

## EXAMINING THE MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS OF TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN GHANA

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### Abstract

*Traditional authorities play a crucial role in socio-economic development by managing rural communities in the absence of modern governmental structures, with the assistance of their respective traditional councils. Adopting a desk review approach, this study examined the managerial functions of traditional authorities and the challenges they face. Applying a thematic analysis framework, the study identified several managerial roles performed by traditional authorities, including planning and implementation, interpersonal relations, information management, and decision-making functions. The challenges faced in the performance of these functions included limited financial resources, chieftaincy disputes, loss of judicial powers and functions, multiple sales of land, absentee chiefship, among others. The study recommends the completion of the process of codifying lines of succession by the National House of Chiefs to minimize chieftaincy conflicts, and that accountability structures be established by the National House of Chiefs and the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs to ensure the effective management of communal resources.*

**Key words:** Management, Managers, Traditional Authority, Organization, Ghana

### Résumé

*Les autorités traditionnelles jouent un rôle essentiel dans le développement socio-économique en assurant la gestion des communautés rurales en l'absence de structures gouvernementales modernes, avec le soutien de leurs conseils traditionnels respectifs. En adoptant une approche fondée sur l'analyse documentaire, cette étude examine les fonctions managériales exercées par les autorités traditionnelles ainsi que les défis auxquels elles sont confrontées. À travers une analyse thématique, plusieurs rôles de gestion ont été identifiés, notamment la planification et la mise en œuvre, les relations interpersonnelles, la gestion de l'information et les fonctions de prise de décision. Parmi les principaux défis relevés incluent l'insuffisance des ressources financières, les conflits liés à la succession coutumière, la perte de pouvoirs et de fonctions judiciaires, la vente multiple de terrains, ainsi que l'absentéisme du chef, entre autres. L'étude recommande l'achèvement du processus de codification des lignes de succession par la National House of Chiefs (institution nationale représentative de la chefferie au Ghana) afin de réduire les conflits de chefferie, ainsi que la mise en place de mécanismes de reddition de comptes par la National House of Chiefs et par le Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs (ministère en charge des affaires coutumières et religieuses), en vue d'assurer une gestion efficace des ressources communautaires.*

**Mots-clés :** gestion, managers, autorité traditionnelle, organisation, Ghana

## **1. Introduction**

Traditional authority is the bedrock of the social fortitude of Africans (Brempong, 2007; Acquah, 2006). Historically, traditional authorities evolved to manage the affairs of their people when man shifted from hunting and gathering to a sedentary lifestyle. In managing their communities, traditional authorities performed a multiplicity of functions. During the early stages of societal evolution, these leaders were primarily concerned with protecting the community from aggressors. They instituted laws and policies to ensure the prosperity of the collective (Abotsi & Galizzi, 2011; Abotchie et al., 2006). Traditional authorities are tasked with the management of communal property resources (CPRs), including land, river bodies, forest reserves, and mineral resources. As managers, traditional authorities instituted measures to safeguard the judicious exploitation and utilisation of CPRs (Boateng et al., 2024a; Boateng & Larbi, 2021; Boateng & Afranie, 2020a; Alhassan, 2006).

Considering the significance of the traditional authorities, the British colonial administration integrated them into the colonial government and charged them with responsibilities of managing communities under their jurisdiction (Brempong, 2007). However, African political elites labeled traditional authorities as anachronistic (Boateng & Afranie, 2020a; Abotchie, et al., 2006; Beall et al., 2005) and sought to alienate them from governance after independence (Brempong, 2007). This notwithstanding, the institution is enshrined in the constitutions of some African nations (Boateng & Afranie, 2020b; Sklar, 2003; Englebert, 2003) and has proven to be indispensable in governance and development (Boateng, 2024; Boateng & Bawole, 2021; Holzinger et al., 2016).

Chiefs have provided leadership for people in rural areas where the presence of the central government and

local governance structures are weak (Boateng et al., 2024). Traditional authorities have established and managed communal funds, which have been used to enhance the potential of needy but brilliant students and to construct developmental projects (Boateng et al., 2024). Based on the foregoing, Abdulai (2006) argued that traditional authorities, in the performance of their roles, function as managers of formal organisations. However, the challenges they face in the performance of these managerial functions have not received the needed attention. This article explores the phenomenon of traditional leadership in Ghana, where the institution is deeply embedded and guaranteed (Boateng, 2024). The main thesis of this study is that, although the principles guiding traditional authorities in the administration of their communities are largely not documented, these principles are not ad hoc or haphazard. They are organised and consistent with the modern documented principles and managerial functions.

Following the introduction, this study is structured into five sections. The second section presents an overview of management and managerial functions, which is then followed by the theoretical framework underpinning the study. Next, the methodology is outlined, followed by the findings and discussion. The study concludes with recommendations and a summary of key findings.

## **2. Conceptualising Management and Managerial Functions**

Management is the process of integrating resources and coordinating tasks to achieve organisational goals. It is the art of getting things done through people by judiciously utilising limited resources (Jha et al., 2014). Management entails changing behaviour to achieve predetermined goals (Buabeng, 2020) through effective economic planning and regulation of an enterprise. Management processes encapsulate

strategic planning, establishing goals, managing resources, leadership, control, motivation, and supervision (Buabeng, 2020; Toymasyan, 2017; Koontz & O'donnell, 2016; Koontz & Wehrich, 2008), among others. Critical here is the ability of a manager to work effectively with and through people, and with limited resources to achieve predetermined goals. Managers are expected to coordinate people with the aim of getting some activity accomplished within a stipulated period with a reasonable amount of effort.

Managers are expected to possess some fundamental skills, including conceptual, human, and technical skills necessary to perform their functions (Jones & George, 2009). Technical skills refer to the knowledge and proficiency in activities involving methods, processes and procedures. Human skills refer to the ability to work with people, emphasising the cooperative and teamwork efforts that managers exert to ensure tasks are performed. The task of a manager is to create an enabling atmosphere for people to freely express their views and expend their energies without intimidation. A manager is also expected to conceptualise and outline broad and long-term organisational objectives. This skill underscores the innovative and creative abilities of a manager to recognise the dynamism in the organisational environment he/she operates. Lastly, design skills denote the ability to identify and solve the problem of group members. Thus, a manager is expected to set goals, plan and organise activities, motivate human resources to increase productivity levels, and control the overall procedures of the organisation (Toymasyan, 2017).

As a group activity, management functions are not only limited to managers and their supervisors—every actor has significant functions to perform in ensuring that established goals are achieved. In the context of this article, management is defined to encapsulate

planning, organising, commanding, and coordinating different sectors and resources to achieve predetermined objectives. The conceptualisation of management illustrates its participatory characteristic. For traditional authorities, it is crucial to recognize the inclusive and participatory processes that characterize development. Communal participation, which highly characterises the African society, is a valuable resource for traditional authorities in community management (Abdulai, 2006).

### **Theoretical Perspective of Management**

The study utilised Mintzberg's (1990) managerial theory to examine the functions of traditional authorities. Mintzberg (1990) labelled ten managerial roles under three clusters: decisional roles; informational roles and interpersonal roles. Decisional roles relate to using information, making selections and encapsulates the manager being a resource allocator, negotiator, disturbance handler and entrepreneur (Buabeng, 2020). As a negotiator, a manager represents the company in negotiations. The manager is a resource allocator, distributing assets and supervising allocation of financial and material resources. A manager, therefore, should have the capacity to ensure the resources of the organisation are best applied (Buabeng, 2020). The disturbance handler undertakes corrective measures whenever the organisation is in critical situations and helps mediate conflicts (Buabeng, 2020; Mintzberg, 1990). As an entrepreneur, the manager is a designer and an initiator who inspires change, and supervises groups to undertake designated activities.

Informational roles denote gathering, receiving and disseminating facts. The manager serves as a fulcrum around which information revolves (Mintzberg, 1990). The informational roles include spokesperson, a disseminator, and a monitor. As a spokesperson, the manager transmits facts about the company to stakeholders and updates them about the company's

operations (Buabeng, 2020). More so, the manager receives and collects information and transmits them to members of the organisation (Altamony et al., 2017; Kumar, 2015).

The interpersonal functions of the manager relate to the behaviour, interpersonal contacts with people, and the ceremonial responsibilities of the manager. The interpersonal roles link all managerial work and are derived from the authority of the manager's post (Mintzberg, 1990). As a liaison officer, the manager maintains a network of contacts and builds relationships with staff and motivates, and oversees the development of subordinates (Peaucelle & Guthrie, 2012). As a figurehead, the manager performs symbolic functions and is regarded as an image of the company (Schwarz, 2015). The ten managerial roles overlap and the manager must strategically balance them in order to effectively manage the organisation (Buabeng, 2020).

### **3. Methods**

#### ***Study design***

The study is a desk review, which involves collecting and analyzing data from existing sources originally gathered for other purposes (Johnston, 2014). The researchers thus reviewed existing documents distinct from the original work to address new research questions or methods (Heaton, 2008; Pollack, 1999). This method was used primarily because of its ability to produce new knowledge or test theories (Magee et al., 2006).

#### ***Search strategy and study selection***

Secondary data was gathered at the Balme Library of the University of Ghana as well as Google and Google Scholar between January 9, 2024, and November 20, 2024. The two online databases provided a wide range of secondary data from diverse intellectual disciplines. The following terms aided our search: “the role of

managers”, “the role of traditional authorities” and “the managerial functions of traditional authorities”. Sixty-three (63) books were identified through the search in the library. Google and Google Scholar searches yielded 98 and 92 respectively. The materials identified included books, pamphlets, journal articles, research reports and policy documents.

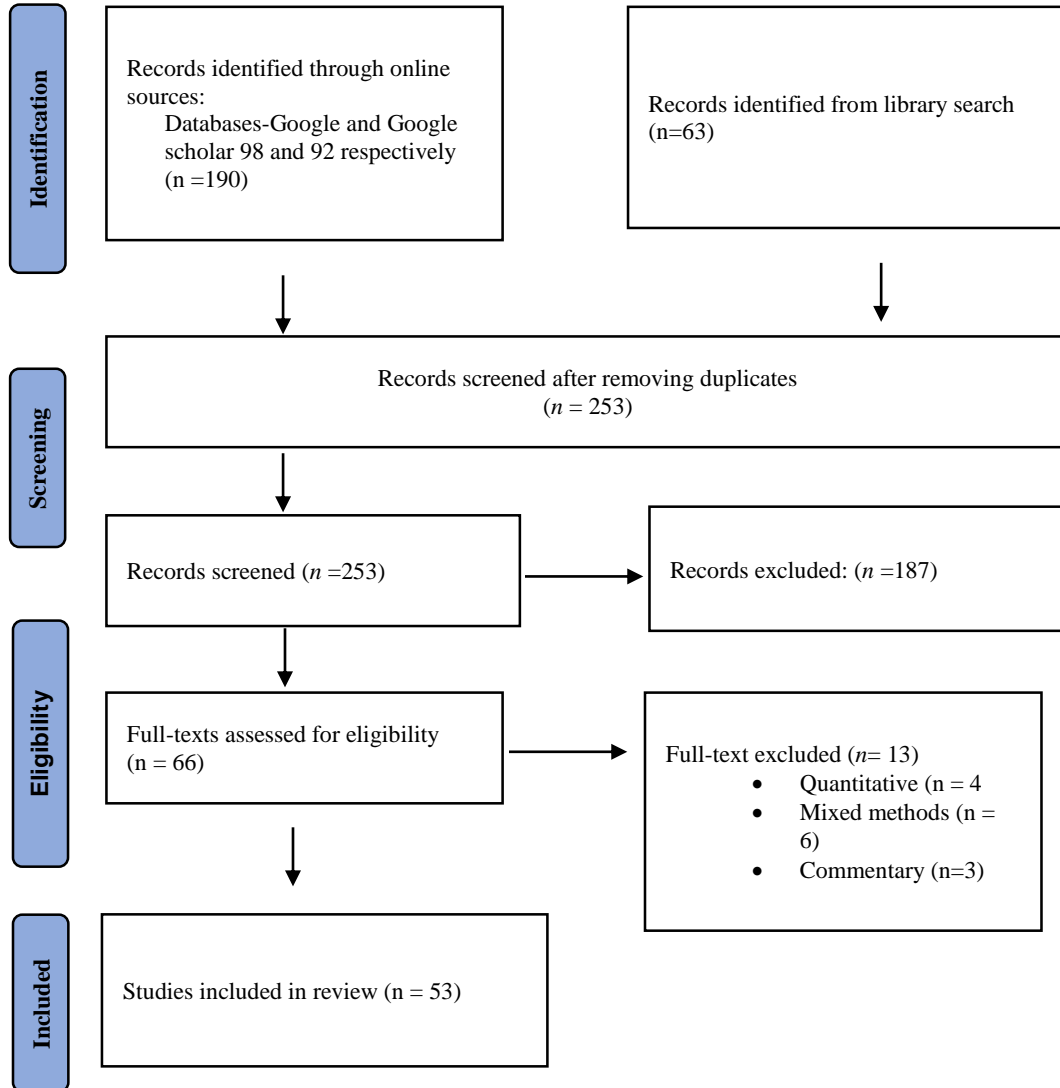
After critical scrutiny, policy documents and pamphlets were excluded from the data set. Materials were eligible for inclusion if they touched on the role of managers, the role of traditional authorities and the managerial functions of traditional authorities and were conducted between 2014 and 2024. We independently reviewed each abstract of articles and titles and prefaces of books and labeled them “include,” “each,” or “reviewed in full text”. Ultimately, 53 materials were included in the study. Out of the 200 materials excluded, 187 were excluded through the title and abstract review while 13 additional ones were excluded after the full text review. We agreed on all, but seven determinations which were resolved through discussion before finally being included in the study. Figure 1 presents the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) flow chart.

#### ***Data extraction and analysis***

Thematic analysis, which involved the identification, reporting and interpretation of patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Liebenberg et al., 2020; Xu & Zammit, 2020) was adopted in the study. Data extraction was conducted by synthesising themes on the topic under investigation and identifying keywords. Codes and themes were subsequently developed from the data set based on previous knowledge or theory (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Themes identified were thus in line with Mintzberg's (1990) categorisation of managerial functions. We further reviewed the data set to gain a better understanding of how concepts were defined

before proceeding to the conceptualization process (Morse, 2016). The process enhanced the rigor of the study and the depth of the research findings (Naeem et

al., 2023). The materials were obtained from ethical means and sources duly acknowledged.



**Fig. 1: PRISMA flow diagram**  
 Note: PRISMA = Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyse. From Page MJ, et al. BMJ 2021;372:n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71. For more information visit <https://www.prisma-statement.org/prisma-2020-flow-diagram>

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

##### *The Managerial Functions of Traditional Authorities*

As observed in Figure 2, the managerial functions identified in the data are categorised into three clusters: decisional, informational and interpersonal.

This section discusses these functions and the challenges traditional authorities faced in executing them effectively.

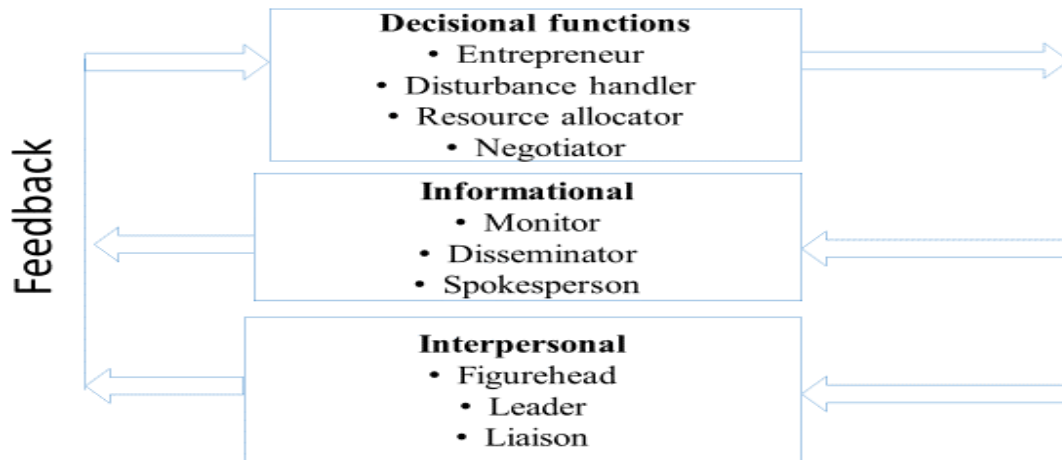


Fig. 2: The managerial functions of traditional authorities.

##### *Cluster 1: Decisional Roles*

The decisional roles comprise the process through which managers identify organisational challenges and take pragmatic steps to remedy them (Abdulai, 2006). In Mintzberg's (1990) conceptualisation, managerial functions include entrepreneurship, disturbance handler and resource allocator. In order to perform their entrepreneurial functions efficiently, managers are expected to possess four fundamental abilities: the ability to institute measures to ensure the judicious utilisation of resources, the ability to provide a sense of direction for the organisation, innovative abilities and the ability to take risks.

Historically, the entrepreneurial abilities of traditional authorities have manifested in diverse forms. Within the economic sphere, traditional authorities have provided a sense of direction and purpose for their subjects, acted innovatively and taken diverse forms of risks through project implementation as well as utilised

CPRs in the interests of the collectivity. Traditional authorities established marketing centers to facilitate trade and commerce and also for revenue generation to enhance socio-economic development. Currently, some educated traditional authorities have significantly invested in the physical and human resources of their subjects. For instance, the Juabenghene, Nana Otuo Siriboe, dynamic leadership style has led to the establishment of the Juabeng Rural Bank and the purchase of the Juaben Oil Mills when it was being divested by the Divestiture Implementation Committee (Boateng et al., 2016; Brempong, 2007). Other prominent rulers such as Osagyefuo Amoatia Ofori Panyin, Togbe Afede XIV, and Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, have implemented diverse developmental projects like block and brick industries, as well as, hydro power and airline companies in their traditional areas (Boateng & Afranie, 2020a; Bewiadzi, 2013; Boafo-Arthur, 2006).

Related to the entrepreneurial skills of a manager is the ability to forecast and implement plans. Planning

entails flexible long-term actions that make predictions about the organisation. Traditional authorities are tasked to strategically devise developmental plans and programs for their communities. They do so through consultative meetings with the council of elders, local government officials and other stakeholders. At the climax of festivals, traditional authorities communicate projected plans to members present and solicit funds for implementation (Boateng et al., 2024; Boateng & Afranie, 2020b; Boateng et al., 2016).

For the materialisation of the objectives of planned projects, traditional authorities deploy human and financial resources at their disposal. The process of directing encompasses issuing orders, assigning and instructing members of the community to undertake strategic projects towards attaining the intended project objectives. Such orders are carried out through officials of the foundations established by traditional authorities to perform specific developmental projects (Boateng et al., 2024). The functions of traditional authorities are similar to the planning and forecast roles of managers of formal organisations which include analysing the microenvironment and drawing up strategic plans (Hall & McShane, 2008; Pugh & Hickson, 2007) for execution.

#### ***Disturbance Handler***

Managers perform their disturbance handling roles by resolving organisational disputes. The fact that unresolved conflicts retard the achievements of organisational objectives make the performance of this role essential. In resolving conflicts, managers are expected to demonstrate a high level of understanding, have good human relations and conflicts management skills (Abdulai, 2006). Traditional authorities have historically settled disputes as their palaces serve as courts (Boateng & Afranie, 2020a; Nukunya, 2016; Marfo, 2014). Prior to colonialism, the court of the paramount chief had a military force to punish offences

like suicide, and murder which affected the collective consciousness of society. For cases that threatened societal existence, parties provided items required for purification of the ancestral spirits and paid some designated amounts before cases were heard. Disputants either paid faulty fee or thanksgiving gift depending on the judgement of the court. Revenue generated through dispute resolution was used for developmental purposes.

The Asantehene Otumfo Osei Tutu II, upon his installation, instructed inhabitants to withdraw all chieftaincy cases pending in modern courts and bring them to his palace for peaceful resolution. Additionally, the Asantehene Otumfuo Osei Tutu II and his two other colleagues, Nayiri Naa Bohagu Abdulai Mahami Sheriga, the overlord of Mamprugu and Tuntumba Boresa I, the Yagbonwura (Boateng & Afranie, 2020a) were instrumental in resolving the Dagbon chieftaincy crisis which had racked the traditional area and stifled community development. Also, Togbe Afede XIV was instrumental in resolving the Ho-Dome conflict (Akumatey, 2019). The above is indicative that a well-resourced traditional institution can assist the judicial service in adjudicating cases (Boafo-Arthur, 2006).

#### ***Resource Allocator***

Traditional authorities are deeply involved in resource allocation which deals with the manner in which an economy distributes its resources for production. Traditional authorities must ensure the sustainable utilisation of CPRs to safeguard the present and future generations (Boateng et al., 2024a; Boateng & Larbi, 2021). The worldview that CPRs belong to the ancestors deter people from mismanaging them. Traditional authorities also derived revenue on transactions relating to CPRs. Mechanisms interwoven with ancestral veneration were instituted to ensure the sustainability of communal property resources. In rural areas, totems, and the prohibition of work on certain

days of the week were to aid environmental conservation (Nukunya, 2016). Currently, traditional authorities collaborate with officials of the Environmental Protection Agency/Authority (EPA) and other stakeholders during environmental campaigns to aid the materialisation of the objectives of Ghana's forestry and wildlife policy as a way of improving environmental conditions (Boateng & Larbi, 2021).

### ***Cluster 2: Informational Roles***

The informational functions of managers revolve around their ability to serve as the hub for information development and circulation. Traditional authorities seek information from internal and external sources (Abdulai, 2006). In seeking information, traditional authorities effectively monitor what goes around in their localities and elsewhere and try to implement similar or enhanced projects in their communities. Taking a cue from the Otumfuo Osei Tutu II Foundation, paramount chiefs in Ghana have established scholarship schemes which have supported teachers and students with educational aids like computers, books, and classroom units among others (Boateng et al., 2024). The Juabenghene and Togbe Afede XIV have mobilised resources from external and internal sources to support teachers and students at different educational sectors (Bewiadzi, 2013; Boateng et al., 2024; Boateng et al., 2016).

### ***Disseminator Roles***

After seeking information from diverse sources, the manager's next duty is to transmit or disseminate it to their people. Traditional authorities disseminate the objectives of governmental policies to their people and also assist in their implementation (Mahama, 2009) thereby serving as channels of communication between the grassroots and external bodies. Traditional authorities play advocacy roles in national development by promoting education, advancing health initiatives, managing population issues, and

offering leadership at the nation level. State institutions like the Ghana AIDS Commission have used traditional authorities for mass education on the dangers of HIV/AIDS and other STIs. Traditional authorities in New Juaben, have benefitted immensely from capacity development programs organised by the Commission in collaboration with the Eastern Regional House of Chiefs (Boateng & Bawole, 2021; Boateng & Afranie, 2020b).

One other informational function of managers is being a spokesperson for the organisation. It is incumbent on the manager, to effectively transmit information about the organisation to the outside world. This function, when effectively performed, enables managers to fill information gaps that may arise within the communication channel (Abdulai, 2006). As the official mouthpiece of the community, traditional authorities communicate the concerns of their subjects to development partners. During festivals for instance, they project the achievements and challenges they have encountered during the past years (Boateng & Bawaole, 2021; Boateng & Afranie, 2020b).

Realising their instrumental function as spokespersons for their communities, politicians have sought to lobby traditional authorities to enhance their political fortunes during elections. During the colonial era, traditional authorities served as intermediaries between their people and colonial officials. Traditional authorities constituted the Native Authorities established to aid in the materialisation of the colonial mandate. The disseminator and spokesperson functions of traditional authorities antagonised the relationship between them and their people. As such, the African political elites considered traditional authorities as collaborators of the imperial regime and reduced their powers after independence (Boateng & Afranie, 2020a; Brempong, 2007).

**Cluster 3: Interpersonal Roles**

As heads of organisations, managers perform ceremonial and symbolic functions like signing documents, and receiving visitors to the organisation. Traditional authorities coordinate and motivate members of the community to work together towards achieving collective objectives. As political heads, traditional authorities perform some ceremonial roles during festivals, state functions and durbars. For instance, paramount chiefs on behalf of the people, received invited guests such as government officials and members of the Diplomatic Corps and other developmental partners. With the co-existence of modern and traditional political systems, traditional authorities and government officials collaborate to perform some ceremonial functions during national occasions like Independence Day, and National Farmers Day ceremonies among others.

Although traditional authorities are not part of the District Assemblies, local government authorities invite some prominent traditional authorities to chair the inaugural session of the General Assemblies. The performance of the ceremonial functions of traditional authorities during state functions is dependent on their relationship with the incumbent government. Traditional authorities aligned with the incumbent government, are usually invited to perform state programs. Though the 1992 Constitution debar traditional authorities from partisan politics, some have since the inception of independence, aligned themselves with incumbent governments (Boafo-Arthur 2006) in their quest to solicit for social amenities. Flirting with the central government by traditional authorities or the dabbling in party politics to a large extent, contributes to their loss of legitimacy and robs traditional authorities of the neutrality they are expected to exhibit (Akrong, 2006).

Managers are expected to develop good interpersonal relationship with their subordinates, communicating, motivating and coaching them to maximise their potentials. Similarly, the leadership functions of traditional authorities manifest in forms such as establishing rapport with their sub-chiefs, people and others who pay courtesy calls at their palaces. As agents of development, traditional authorities are expected to properly communicate projects they intend to undertake to their people and mobilise resources for community development (Boateng et al., 2016). Through the manager's liaison function, they are able to maintain a network of contacts outside the organisation (Serrat, 2018). These contacts provide vital information for the survival of the organisation. Traditional authorities in the performance of their duties, maintain social networks outside their traditional areas (Abdulai, 2006).

**Managerial Challenges of Traditional Authorities**

Traditional authorities face several challenges in the performance of their managerial functions. Inadequate financial resources beset the materialisation of planned projects. Previously, traditional authorities mobilised revenue through state enterprise in agriculture, trading, taxes, levies and tributes, gifts and loans to the state, court fees, among others (Brempong, 2007). The funds generated were used for diverse purposes such as the purchase of regalia, loans and gifts for visitors, among others. Currently, the alternative sources of funding that traditional authorities have resorted to include fund raising during festivals and lobbying from developmental agencies and philanthropists. Fund raising durbars are organised during Easter and Christmas holidays when their people in the diaspora return for holidays. In Asante Juaben, fund raising durbars were organised and money generated were used as seed capital for the commencement of the Juaben Rural Bank (Boateng et al., 2016). Traditional authorities also extend invitation to youth associations

and organisations in urban centres to fund community-initiated projects.

Unlike their predecessors, traditional authorities in Ghana are now decapitated economically as a result of their inability to collect taxes (Brempong, 2007; Bofo-Arthur, 2006). Currently, the revenue mobilisation functions of traditional authorities have been transferred to the central government and its agencies like local government structures. Though social change has reduced the revenue mobilisation functions of traditional authorities, some at the paramountcy level with natural resources derive annual tributes from organisations that extract them. Also, traditional authorities with strong social networks, can mobilise resources to undertake projects. Some subordinate traditional authorities, heckled by lack of financial resources, are unable to implement planned activities in their communities. Also, partisan politics affected the monitoring, controlling and directing functions of traditional authorities. Some local government officials conducted monitoring activities without the involvement of traditional authorities (Boateng & Bawole, 2021; Boateng & Afranie, 2020b). The non-involvement of traditional authorities in planning and monitoring by local government officials antagonised their relationships and affected the level of collaboration between them (Boateng & Bawole, 2021).

Though traditional authorities are disturbance handlers, chieftaincy disputes characterise the selection of qualified persons to vacant stools and for that matter the recruitment and placement role of traditional authorities. The selection process is bedeviled with accusations of bribery and corruption (Boateng et al., 2024a; Boateng & Bawole, 2021; Boateng & Afranie, 2020a). The conflict is primarily due to uncodified lines of succession. The central

government has diverted huge financial resources which could have been used for other developmental projects into managing chieftaincy-related conflicts in Ghana. The rivalry among members of the royal family made it impossible for traditional authorities and their people to undertake developmental projects. Chieftaincy conflict also affected the pace of project being undertaken in the community by the government through the Assembly. Thus, in Ghana, chieftaincy conflicts have destroyed social relations and retrogressed the pace of development (Yahaya, 2016; Bofo-Arthur, 2006).

Additionally, the erosion of the judicial powers of traditional authorities hindered their disturbance handling functions. Traditional authorities surrendered some of their judicial sovereignty to the British during the colonial era. The genesis of this manipulation commenced with the signing of the bond of 1844. Traditional authorities who signed the agreement sought protection from the British against the Asantes and agreed to comply with British jurisprudence (Acquah, 2006). The removal of traditional authorities from courts denied them a formal role in the conciliation and the maintenance of the ethical basis of customary law. The number of judicial cases presided over by traditional authorities diminished, resulting in the reduction of revenue judicially generated. Traditional authorities are unproductive in either passing legislation on resource management in their communities as well as enforcing existing conventions since concessionary rights and contracts about resource extraction are now the prerogative of the central government (Boateng et al., 2024a; Boateng & Larbi, 2021).

The ascension of educated professionals to the various stools and skins has gone a long way to assist traditional authorities perform their liaison functions effectively (Abdulai, 2006). However, elitism within

traditional political system has led to the emergence of absentee rulers who combine their professional careers with the performance of their traditional functions as community leaders (Boateng & Bawole, 2021). As a result of fulfilling their professional obligations, these individuals have to live far, depriving their citizens of their constant presence to oversee the affairs of the community and to listen to their challenges.

Paramount chiefs endowed with substantial resources are those able to travel outside the country to represent their communities and also lobby for initiatives aimed at increasing the living standards of their people. The long distances between communities in the rural areas and the district capitals, coupled with bad roads and telecommunication network problems also hindered traditional authorities' ability to liaise with representatives of the central government and other organisations. Some traditional authorities are not able to honor invitations when such meetings are held outside their territories.

The custodianship functions of traditional authorities as far as resources are concerned has waned (Boateng et al., 2024a; Abotchie et al., 2006). The nation's quest to curtail illegal mining and its environmental ramifications has not yielded the desired results due to the complacency of some traditional authorities who are supposed to be the custodians of CPRs (Boateng et al., 2024a; Boateng & Afranie, 2020a). Traditional authorities cannot be absorbed from the blame since they benefit directly from the activities of the illegal miners who operate within their jurisdiction (Boateng et al., 2024a; Bediako, 2023; Donkor, 2022). Some traditional authorities have now been busily protecting their personal property than those that belong to the community.

Other challenges such as lack of accountability and transparency for utilisation and management of CPRs,

confront traditional authorities in the performance of their resource allocation function (Abosti & Galizzi, 2011; Gough & Yankson, 2000). It is a truism that in Ghana, some traditional authorities and members of the royal families sell lands to multiple buyers. The result is the increase in land litigations in peri-urban areas where lands have become an expensive commodity (Boateng & Afranie, 2020b). Thus, the phenomenon of multiple sale of land, and its related criminal undercurrents, pose a major security threat to Ghana's quest towards national security consolidation (Boateng et al., 2024a; Boateng & Afranie, 2020a; Darkwa & Attuquayefio, 2012). These challenges have undermined the credibility of traditional authorities as managers of CPRs. Despite the challenges that militate against the managerial functions of traditional authorities, their significance in managing the affairs of rural communities where the presence of the central government is absent cannot be ignored.

## **5. Conclusion and Implications**

This study examined the managerial functions of traditional authorities in Ghana and the challenges they face in performing these roles. Although traditional authorities and managers of formal organisations operate within different mandates, the managerial principles and practices of traditional authorities can be compared to those found in modern organisations. As managers, traditional authorities perform decisional, informational, and interpersonal functions.

However, colonialism and other waves of social change have gradually eroded the powers and functions of traditional authorities. Some of the key challenges they encounter include the lack of accountability over communal property resources (CPRs), chieftaincy disputes, allegations of bribery and corruption in the selection process, reduction in their judicial functions, the influence of partisan politics, and absentee leadership, among others.

To strengthen the managerial role of traditional authorities, this study recommends the completion of the codification of lines of succession by the National House of Chiefs to help minimise chieftaincy disputes. Additionally, the establishment of accountability structures by the National House of Chiefs and the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs is crucial to ensure transparent management of communal property resources and community affairs. It is also recommended that the House of Chiefs advocates for legislation that would enable traditional authorities to participate directly in local governance structures, thereby allowing them to contribute their expertise to grassroots resource management. Furthermore, considering that this study largely draws examples from centralised political systems, future research should focus on exploring the managerial roles of traditional authorities within non-centralised societies to provide a more comprehensive understanding of their functions across different traditional governance systems.

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