UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

WOMEN IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AMONG THE GONJA IN YAPEI, NORTHERN GHANA

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2014

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WOMEN IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AMONG THE GONJA IN YAPEI, NORTHERN GHANA

BY

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UDS/LAD/0035/11

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LAW, UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

MARCH, 2014

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere:

Candidate's signature:................................ Date: July 2, 2014

Name: Gariba Ayishetu

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertations of the University for Development Studies.

Supervisor's signature:................................ Date: 2/07/14

Name: Dr. Edward Salifu Mahama

ABSTRACT

As a global problem, the United Nations, NGOs, civil society organizations and other stakeholders have taken steps to prevent, minimize and find solutions to conflicts worldwide, through advocacy for peace or passing resolutions as measures to protect civilian population especially women and children who are most affected. Although most of these resolutions have favoured women, they are usually left out or insignificantly represented when it comes to peacebuilding process. Hence, the study examines and investigates the role of women in conflict management/resolution among Gonjas in Yapei in the Central Gonja District in Northern Ghana. A descriptive and cross-sectional study with Cochran's formula was used to estimate the sample size. A blend of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used to obtain results. Data collection tools used in the study included questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. Both primary and secondary sources of data collection were used. Findings of the study showed that, there were two destructive conflicts in Yapei which were intra-ethnic conflicts. Notwithstanding the significant role culture played in the exclusion of women in conflict management/resolution in the community, women play important roles (indoor) in peace-building. However, mixed reactions on women involvement in conflict management/resolution activities were realised. It is believed that men feel weak and intimidated to bring in women to take decisions on conflict. Aside this, the study also revealed that, there were some indigenous strategies used in conflict management/resolution in Yapei that include women persuading and influencing men to maintain peace in Yapei, mediation by local traditional elders, preaching of religious leaders and family heads controlling their respective families to maintain peace in the area. The study concludes that there is the need for government to support women empowerment and involvement in peace-

building programmes and activities. Policy makers need to understand and appreciate the important role women play during conflict and including them in their policy framework could lead to a conflict-free environment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere appreciation goes to the Grace of the Almighty Allah for the strength, wisdom, protection and direction that inspired me to write this dissertation.

In addition, my profound gratitude goes to my hardworking supervisor **Dr. Edward Salifu Mahama** for his immense support, attention, guidance, supervision and direction.

I am extremely grateful to the immediate past Pro-Vice Chancellor, **Prof. David Millar** for the immense support and encouragement given me during his tenure as the Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University for Development Studies. Furthermore, I wish to acknowledge the entire staff of the office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor, especially, Mr. Nurudeen Abubakar, Ms. Mahama Fati, Ms. Rahaina Tahidu of the UDS International and Jamal-Deen Gariba for their support in various ways. My appreciation also goes to the Management of the University for Development Studies, Tamale for giving me the opportunity to pursue this course.

I also wish to extend my deepest appreciation to the entire community members of Yapei, especially the chiefs and elders, for the cooperation and assistance given me during the data collection for this write-up.

Finally, I would like to thank all loved ones who have been of help in diverse ways to bringing this dissertation to a successfully completion.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my son, Jamal-Deen Gariba, all family members, Ms. Mahama Fati and Ms. Rahaina Tahidu of UDS, Tamale and all love ones.

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CHAPTER ONE
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In a keynote address to the house, at a Third International Conference of Africa Women's Forum held on 22 January, 2001 on "Women and Conflict Management in Africa", A. E. V. King, the Assistant Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, stated that over the past few decades, Africa had probably suffered more from armed conflict than any other continent. She indicated that, between 1960 and 1998, there were 32 wars in Africa, seven million lives were lost and over nine million people became refugees, returnees or were displaced. In 1996 alone, 14 out of the 53 countries of Africa were afflicted by armed conflicts, accounting for more than half of all war-related deaths world-wide. The crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo according to her, involved several States and millions of people of the Great Lakes Region. She concluded that, conflicts have changed in nature, from interstate conflicts to internal civil wars whose main victims are civilian populations as parties in conflict no longer aim at defeating their opponents, but inflicting pain and humiliation on civilians (King, 2001).

Additionally, the European Parliament (2000) reports stressed that, women become specific targets of rape, forced pregnancies, sexual slavery and assault as deliberate instruments of war. Women in areas like Sudan, Liberia, Uganda, Peru, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, Bangledesh, and former Yugoslavia etc. went through these atrocities. During the Bosnia-Herzegovina war for instance, thousands of women

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were reported to have experienced various sexual casualties and were forced to leave their families and communities behind due to shame (European Parliament, 2000).

Consequently, rape, sexual slavery, trafficking of women etc are the main issues that made it necessary for the inclusion of gender equality and human rights programmes vital in managing or preventing violent ethnic conflicts. It is therefore very important to involve women in the process at an early stage to participate in all the stages of conflict management. Ghana is not excluded from these conflicts and their effects in recent times as most parts of the country experience one or more violent conflict situation(s) in which lives and properties are lost and a number of people displaced, causing government to spend huge sums of money on deploying security to the various affected areas in order to protect and prevent further escalation. Examples include, the Nkonya/Alavanyo, Dagbon (2002), Bawku, the Nafana and Ntore ethnic groups at Brohani near Wenchi, Brekusu near Aburi (2003) and Asutuare (2000), Effiduase-Asokore (2000) and Old Tafo (1996), Weija-Oblogo (2002) and Teshie ((1996; 1999) conflicts in Volta, Northern, Upper East, Brong Ahafo, Eastern, Ashanti and Greater Accra regions respectively (Tsikata and Seini, 2004 :25-27). The Gonjas are not an exception, as research has shown that, over the past decade, there have been rampant succession disputes among Gonjas. Examples include Yapei and Kusawgu in 1992 and at Daboya in 1994 (Brukum, 2004) and in more recently (2009) in Bole.

However, conflicts in the Northern part of the country (Upper East, Upper West and Northern Regions) appear to be increasing and their effects more devastating as huge sums of money are spent in maintaining peace in those conflict zones by the government

of Ghana which could have been used for development projects in those areas. Awedoba (2009:129) indicates in his "An Ethnography of Northern Ghanaian Conflicts: Towards A Sustainable Peace" that, "for the past twenty-two years, there has been intermittent outbreak of either intra-ethnic or inter-ethnic conflicts, between two or more ethnic groups and among same ethnic groups respectively, in the Northern Region". Conflicts could either be political, religious or social. Conflicts may also be the source of conflict since violent reactions could invite retaliatory responses (Tsikata and Seini, 2004). The Bawku and Dagbon conflicts are typical examples of very destructive conflicts in which lives and properties were lost (Hughes, 2003).

As a result, efforts are made by the Government of Ghana and some civil society organisations advocating for peace and stability in the country. Some of these civil society organisations include the Centre for Democratic Development (CDD), Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), Ghana Network for Peacebuilding (GHANEP), Women in Security Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP). Their main objectives are to advocate for peace. They under took various educative programmes on conflict management to minimize the consequences of conflicts and the need for peaceful environment.

Despite all the efforts made, the threats of conflict in Ghana are high as most of the conflicts were managed rather than resolved. Hence, conflict usually escalates or reoccur at the slightest misunderstanding or argument among the parties involved. Therefore, there is absence of total peace in conflict prone areas. The questions at stake are; what could be accounting for the persistence of conflicts? Can women play more active roles

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before, during and after conflict? Are women's roles recognized in conflict prevention, management and resolution in Yapei? This study seeks to address these questions but more specifically, assess women's role in conflict management and resolution in Yapei.

Due to the devastating nature of conflicts in contemporary times, where attention is said to have shifted to the civilian population, both national and international governments/bodies /civil societies show interest in dealing with conflict as a matter of concern to all since the consequences could either be directly or indirectly that needs to be handled professionally in order to address these conflict not to escalate and to minimize the high risk for violence and instability. In this regard, the Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation in the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA/CMM) of the USAID was established to provide technical leadership on conflict, instability, extremism, terrorism and insurgency to Missions and Washington bureaus which are currently operating in areas that are either in conflict, coming out of conflict, or are at high-risk of violence and instability, or are facing growing extremist threats (USAID, 2007).

In view of the above, the USAID Report (2007) further indicates that, despite the implementation of strategies and plans to address the negative effects of conflict on women especially, the effects of conflict are still alarming and frightening. Consequently, the report catalogued innovative measures that are put in place by USAID to address circumstances surrounding conflict by broadening its developmental programmes as well as ensuring these programmes are well executed in order to minimize the consequences

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and volatilities involved. The report stressed further that, "in most cases, women's efforts towards peace go unrecognized and are under-reported even though, for the past decade, outstanding progress had been made as women performed a role in peace negotiations, they are usually left out of formal peacemaking activities, rebuilding destroyed economies and reconstructing war-torn societies, hence, there is the need for women to come to peace table" (Kvitashvili, 2007:4).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

According to UN Security Council Resolution 1385 (2004)1 adopted by the European Parliamentary Assembly on "Conflict prevention and resolution: the role of women", women are usually left out in peacebuilding decision making process due to their social statuses and sex, although women are believed to be the largest civilian population who suffer most during conflict situation. Hence, the report stressed the need for appropriate measures to ensure women empowerment and involvement in peace decision making process in order to achieve lasting peace. It also considers that women can play a particularly important role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. It is believed that empowering women in conflict situations would help prevent gender-based violence such as the abominable crimes of rape, forced pregnancy and sexual slavery. According to the EU Parliamentary Assembly, these crimes constitute grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and their Protocols, and should be prosecuted as such. It further stressed that, notwithstanding resolutions, appeals and recommendations of international bodies and the pressure of non-governmental organizations, Europe which passed resolutions in favour of women involvement in decision-making, failed to ensure women's full participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution as women are

continuously marginalized or excluded from any negotiation or diplomatic initiative. The Assembly sees the need to understand the effects of conflicts on women and taking appropriate measures to promote women's empowerment and equal participation in the peace process as the gateway to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security (European Parliament, 2004).

During the processes of the collapse of the former Yugoslavia and the USSR (UN 2002: 1), the European conflict which was extremely intense in the Balkans and the Caucasus, was considered as the most violent region in the world as the incidence of conflict accounted for two-thirds of wars in the early 1990s. However, "between 1997 and 1998, there was a sharp decline in conflict situation in Europe due to major internal changes" (Smith, 2004: 2-3).

In a similar vein, Stojsavljevic (1995:39) indicates that, "the war in former Yugoslavia highlighted rape as a strategy of war, whose aim was to humiliate enemy men and destroy the fabric of the families and societies as women being raped are usually considered not "clean" and will no longer have places in their respective families or communities. Raping and impregnating women also served as a strategy of "ethnic cleansing" as the Serbs describe the raped women as better to die than alive to shame their husbands, family and communities as well by given birth to the rapists". For instance, Bosnian women and girls were camped and systematically raped in the Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995) conflict (UN, 1998). During the same period, experiences of women as mentioned in UN (2002) report revealed that women's rights were seriously violated. Over 1,100 women were reported to be victims of sexual violence. Rape as a weapon of war in the then Yugoslavia was a violation of women's dignity and integrity which led

victims to flee to neutral grounds due to mental harm, seeking for peace within themselves and the children. These conflicts according to Smith (2004) were not entirely brought to an end but were rather suspended after peace agreements which apparently accounted for the resumption of conflict after some time. Asian women and girls popularly referred to as "comfort women" during the World War II, were victims of war as they were forced by the Japanese Army into military sexual slavery which was hidden for almost 50 years (Stojsavljevic, 1995). This accounted for the intervention by UN with numerous measures (ranging from resolutions to advocacy) to minimize these atrocities faced by women during war. It is in this regard that 25th of November every year is set aside as International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against women in recognition for women.

Hence, the United Nations Resolution 1325 came into being in order to address the disproportionate effects of conflicts on women and the need for women to be involved in all conflict peace-building efforts, especially at the grass root levels UN (2002).

In spite of the recognition by the United Nations of the importance of women's participation at all stages of conflict resolution and in post conflict development, Suthanthiraraj and Ayo (2010:17) pointed out that "the UN has never-appointed a woman as lead mediator". They also mentioned that women often participated as witnesses and observers than as members of negotiating teams and as signatories or mediators, although it is women who are the worse victims of conflict. According to Pankhurst (2009:1), "most approaches to peace-building have either ignored or marginalized issues of gender

and women. Hence, women consistently remain minority participants in peace-building projects; receive less attention than men in peace-building policies; and gender analysis rarely informs peace-building strategies".

As alluded to earlier, in contemporary times, the African continent has experienced the greatest destructive conflicts where women and girls were severely affected in various ways. Some of these countries include; Eritrea - Ethiopia, Angola, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Nigeria and recently, Ivory Coast. Ghana, although considered as a peaceful country, has experienced its own casualties in most parts of the regions. Despite the experiences women go through during these conflicts, they are usually neglected when it comes to decision-making processes geared towards peace.

Even though Ghana is generally considered as one of the most peaceful countries on the African continent, the country has experience violent ethnic conflicts (either inter or intra ethnic) in different regions at different times and of different magnitude (Awedoba, 2006). In recent times, conflict in Ghana has been of concern, as the entire country experiences conflict.

The effects of the above mentioned conflicts on women and children are grave and need to be brought to the fore. In the northern parts of the country and Yapei in particular, women and children usually face famine and other consequences as a result of such violence. Lives and properties are destroyed, economic activities come to a standstill, as people are displaced and have to seek for shelter elsewhere. Women and children are

usually victims and vulnerable during conflicts, examples of some conflicts are the Dagomba-Konkomba war and the Mamprusi-Kusasi conflict in Bawku.

Although, Ghana adopted policies geared towards the achievement of gender equality, so far as peace-building is concerned, the role of women in conflict management and resolution is still minimal.

There are limited scholarly works on the role of women in conflict management and resolution, especially in northern Ghana. The problem here is that, although it is believed that women suffer most during conflicts, they are usually left out or insignificant numbers of them participate in conflict decision making. Hence, the study attempts to find answers to; what roles do Gonja women play during conflict situations in Yapei community to manage and resolve conflict? This study therefore aims at assessing the role of women in conflict management and resolution among Gonjas in Yapei in the Central Gonja District of the Northern Region of Ghana.

2   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

2.1   Main Research Question

The main research question is:

What are women's roles in conflict management among the Gonja of Yapei in the Central Gonja District of Northern Region?

1.2.2   Specific Research Questions

1.   What indigenous strategies do the Gonja in Yapei use for resolving conflicts and maintaining peace?

2. How do the Gonjas in Yapei regard women's roles as mothers, wives and sisters as contributing to peace in the area?

3. What strategies do women in Yapei use in conflict management and resolution?

4. How could women's experiences in conflict be incorporated into effective conflict management strategies in Yapei?

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

.1 Main Objective

The main objective of this study is to assess women's role in conflict management among the Gonjas in Yapei in the Central Gonja District of the Northern Region.

.2 Specific Objectives

1. To explore the indigenous strategies Gonjas in the Central Gonja District use in managing conflict.

2. To assess the advisory roles Gonja women adopt in conflict management in Yapei

3. To investigate the role of women as mothers, wives and sisters in managing conflict in Yapei.

4. To examine the experiences of Gonja women during conflict and how they can be incorporated into effective conflict management strategies in Yapei.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The nature of conflicts in northern is characterized by massive destruction of lives and property, stagnation of economic activities leading to poverty and starvation, high rate of displacement of people and insecurity in the region. The inadequate resources that could

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have been used for basic infrastructure and social amenities in the region are usually diverted to managing conflicts and employing security agencies in maintaining peace in the area instead. Hence, the existence of economic and infrastructural stagnation in the region making the region not to develop as expected.

- The study therefore aims at finding indigenous strategies that women use in managing conflict that could be useful to peace process in Yapei and its surroundings.

- Furthermore, the study will contribute to existing knowledge on the significance of women's involvement in conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution and decision making process.

- The study will also enable researchers probe further into women's roles in conflict management and resolution.

- Suggestions and recommendations could help policymakers, peacemakers and other stakeholders to include women in their policy framing.

5 **SCOPE OF STUDY**

The study was targeted at only people living in Yapei township (Yapei town, Yapei quarters, madinaline and darisalam areas) and the sample size was 175 respondents out of the study population of 2,011 comprising the chiefs and opinion leaders, women's groups and other community members. The study was interested in involving the chiefs and elders due to past experience of chieftaincy dispute in the area that resulted into violent conflict and could also have relevant information. Women were also selected since the study was their roles in conflict management. Other community members selected for the

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study was to get the reality on the ground. The research was focused on assessing the role of women in (intra-ethnic-violent) conflict management among Gonjas at Yapei in the Central Gonja District of the Northern Region of Ghana. This study attempted identifying the roles of various women before, during and after conflict in Yapei, individuals/community members, as well as chiefs and elders of Yapei in the quest to manage and resolve conflicts was also looked at.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The major limitation was language barrier, which sometimes made it difficult for respondents who are illiterates to understand exactly the questions. The inability of the researcher to speak the local language was also a challenge. Some local assistants were engaged during the data collection. Some people were also hesitant to speak about the conflicts of Yapei.

ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This study comprises five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and discussed the experiences of women during and after conflict, both internationally and nationally (Ghana), efforts to involve women in decision-making on conflict management programmes since it is believed that women and girls are victims of conflict. Here, the main objective of the study was specified, the research problem and the profile of the study area among others were also presented.

Chapter two deals with relevant literature on the topic in order to have an idea about other people's views on women and conflict. Some concepts and definitions were discussed. The variables involved in conflict and conflict management were also discussed in detail.

Chapter three consists of the methodology used in the study. This included research design, the target population, the research design, data collection methods and tools of data collection.

Chapter four presents the data and data analyses and chapter five is the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

It is widely believed that women and children experience most of the effects of conflicts worldwide due to their physical and emotional vulnerability and yet, excluded in programmes on peace decision-making processes. During the World War II, women and girls suffered from different forms of human rights violation which was hidden for almost 50 years,   as many of them were either internally displaced or became refugees (UN, 2002) report. The UN, realizing the necessity to protect women, after the Beijing Platform for Action, declared its support for women empowerment, compiled a report on "women, peace and security" pursuant to the resolution 1325(2000).   Despite these measures by UN and other Civil Society Organisations, women are still not represented during peacemaking programmes both internationally and nationally. Even though, Ghana is a considered peaceful country, it has experienced conflicts in almost every region in different magnitudes where women were also affected. The purpose of this study therefore is to assess the role of the Gonja women in conflict management and resolution in Yapei in the Central Gonga District.

2.2   DEFINITION OF CONFLICT

What immediately comes to mind when conflict is mentioned is war, violence and bloodshed. Awedoba (2006) indicates that scholars attempt to describe conflict by using terms like violent, disagreements, dissonance, opposing views, divergent views and

incompatible goals that is between two or more parties. He further defined conflict as a relationship between two or more parties that centres on differences, disagreement on some issue of common interest or concern, divergence, incompatibilities, clash of wills and the like: which may involve antagonism and opposition. Wilmot and Hocker (1985) cited in Easterbrook et al (1993), defined conflict as an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals. This definition is also in Swanström and Weissmann, (2005:9), saw conflict as "perceived differences in issue positions between two or more parties at the same moment in time". According to Scheper (2002:2) "conflict is a perceived divergence of interests or a belief that current aspirations of different individuals or groups cannot be achieved simultaneously". Kolb and Putnam (1992:312) too admitted that, conflict "may exist when there are real or perceived differences that arise in specific organizational circumstances and that engender emotion as a consequence". Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (HIIK 2005:8) defines conflict as "the clashing of interests (positional differences) on national values of some duration and magnitude between at least two parties that are determined to pursue their interests and achieve their goals". Algert and Watson (2002) said conflict as a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values, or goals. Higgerson (1996:2) also indicated that, "whenever two or more people disagree about a decision or action, as a result of differences in perception, attitudes, beliefs, and expectations, then conflict is said to exist". Rahim (2001:32) saw conflict as "an interactive process manifested in incompatibility, disagreements, or dissonance within or between social entities" although he acknowledged that there is no accepted definition of

conflict. Wall and Callister (1995) cited in a Journal by Lee L. K. (2008) also acknowledged that, conflict is a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party. Lee (2008:12) also described conflict "as a situation in which two or more individuals operating within a unit appear to be incompatible". Mayer (2000:3) also viewed conflict as "a feeling, a disagreement, a real or perceived incompatibility of interests, inconsistent worldviews, or a set of behaviors".

From the above definitions, conflict could be said to be a struggle, between two or more persons or nations, over achieving their individual or group interests due to incompatible goals, views, interests and values. Apart from the interpersonal conflicts mentioned, the conflict situation in Yapei is therefore not far from all the definitions. Conflict can therefore be seen as a dispute between two or more parties (either within or without) as a result of incompatible interests, values or goals.

TYPES OF CONFLICT

Conflict can be categorized into several types depending on two major ways: "the basis of the sources or antecedent conditions that lead to the conflict and also, according to the levels of its origin such as intrapersonal, interpersonal, intra-group and intergroup conflicts" (Rahim, 2001:33). He went ahead to explain that, intra personal conflict also known as intra-individual or intra-psychic conflict occurs when there are conflicting interests, goals and values within the same level, whilst interpersonal or dyadic conflict refers to conflict between different levels. For example, in Schirch and Sewak (2005:3) "Some turn violence inward and engage in self-destructive behaviors such as drug and

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alcohol abuse, prolonged depression or even suicide. Interpersonal conflict according to Wilmot and Hocker (2010), explains the key dynamics of personal conflicts that we all face. Domestic violence in families is a pervasive form of violence, where usually women persistently experience brutalities meted out by male partners forms of domestic violence are usually by men against their female partners and children". To Tsikata and Seini, (2004), conflict could be classified as inter-ethnic`, intra-ethnic, religious, political, football etc. conflicts. They further explained that, inter-ethnic conflicts are conflicts between different ethnic groups whilst intra-ethnic conflicts are conflict within the same ethnic group. The Bawku conflict, between the Mamprusi and the Kusasis, is a typical example of inter-ethnic conflict, whilst the Dagbon War, is intra-ethnic conflict. Furthermore, Pankhurst (2000:2) also acknowledged that, "many of the conflicts today tend to be referred to as ethnic conflict, social conflict, or civil conflict and, where there is some cross-border activity or other state involved, international social conflict. They are also often described as being about identity, whether conceived in terms of an essentialist ethnicity, or regionalism, or tensions over state-formation. They are also cited at the margins of an increasingly globalised economy, and it is commonly accepted that this also has something to do with their root causes.

According Mayer (2000:6), "conflict is seen as arising from basic human instincts, from the competition for resources and power, from the social structure of the societies and institutions people create, from the inevitable struggle between classes".

2.4   NATURE OF CONFLICT

Human beings are nurtured differently in various homes and ethnic groups and their way of understanding issues differ from one person or group to the other (even within a particular home or ethnicity). This category of people think and behave differently with different cultures, values and norms, hence, conflict is said to exist, as indicated by Lee, (2008) as human beings interact in organizations, differing values and situations create tension. Bartlet (2009:2) pointed out that "conflict in itself is neither good nor bad. Conflict, can either be constructive and destructive, depending on how we understand and respond to it". Whilst Aula and Siira (2010:125) also admitted that, "conflicts are part of human consciousness in all aspects of life. One cannot avoid conflict, whether at home, at the office, or when watching television news". Bartos and Wehr (2002) also said conflict and change are inherent in the social world as order and permanence. Donohue A. (1992) indicated that, conflict is a part of everyone's life that is inevitable. The USAID also affirms and recognizes that, conflict is natural and justifiable within social and political life and is an inherent and legitimate part of social and political life, conflict is often a precursor to positive change, but the consequences of conflict can also be alarming (Kvitashvili, 2007). In addition to this, Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution Guide, by the U.S Figure Skating: 7 also acknowledged that, "conflict is a natural part of life and how it is dealt with leads to either a healthy or an unhealthy relationship". Algert and Watson (2002), also affirms the statement that, conflict is inevitable and its result is not predetermined. They however, admitted that, conflict might escalate and lead to nonproductive results, or conflict can be beneficially resolved and lead to quality final products or end results.

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Mayer (2000) opines that, conflict is normal, natural, inevitable and necessary in human lives. Whether at home, or at work, between nations, conflict is pervasive in every relationship. He also admitted that, the problem is not its existence but how to handle it. In order to understand conflict better, Mayer viewed conflict in a three-dimensional perspective that can help understand the complexities of conflict and why conflicts sometimes proceed in contradictory directions. He admitted that, none of these dimensions are static. These are viewing conflict as cognitive (perception), emotional (feeling) and behavioral (action).

- Conflict as a perception has both objective and subjective elements in the cognitive perspective. Here, conflict is belief or understanding that one's needs, interests, wants, or values are incompatible with someone else's.

- Conflict as feeling involves emotional reaction to situations or interaction that signals a disagreement of some kind. Emotions felt might be fear, sadness, bitterness, anger or hopelessness, or combination of these. Conflict exists when one person feels in conflict with another, even though the other person is unaware of those feelings. Emotions were described as the energy that fuel conflict, but at times also a key to deescalating it. Deutsch et al (2006) also agreed to Mayer that, most destructive conflicts are usually due to emotional intense.

- Conflict as action also consist of the actions that one takes to express feelings, articulate perceptions, and get his or her needs met in the expense of someone else's

ability to get his or her needs met. Mayer described this as exercising power, violent, destructive that could also be conciliatory, constructive, and friendly.

Donohue A. (1992) explained that, for one to understand conflict situation, four elements should be looked at. These include; conflict varies according to the extent to which it is out in the open (manifest) or hidden from view (latent); the perceive interference; needs and interests; and interdependence.

In explaining further, manifest conflict exist daily when people have differences and need to express them, by signs war, political strife and dissent. To him, Latent conflict consists of individual differences that continue to remain hidden from view, not because there is no conflict, but think avoidance is the best conflict management strategy. Hence, try to live with the problem. In addition, perceived interference, as he did indicate can trigger conflict in the sense that, each party sees the other as standing in the way of goal attainment, hence conflict flares up. As conflict erupts, people realise they depend on each other to resolve the issue. Even though, they may not like or trust one another but they remain interdependent until the conflict is resolved. Resistance to change occurs due to needs and interests based. The desire for respect, dignity, freedom, recognition, and self-worth (needs) are usually the motive behind conflict because people are ready and likely to defend themselves at all cost. In conclusion, "needs-centered disputes are more likely to become intense and lead to a dead end" (Donohue 1992:6), but interest based conflicts are easy to resolve.

Wilmot and Hocker (1998) argued that, parties in conflict engage in an express struggle and interfere with one another because they are interdependent. Pul (1994) affirms the existence of conflicts in the Northern Region as indicator of some degrees of interdependence among people involved these conflicts.

5 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION

According to Higgerson (1996:2), "the goal of conflict resolution is conflict elimination whilst conflict management is directed toward reducing destructive conflict but allows for the existence of constructive conflict". In addition, to Higgerson, conflict resolution is often an impossible task and not always a desirable goal and whoever accepts conflict resolution as the ultimate objective will certainly fail. However, he admitted that, whoever realizes that all conflict cannot or should not be eliminated, accepts conflict management as an objective, in the sense that, it helps understand some basic facts about conflict. "Conflict management is a theoretical concept focusing on the limitation, mitigation, and/or containment of a conflict without necessarily solving it. Conflict management involves acquiring skills related to conflict resolution, self-awareness about conflict modes, conflict communication skills, and establishing a structure for management of conflict in your environment" (Swanström and Weissmann, 2005:5). Algert and Watson (2002), also describe conflict management as the principle that all conflicts cannot necessarily be resolved, but learning how to manage conflicts can decrease the odds of nonproductive escalation. "Conflict management approach generally tends to focus more on mitigating or controlling the destructive consequences that emanate from a given conflict than on finding solutions to underlying issues causing it.

The use of military force for deterrence or in peace keeping is a typical conflict management strategy" Scheper (2002:2).

According to Bartos and Wehr (2002), human conflict is an ever present and universal social problem, and the methods to manage it are challenge for everyone, from average citizens to policy makers and social theorists. Wilmot and Hocker (2000:6) mentioned that, "unresolved conflict has a tremendous negative impact. It directly affects the parties themselves".

6   CONFLICT AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Though conflict situations are global issues, women and girls being molested in different ways are not involved in peace-building programmes and decision-making process. In order to address this situation, the European Parliamentary Assembly unanimously adopted United Nations Security Council Resolution (UN SCR) 1325 on October 31, 2000, at its 4213th meeting, on women, peace and security, in which it urges the member states to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. The UN SCR 1325 also stressed the importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in the promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution. The impact of SCR 1325 was further solidified by the establishment of national action plans by 24 nations, confirming government support at the national level for the inclusion of women. The UN is increasingly recognizing the position of women leadership in the prevention and management of conflict as the

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occurance of war mostly affect women and children and expressed willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations (UN SCR 1325).

Research has shown that, the most affected population during armed conflict are women and children, Pankhurst (2009:1), indicated that, "most approaches to peacebuilding have either ignored or marginalized issues of gender and women. Women consistently remain minority participants in peacebuilding projects".

The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1385 (2004) "on conflict prevention and resolution: the role of women" stated that, conflict is a gendered activity where women and men have different access to resources, power and decision making before, during and after conflicts. The experience of women and men in situations of tension, war, and post-conflict reconstruction is significantly different as conflict situations differ in every part of the globe (European Parliament, 2004).

King (2001) acknowledged that, women in conflict decision making process are increasingly being recognised beyond the confines of the African continent engaging in grassroots activities (that serve as catalysts to motivate others to come together for peace), to a wider political roles such as humanitarian assistance, demobilization and disarmament, child and health care, hostage exchange, and using traditional African conflict management approaches such as abantu, and the peace tent, women's organizations in Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mali, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa and the Sudan have grown in strength and legitimacy(King, 2001).

The (1995) Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action also acknowledged the crucial role of women during armed conflict and the collapse of communities and called for the establishment of "an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective when addressing armed and other forms of conflicts (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995) report.

In addition, the UN has taken stringent measures to confirm its commitment to the rights of women and their role in the peace and reconstruction processes through the passage of Security Council Resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), and 1889 (2009). However, SCR 1820 also stresses the need to develop effective guidelines and strategies to enhance the ability to protect civilians, including women and girls. It also established a strong link between sexual violence and sustainable peace and security. Security Council resolution 1888 also provides concrete building blocks to advance its implementation. SCR 1888 signals a robust political commitment to addressing conflict-affected sexual violence as a peace and security issue (Alberdi, 2009). She also indicated that, it marks a significant engagement with the UN's new peacebuilding architecture and is an opportunity for women, peace and security advocates to engage over the coming years in providing recommendations for best women leadership and to ways to respond to women's needs in all peacebuilding contexts (Alberdi, 2009).

2.7   CONCLUSION

The world is experiencing different kinds of conflicts which could either be political (like in Ivory Coast and Mali and the numerous chieftaincy succession disputes in Ghana), ethnicity, (The Konkombas and the Dagombas, Nanumbas, Gonjas, and the Mamprusis

and Kusasis, Nafana and Ntore ethnic groups at Brohani, as examples of inter-ethnic conflicts and the Dagbon War as intra-ethnic conflicts in Ghana), religious (eg. northern Muslims and Southern Christians in Nigeria as we hear in radio and television sets, and also, clashes between the Tijaniya and Al Sunna Muslims at Wenchi and Tamale), invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan where several innocent lost their lives and displaced. Henceforth, conflict situation in the world is a serious concern to all. In view of this, governments, civil society organisations, non-governmental organizations, try to put in place some strategies and measures as to how to deal with conflicts globally (both national and international levels). Domestic violence of late has become scary in typical African homes that it should not be ignored.

Furthermore, Gender inequality is a major form of inequality that needs to be addressed (to include both men and women) in peace-building process to gear towards positive peace instead of men only in decision making process, since most at times, it is women and children who are victims of violent conflict (Alberdi 2009).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

According to Fisher (2007:40), a research methodology "is the study of methods which involves philosophical questions about what is possible for researchers to know and how valid their claims to knowledge might be". He further explained that, the link between understanding and action in interpretive research is mediated through people's thinking, values and relationships with each other.

All the methods used by a researcher during a research study are termed as research methods. They are essentially planned, scientific and value-neutral. They include theoretical procedures, experimental studies, numerical schemes, statistical approaches, etc. Research methods help us collect samples, data and find a solution to a problem. Particularly, scientific research methods call for explanations based on collected facts, measurements and observations and not on reasoning alone.

A Research methodology usually comprises the pathway to discovery of research answers to the existing problem logically. It usually includes the research design to be used, the population under study or the target population, source of data collection, data collection tools, the sample and sampling techniques that could help find accurate answers to the research problem under study and how data analysis will be done.

It is a systematic scientific process used or applied to solve an existing problem. Usually, the processes by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and

predicting phenomena are part of research methodology. It is also defined as "the study of methods by which knowledge is gained" and its aim is to give the work plan of research" (Rajasekar et al 2006:2). To Kothari (2009:24), "research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem".

Dawson (2002) also agrees with Flyvbjerg and went further to indicate that, the combination of the two approaches (triangulation) enables a researcher to work against the weaknesses in both qualitative and quantitative research. Therefore, this study is combined both qualitative and quantitative approaches, to find answers to the main research question.

2   RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan or structure that gives direction to researchers to achieve the research goal, by specifying how the research questions will be linked to the data, the research tools to be used and the procedures to use in answering them. This needs to follow from the questions, and fit in with the data, that could lead to the achievement of the intended objective.

Punch, (2010:48) however, pointed out that "the design is the basic plan for a piece of empirical research and includes five main ideas: strategy, conceptual framework, who or what will be studied and the tools and procedures to be used both for collecting and for analyzing empirical materials".

Also, Bryman, (2008:30), defines research design as "a framework for the generalization of evidence that is suited both to a certain set of criteria and to the research question in which the investigator is interested".

The main research design used in the study was descriptive survey in the sense that, conflict is full of emotions which can best be described. The descriptive research design was appropriate for this study, because it will provide rich descriptive details about the people, place and other social phenomena which include feelings and emotions of the people involved (Hall, 1999).

Hence, conflict by its nature, is a social phenomenon and the data collected on participants perception on the role and the involvement of Gonja women in conflict decision making process in Yapei require a descriptive design. This kind of data allows for in-depth understanding and interpretation of phenomena such as the involvement of women in conflict.

SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SIZE

Sampling is "taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe" (Osuala, 2007:114). Sampling is a procedure, where a fraction of the data is taken from a large set of data, and the inference drawn from the sample is extended to the whole group (Cochran, 1953). Babbie (2005) also saw sampling as a process of selecting units of observations.

In addition, Kreuger and Neuman (2006) indicated that, a sample is a subset of a study population meant to be studied in order to make inferences. The initial goal is to get a representative sample of the target population in order to be able to generalize, hence,

researchers focus on the specific techniques that will yield a highly representative sample. This study therefore sampled from the Yapei community as it was impossible to use all the community members for the study.

^ 3.1   Population of the Study

The total population of the study area is 3,868 and the sample frame of the study was 2,011 that consisted of 21 women leaders residing in Yapei, 22 Chiefs and Elders of Yapei and 1,968 community members (both men and women) of Yapei, of the Central Gonja District in the Northern Region of Ghana.

3.2   Sample Size

Miaoulis and Michener (1976) cited in Israel (2012) said that besides the purpose and population size, the level of precision, the level of confidence or risk and the degree of variability are the attributes needed for the determination of the appropriate sample size. Hence, Sample sizes according to Onwuegbuzie J. and Leech L. (2007:5), sample size "should not be too large that will make it difficult to extract rich data". In a similar way, they also indicated that, Sandelowski pointed out in (Flick, 1998; Morse, 1995), that, a sample should not be too small that will make it difficult to achieve data dissemination and theoretical saturation (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2007:242).

Cochran's formula was used to calculate the sample size. Using precision of 5% and 95% confidence interval, z = 1.96. The sample size was calculated by using

$$N = \frac{Z^2(P)(1-P)}{e^2}$$

Where;   Z = 1.96 which associated with 95% CI

e = 5% which is associated with 5% probability of the research finding been due to chance.

P =13.1% which is the estimate prevalence of conflict in Yapei

$$= \frac{1.96^2(13.1)(100-13.1)}{5^2} = 174.93 = 175$$

Therefore, a sample size of 175 community members was used out of a targeted population of 2,011. Of those who participated, 90 were males and 85 were females representing 51.4% and 54.6% of the target population respectively.

3.3   Sampling Techniques

The two sampling techniques, probability and non-probability were both used as indicated earlier. For the probability sampling, simple random and systematic samplings were used. Out of a population of 2,011, a sample size of 175 respondents was obtained using Cochran's formula. This consisted of 22 chiefs and elders of Yapei, 21 women (7each from 3 women's groups), 117 community members (both men and women) and 15 others who were non-natives of Yapei but stayed in Yapei. The systematic sampling was used to select 21 members from three women's groups for interviews using a sampling interval of 5.

Furthermore, purposive sampling, as a non-probability sampling, was used for the selection of people who had adequate knowledge and information on the subject matter.

These included some opinion leaders, public institutions such as the Central Gonja District Assembly, eyewitnesses and some conflict victims.

3.3.4 Simple Random Sampling

This sampling technique ensures that each element in the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample. Random numbers are usually generated for selection of a sample with the formula of probability of selection = sample size ÷ population size.

A simple random sampling method was used in selecting three women's groups out of five women's group for interviews. These five women's groups included; Kanyitiwale Women's Group in Yapei Darisalam, Senikowuli Women's Group in Yapei Madinaline, Bakuwale Women's Group in Yapei Darisalam, Nyifianoto Women's Group in Yapei town and Jiminiaba Women's Group in Yapei town. The names of these groups were written on paper and mixed up and three were randomly chosen. Those that were picked were Kanyitiwale, Senikowuli and Jiminiaba women's groups as the sample for the five groups.

3.5 Systematic Sampling

Systematic sampling was used to select 7 respondents each from the three women's groups. Each group had 35 members. Here, in every 5th number of the 35, a selection was made.

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3.3.6 **Purposive** Sampling

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that the researcher chooses or decides who should be selected as an element of the sample. Hence, the population has no equal chance of being selected. Sampling was done where information needed was obtained from chiefs, elders, opinion leaders, public institutions such as the Central Gonja District Assembly, eyewitnesses and some conflict victims due to the characteristics those persons possessed that was relevant to the study.

4 SOURCES OF DATA AND DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Data were collected using both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected using questionnaires, focus group discussions and interviews. Questionnaires were designed and used in collecting both qualitative and quantitative data from all the 175 respondents comprising 90 males and 85 females. Out of which 22 were administered to chiefs and opinion leaders of Yapei, 8 women leaders, 130 questionnaires were also administered to the ordinary community members (both males and females) and 15 to others. Focus group discussions were another research tool used in collecting in-depth data from 7 women in each of the 3 women's groups. Interviews were used to collect data from three women groups in the community. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, internet and reports.

3.4.1 **Questionnaires**

Questionnaires are an inexpensive way to gather data from a potentially large number of respondents (Dawson, 2002). This data tool was designed carefully in order that data

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representative enough for easy and accurate interpretation of the results. Structured and close-ended questionnaire was however used for the quantitative data whilst semi-structured and open-ended questionnaire was designed for qualitative data to facilitate analysis of the two simultaneously. This section was divided into four parts; the background information was combined with the indigenous strategies women use in maintaining peace in Yapei; how the Gonja women are regarded as mothers, wives and sisters that could help in the maintenance of peace in the area and also; how women's experiences during conflict could be incorporated into effective conflict management strategies in Yapei.

4.2   Interviews

Interviews were used for in-depth information on the indigenous conflict strategies and the perception of respondents on women's role and involvement in conflict management/ resolution activities and decision making process in Yapei. Interview schedule was designed for all the 127 respondents.

4.3   Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussion is a qualitative research technique that was initially developed to give marketing researchers a better understanding of the data from quantitative consumer surveys.

According to Kumar (1987), focus group discussion (FGD) is a purposively selected set of participants gathered to discuss issues of concerns based on a list of key themes drawn up by the researcher.

The USAID (2008) report also defines focus group as a planned, facilitated discussion among a small group of stakeholders designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment that usually consists of 7 - 10 participants. It is regularly used as a means of triangulation with other data collection methods. This tool is described as a good tool for exploration, generating innovative ideas, testing these ideas and determining the differences in the opinion between various stakeholder groups. It is also less expensive, simple and very flexible format that allows respondents to elaborate upon their answers. Hence, this tool was very appropriate for the study. Three focus group discussions were organised. Each focus group discussion was made up of 7 women from each group.

5   DATA ANALYSIS

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for the analysis using questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. Sorting and coding of data collected from field and software was done simultaneously. Tables, histograms, bar and pie charts were used for data presentation and analysis using Microsoft Excel software based on the information acquired from the PASW.

3.6   DISTRICT PROFILE

3.6.1   Physical Characteristics

The Central Gonja District is one of the twenty six (26) districts of the Northern Region. It was carved out of the West Gonja District in 2004 as part of the government's efforts to further decentralise governance.

The Central Gonja District located at the southern end of the Northern Region of Ghana. It shares boundaries to the north with the Tamale Metropolis, the Kintampo North District of the Brong Region to the south, East Gonja District to the East and the West Gonja District West (Central Gonja District Assembly Records).

It covers a total land area of 233 Km2, representing 12% of the total landmass of the Northern Region (Central District Assembly Records).

Relative humidity is between 90% during the rainy season but is as low as 20% during the long dry season. Though the rain pattern constitutes a major limiting factor affecting agricultural activities the district, rainfall in the district is relatively more stable and reliable than in the Northern Region (Central Gonja District Assembly Records).

The Central Gonja District in the tropical continental zone. Annual rainfall is unevenly distributed months that is, May to October. The mean annual rainfall ranges 1500 mm with its peak in September. It has a slightly longer dry season rest of the northern region (Central Gonja District Assembly Records).

The District is endowed aesthetic features located in various parts of the district. These include the Volta Lake in areas like Buipe which can be used for outdoor recreation camping. Also found in the area are a number of hills, valleys, rocks and outcrops considerable beauty that represent important heritage

facilities and potential attractions to tourists. The rich culture of the people, which is manifested in the traditional architecture, festivals (particularly Damba), dressing (renowned Gonja smock) and traditional dances are of considerable beauty (Central Gonja District Assembly Records).

.6.2   Climate & Vegetation

Temperatures are generally high and exhibit seasonal variation. The district has a mean annual temperature of 35°C with the maximum temperature of about 40°C usually recorded around March-April. Temperatures are lowest, on average 22°C, between November and January due to the influence of the north-easterly winds otherwise known as harmattan

6.3   Cultural Heritage and Customs

According to the 2000 Population and Housing Census, the district has a population of 69,665. At a growth rate of 3% (higher than the national average), the population is projected to reach 110,127 by 2015. The projected increase is partly due to the gradual return of people displaced by the ethnic conflicts of 1990 and 1996 and the increasing influx of migrant farmers from other districts and regions, a manifestation of the good soils for agriculture. The youth constitute about 50% of the population requiring the provision of appropriate facilities and opportunities for youth development (education, heath, recreation etc). The current population growth trends, if not addressed will undermine economic growth. The population density is relatively low, about 8.3 persons per square kilometre but is unevenly distributed. Settlement concentrations are found along the Buipe-Fufulsu- Yapei-Sankpala corridors.

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Males constitute 51 % of the population. This is due to the fact that the incidence of migration to the south is higher among females than male. Besides, most of the large population of in-migrants to the area for farming are predominantly men. The population of the district is predominantly rural. About 90% of the population is located in rural communities with populations of less than 500 people. The population is concentrated in a few centers including Buipe (7,692), Yapei (3,868) and Mpaha (3,674).

The Gonja are the predominant ethnic group in the district. Gonjas constitute over 80% of the total population. Other major ethnics include Dagombas, Hanga, Mamprusi and Dagaaba. There are three main religious groups in the district, namely Islam (70%), Christianity (18%) and traditional worship (12%). There is a harmonious co-existence among the ethnic groups and religious groupings and this constitutes good potential for community participation in local development activities and the establishment and growth of businesses.

6.4   PROFILE OF YAPEI

Yapei is one of the largest and densely populated communities in Central Gonja District with its population of 3,868 according to the 2000 Population and Housing Census. It is located on the Tamale-Kintampo main road that shares boundaries with Sankpala to the north, Kusawgu to the east, Fufulsu to the west and Buipe to the south.

Islam dominated by 73% of the religious groups in Yapei, followed by Christianity (20%) and traditional religion (7%). The Gonja is the predominant ethnic group in the community. Other minor ethnics include Dagombas and Ewes also exist.

Majority of the community members have obtained at least basic education and farming especially fishing is the main occupation of the people. Most farmers practice mixed farming (animal rearing, fishing at the same time do crop farming). The soil is alluvial soil which is fertile and good for crop farming. The White Volta passes through Yapei from Daboya to Yeji which finally to the Lake Volta. It is as this regard that fishermen (usually the Ewes) got attracted to the community and finally settled there.

The people of the Yapei community are generally very skillful and innovative in several areas including farming, fishing, crafts such as carving, weaving, food processing, blacksmithing etc. The skills, which are readily available, are a good potential for the development of both the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors of the local economy and also for supporting new businesses. (This profile was acquired from Central Gonja District website).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1   OVERVIEW

This chapter presents the analysis, findings and discussions of data obtained during the field work. The presentation describes frequency distribution of various variables from respondents by means of tables in figures, charts and graphs to depict the outcome of the study on the role of Gonja women in conflict management/resolution in Yapei. Findings however, are represented in relation to the thematic areas contained in the objective of the study based on the views of respondents. This segment begins with the background and bio-data of respondents. It however, concludes by interpreting the results and drawing conclusions based on the views of the respondents on the role of Gonja Women in conflict management/resolution in Yapei in the Central Gonja District.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for the analysis using responses from close ended questionnaires and interviews for the background and biodata of respondents. The open-ended questionnaire facilitated the collection of in-depth information from respondents for analysis of the perceptions of the involvement of women in conflict management or resolution and decision making programmes.

Histograms, pie charts and tables were also used for the presentation of results on indigenous strategies used in managing conflict in Yapei, women's role in managing conflict, perception of respondents about the involvement of women in decision making programmes and how women's experiences during conflict situation could result in effective conflict management strategies in Yapei .

4.2   **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS**

Demographic data of respondents are the unique features that distinguish respondents from each other and make it easier for identification. Data on respondents on their background information is presented and discussed in this segment. Although, being a native of Yapei or not, status in the community, age, sex, religion, educational levels of respondents were not considered in the sampling of respondents, patterns of responses are along these lines. Therefore, these factors were included in the study and their various distributions are specified and discussed.

Out of 175 respondents selected for the study, the detailed analysis of the data indicated that 77% of the respondents were natives of Yapei whilst the remaining 23% were non-natives, although the interactions with them and residents of Yapei showed that they could be described as natives because they were born and have lived all their lives in Yapei. As illustrated below in Table 4.1, it was realized that, although some respondents were not natives of Yapei they have lived and settled in there for various reasons and have more or less become part of them.

TABLE 4.1: Residential Status of Respondents

Resident	Frequency	Percentage
Native of Yapei	135	77.14
Non-Native of Yapei	40	22.86
Total	**175**	**100**

Source: Field work, 2013

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On the part of the respondents' statuses within the community, it was also revealed that about 13% of the respondents represented the chiefs and opinion leaders of Yapei, 12% represented women leaders, 67% represented the ordinary community members and 9% of respondents being others. This is shown below in Table 4.2 illustrating the residential statuses of respondents.

Table 4.2: Social Status of Respondents

Status in Community	Frequency	Percentage
Chiefs and Opinion Leaders	22	12.57
Mangazia/Women leaders	21	12
Ordinary Community Members	117	66.86
Others	15	8.57
Total	**175**	**100**

Source: Field work, 2013

With the age distribution of respondents, as indicated below, the study revealed that, those who obtained the ages of 43 years and above were the majority of respondents representing 22%, whilst ages between 18 and 22 years were the least representing 8.57% of the respondents. The ages between 23-27, 28–32, 33-37 and 38-42 years however were 18%, 13%, 20% and 19% of respondents respectively.

Table 4.3: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-22	15	8.57
23-27	31	17.71
28-32	22	12.57
33-37	35	20
38-42	33	18.86
43+	39	22.29
Total	175	100

Source: Field Work, 2013

The sex distribution of respondents that was also obtained during the study revealed that, the Males represented 51% of the respondents whilst the remaining 49% were females. Table 4.4 below, illustrates the sex distribution of respondents.

Table 4.4: Sex Distribution of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	90	51.4
Female	85	48.6
Total	175	100

Source: Field Work, 2013

However, with the marital status of respondents, those who were married represented 57%, singles represented 29% and 7% represented widows and widowers of the respondents. The remaining were those who were divorced representing 3% and those who were separated from their spouses representing 3%. Table 4.5 below illustrates the marital status of respondents.

Table 4.5: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	99	56.6
Single	51	29.1
Widowed	13	7.4
Divorced	6	3.4
Separated	6	3.4
Total	175	100

Source: Field work, 2013

Information on religious background was also captured. The study clearly revealed that, majority (73%) of the people living in Yapei practiced Islam, whilst those affiliated with traditional religion were 7% and Christians represented 20% of the 175 respondents. See Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Religious Distribution of Respondents

Region	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	35	20
Islam	127	72.6
Traditional	13	7.4
Total	175	100

Source: Field Work, 2013

From the figure below, a significant proportion of respondents representing 26% did not acquire formal education, majority (30%) of them had formal education up to the secondary school level and 16% of the respondents had formal education up to Tertiary level whilst 28% had formal education at least to the basic level.

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Fig. 4.1: Educational Levels of Respondents
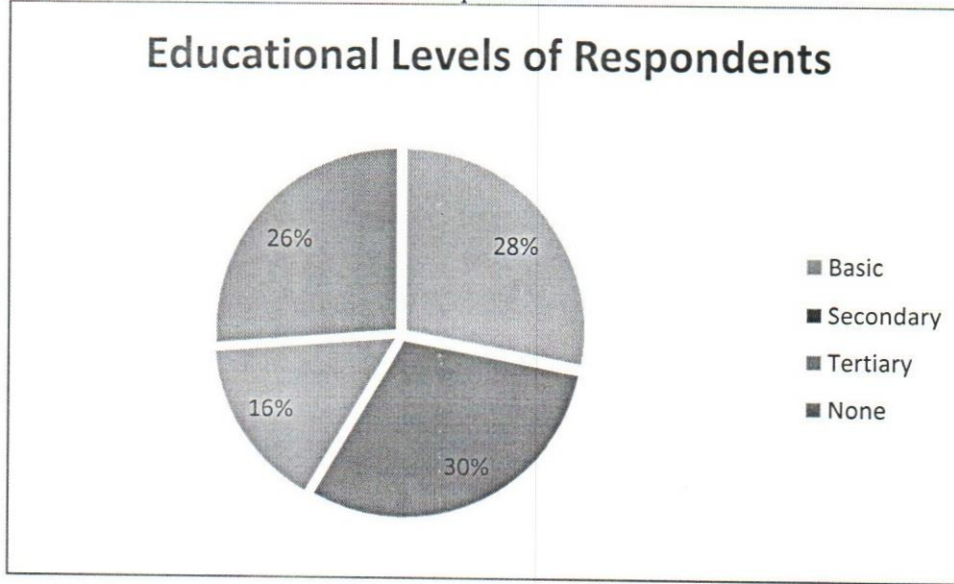
Source: Field Work, 2013

Occupational status of respondents also revealed that 13% of respondents were teachers or lecturers, 15% of the respondents were petty traders and 16% were working in various public institutions. The rest included farmers representing 37% of the respondents indicating that they were in the majority, 4% of them representing Artisans, 9% of them as Hairdressers/Taylor/Seamstress and "others" representing 6% of the respondents.

Below Table 4.7 is an illustration.

Table 4.7: Occupational Status of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentages
Teacher/Lecturer	22	13
Petty Trader	27	15
Work In Public Institution	28	16
Farmer	65	37
Artisan	7	4
Hairdresser/Tailor/Seamstress	16	9
Others	10	6
Total	**175**	**100**

Source: Field Work, 2013

TWO MAIN CONFLICTS IN YAPEI – A CASE STUDY

Two major Conflicts were experienced in Yapei although other minor conflicts occurred. One was caused by the relocation of Yapei market in 1999 from Yapei Township to Yapei quarters and the other resulted from the enskinment of Yapei Chief (Yapeiwura) in 2005. These conflicts were so destructive to the extent that, many became homeless due to massive burning of houses. The intense security presence in the area was so frightening in both conflicts. These were the two destructive conflicts that Yapei ever experienced for the past eight years on which the analysis is solely based.

It was also revealed that, one Amanfo alias Charles Tailor, engineered the movement of the market due to his political influence and selfish interest. This idea however, did not go down well with the people residing in Yapei town. Hence, conflict escalated between the town people and the residents of the Yapei quarters over the relocation of the Yapei Market. This was however, resolved out of court as various stakeholders such as the

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District Assembly, Chiefs and Opinion Leaders, Religious Leaders, Civil Society Organisations and all representatives of the parties involved in the conflict, including women leaders. All the parties came together to resolve the issue by understanding each other and showing the willingness to compromise. During the conflict related to the relocation of the Yapei market, women were actively involved in peace talks and their suggestions were taken into consideration since majority of the people who used the market were women. The women agreed to the movement of the market just to end the conflict.

The enskinment of two Yapeiwuras, also generated conflict between the people of Yapei and the Kusawguwura, where the Jakpa and Adama gates clashed over the issue. This conflict was however resolved through a court injunction on the enskinment of the Kusawguwura. On the particular conflict, women were not part of the peace-process except the Queenmother of the area.

Other minor conflicts included the struggle over the ownership of land between Gonjas and Dagombas as well as political differences that occured occasionally.

3.1 Women Involvement in Conflict Management/Resolution

The study also revealed that, although women were involved in managing and resolving the market issue, they were not involved in resolving the chieftaincy conflict. The perception of respondents was that, market issues were for women whilst chieftaincy issues were reserved for men only as culture does not permit the involvement of women in the resolution of any chieftaincy conflict.

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Women managed these conflicts effectively by talking, pleading and persuading their husbands, brothers and sons to prevent conflict from escalating. Out of sympathy and love, the men listen to their plea and this minimizes conflict escalation in the area.

Some however, did not realize that persuasion was an effective role the women play in managing conflict. It is agreed in both Chaiken et al (2005) and Horowitz (2012) that, persuasion plays a vital role towards the success of conflict resolution. They also added that, persuasion is one of the significant characteristics a negotiator needs in order for optimal settlement of conflict.

CAUSES, TYPES AND NATURE OF CONFLICT AND WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN CONFLICTS IN YAPEI

This part of the study discusses in detail the causes, types, nature and women's involvement in conflict management and resolution in Yapei. As to whether Yapei ever experienced conflict, 100% of the respondents indicated that, there have been some conflicts in the past in Yapei. However, only 2% represented minority and 36% who ever experienced three (3) and two (2) conflicts respectively in Yapei. Majority of 62% of them also ever experienced one (1) conflict. This is illustrated below in Table 4.8 of the number of conflicts of the respondents.

Table 4.8: Number of Conflicts in Yapei

Number of Conflict	Frequency	Percentage
One	108	62
Two	63	36
Three	4	2
Total	175	100

Source: Field Work, 2013

In addition, the study also observed that, multiple responses were given by respondents on causes of the conflicts. It was revealed that, majority representing 75% of the respondents maintained that, the relocation of the Yapei market from Yapei town to Yapei quarters was the cause of the conflicts, as against 53% who indentified the causes of the conflict as being a result of chieftaincy succession. The rest of 7% and 1% of them said, conflict was due to power struggle over landownership among the Gonjas and Dagomba settlers and religious difference among natives of Yapei respectively. This is illustrated in Table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9: Causes of the Conflicts of the 175 Respondents

Causes of Conflict	Frequency	Percentage	Ranks
Relocation of Yapei Market	132	75	1st
Chieftaincy Succession	92	52	2nd
Power Struggle over Landownership	13	7.43	3rd
Religious Difference	2	1	4th

Source: Field Work, 2013

Furthermore, the study revealed that, most of the conflicts in Yapei were intra-ethnic conflicts representing 89% of the respondents with 11% of them maintaining that, conflict were inter-ethnic. In fact, in the case study of the two major conflicts, it was realised that both conflicts were intra-ethnic conflicts between only Gonjas and not any different ethnic group.

See fig. 4.2 below.

Fig. 4.2 Types of Conflicts
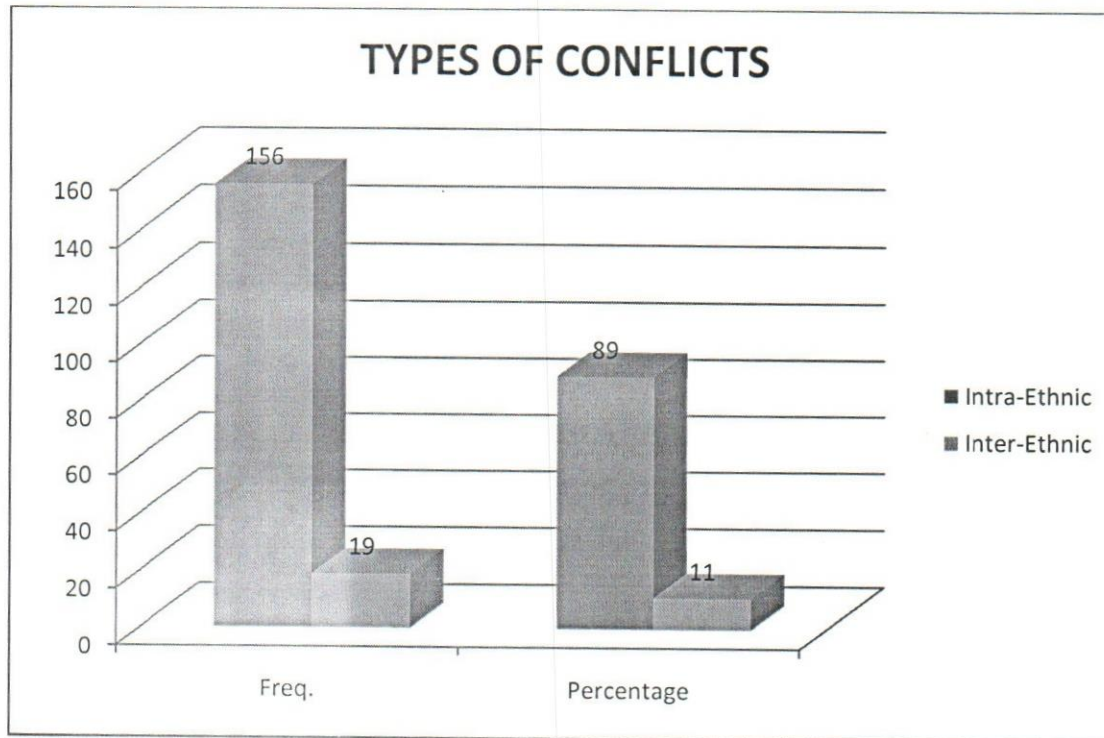
Source: Field Work, 2013

With the issue of whether conflict was destructive or not, majority representing 84% of the respondents admitted that both the market issue and the chieftaincy conflict were very destructive and 16% of them indicated that, conflicts were not destructive. To the question as to whether the conflicts were resolved, only 3% of the respondents indicated that they were not resolved, majority of 97% of the respondents also admitted that, conflicts were successfully resolved as shown in fig 4.3 below.

Fig. 4.3: Nature of Conflict in Yapei

Nature of Conflict
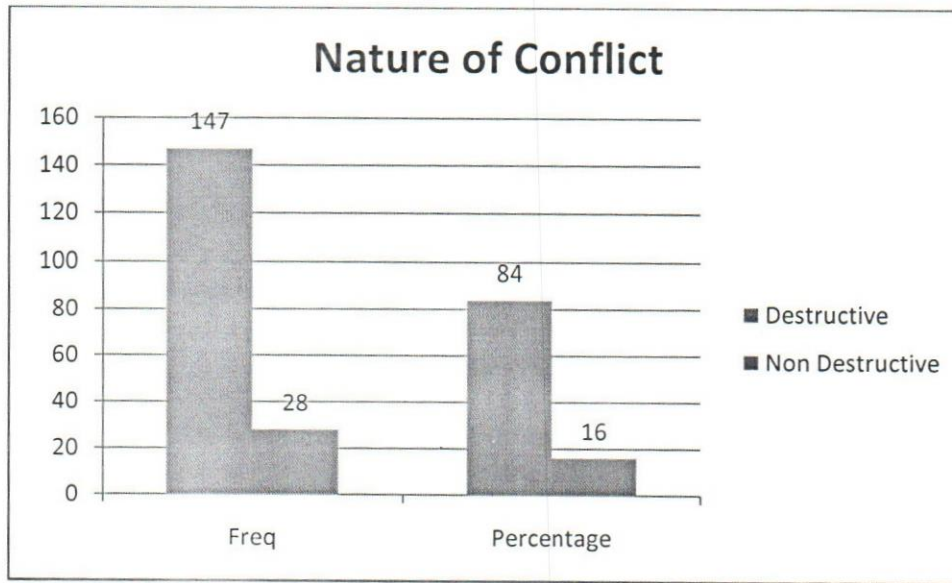
Source: Field Work, 2013

As to how these conflicts were resolved, the study shown that, 53% of the respondents indicated that, the relocation of the market conflict was resolved through negotiation. Stakeholders such as the Central Gonja District Assembly, chiefs and elders of the area, religious leaders and other Civil Society Organisations like the women's groups and Gonja Youth Association were part of the negotiation including representatives of the feuding factions in the conflict.

On the other hand, 45% of the respondents pointed out that, the chieftaincy conflict was resolved through the High Court injunction. A hand full of 2% of them on the other hand had no idea as to how the conflicts were resolved see fig. 4.4 below.

Fig. 4.4: How Conflicts were Resolved in Yapei

How Conflicts are Resolved
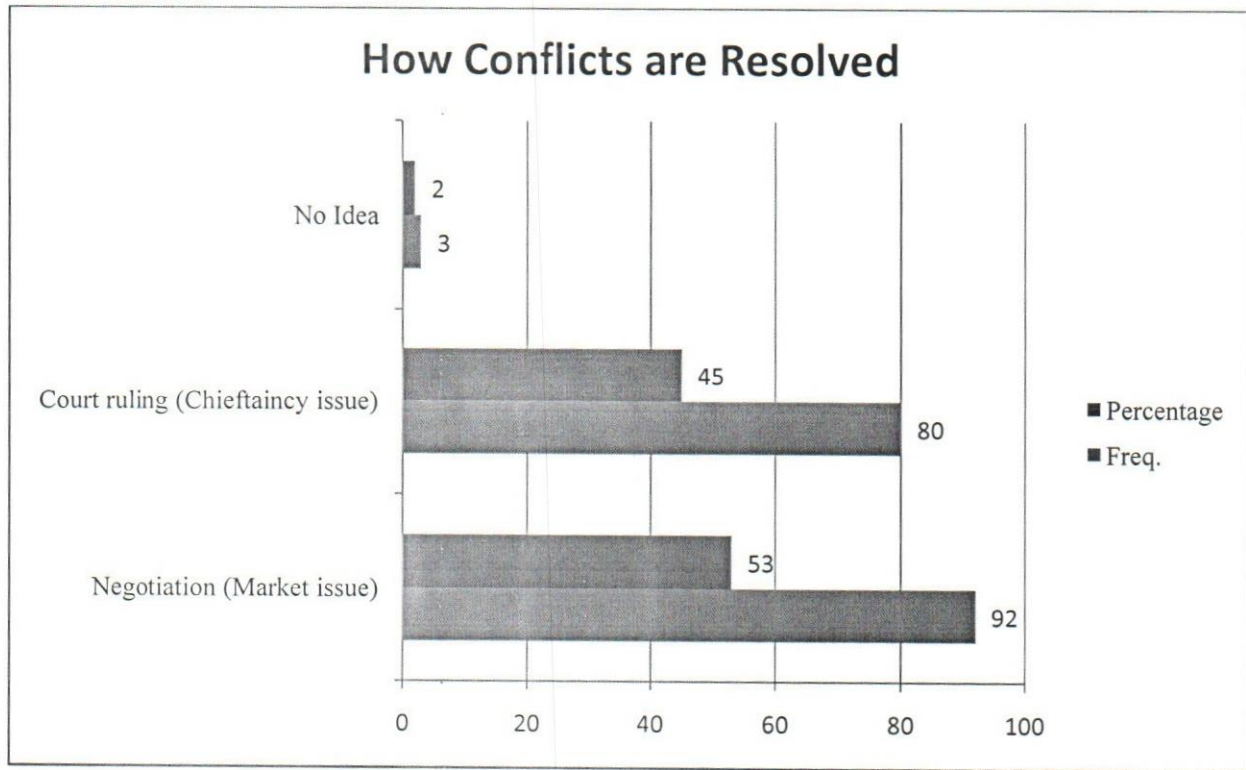
Source: Field Work, 2013

The study also investigated parties involved in resolving the conflicts and observed that, multiple responses were given by respondents out of which majority (84%) of the respondents indicated that, chiefs and elders were involved in resolving both conflicts and 78% of them also said that, parties involved in conflicts were equally involved in resolving it. 66% of the respondents admitted that, the District Assembly took part in the peace process by providing security and participated in brokering the peace deal. The remaining 47%, 13% and 21% of the respondents indicated Religious leaders, Civil Society Organisations/NGOs and women leaders respectively participated with regards to the market issue. The remaining 29% of the respondent said the chieftaincy conflict was

resolved by the Tamale High Court. Table 4.10 below shows parties involved in managing or resolving conflicts in Yapei.

Table 4.10: Parties who Managed and Resolved conflicts

Parties who Managed and Resolved the Conflicts	Freq.	Percentage	Ranking
Traditional Authorities/Chiefs and Elders	147	84	1st
Parties to conflicts	137	78	2nd
District Assembly	116	66	3rd
Religious Leaders	82	46.9	4th
Court of Law	50	28.6	5th
Women leaders	36	20.6	6th
Civil Societies/N G Os	22	12.6	7th

Source: Field Work, 2013

Responses ranked based on the predominance to each response given by respondent. Thus, imply that, the traditional authority/chiefs and elders' involvement in managing and resolving conflicts in the area was paramount in terms of conflict resolution in Yapei, hence, ranked 1st. this was followed by the parties to the conflict, the District Assembly, up to the 7th rank representing that the civil society/NGOs had the least number of responses indicating that, their involvement in managing and resolving conflict was minimal.

As to how these parties were involved in managing and resolving conflict, it was revealed that, during the relocation of the market issue, the Chiefs and elders of Yapei, had to call for an emergency meeting with the representatives of the two groups (Yapei town people and the quarters people), the District Assembly/Regional Security Council, the religious

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leaders, women leaders etc. for sharing of ideas and the resolution of the issue. It was a consensus building forum. The District Assembly in collaboration with the Northern Regional Police provided security in the form of personnel and imposition of a curfew on the people of Yapei to manage the conflict until the problem was finally resolved. All these parties involved equally played significant roles in managing and resolving the market issue by given suggestions and compromising with each other.

Illustrated in figure 4.5 below, shows responses on whether women were involved in resolving conflict or not. It was then revealed that, majority of 73% of the respondents said women were not involved in managing and resolving the conflicts and 18% of them also indicated that, women were involved. On the other hand, 9% of the respondents were unaware as to whether women were involved in resolving the conflicts or not.

Fig. 4.5: Were Women Involved in Resolving Conflict or Not?
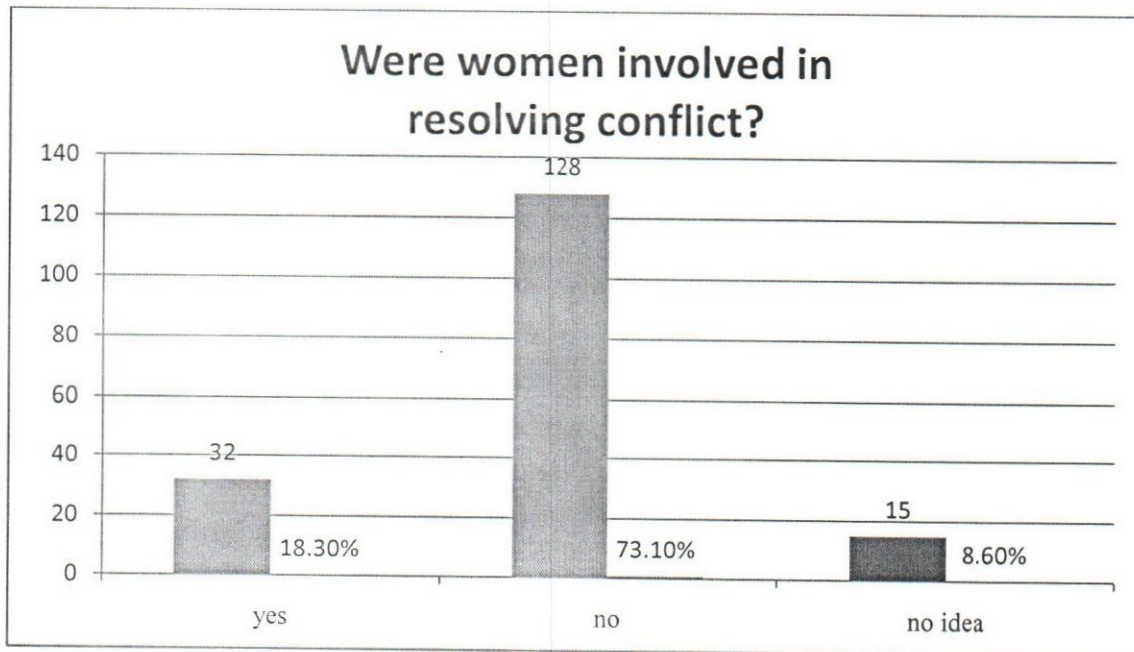
Source: Field Work, 2013

As to how women were involved, 73% of those who admitted that women were involved in resolving conflict indicated that, women persuaded the men to manage and resolve the conflicts, and 64% of them also acknowledged the positive contribution women made by given out their views and suggestions in resolving the market issue.

On other hand, majority (71%) of the respondents indicated that women were not involved in resolving these conflicts in the sense that, "culture does not permit the involvement of women in conflict issues". This is because they feel men are heads of families and women are not suppose to resolve any conflict since the men are there to do that on behalf of the women. An insignificant number of them, representing 9% said, "women were dull and weak" and cannot contribute meaningfully towards any conflict resolution. To them, women have no better thinking ability, but whatever men say, whether reasonably or not, they are the best contributors. Another 9% of them said that "women are meant for the kitchen and the home". For these respondents, a woman has no use doing anything but to be at the kitchen cooking, doing household chores and taking care of the children. It was also revealed that, 8%, of the respondents who said that, "women's views are not regarded" pointed out that, men usually do not take women's views no matter how useful they are, just because they feel superior to women. The same 8% of them also think "women cause conflict" and should not be involved in any peace programme. 2% of them believe that, women were not involved because, "women cannot keep secrets". Another reason why women were not involved according to another 2% of the respondents was that, "women lack understanding". The understanding here is that, women always want the men to remain calm and men by their nature, have the spirit of retaliation, hence, they feel women lack understanding. A 7% of the respondents

however indicated that, they have no idea as to why women were not involved. See below table 4.11.

Table **4.11**: Reasons why women were not involved in resolving conflicts n= 117

Why women were not involved in resolving conflicts	Frequency	Percentage
Culture does not permit women involvement	83	70.9
Women are dull and weak and cannot withstand conflict	10	8.5
Women are meant for the kitchen and the home	10	8.5
Women's views are not regarded	9	7.7
Women cause conflict	8	7.7
No idea	8	6.8
Women cannot keep secrets	2	1.7
Women lack understanding	2	1.7

Source: Field Work, 2013

4.1 Perception of the Respondents on the Inclusion of Women in Conflict Resolution in Yapei

On the issue of whether respondents think the inclusion of women in peace-building could have positive impact on peaceful co-existence in Yapei, 69% of the respondents admitted that women inclusion could have a positive impact on peace and 31% of them said women inclusion in peace-building cannot positively impact on peace.

Out of the 69% of the respondents, it was revealed that, 57% of them explained that, "women can influence men to maintain peace through persuasion" and 39% of them said, "women are generally peaceful and can contribute peacefully to achieve peace". 38%, 25% and 22% of the respondents pointed out that, "involving women will provide

information and education towards peace", "women can share their experiences towards peace" and "due to inter-marriages, women should be included to enable them unite families" respectively (See Table 4.12 below). To these respondents, women are respected in the community for their patience, tolerance and calm nature, therefore, can impact positively in peace processes.

Table 4.12: Why women should be involved in conflict resolution in Yapei.

Reasons why women should be involved in conflict management/resolution	Frequency	Percentage
Women can influence men to manage/resolve conflict	89	56.7
Women are generally peaceful and can contribute peacefully manage and resolve conflict	68	38.9
Involving women will provide information and education towards peace	66	37.7
Women can share their experiences towards peace	44	25
Due to inter-marriages, women should be included to enable them unite families	39	22.3

(Source: Field Work, 2013 in a multiple response)

Opposed to the above were those who also said "women inclusion in peace-building cannot positively impact on peace". They gave reasons such as "culture forbids women inclusion" and women should not equal men". These reasons presented in Table 4.13 below.

Table 4.13: Responses to Reasons why women should not be involved in conflict resolution.

Reasons why women should not be involved in conflict resolution	Frequency	Percentage
Culture does not permit women to get involve in decision making programmes	27	15.4
Women should not be equal to men"	22	12.6
Women do not have anything to say	20	11.4
No need/not important.	8	4.6
Women are difficult in understanding issues	5	3
Women cannot keep secret	2	1.1
Women are weak and dull and cannot play active role in decision	2	1.1

Source: Field Work, 2013 in a multiple response

According to responses given in the tables 4.11 and 4.13, culture is the main reason for the refusal to involve women in peace-building activities, although there are other minor reasons. Notwithstanding this, women are loved and respected as mothers, wives and sisters by their sons, husbands and brothers can therefore succeed in convincing and influencing the men through persuasion to manage and resolve conflict in the community.

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4.4.2 Do Men like the idea of Women in conflicts decision making in Yapei

Although, respondents acknowledged that, women manage conflict effectively than men, with regards to whether men like the idea of women's participation in decisions during conflict, 33% of the respondents admitted that, men like the idea and majority (67% of them) said men do not like the idea of women inclusion in decisions in resolving any conflict.

Out of the 33% who affirmed they like the idea of women participation in decisions on conflict, it was revealed that, 67% of the respondents believed that, "women are very supportive and can easily influence men due to their position in the family" and thus necessary for women to be included in any peace talks especially when it comes to decision making. 75% of them also said, "women should be regarded as part of the family and the community" for their contribution could assist in peace-building and strengthening of family ties and should not be neglected. Some of the respondents representing 31% also said, "women suffer during conflict and should be involved in resolving conflict". This according to them, could make useful suggestions.

On the other hand, within the 67% of the respondents who indicated they do not like the idea of women involvement in decision making, it was revealed that, 55% of them said, "men do not regard women's views" so women may waste their own time when they participate since no one will listen to them. Other respondents of 51% too said, "women want to rub shoulders with men and should not be empowered". A number of them representing 24% also thought that, "women cannot withstand the pressure of conflict", hence should not participate in any decision concerning conflict. The rest of 20% of the

respondents who also hold the view that, "women are too emotional" hence, imagines how they could contribute in any conflict decision making when their emotions will not allow them.

With all these views above, it was deduced that, most men although not the majority, feel the women want to be equal to them and rub shoulders with them and do not want the idea of women participation in any decision making.

.4.3 General Opinion of Respondents on the involvement of women in conflict decision making

As regards to whether women participation in conflict decision making could be useful in achieving peace in the area, the study revealed that 69% of the respondents admitted that women could contribute positively towards peace and 31% of them also indicated that women cannot promote peace even if they are included in conflict decision making.

Out of the 69% of the respondents who admitted that women could help in attaining peace when included in conflict decision making, gave reasons in multiple responses. 59% of them indicated that, "women are more patient and tolerant and deserve to be included in the decision making process" since patience and tolerance are important qualities that each party needs to be able to manage or resolve conflict. In addition, 34% and 29% of the respondents indicated that, "women should be allowed to contribute in decision making process since they are peace loving people who can make healthy contributions towards peace". Furthermore, 12%, of the respondents indicated that, "due to inter-marriages, women can unite families when included". According to them, women strengthen both her father's family and that of the husband's family ties and the two

families will not want to be involved in conflict, hence, women could unite these families when included. Although, as indicated by 9% of the respondents, "women find it difficult to get men to accept their views", but they do accept unknowingly through advices and persuasion. Few of them 5% also pointed out that, "women are dull, weak and difficult to understand issues". This response however, is considered as a thing of the past, because in contemporary times, education is so wide that, people are very much aware that, decision making is not by strength. A number of them representing 3% said, "women are sometimes the root cause of conflict and should not be involved" and 30%, said "culture does not regard women involvement". The study revealed that, women in the area do not take part in any conflict resolution activity but rather manage conflict effectively.

Table 4.14: General Opinions on Women in Decision Making.

Reasons given by Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Culture does not permit women in decision making	52	29.71
Women should be allowed to contribute in decision making process	60	34.29
Women are peace loving people and can contribute peacefully towards peace	50	28.57
Due to inter-marriages, women can unite families when included	21	12
women are more patient and tolerant and deserve to be included in the decision making process	104	59.43
Women find it difficult to get men to accept their views	15	8.57
Women are dull, weak and their understanding of issues differ from how men understand them	8	4.57
Sometimes women are the root cause of conflict and should not be involved	6	3.43

Source: Field Work, 2013

4.5 STRATEGIES USED IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN YAPEI

4.5.1 INTRODUCTION

In managing conflict in Yapei, strategies include the law enforcement agencies (usually, the military and police) putting in place measures to ensure that, the people go about freely without anyone going contrary to the laws of the land. Peace matches were also organized to portray that, there is no need for conflict in the community. Massive educational programmes, through the electronic media (nationwide) as well as other communication channels on the effects of conflict by citing examples of other conflict prone areas such as neighbouring Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Libya etc also helps in instilling the need for peace amongst them. This study is very much interested in the indigenous strategies used in maintaining peace in the area.

.2 INDIGENOUS STRATEGIES USED IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN YAPEI

This section of the study discusses the indigenous strategies that the people of Yapei use in managing conflict. Multiple responses were given of which majority (86% of the respondents) indicated that, "because the Chiefs and Elders of the Traditional Council have authority to summon parties in conflict for arbitration, judgement and sometimes, ban perpetrators, people fear to be punished, hence, maintains peace". 47% of the respondents also pointed out that, the "family heads control their respective families to maintain peace" and 76% said "religious leaders preach the fear of God to the people to maintain peace". It was revealed that 74% of them indicated that, "women persuade their husbands, brothers and sons to maintain peace" and only 17% of the respondents said "no indigenous strategy exists in maintaining peace in Yapei". Table 4.15 below, illustrates

views expressed by respondents. These responses are ranked in descending order (in a multiple response), signifying the most effective and successful strategy used in maintaining peace at the top (ranked 1st) in the area, hence, chiefs and elders use their traditional authority to maintain peace. The family heads although ensure peace is maintained, have the least effective and success according to the 4th position in the ranking compared with the traditional authority.

Table 4.15: Indigenous Strategies in Managing Conflict in Yapei

Indigenous Strategy used in Managing Conflict	Frequency	Percentage	Ranking
Traditional Council/Chiefs and Elders summon parties to conflict for mediation, arbitration and pass judgement to maintain peace	150	86	1st
Religious leaders preach the fear of God to people to maintain peace in the area	133	76	2nd
Women persuade their husbands, brothers and sons to maintain peace in the area	129	74	3rd
Family Heads control their respective families towards peace in the area	83	47	4th

Source: Field Work, 2013 in a multiple response

.2.1 How Traditional Authority Manages Conflict in Yapei

According to respondents, the chiefship rotates among three chieftaincy gates (Jakpa, Adama and Soale gates). To them, a successor should be the eldest son of the next qualified gate. If a wrong person is enthroned, violence is likely to erupt just like in the case of the 2005 chieftaincy conflict. It was also explained that, traditional authority is a highly recognized and respected body that has authority and power to rule, control and protect its subjects to ensure safety for all. In Africa, according to Logan (2008), traditional chiefs are the true representative of their people, accessible, respected and

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legitimate, adding that, in many countries, traditional authorities play a pre-eminent role as mediators of violent conflict.

As Birgit Brock-Utne indicated in a seminar on indigenous solutions to conflicts held at the University of Oslo, in February 2001, traditional authority is "effective in dealing with interpersonal or inter-community conflicts. This approach has been used at the grassroots level to settle disputes over land, water, grazing-land rights, fishing rights, marital problems, inheritance, ownership rights, murder, bride price, cattle raiding, theft, rape, banditry, and inter-ethnic and religious conflicts" Brock-Utne (2001:9).

Therefore, in the case of Yapei, the traditional authority acts as the recognized traditional body in-charge the judicial system that makes decisions based on the laid down rules and regulations of the community. Chiefs and the council of elders of a community pass judgement based on principles of morality to manage conflict (Avruch et el, 1991). They also went further to say that, should anyone behave contrary to these laid down standards (norms and value systems), parties involved in the misunderstanding will be summoned before the council of elders for mediation, arbitration and judgement or ruling depending on the nature and magnitude of the conflict. Various sanctions like imposing fines on perpetrators, sometimes mutual apologies rendered. If the issue is critical the sanction could be banishment from the community.

4.5.2.2 How Religious Leaders Preach Peace

About 76% of the respondents believed that, in recent times, the country has become more religious than previously where a lot of people worship idols. Even children listen,

appreciate and believe in the word of God. The study revealed as shown in table 4.6 that, only 7% of the respondents belonged to traditional religion and most of them were either Muslims or Christians. This means that, each respondent belongs to a religion, be it traditional, Islam or Christianity since there was none who said, he/she did not belong to a religion.

It was also revealed that, community members believed in the day of judgement and the existence of the Almighty God. The religious leaders therefore take advantage of the peoples beliefs to preach the fear of God and the need for peaceful co-existence with neighbours in order to enter the kingdom of God. Hence, community members are usually reminded of this during conflicts. Therefore, in the event of conflict, because people fear to be punished by the Almighty God, they are obliged to forgive each other and do good to one another and to avoid any further or future conflict just to please God to enable them enter the kingdom of God. The study also pointed out that, the religious leaders put fear of God into community members and this goes a long way to maintain peace in the area. Preaching the word of God by various religious leaders prevents recurrence of the conflicts to maintain peace in Yapei.

4.5.2.3 How Women Persuade Men to Manage Conflict

The study revealed that, persuasion is the key weapon the Gonja women in Yapei use in maintaining peace in the area. As alluded to earlier, women were involved in managing and resolving the market issue, but were not involved in resolving the chieftaincy conflict. Those respondents who said women help in maintaining peace in Yapei, also said, due to women's peaceful nature and inter-marriages, conflict is critical and an issue

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of concern. Therefore, in their efforts to maintain peace, women persuade their husbands, brothers and sons. It was also mentioned that, women are said to be very good in convincing men and bringing family ties together to promote peace in the area. As mothers, wives and sisters, women are regarded as such. Besides, the study also revealed that, mothers talk to/and educate their sons to manage conflict by pointing out the effects of conflict on women and children as well as development and the need for peace in the area. In addition according to the respondents, husbands listen to their wives due to the love they have for them and will also not want women and the children to suffer. Some of the respondents cited the saying that "blood is thicker than water" indicating that, family ties and loyalties take precedence over other relationships. Sisters are also able to persuade brothers to maintain peace.

.2.4 How Family Heads Manage Conflict in Yapei

According to Cockerham, W. C. (2001), the family has been regarded as a complete social institution and an inevitable part of human society. The family is the basic unit of social organization. He imagined how difficult human society could function without it. To Meyerhoff M., (2013), notwithstanding the progress of civilization that characterizes modern society, the family remains the central element of life and added that, families put forward measures to protect members against the problem of an often hardhearted world.

Duke-Williams, O. and Haskey, J. (2004), therefore define a family as a unit made up of two or more people who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption; who live together; form an economic unit; and bear and raise children.

The family is believed to provide the love, comfort, and emotional support that children need to develop into happy, healthy, and secure adults as Ejizu (1986) indicated.

The study revealed that, most of the families in Yapei practice the extended family system. 47% of respondents indicated that, individual family heads in the area ensures that family members are controlled during conflict to manage conflict not to escalate. It is believed that, women are usually not considered as family heads among the Gonja in Yapei, but the oldest man and the breadwinner of the family. He is highly respected in the family. He controls and takes decisions for the family. The family head tries to protect his family members from external attacks and also ensuring that family members do not physically attack or assault another family member. By so doing, he manages or resolves conflict. The family is an important social institution that comprises persons bind together either by blood, marriage or through adoption. To them, most of the family heads in Ghana and Yapei in particular are men. These family heads as they indicated, have a lot of responsibilities including protection of the family from being attacked by anyone outside that family and also prevent family members from causing conflict outside the family. They however added that, the primary role of the family heads in the families is to maintain peace in the area and when misunderstanding between two or more families is beyond each family head, then the issue is sent to the chief's palace for a solution.

4.6   Marginalization of Women in Conflict Management and Resolution Programmes

With regards to whether it is true that women are kept away from the center of attention, authority, or power, 87% of the respondents expressed the view that "women were

excluded from power sharing or lack authority" and 13% of them indicated "women are not neglected in terms of authority or power sharing".

As to the reasons why women were excluded in power sharing or lack authority, 9% of the respondents said that, "women are naturally meant to be submissive to men" and 74% of the respondents also indicated that, "culture does not permit women to be equal with men". Also, 13% and 4% of the respondents said "men are generally bullies" and "women are naturally dull, hence the men take opportunity to bully them".

This implies that, although women were involved in the peace process in the area, most of the people feel that, their culture forbids women to be in authority or having power but then, power and authority is for men only. Therefore, women are usually left out in decision-making. Others think women want to be equal to men and resist women inclusion in decision making. According some of the respondents, men are naturally bullies. They take advantage of the fear of embarrassment and the sympathetic nature of women to bully them by excluding them from participation in decision making. (See Figure 6 below).

Figure 4.6: Why women are marginalized in conflict decision making process in n=156 respondents indicated "yes".

Reasons why Women are Marginalized

- women are to be submissive to men
- culture does not permit women
- men are bullies
- women are dull, hence men bully them
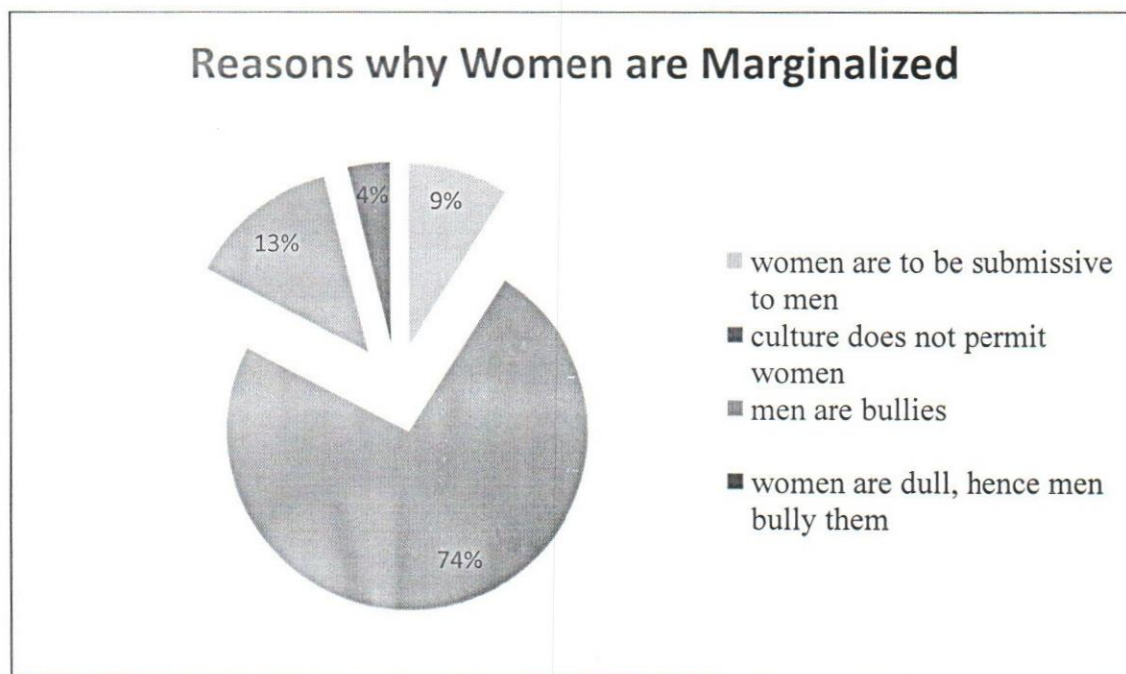
Source: Field Work, 2013

The study also revealed that, women face a lot of challenges getting men to involve them in conflict management or resolution programmes. On this issue, 89% of the respondents indicated that "men feel superior to women, hence dominate the process throughout", whilst 35% of them indicated "men feel women want to be equal to them, hence do not give them chance". 3% of them also indicated that, "women don't make sense and are unable to understand issues".

4.7   Ways of Attaining Peace in Yapei

Various suggestions were made by respondents on how peace in the area could be achieved and sustained. About 70% of the respondents indicated that, "educating people through the media and in schools on the effects of conflict could promote peace", whilst 54% of them also indicated that, "there should be respect for all including women" and

62% of them said, "Religious Leaders preaching for peace to the people could enhance peace". The remaining 49%, 18%, 23% and 37%, of the respondents indicated that, "the formation of peace clubs", "promoting inter-marriages", "justice for all, in terms of chieftaincy succession" and "creation of jobs/projects for the youth" respectively. Another 29% of the identified that, "family heads can control their respective families", whilst 19% of them said "chieftaincy issues should not be interfered with by politicians" and 26% of them also indicated that, "early resolution of conflict could maintain peace". Meanwhile, 7% and 6% of the respondents indicated that, "all grievances should be sent to the court" and "the provision of security during conflict in the area" respectively.

Table 4.16: Ways to Achieve Peace

Ways of Maintaining Peace	Frequency	Percentage
Education (through media and school)	120	68.6
Respect for all including women	95	54.2
Promoting Inter-marriages	32	18.2
Justice for all in chieftaincy succession	41	23.4
Formation of peace clubs/programmes	86	49.1
Preaching for peace by Religious Leaders	108	61.7
Creation of jobs/projects for the youth	65	37.1
Family Heads controls respective families	50	28.6
Chieftaincy issues not to be interfered by politicians	34	19.4
Early resolution of conflict through dialogue	45	25.7
All grievances should be sent to the court	13	7.4
Provision of security during conflict	10	5.7

(Source: Field Work, 2013)

4.8 HOW GONJA WOMEN EXPERIENCES DURING CONFLICTS CAN BE INCORPORATED INTO EFFECTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS IN YAPEI

With reference to the market and the chieftaincy conflicts in the area; it was pointed out that, women become confused and helpless as they experienced the bitterness of conflict when they see their own brothers fighting their husbands and their sons fighting their uncles. The women, according to the study, are in the best position to advice and advocate for men to avoid or minimize any hardship in terms of conflict. Majority (65%) of the respondents said that, because of intermarriages, no family wants to hurt the other, hence the effect of conflict is minimized and this "leads to collaboration among families" whilst 35% of them indicated that, men's sympathy for the plight of their women "could facilitate dialogue and compromise between various parties involved in conflict". These are achieved, when women are involved in decision making. See Fig. 4.7 below.

Fig: 4.7 How women's experiences could be incorporated into effective conflict management or resolution strategies

How women's experiences could bring effective conflict management strategis

- Could lead to collaboration
- Could facilitate dialogue and compromise
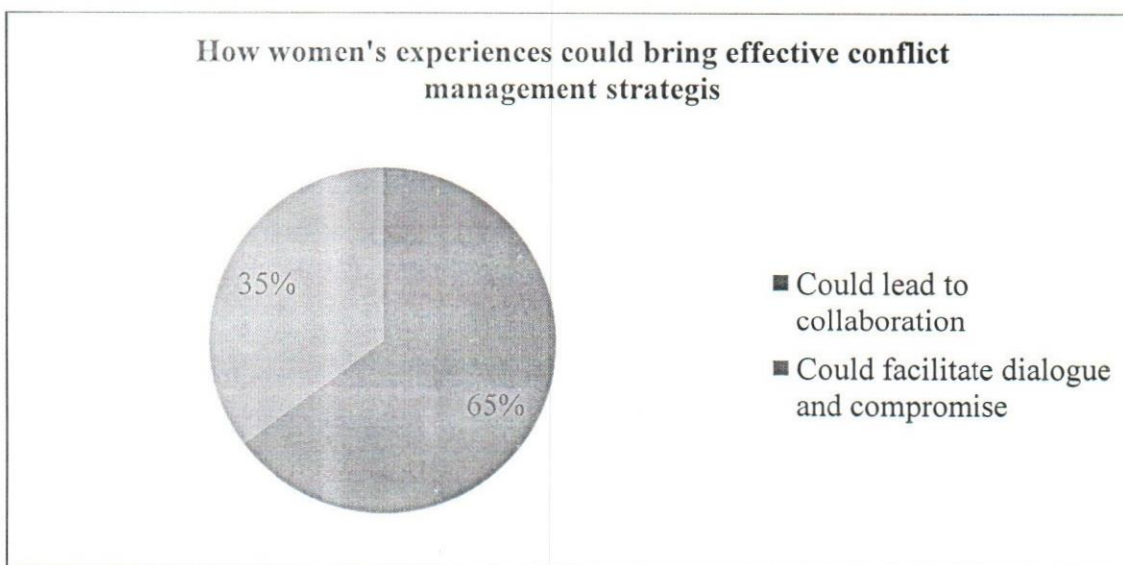
Source: Field Work, 2013

In conclusion, the study revealed that, basic, social and economic infrastructural developments in the community are usually affected by the conflicts. Political intrusion on chieftaincy successions and unemployment among the youth of Yapei also contributed significantly to conflicts in the area.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a summary of the study and draws conclusions from the discussion. It also presents some recommendations for the improvement security and conflict management/resolution strategies in Yapei. Considering the above findings established in chapter four, it is necessary to reiterate the research objectives in order to ascertain the degree to which these objectives have been achieved. The main objective of this study was "to assess women's role in conflict management/resolution among Gonjas in Yapei in the Central Gonja District of the Northern Region of Ghana". The specific research objectives assisted in exploring the indigenous strategies Gonjas in the Central Gonja District use in maintaining peace, assessing the advisory roles Gonja women adopt in maintaining peace in Yapei, investigating the roles of women as mothers, wives and sisters in managing conflict in Yapei and examining the experiences of Gonja women during conflict and how they can be incorporated into effective conflict management strategies in Yapei. In an attempt to address these specific objectives, research questions covered:

Indigenous strategies of Gonjas in Yapei used in maintaining peace, women's role in maintaining peace, strategies that women in Yapei use in maintaining peace and how women's experiences in conflict be incorporated into effective conflict management strategies in Yapei.

5.1 SUMMARY

Although a number of conflicts occurred in Yapei, two destructive conflicts were experienced in 1999 and 2005 over the relocation of the Yapei market from Yapei township to Yapei quarters and the enskinment of Yapei Chief (Yapeiwura). Dialogue was used in resolving the market issue whilst a court injunction was used for the chieftaincy succession conflict.

In general, although, the study revealed that women's views were not regarded, they played significant roles in managing and resolving conflicts in Yapei. Even though, women might not necessarily be actively involved in conflict resolution decisions in the community, they gave moral support and persuaded men to manage and resolve conflicts. The motherly respect and the love men have for women as mothers, wives and sisters, makes it possible for men to listen to the women's advice as they persuade them.

The involvement of women in conflict decision making was however dependant on the issue at stake. For instance, during the conflict that erupted as a result of the relocation of the Yapei market in 1999, women were involved in the decision making process that resolved the issue because women are considered major stakeholders when it comes to market issues. In 2005 when the chieftaincy enskinment issue erupted in the area, apart from the Queen-mother, no woman was involved in decision making process that led to the resolution of the conflict. This is because women, except queen-mothers and few women, men are always the head of families and communities. Women are never chiefs and so were not considered during the chieftaincy issue although some respondents talked about consulting women for historical facts about succession. There is no doubt as shown

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in the study that, women are marginalized so far as conflict decision making is concerned. This is attributed to the culture of the people that does not permit women's participation in decision making process.

The perception of the community members on women involvement in conflict management/resolution activities was both positive and negative. They thought women could play significant roles in peace-building process through education and persuasion due to their peaceful, tolerant, patient and calm nature when included in conflict management activities. However, men feel weak and intimidated to bring in women to take decisions of this nature. By their culture, war, conflict and similar other issues should be addressed by men.

It is believed that, power and authority is for men only. They take decisions for all and women are meant for the kitchen and child bearing. The men however agreed that women play significant roles in family conflicts. Issues of marriage are usually headed by men but women are the main architects as their marital status gives them societal recognition and they do everything to keep the family together.

Reporting on their experiences during the Yapei conflicts, it was clear that women suffered the most. While the men are out to defend their factions, women are left to fend for the family. Because of the fear of losing their marital statuses, they are more willing to compromise, use reason than emotions during a conflict. In all, women are seen to

have significant roles in conflict management/resolution among Gonjas in Yapei. This is however never made public.

The two violent conflicts were not left to the people of Yapei alone to resolve. They were supported by the government and some civil society organisations and NGOs to use the right institutions to resolve their impasse. First, traditional initiatives were used and when they failed, the judiciary was resorted to.

CONCLUSION

This study reached a number of conclusions regarding women in conflict in Yapei. First of all, the people of Yapei, mainly Gonjas are a chiefly group, where their social structure is hierarchical. This implies that there is the ruler or leader and there are the ruled. In the Gonja society, women are always considered subordinate to men so in times of conflict, all major decisions and actions are expected to come from the men. This rarely gives the women a say in conflict issues. Their roles have been defined to indoor-family care.

This notwithstanding, the study showed that women had roles to play especially in conflicts that they were regarded as major stakeholders. Their roles include advice and mobilisation of domestic resources. Because they are never portrayed as leader and a group of power and influence, there were some respondents who thought women had such crucial roles to play in conflict management/resolution.

The study also revealed that the people of Yepei do not resort to only their traditional ways of mediation for conflict resolution. They also make use of the country's institutions established to maintain peace and order in the country.

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5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made based on the study:

1. Given that even the local people of Yapei say women could have significant contributions to make during conflicts in Yapei, the people of Yapei should endeavour to make them also "outdoor" so that their contribution can be appreciated more.

2. Culture is dynamic and the beliefs held several years ago might have changed. It is therefore recommended that NGOs through educational programmes help the people of Yapei to see that women's contribution in/during conflict management in Yapei should not be held back in the name of culture.

3. There should be educational reforms that will include conflict studies as a major subject in the Junior High Schools to the university levels that will educate the youth on the need for peace. If people will live peacefully, there will be no need to resolve conflicts.

4. There is the need to accelerate the adoption and enforcement of legal and policy frameworks to advance gender equality in conflict management and resolution activities.

5. Domestic violence is rampant in Yapei and there is the need for further research into the role of women in managing and resolving domestic violence in the area.

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APPENDIX

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, FACULTY OF LAW, EDUCATION AND BUSINESS STUDIES, UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, WA CAMPUS

QUESTIONNAIRE

This Study is a research on "assessing the role of women in conflict management among Gonjas the Northern Region of Ghana"

e research is therefore solely for academic purpose and information given will be treated as nfidential. Names will not be mentioned in the report. Your cooperation is therefore very ich appreciated.

ndly answer the following questions by ticking (√) for the appropriate answer or explain as y be required. Thank you.

CTION (A)
ckground Characteristics of Respondents

Which of the following category do you belong?
a) A native of Yapei ( )   b) Non Native of Yapei ( )

Which of the under listed category do you belong in the Yapei community?
a) Chief ( )   b) Opinion Leader ( )   c) Mangazia ( ) d) Community
Member ( )   e) others (specify) ....

Age of respondent: a) 18-22 ( )   b) 23-27 ( )   c) 28-32 ( ) d) 33-37 ( )
e) 38-42 ( )   f) 43+ ( )

Sex: a) Male ( )   b)   female ( )

Religious Background: a)   Christianity ( )   b) Islam ( )   c) Traditional ( )

d) Other, specify.........................

6. Marital Status: a) Married ( ) b)   Single ( )   c) Widowed ( ) d) Divorced ( )
    e) Separated ( )

7. Which of the following is your level of education: a) Primary ( )   b)   J. S. S ( )
    c) O-Level/SSS ( )   d) A-Level/Voc/Tech/TTC ( )   e)   Tertiary   ( ) f) not
    educated

8. Which of the following category of work do you belong to? A) Teacher/Lecturer ( )
    b) Petty Trader ( )   c) Work in Public Institution ( )   d) Farmer ( )

e) Artisan (   )   f) Hairdresser/Tailor/Seamstress (   ) g) not working h) other, specify

....

9. Have you ever experienced conflict in Yapei? Yes   (   )   No   (   )

10. If yes, how many conflicts have you experienced?

....

What was the nature of the conflicts
a) Destructive   b)   not destructive

Who were involved the said conflicts?

....

....

....

Could you please describe how that conflict was?

....

....

....

How did you feel during the conflict?

....

....

....

What type of conflict was it? a) Inter Ethnic   b) Intra Ethnic c) Religious
Others, specify...

....

....

16. What were the causes of the conflicts?

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....

....

....

17. Is the conflict or are those conflicts resolved?
a) Yes   b)   No

18. If **yes**, could you please explain how the conflict was resolved?

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....
....
....

If no, why was it not resolved?

....
....
....
....

Kindly mentioned parties who were involved in resolving the conflict

....
....
....

Were women involved in resolving the conflict?
a) Yes   b)   No

If yes, how were they involved?

....
....
....

If no, kindly explain why?

....
....
....

24. **Do you** have anything to say about any or a particular conflict?

....
....
....

SECTION B

Indigenous Strategies Involved in Maintaining Peace in Yapei

25. Do Gonjas at Yapei have indigenous strategies in maintaining peace during conflict
situation(s)?   A) a) Yes ( )   b) No ( )

26. If yes, could you please list or explain some of the indigenous strategies used in maintaining
peace during conflict in Yapei.

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....

In your opinion, how do these indigenous strategies listed/explained above help maintain
peace in Yapei during a conflict situation?

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....

....

Do you think the inclusion of Gonja women in peacebuilding process can have positive
impact in peace in the area?
    Yes ( )   No ( )
If yes, how?

....

....

....

....

If no, why?

....

....

....

31. It is said that "Women are marginalized everywhere in the world with regards to decision
making process". Is this statement applicable in the Yapei?

    Yes ( )   No ( )

32. If yes, which of the following reasons could be the cause?

   a) Women are naturally meant to be submissive to men ( )

b) Culture does not permit women to be equal to men, hence, men always feel superior to women   ( )

c) Men are generally bullies ( )

d) Women are naturally dull, hence the men take the opportunity to bully them ( )

e) Others, please specify...
....
....

What are the ways you think can be used to maintain peace among the people of Yapei?
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....
....

Do you have anything else to say on women involvement in conflict in your area?
....
....
....

CTION C
men's Experiences in Conflict in Yapei
What were your experiences during the conflicts?
....
....
....

ᴊᴜ. Which category of people suffered most? a) Men ( )   b) Women ( )   c) Children ( )

d) Women and Children ( )   e) Men and Children ( )   f) others, please specify
....

37. Could you please explain some of the experiences women had during the said conflicts?
....
....

....

38. Do you think involving women in conflict management/resolution programmes could bring

positive peace in Yapei?

a) Yes   b) No

If yes, kindly explain how women could help in maintaining peace in your area.

....

....

....

If no to question 27 above, kindly explain why you think women should be excluded in conflict management/resolution decision making process in Yapei?

....

....

....

Interview Schedule for Gonja in Yapei

Assess the role of Gonja women in Yapei in maintaining peace

41. During conflict situation, do women have a role to play in managing the conflict not to escalate? Yes ( )   No   ( )

42. If yes, could you please explain them?

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. If no, why?

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....

. Are there any indigenous strategies women could use in order to prevent conflict from escalation? Yes ( )   No   ( )

. If yes, explain them?

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....

46. How do men feel about women involvement in conflict management/resolution programmes?

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47. Do men like the idea of involving women in conflict management/resolution programmes?

48. If yes, why?

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49. If no, explain?

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....

How do you think the involvement of women in conflict management/resolution decision making can be useful in maintaining peace among the people of Yapei?

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What challenges do women face with men during conflict management/resolution decision making process?

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Do you have anything else about the role of women in conflict management or resolution?

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Thank you.