

ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF CONFLICT ON INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS: INSIGHTS FROM GONJA-NAWURI CONFLICT IN KPANDAI

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Abstract

This paper examined the economic effects of Gonja-Nawuri conflicts on inter-ethnic relations in Kpandai. The protracted inter-ethnic conflict in Kpandai not only caused the loss of lives and properties in the area but also contributed significantly to ethnic displacement and low economic productivity. The conflict has also underwritten the underdeveloped nature of the district and its catchment areas in northern Ghana. The theoretical framework of analysis is the greed and grievance theory. The paper also employed an exploratory case study design and relied on data from in-depth interviews. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews from purposively selected 30 study participants from the five major ethnic groups and some key informants in the study area. The analysis of both primary and secondary data revealed that the colonial policy of subordination and realignment of traditional authorities in some parts of Northern Ghana for local administration and convenience created local power dominance. The phenomenon created ethnic superiority and political and social dominance of Gonjas over Nawuris in the Kpandai traditional area. The overall effect of the conflict from the

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study results is that it aggravates the social and economic relations among, and between the ethnic groups in the area. The paper concludes that the Gonja-Nawuri ethnic conflict had a severe tone on the lives of ordinary people irrespective of their ethnic origin. The devastating nature of it left many of the people jobless as they couldn't continue with their day-to-day activities. The paper recommends that for Nawuris and Gonjas to harmonise their debilitating social relations, there is a need for mutual respect and a sense of social bonding. Also, though much effort went into peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction in the area, there is still the need for the local authorities, well-meaning citizens and opinion leaders in the area to intervene through social durbars with a theme 'One Gonja, One Nawuri, One Kpandai' in unity reconciliatory project.

Keywords: economics, conflict, ethnic, Gonja, Nawuri, Kpandai

Introduction

Ethnic conflicts are prominent in post-independent African States (Alabi, 2002; Aremu, 2010; Awedoba, 2009; Mbowura, 2014; Debrah, et. al., 2016). For instance, Aremu (2010) argued that Africa's history as a continent is littered with conflicts. Alabi (2002) also mentioned that strife and conflicts run through Africa, from north to south, east to west, and central to south. African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Rwanda, Ivory Coast, and many others have all experienced different forms of ethnic conflicts (Awedoba, 2009; Mbowura, 2014; Debrah, et al., 2016). Pre-colonial Africa had a centralised political and local governance administration with a well-structured local authority system (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2013; Bukari, Mbowura, Orlapu & Shanunu, 2023). African societies, such as the Songhai Empire in Western Africa, the Luba Kingdom in Central Africa and the Buganda and Ankole Kingdoms in Eastern Africa, had centralised local authority systems and political institutions.

However, some societies such as the Nuer society in Sudan and the Konkomba society in Ghana and Togo have no centralised local authority and political administration (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2013). Some scholars have argued that the lack of centralised local authority or structured-political administration easily triggers ethnic conflicts (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2013; Bukari, Mbowura, Orlapu & Shanunu, 2023). Other scholars have divergent views and opine that most of the ethnic conflicts in Africa were triggered by the indirect rule system in the colonial African states (Mbowura, 2014). Mbowura (2014) further stated that the

colonial indirect administration system by the Europeans in the year 1932 permitted centralised societies to exercise control over the less centralised societies in Africa. As a result, some societies in Africa like Nawuris in Ghana lost their authority and power over Alfai to the Gonjas in Northern Ghana (Awedoba, 2009; Mbowura, 2014; Debrah, et al., 2016; Bukari, Mbowura, Orlapu & Shanunu, 2023).

Ghana has over the years experienced a lot of intra and inter-ethnic conflicts, particularly in the northern part of the country. One such conflict is the Gonja-Nawuri ethnic conflict. The conflict which initially involved only two ethnic groups, the Gonjas and the Nawuris, later drew in other ethnic groups (Mbowura, 2014). In this conflict, there were perceptions, misrepresentations, and mistrust not only between the Gonjas and the Nawuris but with other ethnic groups. Other ethnic groups also rose to defend themselves from the frustration and the abuses by Gonjas and the Nawuris (Awedoba, 2009; Mbowura, 2014; Debrah, et al., 2016).

Arguably, scholarly works and discussions exist on ethnic conflicts in northern Ghana. For instance, Lentz and Nugent (2000) examined the causes of Gonja-Nawuri conflict between 1991 and 1992. Awedoba (2009) also discussed the cost of the conflict. Further, Stacey (2013) worked on the Gonja-Nawuri interrogates local democratisation and struggles over traditional jurisdictions in the new Kpandai District in the northern region of Ghana. Though a lot of lessons can be learnt from these studies, they concentrated on explaining the causes of the conflict, the cost, and administration lapses that contribute to the conflict. The available studies have also confined their analysis to two conflicting parties in the conflict, the Gonjas and the Nawuris (Awedoba, 2009; Mbowura, 2013; Mbowura, 2014; Debrah, et al., 2016).

Given this background, the paper is expected to accentuate the real and perceived economic effects of the conflict on inter-ethnic relations of the settler ethnic groups (Gonjas and Nawuris) in Kpandai to contributing not only to a wealth of knowledge and debate on the phenomenon but also provide pathways for preventing a relapse of the conflict in the present or near future. The rest of the paper is organised as follows: the next section after the introduction is the theoretical and conceptual issues of the paper. Section three is the dynamics of the Gonja-Nawuri conflict, followed by section four which is the methodology. Section five is the results of the analysis and discussion, followed by the concluding remarks and references.

Theoretical and Conceptual Issues

The study is conceptualised within the framework of the greed versus grievance model (Collier & Hoeffler, 1998). The greed versus grievance model was developed to explain the economic triggers of civil wars and conflicts in society. In their regression analysis, using the measures of greed such as primary product exports, and two measures of GDP per capita, together with indicators of grievances such as ethnic and religious segregation, ethnic supremacy, and income disparity, the authors concluded that it is mainly the financial viability of a country which inspires rebellious movements and causes civil wars and conflict, and not social grievances (Collier & Hoeffler, 1998). The authors also argued that greed essentially denotes the economic opportunity for groups to participate in rebellious conflicts that make loot-seeking the foremost motive for civil wars and conflicts. Beyond the economic indicators, civil and ethnic conflicts are also triggered by corruption (Howard, 2005). Collier and Hoeffler's (2001) model also identifies diaspora funding in particular geographical locations to be central to conflict formation. It also states that genuine grievances, such as political exclusion, inequality, ethnic division, and religious segregation only inadequately explain the causes of civil wars (Mbowura, Iddrisu & Bukari, 2023).

However, the contentious nature of the model has produced criticisms and persuaded the authors to include the grievances in their presentation and replace greed with rebel opportunity. This, they argued, was important in explaining the occurrence and sustenance of rebellious movements seeking or not seeking profit (Ylonen, 2005; Wimmer & Min 2009; Stewart, 2008). Ylonen (2005) for instance, opined that the greed and grievance theory appreciate that insurgent grievances have a place in factors causing ethnic conflicts, though play an insignificant role in the development of civil wars. It restricts the occurrence of war principally to the rebel economic agendas expressed in an opportunity to rebel in society. Wimmer and Min (2009) also argued that highly diversified societies are not necessarily catalysts for ethnic conflict. According to the authors, states characterised by certain ethnopolitical configurations of power are more likely to experience violent conflict. Similarly, Scheffran and Schilling (2014) supported the proposition by arguing that the erosion of social order and state failure are potential triggers for ethnic conflicts rather than ethnic diversity. Using Kenya and Sudan to support their assertion, the

authors were of the view that all the spiralling conflicts that erupted in these countries were between the state military and the rebel forces and had nothing to do with ethnic diversity.

The relevance of the theory lies in how the variables can be used to explain how the war produced economic effects. First, the inequality variable of the theory within the context of Gonjas' dominance in the Kpandai traditional area contributed to the war. The Gonja dominance in Kpandai brought about social inequality and structural imbalance where, for instance, some ethnic groups enjoyed certain rights to the detriment of other ethnic groups. This eventually triggered the Gonja-Nawuri ethnic conflict in Kpandai and its subsequent effects on inter-ethnic relations in the area. Secondly, the ethnic and religious fractionalisation variables in the greed and grievance theory have also been considered. Using these variables, we interrogate how some ethnic groups in Kpandai naturally use religion to strike ethnic alliances and cleavages amongst themselves in the area. Thirdly, the political repression variable is used to explain how some ethnic groups tend to dominate politically because of their numbers and higher education attainment to the disadvantage of other ethnic groups in Kpandai. Finally, the natural resources causality principle has been employed to explain how land as a natural resource brought a conflict between the Gonjas and the Nawuris ethnic groups which later attracted other settler communities in Kpandai District.

The study also adopted the concept of the land tenure system to fill in the gap that the Greed and Grievance Theory was weak. Prior studies have been conducted about and among people, individuals, or groups concerning land (Crocombe, 1974; Johnson, 1972).

Dynamics of the Gonja-Nawuri Conflict

Gonja-Nawuri ethnic conflict can be traced to the pre-colonial, colonial era and post-independence Ghana. Mbowura (2012) said the underlying causes of inter-ethnic conflicts in Ghana especially in the northern part of Ghana. The colonial policy of subordination has merged different ethnic groups for political administration and convenience. This contributes to some ethnic conflicts in the northern part of Ghana. One of such ethnic conflicts' is the Gonja-Nawuri conflict in the Kpandai traditional area.

Historically, the Nawuris were considered to have settled in the Kpandai area first. However, the colonial policy of subordination made the Gonjas overlords over the Nawuris who

are considered to be the first settlers in the area. The synthesis of this was marginalisation, maltreatment, social and political injustice and other forms of inconvenience (Mbowura, 2012; Debra, 2016; Gbati, 2017). Who owns the Kpandai traditional area lands and its environs brings to the fore the unanswered question of whether it is the earlier settlers (the Nawuris) of the area or the immigrants (the Gonjas) in the area. Scholars have suggested one fundamental cause of the ethnic conflict as the issue of land ownership between the Gonjas and the Nawuris in Kpandai. For instance, Mbowura (2012) argued that the ‘question’ of who owns the Kpandai land was the fundamental root cause of all the various forms of violent conflicts in the area, particularly among the Nawuris and Gonjas between 1932 and 1991. Thus, who owned the Kpandai land was a major problem to the two major combatants (Nawuris and Gonjas). However, the Gonjas had political authority rested in their hands, and all royalties were solely under their authority.

The April 1991 incident marked the beginning of the bloody conflict between the Gonjas and Nawuris, even though some misunderstandings existed between the two combatants. This started the clash between Gonjas and Nawuri women over land and politics, and later a group attacked a Nawuri man in one of the Gonja towns. Because the political authority resides in the Gonjas, they sell land to settler ethnic groups, and sometimes to the Nawuris who are considered as the earlier settlers in the area. When the Nawuris realised that the Gonjas (the later settlers) had the intention of selling Nawuri lands to them (Nawuris), it triggered agitation against the Gonjas in the area (Debra et al., 2016; Gbati, 2017). For instance, Debrah et.al. (2016, p.11) emphasised that “it was the same land right issue that resulted in the mutual attacks between Nawuris and Gonjas from 1991-1992.” Also, Mbowura (2012) argued that the first phase of the conflict was a clash of brides between the women of the two combatants, and this occurred on 7 April 1991. This later degenerated into a full-blown battle when the Gonjas decided to sell a piece of land that the Nawuris had already sold to the Roman Catholic Church. Incidentally, the Nawuris happened to constitute the largest congregants of that church (Mbowura, 2012; Debrah et al., 2016). The Nawuris protested and vowed to defend it with their last blood. It was a means to end the Gonja dominance on the allodial right of Kpandai land. This conflict which started with the two combatants in 1991 later drew in other ethnic groups such as the Bassare, the Konkomba, the Kotokoli and other settler groups where many lives were lost and properties were

destroyed (Mbowura, 2012). This conflict had an economic implication on the various ethnic groups living in Kpandai, and its environs (Mbowura, 2012; Debrah et.al., 2016).

The relationship among the various ethnic groups in Kpandai, and its surrounding communities can be traced to both pre- and post-independent Ghana. The Nawuris are purported to have been the first settlers and indigenes of the area, it has been difficult to give the exact date they migrated to the place and their origin. Mbowura (2012, p.4) agreed with this assertion when the author stated that, the historical accounts of the origin of the Nawuri varied and “the migration-and-settlement history of the Nawuri suggests that they were part of the autochthonous Guan groups who inhabited present-day Ghana over a thousand years ago.” The other combatant, the Gonjas, origin can be traced somewhere in the northwestern part of Niger in modern-day Mali. The Bassari and the Konkomba arrived later in somewhere the early part of the 19 Century. According to Mbowura (2012) by the year 1920, small groups of Bassari and Konkomba arrived in Alfai. Besides these major ethnic groups, other groups such as the Kotokoli, the Dagomba, the Chikosi, and the Akan also moved to settle there. Debrah (2016 et al., p.7) asserted this view when they stated that “among the Mole-Dagbani (the principal ethnic group in the Region), Dagomba and Mamprusi are the largest sub-groups, and Kokomba, Basaari and Bimoba are the largest of the Gurma group. Also, “there are small groups such as Chokosi that are linked to Akan, and Gonja and Chumburu of Guan identity” (Debrah, et.al., 2016 p. 7).

Before independence and after independence Ghana until 1991, these various ethnic groups lived in harmony except the Gonjas and the Nawuris who occasionally had misunderstandings which were mostly settled within the chieftaincy level. Even with all this misunderstanding, they married each other. Debrah et al. (2016), the Gonja-Nawuri rivalry started way back in the 1980s when each ethnic group joined forces with any like-minded ethnic group in a conflict against the other but that could not stop them from marrying each other. Even politically, the Gonjas and the Nawuris exhibited their political differences. It is established that in the 1969 general elections in Ghana, the Nawuris and the Gonjas were divided along political lines. The Nawuris supported Gbedemah’s National Alliance of Liberals (NAL) while the Gonjas threw their weight behind the Progress Party (PP) of Busia (Mbowura, 2012; Debrah et. al., 2016; Gbati, 2017).

The intermarriages between the various ethnic groups were enormous. The intermarriages between the Gonjas and the Kotokolis were high due to the Islamic religion. They were predominantly Muslims. The Nawuris are mostly predominantly Catholics and for that matter could marry from any ethnic group. Debrah et.al. (2016) and Mbowura (2012) asserted this view when they stated that, most of the Gonjas were Muslims, but the Nawuri were largely Christians, mostly Catholics in the denomination. The relationship between the Nawuris and the Gonjas was very cordial. They lived like brothers and sisters. Because of the cordial relationship that existed between them, they easily agreed on how the constitution of the Kpandai political system should be administered. The Nawuris initially allowed the Gonjas to handle political matters in Kpandai where the Nawuri brought meat and farm produce from hunting and farm, respectively; to the Gonja chief which lasted for years until the outbreak of the 1991 conflict (Mbowura, 2012; Debrah et.al., 2016; Mbowura, Iddrisu & Bukari, 2023).

Design, Methods and Data Sources

Methodologically, the paper employed an exploratory case study design and relied on feedback from in-depth interviews. Besides the primary data, the paper relied on secondary data from sources such as books, newspapers, journal articles, reports, the internet, and other documented materials to help in the analysis. A total number of thirty (30) participants were purposively selected and interviewed based on their knowledge and lived experience of the conflict. Ten (10) of the 30 participants were drawn from the five major ethnic groups in Kpandai, namely the Nawuri, Gonja, Bassare, Konkomba and Kotokoli. The other twenty (20) participants were drawn from security agencies, traditional authorities (or chiefs), educationists, opinion leaders, and politicians in Kpandai, Kpembi, and Salaga. The data analysis involves making comprehensive and analytical descriptions of statements made by the participants in the form of explanations and drawing inferences.

Results and Discussion

The economic activities in Kpandai consist of farming, fishing, trading, and others. The Nawuri and Ewe around the rivers engaged in fishing, and the Bassare, Konkombas and some Nawuri engaged in farming (Gbati, 2017). Besides the main occupation, some are also engaged in livestock such as cattle, goats and sheep rearing. In most cases, after the harvest of their produce,

they transport them in larger quantities to the capital of Ghana-Accra where there is a large market for it. A participant has this support of the above historical statement.

“...The people were mainly into commercial businesses....and that they were mostly traders and traded among themselves in the various major markets in the Alfai and other areas. Before, the conflict, Kpandai and its environs had major markets in Ketare, Kumindi, Nkanchi, Kadjaboni, and Kpandai itself.... the surrounding markets included Lungni, Kpassa, Dambai, Krachi, Damanko Welensi, Nakpayili and Binbimla.... The women were trading in these markets. The various items that they traded in included fish, groundnuts, keta-school boys, beans, clothes, sandals, yams, corn and so on. Their male counterparts were mostly into transport businessesand they owned vehicles that transported these market women to and from. But some men also competed with the women in trading, where they also engaged in buying and selling...” (Participant interview, at Kpandai 2017).

Trading in the area was mostly controlled by the Gonjas and Kotokolis (Gbati, 2017). The Gonja men and the women were rich because they owned vehicles, and so could transport goods from one place to another. Again, they could buy the farm produce at a cheaper price from the poor farmers and sell it at a higher price. The buying and selling were dominated by Gonjas and followed by the Kotokolis. This was the time when Kpandai produced plenty of food. One participant also said:

“...The economic activities like tax collection and tokens for land were all controlled by the Gonja. In fact, they exerted all their powers on the other settlers but could not bring it on to the Nawuris.....and that economic activities like trading were in the hands of the Gonjas and the Kotokolis, Bassares and Konkombas and some sections of Nawuris are farmers. Gonjas also farm but was not on a large scale ...” (Participant interview, 2017 at Kpandai).

The Gonjas, apart from controlling trade in Kpandai, were also in charge of the commercialisation of land in the area. The sale of land was under their control. One could not acquire land apart

from a Nawuri without the permission and acceptance of the Gonja. They took over all the strategic areas of Kpandai to establish their business. Even when one acquired land from the Nawuris, and Gonjas did not approve of it; it was very difficult to develop on that land. As another participant indicated:

“...Economically, the Gonjas were in charge. The sale of lands and collection of taxes were all done by the Gonjas. Even to be appointed as a tax collector you need to send your application to Salaga for you to be interviewed and appointed...” (Participant interview, 2017 at Kpandai).

After the departure of the Gonjas, the control of the economic activities changed. The Nawuri for instance who could not get access to the land due to the Gonja dominance had to finally resume as landowners where they could be fully in charge of the commercialisation of lands in Alfai. Besides the commercialisation of land, the Nawuris also competed with the Bassaris and Konkombas in farming activities (Mbowura, 2012; Debrah et.al., 2016). This was supported by the study results. A study participant opined that:

“.... Even though they also engaged in farming activities, they do that subsistence level especially those in fishing. Large-scale farming still lies in the domain of the Bassari and the Konkomba. They plough large arches of land for various forms of farming. Just a few people within the Nawuris, Bassari and Konkomba are involved in trading activities. This is still dominated by the Kotokolis, the Akans and other minor tribes in Kpandai. The Kotokoli women still engage in buying and selling trading activities. Some rich men own big trucks and commercial vehicles who convey goods and services to and from the market.....”
(Participant interview, 2017 at Kpandai).

Even though other ethnic groups were also engaged in trading activities, they did that on a smaller scale. After the conflict, the status quo changed, and it became very difficult for certain ethnic groups to engage in economic activities like farming, fishing and buying and selling. The Nawuris for instance find it difficult to engage the Gonjas in economic activities, and this continued until Kpandai became a district in 2005 (Debrah et.al., 2016; Gbati, 2017). A key informant interview revealed that:

“.... This opens up the district to the other parts of the country. As a result, various ethnic groups had to extend their relations beyond the Kpandai to the national capital (Accra). Movement from Kpandai to Accra is no longer as difficult as the days before. The road network had improved, which attracted other investors into the district. Currently, most of the commercial vehicles conveying people from Kpandai to Accra and back are all owned by foreign investors other than the natives of Kpandai. As a result, there is no easy movement for trade between the Kpandai and Accra....” (Participant interview, 2017 at Kpandai).

The 2010 population census indicated that the major occupation in the district is skilled agriculture, forestry and fishery, which employed 85.7 percent of the population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013). In this report, about 92 percent of males and 78.9 percent of females are involved in skilled agriculture, forestry and fishery. The proportion of craft and related trades workers constitute 6.5 percent, however, a higher proportion of females (11%) than males (2.1%) are in craft and related trades in the district (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013). This pattern remains the same for the service and sales workers which is the next leading form of occupation at 4.5 percent in the district. The proportion of females who are engaged in this occupation is higher 7.3 percent than males' 1.6 percent (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013). These changes occurred because of various ethnic groups trying to pick up other activities that would make them self-sufficient due to the economic breakdown in terms of trade among the various ethnic groups after the conflict. With the commercialisation of the land, even though the Nawuris are no longer competing with the Gonjas or any other tribe, they are seriously competing among themselves. The commercialisation of the land has seriously brought a sharp division among the Nawuris. The economy of every society is a source of its livelihood and the case of Kpandai in northern Ghana was not an exception. For instance, Gbati (2017 p. 42) argued that: “There were severe economic consequences in the Gonja-Nawuri conflict in the Kpandai area.” Many properties and businesses were destroyed, leaving many cashless and non-business for a long period. The only vibrant market in Kpandai was destroyed during the conflict where many undocumented assets such as corn mills, grinding mills, lorries, cars, farm produce, houses, cattle, goats, sheep,

markets, stores, filling stations and shops were destroyed. Most women lost all their properties and for many years now some could not reactivate their business activities.” This left a heavy toll on the lives of the people in Kpandai. The economic consequences have been severe that, almost all the economic activities which came to a halt during the conflict, and the immediate post-conflict was. According to Mbowura (2014), people's daily routines came to a halt as they lived in continual anxiety. The sale of yams grown by most farmers became difficult since yam buyers, especially from the South, were afraid to visit the region. As a result, the money generated in rural regions came to a screeching end.

The people of Kpandai who relied heavily on yam cultivation for their income were unable to do so due to the violence which had a huge impact on them. Yam buyers were able to go to Kpandai for fear of their lives even in the immediate post-conflict. This viewpoint was expressed by (Awedoba, 2009) and (Mbowura 2002) who argued that an oversupply of farm produce severely reduced people's earnings. Harvesting was difficult, and farm produce was left on the farms. This had a significant impact on the farming industry and caused immeasurable misery for the residents of the area. The preceding farming seasons were similar in that farmers were unable to harvest their yams, seedlings for planting were few, and the available seedlings were of poor quality, affecting future yields between 1991 and 1995. There was still some fear and panic among the people and the traders outside Kpandai. There were still minor killings within the area in the same period. Mbowura (2002) puts it as, “Because of the insecurity in the area, the 1991 crop season was marked by poor harvests.”

“.....Some farmers were unable to prepare land for food production. This had an immediate and long-term impact on agricultural activities in the area due to a lack of planting materials and incentives, farm neglect, and other factors, all of which had major consequences for the country as a whole.... the domestic markets within Kpandai and its environs were also not spared. Before the conflict, Katare Market, Kumidi Market, Nkanchina Market, Kanjaboni Market and Kpandai Market were in existence.... other surrounding markets were the Lungni and Nakpayili markets, Salaga Market, Kpassa Market, and Yeji Makango Market. Due to the conflict, most of the markets especially those within the Kpandai district folded up.... The only serving markets were the Salaga and Yeji

but were also dominated by the Gonjas. It was very difficult for traders from other ethnic groups such as the Bassaris, the Nawuris, the Konkombas, and the Nchumurus to trade with them.... The traders could not do so for fear of their lives. These ethnic groups became bitter enemies of the Gonjas fraternity....”
(Participant interview, 2017 at Kpandai).

As Gbati (2017, p.5) puts it “there were perceptions, misrepresentations and mistrust not only between the Gonjas and the Nawuris but with other ethnic groups.” Transport owners were also not left out as far as the consequences of the economic activities were concerned. During the conflict, some cars, trucks, and other machines were burnt and destroyed by opponents. Mbowura (2014) confirmed this incident and indicated that ‘property belonging to both factions, such as residences, physical cash, motorcycles, bicycles, and vehicles, among other things, were burned or plundered during the battle.’ This also affected income generation after the conflict. Those who managed to escape with their vehicles, cars and trucks have also got all of them broken down due to the bad nature of the roads. The vehicles often break down on those roads and the maintenance costs often outweigh revenue generation. In a nutshell, the Gonjas were still dictating the economic activities in Kpandai even though they were defeated by the Nawuris. Immediately, after the conflict, Kpandai and its environs were still under the then East Gonja District (Salaga South District) with the district capital as Salaga. Gonjas were still in charge of revenue collection, and the revenue and other property rates collected were sent to Salaga. This assertion was confirmed by a study participant as:

“...A Nawuri man who was in charge of revenue collection in Kpandai said, that after the conflict, the Gonja demanded that all the receipt books be used to collect revenue for the district ... and he told them that the recent books got burnt during the conflict. But this only lasted for a short while as far as economic activities were concerned ...” (Participant interview, 2017 at Kpandai).

In 2005, Kpandai got its own district and became independent on its own. Because the Gonjas wanted to continue to exert their powers on the economic activities in Kpandai tried hard to deny people a district. They used political class to deny the people of Kpandai a district, but all attempts

to achieve this failed. The agenda of Gonjas to influence the Government's decision to make Kpandai a district failed because the educated elites of Nawuris did not also go to sleep.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, it is obvious from the foregoing that, the Gonja-Nawuri ethnic conflict had a severe tone on the lives of ordinary people irrespective of their ethnic origin. The devastating nature of it left many of the people jobless as they couldn't continue with their day-to-day activities. It became a tug of war as to who was the right authority to manage the economic activities after the conflict between the two major combatants (Nawuris and Gonjas). The Gonjas fought to have absolute control of the economic activities in the area. Nawuris on the other hand wouldn't agree because they felt they fought for independence and must have total freedom including economic freedom. This was the back-and-front confrontation between them until the people of Kpandai got a district in 2005 settling the post-conflict economic power struggles. The overall effect of the conflict was that it aggravated the social and economic relations among, and between the ethnic groups in the area.

The Gonjas who had early education as against the Nawuris who were merely farmers and hunters exploited the Nawuris to their advantage. The Gonjas' way of ruling at a point in time sparked some agitation from the Nawuris youth, which later developed into a sporadic conflict, defeating the Gonjas (Mbowura, Iddrisu & Bukari, 2023). Religion was very crucial in this conflict since it served as a social bond among the various ethnic groups in Kpandai as far as inter-ethnic relations were concerned. Kpandai district comprises three major religions which are Christianity, Islam, and African traditional religion.

There is a need for Nawuris and Gonjas to harmonise their debilitating social relations for mutual respect and a sense of social bonding. The post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building effort should involve investing in small-scale businesses, entrepreneurship, farming and trading to boost the local economy in the area (Bukari, Mbowura, Orlapu & Shanunu, 2023). Finally, though much effort went into peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction in the area, Local Authorities, well-meaning citizens and opinion leaders in the area intervened through social durbars co-naming it as 'One Gonja, One Nawuri, One Kpandai' in a unity reconciliatory project.

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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES DURING THE PERIOD OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN GHANA: A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT NANA AKUFO-ADDO'S SPEECHES

Abstract

This study examined the addresses delivered by the President of Ghana, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. It addressed ⁵⁸two research questions: a) What rhetorical elements framed the addresses; and b) What was the contribution of these rhetorical elements deployed in the