



INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

(SoGSaR)

**THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A CASE OF
CHIEFTAINCY DISPUTE IN GHANA**

BY

BERNARD OWUSU- ANSAH


MASPRM24067

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MEDIA, ARTS AND
COMMUNICATION UniMAC IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE AWARD OF MA IN STRATEGIC PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT.**

OCTOBER, 2025.

DECLARATION BY STUDENT – DISSERTATION

I hereby declare that this research is a result of my own original research and that, no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or any other higher education institute. I further declare that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Bernard Owusu – Ansah	MASPRM24067		30th October, 2025
Student	Index Number	Signature	Date

CERTIFICATION BY SUPERVISOR

This Dissertation has been prepared and presented under my supervision according to the guidelines for supervision and formatting of Dissertation laid down by the University of Media, Arts and Communication, UniMAC.

DR. GEORGE ASAMOAH		30th October, 2025
Supervisor	Signature	Date

ABSTRACT

Chieftaincy disputes remain one of the most enduring and culturally sensitive conflict forms in Ghana, often threatening local stability, community cohesion, and national peace. This study examines the role of public relations in conflict resolution with specific focus on the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute. Guided by the Excellence Theory of Public Relations and the Conflict Transformation Theory, the research adopts a qualitative approach to explore how strategic communication, stakeholder engagement, and media relations contributed to restoring peace in Dagbon. Ten participants including traditional authorities, government officials, media practitioners, and community representatives were purposively sampled and interviewed. The findings reveal that structured communication channels, culturally grounded engagement, and consistent peace messaging played a central role in reducing tensions, countering misinformation, shaping public perception, and building trust among the Abudu and Andani royal families and wider Dagbon community. Radio, community durbars, official statements, religious platforms, and interpersonal communication emerged as critical tools in fostering dialogue and promoting reconciliation. The study concludes that public relations acted as a catalyst for peace by enhancing transparency, ensuring inclusivity, and reinforcing legitimacy in the conflict resolution process. It recommends sustained communication strategies, cultural sensitivity, and collaborative stakeholder engagement in future traditional conflict resolutions to strengthen social cohesion and support long-term stability.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family, whose love and support have been my foundation throughout this journey. Dr. Asamoah and Dr. Nutsugah, you are my greatest inspiration and the heart behind every accomplishment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I begin by expressing profound gratitude to the Almighty God, whose abundant grace, divine guidance, and unwavering support have sustained me throughout this academic journey. It is by his strength alone that I have been able to reach this significant milestone.

I am grateful to my supervisor, Dr. George Asamoah, for his exceptional mentorship and commitment to my academic growth. His expert guidance and constructive feedback have been instrumental in shaping the quality and direction of this dissertation.

To my colleagues and friends, thank you for the moments of collaboration, motivation, and laughter that made this process more manageable.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

DECLARATION BY STUDENT – DISSERTATION	i
CERTIFICATION BY SUPERVISOR	i
ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Background of the Study	1
1.1 Statement of the Problem	3
1.2 Purpose of the Study	4
1.3 Research Questions	4
1.4 Significance of the Study	5
1.5 Scope and Delimitation	5
1.6 Organisation of the Study	6
CHAPTER TWO	7
LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.0 Introduction	7
2.1 Concept of Public Relations	7
2.2 The Role of Public Relations in Conflict Management	8
2.3 Conflict and Chieftaincy Disputes in Ghana	10
2.4 Public Relations and Stakeholder Communication During Conflict	13
2.5 Public Perception and Image Repair in Conflict Contexts	16
2.6 Communication Tools and Channels for Conflict Resolution	19
2.7 Public Relations and Government Intervention in Chieftaincy Conflicts	22
2.8 Theoretical Framework	25
2.9 Review of Empirical Studies	27
CHAPTER THREE	31
METHODOLOGY	31

3.0 Introduction	31
3.1 Research Design	31
3.2 Population and Sample	31
3.3 Sampling Technique	32
3.4 Data Collection Methods	32
3.5 Research Instrument	33
3.6 Data Analysis Techniques	33
3.7 Ethical Considerations	34
CHAPTER FOUR	35
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS	35
4.1 Demographic Information	35
4.1.1 What is your role or affiliation in relation to the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict?	35
4.1.2 How long were you involved in the conflict resolution process?	36
4.1.3 In what capacity did you engage with communication or public relations activities during the conflict?	36
4.2 The Role of Public Relations Strategies in Managing Communication Among Key Stakeholders	37
4.2.1 How communication was managed between the main stakeholders	37
4.2.2 Specific public relations strategies or approaches used	38
4.2.3 Effectiveness of the public relations strategies	39
4.3 How Public Relations Contributed to Shaping Public Perception, Promoting Dialogue, and Facilitating Peace	40
4.3.1 How public relations efforts influenced how the general public perceived the conflict and the peace process	40
4.3.2 Deliberate strategies to promote dialogue between factions or the wider community	41
These accounts reveal that PR actively created platforms for dialogue and amplified them for public credibility.	42
4.3.3 Ways public relations contributed to the restoration of peace and stability in Dagbon	42
4.4 Specific Communication Tools and Channels Employed by Traditional Authorities and Government Actors in Fostering Reconciliation	43
4.4.1 Communication tools most commonly used during the conflict resolution process	43
4.4.2 Channels most effective in reaching and engaging stakeholders	44
4.4.3 Use of culturally rooted or traditional communication forms and their reception	44
4.5 Closing Questions	45
Overall, the challenges showed that while PR tools were valuable, they needed consistency, credibility, and resources to be fully effective.	46

4.5.2 Lessons that could help resolve similar chieftaincy or communal disputes in Ghana	46
4.5 Discussion of Findings	47
CHAPTER FIVE	50
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	50
5.0 Introduction.....	50
5.1 Summary.....	50
5.2 Conclusions.....	51
5.3 Recommendations	52
REFERENCES.....	54
INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	63

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

Conflict remains an enduring feature of human society, manifesting across various social, political, economic, and cultural contexts (Bukari et al., 2021). In Ghana, one of the most persistent and culturally sensitive forms of conflict arises from chieftaincy disputes (Osei, 2024). These conflicts often stem from succession disagreements, boundary disputes, and questions over the legitimacy of traditional authority (Kanu, 2019). As custodians of cultural heritage and local governance structures, traditional leaders play a pivotal role in community cohesion and development (Bashiru, 2020). When disputes arise within this institution, the repercussions can be extensive, disrupting not only local peace and development but also challenging the stability of regional and even national governance structures (Keashly et al., 2020). Over the years, various chieftaincy disputes in regions such as Dagbon, Bawku, Ga, and Anlo have attracted national attention, requiring government intervention, mediation by civil society, and the involvement of various stakeholders in conflict resolution processes (Abdinasir & Mohamed, 2024).

Against this backdrop, the role of communication becomes particularly critical (Boafo-Anang et al., 2021). While legal, political, and traditional mechanisms are often employed to resolve chieftaincy disputes, Public Relations (PR) as a strategic communication tool remains underexplored (Chiluwa, 2022). Public relations, in essence, focuses on managing relationships and shaping public perception (Penu, 2022). It involves the use of planned communication strategies to build and maintain mutual understanding between institutions and their publics (Okpevra, 2023). In conflict situations, especially those deeply rooted in cultural and traditional

systems, PR can play a unique role in de-escalating tensions, promoting dialogue, fostering reconciliation, and restoring trust among stakeholders (Badache et al., 2022).

In the context of Ghana's chieftaincy institution, disputes are often not only about who occupies a stool or skin, but also about identity, land ownership, historical narratives, and cultural legacies (Okojie, 2022). These issues evoke strong emotions and loyalty from community members, making the conflict resolution process complex and delicate (Kanda, 2019). Effective communication in such scenarios must therefore go beyond mere dissemination of information, it must be rooted in empathy, cultural sensitivity, transparency, and the building of bridges between opposing parties (Narh, 2020). This is where public relations comes in as a potentially transformative tool (Egbe, 2024). By deploying strategic communication tactics such as community engagement, crisis communication, media relations, and stakeholder mapping, PR professionals and traditional councils can work to shape positive narratives, clarify misinformation, manage public perception, and facilitate peacebuilding efforts (Apuko-Awuni, 2024).

Moreover, in a globalized era marked by rapid information flow and digital media influence, the way conflicts are portrayed in the media can either exacerbate tensions or promote understanding (Aasoglenang, 2023). Public relations can guide how traditional leaders and their factions interact with the media and the broader public, ensuring that messages are tailored to promote peace rather than provoke further division (Avruch, 2022). This includes crafting press releases, organizing press conferences, engaging in dialogue with community leaders, and leveraging social media platforms for constructive messaging (Väyrynen, 2023). In this way, public relations do not replace traditional conflict resolution mechanisms such as arbitration by the National or Regional House

of Chiefs or mediation by religious leaders, but rather complements them by shaping the communication environment within which these mechanisms operate (Okpevra, 2023).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

While extensive literature exists on the causes, nature, and resolution processes of chieftaincy disputes in Ghana, particularly with regard to the Dagbon chieftaincy crisis, there remains a significant gap in exploring the role of public relations as a strategic tool in conflict resolution within this traditional context (Okojie, 2022). The Dagbon chieftaincy dispute, one of the most protracted and high-profile traditional conflicts in Ghana's history, has been widely studied through political, legal, cultural, and security lenses (Keashly et al., 2020). Previous research has focused on issues such as the historical origins of the conflict, the roles of political actors and traditional authorities, the impact on regional stability, and the mechanisms of mediation employed by government and customary institutions (Bercovitch, 2019).

However, there is limited scholarly work that critically examines how public relations strategies such as stakeholder engagement, crisis communication, media framing, narrative control, and peace communication were or could have been utilized to influence public perception, foster dialogue, and facilitate reconciliation throughout the conflict and resolution process (Pasricha, 2020). Moreover, although the Dagbon conflict ultimately saw a breakthrough in 2019 with the successful performance of the funerals of the late Ya Na Mahamadu Abdulai IV and Ya Na Yakubu Andani II, leading to the enskinment of Ya Na Abukari Mahama II, little has been written about the communication strategies that contributed to this resolution (Assanful, 2021).

There is inadequate academic analysis of how traditional councils, the Committee of Eminent Chiefs, government agencies, and local media used communication to manage expectations, reduce hostilities, and build trust among the Andani and Abudu factions (Furlong, 2020). The lack of focus on public relations frameworks in this context represents a missed opportunity to understand how strategic communication can complement legal and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms. Therefore, this study fills a critical gap by investigating the PR dynamics involved in the Dagbon dispute.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the role of public relations in conflict resolution: A case of chieftaincy dispute in Ghana particularly the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Assess the role public relations strategies played in managing communication among key stakeholders during the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict.
2. Explore how public relations contributed to shaping public perception, promoting dialogue, and facilitating peace during the conflict resolution process.
3. Identify the specific communication tools and channels employed by traditional authorities and government actors in fostering reconciliation.

1.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions.

1. What role did public relations strategies play in managing communication among key stakeholders during the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict?

2. How did public relations contribute to shaping public perception, promoting dialogue, and facilitating peace during the Dagbon conflict resolution process?
3. What specific communication tools and channels were employed by traditional authorities and government actors in fostering reconciliation during the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it highlights the underexplored role of public relations in resolving traditional conflicts, using the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute as a case study. The study further provides practical insights for traditional authorities, government agencies, and conflict resolution practitioners. It also contributes to academic discourse by bridging the gap between public relations and conflict management literature. The findings will serve as a guide for incorporating effective communication strategies into future chieftaincy dispute interventions, ultimately promoting social cohesion, cultural stability, and peaceful co-existence within Ghana's traditional governance framework.

1.5 Scope and Delimitation

The scope of this study is limited to examining the role of public relations in conflict resolution within the context of the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute in Ghana. It focuses specifically on how public relations strategies, tools, and communication channels were employed by key actors including traditional authorities, government agencies, and the media to manage stakeholder relations, influence public perception, and facilitate reconciliation. The study emphasizes strategic communication elements rather than the legal, political, or historical aspects of the conflict.

The delimitations of the study include the decision to concentrate solely on the Dagbon conflict, thereby excluding other chieftaincy disputes in Ghana which may have different dynamics. Additionally, the study does not focus on the broader sociological or anthropological implications of the chieftaincy institution but narrows its lens to the communication processes involved in the resolution of the conflict. This approach allows for a focused analysis of public relations within a specific and high-profile traditional conflict scenario.

1.6 Organisation of the Study

This study is structured into five chapters. Chapter One introduces the research by presenting the background, problem statement, objectives, research questions, significance, scope, and definitions of key terms. Chapter Two reviews relevant literature, highlights gaps, and provides the theoretical or conceptual framework. Chapter Three outlines the research methodology, including the design, sampling, data collection and analysis methods, and ethical considerations. Chapter Four presents and analyses the findings of the study. Chapter Five discusses the results, draws conclusions, and offers recommendations for practice and future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Chapter Two presents a review of relevant literature on the role of public relations in conflict resolution. It explores key concepts, theoretical perspectives, and previous empirical studies to provide a strong foundation for understanding the dynamics of communication in conflict contexts.

2.1 Concept of Public Relations

Public relations (PR) is a strategic communication process that builds and sustains mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics (Keashly et al., 2020). At its core, the concept of public relations revolves around the effective management of information, perception, and dialogue (Penu, 2022). It encompasses the deliberate, planned, and sustained efforts to establish goodwill, foster understanding, and maintain a favorable image within society (Kanda, 2019). While historically associated with corporate promotion and media management, public relations have evolved into a broader field that engages with political institutions, civil society, governments, and traditional authorities, particularly in conflict-sensitive settings (Bashiru, 2020).

In its operational sense, public relations functions by aligning institutional behavior and communication with public expectations and societal norms (Apuko-Awuni, 2022). It involves two-way communication, where feedback from stakeholders influences how messages are crafted and disseminated (Okojie, 2022). This feedback loop enables PR practitioners to remain responsive, adaptive, and credible (Väyrynen, 2023). Public relations practice is therefore not

limited to press releases and media appearances but includes managing narratives, shaping discourse, and facilitating trust-building mechanisms among diverse audiences (Avruch, 2022).

Moreover, public relations are grounded in ethical communication and transparency, particularly in contexts where tension, uncertainty, or crisis exists (Abdinasir & Mohamed, 2024). Its effectiveness lies in its ability to understand audiences, frame issues appropriately, and guide communication in ways that support organizational or societal objectives (Furlong, 2020). The concept has been institutionalized in both public and private sectors through the establishment of PR departments, engagement with media professionals, and utilization of communication technologies (Kanu, 2019). As a discipline, it draws from sociology, psychology, political science, and communication studies, integrating theoretical and practical approaches to manage complex human relationships in organizational and societal settings (Boafo- Anang, Akrofi & Shitsi, 2021).

In conflict-prone environments, such as those involving chieftaincy disputes or political unrest, the concept of public relations takes on a transformative role (Chiluwa, 2022). It enables institutions to shape narratives, mediate misunderstandings, and create platforms for dialogue (Bercovitch, 2019). Through its emphasis on consensus-building, image repair, and inclusive messaging, public relations contribute significantly to peacebuilding, reconciliation, and long-term conflict resolution (Aasoglenang, 2023). Thus, the concept of public relations extends beyond publicity to encompass a critical function in shaping interactions and fostering harmony within communities (Pasricha, 2020).

2.2 The Role of Public Relations in Conflict Management

Public relations play a vital role in conflict management by serving as a strategic communication bridge between opposing parties, mediators, and the broader public (Bukari et al., 2021). In

situations of conflict whether interpersonal, organizational, communal, or political the ability to manage narratives, perceptions, and communication flows becomes central to de-escalation and resolution efforts (Assanful, 2021). Public relations provide the framework and tools necessary to manage these complex interactions in a manner that fosters dialogue, builds trust, and promotes mutual understanding (Narh, 2020).

At the heart of public relations in conflict management is the facilitation of transparent and consistent communication among stakeholders (Tseer et al., 2023). Through carefully crafted messaging, PR practitioners help clarify misunderstandings, correct misinformation, and align stakeholder perceptions with reality (Egbe, 2024). In highly sensitive and emotionally charged contexts such as chieftaincy disputes or political unrest, the dissemination of truthful, timely, and culturally appropriate information can prevent further escalation and foster a climate of openness and trust (Badache et al., 2022). By ensuring that communication is not only strategic but also empathetic and inclusive, public relations becomes instrumental in creating space for dialogue and reflection (Okpevra, 2023).

Furthermore, public relations contribute to conflict resolution by framing narratives in a way that emphasizes common ground, shared interests, and long-term goals (Bercovitch, 2019). It supports the process of reframing divisive issues, thus shifting the focus from entrenched grievances to potential solutions (Osei, 2024). This reframing helps stakeholders see beyond immediate hostilities and begin to engage in constructive conversations (Nwanmuoh et al., 2021). In this way, public relations enable conflicting parties to recognize the broader implications of their actions and adopt more cooperative attitudes (Silverman & Smith, 2024).

In addition to managing narratives, public relations are also critical in stakeholder engagement and relationship building (Maiwada et al., 2025). It helps identify key audiences, map their concerns

and expectations, and tailor communication strategies to address those concerns (Gjerazi, 2023). Through tools such as press briefings, community forums, stakeholder meetings, and social media engagement, public relations creates opportunities for continuous interaction, feedback, and accountability (Thomas & Omojunikanbi, 2023). These interactions are essential in conflict management, as they ensure that all voices are heard, concerns are acknowledged, and actions are taken based on collective input (Mundy, 2021).

In contexts like the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict, public relations played an important role in facilitating peace by managing the communication between traditional leaders, government officials, the media, and local communities (Osei, 2024). The careful handling of public discourse, use of culturally sensitive language, and alignment of communication efforts with peacebuilding initiatives helped rebuild trust and foster reconciliation (Maiwada et al., 2025). By positioning itself as a conduit for empathy, truth, and unity, public relations provided a platform for healing and understanding (Modisane, 2024).

In sum, the role of public relations in conflict management goes beyond crisis containment (Mrutu, 2023). It serves as a proactive and transformative force that uses communication not only to manage perceptions but to cultivate peace, respect, and mutual cooperation (Agbasimelo & Ignatius, 2025). Through its principles of transparency, dialogue, and inclusivity, public relations become an indispensable tool in navigating and resolving conflicts in both traditional and modern settings (Luttrell & Wallace, 2025).

2.3 Conflict and Chieftaincy Disputes in Ghana

Chieftaincy disputes in Ghana represent one of the most persistent and complex forms of conflict in the country's socio-political landscape (Bashiru, 2020). These disputes, deeply rooted in

traditional authority, lineage succession, and territorial claims, have over the decades posed significant threats to local stability, development, and governance (Agyeman, 2020). The institution of chieftaincy in Ghana is constitutionally recognized and culturally revered, serving as a key pillar in community leadership, land administration, and conflict mediation (Appiah-Thompson et al., 2024). However, the same institution has also become a source of tension, especially when disagreements arise over rightful succession, legitimacy, and the distribution of traditional power (Ntumva, 2022).

The origins of most chieftaincy disputes can be traced to historical rivalries, ambiguities in customary laws, colonial manipulations of traditional authority, and the politicization of the institution in post-independence Ghana (Bukari et al., 2021). While chieftaincy succession is ideally guided by established traditions and lineage protocols, in many instances, the interpretation of these customs is contested, especially when multiple royal gates or families lay claim to the same stool or skin (Kanyagele, 2022). These contestations often lead to prolonged legal battles, community unrest, and at times violent clashes, as witnessed in notable cases such as the Dagbon conflict in northern Ghana (Sayibu, 2020).

The Dagbon chieftaincy dispute, which spanned over a decade and culminated in the tragic killing of the Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II in 2002, is one of the most illustrative examples of how chieftaincy-related conflicts can destabilize entire regions (Akwara, 2024). This dispute between the Abudu and Andani royal families was not only rooted in succession disagreements but also in historical grievances, perceived injustices, and political interference (Wallenstein, 2023). The conflict fractured the social cohesion of Dagbon, disrupted local governance, and created a climate of fear and division (Salihu, 2023). It also exposed the limitations of legal and governmental

structures in addressing deeply entrenched traditional disputes without sustained community engagement and cultural sensitivity (Nwanmuoh et al., 2021).

Beyond Dagbon, chieftaincy disputes are widespread across various regions in Ghana, including the Ashanti, Eastern, Central, and Volta regions (Gjerazi, 2023). These disputes often delay developmental projects, weaken local authority, and in some cases, undermine the legitimacy of traditional rulers (Avruch, 2022). The ripple effects extend to land disputes, economic stagnation, and strained relationships between traditional councils and district assemblies (Kanda, 2019). Furthermore, the increasing economic and political value of traditional leadership—due to royalties from natural resources, land leasing, and political patronage—has intensified the competition for chieftaincy titles, making disputes more difficult to resolve (Nwanmuoh et al., 2021).

Efforts to address these conflicts have involved a combination of judicial processes, mediation by the National and Regional Houses of Chiefs, government interventions, and community-based peacebuilding mechanisms (Chebet et al., 2024). However, these approaches have had varied success, often hindered by delays in adjudication, lack of enforcement of rulings, and limited coordination between traditional and statutory institutions (Rodionova, 2024). The introduction of the Chieftaincy Act, 2008 (Act 759), which outlines the structure and functions of chieftaincy institutions, has provided a clearer legal framework, but it does not always account for the nuanced, dynamic, and localized nature of traditional customs and rivalries (Jepkorir, 2021).

In contemporary Ghana, resolving chieftaincy disputes requires more than legal pronouncements; it demands inclusive dialogue, cultural diplomacy, historical truth-telling, and the depoliticization of traditional authority (ogly, 2023). The integration of public relations strategies, as seen in the post-conflict resolution processes in Dagbon, has proven effective in shaping public narratives,

restoring trust, and promoting reconciliation (Ateng, 2020). These efforts highlight the importance of communication, transparency, and stakeholder engagement in managing conflicts rooted in cultural identity and heritage (Limani et al., 2024).

Chieftaincy disputes in Ghana are not merely matters of tradition but are deeply intertwined with questions of power, identity, and governance (Bukari et al., 2021). Addressing them requires a multifaceted approach that respects cultural norms while promoting peace, justice, and inclusive development (Tseer et al., 2023). As Ghana continues to evolve democratically, fostering a more resilient and peaceful chieftaincy institution remains essential to national cohesion and stability (Abdulkabir & Joseph, 2023).

2.4 Public Relations and Stakeholder Communication During Conflict

Public relations and stakeholder communication play a pivotal role during conflict situations, particularly in environments characterized by complexity, historical grievances, and deeply entrenched interests such as chieftaincy disputes (Juozėnaitė, 2023). In such contexts, communication is not merely about information dissemination; it becomes a strategic tool for building trust, managing perceptions, mitigating tensions, and facilitating dialogue among parties with divergent views (Imesha et al., 2020). The success or failure of conflict resolution efforts often hinges on how effectively communication is planned, executed, and tailored to the cultural, political, and emotional dynamics of the stakeholders involved (Ejiofo et al., 2023).

Public relations, in the context of conflict, involves the deliberate and systematic planning of communication activities aimed at fostering understanding, promoting transparency, and managing reputational risks (Ezinwa, 2020). It is about shaping narratives in a way that resonates with all actors traditional authorities, government officials, community members, media, and

external observers while avoiding inflammatory rhetoric or divisive messaging (Mwangi, 2020). In conflict settings, emotions tend to run high, and any miscommunication or perceived bias can escalate tensions (Tabish, 2024). Public relations professionals therefore act as intermediaries who ensure that messages are clear, inclusive, and culturally sensitive (Latupeirissa et al., 2024).

Stakeholder communication during conflict involves identifying all parties with a vested interest in the outcome of the dispute and engaging them appropriately throughout the resolution process (Adham, 2023). These stakeholders often include not only the disputing factions, but also government institutions, civil society organizations, religious bodies, the media, and the broader community (Marchetti & Tocci, 2020). Public relations practitioners must understand the needs, fears, and motivations of each stakeholder group and craft messages that foster mutual respect, empathy, and cooperation (Sabharwal, 2025). This stakeholder-focused approach encourages transparency and inclusiveness, which are essential to building legitimacy in the eyes of the public (Luttrell & Wallace, 2025).

One of the critical aspects of stakeholder communication in conflict is message framing (Okpevra, 2023). The way messages are framed—whether as win-lose, win-win, or compromise—can significantly influence how stakeholders respond (Silverman & Smith, 2024). In chieftaincy disputes, for instance, communication that frames reconciliation as a shared heritage or cultural restoration effort rather than a political victory can foster broader support for peace (Appiah-Thompson et al., 2024). Public relations strategies in this context often draw from peace journalism techniques, which emphasize constructive, non-inflammatory reporting and highlight common ground rather than antagonism (Chiluwa, 2022).

Another vital function of public relations during conflict is to manage misinformation and rumors, which tend to proliferate in the absence of clear and credible communication (Silverman & Smith,

2024). In the age of social media and instant news, false narratives can quickly gain traction, inciting violence or deepening divisions (Ntumva, 2022). Effective public relations entails establishing trusted communication channels—through town hall meetings, press briefings, community radio, and social media platforms—where accurate information can be disseminated consistently (Salihu, 2023). Public relations practitioners also play the role of listening posts, monitoring public sentiment and feedback to adjust strategies and messages accordingly (Limani et al., 2024).

Furthermore, public relations support conflict resolution by promoting symbolic communication acts and messages that convey commitment to peace, unity, and restoration (Furlong, 2020). These may include joint statements by rival factions, culturally significant peace ceremonies, or community dialogues led by respected neutral figures (Bercovitch, 2019). Such symbolic acts, when communicated strategically, help heal emotional wounds and signal a shift towards reconciliation (Kanyagele, 2022).

The Dagbon chieftaincy conflict in Ghana offers a compelling case where public relations and stakeholder communication played a significant role (Mundy, 2021). During the mediation and resolution processes, various communication strategies were employed to reach out to both the Abudu and Andani royal gates, explain the rationale behind key decisions, and maintain public support for peace (Egbe, 2024). The involvement of respected figures such as the Committee of Eminent Chiefs, the National Peace Council, and the use of culturally resonant language and symbols in public statements helped ensure that the process was perceived as legitimate and inclusive (Nwanmuoh et al., 2021).

Public relations and stakeholder communication are indispensable tools in managing conflicts, especially those rooted in identity, tradition, and power structures (Thomas & Omojunikanbi,

2023). By facilitating dialogue, shaping perceptions, countering misinformation, and reinforcing peacebuilding messages, public relations contribute not only to resolving the immediate crisis but also to laying the foundation for long-term social cohesion and trust (Agbasimelo & Ignatius, 2025). In chieftaincy disputes and other sensitive conflicts, strategic communication is not just complementary it is central to the path toward peace (Avruch, 2022).

2.5 Public Perception and Image Repair in Conflict Contexts

In conflict contexts, public perception becomes a critical battleground where reputations are challenged, legitimacy is questioned, and narratives compete for dominance (Snow, 2020). Managing public perception and undertaking image repair are central to conflict resolution, particularly when key stakeholders such as traditional authorities, political actors, or mediating institutions are either accused of bias or perceived as ineffective (Gregory & Willis, 2022). Effective image repair, grounded in public relations strategies, is essential not only for restoring the credibility of those involved but also for building the trust necessary to sustain peace and reconciliation (Lee et al., 2021).

Public perception refers to how the general public interprets and understands the actions, motives, and identities of individuals or institutions during a conflict (Kent & Li, 2020). These perceptions are shaped by a combination of lived experiences, historical narratives, media portrayals, interpersonal communication, and symbolic acts (Gregory, 2020). In chieftaincy conflicts such as the Dagbon crisis in Ghana, public opinion is often divided along family, ethnic, or political lines (Aasoglenang, 2023). Misinformation, rumors, and longstanding grievances can further entrench negative perceptions of particular groups or mediators (Mrutu, 2023). Therefore, strategic

communication efforts aimed at influencing public perception must be deeply rooted in cultural awareness, emotional intelligence, and historical sensitivity (Chebet et al., 2024).

Image repair theory, as developed by William Benoit (1995), offers a useful framework for understanding how individuals and institutions respond to reputational damage in the aftermath of conflict. The theory outlines several rhetorical strategies that can be used to restore a damaged image, including denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification (expressing regret or apology) (Berman et al., 2021). In a chieftaincy conflict scenario, for instance, a traditional authority that is accused of partiality or instigating violence may need to undertake a public apology, clarify their position, or initiate peace-building programs to demonstrate commitment to resolution and unity (Edwards, 2021). These communicative actions serve to reshape how they are viewed by the public and re-establish their moral authority (Stange et al., 2022).

Image repair in conflict contexts also relies heavily on message consistency and credibility (Bukari et al., 2021). Mixed signals, contradictory messages, or sudden changes in communication tone can deepen mistrust and fuel further unrest (Rodionova, 2024). Therefore, public relations efforts must ensure that all communication across media platforms, public forums, and interpersonal interactions align with the broader peace-building objectives (Penu, 2022). When leaders or institutions involved in conflict resolution demonstrate transparency, humility, and responsiveness, they are more likely to rebuild public confidence (Ntumva, 2022).

The media plays a particularly powerful role in shaping public perception during conflicts (Keashly et al., 2020). In Ghana, radio stations, community-based information centers, and online platforms often serve as the primary sources of news in rural and semi-urban communities (Bashiru, 2020). Consequently, managing how the conflict and its actors are reported in the media

is crucial to image repair (Modisane, 2024). Strategic media engagement such as exclusive interviews, press conferences, and opinion editorials can help frame narratives in ways that emphasize peace, dialogue, and mutual respect (Chiluwa, 2022). This includes ensuring that language used does not inflame tensions or reinforce stereotypes but rather fosters understanding and encourages reconciliation (Avruch, 2022).

Symbolic communication also serves as a potent tool for public perception management in conflict settings (Apuko-Awuni, 2022). Acts such as joint community events, public displays of unity among rival factions, or culturally significant rituals of peace and forgiveness have a profound impact on the collective psyche (Luttrell & Wallace, 2025). When such events are accompanied by effective public relations campaigns, they reinforce the message that healing and progress are possible (Tabish, 2024). In the Dagbon case, the final funeral rites of the late Ya Na, the enskinment of a new overlord, and the participation of both factions in public celebrations were widely publicized as milestones of unity and healing (Marchetti & Tocci, 2020).

In addition, the role of non-verbal communication in shaping public perception cannot be overstated (Berman et al., 2021). The body language, attire, tone, and visual symbols associated with key actors during public appearances all communicate meaning (Maiwada et al., 2025). Public relations efforts in conflict situations must therefore consider the optics of events and ensure that they project messages of sincerity, inclusion, and peace (Väyrynen, 2023).

Managing public perception and engaging in image repair are indispensable components of effective conflict resolution (Narh, 2020). In deeply rooted traditional conflicts such as chieftaincy disputes, where identity and legacy are at stake, the ability of stakeholders to regain public trust through strategic communication can determine the success or failure of peace processes (Gjerazi, 2023). Public relations serve not just as a tool for damage control but as a bridge to reconciliation,

fostering environments where wounds can heal and collective hope can be restored (Pasricha, 2020).

2.6 Communication Tools and Channels for Conflict Resolution

Effective conflict resolution, particularly in culturally sensitive and highly polarized contexts such as chieftaincy disputes in Ghana, depends significantly on the strategic use of communication tools and channels (Egbe, 2024). These tools serve not only to disseminate information but also to build trust, facilitate dialogue, and reduce tensions among stakeholders (Okojie, 2022). The success of any peacebuilding process often hinges on the ability of mediators, traditional leaders, government officials, and public relations practitioners to select and utilize appropriate communication mechanisms that resonate with the affected communities and foster understanding across conflicting parties.

In the context of chieftaincy conflicts, communication must address deeply rooted historical grievances, cultural identities, and symbolic loyalties (Osei, 2024). This requires using channels that are accessible, credible, and trusted by the community (Rodionova, 2024). Traditional media such as radio, particularly local FM stations broadcasting in native languages, remains one of the most effective communication tools in many Ghanaian communities (Agyeman, 2020). Radio provides an inclusive platform for the transmission of peace messages, conflict updates, and educational content about the implications of continued disputes. Its wide reach and oral nature make it a preferred medium, especially among populations with limited literacy (Adham, 2023).

Community durbars, town hall meetings, and public forums represent another essential communication channel in conflict resolution (Agbasimelo & Ignatius, 2025). These face-to-face gatherings provide opportunities for direct engagement between disputing parties and community

members (Penu, 2022). Such forums are often used to clarify misunderstandings, offer apologies, issue reconciliatory statements, and reinforce communal bonds (Maiwada et al., 2025). The physical presence of respected figures like chiefs, religious leaders, and government officials at these events adds weight to the messages conveyed and demonstrates a commitment to peaceful resolution (Luttrell & Wallace, 2025).

In addition to traditional gatherings, print media particularly newspapers and newsletters plays a complementary role in reaching more literate segments of the population (Gjerazi, 2023). Articles, opinion pieces, and official statements published in widely circulated newspapers help frame the conflict in constructive terms and promote narratives of reconciliation. (Gjerazi, 2023) Print media can also archive peace efforts and serve as a historical record of stakeholder commitments and public sentiment throughout the resolution process (Bukari et al., 2021).

Modern digital communication tools have also become increasingly relevant in conflict resolution efforts (Badache et al., 2022). Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter (X), and WhatsApp are now widely used by both state and non-state actors to share updates, debunk misinformation, and encourage civil discourse (Apuko-Awuni, 2022). In the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict, for example, official government communication regarding peace processes and ceremonial events was often disseminated through digital platforms to ensure transparency and real-time engagement. (Okojie, 2022) However, the use of social media must be carefully managed, as it can also be a source of inflammatory content, fake news, or divisive narratives if left unregulated (Kiplagat (Kiprono, Kipron & Bundotich, 2024)

Interpersonal communication remains perhaps the most powerful and sensitive tool for resolving conflict, particularly in cases where emotions run high and trust is fragile (Akwara, 2024). Private dialogues, shuttle diplomacy, and informal negotiations facilitated by trusted intermediaries such

as elders, clerics, or community influencers can help parties explore common ground without the pressures of public scrutiny (Jepkorir, 2021). These forms of communication provide a safe space for honest expression, acknowledgement of grievances, and compromise (Ebohon, 2024).

Non-verbal communication and symbolism also play a vital role in conflict resolution (Sabharwal, 2025). The use of traditional rituals, public gestures of forgiveness, and symbolic acts such as joint tree planting or the sharing of meals can communicate messages of unity and renewal more effectively than words alone (Marchetti & Tocci., 2020) These cultural expressions often carry deep emotional and spiritual significance that transcends formal rhetoric (Agyeman, 2020).

Government institutions and public relations practitioners often use press releases, speeches, and televised addresses to communicate official positions and reassure the public about peace efforts (Juozenaitė, 2023). These formal channels help to establish authority, set the tone for public discourse, and demonstrate institutional support for reconciliation (Kent & Li, 2020). In sensitive contexts like chieftaincy disputes, the language and tone of such messages must be carefully calibrated to avoid triggering renewed hostilities or appearing biased (Tabish, 2024).

Ultimately, the effectiveness of any communication tool or channel depends on the cultural, social, and technological context in which it is applied (Akwara, 2024). A successful conflict resolution strategy in Ghana, and particularly in Dagbon, requires a hybrid communication approach that blends traditional and modern methods, leverages both mass and interpersonal communication, and prioritizes clarity, empathy, and inclusivity (Luttrell & Wallace, 2025). Through careful planning and contextual adaptation, communication tools and channels can serve as powerful instruments of peace, helping to dismantle decades of mistrust and paving the way for enduring reconciliation (Okpevra, 2023).

2.7 Public Relations and Government Intervention in Chieftaincy Conflicts

Public relations play an instrumental role in shaping the strategies, messaging, and perception of government interventions in chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana (Bashiru, 2020). Chieftaincy disputes, which often stem from competing claims to traditional authority, succession disagreements, and breaches of customary protocols, are sensitive issues deeply embedded in the sociocultural fabric of local communities (Nwanmuoh et al., 2021). When the government intervenes in these conflicts—whether through mediation, policy enactments, or security deployment—the success of such efforts depends heavily on how they are communicated, understood, and received by the public and stakeholders involved (Tseer & Sulemana, 2022). Public relations become a central mechanism for managing this interface between government action and public perception (Osei, 2024).

In Ghana, the government often finds itself in a delicate position during chieftaincy disputes (Ateng, 2020). On one hand, it must uphold the rule of law, peace, and national unity, while on the other, it must respect the autonomy of traditional institutions guaranteed by the Constitution (Ejiofo et al., 2023). The use of public relations, therefore, allows the government to craft messages that maintain neutrality, foster dialogue, and promote transparency in its intervention processes (Sabharwal, 2025). Effective public relations strategies help frame the government's role not as a partisan actor taking sides in the conflict, but as a peace broker concerned with national interest and community welfare (Gregory, 2020).

One of the key functions of public relations in this context is to provide consistent and credible information (Breslin & Gatrell, 2023). During intense periods of chieftaincy disputes, misinformation and rumors can inflame tensions and erode public trust in government efforts (Juozėnaitė, 2023). Through press briefings, public statements, official communiqués, and

engagement with both traditional and digital media, government PR professionals help dispel falsehoods and clarify the intent and scope of state involvement (Abdulkabir & Joseph, 2023). For example, in the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict, strategic communication from the Office of the President and the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs helped to manage expectations, communicate peace milestones, and counter narratives that could derail the mediation process (Limani et al., 2024).

Furthermore, public relations efforts ensure that government interventions are seen as inclusive and participatory (Aasoglenang, 2023). By showcasing consultations with key stakeholders—such as traditional councils, religious leaders, local government officials, and civil society actors—the government can build legitimacy for its actions (Juliet & Santas, 2022). PR practitioners play a pivotal role in highlighting these inclusive processes through storytelling, visual media, and community-centered campaigns that emphasize unity and mutual respect (Gierszewska, 2025). In doing so, they contribute to creating a collective sense of ownership over the peace process, which is crucial for sustainable conflict resolution (Idris, 2020).

Public relations also support government intervention through image management and perception building (Ntumva, 2022). Chieftaincy conflicts often draw public scrutiny, especially when interventions are perceived as politically motivated or biased. PR strategies help counter these perceptions by promoting transparency and accountability (Pasricha, 2020). Statements made by government spokespersons, televised speeches by national leaders, and peace declarations at public events serve to reinforce the government's commitment to impartiality and national cohesion (Nwanmuoh et al., 2021). This kind of narrative shaping is crucial in preventing political polarization and ensuring that interventions are not misinterpreted as attempts to undermine traditional institutions (Hassan et al., 2024).

Another significant role of public relations lies in preparing communities for reconciliation and reintegration (Ateng, 2020). Once conflict mediation achieves tangible outcomes, such as the enskinment of a new chief or the signing of peace accords, PR campaigns are often deployed to normalize relations, restore public confidence, and emphasize the benefits of peace (Rodionova, 2024). These campaigns may include peace-themed community outreach programs, media features on cultural unity, and collaborative messaging between government and traditional authorities (Furlong, 2020). Such efforts are essential in transitioning communities from conflict to post-conflict stability (Gregory & Willis, 2022).

Moreover, in today's digital age, public relations have expanded to include the use of social media as a real-time tool for engagement and feedback (Nwanmuo et al., 2021). Government ministries and officials now use platforms like Twitter (X), Facebook, and YouTube to update citizens, respond to concerns, and showcase progress in resolving disputes (Agyeman, 2020). These platforms offer immediacy and interactivity, allowing the government to maintain a direct line of communication with citizens and diaspora stakeholders who are often emotionally invested in traditional leadership matters (Maiwada, et al., 2025).

However, the success of public relations in facilitating government intervention in chieftaincy conflicts also depends on the credibility of the messengers and the authenticity of the message (Jepkorir, 2021). If the government is perceived as lacking cultural sensitivity or is seen to be imposing top-down solutions without respecting traditional norms, even the most well-crafted PR messages can fall flat (Appiah-Thompson et al., 2024). Thus, collaboration with respected traditional communicators such as chiefs, elders, and local opinion leaders—is crucial (Salihu, 2023). These figures often act as co-communicators, amplifying government messages in a culturally resonant manner that enhances community trust (Penu, 2022).

In summary, public relations is a vital enabler of effective government intervention in chieftaincy conflicts in Ghana (Egbe, 2024). It functions as the bridge between policy and public understanding, shaping perceptions, managing expectations, and fostering trust (Bercovitch, 2019). Through a combination of strategic messaging, inclusive engagement, and cultural sensitivity, public relations ensures that the government's role in conflict resolution is not only operationally sound but also publicly credible and socially sustainable (Ali, 2023).

2.8 Theoretical Framework

Two relevant theories that best fit the study are the Excellence Theory of Public Relations and the Conflict Transformation Theory.

Excellence Theory of Public Relations: The Excellence Theory of Public Relations was developed by James E. Grunig and his colleagues in the 1980s and further refined through the 1990s. This theory posits that the most effective public relations practice is characterized by two-way symmetrical communication, where dialogue rather than persuasion is prioritized (Akwara, 2024). In this model, organizations engage in open communication with their publics, listening and responding to feedback in a manner that fosters mutual understanding and long-term relationships (Bashiru, 2020). One of the key strengths of this theory lies in its emphasis on ethical communication and stakeholder engagement, which are crucial in conflict-sensitive contexts (Gjerazi, 2023).

It encourages transparency, trust-building, and responsiveness, elements that are indispensable in managing chieftaincy conflicts, where misunderstandings and perceived bias can easily escalate tensions (Mundy, 2023). However, the theory assumes that all stakeholders are willing and able to

engage in dialogue, which may not always hold true in highly polarized or deeply traditional environments like chieftaincy disputes, where entrenched beliefs and power dynamics may hinder mutual engagement (Wallensteen, 2023). Despite this limitation, the Excellence Theory aligns well with the objectives of the study, as it underscores the strategic role of public relations in facilitating dialogue, managing stakeholder communication, and restoring public trust during and after conflict (Kanyagele, 2022).

Conflict Transformation Theory: The second theory, Conflict Transformation Theory, was propounded by John Paul Lederach in the 1990s. This theory views conflict not merely as a problem to be resolved but as an opportunity for constructive change in relationships, attitudes, behaviors, and structures. Lederach emphasizes the need to address the root causes of conflict and to foster long-term peace through inclusive processes and relationship building (Agyeman, 2020). A significant strength of this theory is its holistic view of conflict, which incorporates cultural, psychological, and structural dimensions, making it particularly relevant in traditional and community-based conflict scenarios such as chieftaincy disputes (Rodionova, 2024).

The theory also promotes multi-level engagement bringing together grassroots actors, traditional leaders, and institutional stakeholders which mirrors the complexity of the Dagbon conflict where both government and customary institutions played key roles (Sayibu, 2020). Nevertheless, one weakness of the Conflict Transformation Theory is that it can be difficult to operationalize in short-term interventions due to its long-term orientation and reliance on systemic change (Osei, 2024). Despite this, the theory fits the study by providing a framework through which public relations can be viewed not just as a communication function, but as a transformative tool that contributes to reconciliation, healing, and the rebuilding of fractured community relations (Kanda, 2019).

2.9 Review of Empirical Studies

Juliet and Santas (2022) conducted a study in Nigeria to examine the role of public relations in managing communal conflicts in the southeastern region. Using qualitative interviews with government PR officials, media representatives, and local leaders, the research revealed that crisis communication, community outreach, and dialogue facilitation were central to reducing hostilities. The study found that when public relations efforts prioritized trust-building and stakeholder inclusiveness, they contributed significantly to peaceful resolution and social reintegration.

Dung et al. (2024) assessed how public relations was employed by the African Union's peace missions in the resolution of the Sudanese Darfur conflict. Through document analysis and field interviews with communication experts, the study uncovered that tailored public relations messaging that reflected cultural sensitivities and historical grievances was key to reshaping perceptions and improving cooperation. The findings also emphasized the power of media relations and symbolic communication in advancing peace narratives.

Thelma et al. (2020) explored the influence of public relations strategies in resolving conflicts in multi-ethnic districts in Ghana. Through interviews with public information officers, traditional authorities, and youth leaders, the researchers found that community radio, town hall meetings, and stakeholder dialogue initiatives were instrumental in de-escalating tension. The study concluded that communication strategies grounded in local traditions and participatory engagement improved the legitimacy and success of conflict resolution efforts.

Sandström (2025) studied public relations practices in post-genocide Rwanda with a focus on reconciliation efforts. Using a combination of historical analysis and interviews with public communication experts, the study found that the Rwandan government's PR efforts—including national storytelling campaigns, truth commissions, and memorial events—played a vital role in

shaping collective memory, reducing ethnic tensions, and fostering national unity. The findings highlighted the power of symbolic PR strategies in managing conflict legacies.

Nowakowski (2025) investigated how public relations practices were used during industrial labor conflicts in South Korea. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, including surveys of communication practitioners and interviews with union leaders and corporate PR officers. It revealed that strategic PR practices, such as neutral media framing, third-party endorsements, and behind-the-scenes stakeholder negotiations, helped restore trust and pave the way for mutually acceptable agreements. The study emphasized the value of reputation management and message control in high-stakes conflict contexts.

2.10 Gaps in Literature

A critical review of the existing literature reveals several notable gaps in the study of public relations and its role in conflict resolution, particularly within the context of traditional disputes such as the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict (Breslin & Gatrell, 2023). While several empirical studies have examined the use of public relations in managing political, ethnic, or corporate crises, there remains a limited body of research that focuses specifically on traditional conflicts embedded in cultural and customary institutions (Grünig, 2020). Chieftaincy disputes, unlike political or ethnic conflicts, often involve long-standing historical grievances, symbolic authority, and deeply rooted traditional structures, all of which require tailored communication strategies (Maiwada et al., 2025). However, the intersection between public relations practice and the dynamics of traditional authority systems has not been adequately explored (Juozėnaitė, 2023).

Another significant gap in the literature is the geographical and contextual bias in empirical studies (Ali, 2023). Many of the prominent works on public relations in conflict settings are derived from

Western, Asian, or Middle Eastern contexts, where institutional structures, media freedoms, and cultural norms differ substantially from those in African societies (Valente & Lourenço, 2020). Even within Africa, much of the attention is directed at high-profile violent conflicts such as civil wars and insurgencies, with little focus on culturally driven internal disputes such as chieftaincy clashes (Abdulkabir & Joseph, 2023). Although some Ghanaian scholars have begun to document the role of communication in disputes like those in Bawku or Dagbon, the scope of such studies is narrow, often limited to government communication or media framing, with minimal attention paid to the strategic public relations efforts that span multiple stakeholders, including traditional leaders, civil society, and peace-building institutions (Ebohon, 2024).

Additionally, there is a methodological gap in the literature, with a dominance of qualitative narratives and case study accounts, many of which lack comparative analysis or theoretical grounding in communication and conflict resolution theories (Bashiru, 2020). This makes it difficult to generalize findings or build a robust framework for understanding how public relations functions across different conflict scenarios (Tabish, 2024). Furthermore, very few studies systematically assess the effectiveness of specific public relations tools, such as stakeholder consultations, framing strategies, or media engagement, in contributing to sustainable peace or post-conflict image rehabilitation (Gregory, 2020).

Finally, there is limited documentation of the long-term impact of public relations strategies employed during conflict resolution (Silverman & Smith, 2024). Most existing research tends to focus on the immediate outcomes of communication interventions, neglecting to examine how public perception, stakeholder trust, and communal harmony evolve over time after a resolution has been reached (Imesha et al., 2020). This temporal gap in the literature limits a full understanding of the role of public relations not only as a conflict management tool but also as a

vehicle for reconciliation and trust-building in post-conflict societies (Sayibu, 2020). Addressing these gaps can enhance the theoretical depth and practical application of public relations in managing traditional disputes, particularly in culturally sensitive and institutionally complex settings like Ghana (Rodionova, 2024).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach employed to investigate the role of public relations in resolving the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. It details the research design, target population, sampling technique, data collection methods, research instruments, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations that guided the systematic execution of the study.

3.1 Research Design

This study will adopt a qualitative research design to explore the role of public relations in the resolution of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. The qualitative approach is appropriate for this inquiry as it facilitates the in-depth examination of participants' lived experiences, strategic communication approaches, and socio-cultural influences that shaped the conflict resolution process. Unlike quantitative research, which focuses on statistical analysis and numerical data, qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings, thereby providing rich and nuanced insights (Creswell, 2013). The design aligns with the exploratory nature of the study, allowing the researcher to investigate how public relations influenced communication flows, stakeholder engagement, and public perception during the Dagbon conflict.

3.2 Population and Sample

The target population for this study comprises key stakeholders who were directly involved in or closely observed the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict and its resolution. These include traditional authorities such as members of the Dagbon Traditional Council, representatives of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs, government officials involved in peacebuilding, public relations practitioners,

media representatives, and community members from both the Abudu and Andani royal families. The study will use a purposive sample of 10 participants selected for their experiential relevance to the research objectives. Purposive sampling enables the researcher to focus on “information-rich” cases (Patton, 2002), ensuring that selected participants have direct engagement with communication efforts, dialogue facilitation, and public perception management during the conflict. The sample size, while small, is sufficient for a qualitative study of this nature and allows for deep exploration of individual perspectives. Each participant will be chosen based on their role, expertise, and willingness to participate in the study.

3.3 Sampling Technique

This study will employ purposive sampling as the most appropriate technique for selecting participants who possess in-depth knowledge of the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict and the communication strategies employed during its resolution. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that is widely used in qualitative research to identify and select individuals who are especially knowledgeable or experienced with the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas et al., 2015). Given the socio-political sensitivity of the conflict, this approach ensures that only those with first-hand involvement or credible insights into the public relations aspects of the process are included. The sample will cover a diverse group of stakeholders—traditional leaders, public officials, media personnel, and peacebuilding actors—to gather multiple perspectives. Participants will be selected based on their accessibility, willingness to participate, and relevance to the core themes of communication, perception, and reconciliation within the Dagbon dispute.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Data will be collected through structured interviews, allowing respondents to freely express their perspectives while ensuring that the core research objectives are addressed. Structured interviews

are particularly suited for studies involving complex social phenomena like conflict resolution and public relations because they enable probing and clarification of emerging themes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Interviews will be conducted virtually via platforms such as Zoom or WhatsApp video calls. Each session will last approximately 30–45 minutes and will be audio-recorded (with consent) to ensure accuracy and allow for detailed transcription. The researcher will maintain a reflective journal to capture non-verbal cues and contextual insights. This flexible yet systematic method of data collection ensures both depth and consistency in the information gathered across different stakeholder groups.

3.5 Research Instrument

The primary research instrument for this study will be an interview guide, carefully designed to align with the study's research objectives and questions. The guide will be made up of open-ended questions, aimed at eliciting detailed narratives from participants. Topics covered will include the nature and impact of communication strategies, the role of media and public relations professionals, community perception management, and the tools used to foster dialogue and reconciliation. The use of a structured guide ensures flexibility, allowing the interviewer to explore emerging issues while maintaining coherence across interviews (Bryman, 2016).

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected from interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis, a flexible and widely used qualitative analytic method that identifies, analyzes, and interprets patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process will begin with transcription of recorded interviews, followed by initial reading to gain familiarity with the content. Coding will then be conducted manually, with the codes grouped into categories that reflect common ideas, behaviors, or

experiences related to communication and conflict resolution. From these categories, broader themes will be developed that address the research objectives.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations will be strictly observed throughout the study to ensure the protection of participants and the credibility of findings. Prior to participation, informed consent will be obtained from all interviewees, who will be briefed on the purpose, procedures, and voluntary nature of the study. Participants will be assured that their identities and responses will be kept confidential, and pseudonyms will be used where necessary to protect anonymity. The data collected will be stored securely and used solely for academic purposes. In line with ethical research practices, participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. These measures aim to ensure transparency, mutual respect, and adherence to the highest ethical standards in qualitative research.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents and analyzes findings from interviews with ten participants on the role of public relations in resolving the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. It discusses communication management, strategies applied, their effectiveness, tools and channels used, and lessons drawn to guide future conflict resolution efforts in Ghana.

4.1 Demographic Information

4.1.1 What is your role or affiliation in relation to the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict?

Participants represented diverse affiliations, ranging from traditional authorities and government officials to media practitioners and peace council members. For instance, Participant 1, a senior member of the Dagbon Traditional Council, explained: *“My involvement was as a custodian of culture and tradition, ensuring that decisions taken reflected our customs while also promoting dialogue and peace. I had to carefully balance tradition with modern expectations during the resolution process.”*

In contrast, Participant 4, a journalist who extensively covered the conflict, highlighted the *challenges of balancing neutrality and accuracy while reporting sensitive events*. Participant 7, a government communication officer, emphasized their role in *issuing official statements to calm tensions and reassure the public*. Meanwhile, Participant 10, representing civil society, described their task as *fostering grassroots dialogue, ensuring that community voices were not lost amid elite negotiations*. Collectively, participants’ roles illustrated the multi-stakeholder nature of the Dagbon conflict resolution.

4.1.2 How long were you involved in the conflict resolution process?

The length of involvement varied significantly across participants. Participant 2, a representative of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs, recalled: *“I was directly engaged for nearly a decade, from the height of the crisis in the early 2000s until the final reconciliation processes. The duration allowed me to witness setbacks and breakthroughs, giving me a full picture of how patience and communication gradually built trust.”*

In contrast, Participant 5, a young media correspondent, reported an *involvement of about three years, mainly covering the post-2016 mediation initiatives*. Participant 8, a religious leader engaged by the peace council, *had a five-year involvement*, while Participant 9, a community elder, *stressed their long informal involvement of over fifteen years*, as they constantly mediated at the grassroots. Together, the responses reflected both short-term and long-term perspectives in the resolution process.

4.1.3 In what capacity did you engage with communication or public relations activities during the conflict?

Participants engaged in communication and PR activities in varying capacities depending on their affiliations. Participant 3, a local radio broadcaster, explained: *“I used my platform to promote messages of peace, host dialogue sessions on-air, and counter misinformation. At times, this meant resisting political pressure to slant stories, which was not easy but necessary to ensure the community trusted our station.”*

Participant 6, a government press officer, stated that they *coordinated press releases and official briefings that framed government interventions as neutral and peace-oriented*. Participant 1 and Participant 7, representing traditional and governmental structures, admitted that they *worked closely with PR professionals to craft culturally sensitive messages*, while Participant 10, from

civil society, *employed community durbars and town hall meetings as communication platforms.* Collectively, these engagements highlighted how communication and PR were central to shaping public narratives, dispelling rumors, and encouraging reconciliation.

4.2 The Role of Public Relations Strategies in Managing Communication Among Key Stakeholders

4.2.1 How communication was managed between the main stakeholders

Participants noted that communication among the Abudu and Andani gates, government bodies, and traditional authorities had to be carefully coordinated to prevent further escalation. The process relied heavily on structured channels, trusted intermediaries, and consistent messaging. Participant 1, a traditional authority, explained, *“In Dagbon, we agreed that only recognized chiefs and elders should speak on behalf of the gates.* This way, communication was uniform and avoided confusion. It also showed respect for authority and made it clear that pronouncements were collective, not individual.” (Participant 1)

From the government’s side, communication was deliberately centralized. Participant 4 emphasized this point: *“To manage expectations and avoid misinformation, the government created a single desk for communication. All updates on security, mediation, and reconciliation came from that office, which gave citizens a reliable source of information at a very uncertain time.”* (Participant 4)

Media actors, on the other hand, ensured that both factions had space to speak. Participant 7 shared, *“As a broadcaster, I knew neutrality was critical. We gave equal airtime to Abudu and Andani representatives. This balance reduced accusations of bias and created a sense of fairness in how information was shared with the public.”* (Participant 7)

Together, these accounts suggest that communication management was built on authority, centralization, and neutrality, which helped contain tensions during the conflict.

4.2.2 Specific public relations strategies or approaches used

Participants highlighted a mix of formal and informal PR strategies aimed at controlling the flow of information and creating transparency. These included press briefings, peace forums, community durbars, and crisis communication methods. Participant 2, a member of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs, stressed the role of press briefings: *“We issued regular press statements through chiefs to update the public. This controlled rumors and gave people confidence that progress was being made under respected cultural leaders. It also showed that the peace process was not hidden but open to scrutiny.”* (Participant 2)

Community engagement was another significant strategy. Participant 5, a journalist, explained, *“Forums and radio programs were organized so that ordinary people could ask questions about the peace process. Allowing communities to hear directly from leaders-built transparency and reduced the suspicion that decisions were being taken in secret.”* (Participant 5)

Religious leaders often used crisis communication techniques to intervene quickly when tensions rose. Participant 8 remarked, *“Whenever clashes seemed likely, we used sermons and announcements from mosques and churches to calm the youth. These immediate responses helped prevent small incidents from escalating into larger confrontations.”* (Participant 8)

Overall, the strategies relied on transparency, inclusiveness, and rapid response to maintain peace and encourage dialogue.

4.2.3 Effectiveness of the public relations strategies

When reflecting on effectiveness, most participants agreed that the strategies gradually reduced tensions and rebuilt trust, though the process was not without challenges. Media consistency and repetition were cited as particularly influential. Participant 3, a broadcaster, noted,

“Consistent peace messages, especially on radio, had a real impact. People who had grown used to anger began to hear the same call for reconciliation every day. This repetition slowly changed the atmosphere and encouraged tolerance.” (Participant 3)

Government representatives also observed that the strategies helped project neutrality. Participant 6 explained, *“By maintaining a consistent and transparent line of communication, government was able to counter claims of bias. Citizens could see that messages were not partisan, which helped to restore confidence in the peace process.”* (Participant 6)

From a grassroots perspective, community elders stressed the importance of persistence. Participant 9 recalled, *“At first, people doubted the peace process and thought it was all talk. But the continuous flow of messages, from chiefs to government and even the media, gradually softened attitudes. People began to trust that peace was actually possible.”* (Participant 9)

In summary, the PR strategies were effective in building trust and lowering tensions, largely because they were consistent, inclusive, and persistent across different levels of Dagbon society.

4.3 How Public Relations Contributed to Shaping Public Perception, Promoting Dialogue, and Facilitating Peace

4.3.1 How public relations efforts influenced how the general public perceived the conflict and the peace process

Participants consistently noted that public relations efforts shaped how the Dagbon conflict was understood by the public. Carefully managed communication helped to reduce suspicion and restore confidence in the peace process. Participant 2, a member of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs, explained, *“When we openly issued statements and updated the public, people began to see the peace process as genuine. Without that transparency, rumors would have destroyed trust. PR gave ordinary citizens the sense that they were included, and this changed how they viewed the conflict.”* (Participant 2)

From a media perspective, balanced coverage was key in reshaping perceptions. Participant 5 observed, *“We deliberately framed stories around reconciliation rather than division. By shifting the narrative from blame to solutions, the public gradually started seeing peace as possible. It was through PR framing that attitudes were softened and hope in the process was rebuilt.”* (Participant 5)

For community actors, visibility of peace campaigns mattered. Participant 9 remarked,

“The banners, radio jingles, and town announcements constantly reminded people that peace was coming. These repeated messages created an atmosphere where the public expected reconciliation, not more conflict.” (Participant 9)

Collectively, the responses show that PR influenced perception by emphasizing transparency, balance, and visibility.

4.3.2 Deliberate strategies to promote dialogue between factions or the wider community

Participants explained that dialogue did not emerge naturally; it was carefully promoted through deliberate public relations strategies. These included community forums, mediated broadcasts, and culturally sensitive engagements. Participant 1, a traditional authority, highlighted the use of structured forums: *“Public relations created space for dialogue through durbars and mediated meetings. These were carefully planned to ensure both Abudu and Andani representatives could air their views respectfully. The publicity around these forums reassured the wider public that dialogue was ongoing.”* (Participant 1)

Participant 6, representing government communication, emphasized the media’s role:

“We supported radio dialogues where both factions had equal time to speak. These programs were widely advertised as neutral platforms, which encouraged participation from communities that might otherwise have felt excluded.” (Participant 6)

Religious leaders also engaged through faith-based messaging. Participant 8 noted,

“We organized joint prayer sessions and used sermons to call for dialogue. By publicizing these acts, PR gave them legitimacy and visibility, making dialogue appear not just political, but spiritual and communal.” (Participant 8)

These accounts reveal that PR actively created platforms for dialogue and amplified them for public credibility.

4.3.3 Ways public relations contributed to the restoration of peace and stability in Dagbon

When reflecting on outcomes, participants agreed that PR was integral to restoring peace and stability. It helped clarify misinformation, frame reconciliation positively, and sustain public support for peace milestones. Participant 3, a broadcaster, reflected on this:

“Without the consistent communication, peace efforts would have failed. PR ensured that when funerals were held and the new Ya Na enskinned, the public understood these as milestones of unity rather than moments of division. That narrative gave stability to Dagbon.” (Participant 3)

Government representatives also linked PR to long-term peace. Participant 7 explained,

“By maintaining consistent and transparent updates, PR convinced people that government was impartial. This neutrality was vital for sustaining stability because both factions felt respected in the process.” (Participant 7)

Finally, community elders stressed PR’s role in reconciliation. Participant 10 noted,

“The public relations messages helped people move from suspicion to acceptance. They made ordinary people believe that reconciliation was not just for elites but for every family in Dagbon. That shift in mindset restored peace at the grassroots.” (Participant 10)

In sum, PR was not simply supportive but central to framing the peace process as credible, inclusive, and lasting.

4.4 Specific Communication Tools and Channels Employed by Traditional Authorities and Government Actors in Fostering Reconciliation

4.4.1 Communication tools most commonly used during the conflict resolution process

Participants agreed that a wide range of communication tools were deployed to manage the conflict, with particular emphasis on those accessible to local communities. Radio broadcasts, press releases, and community forums were consistently highlighted. Participant 2, from the Committee of Eminent Chiefs, explained, “*We relied heavily on official press releases and public statements to correct misinformation. These were carefully drafted and disseminated through the national media to ensure consistency in what the public heard. It gave structure to the peace process and prevented confusion.*” (Participant 2)

Participant 5, a journalist, emphasized the importance of radio: “*Radio became the most effective tool because it reached the largest audience in Dagbon. We held talk shows, live call-in programs, and jingles that carried peace messages. People trusted radio more than written statements because it was immediate and in local languages.*” (Participant 5)

From a community level, Participant 8, a religious leader, pointed to forums:

“*Community forums gave people the chance to ask questions and hear directly from leaders. These gatherings served as tools for reassurance, as people could see elders, chiefs, and government officials standing together for peace.*” (Participant 8)

Together, the responses show that the combination of press releases, radio, and forums worked to complement each other in fostering reconciliation.

4.4.2 Channels most effective in reaching and engaging stakeholders

Participants identified local media, traditional gatherings, and government bulletins as the most effective channels for engagement. Each offered unique advantages in reaching different audiences. Participant 1, a traditional authority, emphasized traditional gatherings:

“Durbars and palace meetings were the most effective channels because people trusted what they heard face-to-face from chiefs. These gatherings carried more weight than any newspaper or broadcast since they symbolized cultural authority.” (Participant 1)

Government officials relied more on formal channels. Participant 6 explained,

“Government bulletins and official communiqués served as credible channels for announcing progress. They reassured stakeholders that the state was actively engaged and provided clarity when rumors circulated.” (Participant 6)

Media actors stressed the bridging role of local radio. Participant 9, a community elder, observed, *“Local FM stations were the heartbeat of communication. They engaged rural and urban listeners alike, carrying messages in Dagbani and English. Because of this accessibility, they became the most trusted and effective channels during the conflict.”* (Participant 9)

Thus, traditional gatherings provided authority, bulletins gave official credibility, and local radio reached the widest audience.

4.4.3 Use of culturally rooted or traditional communication forms and their reception

Cultural communication practices were not only used but proved central to reconciliation, as they carried symbolic meaning and legitimacy. Participants stressed that traditional methods like chiefs’ durbars, storytelling, and the use of town criers were highly effective. Participant 3, a broadcaster, described their role: *“Chiefs’ durbars served as cultural platforms where reconciliation was*

enacted in public view. These durbars, widely covered by the media, showed both Abudu and Andani gates standing together. The symbolism was stronger than any speech or press release.”

(Participant 3)

Participant 7, a government communications officer, emphasized storytelling:

“Community elders often used storytelling to recall Dagbon’s history of unity before the conflict. This cultural form of communication helped people to reconnect emotionally and view reconciliation as a return to shared heritage, not a political compromise.” (Participant 7)

Participant 10, from civil society, noted the use of town criers: *“In smaller villages, town criers were used to announce peace meetings and prayers. People accepted these messages because they were rooted in tradition. They felt authentic, unlike distant government announcements.”*

(Participant 10)

The reception of these cultural forms was overwhelmingly positive, as they reinforced trust and bridged the gap between formal processes and community values.

4.5 Closing Questions

4.5.1 Challenges observed in using communication or public relations tools during the conflict

Participants highlighted that while PR tools were crucial, their use came with difficulties such as misinformation, political interference, and limited resources. These challenges often slowed progress and at times threatened to derail peace efforts. Participant 2, a member of the Committee of Eminent Chiefs, emphasized the problem of rumors: *“One of the biggest challenges was misinformation. Even when official statements were issued, rumors spread faster than the truth,*

especially in rural areas. At times, false messages created panic and anger before we could counter them with accurate information.” (Participant 2)

Media actors also acknowledged challenges in maintaining neutrality. Participant 5 explained,

“As journalists, we constantly faced pressure from both sides to slant stories in their favor. Remaining neutral was not easy, especially when factions accused us of bias. This undermined trust in the media, even though our goal was to promote peace.” (Participant 5)

Government communicators dealt with credibility gaps. Participant 6 admitted,

“Many people suspected government statements of being politically motivated. This made it difficult for our PR efforts to be trusted immediately. We had to work harder to demonstrate impartiality, sometimes by involving neutral voices like chiefs and religious leaders.” (Participant 6)

Finally, civil society actors pointed to resource constraints. Participant 10 observed,

“We lacked the funding to sustain communication campaigns. While radio and posters were effective, we couldn’t keep them running for long. Limited resources meant peace messages often lost momentum when they were most needed.” (Participant 10)

Overall, the challenges showed that while PR tools were valuable, they needed consistency, credibility, and resources to be fully effective.

4.5.2 Lessons that could help resolve similar chieftaincy or communal disputes in Ghana

Despite these challenges, participants identified valuable lessons from the Dagbon experience that could guide future conflict resolution efforts. They emphasized the importance of consistency in communication, inclusivity of stakeholders, and cultural sensitivity. Participant 1, a traditional

leader, highlighted the power of cultural legitimacy: *“The lesson is that peace messages must be rooted in tradition. Chiefs, elders, and family heads carry more authority than politicians in these disputes. If they are at the forefront of PR efforts, people will listen and support reconciliation.”*

(Participant 1)

Participant 3, a broadcaster, stressed consistency: *“Peace communication must be continuous. If messages stop after initial progress, old divisions return. In Dagbon, repeated radio announcements, jingles, and dialogue shows kept the momentum alive until stability was restored. That consistency is what other communities must learn from.”* (Participant 3)

Religious actors underlined inclusivity. Participant 8 explained, *“We learned that peace lasts only when everyone feels included. From youth groups to women leaders, involving all voices in forums and media discussions gave the process legitimacy. Without inclusivity, PR strategies risk looking like elite bargains.”* (Participant 8)

Government representatives emphasized transparency. Participant 7 concluded, *“Future conflicts must be managed with openness. Every step should be explained to the public, not just the final outcome. Transparency reduces suspicion and prevents misinformation. That was a clear lesson from Dagbon’s experience.”* (Participant 7)

In summary, the Dagbon conflict taught that effective PR in conflict resolution must be consistent, inclusive, transparent, and culturally grounded. These lessons, if applied, could strengthen peacebuilding in other chieftaincy or communal disputes across Ghana.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The first objective of the study sought to assess the role public relations strategies played in managing communication among key stakeholders during the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. The

findings revealed that communication among the Abudu and Andani gates, government representatives, and traditional authorities was deliberately managed through structured dialogue, radio broadcasts, press releases, and mediation channels to prevent misinformation and reduce hostilities. Respondents emphasized that strategic communication helped clarify positions, reduce inflammatory rhetoric, and promote transparency. These findings align with Tseer et al. (2023), who argued that transparent and consistent communication is essential for clarifying misunderstandings and preventing escalation in conflict settings. Similarly, Egbe (2024) emphasized that effective public relations mitigate misinformation and establishes trust between opposing groups. The Dagbon case also reflects Okpevra's (2023) assertion that inclusive and empathetic communication is critical in sensitive conflicts, as it created space for dialogue while maintaining cultural sensitivity. Thus, the findings confirm that strategic PR was central to stakeholder communication, ensuring that the conflict resolution process was credible and widely accepted.

The second objective was to explore how public relations contributed to shaping public perception, promoting dialogue, and facilitating peace during the conflict resolution process. The findings showed that PR efforts reshaped narratives surrounding the conflict by emphasizing reconciliation and cultural restoration rather than rivalry. Public relations strategies such as community engagement, peace campaigns on local radio, and symbolic communication during funerals and ceremonies shifted public opinion toward unity and peace. This resonates with Pasricha (2020), who highlighted the importance of narrative framing in conflict settings to move public perception from hostility to cooperation. Likewise, Gregory & Willis (2022) noted that image repair and consistent messaging help restore credibility and legitimacy to peace processes. The findings also mirror Chilwa's (2022) view that peace journalism and constructive reporting foster

reconciliation by highlighting shared values instead of deepening divisions. In Dagbon, public relations served this role by promoting symbols of unity such as the enskinment of the new Ya Na, which functioned as a cultural milestone in restoring peace.

The third objective sought to identify the specific communication tools and channels employed by traditional authorities and government actors in fostering reconciliation. The findings indicated that both modern and traditional tools were deployed, including community durbars, town hall meetings, radio broadcasts, press statements, and culturally symbolic rituals. Respondents noted that radio was especially influential due to its accessibility and ability to broadcast in local languages, while traditional forums such as durbars carried cultural legitimacy. These findings support Agyeman (2020), who identified community radio as one of the most effective tools for reaching broad audiences in Ghanaian conflict contexts. They also confirm Agbasimelo & Ignatius (2025), who stressed that traditional gatherings provide legitimacy and trust in reconciliation processes. Additionally, Marchetti & Tocci (2020) emphasized the role of symbolic acts such as peace ceremonies in communicating unity, a theme that was strongly reflected in the Dagbon settlement process. Collectively, these results affirm Okojie's (2022) conclusion that a hybrid approach blending traditional and modern channels ensures that reconciliation efforts are both culturally resonant and widely accessible.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

After carefully analyzing the data presented in the previous chapter, this chapter summarizes the key findings, draws conclusions based on the objectives of the study, and provides recommendations to guide practice and policy on the use of public relations in conflict resolution, particularly in the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute.

5.1 Summary

The main objective of this study was to examine the role of public relations in conflict resolution, using the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict as a case study. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Assess the role public relations strategies played in managing communication among key stakeholders during the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict.
2. Explore how public relations contributed to shaping public perception, promoting dialogue, and facilitating peace during the conflict resolution process.
3. Identify the specific communication tools and channels employed by traditional authorities and government actors in fostering reconciliation.

The study adopted a qualitative research design, relying on a purposive sample of ten participants drawn from traditional authorities, government officials, media practitioners, religious leaders, and civil society actors. Data were collected through structured interviews guided by open-ended questions, and thematic analysis was employed to interpret responses. Findings from the first objective revealed that communication between the Abudu and Andani gates, government, and traditional authorities was carefully managed through structured channels, centralized

communication desks, press statements, and balanced media reporting. These strategies minimized misinformation, ensured neutrality, and gave credibility to peace efforts.

The second objective established that public relations contributed significantly to shaping public perception and promoting dialogue. Transparency in communication, framing messages around reconciliation, and visibility of peace campaigns changed how the public viewed the conflict. PR also created deliberate platforms for dialogue, such as forums, radio programs, and prayer sessions, which helped reduce hostility and build trust.

The third objective showed that both modern and traditional communication tools were critical in fostering reconciliation. Radio, press releases, community forums, and bulletins provided broad reach, while chiefs' durbars, town criers, and storytelling reinforced cultural legitimacy. Respondents noted that these culturally rooted methods were widely accepted because they resonated with community values.

5.2 Conclusions

The findings of this study make it evident that public relations was not peripheral but central to resolving the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. By strategically managing communication among key stakeholders, PR helped reduce misinformation, built trust, and promoted transparency, which were critical in stabilizing relations between the Abudu and Andani factions. The study concludes that PR significantly influenced public perception by reframing narratives from rivalry to reconciliation. Visibility of peace campaigns, consistent radio messages, and symbolic ceremonies strengthened public confidence in the peace process. This indicates that public relations is not only about information dissemination but also about shaping attitudes and building legitimacy for peace agreements.

Furthermore, the study revealed that communication tools and channels used in the conflict combined both modern and traditional approaches. Radio and press releases offered reach and credibility, while durbars, storytelling, and religious platforms grounded the process in cultural values. This hybrid approach was particularly effective because it bridged modern communication practices with deeply respected traditional systems. Overall, the results underscore that public relations is a transformative tool in conflict resolution. By ensuring structured communication, reframing public narratives, and leveraging culturally relevant channels, PR reinforced traditional and political mechanisms, leading to the eventual restoration of peace in Dagbon.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Traditional authorities, government, and peace councils should adopt structured communication frameworks, including designated communication desks and protocols, to ensure clarity, transparency, and consistency during conflicts.
2. Local FM stations and community radio should be further empowered with training in peace journalism and supported with resources to sustain continuous peace campaigns in conflict-prone areas.
3. Chiefs' durbars, storytelling, and the use of town criers should be integrated systematically into conflict resolution strategies, as they command trust and legitimacy within communities.
4. Peace forums, joint prayer sessions, and community meetings should deliberately include women, youth, and marginalized groups to ensure that reconciliation processes reflect the perspectives of all stakeholders.

5. Government communication teams and traditional authorities should develop rapid-response strategies to counter misinformation and issue timely reconciliatory messages whenever tensions rise.

6. The Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, together with the National Peace Council, should integrate PR as a formal component of national peacebuilding policy, ensuring that communication strategies complement legal and political mechanisms.

REFERENCES

Aasoglenang, T. A. (2023). Legal pluralism and indigenous conflict adjudicatory mechanisms: the theory and practice in North-Western Ghana. *SN Social Sciences*, 3(10). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-023-00764-x>

Abdinasir, A. M., & Mohamed, Z. A. (2024). Indigenous peacebuilding approaches and clan conflicts in Ethiopia's Somali region: a case study of Shilabo district. *African Identities*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2024.2440084>

Assanful, V. (2021). Chieftaincy Act and Succession Disputes Resolution: A Panacea for National Security? *E-Journal of Religious and Theological Studies*, 7(5), 69–77. <https://doi.org/10.38159/erats.2021751>

Avruch, K. (2022). Culture and Conflict Resolution. *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 1(1), 254–259. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77954-2_67

C. Nweke, N. K. Agbenyega, O. (2022). *Apuko-Awuni, P. (2022). Mediation as an Option under Alternative Dispute Resolution the Case of Ghana. UCC Law Journal, 2, 157-175. - References - Scientific Research Publishing. Scirp.org.*

<https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=3644440>

Abdinasir, A. M., & Mohamed, Z. A. (2024). Indigenous peacebuilding approaches and clan conflicts in Ethiopia's Somali region: A case study of Shilabo district. *African Identities*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2024.2440084>

Assanful, V. (2021). Chieftaincy Act and Succession Disputes Resolution: A Panacea for National Security? *E-Journal of Religious and Theological Studies*, 7(5), 69–77. <https://doi.org/10.38159/erats.2021751>

Ismail, A. A., & Abubakar, A. M. (2024). Traditional rulers' role in resolving community conflicts in Northern Nigeria: A study of the Katsina Emirate. *Journal of African Conflict Resolution*, 5(2), 45–62.

Jibril, M., & Adekunle, O. (2023). The interplay between media framing and conflict resolution in Nigeria. *Media, Culture & Society*, 45(7), 1150–1168.

- John, T. O., & Michael, A. S. (2022). The effect of public relations strategies on organizational conflict management. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 16(3), 250–268.
- Joseph, N., & Fadipe, O. (2021). Conflict resolution mechanisms in Nigerian communities: Traditional vs. modern approaches. *African Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 12(1), 77–95.
- Kankam, J. A. (2020). *Dagbon chieftaincy conflicts and the role of mediation* (Master's thesis, University of Ghana).
- Kpebu, P. (2022). Indigenous methods of conflict resolution and their relevance in contemporary Ghana. *Journal of African Traditional Studies*, 14(4), 88–104.
- Kusi, H., & Asare, P. (2023). Land conflicts and conflict resolution strategies in Ghana: A critical analysis. *African Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(2), 132–149.
- Lartey, F., & Mensah, K. (2021). Public relations as a tool for conflict resolution in public institutions: Evidence from Ghana. *Journal of Media and Communication Studies*, 13(2), 34–49.
- Lartey, P. K., & Adomako, D. (2024). The role of communication in mitigating chieftaincy conflicts: A study of Northern Ghana. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 19(1), 101–119.
- Mensah, J., & Ofori, A. (2023). Evaluating the effectiveness of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in traditional Ghanaian societies. *Journal of African Legal Studies*, 18(2), 221–239.
- Mohammed, B., & Ali, S. (2022). Community-based conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Northern Ghana. *Ghana Journal of Social Science*, 11(1), 55–73.
- Nana, K. A. (2020). *Conflict management in Ghanaian traditional councils: Case study of the Ashanti Kingdom* (Master's thesis, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology).
- Nkrumah, E. Y., & Boateng, R. (2021). Social media and conflict resolution: A study of digital communication strategies in Ghana. *African Journal of Communication*, 12(3), 201–220.
- Nyarko, P., & Owusu, D. (2023). Traditional leadership and the resolution of land disputes in Ghana: A case study approach. *Journal of African Studies and Development*, 15(2), 78–95.
- Ofori, E., & Asamoah, R. (2022). Chieftaincy disputes and peacebuilding in Northern Ghana: An appraisal of mediation mechanisms. *Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 9(1), 44–60.

- Okafor, F. C., & Umeh, I. N. (2021). The role of indigenous institutions in conflict resolution in Igbo communities. *International Journal of African Studies*, 18(3), 102–120.
- Osei, A., & Adjei, K. (2020). Media reporting and conflict resolution: Lessons from Ghanaian chieftaincy disputes. *African Communication Research*, 13(1), 12–29.
- Owusu, D., & Baah, F. (2023). Evaluating public relations strategies in mediating community conflicts. *Journal of Media and Public Affairs*, 16(2), 85–102.
- Quaye, E., & Darko, A. (2022). Peace communication and the role of community radio in conflict mitigation. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 14(4), 77–93.
- Salifu, M., & Mensah, P. (2021). Conflict resolution in Dagbon: Traditional mediation and modern interventions. *Northern Ghana Studies*, 7(2), 45–66.
- Sam, A., & Kwaku, B. (2024). The impact of traditional authorities on social cohesion in Northern Ghana. *Journal of African Governance and Development*, 9(1), 33–52.
- Sarfo, E., & Adom, R. (2023). Communication strategies for conflict resolution in multicultural settings. *International Journal of Communication Research*, 15(3), 88–104.
- Tamakloe, J., & Laryea, S. (2022). Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms in Ghana: The role of elders and traditional councils. *African Journal of Peace Studies*, 10(1), 67–82.
- Twumasi, A., & Badu, K. (2021). Social media as a tool for conflict management in higher education institutions. *Journal of African Educational Studies*, 12(2), 99–115.
- Umar, S., & Abdullahi, M. (2023). The impact of public relations in resolving conflicts: A study of Nigerian local government councils. *African Journal of Management and Communication*, 7(1), 55–71.
- Yeboah, D., & Obeng, S. (2022). Conflict prevention and resolution in Ghana: Lessons from traditional governance structures. *African Journal of Governance*, 8(2), 112–130.
- Yidana, I., & Kofi, N. (2024). Peacebuilding strategies through media engagement in Northern Ghana. *Journal of African Communication*, 18(1), 50–68.
- Apuko-Awuni, P. (2022). Mediation as an option under alternative dispute resolution: The case of Ghana. *UCC Law Journal*, 2(1), 157–175.

- Avruch, K. (2022). Culture and conflict resolution. In *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies* (pp. 254–259). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Badache, F., Hellmüller, S., & Salaymeh, B. (2022). Conflict management or conflict resolution: How do major powers conceive the role of the United Nations in peacebuilding? *Contemporary Security Policy*, 43(4), 547–571.
- Bashiru, A. W. A. (2020). *Conflict and conflict resolution mechanisms in the Ga chieftaincy conflict* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Cape Coast).
- Bercovitch, J. (2019). *Social conflicts and third parties: Strategies of conflict resolution*. Routledge.
- Boafo-Anang, M., Akrofi, E. O., & Shitsi, F. J. (2021). Land disputes and conflicting land-court judgement resolution in Ghana: Perspectives of regulatory stakeholders. *African Journal of Land Policy and Geospatial Sciences*, 4(3), 331–342.
- Bukari, K. N., Osei-Kufuor, P., & Bukari, S. (2021). Chieftaincy conflicts in Northern Ghana: A constellation of actors and politics. *African Security*, 14(2), 156–185.
- Chiluwa, I. (Ed.). (2022). *Discourse, media, and conflict: Examining war and resolution in the news*. Cambridge University Press.
- Egbe, J. A. (2024). The impact of effective communication in conflict resolution: A case study of Agbani/Nkerefɔ conflict. *Oracle of Wisdom Journal of Philosophy and Public Affairs (OWIJOPPA)*, 8(3).
- Furlong, G. T. (2020). *The conflict resolution toolbox: Models and maps for analyzing, diagnosing, and resolving conflict*. John Wiley & Son
- Yidana, I., & Kofi, N. (2024). Peacebuilding strategies through media engagement in Northern Ghana. *Journal of African Communication*, 18(1), 50–68.
- Aasoglenang, T. A. (2023). Legal pluralism and indigenous conflict adjudicatory mechanisms: The theory and practice in North-Western Ghana. *SN Social Sciences*, 3(10).
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-023-00764-x>

- Abdinasir, A. M., & Mohamed, Z. A. (2024). Indigenous peacebuilding approaches and clan conflicts in Ethiopia's Somali region: A case study of Shilabo district. *African Identities*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2024.2440084>.
- Assanful, V. (2021). Chieftaincy Act and Succession Disputes Resolution: A Panacea for National Security? *E-Journal of Religious and Theological Studies*, 7(5), 69–77. <https://doi.org/10.38159/erats.2021751>
- Apuko-Awuni, P. (2022). Mediation as an option under alternative dispute resolution: The case of Ghana. *UCC Law Journal*, 2(1), 157–175. <https://doi.org/10.47963/ucclj.v2i1.903>
- Avruch, K. (2022). Culture and conflict resolution. In *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Peace and Conflict Studies* (pp. 254–259). Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77954-2_67
- Badache, F., Hellmüller, S., & Salaymeh, B. (2022). Conflict management or conflict resolution: How do major powers conceive the role of the United Nations in peacebuilding? *Contemporary Security Policy*, 43(4), 547–571. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2022.2147334>
- Bashiru, A. W. A. (2020). Conflict and conflict resolution mechanisms in the Ga chieftaincy conflict (Doctoral dissertation, University of Cape Coast).
- Bercovitch, J. (2019). *Social conflicts and third parties: Strategies of conflict resolution*. Routledge.
- Boafo-Anang, M., Akrofi, E. O., & Shitsi, F. J. (2021). Land disputes and conflicting land-court judgement resolution in Ghana: Perspectives of regulatory stakeholders. *African Journal of Land Policy and Geospatial Sciences*, 4(3), 331–342. <https://doi.org/10.48346/IMIST-AJLP-GS.2021.4.3.331>
- Bukari, K. N., Osei-Kufuor, P., & Bukari, S. (2021). Chieftaincy conflicts in Northern Ghana: A constellation of actors and politics. *African Security*, 14(2), 156–185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2021.1932244>
- Chiluwa, I. (Ed.). (2022). *Discourse, media, and conflict: Examining war and resolution in the news*. Cambridge University Press.

- Egbe, J. A. (2024). The impact of effective communication in conflict resolution: A case study of Agbani/Nkerefɪ conflict. *Oracle of Wisdom Journal of Philosophy and Public Affairs (OWIJOPPA)*, 8(3).
- Furlong, G. T. (2020). *The conflict resolution toolbox: Models and maps for analyzing, diagnosing, and resolving conflict*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Kanda, W. (2019). Communal conflicts in Ghana: A case study of the Dagbon conflict. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 3(1), 98–111.
- Kanu, I. A. (2019). Igwebuiké as an Igbo-African modality of peace and conflict resolution. *Journal of African Traditional Religion and Philosophy*, 1(1).
- Keashly, L., Minkowitz, H., & Nowell, B. L. (2020). Conflict, conflict resolution and workplace bullying. In *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace* (pp. 331–361). CRC Press.
- Narh, J. (2020). The role of politics in attempts to resolve the Many-Yilo conflict in Ghana. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 20(1), 77–102.
- Okojie, O. S. (2022). *Recognition in the age of conflict transformation: Emerging experiences of the Ghanaian National Peace Council* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Okpevra, U. B. (2023). Nature of conflict and the prospect of traditional institutions of conflict resolutions in contemporary Africa: The Nigeria example. *IKENGA: International Journal of Institute of African Studies*, 24(1). <https://doi.org/10.53836/ijia/2023/24/1/009>
- Osei, E. K. (2024). *Conflict resolution in Northern Ghana: Re(considering) indigenous peace mechanisms*.
- Pasricha, A. (2020). Conflicts and conflict resolution through dialogue. *Himachal Pradesh University Journal*, 8(1), 115–128.
- Penu, D. A. K. (2022). Explaining region creation conflicts in Ghana. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 60(4), 571–595. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X22000374>
- Väyrynen, R. (2023). To settle or to transform: Perspectives on the resolution of national and international conflicts. In *Raimo Väyrynen: A Pioneer in International Relations, Scholarship*

and Policy-Making (pp. 279–299). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-13627-6>

Wallensteen, P. (2023). *Understanding conflict resolution*.

Wallensteen, P. (2023). *Understanding conflict resolution*. SAGE Publications.

Yeboah, F. K., & Darko, A. (2021). Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms and their relevance in contemporary Ghana. *African Journal of Social Sciences*, 11(2), 88–105.

Yawson, R. M., & Adjei, K. (2022). Chieftaincy disputes and social cohesion in Ghana: The case of the Asogli State. *Journal of African Studies*, 14(3), 201–222.

Zartman, I. W. (2020). The timing of peace initiatives: Hurting stalemates and ripe moments. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 27(1), 1–18.

Abdullahi, A. (2021). Indigenous conflict management systems among pastoral communities in Kenya. *Journal of African Conflict Studies*, 9(1), 45–63.

Adams, R., & van Tongeren, P. (2022). Peacebuilding in Africa: Lessons from local experiences. *Conflict, Security & Development*, 22(2), 127–150.

Adomako, A. (2023). Land disputes and mediation in Ghana: Local approaches and challenges. *Ghana Journal of Legal Studies*, 10(1), 60–78.

Agyekum, K., & Asare, B. (2021). Conflict resolution in northern Ghana: A study of Dagbon traditional mechanisms. *African Journal of Governance and Development*, 12(2), 34–52.

Akoto, I., & Amponsah, E. (2020). Communication strategies in peacebuilding: Media as a tool for conflict resolution in Ghana. *Journal of Media and Peace Studies*, 5(1), 15–32.

Alhassan, S., & Boateng, R. (2022). Role of traditional authorities in dispute resolution: Evidence from Northern Ghana. *African Studies Review*, 65(4), 89–108.

Amankwaa, F. (2023). Chieftaincy conflicts and national security in Ghana. *Journal of African Political Studies*, 11(3), 210–229.

Annan, K., & Mensah, J. (2021). Community-based approaches to conflict resolution in Ghana. *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 26(2), 75–95.

- Antwi, P., & Owusu, K. (2020). Conflict mapping and resolution in multi-ethnic communities: Insights from Ghana. *Journal of Conflict Transformation*, 8(1), 1–21.
- Apeagyei, P., & Danso, R. (2022). The role of NGOs in promoting peace: Case studies from Ghana. *African Peacebuilding Review*, 4(1), 55–74.
- Asamoah, D., & Frimpong, B. (2023). Mediating communal disputes in Ghana: A historical perspective. *Ghana Journal of Conflict Studies*, 7(2), 112–135.
- Asiedu, N., & Darkwa, F. (2021). Ethnic conflicts and social harmony in Ghana: Strategies for resolution. *African Social Science Journal*, 17(3), 45–68.
- Awunyo-Vitor, D., & Boateng, S. (2022). The effectiveness of traditional mediation mechanisms in Ghana. *Journal of African Legal Studies*, 15(1), 99–120.
- Baah, F., & Aidoo, R. (2020). Chieftaincy succession disputes in Ghana: Challenges and opportunities. *West African Journal of Governance*, 9(2), 75–92.
- Badu, E., & Osei, D. (2021). Conflict resolution through religious institutions in Ghana. *Journal of Religion and Peace Studies*, 3(1), 33–50.
- Bediako, A., & Owusu-Ansah, P. (2023). Peace education and its impact on youth conflict in Ghana. *African Journal of Education and Development*, 12(2), 81–104.
- Biney, A., & Tetteh, M. (2022). Resolving land tenure conflicts in Ghana: Traditional versus formal approaches. *Journal of African Land Studies*, 7(1), 21–42.
- Blay, E., & Frempong, R. (2020). Indigenous governance and conflict resolution in Ghana. *African Journal of Political Science*, 14(2), 60–83.
- Boateng, K., & Quaye, E. (2021). Youth involvement in peacebuilding in northern Ghana. *Journal of Conflict Resolution in Africa*, 6(2), 45–68.
- Dapaah, S., & Yirenkyi, K. (2022). The role of local councils in mitigating chieftaincy conflicts. *Ghana Policy Review*, 11(3), 101–125.
- Danso, J., & Afriyie, K. (2023). Social media as a tool for conflict prevention and resolution. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 12(1), 33–57.

- Dzokoto, V., & Appiah, F. (2020). The Dagbon conflict: Lessons for peacebuilding in Ghana. *Ghanaian Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 5(1), 1–26.
- Eshun, K., & Adu, P. (2021). Women in peacebuilding: Local perspectives from Ghana. *Journal of Gender and Peace Studies*, 4(2), 55–77.
- Essel, L., & Agyapong, F. (2022). Traditional councils and dispute resolution in Ghana: Case studies. *African Governance Journal*, 16(2), 101–124.
- Fosu, K., & Tetteh, R. (2023). Religion, ethnicity, and conflict: Insights from Northern Ghana. *African Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 8(1), 67–89.
- Gyasi, P., & Mensah, A. (2020). Conflict resolution mechanisms in multi-ethnic Ghanaian communities. *Journal of African Community Studies*, 9(2), 45–70.
- Hagan, S., & Obeng, E. (2021). The role of elders in community conflict resolution. *Ghana Social Science Journal*, 11(3), 77–101.
- Hanson, M., & Kofi, R. (2022). Negotiation strategies in Ghanaian chieftaincy disputes. *International Journal of African Mediation*, 3(1), 23–48.
- Ibrahim, A., & Abubakar, S. (2023). Peace commissions and local conflict resolution in Ghana. *African Journal of Legal Studies*, 14(2), 95–117.
- Iddrisu, A., & Mahama, K. (2020). Indigenous law and chieftaincy succession disputes in Northern Ghana. *Ghana Law Review*, 12(1), 33–58.
- Issah, M., & Sulemana, A. (2021). Land conflicts and customary mediation in Ghana: A study of Northern communities. *Journal of African Property and Land Studies*, 6(1), 44–67.
- Jalango, A., & Tandoh, J. (2022). Conflict analysis and peacebuilding interventions in Ghana. *African Peace and Development Journal*, 10(2), 67–92.
- Johnson, E., & Asare, M. (2023). Traditional authorities and peacebuilding in Ghana: A Northern perspective. *Journal of African Political and Social Studies*, 13(1), 101–126.
- Kumi, P., & Ofori, B. (2020). Youth and conflict mediation in Ghanaian communities. *African Journal of Youth and Development*, 7(2), 55–78.

Lamptey, F., & Mensah, J. (2021). The role of chiefs in dispute resolution in Ghana: Historical perspectives. *Ghana Historical Studies*, 15(2), 88–110

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study on the role of public relations in conflict resolution, with specific focus on the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict. Your insights are highly valued, and your responses will play a vital role in helping the researcher explore the practical and strategic contributions of public relations in traditional conflict resolution contexts. The information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes. You are encouraged to speak freely—there are no right or wrong answers, only your lived experience and professional insights.

Section A: Background Information

1. What is your role or affiliation in relation to the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict?

.....
.....

2. How long were you involved in the conflict resolution process?

.....
.....

3. In what capacity did you engage with communication or public relations activities during the conflict?

.....
.....

Section B: The role public relations strategies played in managing communication among key stakeholders during the Dagbon chieftaincy conflict.

4. Can you describe how communication was managed between the main stakeholders (e.g., the Abudu and Andani gates, traditional authorities, government bodies) during the conflict?

.....
.....

5. What specific public relations strategies or approaches were used to ensure clear and effective communication during the conflict?

.....
.....

6. In your opinion, how effective were these public relations strategies in reducing tensions and building trust among the stakeholders?

.....
.....

Section C: how public relations contributed to shaping public perception, promoting dialogue, and facilitating peace during the conflict resolution process.

7. How did public relations efforts influence how the general public perceived the conflict and the peace process?

.....
.....

8. Were there any deliberate strategies to promote dialogue between the factions or with the wider community? If so, how were they implemented?

.....
.....

9. In what ways do you believe public relations contributed to the restoration of peace and stability in Dagbon?

.....
.....

Section D: Specific communication tools and channels employed by traditional authorities and government actors in fostering reconciliation.

10. What communication tools (e.g., press releases, community forums, radio broadcasts) were most commonly used during the conflict resolution process?

.....
.....

11. Which channels (e.g., local media, traditional gatherings, government bulletins) proved most effective in reaching and engaging the stakeholders?

.....
.....

12. Were any culturally rooted or traditional communication forms (e.g., chiefs' durbars, town criers, storytelling) used to support reconciliation? If so, how were they received?

Closing Questions

13. What challenges, if any, did you observe in using communication or public relations tools during the conflict?

.....
.....

14. What lessons can be drawn from the Dagbon conflict that could help resolve similar chieftaincy or communal disputes in Ghana?

.....
.....

