance to the same stool or skin struggling to surpass each other just in attempt to claim ownership to the title or stool. Some of the interviewees revealed that two families are claiming that they are all rightful heirs to the throne thus resulting into conflict. They are the Gharthey and Ayiribi-Aquah families. Other respondents also disclosed that the Asafo company and the youth are also part of the dispute.

Commenting on this issue during the interview session, an opinion leader asserted that:

*From the beginning of the Effutu state formation, we were not having anyone we can point as a chief because those in charge combine the roles of a ruler and that of a priest. These rulers were chosen by the kingmakers after they had observed that person for several years. During this era, chieftaincy issues in this town were not arising since all parties understood themselves. Right*

now, the chieftaincy institution in this area has faced a lot of conflicts in recent times. This is as a result of which particular royal family is to occupy the stool whenever it is vacant. These are the Ghartey and Ayiribi-Aquah families with the Asafo companies and the youth are also part of the dispute. Each of these families claim that they are the rightful ruler so the misunderstanding is within this circle. The Ghartey and Ayiribi-Aquah families are the ones having more interest in the throne and the problem is now invading into other social gatherings and even festivals. What has made the situation worst now is the actions and deeds of certain politicians. Politics have now made the problem worse than it was before because each of the families that want to occupy the throne are thought of as being affiliated to a particular political party. We all can attest to how politicians can use their powers to influence people as a result of their wealth. Due to this they have succeeded in making the situation bad more than it was before.

A member of the community commented

*In 1979, the chieftaincy case was taken to the central regional house of chiefs and the ruling was in favour of the Ghartey's family and since that time the Ayiribi-Aquah's family do not want to accept the ruling. However, many people have made the conflict worse. I have even witnessed a situation where youth belonging to these respective families engaged in a fight leaving some of them seriously injured. The argument was that the youth belonging to both families claim that an individual from their family is the rightful person to rule Effutu traditional area. Left with them alone, the situation is sometimes good to tell about but recent influence of some businessmen and especially politicians have made the problem very devastating. They have used their power and wealth to influence both elders and youth of these families to context against each other and it has affected both the development and certain cultural practices within the area. Aboakyir, we all can testify its nature quality is now fading bit by bit due to this misunderstanding. Right now there is a paramount chief here but because the two families did not negotiate well as to whom to ascend the throne, he is being valued better by the family where he belongs.*

*Anybody who has something to do with the chieftaincy disputes and therefore contribute to the situation is an actor. The emphasis is who is the rightful ruler? Each family, that is, Ghartey and Ayiribi-Aquah families claim they are the rightful ruler so the misunderstanding is within this circle. There are many people involved. There are youth involved and there are the Asafo groups and the political parties.*

#### **Misunderstanding and disagreement over succession**

As Russell and Dobson (2011) succinctly put it that in an attempt to have traditional power that authorizes an individual to exercise powers over an

area, it becomes a huge source of misunderstanding and disagreement. In some other cases misunderstanding arises as the result of legitimacy of one of the selected individuals to succeed or occupy the position, or sometimes there is a disagreement over the procedure of the selection and installation.

Owusu-Mensah, (2013) and Tonah, (2012) shared similar sentiments that the causes of conflicts in Africa can be attributed to competition over valuable resources as the people struggles for power (both political and traditional), ethnic identity, land and deep rooted historical, socio-economic and cultural elements as the consequences of the manipulations of colonialism and neo-colonialism. In other jurisdictions, disagreements over the authority or legitimacy of one of any of the kingmakers also result into chieftaincy conflict and mar the beauty of the institution.

The above comment also highlights that there are many different actors involved in the conflict. There are political actors, youth groups and the Asafo groups. Political actors have noted by Johannes, (2011) as actors in chieftaincy related conflicts. Similarly, the youth have been known as actors are chieftaincy and other conflicts in Ghana and elsewhere. Thus the argument can be made that the actors in the conflict are not only the royal families. However, the comment supports that eh royal families are the main actors in the conflict.

Another opinion leader noted that

*This conflict can be attributed mainly to Ghartey and Ayiribi-Aquah's families who I may say lack better understanding as to who is to be crowned the paramount chief, brainwashing by some famous people, and political interference. This conflict now results in a lot of conflicts among the two families especially their youth. I have witnessed many occasions during certain social gatherings where a misunderstanding arose all because some members of the Ayiribi-Aquah's family decided to cross the Ghartey's family during a walk in town. This led to some of them injuring themselves. What rescued the situation was the police. Though the conflict was there long time ago but what has made it worse is due to the action of certain politicians within this Municipality. They have used their popularity to influence the youth in both families to riot against each other and this has lowered certain developmental activities within this area. Though there is a paramount chief here now but there are question marks regarding it because he is being appreciated only by part of the indigenes within the town because they were the ones that choose him making him to have little or no influence on others.*

An Elder in the community noted that:

*The Ghartey and Ayiribi-Aquah families are having one chief interest-the throne. Though they may have other alternative interests but the throne is all that all they*

are looking for hence the chieftaincy dispute. So, if you ask me, the main actors in the conflict are the Ghartey and the Ayiribi-Acquah families.

One community member disclosed that:

*The conflict is here because of the Ghartey and the Ayiribi-Acquah families. The argument is that the actors can be distinguished as the Ayiribi-Acquah and the Ghartey families. They all want to rule Effutu traditional area. They are fighting for the throne their interest is power and money. Ghartey and Ayiribi-Acquah families are main cause of the conflict. Others include Asafo company, Families/Clans Heads of families, Government institutions in Winneba and Businessmen in town.*

A member of the Ghartey family stated that:

*The main actors are the Ghartey and the Ayiribi-Acquah families. In 1979, the case was taken to the central regional house of chiefs and the ruling was in favour of the Ghartey family and since that time the Ayiribi-Acquah family do not want to accept the ruling. However, many people have joined the conflict. The political parties, the police who dispel crowds and the you.*

A member of the Ayiribi-Acquah's Royal Family stated that:

*The Effutu Chieftaincy dispute is an old issue dating years ago but I cannot tell the years exactly but I am aware that it has been about land ownership between Ghartey's Royal family and Ayiribi-Acquah's Royal Family. Even some businessmen in town are involved though most of them are not indigenes but their influences on the indigenes have made the situation demoralizing because they have been forced to take sides. This dispute between these houses on patrilineal and matrilineal succession has degenerated into violent clashes involving not only the family members but other people residing in the town. This has affected the traditional area to the extent that Winneba has been tagged "the town of stones".*

An opinion leader asserted:

*Government interferences have resulted in the inability of the two families to arrive at a compromise. Now the current MP has been involved in the dispute. He is belonging to the New Patriotic Party (NPP) backs the Ayiribi-Acquah's Royal Family to support the Fancy Dress Festival (FDF). The potent festival in the land which is the Aboakyir is observed by members of the Ghartey Royal family who are presumed to be National Democratic Congress (NDC) members. It is clear that most residents now put their energies into celebrating the Fancy Dress Festival due to the power of the current MP in the area. Currently, Effutu have a chief who has the gazette of the District, Regional and National Houses of Chiefs. However, the indigenes of Winneba continue to question his legitimacy with the*

*claim that he was not taken through all the processes needed for his enstoolment.*

These assertions suggest that the major factor contributing to this dispute is the quest of the two families (Ghartey family and Ayiribi-Acquah family) over the throne. Whereas they are the main actors they have since gotten support from political parties and youth groups. The police are perceived as actors, mainly because they have been acting to dispel demonstrators and prevents people from attacking others. There are many arguments that can be made. First, the main actors in the conflict are the Ghartey and the Ayiribi-Acquah families.

Second, political party functionaries have become actors in the conflict. Third, the youth and other community members have become conscripted into the conflict. This would support that the conflict is permeated in different aspects of the community. Nearly all groups have become actors in the conflict for one reason or the other. As one comment supported earlier, market women, police and all members of the community have become actors. Therefore any result of the conflict would involve addressing a broader spectrum of actors beyond the royal families involved in the conflict. Also, the many actors valued in the conflict explains why the state of chieftaincy in Effutu Traditional Area has become intractable.

The entire community has become actors. In my view all of us have been affected in one way or the other: so we are all actors.

*Those of us in the conflict here at Effutu We are all brothers and sisters, we are one people but lack of understanding, brainwashing and political interference is causing this division from the women to the youth. From the elders to the chiefs. The royal family as well as those who are not the royal family. We are all part of the conflict in one way or the other. The Ghartey and Ayiribi-Acquah families have not been good to the people of Effutu at all. Why can't they find a lasting solution to this conflict? I know their forefathers will not forgive them if they continue like this. But they are not alone. Politician and other actors have become part.*

Also, it can be inferred from the above statements that there are competing interests. The conflict has several actors whose interest is the main cause of the conflict. Chieftaincy dispute within the two Effutu Royal Families, where the Ghartey Royal family and the Ayiribi-Acquah Royal Family over succession to the late Effutu paramount stool. Added to this conflict are a rivalry between the two Asafo (hunting) companies and interference by partisan politicians. The ongoing conflict has diminished public participation in the Aboakyere festival. Some big business concerns in the immediate past used to sponsor advertisements and donated resources in support of the festival, but in

recent years have withheld their donation and participation.

In an interview with a native of Effutu, who happens to be a very key member of the Simpa Otuano Royal family, it became known to the researcher that the current chieftaincy dispute in Effutu dates back to colonial times, precisely 1923. According to him, there is only one gate to the throne of a chief in the Effutu Traditional Council. He pointed out that the only family that has the power to enstool and dethrone chiefs in Effutu Traditional Council is the Otuano Royal Family. He also made it clear that the family was patrilineal one, and for that matter, male children of the chiefs have the right to inheritance. The respondent also established the fact that the stool name for the chieftaincy is "Nana Ghartey"

### **The role of chieftainship in the development of Effutu Traditional Area**

The insight gained from the discussions regarding participants' views on the role of chieftainship in the development of Effutu Traditional Area revolves around issues of different people having different opinions and perceptions about development in the area. A native of the town expressed that:

*This conflict is popularly a major debilitating factor denying the area of its actual developmental targets. This is so because it has created disunity among the indigenes in this town which in turn has made some of us see others as aliens, and for that matter, enemies. Comparatively, it has made it unfruitful for the two families to come together to lobby government and development partners to institute any meaningful projects in the area. Cooperation amongst the citizenry to embark on developmental programmes or to support its implementation is now fading away in this town due to lack of this kind of agreement between these two parties. For instance, the first Thursday of every month is set aside as national sanitation day by the Municipality but it always attracts low turn-out. This is because the chief occupying the position as of this time is only cherished by a particular group of the natives as their chief whilst the others regard him as a fraud by the chiefs for enstooling him on the throne. As a result of the fact that the chief occupying the position hails from the Ghartey family who is not supported by all the indigenes, his power is limited because he finds it challenging to sanction people and institutions operating in the area or to make them accountable, resulting in alleged corruption, abuses of office and financial misappropriations at the Municipal Assembly, National Health Insurance Scheme, hospitals, public toilets, waste dumping sites, etc. This is so because not all the people working in these institutions may be from his family or may support him as a visitor due to the politics being attached to this cultural phenomenon. As a result of these, it becomes challenging for chiefs of the area not able to play any key role in the district assembly system because it becomes uncertain as to the*

*required representative from traditional authorities to the assembly is to be chosen from.*

Also, the youth leader in the community opined that:  
*The Aboakyir festival is no longer celebrated the way it was years ago. This festival is celebrated when it comes to Ghanaian history because it attracts a lot of foreigners across the globe. This creates a lot of revenue for the indigenes within the town but due to this conflict, it has resulted in drawbacks in the manner in which it is being celebrated nowadays. This festival has attracted the attention of the Ghanaian tourism industry for many years but the conflict has withdrawn the magnitude of attention of the industry simply because they do not know the right person to resort to for its effective organization. This has slowed down certain developmental activities within the town. For example during the past, before the commencement of the festival, there are certain residential areas in the town that are well-furnished in order for those that come to witness the occasion to have a suitable place to lay their heads the former and also to develop certain parts of the town the latter. Developmental activities are at times nothing good to come about within the town. Developmental activities that are meant to be undertaken are sometimes withheld as a result of the fact that officials to commence the work usually do not know the exact person to resort to in case they face a problem.*

An elder also had this to say:

*In Simpa, the predominant cultural activity that had captured the attention of people across the township and the government is the Aboakyir festival. Due to this conflict, it has affected how it is being organized nowadays. The tourism industry who use to sponsor it in one way or the other to enhance its effectiveness now feel reluctant to invest into it vividly within these days. This is because the MP in the area is an NPP man and the members of this political party are in support of the Acquah's family and they support the FDF. Since the chief on throne now comes from this family, he pays little heed to the Aboakyir festival and concentrates much on the FDF which has affected all sorts of developmental activities within this area. In addition, the youth from those families sometimes engage in conflicts leaving some wounded making resources such as financial allocations which otherwise could be used for development are channeled into maintaining peace and security in these conflict areas.*

An opinion leader commented:

*I have witnessed on numerous occasions where some private individuals willing to establish their businesses in this town goes back with their money. All indigenes from the two families owe lands and considering the customs in every town, the chief usually have the mandate to allot the land to such individual. This usually happens when the owner of that piece of land is not from the Acquah's family. As a result, he/she do not*

recognize him as their king so for him to come into contact with the person to negotiate over the land becomes a problem and many people who wish to invest within the area use to leave because they do not want to engage themselves in the conflict. Clashes between these two families were recorded in several years ago during which a number of casualties were recorded and many people were displaced. This affected the activities of traders and businessmen/women being unable to engage in their commercial activities thereby leaving markets and business centers deserted. This resulted in huge decrease in revenue generation within the town. These violent clashes affected educational levels and also sidetracked government's attention from tackling pressing issues relating to development to restoring peace and order in Effutu Municipality.

An elderly man in the community expressed that: *Certain developmental activities in this town are lowered due to this conflict crisis. The manner in which certain infrastructural facilities were refurbished with new ones being developed to accommodate the tourists had undergone a lot of transmogrifications. This is because the Aboakyir festival is thought of being followed by the members of the NDC who are usually the Acquah's family. Because the chief occupying the seat is not from this family likewise the MP, they mildly support it which has made it to lose its value not attracting a lot of people as previous. They rather invest in the FDF which is a single day activity. The Aboakyir festival sustains economic development more than the FDF because it involves a number of days which make the tourists to stay in the area for some days and this helps businessmen and women to make better sales and in rendering profitable services to them. In the advent of this dispute these are lowered since the parties are not ready to come together to enhance its effective organization. In addition, certain businessmen who are usually politicians use to withdraw infrastructural projects they were willing to develop in this town because what I have observed is that immediately they find out that each of the two families belong to a respective political party. I know of one influential man in NDC who came here a time ago to establish a factory here but after finding out that the chief is solidly behind NPP, he decided to withdraw his action because he said his company shall not be safe because even the MP in this town shall be against him especially when it comes to issues of who and whom to employ as workers. This was professed by some NDC leaders within the area and is true in most occasions within this town because even with the University in this town, he sometimes issue them on who they should employ.*

Another opinion leader commented:

*The two parties usually claim ownership of the throne so it is only members whose family member is on the throne is recognised by them whilst the other family*

*members disregard him. Since they are all from the same town, they have ownerships to certain parcels of lands. I have witnessed an occasion when certain mobile network officials came to look for a parcel of land to construct their network antenna. Unfortunately, the suitable place for its construction was belonging to a man who does not reside from the current chiefs' family though he agreed for them to begin its construction. It took an amount of time for the man to succumb to their quest. It is not only about this alone but other infrastructural developmental activities such as schools, roads, hospitals, etc.*

The comments highlight how the conflict practically had a negative impact on every aspect of the life of the people. The disagreement between the traditional authorities makes it difficult to champion development in the community and this has added to the economic woes and poverty of the people. Also, other social and economic facilities that could have triggered economic development in the community were inadequate and in some cases lacking in the community.

Finally, it was also found that the socio-cultural activities of the community have been affected negatively. Although the people still enjoy those social and cultural activities that bind them together as one family and one people. The development of the area seemed too shaped by some interests beyond those held by the royal groups. Interest including those who want to be control of the youth and the fancy dressing festival. This is further illustrated in other comments.

Another participant made the following interesting comments:

*National political parties seem to have politicized the two festivals in Effutu as a result of the chieftaincy disputes. It is indirectly observable that members of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) who are mostly from the Ghartey Royal family support the Aboakyir Festival while members of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) who are mostly from the Ayiribi-Aquah Royal Family support the Fancy Dress Festival (FDF). It is clear that most residents now put their energies into celebrating the Fancy Dress Festival. The FDF was started in the 1920s but was little known until recently has almost replaced the Aboakyir which for many years has been the most popular. This has affected the development of the community.*

This comment specifically highlights political interest. The conflict has evolved into a social stratification of the community into NDC group that supports Ayirebi-Aquah and NPP group that supports Ghartey. However, Ghartey himself is not politically supported by people from his family. Although Ghartey is supported by the NPP, his family members are mostly NDC sympathesers. The reverse of this is true for Ayirebi-Aquah

An elderly man in the community maintained that:  
*I am not quite sure of the development over the years but the dispute has been intermittent for a long period of time involving different faction with different interest key amongst them are the Gharthey and Ayiribi-Aquah families*

Currently, Effutu have a chief who has the gazette of the District, Regional and National Houses of Chiefs. However, the indigenes of Winneba continue to question his legitimacy, with the claim that he was not taken through all the processes needed for his enstoolment. This is making the role chieftaincy in development in Effutu Traditional Area unappreciable.

## VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that the government through the national house of chiefs and other stakeholders should endeavour to settle amicably the Effutu Chieftaincy dispute with immediate effect. In bringing peace to Effutu traditional area, government should institute, resource and empower a committee to resolve the cultural aspect of the chieftaincy conflict. The peace process should also incorporate other organizations such as the National Peace Council, the Christian Council and other civil societies. The work of these organizations will help bring sustainable peace in the area which will consequently harness local development.

All the royal families in the Effutu traditional area in the country should try to inculcate the habit of documenting all events that go on in the palace. For instance, if proper records are kept on eligible royals who could succeed a vacant throne; it would go a long way to help reduce disputes whenever a new chief is to be installed.

The Regional and National Houses of chiefs and copies should be given to each of the lineages and kingmakers in other to prevent the tendency of laid down procedure.

The royal families which have the right to nominate their members for enstoolment or enskinment should be registered with the traditional council, regional and national house of chiefs. This is to prevent unqualified lineage from a takeover when the stool is vacant.

Regular sensitization meetings and community education should be organized within the communities in the Effutu Municipality to sensitize stake holders about the value of community engagement in ensuring peaceful resolution of the dispute and promote development. This can be done in community and social gathering such church, durbar or through the use

of community information service and other radio stations.

## IX. CONCLUSIONS

Chieftaincy as an important social institution which binds the people together is burdened with numerous disputes hence a negative toll on development. Chieftaincy disputes are the misunderstanding, that occurs between two or more factions on the enstoolment or enskinment of a chief or the misunderstanding between an incumbent chief and some of his subjects. Discussions went into finding the actors and dynamics involved in the chieftaincy disputes in Effutu, effects of the disputes and some mechanisms that will help in ensuring peaceful co-existence in the Effutu Traditional Area were also discussed. Issues of over succession to the Effutu paramount stool, rivalry among the royal clans, rivalry between the two Asafo (hunting) companies and interference by partisan politicians and were all sited.

In order to facelift the image of Effutu Traditional Area and promote development suggestions were made to ensure peaceful resolution of the dispute. Measures such as rightful and lawful succession to the throne should be ensured, all disputants in the Effutu chieftaincy conflict should be invited to a mediation table by national house of chiefs and the regional house of chiefs which should be facilitated by the National Peace Council and Central Regional Peace Council, and participation should be extended to other external interest groups and persons to build an all-inclusive sustainable peace in the Effutu.

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