

**SOCIAL CONTROL IN A PERI-URBAN GHANAIAAN COMMUNITY, SEGE IN THE  
GREATER ACCRA REGION OF GHANA.**

**BY**

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN  
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MPhil  
SOCIOLOGY DEGREE.**



**JULY 2019**

**DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this work is the outcome of my own research, conducted in the Department of Sociology, University of Ghana, under the supervision of Prof. Kodjo Senah and Dr. Sylvia Esther Gyan and that all sources that I have utilized in this work have been completely recognized by way of complete references. I also declare that as far as I know, this work has not been submitted to any other academic institution for a certificate or a degree.

Further, I declare that I am responsible for any limitations or misunderstandings of parts that may be found in this work.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my parents and siblings, Mr. John Narh Sottie, Mrs. Grace Sottie, Mr. Elisha O. Sottie, Mrs. Hannah Odehey, Mrs. Alberta Laryea , Abraham Sottie and Richmond Sottie who have been there for me and have been my strength and source of joy, most especially Mr. Elisha O. Sottie throughout my academic journey.

I also dedicate this thesis to Mr. Kwaku Ansa-Asare, Mrs. Irene Korley-Ayerteye, and all staff at Mountcrest University College for the advice and support. Further, I dedicate this thesis to other family members especially, Mr. Richard Kumadoe and friends for their encouragement and understanding throughout these years.

God bless and replenish you all for the economic, moral, spiritual, and passionate supports given me through my years of education.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would honestly like to thank God Almighty for his grace, favor, love, and faithfulness upon my life and for making my dream a reality. Many people have contributed to the completion of this thesis, but I cannot mention all of them. therefore, wish to recognize a few people who have assisted in making this thesis possible. To start with, I would like to acknowledge and appreciate my supervisors Prof. Kodjo Senah and Dr. Sylvia Esther Gyan for their tolerance, insight, direction, inspiration, and support throughout the supervision period. I could not have finished this thesis without their skills and directions.

I would also like to appreciate Prof. Akosua Darkwah, the current Head of Department, Sociology for her advice, encouragement, and support during my years of pursuing masters in the department. Also, I thank all the staff of the Department of Sociology for their contributions in one way or the other. I am much thankful to the Tshepo Graduate Institute for the opportunity given me to spend a semester at Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada. I would also want to show gratitude to Prof. Robert Ame, Dr. Carrie Sanders, and all the staff and students at the Wilfrid Laurier University for their kindness, love, and support during my stay in Canada. I would also like to thank Mike of Laurier International for making my stay in Canada, a memorable one.

Again, I would like to show indebtedness to the traditional authorities and people of Sege for accepting me into their community, responded to my questions and given me the necessary information needed for the effective accomplishment of my thesis. I am very grateful for your support and participation during the study, may God richly bless you all.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the Ghana Police Service, especially the Tema Regional Commander, Sege District Commander and the entire Police Service of Greater Accra Region for their understanding and support.

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FIGURE 1.1: A map showing the location of Sege on the Ghana map

FIGURE 1.2: A map indicating the location of Sege on the Ada West District map

## ABSTRACT

Social control had been part of all human societies. Traditional Ghanaian societies had means of ensuring social control and order prior to colonialism. Two systems of social control-formal or Western and informal or traditional exist in Ghana. It was observed that the introduction of formal social control challenged and weakened informal social control. However, in the midst of a distinct bulk of works, a few studies were done on the informal social control systems in Ghana. Specifically, there is a dearth of research that examines how the informal social control system contributes to the maintenance of law and order or ensuring social order.

This study, therefore, finds out how the informal social control system contributes to ensuring law and order. The study employs a qualitative phenomenological approach to gather data using focus group discussion and individual in-depth interview from twenty-eight (28) discussants and seven (7) key informants at Sege. In the course of the discussions and interviews, participants shared their views on the role of the informal social control system in ensuring social order in the community. The findings of the study indicated that three forms (sanctions, prohibitions and cautioning) of informal social control measures were available in the community. Some of these informal social control measures were more efficient and regularly used for the maintenance of law and order. However, most of these measures were no longer in existence in the community as a result of some factors of change. The study found that formal and informal social control measures were utilized by the community to ensure social order.

The study also found that agents of social control system included both traditional and non-traditional leaders. This comprises traditional leaders, political leaders, religious leaders, family heads and the police. The agents of social control were the mediators of dispute resolution in the community. The choice of a mediator depended on the disputants and the issue at hand. It was

also found that disputes were resolved by disputants themselves or with the support of a third party. The study likewise revealed that the mechanisms of dispute resolution comprise negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. The findings of the study once more indicated that community members were unhappy with how law and order were maintained and proposed varied ways to improve social order. The study concludes that the informal social control system has contributed to ensuring law and order in Sege. Hence, it is recommended that the formal and informal systems of social control should collaborate to ensure social order in Sege and that the government should also include in the constitution informal social control measures that do not undermine the fundamental human rights of people.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Human Societies and Law and Order

#### 1.1 Introduction

All human societies teach members immediately from birth to adopt the norms and values of society. Through the socialization process, members of the society are taught to differentiate between what is good and bad. This notwithstanding, the violation of norms and values exist in all human societies. However, what constitutes deviance and crime vary from society to society depending on the socio-cultural and economic differences as well as the time and the circumstances (Abotchie, 2017; Ghani, 2017). Globally, deviance and crime do not only affect the victims but also the whole society. In Canada, Australia, Greenland, and the United States, it is believed that the perpetrator has hurt the whole community hence, steps must be taken to reintegrate the perpetrator into society and that justice should be held locally among people who know and better understand themselves (Appiahene-Gyamfi, 1995). Traditional African societies and for that matter, traditional Ghanaian societies believe that deviance and crime do not just affect the victim(s) and the community but also the gods and the ancestors as well which require an atonement (Ame, 2018; Appiahene-Gyamfi, 1995). Durkheim states that traditional societies are characterized by mechanical solidarity which shows a high level of collective conscience. A violation of the norm is seen as an offence against the entire community.

Abotchie (1997) and Nukunya (2016) argue that chaos will occur in society when people are allowed to practice deviant behaviour with freedom. To avoid chaos, human societies have developed mechanisms and actions to deal with deviants and to ensure law and order.

For instance, in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible, God gave the Ten Commandments to the Israelites through the Mosaic Laws to regulate and control their behaviour for the maintenance of law and order (Sailhamer, 1991). Emile Durkheim argues that the nature of regulation determines one's ability to deviate from norms of society or to conform to the accepted ways of behaviour. That is when people are less regulated, there is a higher possibility of them deviating from expected and accepted ways of behaviour in society. Hirschi (1969) contends that when a person's social connections or social bonds (commitment, attachment, involvement, and belief) to the society are strong, he or she is more likely to follow and obey societal norms. However, when the person's social connections with others or society are weak, such a person is more likely to deviate from the accepted rules of behaviour in society. In relation to this, societies ensure that people internalize norms and follow accepted ways of life through various means to maintain law and order.

Informal social control from the Western views occurs at family and neighbourhood levels which comprises private, parochial, and public (Groff, 2015). In addition, observations, expressions of disapproval, and direct sanctions are the forms of informal social control and these forms include angry look or a negative comment, harassment, and denied contact with relations, among others (Brauer & Chekroun, 2005; Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2011).

Chen (2002) pointed out that in China, social control is maintained through the effort of society's members who understand themselves and work together to achieve common goals through common rules of behaviour. Traditional Ghanaian societies had in their tradition, an elaborate administrative structure in which societal life was attached, and upon which values of life were propagated and ways of maintaining social order before the country was colonized

(Abotchie, 1997; Ame, 2018; Appiahene-Gyamfi, 1995; Nukunya, 2016). It is important to note that pre-colonial Ghana was guided by its own traditional religions. The traditional religious norms and values during the pre-colonial era created strong bonds of moral solidarity among members of society. The violation of these moral bonds attracted punishment or sanction. However, the intensity and severity of punishments inflicted on violators at that time were influenced by the kind of crime committed. For example, among the Akan, a person who commits adultery with say the spouse of a king is punished through *atopre* dance (Nukunya, 2016). The *atopre* dance as explained by Nukunya (2016) comprises the parading of the offender in public and his organs are cut until the person died.

Other informal social control measures such as taboos, songs, trial by ordeal, oath-taking, reintegration, gossip, and others were utilized in traditional Ghanaian societies to control deviance and to maintain social order. In the pre-colonial era, social control was in the hands of traditional authorities and community members. However, colonialism introduced a new system of social control which lay in the hands of modern criminal justice institutions such as the police, the court, the prison, the army and others (Ame, 2018; Onyima, 2015; Owumi & Ajayi, 2013). These institutions oversaw social control during the colonial era. However, the post-colonial era has seen the fusion of both Western or formal and traditional or informal social control systems (Tade & Olaitan, 2015).

Social control as defined by Nukunya (2016) “is the system of maintaining law and order in society and ensuring that members of society conform to the accepted ways of behaviour”. Social control is necessary because it leads to the development of a group, a society as well as a country. It aids in the maintenance of law and order, provides sanctions for norm violators,

brings about social unity and equality and regulates the behaviour of members of society. There are two systems of social control – formal or Western and informal or traditional. This study, however, concentrates on the informal social control system.

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

Traditional or informal social control measures are more effective and efficient in controlling deviance and for ensuring social order because these measures are derived from the norms, values, culture and tradition of the people which they have internalized through socialization (Abotchie, 1997; Ayuk, Owan, & Uyang, 2013; Okafo, 2007; Prinsloo, 1998). As Prinsloo (1998) noted, the traditional system of mediation and conflict resolution have the possibility to further peace and prevent the commission of criminal offences and hurtful behaviour. The deities or the gods are very effective in detecting deviance and punishing criminals immediately because of their presence everywhere and their ability to see what happens anywhere. The fear of the gods and the belief that one cannot escape their punishment compel people to conform to the norms of their societies (Abotchie, 1997).

The informal or traditional social control system is challenged and weakened by the formal or Western social control system (Abotchie, 1997; Ame, 2018; Appiahene-Gyamfi, 1995; Onyima, 2015; Owumi & Ajayi, 2013). Formal education, colonialism, modernization, Christianity, Islam, social change and others have challenged the authorities of traditional leaders and the family or the lineage as agents of informal social control. This is because the family or lineage and the traditional leaders do not have full control over members anymore due to migration. Furthermore, the introduction of Christianity and Islam weakened the belief in the gods, the

ancestors and their powers. Though the formal social control system challenges the informal social control system, it has not eliminated it totally.

Although the formal or Western system of social control challenges and weakens the informal or traditional system of social control, it is inefficient, ineffective, expensive, time-consuming and unable to prevent and control crime as the system is foreign to the people of African (Chereji & Wratto, 2013; Okafo, 2007; Owumi & Ajayi, 2013). The police service takes a long time to carry out criminal investigation and they also accept bribe to let criminals go (Abotchie, 1997). Some people therefore, prefer informal social control system to formal social control system. Hills (2014) extended this assertion, by saying that the ineffectiveness of the formal social control system has led to the active role of the informal social control system. The ineffectiveness of the formal social control system has resulted in Africans returning to the informal social control system for the maintenance of social order in their communities (Sunday & Adeokin, 2018).

The formal or Western system of social control not being able to control deviance and maintain law and order has resulted in the suggestion that both systems of social control should be allowed to complement each other (Abotchie, 1997; Ayuk et al., 2013; Onyeozili & Ebbe, 2012; Onyima, 2015). Sunday and Adeokin (2018), based on the findings of their study on charms as social control mechanisms in Nigeria, propose that those mechanisms must be documented into formal social control mechanisms to combat crime in Nigeria.

However, most criminological studies undertaken in Ghana focused on other areas rather than the traditional or informal social control systems with the exception of Abotchie (1997), who studied the social control system of traditional societies in southern Eweland. There is therefore,



dearth of literature or work on the traditional or informal social control systems in Ghana. The purpose of this study is to investigate the views of people on the role of the informal social control system for ensuring law and order in Sege in the Greater Accra Region.

### **1.3. Research Objectives**

Main objective

The main objective of this study is to find out how the informal social control system contributes to ensuring law and order in Sege.

Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Find out the various informal social control measures for ensuring law and order in Sege.
2. Identify the agents of the informal social control system and how often they are consulted to ensure law and order.
3. Investigate the perceptions of community members regarding how law and order are maintained in the community.
4. Examine how informal social control measures are employed in settling disputes.

It is very true that dispute resolution can be a topic for another study. However, the study was interested in how dispute resolution in the community contributes to ensuring social order.

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

This study has several contributions to make to the field of Criminology or Sociology of Deviance and is vital in adding to already existing literature on social control, dispute resolution and law and order. There is a dearth of literature on informal social control systems in Ghana.

Hence, this study adds to the existing literature and serves as a source of secondary data for other researchers in the field of criminology, sociology, and other academic disciplines.

The study has been able to throw light on the on-going debate on the perceived effectiveness of informal social control systems and the need to incorporate the formal and informal social control systems for effective law and order maintenance.

Also, there were not yet identified informal social control measures, agents and means of resolving disputes in Sege through research. Hence, the findings of this study provide information on the informal social control measures adopted by the people of Sege and how these measures contribute to the maintenance of law and order. The findings from the study are also valuable for policymakers to consider when formulating and implementing policies concerning ensuring law and order in Sege.

### **1.5. Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is to find out how the informal social control system contributes to ensuring law and order as well as to discover the various measures of informal social control in Sege. Furthermore, the study assesses how disputes or conflicts are resolved at the community level using informal social control measures.

Although there are various assertions by scholars that the informal social control is more effective in controlling and preventing deviance and crime, specifically, this study seeks to investigate the views and opinions of people in the community regarding the role of the informal social control system for ensuring social order and control in their community. The geographical context for the study is Ghana and the location of the study is Sege, the district's capital of Ada

West in the Greater Accra Region being a peri-urban community which has both rural and urban features.

## **1.6. Definition of Key Concepts**

### **1.6.1. Deviance**

According to Abotchie (2017), there is no single, generally accepted definition of deviance. This is so because different disciplines have varied perceptions of what constitutes deviance. He outlines four different definitions of deviance namely, legal, sociological, pathological and statistical perspectives. According to the legal view, “deviance is any acts or omissions which violate the provisions of the criminal legislation”. Abotchie (2017) further explains that the criminal legislation consists of all the laws of the state which forbid specific acts or demand the performances of some specific tasks and sanction non-compliance. The sociological definition of deviance according to Durkheim, as pointed out by Abotchie (2017) is “an act which offends the strong and definite dispositions of the collective consciousness, and which as a consequence, evokes a punishment”. The pathological view of deviance is that abnormal or deviant acts are the manifestation of some illness or disease. Finally, the statistical definition views deviance as anything that varies too widely from the average or the norm.

According to Schaefer (2000), deviance is a behaviour that violates the standards of conduct or expectations of a group or society.

The study employed the sociological definition of deviance which views deviance as behaviour or action or omission which violates the norms and values of society and deviates from the accepted ways of life.

### **1.6.2. Crime**

Crime is the violation of criminal law for which some administrative authority applies official penalties. Crime also represents a deviation from formal social norms administered by the state (Schaefer, 2000). Haskell and Yablonsky as cited in Abotchie (2017) suggested that crime is an intentional act committed or omitted in violation of a law forbidding or commanding it, and to which is annexed either of the following punishments, the death penalty, imprisonment, imposition of fines, removal from office or disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust or profit in society.

Crime, as per this study is any behaviour, action or omission which violates the codified rules of the state and attracts formal or legal sanctions.

### **1.6.3. Dispute and Conflict**

Conflict is when “two or more parties [are] engaged in heightened competition, over resources, power, or prestige that is perceived to be scarce, and or over goals and values which are perceived to be incompatible during which process they may intend to neutralize, gain advantage over, injure, or destroy one another, is much closer to the truth and, therefore, more acceptable” (Prinsloo, 1998: 73).

Traditional definitions of conflict regard it as “a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals” (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014: 139).

Dispute according to this study is a misunderstanding or disagreement which occurs between two or more individuals over a specific matter.

#### **1.6.4. Social Control**

Social control can be defined as “organized ways in which society responds to behaviour and people it regards as deviant, problematic, threatening and worrying and undesirable in some ways” (Cohen, 1985). According to Owumi and Ajayi (2013), social control is a set of mechanisms that create normative compliance in individuals. Social control can also be defined as “the techniques and strategies for preventing deviant human behaviour in any society”. Social control are sanctions employ to foster norm conformity and norms obedience – and oppose the violation of social norms transmitted through informal and formal social control (Schaefer, 2000). The study adopts the definition of social control by Nukunya (2016) which refers to “the system of maintaining law and order in society and ensuring that members of society conform to the accepted ways of behaviour”.

The informal social control system in this study refers to the system of maintaining law and order and ensuring conformity to norms and values of a society without the involvement of the state or state institutions.

#### **1.6.5. Peri-Urban Community**

Peri-urban community as used in the study refers to a community with features of both rural and urban societies. According to Cobbinah & Amoako (2014) and Tacoli (2003), as cited in (Dapilah, Nielsen, & Akongbangre, 2019) peri-urban areas are places where urban and rural characteristics and processes meet, relate, intertwine, and are located between the city and the

countryside at the peripheries of an urban area. Sege qualifies as a peri-urban community because it has similar characteristics and is in transition form from predominantly rural to urban society.

### **1.7. Organization of Chapters**

This study is divided into six chapters. The first chapter introduces the study and set the stage for the investigation of people's views on the role of the informal social control system in ensuring law and order. This chapter also involves the problem statement, objectives and significance of the study and scope of the study as well.

The second chapter reviews the existing literature on the informal social system which includes agents and measures of informal social control, dispute resolution, adopted mechanisms and processes of dispute or conflict settlement. The chapter also involves the theory underpinning the study.

The third chapter describes the study area. This chapter provides a detailed description of the Sege community. It provides information on where Sege is located geographically, the social structure of the place to provide readers with a clear picture of the area.

The fourth chapter provides information on how data were collected. It indicates why the qualitative approach was employed for the study. How data was collected and validated, the field experiences of the researcher and ethical considerations that were established are discussed.

The fifth chapter gives an analysis of data gained from key informant interviews and focus group discussions with traditional, non-traditional authorities and community members respectively at Sege.

The sixth chapter offers a summary of the findings of the study and some implication of the study for policy formulation. The chapter also presents recommendations for further studies.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

The previous chapter focused on how societies instill in members norms and values of society. The chapter also indicated how societies maintain law and order. The chapter as well included the problem statement, objectives of the study, significance of the study, the scope of the study, definition of key concepts and outline of chapters.

This chapter reviews literature on the informal social control system. The review of the literature covers the various agents of informal social control, the various measures or mechanisms of informal social control and the chapter also focuses on how disputes are resolved, dispute settlement processes and the spiritual dimensions of dispute resolution in traditional societies. The theory that underpins the study is critically discussed.

#### **2.2. Agents of the Informal Social Control System**

##### **2.2.1. Family and Lineage**

The extended family system and kinship are effective for reducing deviance and crime in society and are also efficient in maintaining peace and order in society (Ayuk et al., 2013; Onyeozili & Ebbe, 2012; Onyima, 2015). The family and the lineage right from birth educate their members through socialization on the norms and values of the family or the lineage and the society. Prinsloo (1998) argues that the head of the family in traditional South African society collaborates with adult members of the family to resolve conflict or dispute. Similarly, family



land disputes among members of the family in Gorowa, Tanzania are resolved by heads of clan and elders (Emanuel & Ndimbwa, 2013). In China, the family is the most effective agent of informal social control where parents lead exemplary life for children to follow (Jiang & Lambert, 2009). Among the southern Ewe of Ghana, the family or the lineage head is the principal priest who performs spiritual roles to keep the family in a good connection with the gods and ancestors and punishes deviants through shame, fines, banishment, capital punishment and hocking (Abotchie, 1997; Ameh, 2001).

Based on the principles of collective responsibility and reciprocity, the family or the lineage puts emphasis on strict conformity to norms of the group and the society as well (Ameh, 2001). These principles, therefore, ensure that family or lineage members do not deviate from the group's norms but conform to them. Ame (2018) pointed out that among the Fante of Ghana in the olden days, when any member of the family contracted a debt or committed any wrong and he or she was expected to pay for the damages but could not pay, other members were bound to pay. He went further to state that in the case of children, the father was not just liable for the child's action but also responsible for any damages resulted from a son's misconduct with any woman when the father failed to provide the son with a wife when he has gotten to puberty. Similarly, Abotchie (1997) asserts that family or lineage members pay for the misconducts of other members of their group. He indicated that in pre-colonial traditional Ewe society, in the case of murder, it is mandatory that the murderer compensates for his or her crime with seven persons and a fixed sum of cowries. The fee was so high that members of the lineage were compared to redress by wagering several persons from the offender's lineage (Abotchie, 1997).

### 2.2.2. Chiefs

It is generally agreed upon that traditional authorities such as chiefs serve as agents of the informal social control system in traditional settings (Ame, 2018; Chereji & Wratto, 2013; Nukunya, 2016). Chiefs are representatives of the gods and ancestors hence, their authorities are regarded as such and viewed as those of the gods as well as the ancestors. Nukunya (2016) observed that people were of the view that their disobedience to the authorities of the chiefs and elders will be sanctioned by the supernatural powers of the gods and the ancestors. Disrespecting and disobeying the authorities of chiefs are considered crime or abomination which attracts severe punishment of the offender by other community members. In Ajalli community, Nigeria as Okereafoezeke (2003) noted a disputant who is dissatisfied with the judgment of the family head can take the issue to the chief's court but anyone who disagrees with the chief's (community) judgment and takes the issue to the official court is viewed as standing against the traditional system and such a person is ostracized by community members.

Tade and Olaitan (2015) in their study of *traditional structures of crime control in Lagos, Nigeria* indicate that the chief or the king adjudicates over cases involving murder, fornication, land disputes and adultery. Likewise, in the traditional southern Ewe society of Ghana, serious cases like murder, stealing and adultery are dealt with by the chief and his council of elders in the chief's court. Chiefs also have the power to sentence offenders of serious offences to death. Willful murder or homicide through witchcraft is punishable by death or banishment (Abotchie, 1997). Nukunya (2016) supported this and argued that murder is severely sanctioned by death through *atopre* dance among the Akan and *nyikor* among the Anlo-Ewe of Ghana. An offender in the case of murder is fined to pay with several cows and then banish from the community

among the Mende-speaking people of Liberia (Chereji & Wratto, 2013). However, in the case of murder resulting from an accident, the offender is asked to plead for forgiveness and the family of the victim is asked to accept and forgive. Some concoctions are made and the offender is made to promise never to engage in such an act and the victim's family also promises not to take revenge (Chereji & Wratto, 2013). Offences like rape, insult, assault are punishable by fines and purification ritual. Minor offences are mostly presented before the chief's court when the parties involved in the case are not satisfied with the judgment of their family or lineage heads (Abotchie, 1997).

### **2.2.3. Council of Elders**

In addition to chiefs, the Council of Elders is also an agent of informal social control in traditional societies. Council of elders at times collaborates with chiefs to settle social deviations in the society to ensure law and order. However, in some African societies, the Council of Elders makes laws and enforces them, punishes violators of norms and transfers societal knowledge into the young generation. As Mbuba and Mugambi (2011) noted in Kenya, many societies fight wrongdoing through the powers of the Council of Elders who has the mandate to fine people, to request community service, and to punish violators of norms and traditional laws. Daniel (2009) added that elders in African communities play a vital role in teaching, guiding, and counseling community members on the moral values of the community. They ensure that members of the community conform to society's norms and values. When a conflict occurs in the society, the elders mediate and encourage a peaceful resolution of dispute or conflict and also make sure that there is a restoration of relationships in order to maintain law and order. The Council of Elders in Kembata of Ethiopia is respected and their decisions on issues are hardly rejected. The elders are

chosen by clan members in an election. The elders are responsible for all matters concerning the community. However, Mengesha, Yesuf, and Gebre (2015) observed that clan members have the right to remove an elder or the council of elders from their position should they lose trust in them. The council of elders does not mediate disputes but only help to calm the situation.

#### **2.2.4. Youth Associations**

Studies have shown that vigilante groups (youth associations) are agents of informal social control system who reduce crime and ensure conformity to norms and values of society (Owumi & Ajayi, 2013). The vigilantes are a collection of people organized to enforce norms, values, and native laws and maintain social control and order (Sohn, 2016). Vigilantes are youth associations, who are believed to possess the magical power of detection and protection to protect the innocent and to punish the offenders (Owumi & Ajayi, 2013). Owumi and Ajayi (2013) additionally indicated that these youth associations use charms and songs to enforce law and order in their communities. Okafo (2007) explained that these groups are able-bodied men who are supported by community members materially and financially and are empowered to provide security for the community with the help of small arms like machetes, bows, and arrows. Likewise, Tankebe (2009) observed that members of the society support vigilantes but, this is based on their age, level of education, untrustworthy, and corruptibility of the police. Traditional authorities in addition to community members support these groups and believe that they are not corrupt. “A complaint about vigilante activities in 1996 by the local police Commissioner in Ogun State was dismissed by the Remo Traditional Council with the argument that unlike the vigilantes, the police routinely accept bribes to let criminals escape” (Owumi & Ajayi, 2013: 5-6).

### **2.2.5. Secret Societies**

Additionally, secret societies were also found to aid in informal social control for law and order maintenance (Ayuk et al., 2013; Onyeozili & Ebbe, 2012). These secret societies are groups in the society who are interested in maintaining social order and doing away with crime or wrongdoing. Ayuk et al. (2013) stated that a group in Efik kingdom in Calabar, Nigeria called Iban Isong is made up of old women who are concerned with the decency of women. A woman found stealing at the marketplace or farm will be painted with charcoal and parade in public. Such a woman is also prevented from participating in anything concerning women in society. In the same way, Igbo and Ugwuoke (2013) stated that secret societies' members mostly meet at night, under the cover of darkness and frequently disguised themselves to cover their real personalities. They played the role of spiritual beings with the aim of criticizing wrongdoers. These people detect crime, sanction offenders, ensure law and order in the society and people do not do anything that will incur the wrath of these groups. They added that among the Igbo, Ekpe which was a male secret group could take a property of the wrong-doer, arrest, detain, fine or kill him or her (Igbo & Ugwuoke, 2013).

## **2.3. Informal Social Control Measures or Mechanisms**

### **2.3.1. Religion**

Scholars argued that religion is an informal social control measure in most traditional African societies for the maintenance of law and order (Abotchie, 1997; Assimeng, 1999; Chereji & Wratto, 2013; Nukunya, 2016; Okunola & Ikuomola, 2012; Onyeozili & Ebbe, 2012; Onyima, 2015). The belief in the spiritual world such as the belief in the gods and ancestors has been

found to keep people from deviating from the values and norms of society. Abotchie (1997) maintained that people's belief in the supernatural and the fear of the supernatural powers of the gods to detect and expose criminals and the fact that these gods are omnipresent and omniscient aid in ensuring law and order in society. Igbo and Ugwuoke (2013) confirm this by stating that among the Igbo, Nigeria, where the identity of the offender is unknown the powers of the gods of the community are summoned with the request of going after the offender. Perpetrators experience punishment through dreadful diseases or mysterious deaths. In Igboland, it is believed that anyone who violates the norms of the religious beliefs of the community must provide some items to be used as a sacrifice to appease the gods. The offender's refusal to do so will lead to his or her excommunication from the community and even in death will not be able to reincarnate and transmigrate (Onyeozili & Ebbe, 2012). In contrast, the introduction of Christianity, Islam, and formal education challenge the belief in the gods and ancestors and the fear of the supernatural powers of the gods as well as the ancestors (Ame, 2018).

### **2.3.2. Taboos**

Just as the belief in the gods and ancestors to detect deviance and sanction norm violators aid in the maintenance of law and order in societies, taboos are also informal social control measures for ensuring societal peace and order (Abotchie, 1997; Nukunya, 2016; Onyeozili & Ebbe, 2012). Taboo is anything considered holy, sacred and forbidden. In African traditional societies, certain days of the week, trees, rivers, and other things are dedicated to the gods or the ancestors and some acts are also considered taboos. Nukunya (2016) indicated that in Ghana among some ethnic groups, some days of the week are dedicated to the gods and therefore considered sacred. Members of these groups are expected to observe and respect this norm. For instance,

Bosompem of the Akan, and Tsawe, Nai or Onyeni of the Ga are gods of the sea and of fishing. Tuesday is dedicated to them and fishing on Tuesday is a taboo among these people. In Akan communities, Thursday and Friday are devoted to the earth goddess. In Twi-speaking communities, the earth goddess is referred to as Asase Yaa and in Fante communities, she is known as Asase Efua. On these days, tilling of the land is a taboo, among these ethnic groups (Nukunya, 2016).

Okereafoezeke (2003) argues that taboos are crimes against public morality which include murder, incest, and homicide among others. Taboos are also perceived as crimes against the land. In Ajalli community in Igboland of Nigeria, a violator of a taboo is mandated to offer sacrifices to cleanse the land and plead for forgiveness for his or her bad behaviour. Even after the sacrifices, the offender is asked to leave the community for years (Okereafoezeke, 2003). Similarly, Chereji and Wratto (2013) added that murder is an abomination (a taboo) among the Mende-speaking people of Liberia and the perpetrator is arrested, detained and constrained to ensure that he or she does not run-away. He or she is fined to pay with several cows and then banish from the community. According to Abotchie (1997), two main taboos exist in traditional societies: general taboo and specific taboo. The general taboo applies to all members of a society and the specific taboo applies to a group. General taboos emerged as a result of repeated mysterious experiences like death, strange diseases, and illness. Nukunya (2016) stated ethnic taboos affect the collective morality of the community and only the chief's reaction remedy the situation. A specific taboo can be an animal which is considered a totem of a group. All members of the group are not allowed to eat the meat of this animal and members are expected to give a befitting burial to this animal when found dead somewhere.

### **2.3.3. Oath-Taking or Swearing**

Oath-taking or swearing is a measure of informal social control for ensuring law and order in most traditional societies (Ayuk et al., 2013; Chereji & Wratto, 2013; Nukunya, 2016; Onyima, 2015). Oath is “deliberate swearing of forbidden words, which constitutes a threat to the amicable relations existing between the living and the ancestors of the chief” (Nukunya, 2016: 107). In some cases, the accused persons are made to swear to an oracle or a god to prove their innocence and it is also believed that if the accused person is guilty and he or she takes the oath, he or she will die, or a sudden misfortune will befall him or her. Tade and Olaitan (2015) argued in Iraye-Oke, Lagos, to guard against bearing false witness, an accused person is presented before a community shrine to swear an oath. This accused person either pleads guilty or innocent. The shrine has a sacred mat backed by spiritual powers which can detect the guilty and sanction him or her immediately. The innocent on the other hand is also vindicated. Supporting this, Igbo and Ugwuoke (2013) stated that an accused person is compelled to take or swear an oath to a dangerous god. However, in some part of the Igboland, a prime witness is obliged to take the oath first to invoke the wrath of the gods against himself or herself, should the accusation be false or a deliberate act to damage the image of the accused person. Also, in the case where the identity of the wrongdoer is unknown, the mature groups in the community may be exposed to idols swearing with a fearful charm. A period of one month to a year is set aside as a test period where the guilty or the innocence of the people will be determined. Any form of misfortune that befalls any member during this period is taken to be the guilty one (Igbo & Ugwuoke, 2013).



#### 2.3.4. Charms

In addition to oath-taking, various charms are used as informal social control measures for the maintenance of law and order in traditional African societies. Sunday and Adeokin, (2018) stated that various charms are utilized in African communities as a social control mechanism. These charms protect lives and properties of people and ensure social control (Ayuk et al., 2013; Onyima, 2015). Owumi and Ajayi (2013) observed that charms are used by youth associations to detect and arrest criminals in Yoruba, Nigeria. The use of charms deters criminals and potential criminals which leads to social order in communities.

Sunday and Adeokin (2018) indicated that *mariwo* and *ale* are charms used on farmlands to avoid farm theft. For instance, when *ale* (mark) charm is placed on a farm, if someone takes any foodstuff from the farm with the intention of eating, the charm will not have any negative effect on him. But if the person steals with the intention of selling when he gets to a T- Junction, he will be confused till he is caught. “The unique thing about this particular charm is that, when someone steals from my farm, and that person escapes with the loot, when such criminal gets to a T- Junction where the road is divided into three, such criminal will be trapped and will be confused on where to go until he or she is caught” (Sunday & Adeokin, 2018:509). The findings of Sunday and Adeokin, (2018) study revealed that the punishment imposed on offenders by local charms is severe and runs from headache, swollen body, bending, death of loved ones and death of the offender himself or herself.

### **2.3.5. Trial by Ordeal**

Furthermore, trial by ordeal is an informal social control mechanism adopted in some African societies (Abotchie, 1997). Trial by ordeal is an informal social control mechanism for investigating criminal activities in traditional societies. According to Chereji and Wratto (2013) in the traditional Liberian societies, an accused person who removes his or her leg when the hot metal is brought closer is viewed as being guilty. However, it is believed that an accused person who is innocent would not be affected by the hot metal. Similarly, among some Igbo people of Nigeria, concoctions are prepared and given to an accused person to drink. Any signs of allergy to the concoction was assumed that he or she is guilty. But where the accused person failed to show any sign of being affected by the concoction, that implies that he or she is innocent of the criminal accusation leveled against him or her (Igbo & Ugwuoke, 2013).

Likewise, Nukunya (2016) emphasized that in cases where disputants are not satisfied with the judgment of the chief among the Ewe of Ghana, they can consult the oracle in the presence of the chief or can be performed independently without reference to the chief. For instance, when a husband accuses the wife of adultery, the husband, the wife, and the alleged lover may be asked to wash their faces with sacred water. The fetish priest will first wash his face. It is believed that if the husband washes his face and no harm befall him, but the wife and the alleged lover have any reactions resulting from the washing of their faces, the accusation is taken to be true but if things happened in the opposite direction, the accusation is taken to be false.

### **2.3.6. Songs**

Songs are also informal social control measures as they operate in a way to ensure conformity to the norms and values of society for law and order maintenance. Abotchie (1997) observed that most groups in African traditional societies compose songs to recount the misdeeds of members of society and this serves as a social control mechanism. Ayuk et al. (2013), confirmed this and indicated that among the Efik people of Calabar, Nigeria *ekpri akata* is a male-dominated group concerned with moral sanctity of the society. This group uses songs to abuse and ridicule wrongdoers as a way to correct them and ensure normative conformity in them.

Opoku (1970) also argued that at festivals like Homowo, among the La-Teshie people of Ghana, songs are composed to recount the misdeeds of people and this serves as a way of a check on members to conform to norms and standards of society. Likewise, Nukunya (2016) explained that songs are used to recount the misdeeds and misconducts of those in authority during the Apo festival. During an annual Ipesi festival of the Yoruba people of Nigeria, songs are used as a social control measure to abuse and make mockery of people who have engaged in any forms of anti-social behaviour during the year (Owumi & Ajayi, 2013). However, Nukunya (2016) noted that during neighbourhood dance competition organized against opposition communities songs were used to make a mockery of each other. He explained that the Halo dance of the southern Ewe of Ghana is an example in which all the songs utilized during the dance are directed toward the wrongs and outrages of their opponents. The use of songs in traditional societies helped to enforce norms conformity and ensure social order.

### **2.3.7. Gossip**

In addition to songs, gossips are forms of informal social control measures in traditional societies for enforcing conformity to the norms and standards of society (Abotchie, 2017; Ame, 2018; Ayuk et al., 2013). Arno (1980) pointed out that gossip is a method for the spreading of information about members of a group and the assessment of behaviour among the group's members. Further, Arno (1980) observed that gossip is an informal social control mechanism among the people of Fiji where members of the community use gossip to circulate misdeeds and evaluate the behaviour of other members of the group. Ayuk et al. (2013) maintained that among the Efik people of Nigeria a male-dominated group concerned with the morality of the society, usually meet at night to gossip about misconducts and scandals of community members. These people move around the community with unfamiliar voices in the cause of moral campaign. This group exposes secret anti-social deeds of members of society through gossip (Ayuk et al., 2013). Gossip as a social control measure in traditional societies spread rapidly since members of such societies know each other. Gossip as a means of correcting norm violators and a form of sanction for minor cases in small traditional Ghanaian societies where everybody knows everybody, spread like fire soon devastating the whole community and affecting the offender and his family (Ame, 2018).

### **2.4. Dispute or Conflict Settlement and Mechanisms Employed in Settling Disputes**

The United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) (2001) as cited in Bukari (2013) states that conflict or dispute is resolved when the root causes of that conflict or dispute are identified and addressed. Dispute is viewed as a danger to human beings and social

agreement which interrupts and deviates from the generally accepted norms and standards recognized for the protection and promotion of relationship of society's members (Dzivenu, 2008). Dzivenu (2008) further argued that conflict among members of society is believed to cause famine, death, and drought–disapproval of the gods. Hence, all effort is made by societies to settle disputes to ensure peaceful coexistence of individuals. Every society has its measures and procedures for handling and settling dispute or conflict which is made up of their tradition. Mediators of dispute or conflict settlement usually involve chiefs, the council of elders, family or lineage heads, community members, neighbors, and others. Mediators use different mechanisms in resolving disputes in their community. However, all aimed at restoring the harmonious relationship among individuals and maintaining peaceful coexistence of society's members (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014; Brock-Utne, 2001; Bukari, 2013; Olowu, 2018). From the Western perspective of the literature, conflict or dispute settlement is done at the neighborhood levels and these are considered as informal social control. The purpose of dispute or conflict resolution is the identification of who is right, wrong and the punishment of the culprit (Bukari, 2013).

#### **2.4.1. Mechanisms of Dispute or Conflict Settlement**

The traditional way of mediation and conflict resolution have the possibility of increasing the peaceful coexistence of individuals and assists in avoiding the commission of various criminal offences and harmful conducts (Prinsloo, 1998). Olowu (2018) pointed out that mediation, adjudication, diplomacy, among others, are the mechanisms adopted in most African societies to resolve dispute and conflict with mediation being the most common mechanism. In order to ensure society's peace and unity conflict or dispute can be resolved by various methods and approaches which include negotiation, mediation, arbitration, adjudication, disregard, avoidance,

collaboration, conciliation in African societies (Bukari, 2013; Dzivenu, 2008; Kariuki, 2015; Olusola & Arigu, 2013; Prinsloo, 1998). In addition, findings of land disputes study done in the Upper West Region of Ghana revealed that land disputes in the area are resolved through arbitration, negotiation, and mediation (Paaga & Dandeebo, 2014). In a similar sense, Chereji and Wratto (2013) indicated that dispute resolution among the Akan of Ghana is through arbitration and mediation but, stated that the process of dispute settlement is not limited to these mechanisms. Studies have also revealed that trial by ordeal is one means of settling a dispute in traditional African societies. The study revealed that an accused person in traditional Liberian society who vomits after drinking the combination of bitter leaves is considered innocent and the opposite reaction from the accused person is considered as being guilty. In the case of murder, the person is shamed and banished from the community (Chereji & Wratto, 2013). Trial by ordeal is likewise used among the Akan and Ewe of Ghana, in resolving certain serious disputes (Dzivenu, 2008; Nukunya, 2016).

#### **2.4.2. Mediators and Alternative Dispute Resolution**

According to Bukari (2013), the process of dispute and conflict resolution in African traditional societies is led by chiefs, elders, kings, priests, healers, and other leaders as well as community members. Pkalya, Adan, and Masinde (2004) cited in Bukari (2013) recommended that chiefs, elders, extended families, lineages, clans, tribes, religious brotherhood, local institutions, and ethnolinguistic groups remain vital in the resolution process of conflicts and disputes. Dispute resolution or settlement takes place in the family or lineage, the neighborhood and at the chief or king court.

### **2.4.3. Traditional Leaders and Dispute Resolution Process**

According to Dzivenu (2008), the chief and his council of elders are mediators who direct and arbitrate discussions of the problem. Chiefs and elders are holders of wisdom and knowledge in traditional African societies, who manage and settle serious dispute cases. Disputants are made to state their side of the problem, one after the other without being allowed to disrupt each other. The statement of issues is followed by deliberation process by the mediators who then listen and cross-examined witnesses. The chief and his council of elders after a thorough examination of issues then pronounce the judgment. At the chief's court both the offender and the victim are actively involved and engaged in the process of disputes settlement (Dzivenu, 2008).

The chief and elders of traditional Liberian societies, after investigation of issues, reported to them and are convinced that an accused person is guilty, he or she is asked to send a kola nut to the victim to plead for forgiveness. If the victim refuses to accept the kola nut from the offender, it is believed that the victim still holds on to the issue but where the victim accepts the kola nut, bites it and gives some to the offender, the dispute is believed to be resolved and the victim is praised and told the gods are proud of him or her (Chereji & Wratto, 2013).

### **2.4.4. The Role of Council of Elders in Dispute Resolution Process**

Chereji and Wratto (2013) posit that in traditional Liberian societies, disputes are resolved by community elders who sit under *Palava* hut to discuss issues until they are resolved. Under the palm wine tree deliberations, men (elders) of the village leave the community to the forest to sit under a palm wine tree, drink from it to deliberate and resolve disputes between parties. They added that females are not permitted to partake. Hence, men of their family or lineage will

represent them should the case involve them. All parties are made to drink from the same cup which signified unity, after which disputants are asked to state their side of the case. When an agreement is reached, all parties will acknowledge their wrongs, apologize and embrace each other before leaving the bush (forest) (Chereji & Wratto, 2013).

Similarly, Brock-Utne (2001), in the study of *Indigenous conflict resolution in Africa*, stated that in Kidepo Valley of Ethiopia in resolving disputes and conflicts, the views of opinion leaders and elders who have gained their authoritative power through experiences and wisdom are necessary. Once the cause of the dispute is found, communities organized meetings which may last for two or three days in an isolated forest to deliberate and solve the matter (Brock-Utne, 2001).

Ajayi and Buhari (2014) agreed that in Africa, elders are believed to have wisdom due to age and experience. They added that in Yoruba, Nigeria, the source of power to oversee disputes by elders is based on their wisdom and traditional knowledge and that these elders sit under a tree to converse until an agreement is reached. Likewise, Kariuki (2015) observed that in traditional Rwanda, conflict and problem are resolved by headmen or the oldest males of the families where they sit on the grass altogether to resolve disputes through the restoration of social harmony, truth-seeking, sanctioning offending parties and compensating offended parties with gifts. The purpose of Gacaca is to ensure social harmony and order between lineages.

#### **2.4.5. Council of Elders as Advisers in the Dispute Resolution Process**

Unlike other societies where elders of the community are mediators in resolving disputes, in the case of Kembata of Ethiopia, study shown that elders play an important role in administering and



harmonizing society but where disputes or conflicts occur, elders do not mediate the disputants but only enable the circumstance to calm down through a third party.

“As to many of the interviewees, the council of elders does not, however, have the authority to mediate the disputants to bring about reconciliation. Instead, it only facilitates the situation to get calmed through the involvement of a third party. It is, therefore, up to the will of the disputants to elect mediators of their choice to reconcile them” (Mengesha et al., 2015: 236).

In the same sense, Kariuki (2015) argues that in Botswana, among the Tswana, disputes are settled right from the basic unit (family) of society through to the highest unit (paramount chief). Throughout the process of dispute resolution, the council of elders is present to offer their advice to the decision maker.

#### **2.4.6. Family Heads and Dispute Resolution Process**

Disputes are not only resolved by chiefs and council of elders but also by family heads in collaboration with adult members and sometimes neighbours. Prinsloo (1998) argued that disputes within the family in South Africa, are managed and resolved by the heads of the family, adult members and neighbours behind closed doors with disputants because matters concerning the family are private and must stay within the family. Members of the family who disagree with the judgment of the family head can send the matter to the chief and his council of elders.

Aluaigba (2011) similarly notified that clan heads of Tiv community in the pre-colonial period, in case of dispute or conflict between two clans, the clan heads meet, deliberate on issues and finally take a decision which binds all. The clan heads of the disputing clans then inform their

members of the shared decision hence, the need to end the conflict. Further, Ajayi and Buhari (2014) enhanced the assertion that the family heads in Yoruba, Nigeria, handle minor cases like misunderstandings between relatives and investigate criminal cases before transferring to the chief.

#### **2.4.7. Individuals, Groups and Dispute Resolution Process**

Disputes are also resolved in some communities at the individual or group levels without the involvement of any political leader or the family head. Fabbro (1978), in his study of *Peaceful Societies*, noted that among the Copper Eskimo of Northern Canada, Hutterites of North America, and the Mbuti Pygmies of the Ituri forest, conflicts are resolved by individual parties or by group intervention through public opinions without the involvement of chiefs or family heads. In the same sense, Aluaigba (2011) explained that disputes are resolved at individual and group levels. He argued further that among the age-mates (*kwav*) of Tivland of Nigeria in the pre-colonial era, this group used force to settle disputes between families and neighbours as well as the conflict between clans to ensure law and order (Aluaigba, 2011). Olusola and Arigu (2013) also stated that conflicting parties themselves negotiate to end the conflict and to look for a resolution to the dispute. Olusola and Arigu (2013) added that dispute resolution process is public, and involvement in the process and the approval of results is voluntary and, also indicated that traditional conflict settlement is consensus-based where everyone must agree with the decision taken.

#### **2.4.8. The Spiritual Aspects of Dispute or Conflict Settlement**

According to Daniel (2009), African religion plays a vital role in conflict resolution. Africans are religious and believed that religion stimulates and gives life. Many African societies believe in the spirit world and its efficacy in the upkeep of society. The gods and the ancestors are believed to play an important role in the affairs of the living. In the case of dispute settlement, certain disputes are recognized to be beyond the powers of the living hence, the gods and ancestors are invited to intervene (Chereji & Wratto, 2013; Nukunya, 2016). In like manner, Ajayi and Buhari (2014) claimed that the spirit of the gods and ancestors are invoked in the settlement of disputes among the people of Yoruba, Nigeria and the disputants are reminded of the consequences of not telling the truth. Aluaigba (2011) stated that in Tiv Nigeria, elders (*ityo*) use traditional religious gods in the settlement of disputes in the pre-colonial era. The elders in the settlement of disputes in the community to maintain law and order and to serve justice swear to the gods and call upon them to deal with anyone who disregards their decision. The fear in these gods compelled people to obey the decisions of the elders. In the same sense, Brock-Utne (2001) added that elders of Kidepo Valley use curses to prevent the youth from engaging in further dispute or conflict. It is believed that the words of the elders are bitter and can cause one's death. Brock-Utne (2001) also asserted that in Africa, the fear of sorcery or divine punishment is also used by elders in settling disputes and to show what the breach of the peace would bring upon the society and the conflicting parties.

A study by Bukari (2013) revealed that the spiritual aspect of Bawku conflict resolution is important and mostly observed by the Kusasi. The process involves blood-collecting and cleansing, object bury and merrymaking. The finding indicates that in the blood-collecting and

cleansing process, animals like the goat are killed and the blood is used to appease the earth god and purified the areas where human lives were lost. The body of the killed animal is roasted and eaten together by disputing groups. Kariuki (2015) and Mengesha et al. (2015) agreed that in the settlement of disputes, there is a spiritual dimension which is observed in traditional African societies. However, the process differs from society to society. They stated that among the Kamtaba people of Ethiopia, rituals are performed for the cleansing of the spell and reunion of disputants.

Similarly, the Igbos of Nigeria make use of oath for the maintenance of peace and order. Disputing individuals or communities are asked to swear an oath before a god to end the conflict and any who violates this decision is believed to have provoked the wrath of the gods upon his or her life (Igbo & Ugwuoke, 2013). The spiritual dimensions of dispute resolution are, however, voluntary where the offender may opt to do that to express his or her innocence or may be asked by the victim to do so (Chereji & Wratto, 2013).

## **2.5. Theoretical Framework**

Creswell (2009) argued that the use of theoretical underpinnings in research is necessary. A theory provides a perspective that shapes the questions that drive the research. It also informs how data are collected and analyzed and provides a call for action. Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey (2010) added that theoretical framework guides the research design and data collection. He defined theory as “an interrelated scheme of beliefs or ideas that are used to give an explanation to behavior and attitudes” (Creswell, 2009). In connection to this, the study adopts Durkheim’s

concept of mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity to explain the phenomenon under investigation.

### **2.5.1. Durkheim's Concept of Mechanical and Organic Solidarity**

Durkheim stated that evolutionary changes affect how society is organized. In his book 'The Division of Labour in Society' (1964), Durkheim differentiates between two societies. He indicated that in a small, primitive or traditional society, members share a set of common social characteristics, norms, and values (Tischler, 1986). Durkheim called this society mechanical solidarity. In this group or society, the shared collective conscience is very strong. The people tend to be of the same ethnicity, religion and share similar economic roles. Mechanical solidarity is founded upon likeness. There is little division of labour in simple societies. In terms of the law, Durkheim (1964) argued that simple societies are engaged in repressive law. Under the repressive law, deviance is seen as a crime. Reaction to such deviation is punishment. In these societies, it is groups of individuals that execute justice. In primitive societies criminals or offenders are sanctioned for sanctioning sake, triggering the perpetrator to suffer without the society focusing on what it gains from the punishment it imposed on the perpetrator. This constitutes penal law (Durkheim, 1964). People in this society behave similarly and share a strong sense of morality hence, anything that affects any member of the group is interpreted as affecting the group as well (Dzorgbo, 2013).

Durkheim observed that as society expands, it develops a more complex division of labour and specialization. According to Durkheim (1964), the causes of division of labour in complex societies are the increased number of human beings and population growth, what he calls

intensified moral density. People are engaged in varied economic activities that is, people perform different roles and tasks. Members of this society do not share the same beliefs, values and norms. However, society members depend on each other's effort to survive (Dzorgbo, 2013; Tischler, 1986). That is a system of varied and specific roles unified by well-defined associations. Durkheim called this society organic solidarity. According to Durkheim (1964), members of complex societies use restitutive law. Organized and specialized bodies are in charge of restitutive law. The focus of restitutive law in complex societies is restoration of relations to their normal state. In complex societies, offenders are mandated to make restitution for their crimes. As a result of a weak shared collective conscience in these societies, crimes executed are probably committed against persons in the society and not the whole society as the case is in the simple societies.

Sege, which used to be a purely rural community has a relatively small number of people. Members of the community were engaged in similar economic activities. The people had and shared similar norms, values and belief system. The shared collective conscience was strong. As the community advances, it shows elements of both mechanical and organic solidarity. The number of people in the community increased through migration. This has led to an increased division of labour and specialization. The people now engage in diverse economic activities. The introduction of new institutions has affected people's choice of social control. Durkheim's concept of mechanical and organic solidarity was therefore appropriate for the study as the study sought and ascertained the degree of cohesion in the community.

## **2.6. Conclusion**

In summary, the concept of mechanical and organic solidarity explained that in traditional societies, people are held together by their similarities. People have similar beliefs, values and norms. But as society develops and becomes complex the social connections that hold people together weaken. People in complex societies are held together by their interdependence on each other. As Durkheim argues, in advanced societies the shared collective conscience becomes weak as people have diverse forms of norms, values and beliefs. This chapter focused on what has already been done on the topic by other scholars. The existing literature indicates the various agents of social control and the roles they played in ensuring social order. The literature also identifies mechanisms adopted by societies to enforce conformity to norms and to sanction or punish norm violators. Further, the literature shows how disputes are settled in traditional African societies, mechanisms employed, and the processes involved in dispute resolution. From the above literature review, it is clear that a lot of studies had been done on informal or traditional social control systems in Africa and other places. However, the same cannot be said for Ghana and most especially research on informal or traditional social control system in Sege has remained unexplored. This study, therefore, investigates to find out how the informal or traditional social control system contributes to ensuring law and order in Sege.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **The Profile of Sege**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Social science studies mostly involve going out and collecting data through observations, interviews, recording, measurements of the activities and ideas of the real people or experiencing events in a particular place. It is essential to give a description of the area in which the study was conducted in order to give readers a clear and elaborate picture of the community. The choice of the study area (Sege) was appropriate because Sege is the only community in the Ada West District which qualifies more as a peri-urban area as it has features of a peri-urban community than other communities. The study was carried out at Sege in the Ada West District of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. This chapter provides a description of the study area. It focuses on the history of the people, the location and size of the place and the social structure of the community. A period of five-year crime report was requested from the Ghana Police Service (Sege Station). However, the Police Service only provided a two-year crime report for the period of 2017 and 2018 (See Appendix C).

#### **3.2. History Background of Sege**

Sege forms part of Ada Traditional Area and as such has the same history as the people of Ada. There are different views on the history background of the people of Ada. As per the oral history on one hand, the Ada (Dangmeli) have journeyed from Israel with a long wait in Togo under Agokoli the King in Notsie (modern Togo) then to Tagologo near Shai-Osudoku in the former Dangme West District (2017 Ada West District Assembly- AWDA). The people of Ada are



called Dangmeli and they speak Dangme as their local language. It is assumed that, many years ago, the Ada originally stayed at a place called Okorwem, a few kilometers from Anyamam in the south-western part of the Ada West District. Some of these people then moved to Togbloku and stayed there. However, while staying there the clan founder (Torgbe Adela Atsu) of the (Kudzragbe) group realized that Ada-Foah was a great place to stay. Hence, the group moved and joined Dangmeli to settle there (2017 Ada West District Assembly- AWDA).

According to Ebeheakey (2015) on the other hand, the people of Ada were part of the African Negro race from Western Sudan before settling in their current location. The people of Ada initially consisted of the Ada, Krobo, Osudoku, Shai, Kpone, Prampram and Ningo who were believed to have come from Oyo to Abeokuta in Nigeria, then to Dahomey where they were prevented from staying long due to conflicts in the land. The people of Ada later merged with the Ewe people from Ketu and then moved together to Tado and together they moved again to Notsie in Togo.

The people of Ada (Sege) forms part of the group of persons within the patrilineal society administered by hierarchical, central authority. Every fellow in Sege descended through the male line. According to the 2017 Ada West District Assembly report, the Ada state has eight clans namely, Adibiawe, Lomobiawe, Tekperbiawe, Dangmebiawe, Kabiawe, Ohuwem, Korgbor, and Kudjragbe. The report further indicated that the Kabiawe clan was later separated into three distinct clans - Kabiawe-tsutsu, Kabiawe-yumu, and Kabiawe-Kponor. All families have their codes, familial shrine, common assets, and a head of the lineage. The leader is generally the eldest remaining fellow of the family. The leader has the last say in practically every matter and

controls all transactions with the interest of the lineage including land distribution. Possession of assets is conceded through patrilineal heritages (2010 Population and Housing Census).

### **3.3. The Location and Size of Sege**

The socio-cultural and political background of this study is in Sege in the Ada West District. Geographically, Sege can be located along the Accra-Aflao road of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Sege is the capital of the Ada West District and lies about 80 kilometers from Accra, the regional and national capital. On the Ghana map, Sege is not located on it but falls within the location of Ada on the map. On the district map, Sege is located between Amartey Koni and Sege Nakomkokey. According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census report, Sege has a population size of 5,990 people which includes 2,833 males and 3,157 females.

Sege shares a common boundary with Battor to the north, Koluedor to the east, Dawa to the west and Sege Nakomkokey to the south. Sege also shares boundaries with other communities such as Amartey Koni, Matsekokey, Bonikokey and Ajumanikokey among others within the district whose main occupations are farming and salt mining and also with some fishing communities such as Goi, Anyamam, Akplabanya, Lolonya and others.

The location of Sege in the district exposes it to a lot of opportunities and problems. Specifically, there are possibilities of migration of people from Accra, Tema, Ashaiman and their surroundings which might create more economic chances and problems. Most especially, with the intention of building an International Airport and the National Housing Project at Ningo

Prampram District located a few kilometers from the community (2017 Ada West District Assembly).

### **3.4. Social Structure of Sege**

#### **3.4.1. The Political Structure**

As indicated earlier, Sege forms part of Ada and as it is, has the same or similar characteristics as that of Ada. The political authority head of the Ada is the principal chief who is generally recognized as Matse. The Matse is followed by the head of the clan (Wetsoyi), then by the chiefs (Asafoatseme). Each community has a clan and each of these clans has a sub-chief who is answerable to the Asafoatse (chief). There are also villages headed by headmen who rule community members on behalf of the sub-chiefs. The name associated with a chief is Nene (2017 Ada West District Assembly- AWDA; 2010 Population and Housing Census). The chief of Sege is under the paramount chief of Ada. The traditional authorities in Sege community have their own justice scheme which judges matters involving a land dispute, marital dispute, defilement of traditional norms and values, and disagreements between relatives and persons.

The people of Sege just like the people of Ada celebrate Asafotufiam festival which means “**the firing of musketeers**”. The festival is celebrated once, in the month of August every year to remember the death of liberty fighters and a form of acknowledgement to the warfare heroes, who fought and protected the land of Ada during the wars against the Asante (2017 Ada West District Assembly). As part of the celebration, the people visit Okorwem. The aim of the visit is to formally inform the ancestors of the celebration. It is mostly led by four chief priests from the Adibiawe clan called the Luluwornyo. These high priests also inform the ancestors of the death

or funeral of a traditional leader (chief) (2010 Population and Housing Census). The celebration of the festival brings people back home. The celebration also gives people the opportunity to socialize and network. There are family reunions and get-together.

Sege was previously a rural area where authority and power were in the hands of traditional authorities and community members. As the community advances, new forms of institutions were introduced. There is a police station in the community which provides security for lives and properties within the community as well as the district. The police service in the community helps to fight and reduce criminal activities. The police also ensure that law and order in the community and the district as a whole are maintained. Apart from some criminal cases, most disputants who report civil cases at the police station and at the court opted for the cases to be resolved in the house with community leaders. The district court is also located as Sege which provides legal advice and support for the people. The court is in charge of cases like murder, defilement, rape and other serious cases. The court works hand in hand with the police. The District Assembly performs functions on behalf of the government. The political power and authority to combat crime and ensure social control lie in the hands of both traditional and state institutions.

### **3.4.2. The Religious Structure**

There are three common religions in the Sege community which include Christianity, Islam, and traditional religions. Many of the people claim to be Christians with a few being Muslims and traditionalists. According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, the examination of religious affiliations shows that Christianity is the major religion in the district as well as Sege.

The number of churches in the community keeps increasing every now and then. The churches in the community include both orthodox and charismatic or Pentecostal churches. Though Christianity is the main religion in the community, there are people who still believe in the lesser gods, the ancestors and their powers.

### **3.4.3. The Economic Structure**

Sege is a peri-urban community with both rural and urban characteristics. The community was strictly rural area with basic economic activities. Recently, the community is densely populated with a lot of people from other countries, regions, districts, towns, and villages for economic and educational purposes. The people of Sege are into farming and trading. The farmers in the community are into cultivation of food crops such as pepper, tomatoes, okro and watermelon among others. Farming in the community is seasonal that is, it is done during the raining season. The people are also into livestock rearing. Livestock reared in the community include goats, sheep, fowls, and others.

Sege has only one stream called Kablu which serves both domestic and economic (agricultural) purposes. The volume of water received by the stream depends on the period and the outcome of weather alteration of the place. The stream is periodic in nature as it becomes dehydrated in the dry time of the year bringing about acute water scarcity in the community for both home and farming purposes. Additionally, there are standing pipes in the community both communal and individual. The standing pipe is a source of cooking, washing and bathing water for all the people in the community. Though there is sachet water commonly known as 'pure' water and bottled water which are sources of drinking water, most people however, drink water from the

standing pipe. Temperatures are constantly high throughout the year. This is more serious during the dry season.

Sewing (dressmaking), hairdressing and auto mechanic are the most common trades being learned in the community. These skills are mostly learned by the youth. Most of the people in the community are also self-employed especially the women. Many of them are into petty trading and tabletop businesses. Sege is the business centre of the district which has a mini market where both people from the community and neighbouring communities trade at. There is no specific day set aside for the market. The market operates every day and the market is mostly for selling and buying of agrarian produce primarily fish, tomato, watermelon, pepper, cassava, and maize. Processed foods are also sold in the market. There are also vendors by the roadside selling bread, fruits, vegetables, salt, biscuits, drinks, water, and other things.

There are two banks in the community which include Ada Rural Bank and Ghana National Bank. There are also Cooperative Credit Union and Microfinance-Savings and Loan in the Sege community. These financial institutions serve people within and around the community. They provide financial support for the people to expand their businesses. However, these financial institutions are inadequate for the people since they serve the whole district. Additionally, there are mobile money shops in the community which also assist in sending and receiving of money.

There are other companies such as District Communication and Information Centre, Electricity Company of Ghana, Filling stations and Gas station in the community which provides employment for people from near and far. The community is connected to the national electricity grid. Additionally, there is fire service in the area which fight fire and fire like disasters within

the community and outside of it. There is a post office in the community which receives and sends documents. However, with the intensification of usage of mobile phone, the function of the post office has reduced considerably

#### **3.4.4. The Marriage and Family Structure**

Sege comprises people from all walks of life. People from far and near have migrated and settled in the community. The majority of these people are Ada with a few other ethnic groups such as Ewe, Ga, and Akan among others. The common languages spoken are Dangme, Ga, Ewe, Twi, Hausa and English. Marriage in the community takes the forms of customary, church and ordinance. Some people are customarily married while others have added a white wedding to it. Among the youth, a white wedding has become the norm in the community. Marriages are also celebrated at churches. Marriage among the people of Sege is viewed as a relationship between the families of the couple and not just the couple. The family system in the community includes both extended and nuclear family systems. The family system in the community is more nucleated now but people still share a strong bond with their extended families. This attests to the fact that families in Ghana have become more nucleated (Assimeng, 1999; Nukunya, 2016).

The people of Sege just like any other ethnic group in Ghana value and respect the dead. Sometimes when someone dies, the dead body can be kept in the mortuary for almost a year in order to prepare and give the dead person a befitting burial. In some cases, houses are even built before the burial takes place. Different funeral clothes are purchased. Some of these funeral clothes can be for Friday wake-keeping, Saturday burial service, and Sunday thanksgiving service. In some situations, different groups of people can buy different clothes for the same

funeral. During the funeral and burial process, sometimes people are served based on their financial contributions. In some instances, parties are even organized on Sundays.

The core building material for the superficial wall in the community is cement blocks or concrete. The most common roofing materials also include slate and metal sheets. Houses are painted in different colours. There are a few private toilets in some houses in the community. There is just one active public toilet and shower for the community members where people pay to get access to the facility. Various schools in the community have their own toilets. Some community members share these toilet facilities with the schools especially the public schools.

### **3.4.5. The Educational Structure**

There are both private and public schools in the community which provide educational needs for the people. Both trained and untrained teachers exist in these schools providing support for teaching and learning activities. In the year 2014/2015, there were 153 trained teachers and 16 untrained teachers in Sege from kindergarten to Junior High School. However, in the year 2016/2017, this has changed considerably to 197 trained teachers and only 1 untrained teacher. The District has five separated circuits for appropriate managing and supervision. Sege is one of the circuits in the district and has the uppermost number of teachers for the primary and the Junior High School (2017 Ada West District Assembly). At the basic level of education, both English language and Dangme are means of instruction for teaching and learning. The only Senior High School (S.H.S) in the district is located at Sege admitting students within the district and outside the district. There is no tertiary institution in the area as well as the district. Many of the people are literate. Most of them had a basic level of formal education. There is Ghana



Education Office in the community which serves teachers in the area and those within the district. The table below shows the number of public and private schools available in the community from the year 2013 to 2017

Year	Public schools	Private schools	Total
2013/2014	15	8	23
2015/ 2016	17	9	26
2016/2017	17	12	29

**Source: Ada West District Assembly, Sege, 2017**

From the table above, it could be seen that there are twenty-nine schools in the community. It is clear from the table that the academic year 2015/2016 has experienced increase in the number of both public and private schools. However, in the academic year 2016/2017, the number of public schools remained the same, but the number of private schools increased by three.

### **3.4.6. The Health Structure**

There are three health centres in the district. However, the health centre at Sege is the main health centre utilized by most people and some serious health issues are transferred from the other health centres to the Sege health centre. There are chemical sellers and shops which provide first aid health services and provide solutions for minor health challenges such as cough, headache, and cold among others faced by the people. There are Traditional Birth Assistants in the community who assist pregnant women during childbirth delivery in some cases. According to 2017 Ada West District Assembly report, the leading disease in the district is malaria due to the high level of poor environmental cleanliness. The number of malaria cases reported rose

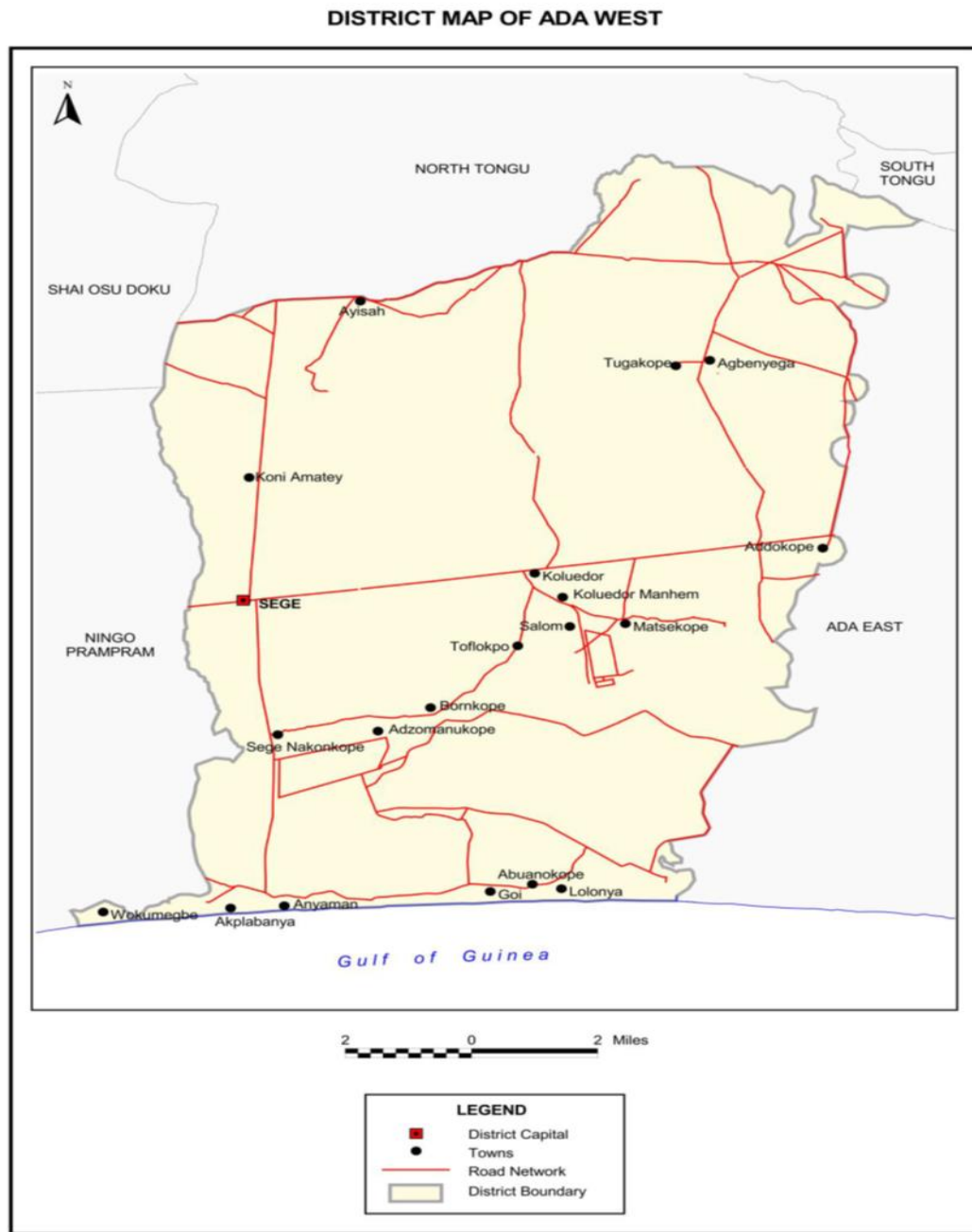
from 9,955 in 2010 to 13,776 in 2011. However, from 2011 to 2017 there has been an important decline of 57.2% over that period. This may be due to a lot of explanations including the creation of an environmental health office at Sege. Even though this report applies to the whole district, it implies to Sege as well. Apart from the public health facility in the community, there is also one herbal clinic. People also use traditional medicines. There are also prayer camps where people seek spiritual healing from. In some cases, people leave their home to stay in these prayer camps or go for prayers every day and come back home.

Figure 1.1 The Map of Ghana



Source: Nations Online Project

Figure 1.2



Source: 2014 Ghana Statistical Service (2010 Population and Housing Census).

### **3.5. Conclusion**

In summary, the chapter presents a description of the study area. It was indicated that the people of Sege are part of the Ada Traditional Area. Therefore, the community shares the same history with Ada. Different authors had diverse views on the history background of the people of Ada. However, it is clear that the people migrated from somewhere to their current settlement. Sege is located in the Ada West District of Greater Accra Region of Ghana and the capital of the district. Sege is located along the Accra-Aflao road. The community shares boundaries with other surrounding community within and outside the district. There are two maps - Ghana map and District map showing where Sege can be located as shown above. The chief of Sege is under the paramount chief of Ada. The people celebrate an annual festival called Asafotufiam. This festival is celebrated on the first Thursday of August every year. Power and authority lie in the hands of both the community and the state. The police, the court, the District Assembly and traditional institutions are in charge of social control and order.

The community used to be a purely rural area with a few people living in it. The people were into similar economic activities with the same values and belief system. Upon the emergence of development, the community also started evolving from being a purely rural area to a peri-urban area. Many people from different areas migrated into the community for educational and economic reasons. The community is more advanced as compared to other communities in the district. There are many modern institutions located in the community. These institutions include Information and Communication Centre, Police Station, District Court, Filling stations, Gas

station, Community Clinic, Education office, District Assembly office, banks, microfinance, credit union, and many more. The community has a mini market which is always busy throughout the week. The chapter revealed that even though, there are many modern institutions in the community, there are still some challenges as these institutions serve other communities in the district as well.

There are various religions in the community. Christianity is however, the predominant religion in the community. The community consists of different ethnic groups such as Ga-Dangme, Ewe, Akan, and others. However, the majority of the people are Dangmeli (Ada). Customary, church and ordinance marriages are observed in the community. The family systems in the community include both nuclear and extended families. Many of them had a basic level of formal education. Public and private schools are available in the community and the teachers in these schools are both trained and untrained. Members of the community seek health assistance from medical, traditional and spiritual sources.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Methods of Data Collection

#### 4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter provided a description of the study area, thereby giving the readers a clear picture of the community. It is important to discuss how the data for the study was gathered and analyzed. This chapter concentrates on the methodology and approaches for data collection to provide the background for empirical dimensions of the investigation. This discussion, therefore, centres on the research paradigm and approaches that shaped the study. The justification for the research approach employed is discussed. In addition, the chapter presents the research strategy, sampling methods and procedure employed for the study. Moreover, data collection instruments employed, the process involved in data collection and analysis of data were discussed. Finally, the chapter discusses ethical issues and field experiences of the researcher.

#### 4.2. Research Paradigm and Design

Hennink et al. (2010) pointed out that paradigms are models or frameworks for observation and understanding which shape both what we (researchers) see and how we (researchers) understand it. Paradigms are ways of looking at reality and they are the frames of reference we make to recognize our observations and reasoning (Hennink et al., 2010). Denzin and Lincoln (2008) define a paradigm as “a net that contains the researcher’s epistemological, ontological and methodological premises”. They refer to ontology as what researchers think reality looks like and how researchers view the world. They further indicate that ontological perspectives, where reality is assumed to comprise perceptions, meanings, beliefs, motivations are more relevant for

qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Epistemology examines issues such as the relationship between the researcher and the known and what might represent knowledge or evidence of the social reality that is being investigated and what is counted as evidence (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Denzin and Lincoln (2008) define methodology as how we gain knowledge about the world and how we collect research data.

The interpretive paradigm sought to understand people's perspectives from the people themselves known as emic or the insider perspective. Interpretive paradigm acknowledges that reality is socially constructed, thus people's experiences happen in a social, cultural, historical or personal context and that people's experiences and perceptions of reality are subjective. Hence, there could be different perspectives of social reality. The ontological view of the researcher, therefore, is one that believes that individuals have varied views on the role of informal social control measures, agents and the processes and nature of dispute settlement. In terms of epistemology, the researcher believes that the study adds to the construction of knowledge on informal social control, dispute resolution and law and order. Hence, the worldview or the philosophical assumption underpinning this study is purely a qualitative interpretive approach. The research paradigm chosen allowed the researcher to gain insight into the views of the people on the role of the informal social control system in ensuring law and order. This approach allowed participants to express themselves on the topic of interest under investigation.

Qualitative research involves a process of naturalistic enquiry that seeks in-depth apprehension of social phenomena in their natural setting and also, a means of exploring and gaining insight into the meanings individuals or a group of people attribute to a social phenomenon or human problem and seek to understand the subject's point of view on the social problem (Creswell,



2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Regarding this, the researcher could explore and gain insight into meanings participants attribute to informal social control system and its role in law and order maintenance in the community. Based on the face-to-face interactions with participants in the community, the researcher could make strong interpretations from the subjective views of the participants. The qualitative method was, therefore, appropriate for the study.

Creswell (2009) argued that a qualitative study provides a variety of information sources that are very interactive and humanistic. The researcher sought to interact with people from Sege in the Greater Accra Region and this made qualitative approach more relevant for the study. Qualitative study permitted participants to speak generally on the subjects bringing out their views, perspectives, belief, values, and understandings. With this approach, people's emotions, views sentiments, and gestures were captured and interpreted to provide more meaning to the study. To effectively understand this phenomenon, it was appropriate to employ an interpretive qualitative approach so that participants could tell their own stories and express their views for the researcher to draw significant conclusions.

Finally, an interpretive qualitative approach was relevant for the study because little is known of informal social control systems in Ghana and Sege for that matter. Hence, an interpretive qualitative approach was appropriate to explore and describe the phenomenon. It was also appropriate to use interpretive qualitative approach because the phenomenon has never been addressed with the people of Sege.

### **4.3. Research Strategy**

Phenomenological research approach utilizing focus group discussions and individual in-depth interviews was selected as the research strategy for the study upon reviewing the various strategies of qualitative research. The phenomenological research approach is a strategy of inquiry which is concerned with the subjectivity, interpretation, description, and agency of the people involved in the phenomenon and recognizes the importance of human experiences about a social problem (Creswell, 2009; Denscombe, 2007). Additionally, the primary goal of phenomenological research design as suggested by Denscombe (2007) and Marshall and Rossman (1999) is to capture the full meaning of the participants' experiences as shared in their own word. Also, the aim of a phenomenological strategy in research is to clarify and enlighten how people understand and comprehend certain occurrences. People have diverse personal perspectives, views, experiences and interpretations of social problems in societies.

The phenomenological approach was therefore appropriate for the study. This is because the study examined the views, perceptions and experiences of the people on the role of the informal social control system in the maintenance of law and order. This emic approach explains the experiences of the people from their own perspective. The strategy assisted the researcher to collect information in a systematic and complete manner which ensured detailed information about each objective outlined to be investigated. All these considerations informed the decision to choose the phenomenological research approach for the study.

### **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

The study sought the views of people living in Sege on the role of the informal social control system in maintaining law and order or ensuring social order. Participants included in the study were people who were eighteen (18) years and above and have lived in the community for at least ten (10) years. State or formal agents of social control such as the court, the prison among others were excluded from the study.

### **4.4. Sampling Method and Procedure**

The study adopted non-probability sampling methods such as purposive and snowball sampling. In a qualitative study, how research participants are selected is based on their relevance to the study and not their representativeness (Neuman, 2014). Purposive sampling also known as judgment sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which the researcher selects cases or research participants with a specific purpose in mind. It is also suitable for choosing participants who are informative and difficult to reach. Purposive sampling is utilized in exploratory study or field research (Neuman, 2014). Purposive sampling method was adopted in this study because of the exploratory nature of the research and, also because the researcher wanted participants who were well informed on the topic of interest. This technique enabled the researcher to choose participants who were more knowledgeable in the informal social control system of Sege and met the inclusion criteria of the study. Purposive sampling was employed for the selection of community members for focus group discussions. Thirty-two (32) participants were purposively chosen for the focus group discussions but only twenty-eight (28) participants participated in the

study. Two of the participants withdrew from the study and the other two participants were not available for the study.

Snowball sampling is when the researcher identifies initial participants for the study and then asks them to link him or her to others who fit the stated criteria (Van den Hoonaard, 2015). Snowball sampling method also called chain referral is a non-probability sampling method for choosing research participants in a network (Neuman, 2014). Snowball sampling was used in this study because identified participants connected the researcher to others. Snowball sampling technique was used for the selection of agents of informal social control identified by community members in the focus groups discussions who met the stated criteria of the study. The assembly member was identified as an agent of informal social control in the community. Through him, the other identified agents of informal social control were contacted and interviewed.

Polkinghorne (1989) as cited in Creswell (2009) suggested that researchers in phenomenological studies could interview between five (5) and twenty-five (25) individuals who have all experienced a phenomenon. In order to go beyond the reference point of data saturation, between thirty (30) and forty (40) participants were determined to partake in the study. A total of thirty-five (35) participants were involved in the study.

#### **4.5. Data Collection Methods**

The data needed for this study were collected from primary sources. Data collection approaches included the usage of various data gathering methods to explore the same social problem in order to validate the quality and consistency of the data gathered. The data collection methods employed included focus group discussion and individual in-depth interview guides. The focus

group discussion guide was designed to guide the discussions with the various groups and a semi-structured interview guide was developed to guide the individual in-depth interviews with key informants. Four (4) focus group discussions and seven (7) individual in-depth interviews were conducted. A total of thirty-five (35) participants were included in the study. The focus groups and individual interviews included:

- Two (2) focus group discussions with 6-8 adult males and females recruited from community members in Sege.
- Two (2) focus group discussions with 6-8 youth males and females recruited from community members in Sege.
- Seven (7) individual in-depth interviews (key informants) with identified agents of social control in Sege.

The inclusion criteria were focused on participants who are eighteen (18) years and above and have lived in the community for at least ten (10) years.

#### **4.5.1. Focus Group Discussions**

The instrument was to generate data considering the merits and demerits of adopting this tool of data collection. It is essential to state that this data collection instrument needed balancing approach-individual in-depth interviews (key informant interviews) in order to enhance the credibility of the study. Focus group discussions were conducted for adult men and women (from 37 to 84 years of age) and the youth males and females (from 18 to 35 years of age) to elicit information on their views regarding informal social control system's contribution to ensuring social order in Sege. Marshall and Rossman (1999) argued that focus group discussion consists

of groups of people usually numbered between four and twelve who may or may not be new to one another. Hennink et al. (2010) added that a focus group discussion is an interactive discussion of six to eight pre-selected participants, led by a moderator and focusing on a specific set of issues. This aims to gain a large variety of views on the research topic over a period of 60-90 minutes and to create an enabling environment where participants feel okay to speak their minds.

The selection of participants for the study was based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria stated earlier. Participants selected for the study were all from the Sege community which included both natives of the community and immigrants to the community. The researcher was able to identify and get access to community members or participants. The researcher contacted participants at their respective homes in person and also by phone with the help of the assembly member of the community. In addition to this, appointments were made with the participants at various times. Each focus group discussion session started with an introduction stating the names of the researcher and her research assistant, the names of their institutions, courses studying, the need and purpose of the study. Informed consents were given orally by participating members. Also, participants were comfortable with the contents and expressed willingness to participate in the discussion sessions and agreed to the use of voice recorder during the sessions with the exception of the youth male group who refused from the beginning but later agreed. Ground rules were set by both the researcher and participating members of various group discussions. Recording of the socio-demographic information of participants was done. This followed by discussion sessions immediately.

In line with suggestions made by Hennink et al. (2010) and Marshall and Rossman (1999), the focus group discussions conducted in the study included six to eight discussants which lasted for about 50 - 60 minutes with the researcher as the moderator while the research assistant took notes. The researcher was also responsible for audio recording and at times took notes. There were eight discussants in the male groups while there were six discussants in the female groups. This was so because, with the adult female group, two participants withdrew from the study but with the youth female group only six participants were available at the time of the discussion. Throughout the focus group discussions, an opportunity was given to all the participants to share their views and opinions on the various issues raised in the study. Discussions were done in very conducive environments to avoid the interference of non-participants.

Focus group discussions generate new ideas as participants build on other people's comments and ideal for exploratory research. It also provides a deeper insight into issues under discussion and as a result produces richer data (Hennink et al., 2010). Indeed, new ideas and information were generated as some discussants built on the ideas shared by others. There was also varied information provided as discussants agreed and disagreed with one another on issues.

In focus group discussions, a few people dominated the discussion which made others passive participants because they could not express themselves under the influence of the group (Bryman, 2012; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Focus group discussion takes a long time to conduct and record hence, time intensive. To avoid only a few discussants dominating the discussion, the strategy of raising hands and being called upon before responding to a question was adopted and all discussants were encouraged to be active in the discussion. Also, to

overcome the time-intensive nature of focus group discussions, discussants were encouraged to focus on the purpose of the study and not to deviate from the aim of the study.

In order to avoid the shortcomings of the focus group discussions which may affect the reliability and credibility of the outcome of the study, individual in-depth interviews (key informant interviews) were conducted to complement focus group discussions in order to improve the quality of research results.

#### **4.5.2. In-depth Interview**

According to Hennink et al. (2010), an in-depth interview is a one-to-one method of data collection which includes an interviewer and an interviewee discussing specific issues in depth. The researcher's aim is to get an understanding on certain topics using a semi-structured interview guide. The in-depth interview allows researchers to gain information on people's experiences, perceptions, feelings, life histories, among others. Focus group discussions and in-depth interviews (key informant interviews) were conducted because the weaknesses of focus group discussions were offset by in-depth interviews and vice versa.

In-depth interviews were conducted for agents of social control in Sege to validate the information gathered from the interactive discussions in focus groups. Just like the focus group discussions session, during the individual interviews, all necessary introductions were made, and informants gave oral consent to partake in the study. Both the researcher and her assistant took field notes during the individual in-depth interviews. In line with the position of Hennink et al. (2010), the researcher asked informants questions on specific issues based on the objectives of the study by which informants provided answers. All the interviews were done in person that is



the researcher in face-to-face interaction with the interviewees. A total of seven (7) individual in-depth interviews were conducted with agents of social control using semi-structured interview guide and open-ended forms of questions to gain their respective views and opinions on the subject under investigation. Additionally, using a semi-structured interview guide allowed the researcher to probe for more information in cases where probing was necessary. Conducting more than one in-depth interview helped to offset the limitation on the number of views shared as different agents of social control were interviewed and varieties of ideas were shared. The kind of interview conducted was an in-depth interview. However, the interviewees were referred to as key informants because they had first-hand in-depth knowledge of the issues under study.

#### **4.6. Data Collection Procedures**

Participants were chosen based on their age and number of years in the community. Focus group discussions were conducted at places chosen by participants and the researcher. Four focus group discussions were conducted in all. Two of the focus group discussions were conducted at the Member of Parliament's house. The other two were held at the homes of some of the participants. Key informants were identified by discussants in focus group discussions. Key informant interviews were conducted at the homes of key informants. The data collection processes were established through the development of focus group discussion and semi-structured interview guides. These guides were designed to help and direct the researcher not to deviate from the set-out objectives of the study and again to assist and prevent research participants from deviating in their answering of the questions posed to them by the researcher. These data collection instruments were relevant in that they enhanced the gathering of detailed

information from participants and ensured that they did not deviate from the subject under investigation.

The focus group discussion guide was divided into five sections (**See Appendix A**) which included background information of participants, informal social control measures, agents, community members' views and dispute settlement. The semi-structured interview guide, on the other hand, was divided into four sections (**See Appendix B**) namely background information, informal social control measures, agents and dispute settlement. Both the interviews and discussions were conducted in Dangme and English languages. Field notes were taken, and recordings were transcribed and cross-checked to ensure that they matched what participants said. Field notes and transcribed recordings were merged and typed into Microsoft Word.

#### **4.7. Data Analysis**

A thematic analysis approach was utilized to analyze data gathered from interviews and focus group discussions at Sege community. The data included precise handwritten notes from interviews, group discussions and audio-recorded data. The audio recorded data were transcribed and translated from Dangme into the English language. The data were read and re-read severally. Initial concepts were noted down. Information provided by participants were typed into Microsoft Word and placed in tables to identify common pattern and themes based on the set-out objectives of the study.

Further, collected data were analyzed through categorization and restructuring of diverse sub-titles, and documentation of related and unrelated parts of the information gathered in the

discussions and interviews. Categorizing and restructuring of theme were guided by the objectives of the study.

It is very important to note that in the process of analyzing the views and perspectives of authorities and community members on the role of the informal social control system in maintaining law and order, pseudonyms were used to protect the real identities of the people. Hence, the names mentioned in the analysis are not reflections of their real names.

#### **4.8. Reliability and Validation**

In order to ensure the reliability and validity of data, the researcher took the following steps. To start with, the approach of repeating questions and inter-subjectivity gave the researcher the chance to include trustworthiness processes during the interviews and discussions to confirm the quality of data. This strategy ensured that there was the constancy in the information provided by research participants. Also, to ensure reliability and validity of data, the researcher conducted focus group discussions for community members and in addition conducted individual in-depth interviews for the agents of social control identified by community members to validate the quality of data provided by community members in focus group discussions.

In addition, brief socio-demographic information was collected during the interviews and discussions to confirm that participants met the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study. This ensured and prevented the wrong people from participating in the study. Finally, the reliability of data was increased by the inclusion of both the older population and the youthful population in the study. Additionally, field notes were taken differently by the researcher and her assistant.

#### **4.9. Ethical Consideration**

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Ghana Ethics Committee for Humanities (See Appendix D). Also, permission from the traditional authorities and gatekeepers of the community was sought. The study was conducted in such a way that participants and their dignity were highly respected. That is informed consent was ensured and participants were informed that the study was for academic purposes and the objectives of the study were clearly spelled out for participants.

Attempts were made as much as possible to cherish, value and secure the privacies, welfares, and compassion of the participants. In this respect, pseudonyms were used to replace the real identities of participants in the study. Researcher assured participants that participation in the study was voluntary and that participants could offer to end the study any time. No participant was forced against his or her will to participate in the study. Lastly, the researcher and her research assistant were fully introduced to participants. This included their names, their level of education, their institutions, and hometowns.

#### **4.10. Field Experiences**

Finance was a challenge to the researcher. As tradition demands, one cannot go to the chief's palace with empty hands. It was required that when seeing the chief, the researcher must pay something in the form of cash or drink. The researcher, therefore, paid some cash to the chief as tradition demanded. Organizing the people for the focus group discussions and even having the discussions required money. According to the tradition of the people, you do not gather people to discuss something and go just like that. Hence, the researcher gave some participants some cash

and refreshment to others. The assembly member gave some of the groups cash which the researcher later refunded. The researcher also bought some phone credit for him to show appreciation for assisting in calling the participants for the study.

Gathering of the people was a challenge for the researcher. It was difficult getting the number of people the researcher wanted for the focus group discussions. However, with the assistance of the assembly member, the target number was achieved. The assembly member of the area was very helpful but delayed most of the processes because of his busy schedules.

The recording of discussions was also a challenge for the researcher because some of the groups especially, the youth male group refused to be recorded during the discussion. This affected their behaviour and participation in the discussion from the beginning but with a further effort of the researcher and her research assistant, the group was convinced and agreed to be recorded. Additionally, the malfunctioning of the recorder was another challenge for the researcher. During the adult male group discussion, the recorder failed because the memory was full, but the researcher and her research assistant were unaware until the end of the discussion. The research assistant took good note and together with the researcher, a recall of the discussion was written down immediately to avoid loss of vital information. Both the researcher and her research assistant went through the questions and recalled the information provided by participants.

Politics was a major feature in the area, which was a big problem for the researcher. The people in the community politicized everything. Some of the participants thought, the study was about their personal problems and the government sent the researcher there to give them some financial

support. Hence, after the introduction when they noticed that the study was for academic purpose only, they declined from participating with the excuse of going to do one thing or the other.

#### **4.11. Conclusion**

In summary, the chapter discussed issues concerning the data gathering process. A qualitative phenomenological approach was found to be the appropriate method for the purpose to describe and explain the views of the people concerning the informal social control system in ensuring law and order. The chapter also centered on focus group discussion and individual in-depth interview which were adopted as data collection methods for the study. In addition, the chapter focused on sampling methods, data collection processes, data sources, and data management techniques. Moreover, the chapter outlined strategies employed by the researcher to ensure credibility, validity and, quality of information gathered. Finally, ethical issues and field experiences of the researcher were discussed.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **Informal Social Control System in Sege**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The primary goal of the study was to find out how the informal social control system contributes to ensuring law and order. Specifically, the study sought to find out the various social control measures for ensuring law and order in Sege, identify the agents of the informal social control system and how often they are consulted to ensure law and order. Additionally, the study sought to investigate the perceptions of community members regarding how law and order are maintained in the community and examine how informal social control mechanisms were employed in settling disputes.

This chapter analyzed data and discussed the findings of the study, using a thematic analysis. The discussion started with a report on the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. This was followed by the various forms of informal social control measures available at Sege and the agents of the informal social control system. Further, community members' perception regarding how law and order are maintained and how informal social control mechanisms are employed to settle disputes were discussed.

#### **5.2. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Participants**

Although this is a qualitative study, it is essential to know the detailed information on the background of the participants since people's perceptive, choice, belief, views among others on issues may be attributed to specific characteristics. Hence, it is important to know the

characteristics of the participants who were involved in the study. The data on socio-demographic characteristics focuses on age, sex, religious affiliations, level of education, marital status, number of years in the community, position in the community, ethnic backgrounds and occupation of the participants (**See Appendix E, Table 1**).

The age of the participants gives a fair idea of the age groups in the study. The age of participants was included because the researcher wanted a particular group of people. That is people who are eighteen years and above and have been in the community for at least ten years. As pointed out by Friedman and Rosenbaum (1988) age is the strongest judge of deviant behaviour and that criminal behaviour reduces with age. In the Sege community, participants' ages were widespread from the youngest, eighteen years (18) to the oldest eighty-four years (84). These age cohorts allow the different experiences, perceptions, and views of research participants to be examined.

According to Friedman and Rosenbaum (1988), males are more likely to commit personal offences than females. The researcher wanted views and opinions of both sexes on the role of the informal social control system for the maintenance of law and order. The majority of the participants were males, out of the thirty-five (35) participants, twenty-one (21) of them were males and their female counterparts fourteen (14). This was so because there were more males available for the study than the females. With the youth female group, two of the participants were not available during the time of the study and with the adult female group, two of the participants withdrew from the study. Also, the identified agents of social control were males with exception of one who was a female.



Christianity, Islam and traditional religions were the religious affiliations of the participants in Sege. Ninety-four percent (94%) of the participants were Christians while three percent (3%) were Muslims and another three percent (3%) also belong to the African Traditional Religion. The result of the study revealed that the majority (94%) of the participants were Christians which confirms suggestion made by Assimeng (1999) that the majority (53%) of Ghanaians are Christians.

Most of the participants indicated that they had been to junior high school (J.H.S), a few had primary education and others had senior high school (S.H.S) and tertiary education. Some also indicated that they had no formal education. Even though most of the participants had some level of formal education, the majority of them had a basic level of formal education with a few at the senior high and tertiary levels. This reflects the 2010 Population and Housing Census report. The 2010 Population and Housing Census report stated that the majority (68.5%) of the population in the district are literate with most having a basic level of education.

Most of the participants were married. Twenty-four (24) of the participants were married, a few were single, one person is divorced and another a widow. This result also supports the assertion of the 2010 Population and Housing Census report which shows that the majority (44.2%) of the population, age twelve and above were married.

The majority of the participants, who had been in the community for less than thirty years were sixty-eight percent (68%) whereas thirty-two percent (32%) of the participants stayed in the community for thirty years and above. Many of the participants were born in the community and

had been in the community since childhood. This is important because the researcher wanted people who have lived in the community for at least ten years.

With the exception of seven participants who were leaders in the community, the rest of the participants were community members. Most of the participants were members of the community. The position in the community was included because the views of those in authority might be different from community members. The result of the study indicated that the rulers and the ruled agreed and disagreed on some issues.

With the exception of a few, many of the participants were natives of Sege. The ethnic backgrounds of the participants in the study show that eighty-five percent (85%) of the participants were Dangme (Ada) whiles six percent (6%) were Ewe, three percent (3%) were Ga and another six percent (6%) were Fante. The result of the ethnic backgrounds of the participants confirms the 2010 Population and Housing Census report, which revealed that most (85.9%) of the population are Dangme (Ada).

Participants were engaged in diverse economic activities. The varied economic activities include farming, trading, apprenticeship, dressmaking, public services, studentship, and artisanship. Most of the participants were farmers representing (29%), apprentices (21%), traders (17%), public servants (9%), tailor or seamstress (9%), artisans (9%) and students (6%).

### **Overall**

Most of the participants were natives of the community and had been in the community for at least ten years. The religious affiliations of participants included Christianity, Islamic and traditional religions. This finding agrees with Durkheim's assertion that in complex societies

people have different forms of norms, values, and beliefs. Even though Sege is not a complex society it has some features of a complex society. The people were engaged in various economic activities which include farming, dressmaking, apprenticeship, public services, and others. There is an increased division of labour and specialization. The study also revealed that participants were quite educated. Many of them had a basic level of formal education. The ages of participants start from eighteen (18) years to eighty-four (84) years old with most being community members and a few leaders. It also found that a number of the participants were married with a few in the other marital statuses.

### **5.3. Informal Social Control Measures**

Based on the on-going debate on the effectiveness of informal social control measures in ensuring social order, the researcher explored informal social control measures available in Sege. In an attempt, discussants and key informants were asked to identify informal social control measures in the community. Varied informal social control measures were recognized. The study revealed that there were three kinds of informal social control measures in the community. This included prohibitions, sanctions, and cautioning. The following sections explored into details the identified informal social control measures.

#### **5.3.1. Prohibitions as Informal Social Control Measures**

There are some informal social control measures in the community which restrict community members and are considered sacred and abomination to violate. In Ghanaian societies, certain acts are viewed as abominations and severely punished. Some days of the week are set aside for the gods and ancestors. Attesting to this, the study found that in Sege Thursday and Friday are the days for the earth goddess. It is therefore, a taboo to till the land on these days.

In this community, we do not till the land on Thursdays and Fridays. You can go to the farm to harvest crops or gather firewood but cannot till the land. If you till the land and you are caught, you will be fined to appease the gods and cleanse the community [Lani, a discussant in youth female group, Sege]

Some studies by Assimeng (2006) and Nukunya (2016) revealed that in Ga communities, Tuesday is the day for the god of the sea and fishing. Hence, people do not go fishing on Tuesday. Additionally, among Akan farming societies where the earth goddess is known as Asase Yaa and Efua, tilling of the land on Thursday and Friday is a taboo (Nukunya, 2016). Supporting this, the study also found that the people of Sege do not till the land on Thursdays and Fridays. Hence, it is a taboo to find someone disobeying this norm in the Sege community.

Both discussants and key informants were of the view that obedience to this prohibition brought the blessings of the gods upon them. Lomotey, a key informant stated: “In the olden days when this norm was strictly obeyed in this community, we were blessed by the gods. There had always been an increase in farm produce. For example, Dawa community still observes this norm strictly and enjoys the fruit of it”.

In addition to not tilling the land on Thursdays and Fridays, the community also had a taboo of not fetching water from the Kablu stream with basin or a black container. Women were also not allowed to fetch water from the Kablu stream when they are menstruating.

We do not fetch water with basin from the Kablu stream but rather use calabash and pot to fetch water from it. Women in their menses were not allowed to fetch water from the stream. It was believed that there was a crocodile in the stream which was a god. This god (*Segedor*) was served, worshipped and celebrated every year [Tanihu, a key informant, Sege]

The people of Sege were forbidden from sinning against the gods and ancestors through these taboos and through this, social order is ensured. The obedience of the taboos brought showers of blessing upon the people and the community as a whole. Likewise, violating these norms attracts the curses of the gods upon the offender, his or her family as well as the community. As indicated by Abotchie (1997) two types of taboos exist in societies - general and specific. General taboo affects the whole community and their violations are crimes against the land (Okereafoezeke, 2003). The identified taboos in Sege are general taboos and their violation affects everybody. This is in line with the assertion by Nukunya (2016) that violating a community's taboo fascinates severe punishment. This is because of their connection with the ancestors and gods. These taboos are derived from the collective conscience of the people.

### **5.3.2 Sanctions as Informal Social Control Measures**

Informal social control measures sometimes stem from the reactions of the community after a violation of norms. These reactions showed disapproval of behaviour put up by some members of the community. The responses to such behaviours were from those in authority and community members. These informal social measures served as a check on deviance and crime by serving as a form of punishment to the offender and others.

Songs were composed to correct and sanction norm violators by groups and individuals in the community. Soyo, a key informant narrated:

Songs were composed to make mockery of norm violators by individuals and dance groups. For example, in 1990, a woman had an abortion performed for her apprentice that led to her death. A song was composed for this incident. Since then she has left the community and never returned.

Songs as informal social control mechanism can lead to self-banishment from the community when offenders cannot withstand the shame and stigma. Offenders against whom songs were composed could leave their communities for years or for life due to the shame and embarrassment attached to those songs.

The study revealed that song was a form of informal social control measure in the community. This result supports studies by Ayuk et al. (2013), Nukunya (2016) and Opoku (1970) which have shown that songs were informal social control measures for the maintenance of law and order in traditional societies. There was, however, a contradiction with songs being a form of informal social control measure in Sege. Those in authority believed that song as an informal social control mechanism was cut off. This was because songs composed were creating a problem in the community as those songs were having effects on others apart from the offenders. The community members, on the other hand, claimed they were using songs as informal social control measures for ensuring law and order.

It was also found that the trokosi system was an informal social control measure. Discussants and key informants claimed that trokosi system was used to ensure that community members did not commit abominable crimes. “Virgin girls were demanded and sent to shrines to pay for the sins committed by members of their families and to end the dying of the family members or any other misfortune” [ Dede, a discussant in youth female group, Sege]

Another finding of the study was the trokosi system being a form of informal social control measure in the community. This is in line with previous studies which have observed that the trokosi system is a traditional religious and social control mechanism used in pre-colonial

Ghanaian societies (Akpabli-Honu, 2014; Ameh, 2001). This practice can be traced back to the seventeenth century and was commonly found among the people of the West African Coast. Trokosi system as an informal social control measure was a severe form of punishment for the offender's family as a member of the family would be gone forever. This also affected the dreams and future of the innocent virgin girl or girls.

Imposing fines on norms violators by authorities was yet another means through which social control is achieved in the community. Offenders of serious and minor cases were fined. The fine includes drinks, cash, hen and goat.

When summoned by the chief and his elders for a minor or serious case, the fellow is fined. This prevents and encourages people to conform and obey the norms in order to avoid being fined by authorities. For instance, when someone steals another person's item and caught, the fellow is asked to return the item or even double it for the owner. The chief and his elders will also fine the offender. This fine can be in the form of cash or drink [ Lomotey, a key informant, Sege]

Community services were demanded from norm-breakers. An offender could be asked to work for a community member, but the payment of the service rendered by the offender would be made to the community. The community services included fetching of water, clearing of farmland and others.

The elders and the chief are the highest authorities in the community who oversee everything that concerns the community. They make sure that norms in the community are observed and they also punish anyone who breaks these norms. They can impose fines or request a community service from the offender. The community service can be fetching of water to fill a tank, carrying of stone and clearing of farmland or a bushy area in the community. The tank or the stone may belong to a community member who would pay for the service to the authorities [Otutey, a discussant in the adult male group, Sege]

Fines and community services put a check on community members to observe the accepted ways of behaviour in the community to ensure law and order. To avoid the punishment of authorities, people conform to the norms and values of the community. This finding is similar to observation made by Mbuba and Mugambi (2011) that traditional authorities in traditional Kenya societies, impose fines, demand community service and enforce norm conformity to ensure law and order.

Similarly, in an attempt to put a check on one another in the community, members of the community use gossip to spread bad deeds. Akor, a discussant in the adult female group stated: “As community members what we also do to ensure that norms were obeyed, was to gossip. When a minor crime occurs, we gossip about it through which the case would be spread in the community and everyone would know about it”.

Further, people spread the misdeeds of others through the words of mouth. Ame (2018) and Arno (1980) argues that gossip is a method for the spreading of information about members of a group and the assessment of behaviour among the group’s members. Affirming this, the study found that members of the community used gossip to ensure that people lead a worthy life.

Likewise, it was found that the belief in the gods and ancestors to identify criminal acts and sanction offenders accordingly and the fear in the supernatural powers of the gods and ancestors prevented community members from deviating from the norms and values of the community.

The belief in the gods and ancestors to punish offenders of norms of the community prevented people from committing a crime or breaking the norm. We believe in the powers of the gods because they control the affairs of the living [Elorm, a discussant in the adult male group, Sege]



The gods and ancestors were the organizers of clan and societies. They therefore, controlled the affairs of the living. The study indicated that the people believed in the gods and ancestors to detect and punish norm breakers of the community. The fear of the gods and ancestors who are omnipresent and omnipotent prevented people from deviating from accepted ways of behaviour. According to the Igbo and Ugwuoke (2013), Okunola and Ikuomola (2012) and Onyeozili and Ebbe (2012), the powers of the gods are invoked to identify an unknown offender and punish norms breakers, this serves as a social control mechanism in societies. The finding of the study has therefore, confirmed the assertion by previous studies.

It was observed that the people identified different informal social control measures which were used to punish offenders in the community. However, some of the reactions were severe while others were minor. This means that the people differentiate between serious and minor norms and their violations were punished accordingly. Those violations that affected the shared collective conscience of the people were severely punished. This finding affirms the observation made by Durkheim (1964) on simple societies that they are held together by their similarities and the shared collective conscience. Anyone who violates the shared collective conscience is severely punished.

### **5.3.3. Cautioning as an Informal Social Control Measure**

The last sets of informal social control measures were those which give guidance and direction to offenders of minor cases. These informal social control measures are used to encourage members of the community not to do what they did again or not to even engage in higher ones.

Advice and warning were cautioning forms of informal social measures for ensuring social order. Akutu, a discussant in the adult female group described: “When someone commits a minor crime or engages in minor deviant behaviour, the person is advised and warned not to do that again. Offenders of serious cases were also advised and encouraged to live a conformity life”.

This therefore, means that violating of folkways norms do not attract severe punishment but violators are cautioned not to engage in such acts again. This indicates that violators of both minor and serious cases were sanctioned but the severity of the punishment depended on the kind of case.

#### **5.4. Perceptions on the Efficiency of Informal Social Control Measures**

To understand from the people’s point of view the informal social control measures that were efficient, discussants and key informants were asked to indicate which informal social control measures were more efficient in ensuring conformity to norms of the community. The study found that prohibitions and sanctions were identified as the most efficient informal social control measures. The following were the views shared by some of the participants.

Fines, trokosi system, community prison and community police, belief in the gods and ancestors were considered the most efficient informal social control measures for maintaining law and order in the community. “The most efficient informal social control measures were fines, trokosi system, belief in the gods and ancestors, community prison and police for maintaining social order” [Maku, a discussant in the adult female group, Sege]

Likewise, songs, taboos, fines, public disgrace, community service and the belief in the gods and ancestors were identified as the most efficient informal social measures. Owutey, a key

informant observed: “For me, I believed taboos, songs, fines, public disgrace (shame), community service and the belief in the gods and ancestors were the most efficient informal social control mechanisms in this community for ensuring law and order”.

The sanctions and prohibitions as informal social control measures were perceived as the most efficient due to their effects on norm breakers and the community as a whole. According to Abotchie (1997) and Onyima (2015), informal social control measures are efficient and effective for controlling deviant behaviour and ensuring law and order in societies. Confirming this, the study also found that informal social control measures were efficient for ensuring law and order in the community.

When participants were asked why they have identified those informal social control measures as the most efficient ones, varied reasons were given. The reasons given included compliance with norms, discouragement to engage in deviant behaviour, awareness of consequences of norm violation and fear to be summoned by the chief and the cost involved. The following were the reasons given by some discussants and key informants.

Fear, deterrence and punishment were reasons for the efficiency of the informal social control measures. These informal social control measures instilled fear in people and discouraged them from violating the norms and values of the community.

When someone engages in any misconduct. He or she would be brought to the public and whatever, he or she did was announced publicly to disgrace him or her. Also, stubborn offenders were arrested by the chief's local police and kept in the community prison for days to deter them and others. Those days when you are doing something wrong and they said the local police were coming you would stop immediately because we feared them a lot. The use of the community prison prevented people from engaging in any form of anti-social behaviour. The fear of being kept in the community prison for days without food scared a lot of us. The

shame attached to it also prevented us from misbehaving [Owutey, a key informant, Sege]

Cost, fear and punishment were the reasons why those informal social control measures were efficient. Korkor, a discussant in the female adult group explained:

This is because anyone summoned before the chief and his elders whether guilty of a serious or minor offence is charged a fine. In past, people also feared to be summoned before the chief and his elders. Taboos were efficient informal social control mechanisms because they were crimes against the gods and ancestors. Their violation, therefore, was a serious case which demanded severe punishment. The cost involved therefore, prevented people from violating them.

Another reason was given by a discussant indicating awareness of the consequences of breaking the norms of the community. She stated: “This is because members of the community knew the norms and were aware of the effect of violating them. Community members feared and respected the authorities of the traditional leaders” [Oforiwa, a discussant in youth female group]

Various reasons given by the participants showed that all the informal social control measures in the community were very essential and have contributed to the peaceful coexistence of the people. One observation was that the efficiency of informal social control measures depended on their effect on the offender and other members of the community and their contribution to law and order maintenance in the community.

Participants were also asked, the informal social control measures that were frequently used. Discussants in focus group discussions and key informants in individual interviews had similar views. The study revealed that all three forms of informal social control measures were frequently used in the community. The frequently used informal social control measures

included prohibitions, sanctions, and cautioning. Tanihu, a key informant observed: “Community service, fines, advice, taboos, belief in the gods and ancestors and warning were the frequently used informal social control measures”.

A discussant also stated that sanctions and prohibitions as informal social control measures were frequently used. “We used songs, taboos, community prison and police, fines, beating and community services more” [Efo, a discussant in the adult male group, Sege]

The study found that belief in the gods and ancestors and the fear of the supernatural powers of the gods to detect and punish norm breakers was one of the most efficient informal social control measures in the community and frequently used. This result is in line with Abotchie’s (1997) study which revealed that the belief in the gods and ancestors to detect and sanction criminals was an efficient informal social control mechanism because one cannot escape the punishment of the gods and ancestors. All three forms of informal social control measures were regularly utilized in the community to ensure law and order.

One significant finding was that most of the informal social control measures identified by discussants and key informants in the study were no longer in existence in the community. This was stated by the participants.

### **5.5. Present Situation**

The study found that both formal and informal social control measures were used in the community presently to ensure law and order. In addition to the existing informal social control measures in the community, the people also employed the services of state institutions available to them especially the police. The crime officer was interviewed. Although the inclusion and

exclusion criteria stated that State institutions were not to be included in the study, it became necessary to interview the police because the people indicated that they go to the police.

The services of the police, taboos, fines, advice and warning were currently used for ensuring law and order in the community. Lomotey, a key informant narrated:

For now, what is more effective is the police station. People are aware that any crime they commit, they would be sent to the police station and be kept in cell. Hence, they avoid any form of social vices. We also use taboos, fines, advice and warning to ensure law and order in the community.

A discussant explained that they make use of both formal and informal systems of social control. Existing informal social control measures and the services of the state institution. “We use fines, advice and the service of the police, the Department of Social Welfare and court. Now that we have a police station, any trivial matter, we run to the police station for a solution” [Ofotsu, a discussant in youth male group, Sege]

As the community evolves and changes occur, new forms of things are done. It could be realized that when the community was a purely rural area, the informal social control system was in charge. However, as the community develops, having the characteristics of both rural and urban areas, formal and informal social control systems run side by side.

When a police officer was interviewed, he indicated that both bailable and non-bailable cases or crimes were reported to them. The police service is only in charge of bailable crimes which include assault, quarreling, fighting, stealing and others. The non-bailable cases are sent to court and it is the court which has the right to give bail on such cases. A perpetrator being given bail by the court does not mean he or she is free. Such a person can be arrested or called back at any

time. Such cases comprised rape, defilement, murder, robbery among others. However, he stated that complaints or reporters of cases at time withdrew cases from the police station to resolve at home. In non-bailable cases, we force and send some cases to the court even when complaints stood against it.

Different crimes were reported to us. This included both bailable and non-bailable crimes. We are only in charge of bailable cases such as fighting, assault among others. In some instance, cases brought to us are withdrawn and sent back to the community to resolve. However, in serious cases like robbery, we stand our grounds and take the cases to court against the will of the complaints. In many cases, the complaints would not turn up for hearing in court. Hence, the court releases the perpetrator when the limit time elapses [Owusu, a key informant, Sege]

Though cases are sent to the police station, members of the community at times prefer resolving cases at the community level. The people still believe in the informal social control system. Even though the shared collective conscience is weakened, it was not totally eliminated. The ‘we feeling’ is still there hence, the people prefer to settle any misunderstandings at the community level even though they report the cases to the police.

### **5.5.1. Factors of Change**

In an effort to figure out what brought about the changes in the choice of social control measures, participants outlined varied factors which have contributed to that. The factors identified included religion (Christianity), migration, attitude, the State and development.

#### **Attitude**

Participants believed that it was the attitude or behaviour of both traditional authorities and community members that has led to the change.

The attitude of traditional leaders and community members has contributed to the change.

Kwesi, a discussant in the adult male group noted:

First, in this community, we asked norms violators to do community services like clearing a bushy area in the community. But it got to a time, community members were complaining about that, so we stopped doing it. Also, the attitude of our leaders has caused the change. Some time ago, some white men came to buy land in the forest to do their business. Tilling the land on Thursday and Friday was a taboo, but our leaders took money from the white men claiming to have performed some sacrifices to allow the white men till the land on those days. Some community members seeing this, have also decided to till the land on those days.

Those in authority were of the view that the attitude of community members contributed to the changes in the choice of social control measures used. Tanihu, a key informant observed: “Some of our community members violate the norms and values of the community. For example, tilling the land on Thursday or Friday. If you asked me, I would say it is an act of disrespect and not Christianity”.

This showed that the behaviour of members of the community toward the norms and values of the community have changed. While community members believed that it was the attitude of both the rulers and the ruled which has caused the change, those in authority were of the view that it was the attitude of community members only.

### **Christianity**

One of the factors of change in the community is Christianity. Participants revealed that some community members especially the Christians were of the view that Christ came to die to pay for our sins and cancel all traditional practices. One of the female discussants explained. She said:



“One Thursday morning, I went to the farm to harvest crops. I met a community member, an elder of a church tilling the land. When I asked him why he told me Christ came to die to cancel all these norms” [Aku, a discussant in the adult female group, Sege]

As Durkheim (1964) observed in complex societies, members have different forms of norms, values and beliefs. Some Christians in Sege believed that the norms and values of the community do not apply to them because they have a different belief system and doctrines. Their belief system contradicts that of the community. This finding is similar to the observation made by some studies that the introduction of Christianity has challenged and affected the belief in the gods and traditional practices (Ame, 2018; Assimeng, 1999; Nukunya, 2016).

### **Migration**

The increase in the number of people in the community is also another factor. A lot of people migrated into the community from near and far communities to settle.

Migration of people into the community has also contributed to the change. The community has become visitors' town. Soyo, a key informant noticed:

Sege is visitors' town. Many people from neighbouring communities in the district have migrated here. Some of the people also migrated from far communities, cities, regions and even countries to this community. Some of them came to buy land to build their houses. These people do what they want, when you say it, they would tell you they are in their own homes. Previously, I could tell the number of people and houses in this community but now I cannot. The increased number of people in the community made it difficult for traditional authorities to control.

The people who have migrated into the community came with their own beliefs and values. People do not respect the tradition and norms of the community. People do what they like or

please them. The traditional authorities do not have much control over the people because of the high number of people living in the community. This reflects Durkheim's (1964) assertion that as society advances, the number of people increases, and that different forms of values and norms are observed. This leads to division of labour and specialization in society what Durkheim calls moral density.

### **The State and Development**

The State is also a key factor of change in the choice of social control measures. The presence of the State in the community for law and order maintenance has led to the change. Sege used to be a purely rural area with a small number of people. These people depended on their traditional norms and measures to control and ensure law and order. As the community develops and enlarges, new laws and developmental projects were introduced. The introduction of the formal social control system in the community has contributed to the change in the choice of social control measures.

Community members punished criminals based on a collective decision. Previously, community members took the law into their own hands. However, a past experience caused the community to comply with the formal social control system. Mamle, a discussant in the adult female group explained:

Previously, theft was not common in this community. Thieves feared to come to our community because when you were caught, you would be killed and buried. An incident happened which caused us a lot of resources to resolve. In the past when there was no police station here, a gang of thieves came to the community to steal but in the process, they were caught. The thieves came in their own car. Some community members killed the thieves, removed their shirts and burnt the car. Our leaders went to Dawa police station to report that an accident occurred in the community. When the police came, their investigation revealed that it was not

an accident. The people involved were arrested and it cost the community a lot to resolve the matter. After that incident, whenever thieves were caught, they were sent to the police station immediately.

Other discussants and key informants in the study shared the same view. This explained why most criminal cases were sent to the police station.

When the community was a rural area or a simple community, repressive law was used as community members took the law into their hands. Offenders of norms were severely punished especially if the norms violated were based on the shared collective conscience. However, as the community advances repressive laws gave way to restitutive laws where criminal cases are now handled by recognized institutions. This finding is in line with Durkheim's (1964) observation that repressive laws are used in simple or mechanical solidarity and restitutive laws are utilized in advanced or organic solidarity. The result of the study also affirmed the suggestion made by Appiahene-Gyamfi (1995) and Onyima (2015) that the formal system of social control challenge and weaken the informal system of social control.

### **5.6. Agents of the Informal Social Control System**

The second objective of the study sought to identify those who were in charge of the informal social control system in the community. It was very important to examine and to find out those in charge of social control and social order. Social control and order in the pre-colonial era were in the hands of traditional authorities and community members. When discussants were asked to identify agents of the informal social control system, various agents were recognized. Key informants had the same view as discussants concerning the identified agents of the informal social control system. They acknowledged that agents of the informal social control system in

the community were both traditional and non-traditional leaders. The following sections explore the identified agents of the informal social control system.

### **5.6.1. Traditional Leaders**

The discussants and key informants identified traditional leaders as agents of the informal social control system in the community. Particularly the participants named the chief as an agent of the informal social control system. They observed that the chief was a representative of the gods and ancestors of the community.

The chief was recognized as the highest traditional authority in the community. He ensured that the norms and values of the community were obeyed. Those who disobeyed his authority were punished. Naa, a discussant in the adult female group stated:

The chief in our community is an agent of the informal social control system. He is the highest authority who represented the gods and the ancestors here on earth. Any form of disobedience to him was severely punished. In the past, the chief had the power to banish offenders of a serious crime like murder. However, in this community, we had never experienced that before. The chief also resolved disputes.

Confirming what Nukunya (2016) and Tade and Olaitan (2015) suggested, the study also found that the chief is an agent of the informal social control system and disobedience to his authority was punished. The chief in the community was acknowledged as the highest traditional authority and a rep of the gods and ancestors.

The Council of Elders was named as an agent of the informal social control system in the community. These elders worked on their own to maintain social order or worked together with

the chief to control and prevent deviant behaviour. The elders also request community services from those who deviate from the accepted ways of behaviour.

The elders and the chief are the highest traditional authorities in the community who oversee everything that concerned the community. The elders made sure that norms in the community were observed and they also punished anyone who breaks these norms. They could impose fine or request a community service from the offender. The community service could be fetching of water to fill a tank, carrying of stone and clearing of land. The tank or the stone may belong to a community member who would pay for the service to the authorities [Amidu, a discussant in the adult male group, Sege]

Further, the study revealed that the Council of Elders was also an agent of informal social control system who ensured norm conformity, imposed fines and demanded community services from norm violators. This is similar to findings of Daniel (2009) and Mbuba and Mugambi (2011) studies which indicated that the Council of Elders fought wrongdoing, demanded community services and provided a solution to disputes.

### **5.6.2. Heads of Families**

The family is the basic unit of socialization in all human societies. The family is an essential, basic and universal social institution (Assimeng, 2006). The family teaches its members the norms and value of society. Participants of the study have acknowledged family heads as agents of the informal social control system.

Family heads ensure members conform to expected ways of life in the community. Any form of disobedience on the part of members is sanctioned. Family heads resolve disputes and impose charges on offending parties. Ofori, a key informant explained:

We do teach our family members what is expected of them and make sure they do accordingly. Family members who deviate from accepted ways of life are punished through fines. We also resolve disputes between members of the family and also settle disputes between family members and other people. In difficult times members are given supporting hands.

Family heads identified as agents of the informal social control system by participants support previous studies. Prinsloo (1998) observed that family heads collaborate with adult members of the family to settle disputes. In term of punishment, Abotchie (1997) argues that the family or the lineage head uses mechanisms such as fines, shame and scold to sanction members who violated the norms of the family and the society as well.

### **5.6.3. Political and Religious Leaders**

In addition to the chief, Council of Elders and family heads, discussants in focus group discussions and informants identified political and religious or opinion leaders as agents of the informal social control system in Sege. These leaders also help to maintain law and order in the community. The religious leaders like pastors use the church platforms to teach and encourage church members to conform to norms and laws of the land. The political leaders also organize meetings and cooperate with other leaders of the community to bring about compliance to norms and laws of the community and the state as well.

Religious and political leaders in the community are also agents of the informal social control system. These leaders also contribute to ensuring law and order in the community.

Apart from the family heads, the chief and his elders, the Assembly Member, the Unit Committee members, and the religious leaders are also agents of the social control system. The Assembly Member together with the Unit Committee members enforces compliance with the laws of the community and the state. The

pastors of the various churches also preach to their members to obey community rules. I am not a Christian, but I heard pastors preaching and empowering church members to follow community rules which do not contradict their belief [Mamle, a discussant in the adult female group, Sege]

Non-traditional leaders were also in charge of law and order maintenance in the community. Political and religious leaders in one way or the other also contributed to law and order maintenance in the community. These leaders collaborate with traditional leaders in bringing about law and order in the community.

One important finding of the study was the fact that the participants identified the police as another agent of social control in the community. Though the police are agents of formal social control. Participants indicated that the police also contributed to ensuring law and order in the community.

#### **5.6.4. The Most Consulted Agents of the Informal Social Control System**

According to the views of discussants in the focus group discussions, all the agents of informal social control system identified such as the chief, the Council of Elders, the family heads, the Assembly Member, the Unit Committee members and the religious leaders (Pastors) were frequently used by the community members. Key informants in the individual interviews shared the same view.

It was noted that although all the agents of the informal social control system were utilized by community members, traditional leaders and political leaders (Assembly Member) were most consulted in many cases. “We use all the agents of the informal social control system when cases

arise. However, the chief, the Council of Elders and the Assembly Member were consulted most in all cases” [Nako, a discussant in youth female group, Sege]

In this context, it could be deduced that all the agents of the informal social control system were very supportive in ensuring social order in the community. The discussants in the various focus group discussions also trusted in the wisdom and judgments of the agents.

When participants were asked which of the agents of the informal social control system were very effective in their role as leaders, many of them pinpointed at the Assembly Member. Akafo, a discussant in youth male group said:

Even though all the agents of informal social control system did their best, the Assembly Member had been very effective in his role. Many people in the community have sent their problems to him and he helped them to resolve the issues. In cases where the matters were beyond him, he led to consulting the necessary authorities to have the matters resolved. He has time for everyone both the old and young.

The Assembly Member might have been a very active and effective leader for many to pinpoint at him as the most effective agent of the informal social control system in the community. It is also clear that the Assembly Member assisted many in the community to resolve issues.

#### **5.6.5. Strategies of Social Order**

Key informants reported various means through which social order is ensured in the community. When discussants were asked how agents of social control system ensure social order, they shared similar views as the key informants. The study found that agents of the informal social control system used pre-strategies and post-strategies to establish norm conformity.



### **Pre-strategies of Social Order**

Agents of the informal social control system use these strategies to educate and direct members of the community unto the expected and accepted ways of life in the community. Agents instill into community members what they should follow and what they should avoid. Below are the views shared by some participants.

The Assembly Member indicated that after he returned from assembly meetings, he discusses laws and what is expected of them as a community with other leaders. They make decisions concerning the matter and organized meetings to educate community members on those laws.

Lomotey, a key informant said:

As the Assembly Member what I do is that, when I am back from assembly meetings. I call the Unit Committee members and we discuss laws that the government wants us to observe as a community. After the discussions, we decide which ones are applicable to us as a community. We then organize community meetings to discuss the laws. We serve letters to churches to that effect. At times, we visit churches to educate them on the laws of the land. We also use the information centres to propagate the laws and educate community members.

A religious leader also explained that he uses the word of God to educate and explain to church members why they must obey the norms and values of the community. Owutey, a key informant shared a similar view. He explained: “Through the preaching of the word of God, I ensure social order. I educate church members on the norms or rules of the community and explain to them why they must conform to them through the use of scriptures”.

A discussant explained how meetings were organized and opportunities were given to community members to ask questions and make suggestions.

The leaders of our community organize community meeting and get us all invited through the gorgon beater or through the communication centres. At the meetings, they educate us on the norms of the community and the consequences of breaking any of them. We also get the opportunity to ask questions and give suggestions [Chiakie, a discussant in the adult female group, Sege]

The police in addition to agents of informal social control system used sensitization and patrolling as pre-strategies of social order and also create awareness on current happenings.

Owusu a key informant stated:

As a state institution, we sensitize community members on the laws and what is happening like kidnapping, robbery and educate them on what to do. There are also patrolmen who patrol the community to prevent people from engaging in criminal activities.

The pre-strategies of social order took the form of public education, creating awareness, open forums and religion. Agents of social control utilized these strategies to ensure norm conformity. Community members through these strategies are informed about the dos and don'ts of the community and the consequences of violating any of the norms and values.

### **Post-strategies of Social Order**

The study also revealed that agents of the informal social control system also utilize schemes of dealing with norms violators to deter them and others in order to maintain law and order. These strategies include punishment and cautioning.

One interesting finding was that offenders of both serious and minor cases were fined. However, the nature of the fine depended on the seriousness of the offence. The violators of mores are severely punished unlike the violators of folkways.

Tanihu, a key informant said:

Offenders of cases were fined whether serious or minor when summoned before the chief and the elders. For example, when you are caught tilling the land on Thursday or Friday, you would be fined to pay cash and provide a drink, one goat, and two hens. Offenders were also advised and warned not to engage in any further deviant behaviours.

The police also arrest, detain and caution offenders to deter them and potential offenders. This aids in ensuring social order in the community.

When cases are reported, we do our investigation and arrest perpetrators. At times we put them in cell for days and also caution them. Those with serious crimes like rape or defilement are sent to court based on significant evidence [Owusu a key informant, Sege]

Agents of the informal social control system ensure that community members were aware of accepted ways of behaviours and punish those who go against these ways of life accordingly. Agents of social control differentiate between serious and minor and the kind of punishment inflicted on offenders also differ. Through these strategies, social order is maintained. This finding of the study is similar to the assertion by Abotchie (1997) and Ameh (2001) that fines, shame, punishment were informal social control measure utilized by family or lineage heads in Ewe societies to sanction norm violators.

### **5.7. Community Members' Views on Societal Law and Order**

The study explored community members' perceptions on how law and order were maintained in the community. The study found that community members were not excited about how law and order were maintained. Discussants rather referred to the past on how social order was maintained. Different views were shared by discussants in the various group discussions.

These included awareness and sanctions, inadequate respect for tradition and traditional authorities, inadequate control and regulation of community members and influence of money on leaders.

Law and order maintenance were seen to be better in the past than in the present. Community members in the past were attached and committed to the activities of the community. Traditional authorities and traditional practices were held in high esteem. The introduction of the formal system of social control seems to have spoilt things as more criminal cases were observed in the community than before.

Ways of maintaining law and order were effective in the past not now. In the past, we were aware of the consequences of deviating from the expected ways. Hence, we observed the norms and practices of the community. We feared and respected the tradition and those in authority but now things are not the same. Introduction of the formal control system has spoilt everything. We have cases of stealing and wee smoking in the community now which were not part of us [Akor, a discussant in the adult female group, Sege]

The presence of the formal social control system challenged the informal social control system but could not ensure social order in the community. Similarly, this result supports studies which indicated that the formal system of social control is ineffective, inefficient and unable to prevent crime and maintain law and order (Chereji & Wratto, 2013; Okafo, 2007). Also, this finding also indicates that people are no longer attached, committed and believe in the things that concern the community. Hence, they deviate from accepted ways of behaviour. This is similar to Hirschi (1969) observation that when the social connections are weak people are more likely to deviate.

The number of people in the community increased due to migration and as a result, traditional leaders do not have much control over them. Trivial issues were sent to the police. However, things rather got worse. Otutey, a discussant in the adult male group explained. He said:

Previously, the way the community maintained social order was good and there was respect for authorities. The mechanisms in place enforced norm conformity because members were aware that when they deviated, they would be sanctioned. For example, the demand for virgin girls to pay for the sins of their family members put a serious demand on family members to conform to the norms of the community. But now people no more respect the traditional authorities. The town has become no man's town, people from different communities migrated to the community and do whatever they like. The traditional authorities in the area do not have much control over them. Every trivial matter is sent to the police station. However, things are rather getting worse. In the olden days when you see a child misbehaving, you could discipline that child irrespective of whose child he or she could be but now you cannot do that.

An observation made was that social order or law and order maintenance in the community now is poor. Social connections among members of the community were strong in the past as people were attached to each other and committed to the activities of the community. As the community progresses and the number of people in the community increased, the shared collective conscience becomes weak. This is similar to Durkheim (1964) suggestion that in complex societies, the shared collective conscience becomes weak as people have different values and norms.

The leaders of the community were influenced by money and this has affected how law and order were maintained in the community. The rich or those with power decide how the community should be ruled. "Our leaders are influenced by money. The rich in the community influence our leaders and then decide how things should be done in the community. This affected how matters were dealt with" [Narte, a discussant in youth male group, Sege]

The powerful are in charge of laws in the community and decide how things should be done. This is also similar to Karl Marx's assertion that the capitalists in society make laws and implement them.

### **Criminal Cases**

Sege police criminal report for the year 2017 and 2018 revealed that stealing is the highest crime reported in the Ada West District (**See Appendix C**). Affirming this, the study has also found that theft and wee (marijuana) smoking were common criminal activities in the community. When participants were asked how these cases were handled as a community, both discussants and key informants indicated that the cases were reported to and handled by the police. However, when asked what the leaders were doing about them, varied views were shared.

Traditional authorities were aware of criminal activities in the community. Hence, they do their investigations and then report perpetrators to the police. Kabu, a key informant explained: "We know theft and wee (marijuana) smoking are our major problems in the community. As leaders, we did our investigations and found the perpetrators. We reported them to the police".

The leaders of the community depended on the police to resolve theft and narcotic drug cases and as such, they have not done much to fight those crimes on their own as traditional leaders of the community.

Community members were of the view that those in authority have done less concerning narcotic drug and theft crimes in the community because the criminals are members of their families. Mamle, a discussant in the adult female group observed. She argued thus:

Our leaders in this community did nothing about theft and wee smoking. The criminals are their family members. Hence, they are not doing anything concerning the cases. The police are friends of these criminals. Even when they arrest them, days later, they will release them. For example, a week ago, these wee (marijuana) smokers were arrested but three days later, they came back celebrating.

In this situation, conflict of interest displayed here as those in authority were found between their roles as leaders and their duty as family relations. These leaders are confronted with the interest of the families and that of the community they serve.

It was noticed that dealing with criminal activities especially theft and wee (marijuana) smoking both the rulers and the ruled did not do much to control and prevent these cases. Noticing from a statement made by a discussant, “we are protecting our neck, we pray our children do not join”. This implies that the people are even afraid to tackle the issue and are more concerned about their children not becoming part of that group.

#### **5.7.1. Perceptions about Re-introducing the Informal Social Control Measures**

The study revealed that discussants suggested various ways to improve social order in the community. The discussants proposed collaboration between formal and informal social control systems to achieve a perfect system of social order. Some suggested support from security groups in the community and use of punishment as that will deter offenders and potential offenders. Further, discussants proposed bringing back informal social control measures that were left behind. The majority of the discussants believed that complementing the efforts of the formal social control system with the informal social control system would enhance social order and reduce criminal activities in the community.

### **Bring Back the Old / Revamping the Informal Social Control Measures**

Some discussants were of the view that bringing back the informal social control mechanisms that were no longer in use would help upgrade social order in the community. Agents of social control cooperating to fight deviant behaviours would enrich social order improvement.

Gossip, songs, shame, community services and trokosi system should be reimplemented in the community to ensure law and order. Formal and informal social control agents should collaborate to fight deviant behaviours. Madey, a discussant in youth female group stated:

Some of the informal social control mechanisms should be brought back to complement the effort of the police and the court to maintain law and order in our community. Songs, gossip, public disgrace and community services as informal social control measures should be reinforced in our community because they prevented people from engaging in bad behaviours. Trokosi system should be brought back because when people are aware that when they commit a crime a precious member of their family would be taken; they would not commit the crime. Also, the police alone cannot fight theft and wee smoking in this community. Traditional authorities should cooperate with the police service to fight theft and wee (marijuana) smoking in this community

Affirming what Onyima (2015) and Owumi and Ajayi (2013) suggested, the study also found that discussants proposed the integration of formal and informal social control systems for prevention of deviant behaviour and the maintenance of law and order.

### **Support from Security Groups**

Discussants proposed that support from security groups in the community would help improve social order. The nature of punishment imposed on offenders would ameliorate social order. The study found that reimplementing of the Watch Dog Committee and support from police assistants could help enhance law and order in the community.



The Watch Dog Committee was recommended to be reimplemented to help prevent and control deviant behaviours in the community. Tetteh, a discussant in youth male group explained:

The Watch Dog Committee should be brought back to go around the community and sanction young ones who are seen after nine o'clock in the evening. Anyone who violates any of the norms of the community should be punished publicly to deter others. For example, anyone who steals and is caught should be paraded in public, beating as he or she carries whatever he or she has stolen.

Reintroducing the Watch Dog Committee in the community can help reduce criminal activities in the community and contribute to law and order maintenance. As offenders are punished, this would deter them and other people who have the intention of engaging in similar acts.

A female discussant suggested that police assistants should be sent into diverse areas of the community to assist the police fight crime in the community. She stated: "Police assistants should be allocated to various areas of the community to support the police fight crime especially theft and wee (marijuana) smoking and ensure social control and order" [Dosi, a discussant in the adult female group, Sege]

Police assistants being distributed into the community could help to identify criminal activities in the community and inform the police about it. The presence of the police assistants in the community may also deter and prevent people from committing a crime.

When discussants were asked how they ensure social order it was found that, previously, discussants used songs and gossip. Currently, discussants report criminals and criminal activities to the authorities. They also assist the police in criminal investigations.

As members of the community, first, we composed songs and gossip about misconducts of people. However, what we do now is that we report criminal

activities and criminals to the police or our traditional leaders. Sometimes we assist the police in their criminal investigations [Akafo, a discussant in youth male group, Sege]

Community members also contribute to law and order maintenance in the community. Members of the community being like a check on each other's behaviour would be very helpful to reduce and control deviations in the community.

## **5.8. Dispute Resolution**

Different people and different processes are involved in dispute resolution. However, in all cases, restoration of relationships and harmonious coexistence of people are the focus. This section focuses on the common disputes in the community and the mediators of dispute resolution. The section also discusses the mechanisms and processes of dispute resolution.

### **5.8.1. Common Disputes in the Community**

Disputes which occur in societies are caused by different reasons. The study found that common disputes in the community were based on religious, political, economic, social and family reasons.

#### **Economic, Political and Social Disputes**

Participants revealed that disputes in the community stemmed from quarreling and fighting between the two main political parties. There were also chieftaincy, theft, land, market, work and financial disputes in the community.

Disputes range from land, market, chieftaincy, partisan, money and others. Soyo, a key informant explained:

The community is divided into two based on the political affiliations. There were times when members of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP) quarrel and fight. Chieftaincy, land, market and financial disputes also exist in the community.

Confirming observation made by Mengesha et al. (2015) that disputes in African societies stem from economic, social and political sources. The study also found that common disputes in the community stemmed from these sources.

### **Family and Religious Disputes**

Disputes in the community also come from family and religious misunderstandings. Participants indicated that intra-family, inter-family, marital, church divisions among others occur in the community.

There are divisions of churches and misunderstanding among some churches. The occurrence of inter and intra-family disputes happen in the community.

The number of churches in this community kept increasing every now and then as a division of churches kept occurring. For example, The Divine Healers' Church has three branches not because of an increased number of people but due to misunderstandings between the leaders of the church or at times between leaders and church members. At times these misunderstandings were due to mismanagement of church finances. Misunderstandings also occurred within the family and between families.

The study found that common disputes in the community also comprise family and religious disputes. This finding is similar to Daniel's (2009) study which pointed out that religious disputes are common in African societies.

### **5.8.2. Mediators of Dispute Resolution**

The discussants and key informants in the study pinpointed different groups of people as mediators of disputes in the community. Significantly, the study found that the agents of social control were the mediators of conflict resolution in the community.

#### **Traditional Leaders**

Participants stated that traditional leaders are mediators of dispute settlements in the community.

Traditional leaders resolve disputes between members of the community.

The chief and elders of the community are mediators of dispute resolution. Adi, a discussant in youth male group revealed that matters concerning the community were sent to the traditional leaders to resolve. He stated: “Matters concerning the whole community were sent to the chief and Council of Elders to resolve. Issues such as communal labour, land dispute, market, quarreling, fighting, and partisan dispute were resolved by these leaders”.

Confirming the suggestion made by Brock-Utne (2001), Chereji and Wratto (2013), Dzivenu (2008) and Kariuki (2015) that traditional leaders are mediators of dispute settlement. The study also found that traditional leaders in the community were mediators of dispute resolution who settle disputes between members of the community to ensure law and order in the community.

#### **Political and State Leaders**

Political and State leaders were also acknowledged as mediators of disputes in the community.

Disputes were also resolved by these leaders. These leaders resolve disputes on their own or

collaborate with other leaders to settle disputes in the community to ensure peaceful coexistence of community members.

The Assembly Member, Unit Committee members and the police were consulted for settlement of disputes in the community. Dosi, a discussant in the adult female group explained: “We sent disputes to the Assembly Member and the Unit Committee members to settle. Sometimes too we report disputes to the police”.

Rukuni, Zadzisai, Maxwell, and Kwaedza (2015) observed that the police are in charge of dispute resolution. The study as well found that police were mediators of dispute resolution in the community. Importantly, the study found that the Assembly Member and Unit Committee members were mediators of dispute resolution in Sege.

### **Family Leaders**

Participants also stated that family leaders mediate and resolve disputes. Disputes between families and within the community are settled by the family leaders.

Family heads and family elders resolve marital, land, intra-family and inter-family disputes.

Tetteh, a discussant in youth male group said:

Marital misunderstandings were mediated and settled by family heads and elders of the family. In some cases, disputes that occur among family members or between family members and others are resolved by these leaders. Family leaders also resolve land and marital disputes.

Previous studies revealed that family heads and elders are mediators of dispute settlements in societies (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014; Aluaigba, 2011; Emanuel & Ndimbwa, 2013; Prinsloo, 1998).

In confirming this assertion, the study similarly revealed that family heads and elders were mediators in the community who mediate to provide solution to disputes that occur in the family.

### **Religious Leaders**

Religious leaders also mediate and settle disputes occurring among members of the community. Most specifically, religious leaders resolve disputes between members of their groups.

Church disputes and misunderstandings are resolved to restore relationships. Efo, a discussant in the adult male group observed: “We have disputes occurring between members of churches and other members of the community. There were disputes between church leaders and church members. Religious leaders mediate these disputes to restore broken relationships”.

In line with previous studies, the study shows that religious leaders were mediators of dispute resolution in the area. According to Bukari (2013) and Rukuni et al. (2015) priests, healers and church leaders are mediators of dispute resolution in African societies.

### **Mediators and Disputes Resolved**

When mediators were asked which kinds of disputes were brought to them to resolve, it was found that it depended on the choice of the disputing parties. Discussants also indicated that the choice of a mediator, depended on the issues at hand and the people involved.

The choice of a mediator depended on the disputants. Disputants can send disputes to traditional leaders or other leaders to resolve.

The community members decide where to send their dispute whenever they have one. For instance, they can choose to send their issue to the chief, the police, the court, shrine among others. For example, an accused person was arrested and kept

in cell for some days. When he came back, he has also sent the issue to the shrine asking the gods to vindicate him. The accuser then went to the shrine to plead for the matter to be brought to the chief's palace to be resolved. The accuser was fined in the shrine by the fetish priest. The issue is now in the chief's court yet to be resolved. There are times where issues sent to the police or the court are brought back to the chief's palace to be resolved. Also, cases brought to us are taken to the police station or court. For instance, when one of the parties felt that the case was not well handled, he or she can take the case to the court or the police for further investigation and resolution [Tanihu, a key informant, Sege]

Disputants were free to make a choice on who and where to resolve disputes. A family member can send his or her case to the police or to a religious leader without informing his or her family leaders. The choice of who and where to settle dispute was the sole responsibility of the disputants.

Church disputes are sent to pastors to resolve and disputants of the same church prefer that their disputes or misunderstandings be resolved by their pastors. Naa, a discussant in the adult female group state: "Matters concerning the church and church members are handled by pastors and elders of the church. For instance, when the parties involved are members of the same church, they prefer sending the matter to their pastor rather than any other person to resolve".

Members of a group prefer to keep disputes between them within the group. This is to avoid other people or outsiders from knowing what is happening within the group. This is similar to an observation made by Prinsloo (1998) that disputes in South Africa are resolved by family heads, elders and neighbours behind closed doors because matters concerning the family should be kept secret.

### 5.8.3. Mechanisms of Dispute Resolution

The participants specified that mediation, negotiation and arbitration were the mechanisms employed for dispute resolution in the community.

Buenor, a discussant in youth male group noted how disputes were resolved by disputants themselves. Minor disputes were resolved by the disputants themselves. He said:

Disputants at times come into terms to resolve disputes themselves. As youth mostly when we have disputes, we settle them ourselves. For example, if I have a dispute with my friend for some weeks, I can go to him and tell him (Charle, e be oo) which means my pocket is good. We can go and enjoy ourselves and that ends the dispute.

Disputes were resolved by adopting the mechanisms of mediation and arbitration. Disputes were settled with the help of a third party or third parties. The third parties either mediate or take a decision which binds all disputing parties.

In this community, different mechanisms are adopted by different people to settle disputes. Some disputants invite a third party or parties who encourage and mediate to resolve disputes peacefully. This third party or parties only make suggestions to the disputants. There are times where the third parties or party take(s) a decision that binds all the disputants [Soyo, a key informant, Sege]

Similar to findings of Chereji and Wratto (2013), Dzivenu (2008), Paaga and Dandeebo (2014) and Prinsloo (1998) who have argued that mechanisms of dispute resolution in traditional societies include mediation, negotiation, collaboration, arbitration, reconciliation among others. The result of the study also explained that mechanisms of dispute resolution in the community comprised mediation, negotiation and arbitration.



#### **5.8.4. Alternative Dispute Resolution**

The study shows that dispute settlement took place in the chief's court, at the church, in the family, in the community as well as at the state institutions. The focus of dispute resolution in the community is the restoration of harmonious relationship. The process of dispute resolution comprised a disputant reporting a dispute to a third-party, disputants being called by the third-party to discuss and find a resolution to the dispute, a decision is taken, and dispute settlement is achieved.

A participant explained the process of dispute settlement and indicated that mediators could be traditional or non-traditional leaders. Dispute resolution could also take place at the chief's palace, in the community, family and church.

One of the disputants reports the issue to a third-party. The disputants are called upon to narrate their side of the issue. The third-party ensured that the parties involved get equal opportunity to express themselves without one interrupting the other. The third-party discusses the matter with disputants, decisions are taken, and dispute resolution is reached. The third-party can be a chief, an elder, a family head, Assembly Member amongst others. Disputes are resolved at the chief's palace, in the church, family and community [Amidu, s discussant in the adult male group, Sege]

The process of dispute settlement as stated by the participants involved reporting of dispute, calling of disputants, discussion and finding of a solution, deciding and accomplishment of dispute settlement. This supports assertion made by (Rukuni et al., 2015). Reflecting on what Bukari (2013) stated, the result of the study shows that disputes were resolved in the family, church, community and at the chief's palace as well as at the state institutions.

Disputes are mediated and resolved by mediators. Guilty parties are fined. However, the focus of the dispute resolution is to restore broken relationships and ensure the peaceful coexistence of members of the community. Lomotey, a key informant explained how he resolved disputes. He stated:

When a disputant reports a case to me, I get the disputants involved invited. The disputants would narrate the cause of the problem. We would discuss the matter together and find a solution to it. Any of the disputants found guilty is fined, advised, and asked to apologize to the offended party. I make sure that there is a restoration of relationship and justice is served. Mostly I encourage disputants to resolve the dispute peacefully without the game of win and lose.

Confirming what Ajayi and Buhari (2014), Brock-Utne (2001), Bukari (2013) and Olowu (2018) stated, the study found that the focus of dispute resolution in the community was the restoration of broken relationships and peaceful coexistence of people.

## **5.9. Conclusion**

In conclusion, there were many informal social control measures used by the people to ensure conformity to norms and to maintain law and order. Some of these informal social control measures were more efficient and frequently used to ensure social order. When the community was a rural area these informal social control measures were strictly used to control and regulate people. However, as the community develops and the number of people increased through migration, new forms of beliefs and laws were introduced. These new developments have led to a change in the choice of social control measures in the community. This supports Durkheim's assertion that in complex societies, there are different forms of norms, values, and beliefs. A

significant finding was that the community uses both formal and informal social control measures to ensure law and order.

The study also found that both traditional and non-traditional agents of social control were in charge of law and order maintenance in the community. Findings of the study revealed that discussants or community members were not excited about how social order was ensured and suggested some ways to improve it. Lastly, the study also indicated that disputes in the community were from varied sources and different mediators were in charge of dispute settlement. Various mechanisms were employed to resolve disputes. The succeeding chapter summarizes these findings. Based on the findings, conclusions will be drawn, and recommendations will be made.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **Reflections**

#### **6.1. Introduction**

The study was carried out to find out how the informal social control system contributed to ensuring law and order in Sege. To attain this objective, the study was led by the need to find out the various informal social control measures available for ensuring law and order and to identify the agents in charge of law and order maintenance. The study also investigated the views of community members on how law and order were maintained and examined how disputes were settled.

Using a qualitative research approach, data was gathered utilizing face-to-face focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. From the focus group discussions and individual interviews, the views of the discussants and key informants were captured under the following themes.

#### **6.2. Core Findings**

##### **Informal Social Control Measures**

The result of the study indicated that there were three (prohibitions, sanctions, and cautioning) forms of informal social control measures available in the community for ensuring law and order. These informal social control measures include songs, taboos, banishment, trokosi system, fines, gossip, advice, community police, prison, shame, and others. The study found that some of the informal social control measures were very effective and regularly used by the community to maintain law and order. However, the study found that most of the informal social control

measures were no longer in existence. Currently, both formal and existing informal social control measures are used to ensure law and order in the community. Factors such as migration, the attitude of community members and traditional authorities regarding community norms and values, religion (Christianity) and the introduction of formal laws contributed to the choice of current social control measures in the community.

### **Agents of the Informal Social Control System**

Informal social control agents in the community included traditional leaders, political leaders, religious leaders and heads of families. In addition, the police were identified as agents of social control in the community. The study revealed that all the agents of the informal social control system were consulted by community members. However, traditional leaders and political leaders were frequently consulted. The majority of the participants explained that the Assembly Member was the most effective agent of the informal social control system in the community.

The agents of social control used both pre-strategies and post-strategies to ensure social order. The study also found that the pre-strategies of social order included the use of the religion, public education, community patrolling and community meetings. The post-social order strategies took the form of sanctions and cautioning. These strategies were applied after the violation of the norms and values of the community. Fines, advice, arrest and warning were the forms of post-social order strategies.

### **Community Members' Views on Societal Law and Order**

Community members were not happy with how law and order were maintained. Members of the community rather referred to how law and order were maintained in the community in the past. They stated that inadequate control and regulation of community members, the introduction of formal laws, influence of money and inadequate respect for tradition and traditional authorities were the contributing factors of ineffective law and order maintenance in the community

The study also found that theft and wee (marijuana) smoking were the main crimes in the community. It was observed that both those in authority and community members have not done much to control and prevent these crimes. Community members believed that the criminals are family relatives of those in authority and friends to the police. The findings of the study indicated that community members report criminals to the authorities and also assist the police in criminal investigations.

It was revealed that community members wanted informal social control measures that were no longer in existence brought back. They have also proposed that the formal and informal social control systems should collaborate to fight deviant behaviours in the community. Community members also recommended supports from security groups such as police assistants and the Watch Dog Committee. They explained that when these suggestions are put into action, a perfect social order would be achieved in the community.

### **Dispute Resolution**

The common disputes in the community comprised family, social, economic, political and religious disputes. The mediators as the study revealed were traditional leaders, political leaders,

religious leaders, family leaders and state institutions (the police, the court, and the Department of Social Welfare). The discussants and key informants explained that the choice of a mediator depended on the issues at hand and the choice of the disputants. The result of the study also indicated that mechanisms of dispute resolution adopted by the people in the community included negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. Disputants either resolve their own dispute or invite a third-party to help them settle the dispute. Dispute settlements took place at the chief's palace, in the family, in the church, in the community as well as at the state institutions.

In conclusion, the informal social control system has contributed to ensuring law and order in Sege. There were various informal social control measures in the community for ensuring law and order but most of these measures were no longer in existence as a result of migration, the attitude of community members and authorities regarding community norms and values, the introduction of formal laws and religion. The community therefore, engaged both the formal and informal systems of social control to ensure law and order. Agents of the informal social control system consisted of both traditional and non-traditional leaders. These leaders used both pre and post strategies to ensure social order.

Also, community members were not excited about how law and order were maintained and suggested ways to improve societal order. Disputes stemmed from religious, political, social, economic and family sources and were resolved by the community and state mediators. Dispute resolution took place in at the chief's place, in the family, church and the community. Members in the community adopted negotiation, mediation and arbitration mechanisms to resolve disputes.

### **6.3. Recommendations**

Based on the results of the study, the researcher recommends that:

The government should allow the informal and formal social control systems to complement each other to ensure law and order in Sege and the nation as a whole. This should include informal social control measures (songs, gossip, fines, community services among others) which do not infringe upon the fundamental human rights of the people. These informal social control measures should be integrated into the constitution of Ghana. Informal social control measures like the trokosi system should not be encouraged even though, some members suggested that the trokosi system should be brought back to ensure social order in the community. The practice is against the laws of the land (Ghana) (Botchway, 2008).

Policymakers in the area should include informal social control measures that are central in their policies for the people of Sege so as to have effective policies for social control and order. This is because community members of Sege still value the informal social control system as it plays a vital role in ensuring law and order in their community.

Traditional authorities and community members should also assist the police to fight theft and wee (marijuana) smoking in the community. Irrespective of who is caught the law should be allowed to play its role. Traditional authorities should take necessary actions to educate community members including immigrants on the norms, values, and tradition of the community. Anyone who violates any of the rules of the community should be punished to serve as deterrence to others.



#### **6.4. Limitations of the Study**

In spite of the attempts to assure excellence and validity of the findings, the study still had some limitations. The basic setback of the study is that it was conducted in only one community (Sege) out of the fifty-two (52) communities in the Ada West District. This implies that the sample size utilized in the study cannot be representative of the population in the District and therefore this does not allow generalization of the findings. The research method used, however, was nevertheless appropriate because the study sought to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

Also, the malfunctioning of the audio recorder during the adult male focus group discussion was another limitation of the study as this could lead to loss of some very important information or may have led to some important information being unnoticed.

#### **6.5. Implication to Research**

The study has added to existed literature on social control and law and order maintenance in general but more specifically the study has contributed to the literature on the informal social control system. The study has given detailed information on the views of people on the role of the informal social control system in ensuring law and order in Sege. Most of the literature on social control focused on other countries and even those in Ghana focused on other ethnic groups leaving the gap in what happens in Sege. This study has therefore, contributed to how communities ensure social control and order.

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**APPENDICES A AND B -FOCUS GROUP AND INTERVIEW GUIDES**



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



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Protocol number

**Ethics Committee for Humanities (ECH)**

**PROTOCOL CONSENT FORM**

**Section A- BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Title of Study:	Social control in a peri-urban Ghanaian community, Sege in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana
Principal Investigator:	Rita Sottie
Certified Protocol Number	ECH 115/18-19

**Section B- CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

**General Information about Research**

My study sought to find out how the informal social control system contributed to ensuring law and order. I would like to conduct a thirty to sixty minutes interview with you, by asking you about your views on the role of the informal social control system in your community and how it contributes to law and order maintenance in the community.

Your involvement and participation in the study will allow me to gain deep insight into some perceptions of people on the role of the informal social control system, particularly in the maintenance of law and order. You, participating in this research is voluntary and you may choose to stop at any time or even refuse to answer any question(s). The interviews and the group discussions will be recorded, and notes will be taken as well.

**Benefits/Risks of the study**

This study is an academic requirement for a master’s degree. Your participation, however, will provide information to fill in the gap in knowledge on the role of informal social control Your participation in the study will also provide information for policy makers to take into consideration

when formulating policies on law and order and social control. Participation in this study will not pose you to any form of risk.

### **Confidentiality**

Whatever information you provide during the interview and focus group discussions will be treated as confidential and known to the researcher and university only. Anonymity of participants will be highly observed where their names or identities will not be given or written in the report.

### **Compensation**

Participants of focus group discussions will be served with drinks and biscuits after the discussions.

### **Withdrawal from Study**

Your participation in the study is voluntary hence, your withdrawal from the study will not attract any penalty. Your refusal to answer any question(s) will not have adverse effect on you.

### **Contact for Additional Information**

Contact for Additional Information

If you have any questions concerning your rights in the study as a research participant, you may contact the Administrator of the Ethics Committee for Humanities, ISSER,

University of Ghana at [ech@isser.edu.gh](mailto:ech@isser.edu.gh) / [ech@ug.edu.gh](mailto:ech@ug.edu.gh) or 00233- 303-933-866.

You can also contact my supervisors:

Professor Kodjo Senah

Department of Sociology

University of Ghana, Legon

Telephone: 0243771545

Email: [kodjosenah@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kodjosenah@yahoo.co.uk)

Dr. Esther Sylvia Gyan

Department of Sociology

University of Ghana, Legon

Telephone: 0244869097

Email: [sgyan@ug.edu.gh](mailto:sgyan@ug.edu.gh)

Below are my contact details:

Rita Sottie

Department of Sociology

University of Ghana Telephone: 0247266448 Email: [rsottie@st.ug.edu.gh](mailto:rsottie@st.ug.edu.gh)/[ritasottie@gmail.com](mailto:ritasottie@gmail.com)

Section C- PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

**"I have read or have had someone read all of the above, asked questions, received answers regarding participation in this study, and am willing to give consent for me, my child/ward to participate in this study. I will not have waived any of my rights by signing this consent form. Upon signing this consent form, I will receive a copy for my personal records."**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature or mark of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**If participant cannot read and or understand the form themselves, a witness must sign here:**

I was present while the benefits, risks and procedures were read to the volunteer. All questions were answered, and the volunteer has agreed to take part in the research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of witness / Mark

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research have been explained to the above individual.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Person who Obtained Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Who Obtained Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**Focus Group Discussion Guide**

Group # \_\_\_\_\_

Date of discussion: \_\_\_\_\_

Time start: \_\_\_\_\_

Time end: \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Age	Sex	Religious Affiliations	Level of Education	Marital Status	Number of Years in the Community	Position in the Community	Ethnic Background	Occupation

### **1. Informal social control measures**

What informal social control measures are available in this area?

Which of these measures do you consider more efficient in maintaining law and order in the community?

Why do you consider those measures more efficient?

Which of these measures do you frequently use to ensure conformity to norms of the community?

### **2. Agents of informal social control system**

Who are the agents of informal social control in this area?

Which agents of informal social control are frequently used by community members?

Under what circumstances, do people use these agents?

Which of the agents are more effective in their role?

### **3. Community members Views of how law and order are maintained**

What are your views on how the community ensures social order?

What do you think should be done to improve the ways in which the community maintains social order?

How do the agents of informal social control in this area ensure social order?

How do you as members of the community ensure law and order?

### **4. Informal social control measures employed in settling disputes**

What are the common disputes in this area?

What are the processes followed in resolving disputes in this area?

Which mechanisms are adopted in settling disputes in this community?

Who do people go to when they have disputes?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

**Semi-structured interview Guide (Key informant interview)**

Participant # \_\_\_\_\_ Date of the interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Time start: \_\_\_\_\_ Time end: \_\_\_\_\_

**Interviewee's Information (Socio-demographic Information)**

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: Male/Female \_\_\_\_\_

Religious affiliation: Christian/Muslim/ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Position in the community: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital status: Single/Married/ Divorced/Separated/ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Level of education: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years in the community: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethic Background: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Informal social control measures**

What informal social control mechanisms are available in this place?

Which of these measures or mechanisms of informal social control do you consider more efficient in ensuring conformity to norms of the community?

Why do you consider these measures more efficient?

Which of these measures are frequently used to maintain law and order?

**2. Agents of informal social control system**

Who are the agents of informal social control in this community apart from you?

How do you ensure community members conform to the norms of the community?

Which agents are mostly utilized by the community members?

Under what conditions, do community members utilize these agents?

Which agents are more effective in their role?

**3. Informal social control measures employed in settling disputes**

What are the common disputes in this community?

Which of these disputes do people bring to you to resolve?

How do you resolve disputes in the community?

Which measures do you adopt to settle disputes in the community?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you very much.

**APPENDIX C – POLICE CRIME REPORT, SEGE STATION**

**APPENDIX C**

**ANNUAL CRIME RETURNS**

**11TH DECEMBER 2017**

**STATION: SEGE**

OFFENCE	TRUE CASES	CASES REFUSED	CASES SENT TO COURT	CONVICTED	ACQUITTED	AWAITING TRIAL	CLOSED	U/INV
ASSAULT	71	29	7	4	-	3	8	27
CAUSING DAMAGE	<b>17</b>	-	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	-	-	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>
CAUSING HARM	6	-	4	1	-	3	-	2
ROBBERY	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
STEALING	80	-	<b>16</b>	3	-	13	4	60
THREATENING	20	-	-	-	-	-	1	19
NOXIOUS TRADE	4	-	2	1	-	1	-	2
DEFILEMENT	7	-	3	1	-	2	-	4
RAPE	4	-	3	-	-	3	-	1
FRAUD	<b>12</b>	-	4	2	-	2	1	7
OFFENSIVE CONDUCT	5	1	1	-	-	1	-	3
CRUELTY TO ANIMAL	4	-	1	1	-	-	-	3
CONTEMPT	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
ASSAULT ON PUBLIC OFFR	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
TRESPASS	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
F' CHIEFS' CALLS	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
CHILD STEALING	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

INDECENT	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
ASSAULT								
ON PREMISES	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
F' BREACH OF TRUST	2	-	1	-	1	-	-	1
ACTS TENTING	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
ESC FROM CUSTODY	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	253	32	49	18	3	28	16	156

ANNUAL CRIME RETURNS

DISTRICT: SEGE

MONTH: 18TH DECEMBER., 2018

OFFENCES	REVIEW OF CASES								
	Cases Reported	Cases Refused	True Cases	Cases sent to court	Cases convicted	Cases acquitted	Cases awaiting trial	Cases closed	Cases undue investigation
Stealing	64	1	64	22	10	2	10	13	28
Causing Damage	8	-	8	1	-	1	-	1	6
Assault	63	1	63	6	1	2	3	6	50
Threatening	23	1	23	2	2	-	-	-	20
Noxious Trade -	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Causing Harm	6	1	6	3	-	-	3	1	1
Fraud	5	-	5	2	1	-	1	-	3
Robbery	2	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	1
Assault On Public Offences	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	1
Indecent Assault	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Being On Premises for unlawful purpose	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fraudulent Transaction	2	-	2	2	-	-	2	-	-
Trespass	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Abduction	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Failing To Attend Chief's Call	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Illegal Tree Felling	1	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
Murder	3	-	3	2	-	-	2	-	1
Fraudulent Breach Of Trust	2	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	1
Failing To Provide Necessaries Of Life	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-
Defilement	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-
Rape	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Offensive Conduct	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
TOTAL	198	5	198	45	15	5	25	22	126

**APPENDIX D – UNIVERSITY OF GHANA ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL**



**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**  
ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR THE HUMANITIES (ECH)

*P. O. Box LG 74, Legon, Accra, Ghana*

My Ref. No.....

30<sup>th</sup> May, 2019

Miss Rita Sottie  
Department of Sociology  
University of Ghana  
Legon.

Dear Miss Sottie,

**ECH 115/18-19: SOCIAL CONTROL IN PERI-URBAN GHANAIAN COMMUNITY: THE CASE OF SEGE IN THE GREATER ACCRA REGION OF GHANA.**

This is to advise you that the above reference study has been presented to the Ethics Committee for the Humanities for a full board review and the following actions taken subject to the conditions and explanation provided below:

Expiry Date: 30/05/20  
On Agenda for: Initial submission  
Date of Submission: 18/03/19  
ECH Action: Approved  
Reporting: Bi-Annually

Please accept my congratulations.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof. C. Charles Mate-Kole.  
ECH Vice Chair

Cc: Prof Kodjo Senah, Department of Sociology, University of Ghana  
Dr. Esther Sylvia Gyan, Department of Sociology, University of Ghana



Tel: +233-303933866

Email: [ech@ug.edu.gh](mailto:ech@ug.edu.gh)



**APPENDIX E – PARTICIPANTS’ INFORMATION**

**Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Participants**

No.	Pseudonym	Age	Sex	Religious affiliation	Level of education	Marital status	Number of years lived in the community	Position in the community	Ethnic background	Occupation
1	Out	18	M	Christian	J.H. S	Single	18	Member	Dangme	Student
2	Narte	19	M	Christian	S.H. S	Married	19	Member	Dangme	Mason
3	Amartey	19	M	Christian	J.H. S	Single	19	Member	Dangme	Student
4	Akafo	20	M	Christian	J.H. S	Single	20	Member	Dangme	Apprentice
5	Daitey	20	M	Christian	S.H. S	Single	20	Member	Dangme	Apprentice
6	Madey	21	M	Christian	J.H. S	Single	11	Member	Dangme	Apprentice
7	Oforiwa	22	F	Christian	J.H. S	Single	10	Member	Dangme	Apprentice
8	Ofotsu	23	M	Christian	J.H. S	Single	15	Member	Dangme	Tailor
9	Adi	23	M	Christian	J.H. S	Married	23	Member	Dangme	Apprentice
10	Buenor	24	M	Christian	J.H. S	Single	24	Member	Dangme	Farmer
11	Lani	25	F	Christian	J.H. S	Single	12	Member	Dangme	Apprentice
12	Tetteh	26	M	Christian	S.H. S	Married	26	Member	Dangme	Carpenter
13	Korkor	32	F	Christian	Tertiary	Married	12	Member	Dangme	Nurse
14	Dede	33	F	Christian	J.H. S	Married	20	Member	Dangme	Apprentice
15	Nako	35	F	Christian	Tertiary	Married	10	Member	Dangme	Teacher
16	Lomotey	37	M	Christian	Tertiary	Married	33	Assembly member	Dangme	Banker
17	Akutu	37	F	Christian	N/A	Married	15	Member	Dangme	Trader
18	Owutey	39	M	Christian	Tertiary	Married	25	Pastor	Dangme	Teacher
19	Dosi	40	F	Christian	Primary	Married	40	Member	Dangme	Trader
20	Efo	40	M	Christian	S.H. S	Married	30	Member	Ewe	Farmer
21	Owusu	40	M	Christian	Tertiary	Married	10	Crime officer	Akan	Police officer
22	Maku	41	F	Christian	Primary	Married	28	Member	Dangme	Seamstress
23	Naa	42	F	Christian	Primary	Married	42	Member	Ga	Farmer
24	Amidu	42	M	Muslim	N/A	Married	15	Member	Fante	Trader
25	Chaikie	44	F	Christian	J.H. S	Married	20	Member	Dangme	Farmer
26	Otutey	45	M	Christian	J.H. S	Married	45	Member	Dangme	Farmer
27	Akor	49	F	Christian	Primary	Married	25	Member	Dangme	Trader

28	Elorm	50	M	Christian	J.H. S	Married	20	Member	Ewe	Farmer
29	Kwesi	53	M	Christian	Primary	Married	30	Member	Dangme	Tailor
30	Aku	56	F	Christian	J.H. S	Married	56	Member	Dangme	Farmer
31	Soyo	56	F	Christian	J.H. S	Married	56	Unit committee leader	Dangme	Trader
32	Mamle	63	F	Tradition alist	J.H. S	Married	63	Member	Dangme	Farmer
33	Ofori	67	M	Christian	Primary	Divorce	35	Family head	Dangme	Farmer
34	Kabu	70	M	Christian	Primary	Widow	50	Elder	Dangme	Farmer
35	Tanihu	84	M	Christian	N/A	Married	70	Chief	Dangme	Farmer

**Source: Fieldwork, Focus groups and Individual interviews**