

# **An Analysis of Conflicts Using SPITCEROW Model: The Case of Dagbon Chieftaincy Conflict, Ghana**

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**Abstract:** *Historical and political underpinnings of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict make it tougher and complicated to understand. Consequently, the purpose of the paper is to furnish a complete component for working out the complexities within the conflict utilising SPITCEROW mannequin of conflict analysis. An analytical part will explain the conflict via Edward Azar's Protracted Social conflict thought. Secondary data including journals, articles, books, radio and newspaper reports, internet publications, and news documents were use in the study. Hence, the paper revealed that the Primogeniture system of inheritance introduced into the 'Ya Na-ship' throne is the main cause of the conflict. In effect, the authors suggest that, for sustainable peace to be see in Dagbon, traditional conflict resolution techniques from within the local people themselves, could be the best way to ensure sustainable peace in Dagbon.*

## **1. Introduction**

Chieftaincy is among the leading informal institutions with cases of violent conflicts especially, in the northern regions of Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service, 2000). The three northern regions have witnessed the greatest amount of violent conflicts leading to the death of hundreds of harmless folks and the destruction of livelihoods and social services. The conflicts are usually triggered by the struggle over claims to values, status, land, power and significantly, over chieftaincy successions (Kendie & Tuffour, 2014). The Dagbon chieftaincy conflict in northern Ghana is no

exception. It has often been referred to as the ‘Dagbon Crisis’, and has taken complex dimension to understand because of its dynamics and historical underpinnings encompassing its origin, source/cause, manifestation and socio-political dimensions concerned. However, to be able to understand the complexities of the conflict, Christopher Mitchell’s (1990) SPITCEROW model of conflict analysis is use thoroughly to examine, and to provide a simple understanding of the conflict.

According to Mitchell (1990), in analysing conflicts, nine (9) key elements should be probe for a comprehensive understanding of such conflict.

These elements examine the sources of the conflict, the parties involved, and pertinent issues, the tactics used by the parties, the changes and enlargement of the conflict, the roles of varied parties, the potential outcome and the winners in the conflicts. A radical analysis of the SPITCEROW model as a conflict analysis tool, will aid peace and conflict studies students and all stakeholders gain a very thorough and deeper understanding of the conflict and violence present in African literature. Accordingly, the appliance of this mannequin will furnish an in-depth analysis and an overview of the complexity of the conflicts(s) in Dagbon. Essentially, the paper systematically and exhaustively analysed each of these elements via the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict to give a comprehensive understanding on what the conflict entails.

## **2. Research Methods and Approach**

A comprehensive multi-layered method was adopt in collecting and analysing data for this paper. Secondary source of data including journals, articles, books, internet publications, radio reports and reviewed thesis were use in the study. Significantly, newspapers, newsletters and news files were strictly validate purposely to ensure that the authors obtained the right information. Data for this paper started from January 24 to August 2 2015.

### **3. Historical, Political, Geographical, and Economic Overview of Dagbon**

Dagbon is a 'Kingdom' found in the Northern Region of the Republic of Ghana. The people are called Dagombas, an associate English corrupted word for Dagbamba. The Dagombas speak Dagbani, which belongs to the Mole-Dagbani sub-group of Gur languages. The overlord of the 'Kingdom' is called Ya-Na<sup>i</sup>. Yendi<sup>ii</sup>, the scene of the current conflict is the seat of the 'Kingdom'. It lies between latitudes 9 and 10 north; and has a land size of about 9,611 square miles (Ibrahim, 2009). The Dagomba kingdom is one of the Mossi-Dagomba states set up in the Volta basin of Northern Ghana in the 14th century. It was established following the defeat of the autochthon group by a band of warriors from the Sahelian region (Tonah, 2012).

The victorious warriors are however, said to have integrated the autochthon population into their fold and adopted their culture and religious practices (Tamakloe 1931; Staniland 1975). Besides the autochthon Dagomba population, there are many migrants of Mamprusi, Gonja, Dagaba, Kokomba, Anufo, Basari, Bimoba, Zantasi, Kotokoli, Kabre Gonja and Akan extraction (Mahama, 2009). It is arguably the largest Kingdom in the Northern Region with twelve (12) out of the twenty-six (26) administrative Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in the region.

Today, Dagbon is a multi-ethnic society with a population of more than one million inhabitants. The 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC) estimated the population of Dagbon at 1,254,476 out of the total population of 2,479,461 in the Northern Region; representing 50.59 per cent (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). The vegetation in the area is largely savannah with tall grass and small trees (mainly shea, acacia, baobab and mango), dotting the entire landscape. The area experiences a single rainfall season (April-October) accompanied by a long dry season (November-March) that brings in the Harmattan winds. Dagbon is overwhelmingly rural, with few urban settlements including Tamale<sup>iii</sup>, Yendi, Gushiegu, Savelugu and Karaga (Tonah, 2012). The inhabitants are mainly agro-pastoralists

engaged in food crops and livestock production. Dagbon has a dearth of basic social and economic infrastructure. Before the advent of both Western and Eastern Religions, the Dagombas were mostly atheists. Their culture was deeply enshrined in their customs and beliefs. This still manifest in the numerous traditional festivals still practised in the area.

The first foreign religion to reach Dagbon was Islam, brought to the region by Arab traders from the North, between the 12th and 15th centuries. As a result, Islam heavily influences Dagomba's culture. It is therefore not surprising that almost the entire population is overwhelmingly Muslim (79 per cent), with ancestor worship common amongst the rural population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2002). Christianity, on the other hand, arrive later from the South and mostly practised by the non-Dagomba ethnic groups.

The Economy of the people is largely subsistence with agriculture being their main occupation. Over 80 per cent of the people depend on Agriculture for their livelihood. They are involved in the cultivation of cereals, tubers and rearing of animals. The major crops cultivated include maize, rice, sorghum, millet, cowpea, groundnuts, soya bean, yam and cassava. Animals reared include cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and poultry birds for domestic and commercial purposes. Other economic activities include weaving, agro-processing (shea butter extraction), meat processing, fish mongering, wholesale and retail of general goods, transport and many others. A good number of the populace are engaged in small to medium scale manufacturing business. They include, smock weavers, blacksmiths, bakers, auto mechanics, shea butter and groundnut oil producers (ghanadistricts.com). Inheritance in Dagbon, like in many parts of Ghana, is patrilineal. It is common, but not restricted, to the Dagomba people to have large families. This practise until recently was to get more 'hands' to help on family farms. It is consider a great pride among the Dagombas to marry more than one wife. The number of children one had was one of the indicators for measuring one's wealth (Wikipedia). The practice of keeping large families vis-a-vis their line of succession, has serious repercussions

for the conflict in the area as it is discussed in the sources of the Dagbon conflict below.

#### **4. Sources (or Origins) of the Conflict**

##### ***4.1 Remote Source of the Conflict***

As customs and traditions of Dagbon people evolved, it became obvious that any son of a former Ya Na who occupied any of the royal gates of Mion, Savulugu and Karaga<sup>iv</sup> is qualify to be consider a Ya Na. However, the regent of Karaga gate cannot migrate to Yendi to become a Ya Na. The reason is that, Yakubu, the grandfather of Abudus and Andanis gave birth to three (3) sons, Abudulai (Abudu), Andani and Mahami. The Fathers of Abudulai and Andani managed to become the Ya Na of Dagbon in Yendi but Mahami could not make it to Yendi before dying. Therefore, his children could not become a Ya Na over Dagbon since their father Mahami, did not make it to the ultimate throne in Yendi. Nevertheless, Mahami's descendants can earn and serve as regent of Karaga because; the successor of Mahami was able to migrate from where his father ended at Kore to Karaga (Aikins, 2012).

This custom existed until 1954 when the Abudus tried to import a strange practice of Primogeniture (right of inheritance belonging exclusively to the eldest son into the Ya Na throne). This according to Aikins (2012) is purported to be the main source or cause of the conflict. Significantly, manifestations of the conflict was in 1954 when Ya Na Abudulai III succeeded his father (Na Mahama Bla III). After fifteen (15), Ya Na Abudulai III died and an attempt by some elders succeeded in imposing Mahamadu Abudulai IV, a regent from the Abudu gate as successor to his late father. Because of that, there were complaints that pro-Abudu strategy is adopt to protect the interest of the Abudulai family and ultimately eliminate the Andani family from the contest of the throne (Sibidow, 1970).

Meanwhile, the Mion Lana Andani, a regent of Mion was the right person to succeed the late Ya Na Abudulai III as custom demands.

Consequently, impartial King makers deskinning Mahamadu Abudulai<sup>v</sup> to allow Mion Lana Andani from Andani gate to be enskinned as the Ya Na. “Indeed, if the regent, Mahamadu Abudulai had been installed, this would have been the third time since 1948 that the Abudu gate would have occupied the throne to the exclusion of the Andani gate” (Aikins, 2012: 21). The deskinning<sup>vi</sup> of Mahamadu Abudulai IV is also one of the major sources of the conflict because, “You do not destool a Ya Na” in Dagbon (Tsikata and Seini, 2004: 33). According to Ahorsu and Gebe (2011), the Andani family called for the deskinning of Mahamadu Abudulai IV for not being properly enskinned according to Dagbon customs and traditions.

Yet, Mahamadu Abudulai IV and his Abudu allies did not recognise the Mion Lana Andani when he was enskinned as the Ya Na Andani II (Aikins, 2012). After about three (3) decades, the deskinning Mahamadu Abudulai IV died and there was the need to bury him. The Abudus wanted to perform the funeral rites of the late Mahamadu Abudulai IV just as any other legitimate Ya Na and bury him in the *Gbewaa* palace. Meanwhile, to benefit from such customary burial, one must have been a legitimate Ya Na who had passed on. The Andani gate prevented them from performing the funeral rites of the late Mahamadu Abudulai IV in the *Gbewaa* palace because he was not a legitimate King before passing on. This brought a severe clash between the two gates and it took the intervention of the Regional Security Council (RESEC), District Security Council (DISEC); police, military and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to ensure relative peace in the area. Below is a tabular representation of the remote origin of the conflict for a clearer picture of the Dagbon chieftaincy crisis.

#### ***4.1.1 The Genealogical Table of the Dagbon Skin***

**Naa Yakubu I (1824 – 1849). He ruled for 25 years:**

Until his rule, line of succession to the Dagbon skin was a uni-linear. He was the father of Naa Abudulai I and Naa Andani II – the creators of the two royal Gates. Upon the death of Naa Yakubu I, he was succeeded by

his elder son, Naa Abudulai I (which created the Abudu Gate), who was also succeeded by his younger brother Naa Andani II (whose line of succession became known as the Andani Gate).

<p>Naa Abudulai I (1849 – 1876)</p> <p>He ruled for 27 years. Upon his death succession went to the Andani Gate</p>	<p>Naa Andani II (1876 – 1899)</p> <p>He ruled for 23 years. Upon his death, succession rotated to the Abudu Gate</p>
<p>Naa Alasani (1899 – 1917)</p> <p>Succession went to the Andani Gate upon his Death</p>	<p>Naa Bukari I (1920)</p> <p>He abdicated within hours after enskinment due to old age and failing ill health. He nominated from the Abudu Gate to succeed him</p>
<p>Naa Abudulai II (1920 – 1938)</p> <p>Upon his death succession reverted to the Andani Gate</p>	<p>Naa Mahama II (1938 – 1948)</p> <p>Succession rotated to the Abudu Gate, upon his death</p>
<p><i>Naa Mahama iii (1948 – 1953)</i></p> <p><i>upon his death succession did not revert to the Andani gate, sparking the succession dispute</i></p>	
<p>Naa Abudulai III (1954 – 1967)</p> <p>Upon his death, succession went to the Andani Gate as per L.I. 59, which called for the Andani Gate to have two successive turns</p>	<p>Naa Andani III (1968 – 1969)</p> <p>Upon his death, succession was supposed to remain in the Andani Gate for one more turn before reverting to the Abudu Gate, as per the L.I. 59 passed in 1960 by the Nkrumah government. However this L.I 59 was repealed, and in Busia's government the skin was given back to the Abudu Gate</p>

<p>Naa Mahamadu IV (1969 – 1974)</p> <p>In 1974, the National Redemption Council (NRC) regime revoked the decision to install him as the rightful King, and rather implemented the L.I. 59. As a result he was deskinned and instead Naa Yakubu Andani II enskinned in 1974</p>	<p>Naa Yakubu Andani II (1974 – 2002)</p> <p>His reign ended in a regicide on March 27, 2002. Upon his natural death, succession would have reverted to the Abudu Gate. However, since his life was cut short by a regicide, by the Dagomba custom, it's taken that he did not serve his entire term in office and therefore succession would have to remain in the Andani family. This has been the present dilemma.</p>
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**Source:** (Asiedu, 2008).

#### ***4.2 Immediate Source of the Conflict***

The main issue that led to the death of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II actually began during the preceding Eid-ul-Adha and fire festival when the regent of late Mahamadu Abdulai IV (the deskinned) tried to perform certain rituals reserved only for the legitimate Ya Na. The legitimate Ya Na Yakubu Andani II was not happy about this, as he perceived it as an affront to his authority as overlord of Dagbon. It is allege that both gates paraded some weapons and decided that the fire festival would determine who really controlled Yendi. The simmering tension forced DISEC to impose a curfew on Yendi in March 2002. The then regional minister lifted the curfew after consultation with the Ya Na (Yakubu, 2005). The Abudus became embitter by the decision to lift the curfew and claim that if they could not celebrate the fire festival, nobody else should. Whereas, the Ya Na also maintained that, as Ya Na, he was the only one with both legal and customary mandate to celebrate the fire festival.

Citing a police source, the report indicated that as the time approached for the celebration of the fire festival at Yendi, Ya Na Yakubu Andani II and his elders received threats from unidentified groups of people to the effect that, they (the unidentifiable group) were planning to disrupt the

festival scheduled for that night. Because of this, tension started mounting in the Yendi Township thereby, prompting the Yendi District Security Council (DISEC) to hold an emergency meeting at which it decided to impose a curfew to avert any unrest (Ahiave, 2013). The issue resulted in shooting in Yendi shortly after the announcement of the lifting of the curfew, which was, re-imposed (Yakubu, 2005). In effect, none of the sides was able to celebrate the festival that intensified their anger, leading to some level of fighting which continued for about three days and eventually, causing the murder of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II and forty others on 27th of March 2002 (Tsikata & Seini, 2004).

The news of Ya-Na's assassination was widely reported in the Ghanaian media. Reporting under the caption 'YA-NA KILLED', both *The Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* reported on Thursday 28th March, 2002 that Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II, King of Dagbon, had been reportedly killed in renewed clashes between the factions in the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute on that Tuesday night. Whereas *The Daily Graphic* reported that twenty-four (24) others were killed with him, *The Ghanaian Times* on the other hand put the figure at twenty-five 25 (*Daily Graphic*, 2002; *Ghanaian Times*, 2002).

### ***4.3 Political***

The turbulent and divisive political situation during the independence struggle had an impact on the Dagbon conflict with the elite within the two factions aligning themselves with the two main political parties in the country (Tonah, 2012). The Abudu faction aligned itself with the United Party (UP) while the Andani was associated with the Convention Peoples Party (CPP). In 1960, the Nkrumah government (1957–66) brokered an agreement between the two factions that attempted to restore the rotational succession system in Dagbon. It was agreed that on the death of Abdulai III the next king should come from the Andani clan. In line with this agreement, Andani III from the Andani clan was selected as the Ya Na in 1968 following the death of Abdulai III in 1967. In 1968, the National Liberation Council (NLC) government (1966–69) that overthrew the

Nkrumah regime set up the Mate Kole Committee to inquire into the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict (Tonah, 2012).

The Committee's report declared Ya Na Andani III's enskinment as not being in accordance with Dagbon custom and therefore annulled his enskinment. Gbonlana Mahamadu was thus, subsequently installed as the King with the support of the ruling Busia government (Ladouceur, 1972; Olawale, 2006; Ahorsu & Gebe 2011). On 9th September 1969, fighting broke out in Yendi following attempts by the security forces to forcibly remove members of the Andani clan from the royal palace resulting in the death of thirty members of the Andani clan.

Again, in 1972, Acheampong's military government (1972–78) that overthrew the Busia regime set up the Ollenu Committee to ascertain the correct custom and customary practices for the nomination, selection and enskinment of a Ya Na. This followed continued agitation by members of the Andani clan for a review of the decisions of the Male Kole Committee. The Ollenu Committee declared the deskinment of Ya Na Andani III as illegitimate and subsequently called for the removal of Mahamadu Abudulai IV as Ya Na (Tonah, 2012). Based on the recommendations of the Ollenu Committee, Yakubu Andani II was enskined as Ya Na in 1972. However, Ya Na Yakubu Andani II was not recognised as the overlord by the Abudu clan. Consequently, the Abudu gate tried many ways to deskin Ya Na Yakubu but could not succeed. According to Tonah (2012), the Abudus attempted to change the status quo during the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) regime (1981–1992) but failed.

Additionally, Ghana's Supreme Court in December 1986 ruled in favour of the Andani clan as it upheld the recommendations of the Ollenu Committee. It also affirmed the principle of the rotation system between the two clans as being fundamental to traditional rule and custom in Dagbon (Tonah, 2012). However, the ruling of the Supreme Court did not settle the matter. It appears the Abudu clan were biding their time for a

change in government to suit their favour (Anamzoya, 2004; Mahama, 2009).

## **5. Parties to This Conflict**

Every conflict involve three (3) major parties with diverse stake thus, primary, secondary and tertiary parties. In the case of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict, the primary parties are the Abudu and Andani gates.

## **6. Position of the Primary Parties**

### ***6.1. Abudu Royal Gate***

The main position of the Abudus is for them to have a new Ya Na from the Abudu gate. Again, their position is that, once the late Ya Na Yakubu Andani II from the Andani gate was dead, it is their turn to hold the throne. Meanwhile, the only way to achieve that is for them to perform the customary funeral rite of late Mahamadu Abdulai in the *Gbewaa* palace (Issifu, 2015).

### ***6.2. Andani Royal Gate***

The position of the Andani gate on the other hand, is for them to have a new Ya Na enskinned from the Andani family because the late Ya Na Yakubu Andani II did not die a natural death (Issifu, 2015). More so, they are on the position that, late Mahamadu Abdulai did not die as legitimate Ya Na therefore, he cannot enjoy a befitting burial like a legitimate Ya Na who had passed on. In addition, they want government to probe into the

conflict and find the killers of the late Ya Na and bring perpetrators to the rigor of the law (Issifu, 2015).

## **7. Position of the Secondary Parties**

Having discussed the positions taken by the parties involved in the conflict, some politicians and conflict entrepreneurs from the two leading political parties in Ghana; New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC) have also aligned themselves to the Abudu and Andani gates respectively, for political gains that in turn prolonged the conflict. Thus, it is argue that, the late Ya Na Yakubu Andani II was healthily alive during the NDC government however; he was kill in cold blood on March 27, 2002 during a time when the NPP government was in power for the first time (Tsikata & Seini, 2004). Hence, the Andani royal family/gate and their sympathisers believe that, the NPP government had hand in the death of late Ya Na Yakubu Andani II (Yakubu, 2005; Ahiave, 2013). Regional House of Chiefs (RHCs), police, military, neighbouring communities, Regional Security Council (RESEC), District Security Council (DISEC), some government officials etc. are all part of the secondary parties who are indirectly affected by the conflict phenomena. Significantly, international neighbouring countries, including Burkina Faso and Togo have all felt the cost of the conflict.

## **8. Position of the Tertiary Parties**

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs); The West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP), Ghana Red Cross Society, Action Aid Ghana, Advocacy Peace Group - IBIS (Ghana), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Christian Council of Ghana, National Peace Council (NPC), Religious Leaders, Commission of Inquiries, National House of Chiefs (NHCs), etc. hold the position that, there should be a sustainable peace. Consequently, they have all contributed their quota in bringing the conflict to a partial peace.

## **9. Main Issues in the Conflict**

At the heart of the Andani-Abudu conflict is an agglomeration of issues about chieftaincy succession. The main issue of the Abudu gate is for them to have a new Ya Na enkindred from the Abudu gate. Again, their argument is that once the late Ya Na Yakubu Andani II from the Andani gate was dead, it is their turn to hold the throne without any hindrance. On the other hand, the Andani gate have based their issue on the fact that, the late Ya Na Yakubu Andani II did not die a natural death therefore, they want a new Na Ya from the Andani gate (Issifu, 2015).

## **10. Tactics Being Used by the Various Parties**

The tactics used in the conflict by the two primary parties include blame and counter-blames. They often use the tactics of sporadic and indiscriminate shooting using small arms and light weapons, burning of houses, ambushing one another, killing people on farms etc. According to *The Ghanaian Times*, on Monday morning, one of the factions allegedly attacked a young man from the rival camp and destroyed his bicycle. This resulted in exchange of gunfire leaving two people injured and admitted at the Yendi Government Hospital (*Ghanaian Times*, 2002). The pictures of weapons and ammunition retrieved from the palace that emerged after the 2002 event included a machine gun, countless AK47s, a private car of the late Ya-Na with several guns in the boot (The Guardian, 2012). The death of the Ya Na since March 2002 has made the Dagbon crisis more deadly, and Brukum (2006) describes the tactics used by the conflicting parties as war of emancipation or secession.

## **11. What has changed as the Conflict Developed Over Time?**

One major thing that has changed because of the conflict is that, there is still no Ya Na but a regent. However, the regent does not have legal and

full customary rights over the Dagbon people as the original Ya Na. For instance, there are a number of lands that should be signed for a complete ownership but once there is still no substantive Ya Na, the regent cannot act in that capacity. Hence, delaying land title registration and community development. Again, the conflict has changed the economic activities of the area. More so, during the periods of the conflict, many school children went on break for the fear of their lives, many people were killed and several properties were also destroyed, the police and military deployed in the area (The Guardian, 2012) seized offensive weapons like G.3 and AK 47 from the rioting factions. Besides, series of curfews were impose on sensitive towns that impeded movement during the conflict (Issifu, 2015).

## **12. How Far the Conflict has enlarged**

The conflict continues to enlarge to other parts of the country. For example, in Agbogbloshie and Kokomba markets, Abudus and Andanis found themselves in bloodshed during the actual conflict in Dagbon. Two men were confirm dead in Accra from machete wounds following clashes between the Andani and Abudu families of Dagbon at the Konkomba Market in Agbogbloshie, Accra (My Joy online, 2008). The conflict also forced many youth to migrate and settle in the urban cities of Accra and Kumasi. Their presence in the cities added up to the already existing social and environmental challenges faced by the urban areas. During the periods of 2002 and 2003, the number of head porters popularly known as ‘Kayaye’<sup>vii</sup> increased. These periods were the times when the conflict was at its peak and curfews been placed on them.

## **13. Roles Played By Other Parties**

The National Security Council, RESEC and DISEC, Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defence through the Ghana police service and the military have been useful in managing and building peace in Dagbon

over the years. For instance, the military and police were deployed to protect lives and properties whenever the conflict exploded or threatened to explode over entrenched positions by the two gates (Issifu, 2015). Following the exchange of gunfire in Yendi that lasted for three days (25th to 27th March 2002), resulting in the death of Ya Na Yakubu Andani II, a military and police contingent were deployed to re-enforce the existing detachment on the grounds. Their duty as usual was to protect lives and properties as well as to monitor and enforce the state of emergency that was imposed on Yendi, Tamale and their catchment areas (Issifu, 2015) reiterate.

Consequently, by Constitutional Instrument, 2002 (C.I.36), the then President, John Agyekum Kufuor, on 25th April, 2002, appointed a three member Commission of Inquiry, chaired by Justice I.N.K. Wuaku, to investigate the Yendi disturbances (Wuaku-Commission, 2002). However, there has not been a complete peace in the face of this commission. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) including Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs), NGOs and specialised United Nations (UN) agencies on their own initiatives and in collaboration with the state have played diverse and important roles in mitigating against the adverse effects of the Dagbon Crisis (Ahorsu & Gebe, 2011). Apart from providing relief services to the displaced during the crisis, they have organised sensitisation programmes aimed at educating people on the need for peace in Dagbon (Ahiave, 2013).

#### **14. Outcome of the Conflict Up To Now**

When conflict breaks out, there must be a resolution, but the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict seems to have defied every attempt to resolve. For example, in 2002 alone, about fifty-five people died in the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict including the Ya Na. The atrocity generated series of conflicts all over the region including Tamale, Yendi, Bimbila and the like. In addition, properties valued at billions of Ghanaian Cedis were destroyed. The Government of Ghana reported to have spent about 6.5 million new Ghana Cedis on the Dagbon crisis when Ya Na Yakubu Andani was murdered in 2002 (Brukum, 2007). In 1994, the then government of Ghana

claimed to have spent six billion Cedis (C 6,000,000,000) in maintaining peace in northern Ghana alone (Brukum, 2006). Meanwhile, if it were not for the conflict, these monies could be used for humanitarian and progressive services such as, the provision of social interventions and not for the constant peacekeeping in the area (Issifu, 2015).

More so, the violence adversely affected production, marketing and investment in agriculture which is most especially, the dominant economic activity in the Tamale metropolis. During the outbreak of the violence, farmers especially those engaged in the cultivation of perishable foodstuffs such as watermelons, tomato, pepper, onions etc., suffered heavy losses. Most farmers abandoned their crops because they feared of being attacked on their farms by an enemy. In addition, because of the fact that transportation networks were disrupted during the violent clashes, farmers were unable to transport their foodstuffs to the market centres. This resulted in the foodstuffs getting rotten on the farms, leading to the shortage of agricultural products on the market. Furthermore, the severe violence and insecurity in the metropolis resulted in most financial institutions unwilling to grant loans to farmers to invest in agricultural production (Issifu, 2015).

It is also an acknowledged fact that, basic human rights are infringed upon during times of violent conflicts. For instance, some of the soldiers who were called upon to restore calm and peace during the Dagbon conflict allegedly ended up abusing young girls and brutalising people unlawfully. This depicts how human rights are violated during periods of violent conflicts. Another effect of the Dagbon conflict is that, it forced many youths especially, vulnerable women and children to migrate and settle in the urban cities of Accra and Kumasi. Their presence in the cities added up to the already existing social and environmental challenges in the urban areas. According to Ahorsu and Gebe (2011), the conflict caused a relentless internal migration to the peri-urban periphery of Southern Ghana.

More so, the conflict affected social cohesion and community mobilisation. The two gates remain suspicious, do not trust each other, and for that matter, do not attend each other's social function. There have also been allegations that, both gates have been arming themselves for a possible showdown. The violence in Dagbon has also adversely affected health care delivery and education. The health cost of the violent clashes include deaths, injuries, ill health and psychological disorders among the residents. The situation places a lot of stress on the limited health infrastructure and personnel in the area. The frequent curfews imposed also affected academic standards because; students could not go out to access academic facilities (libraries, classrooms, laboratories etc.) (Issifu, 2015). Teachers who held evening classes for students were affected since their movement was restricted. Above all, a cursory look at facilities such as roads, clinics and schools in the metropolis as part of the observation technique applied in this study showed that, most of these facilities though are already in bad shape, the conflict paved way for their total destruction (Issifu, 2015).

The destruction of infrastructure like schools, water and health facilities during the violent conflict have negatively affected social development in Dagbon (Canterbury & Kendie, 2010). According to Ghana Statistical Service (2000), the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict witnessed the greatest amounts of all violence in Ghana leading to the death of hundreds of people, causing destruction to livelihood and distortion to social services. In a similar vein, Ahorsu and Gebe (2011) argued that, the Dagbon conflict has been characterised by the wanton destruction of life and property, development reversals, serious abuse of human rights, suffering, especially among the vulnerable.

## **15. Winners of the Conflict Up To Now**

There is no winner in the Dagbon conflict. However, the entire people of Dagbon are the losers especially, relatives or family members of the dead, the tortured and those victims whose properties were destroyed in the conflict. Interestingly, the conflict has remained protracted and this has a bearing in Edward Azar's model of Protracted Social Conflict (PSC). The

Dagbon conflict significantly fits well into Azar's (1995) PSC because; the root of the dispute involves claims to values and power contestation or chieftaincy succession struggle. Several scholars agree to Azar's model that explains that, like the Dagbon conflict, protracted conflicts are difficult to be resolved because of several encompassing and converging factors. Among these scholars, include Coleman (2000) who posited that intractable conflicts are the ones that are often intense, deadlocked and difficult to resolve. Intractable or perhaps protracted conflicts are unpredictable, they occur suddenly, shockingly, persistently and viciously; its effects are often pervasive, affecting not only the aspects of a person or community's socio-political settings but also economic, livelihood sustainability and mental health of people and tend to also affect institutions as the case of Dagbon conflict.

The theory exhaustively examines the root causes and/or source, effects and implications of conflicts which are intractable in nature in a given a society or country. It also pays particular attention to ethnicity, power struggle and other forms of communal conflicts, and emphasises that sources of these protracted conflicts are more internal (within a state) just as the case of the Dagbon crisis than external (Azar, 1990). These sources, according to Azar include cultural, political, power and recognition, economic, colonial legacy and institutional factors. Protracted conflicts usually tend to affect all sectors of a society's development because of the intensity and recurrence of violence (Bukari, 2011). However, Mail, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse (1999) suggest that, in resolving protracted social conflicts, there is the need to properly manage ethnic dominance, power struggle, create economic opportunities for citizens. This suggests that managing the ethnic dominance between the two intra-ethnic gates; Abudu versus Andani could be a suitable way to resolving the conflict.

## **16. Conclusion**

There are many issues of chieftaincy dispute in almost all the regions in Ghana. However, Ghana's northern region comes with the highest severity

of all the conflicts. Thus, the Dagbon conflict is the brutish of all involving two gates (Abudu versus Andani). Consequently, the Andani gate wants to get those who kille the late Ya Na punish and still have someone from the their gate become Ya Na, while the Abudu gate on the other hand, want to gain access to the throne by performing the funeral rites of late Mahamadu Abdulai IV in the *Gbewaa*. Parties, including government, police and military, politicians, Commission of Inquiry, CSOs, and NGOs etc. have all contributed their quota positively in resolving the conflict. However, there is still no sustainable peace in Dagbon.

Hence, the authors suggest that, for sustainable peace to be enjoyed in Dagbon, traditional conflict resolution techniques from within the local people themselves with the involvement of the Kuga-Na<sup>viii</sup>, Nayiri<sup>ix</sup> and some soothsayers in declaring the legitimate gate to serve as Dagbon King could be the best way to ensure sustainable peace in Dagbon. Thus, re-echoing the words of Otumfuo Osei Tutu II (Asantehene), traditional rulers and Dagbon citizens themselves are the best people to resolve the conflict using their traditional conflict resolution methods (Issifu, 2015).

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<sup>i</sup> The customary title name for the King of Dagbon.

<sup>ii</sup> The official location where the Ya Na's *Gbewaa* palace is located.

<sup>iii</sup> The administrative capital of northern region.

<sup>iv</sup> Mion, Savulugu and Karaga are the three main gates from which a person is drawn from to serve as a Ya Na. Without serving as a regent in any of these gates, one can't assume the 'Ya Na-ship' title even if you are a royal.

<sup>v</sup> Deskinment as used in the northern part of Ghana, means the removal of a chief from office. Also, it means destoolment in the southern part of Ghana.

<sup>vi</sup> The only way to do that was to kill him, else, in spite of his deskinment, his people (gate) may recognise him as the King though unacceptable customarily.

<sup>vii</sup> Unskilled labourers mostly women aged from 10 to 65 years who carry luggage for menial monies. They are also homeless and sleep in front of people's shops at night. They are exposed to rape and malaria especially

those with babies. It is surprising to see government agents collecting levies from them in spite of their predicaments.

<sup>viii</sup> The supreme father of both Abudu and Andani gates possessed with great wisdom and respected by all. It is believed that, he is always right and his decisions are respected by his grandchildren (Abudus and Andanis).

<sup>ix</sup> The King of Mampurugu is also blessed with divine wisdom and respected by all. He is consulted in extreme cases where the Kuga-Na needs advise.