

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DECENTRALISATION AND GOVERNANCE IN GHANA: A CASE OF THE
KWAHU NORTH DISTRICT

BY

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DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES OF THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF
CAPE COAST IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN DEMOCRACY,
GOVERNANCE, LAW AND DEVELOPMENT

JUNE 2011

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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THE KWAHU NORTH DISTRICT**

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2010

DECLARATION

Candidate's declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Signature: Date:

Name: Solomon Yaw Fordjour

Supervisor's declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Signature: Date:

Name: Professor J.V. Mensah

ABSTRACT

The study set out to examine the impact of decentralisation in the governance of the Kwahu North District. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The data collection tools used were questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion guide. The study covered 136 respondents selected by means of purposive and simple random sampling techniques. The primary data collected were analysed using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) Version 15.0

This study revealed that decentralisation has had positive effects on agriculture, social and physical infrastructure in the district. With regard to poverty alleviation and environmental conservation, the effects have been negative. Perceptions of the sampled respondents of decentralisation, governance, indicators of good governance, achievements and challenges of decentralisation corroborated what most writers had said.

Among others, the study recommends the capacity building of the various actors of decentralisation, election of government appointees to ensure more accountability and transparency, collaboration between traditional authorities and the District Assembly to protect the environment and minimised deductions from the District Assemblies' Common Fund by management of the Fund as this deprives the local people of adequate development interventions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My indebtedness goes to my supervisor, Professor John Victor Mensah of the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), University of Cape Coast. His patience, guidance and insightful comments helped to reshape this research. I am also grateful to Professor Stephen B. Kendie of IDS, who urged me on to work hard.

I am equally indebted to Dr. Patrick Osei Kufuor, a newly recruited Research Fellow at IDS, UCC for his valuable suggestions and Messrs Maurice Kukuri and Jos Acquah, IDS for their invaluable contributions in the collection and processing of field data. I cannot be ungrateful to my wife, Mabel Nketia whose moral support, sacrifices and fervent prayers buoyed up my spirit throughout the course. Finally, my thanks go to Elijah Fordjour, Kofi Naadow, Emmanuel Opoku, Lucas Ray Boanyah and George Ofori who were of immense support to me in the course of this study.

DEDICATION

To my children: Nana Kwame Ababio (late), Afia Dansoa, Afia Danquah,
Adwoa Boatema and Akua Dentaa.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBOs	Community Based Organisations
DACF	District Assemblies Common Fund
DAs	District Assemblies
DCEs	District Chief Executives
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
NCCE	National Commission on Civic Education
NFED	Non Formal Education Division
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
PSU	Primary Sampling Units
RCCs	Regional Co-ordinating Councils
SMDCs	Sub-Metropolitan District Councils
SPSS	Statistical Product and Service Solutions
SSUs	Secondary Sampling Units
TCs	Town Councils
UCs	Unit Committees (UCs)
UTACs)	Urban/Town/Area Councils
VLTC	Volta Lake Transport Company
VRA	Volta River Authority
ZCs	Zonal Councils

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Decentralisation, defined broadly as the transfer of public authority, resources and personnel from the national level to sub-national jurisdictions, emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as a response to dissatisfaction with centralised planning and administrative structures. Rondinelli and Cheema (1983) observed that despite its vast scope, decentralisation has seldom if ever, lived up to expectation. Decentralisation programmes have been implemented globally mainly for two reasons. First, decentralisation is seen as a key element of the process of democratisation and particularly in the search for a more participatory approach to development. It is viewed as the key to improving the planning and implementation of rural development and facilitating popular participation in the development process. Secondly, decentralisation has been regarded as an administrative reform frequently driven by donor agencies who have seen it as means of slimming down ineffective central administration.

In the developmental context, decentralisation has been linked to such benefits as equity, effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness. Rondinelli (1981) states that by reducing diseconomies of scale inherent in the over-concentration of decision-making in the national capital, decentralisation can increase the number

of public goods and services and the efficiency with which they are delivered at lower cost. Thus, the potential benefits of decentralisation have also been promoted as part of good governance initiative launched by the World Bank and other donors in the late 1980s (World Bank, 1989; 1992).

The demand for decentralisation is strong throughout the world because of its link to the concept of subsidiarity which holds that decisions should be taken at the most appropriate level of governance and establishes a presumption that this level would be the lowest available (Van Kersbergen & Verbeck, 1994). The World Bank (2000) sees a great promise in decentralisation in most developing countries and cites the attempt at the process of decentralisation in countries globally.

Wunsch (1991) points out that decentralisation has not been a successful solution to centralist approach to development. He notes that while there have been many decentralisation efforts in the Third World development through the provision of resources, training, and incentives their results have been generally disappointing. In general, decentralisation efforts have not significantly expanded participation, improved project efficiency or effectiveness.

In the early post – independence era, the choice of strategy for government in Ghana was preponderantly informed and influenced by centralist methods. This was characterised by the perpetuation of top- down, authoritarian approaches to problems requiring a genuine partnership between urban-technical and poor and rural people; and discouraging participation in the development process by poor and rural dwellers as well as poorly designed projects and programmes

which did not fit local wants, needs and conditions and shifting of vast resources to the centre from the field (Hyden, 1980; Cheema and Rondinelli, 1983 and Smith 1985). The emergence of decentralisation has shaped the contours of development thinking, administration and governance both in the developed and the developing countries.

Globally every nation today has a system of local government. The form it takes depends on the nature of the society in which it works and the conception of the people it serves. Yet one principle is common; that power is given to a local body to carry out functions within the locality. Asibuo (1992) notes that local government is an essential instrument of national government which unites people of a defined area in a common organisation whose functions are essentially complementary to those of the central government and in the interest of the local residents for the satisfaction of common community needs. He observes that all communities have problems and needs which are shared by their citizens and which can be alleviated only by their joint action generally through government at the local level. Just as government in general is the means by which all people can do jointly what they cannot do effectively acting alone, local government is the means by which the residents of a local community can together accomplish what neither the national government nor the individual residents can accomplish as adeptly.

Good governance requires all concerned to be clear about the functions of governance and their own roles and responsibilities and those of others, and to behave in ways that are consistent with those roles. Being clear about one's own

role within the decentralisation process, and how it relates to that of others, increases the chance of decentralisation in improving good governance at the local level. Clarity about roles also helps all stakeholders to understand how the governance system works and who is accountable for what.

Modern local government system in Ghana has its genesis in the colonial era. Since then it has gone through a series of changes particularly since the end of the Second World War and the attainment of national political independence. Prior to the establishment of modern local government system, chiefs had taken an appreciable share in local administration. They had powers to preside over civil and criminal processes as well as powers to collect taxes. They served as the channel of communication between the government and the people until the post-world war II constitutional and political developments in the Gold Coast which led to the promulgation of the local government ordinance passed in 1951 to introduce modern representative local government.

Moreover before the attainment of independence in 1957 and sometime thereafter, commissions and committees of enquiry had been appointed at various times to enquire into the administration of this country. Ghana's decentralisation policy has had a chequered history. The economic and political circumstances in Ghana have successively determined the approach of governments towards local reform (Asibuo, 1992.)

Adu (1973) notes that there is no need disguising the fact that decentralisation as a policy has not received the enthusiastic support and attention of those who have the power (i.e. the political and administrative leadership) to

make effective decisions in these matters. Progress has therefore been disappointing.

Baah-Wiredu (2000) in a two-day sub-regional conference on decentralisation was of the view that the major characteristic of governance on the African continent following political independence was the over centralization of government authority. To him the consequence of over centralisation has been, *inter alia*, a distortion of the development process, owing to the insufficient dynamising of the rural population, the stifling of local initiative and an under-mobilisation of local resources. He further argued that, in the face of widespread poverty, wars, conflicts and massive corruption in our public administration, we must be humble and honest to concede that all have not been well with us and our system of governance. It is the realisation of this stark fact which has led many African governments to look in the direction of local governments for a search for an enduring solution to ever mounting socio-economic problems.

Statement of the problem

An effective decentralisation programme offers the opportunity to set up democratic institutions in which the poor can actively participate, decide and lobby for their interests. Improved knowledge and induced competition lead to a better matching of local needs and better policies. These improvements will bring about efficiency gains, especially in the area of service delivery in terms of access, quality and targeting. As the capacity of citizens to monitor local officials and politicians is higher in a decentralised system, there are opportunities for an

increase in transparency and thus for a reduction in corruption and an overall improvement in local governance. This latter is expected to help to reduce the vulnerability of the poor.

However, in the Kwahu North District it has been observed that some Assembly members perform functions which sometimes go beyond what is constitutionally required of them. For example, some Assembly members and their unit committees arrogate to themselves the responsibility of settling issues that are purely the functions of the security agencies and the courts.

It has also been observed that some sub-district structures which are supposed to facilitate the deepening of the decentralisation process in the district are generally weak, let alone help to enhance good governance. This problem within the district leads to the politicisation of issues that affect the communities. Meanwhile, good governance is supposed to flow from a shared ethos or culture, as well as from systems and structures. It cannot be reduced to a set of rules, or achieved fully by compliance with a set of requirements. This spirit or ethos of good governance is rarely expressed or demonstrated in the behaviour of some community members.

The challenges to decentralisation in general have made some authors like Crook and Sverrisson (2001) wonder, whether or not decentralisation is able to deliver real benefits in service delivery and governance. The two authors conclude that the development of more 'pro-poor' policies or poverty reduction outcomes clearly lacks any convincing evidence, particularly the perceived impact of decentralisation on beneficiary participation and empowerment. The question

that arises is, has the practice of the system of decentralization in our local government concept led to good governance in the Kwahu North District?

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was to examine the impact of decentralisation in the governance of the Kwahu North District.

The specific objectives of this study were to:

- analyse the people's understanding of decentralisation at the local level in the district;
- find out the roles of the various stakeholders in the decentralisation process in the district;
- find out whether there is good governance through the practice of decentralisation in the district;
- examine communities' understanding of the indicators of good governance in the district;
- discuss the achievements and challenges of decentralisation and good governance in the district and;
- make recommendations towards the enhancement of good governance through the practice of decentralisation.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- What is communities' understanding of the concept of decentralisation at the local level in the district?
- What are the roles of the various stakeholders in the decentralisation process in the district?
- Has there been good governance through the practice of decentralisation in the district?
- What is communities' understanding of the indicators of good governance in the district?
- What are the achievements and challenges of decentralisation and good governance in the district?
- What recommendations can be made towards the enhancement of decentralisation and good governance in the district?

Significance of the study

There has been a paradigm shift in government towards a more participatory form of governance. An examination of successes and failures of this intervention would assist in the formulation of more successful strategies to improve the performance of District Assemblies in Ghana.

The importance of decentralisation as a key to good governance cannot be over emphasized. Even though a lot has been done on decentralisation, the study seeks to find out people's level of understanding of decentralisation and good

governance to guide policy makers in their conceptualisation in development management. Again, it is also important to assess the decentralisation concept as practised in Ghana and how this system of administration can lead to good governance in the Kwahu North District.

Organisation of the study

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter One deals with introduction, which focuses on the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives, significance of the study, and organisation of the study. Chapter Two reviews the literature on the concept of decentralisation and local government. It also examines the concept of good governance, its features and how decentralisation is linked to good governance.

Chapter Three deals with the methodology, presents the study area, study population, sampling procedures, sources of data, instrumentation and data collection, and methods of data analysis. Chapter Four looks at the results and discussions of the study. The last chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter reviews the emerging view of decentralisation in local governance discourse, which is increasingly recognising the importance of participation in development programmes. In this chapter, we begin by seeking an understanding of the concept of decentralisation and review the merits and demerits of the concept. The concept of local governance is also discussed focusing on accountability and transparency at the local level. The chapter also reviews the indicators of good governance.

Decentralisation

Decentralisation means different things to different people, and a variety of motivations can be uncovered for the recent attempts to decentralise planning and administration in developing countries (Rondinelli & Cheema, 1983). The ‘transfer of authority to plan, make decisions and manage public functions from a higher level of government to any individual, organisation or agency at a lower level’, provides a basic working definition of decentralization (Rondinelli, 1981: 137)

The concept of decentralisation is based on certain premises as listed by Rondinelli and Cheema (1997) and Von Brot (2001), which include the following:

- The herculean task in development cannot be tackled alone by the central government whose resources are limited, and that the task of development of necessity involves the mobilisation of the whole nation.
- Locally felt needs can be properly identified only by local communities; and it is they alone who can effectively plan their realisation. A corollary of this viewpoint is that central government is too far off to appreciate the pressing needs of the vast rural areas.
- Centrally formulated development schemes face risk of failure of execution and realisation or rejection at the local levels if the communities are not involved in the planning process.

Rondinelli et al (1983) define decentralisation as the transfer of responsibility for planning, management, resource raising and allocation from the central government and its agencies to field units of central government ministries or agencies, subordinate units or levels of government, semi-autonomous public authorities or corporations, area-wide regional or functional authorities or non-governmental private or voluntary organisation. Smith (1985:1) sees “decentralisation as the delegation of power to lower levels in a territorial hierarchy, whether the hierarchy is one of governments within a state or offices within a large-scale organisation”. Smith’s (1985) view does not recognise ‘functionally-based delegation’ (re-delegating an authority within a particular function), a conception that might not find favour with Rondinelli (1981).

According to Olowu (2001), decentralisation is a relative, complex and multidimensional process. It is relative in that it describes the distribution of state resources (responsibility, finance, personnel or discretionary authority) between various institutional actors within the state and/or society against some normative mode in space or time. It is a complex process in that it incorporates and is impacted upon by political, economic, institutional and cultural factors. Moreover, programmes of decentralisation are a mixture of centralization, privatization, deconcentration and in some cases devolution. Finally, decentralisation is a multidimensional process that defines the distribution of power and resources between state and society, the executive and other branches of the government, at micro level between central and local governments, central government and their field administrations, central/local governments and non-governmental entities, as well as at higher levels between governmental units within a federal or international system.

Maddick (1966) defines decentralisation as the delegation of authority adequate for discharge of specified functions to staff of a central department who are situated outside the headquarters. Given the rationale behind this concept, it is not surprising that various attempts have been made in some developing countries to create decentralised institutional framework. Thus, decentralisation is seen as complementing the process and functions that are naturally centralized.

In such a framework as Maddick (1966) puts it, local authorities provide the opportunity for local people to participate in local decision and local schemes within general national policies and to act above all as local centres of initiative

and activity conducive to development from close association with the people of a particular area arises a detailed understanding not only of their needs, but also of the long-term potentials of the area. The planning of this potential development can be carried out in far greater detail by the people in the area, who are primarily and particularly concerned with its welfare.

The above view lends support to the argument that there is a need to create a development oriented decentralised framework which will enable local government institutions to organise and ensure the maintenance of development projects created through local initiative. Undoubtedly, such a framework will provide the tools for local authorities to make worthwhile contributions at local level towards national development.

The concept of decentralisation to foster development from below may take the form of an institutional framework within which local authorities and other decentralised bodies would provide the essential support needed to promote social and economic development throughout the entire nation. Nsarko (1964) shares the view that every state in the world today has a system of local government. The form it takes depends on the nature of the society in which it works and the conception of the people it serves. However, one principle is common: power is given to a local body to carry out functions within the locality.

The nature of power ceded to lower levels of government determines the form of decentralisation being practised. The forms of decentralisation found in the literature are discussed in the next section.

Forms of decentralisation

Decentralisation in the literature has also been defined according to the degree of delegation and autonomy of local actors, and who these local actors are. It may be categorised into territorial and functional decentralisation (United Nations, 1965; Rondinelli, 1981; Smith, 1985). For the purpose of this study, we follow three popular typologies of decentralisation namely; deconcentration, delegation and devolution as identified in Rondinelli and Nellis (1986). This typology is based on the degree of discretion and responsibility given to local authorities (Smith, 1985).

Functional decentralisation refers to a shift in the distribution of powers between various authorities that operate in parallel. In some countries, a single ministry of education is responsible for all aspects of public education. A move to split such a body into the ministry of basic education and a separate ministry of higher education could be called functional decentralisation. Territorial decentralisation, in contrast, refers to a redistribution of control among different geographic tiers of government such as nations, states/provinces, districts and schools. Here, there is a transfer of power from higher to lower levels (Bray, 2003).

Three forms of decentralisation are focused on in this review mainly for two reasons. First, they are closely related to one another conceptually: they belong to the generic form of decentralisation that can be referred to as intergovernmental or intra-governmental decentralisation. While market decentralisation or privatisation may be related in some sense to efforts to

decentralise, they raise several other issues relating to the management of national economies that are beyond the scope of this review. Second, and more importantly, these three concepts are usually referred to in government policy documents on decentralisation, especially in African countries (Rondinelli, 1981; Smith, 1985).

In discussing forms of decentralisation, there are some important issues that are discussed in the literature. Firstly, one must distinguish between the nature of power that is being transferred and therefore classify the functions that the 'decentralised unit' can effectively perform. Secondly, it is important to consider the institutional nature of the decentralised unit, in order to differentiate between the extent of control that the central government, continues to exercise over the decentralised unit. Asibuo (1992) reiterates this concern by explaining that different approaches to decentralisation are distinguishable primarily by the extent to which authority to plan, decide and manage is transferred from the central government to other up- country organisations and the amount of autonomy granted to these organisations in carrying out such task.

Deconcentration is a form of decentralisation that involves only a minimum power transfer. It involves the shifting of workload from a central government ministry to its field staff without transferring corresponding authority to make decision on the spot (Asibuo, 1992). It is a redistribution of routine administrative functions between offices dependent on the central government (Alfonso, 2001). It refers to the dispersion of activities, previously carried out by the central government, to local bodies, while the centre retains control over

decision-making so that local officials remain accountable to the central administration. As a result, local authorities are able to make very few decisions without referring to the centre. The centre retains basic decision making powers in this limited horizontal distribution of functions.

According to Olowu (1988), the primary objective of deconcentration is the efficiency and effectiveness of the central administrative system, whereas the primary consideration of devolution is political-popular participation and empowerment. Deconcentration (or administrative decentralization) is said to occur when powers are devolved to appointees of the central government in the local arena. In contrast, political decentralisation (also called democratic decentralisation) involves the transfer of power to actors or institutions that are accountable to the population in their jurisdiction.

Delegation refers to the transfer of decision-making authority from the central administration to local authorities for pre-defined activities. It usually involves the distribution of fiscal resources to the local level, accompanied by specific instructions about their allocation. Since the central administration retains the power of re-allocating resources, this form of decentralisation has some of the characteristics of a principal agent relationship, with the central government as the principal and the local governments as the agents. None of the units to which powers are either 'deconcentrated' or 'delegated' are elected institutions. They also do not have powers to reformulate policies that affect their status or position within the broader decision-making structure, and can only take decisions on subjects transferred to them.

Devolution refers to the transfer of significant fiscal and allocative decisions to local authorities who gain full responsibility for them, with no interference from the central administration (Mawhood, 1983; Olowu, 1988; Anderson, 1995). The issue most discussed in the decentralisation literature is the concept of devolution. This type of decentralisation is qualitatively different from the previous two because local authorities gain virtually complete control over resource allocation and generally become accountable to local constituencies which should increase decision-making responsiveness to local needs. Devolving powers to lower levels involves the creation of a realm of decision-making in which a variety of lower-level actors can exercise a certain degree of autonomy (Booth, 1985; Smoke, 1993).

However, decentralisation cannot be classified into watertight compartments because in practice, public administration systems reveal a mixture of both elements - devolution and de concentration. Decentralisation that treats local accountability and discretionary powers centrally is commonly referred to as political decentralisation. If local authorities, whether appointed or elected, are made accountable to their superiors, the resulting reform can be termed deconcentration. This is because elections and funding arrangements are often structured so as to make elected officials upwardly accountable. When powers are transferred to lower-level actors who are downwardly accountable, even when they are appointed, the reform is tantamount to political decentralisation. Critical to understanding the process, then, is an empirical examination of the structures of accountability in which actors are located (Agrawal & Ribot, 1999).

The ability of accountable local authorities and governments to make and implement decisions is in some sense the key feature of any effective decentralisation. This ability, which defines the responsiveness of local authorities, requires discretionary powers. Accountability or sanction beckons leaders to respond; responsiveness is a function of discretionary powers (Ribot, 2004). If local governments always must seek approval from superiors before undertaking an action, their downward accountability and ability to respond are attenuated. Discretionary authority for local governments is an integral part of responsiveness in any decentralisation reform. If central governments grant local governments the rights to make and implement decisions but in practice withhold resources or otherwise check local ability to do so, then discretionary powers have not been effectively transferred.

Decentralised institutions are viewed as likely to perform better on the criteria of efficiency and equity for several reasons. Local authorities are presumed to have better time and place-specific information which leads to better-targeted policies and lower transaction costs (World Bank, 1997). Decentralisation improves competition among jurisdictions and promotes greater political participation.

By channeling greater benefits to local authorities and local peoples, decentralisation is believed to provide incentives for local populations to maintain and protect local resources. Bringing government decision-making closer to citizens, through decentralisation, is widely believed to increase public-sector accountability and therefore effectiveness (Fox & Agranda, 1996; World Bank,

1997). These arguments imply that the purported benefits of decentralisation are achieved through the establishment “of democratic mechanisms that allow local governments to discern the needs and preferences of their constituents, as well as provide a way for these constituents to hold local governments accountable to them” (Smoke, 1999; 10). When these downwardly accountable local authorities also have discretionary powers-that is, a domain of local autonomy-over significant local matters, there is good reason to believe that the positive outcomes suggested by the previous theories will follow (Agrawal & Ribot, 1999).

We can infer, then, that if institutional arrangements include local authorities who represent and are accountable to the local population and who hold discretionary powers over public resources, then the decisions they make will likely lead to more efficient and equitable outcomes in comparison to the outcomes of decisions made by central authorities that are less representative or accountable.

Fundamentally, decentralisation aims to achieve one of the central aspirations of just political governance, democratisation, or the desire that humans should have a say in their own affairs. In this sense, decentralisation is a strategy of governance to facilitate transfers of power closer to those who are most affected by the exercise of power.

According to Conyers (2000:9), most decentralisation efforts have both explicit and implicit objectives. Those objectives likely to appeal to the general public, such as local empowerment and administrative efficiency, are generally

explicitly stated, while less popular ones, such as increasing central control and passing the buck, are unlikely to be voiced.

Benefits of decentralisation

This section of the review focuses on the benefits or outcomes that decentralization is believed to produce. While decentralisation may or may not result from the pursuit of these benefits, the said benefits emerge frequently in political discourse.

“Devolution” and “delegation”, if carried out properly, can make development programmes effective. However, decentralisation in developing countries has mostly taken the form of deconcentration. In Ghana, one major act of “devolution” was the creation of the district assemblies and the transfer of resources and power to these local governments (Asante & Aryee, 2001). However, this does not mean that decentralisation has improved the efficiency of the administration of rural development. As suggested by some authors in the literature, the benefits of such decentralisation have been mostly enjoyed by the dominant power groups (Mawhood, 1993; Crook & Manor, 1998; Olowu & Wunsch, 1995). According to them, genuine decentralisation of resources and power cannot take place at the local level unless the entire structure of development planning changes. In decentralised power structure, plans are formulated by the rural people at the grassroots and not imposed from above.

Decentralisation of power can facilitate empowerment of people. Some writers suggest that local communities should be empowered and that this is likely

to result in sustainable development. The features of normal bureaucracy which include centralisation of authority, especially financial control and standardisation of rules, recommendations and actions may not facilitate the empowerment of people. Hence, it is felt that the participation of beneficiaries in the formulation, implementation and maintenance of programmes is necessary.

The justification of the local community's participation is based on the arguments that local people organize best around the problems they consider most important such as in assessing needs and finding solutions; local people make rational economic decisions in the context of their own environment and circumstances providing appropriately for the risks associated with the change; and that local participation also ensures voluntary commitment of resources and local control over the quality and distribution of benefits.

Participation is currently a key aspect of most discussions on decentralisation and is often uttered in the same sentence (Balogun, 2000; Sharma, 2000; Engberg-Pedersen, 1995:1). Participation is believed to make plans more relevant, give people more self-esteem, and to help legitimise the planning process and the state as a whole (Conyers, 1990:16). Decentralisation is argued for on the grounds that 'public participation and citizen involvement in programmes is a good in and of itself' (Menizen-Dick & Knox, 1999:5).

Participation of rural populations has become a core principle in natural resource management, and more recently decentralisation has become a commonly cited means of achieving it. Participatory approaches to natural resource management are lauded for their potential contribution to economic

efficiency, equity and development just as is decentralisation writ large. These accolades, however, need to be taken with caution.

While intuitively obvious, there is little empirical evidence to support these claims. Rural communities are usually highly differentiated by class, caste, livelihood, gender, age, religion, race, origins, and ethnicity. While planners have treated communities as uniform in the past, this is rarely the case (Painter et al. 1994; Agrawal, 1997; Berry, 1989; 1993; Sharpe, 1998; Ribot, 1995; 1998). It is due to this diversity that questions of community representation arise. Achieving many of the equity, efficiency, environment and development benefits of participation is predicated on devolving decision-making powers and responsibilities to some individual or body representing or within the local community. This requires representative and accountable authorities or groups to whom powers can be devolved or the need to create such authorities.

Decentralisation, even in its devolutionary form, is not a panacea, however. Although some forms of decentralisation may improve equity *within* regions, they may worsen it *across* regions. Cross-regional equity can only be addressed by a central government with re-distributive powers. Indeed, decentralisation without some type of central government re-distributive formula would probably exacerbate existing regional inequalities.

Governance

International development has been characterised by periodic thematic shifts in the ideas that give meaning and direction to the types of outcomes that

donor agencies and states wish to support (Abrahamsen, 2000). Once institutionalised, these new ideas occupy a dominant position in development management and public administration, before being superseded by, or coalescing with, other concepts and applications (Escobar, 1995). “Good governance” is one such idea.

Governance refers to the “...formation and stewardship of the formal and informal rules that regulate the public realm, the arena in which the state as well as economic and societal actors interact to make decisions” (Hyden et al., 2004,16), or how “operational rules shape specific outcomes” (Hyden et al., 2004: 4). Beall’s (2005) broader definition of governance is important; the term can refer to forms of democratic politics, but also to the power relations that exist between the state and civil society (Harriss et al., 2004).

The norms and expectations that constitute a given regime of governance are shaped by six overlapping principles that are proposed as being applicable at several levels: global, national, international, regional, and local. These principles permeate into governmental, non-governmental, and corporate sector institutions. They are: openness, participation, accountability effectiveness, coherence, civic peace with openness, institutions must improve the public confidence in them by conducting their practices in a transparent manner and in language accessible and comprehensible for the larger public.

As regards, participation, institutions should adopt an inclusive approach when developing, implementing and evaluating policies. Stakeholders must be involved in the decision-making process.

On accountability, institutions must provide clarity about their policies to the larger society and take responsibility for their impacts. On the issue of effectiveness, policies must be clear and timely and should correspond to clear objectives. Next, in the area of coherence, policies and practices should be coherent and easily understood, given the increasing diversity and complexity of demographic and institutional scales at which the institutions are expected to function.

With regard to civic peace, it refers to the importance of mutual respect, human dignity, and rights among groups in society (EC Commission, 2001; Graham et al., 2003; Hyden, 1998; UNDP, 1997). These are criteria that offer a set of guidelines against which to assess particular policies resulting from planned international development efforts and state policy, and they are subject to debate and revision (UNDP, 2002).

“Good governance” is an umbrella term for any package of public sector reforms designed to create lasting and positive changes in accordance with the principles outlined above, although it can involve actions taken in civil society as well, and such reforms are frequently promoted by international aid organisations. Deng (1998) argues that good governance also includes respect for indigenous identities, structures, values, institutions and heritage, yet this may appear contradictory, since a transformation of tradition is also envisaged by some of its architects, particularly with regard to indigenous peoples and where the formulation of local institutions radically change social and political norms.

Governance reforms have frequently involved changing the scale at which institutions operate. Harriss et al. (2004: 2) point to the widespread “scalar reconfiguration of state power in favour of regionalisation and localisation” and the diffusion of power to “state, market and civil society actors at local, national, regional and global scales”. The political decentralisation of decision-making powers downward to local institutions is an important feature of the governance approach since it improves, at least in principle, both accountability and voice for local people and their representatives (World Bank, 1992). It is this reconfiguration that forms the central object of inquiry for the papers in this collection.

As a policy goal, the quest for “good governance” also requires new political and judicial measures and instruments to be implemented. Political reforms in developing countries in the late 1990s have allowed rural communities to protest government abuses of power with more confidence, and local government officials are more obliged to listen to them under the new operating conditions of state-society relations (McCarthy, 2004). Decentralisation of political decision-making alters the social and economic landscape by changing both the form and the scale of decision-making processes and the financial and human resources available to local actors (Bebbington et al., 2000).

Good governance and planned development

The articulation of “good governance” by development agencies overtly acknowledges the past failure of development policy. In the early post-colonial

years, policies of economic liberalism failed to take hold partly because of the lack of focus on governance reforms (Harriss et al., 2004). More attention, however, is now focused on governance and institutions, particularly by the World Bank. The Bank's 1989 and 1992 reports launched an explicit commitment to "good governance" and to efficient and accountable public sector management, while subsequent directives have stressed the importance of citizen participation in government (World Bank, 1989; World Bank, 1992; World Bank, 1997). This has only occurred after an internal struggle in the Bank about the degree to which interventionism in the political arena was desirable or possible (Doornbos 2003; Piron & Evans, 2004).

Reviewing a broad range of evidence, Mansuri and Rao (2004) report that around seven billion dollars has now been spent by the World Bank on community-based and community-driven development efforts worldwide, although with little result in terms of poverty alleviation. They argue the reasons for the failure of so many programmes lies with poor government commitments to creating an enabling institutional environment, and the low accountability of local leadership. Much longer project time horizons, and the tailoring of local programmes to the specific socio-political context, are essential (Ribot et al., 2004).

Abrahamsen (2000) offers a harsher critique, suggesting that the struggle to define and enact development will fail where there is an *a priori* determination of economic models and a "relegation of constituents' preferences to second-order importance" by external agencies. If this is visible in donor aid packages or

government reforms, then it silences the possibility that the majority in developing countries may favour economic and political solutions that contradict with good governance. This is an important point, and the papers in this collection offer a range of perspectives to justify her assertion. To this end, most common property resource management projects in developing countries based on imposed blueprints have failed precisely because they are not locally attractive and well adapted, while environmental policies in countries initiated and directed by central government have not yielded sustainable outcomes in marginal environments because the state has not yet relinquished control over policy formulation.

Decentralisation and local governance

As part of the emerging concerns of ‘good governance,’ the policy of devolution of power and authority to sub-national governments, commonly referred to as ‘decentralisation,’ has been popularised in developing countries and many aid agencies support it. Decentralisation is a gradual process and is expected to enhance the opportunities for participation by placing more power and resources at a closer, more familiar, and more easily influenced level of government. In environments with poor traditions of citizen participation, decentralisation is perceived to be an important first step in creating regular, predictable opportunities for citizen –state interaction.

Within Africa, decentralisation has also been opted for as a solution to political challenges that seem to threaten national cohesion. Countries with a

history of linguistic, ethnic, tribal, and religious tensions have often found the federal approach to national governance as most suited for national harmony.

Despite the political ideals around decentralisation, however, African political systems show little record of success in this sphere. To understand why this is so, a number of fundamentals ought to be appreciated. Irrespective of the political pronouncements in favour of decentralisation, a given country's laws, rules and regulations that govern the interaction of various actors in the political arena significantly influence the nature of the relationships that emerge and whether those relationships adhere to the people's defined norms of good governance. Good governance, a canon that is associated with decentralisation, is also about power and authority. Although people are the means and the end of development, they have different amounts of power and resources, and different interests.

In nearly all societies, the needs and preferences of the wealthy and powerful are well reflected in official policy goals. But this is rarely true of the poor and the marginalised, who struggle to get their voices heard. And yet democracy, in general, and decentralisation, in particular, must accommodate the interests of the majority and minority, the poor and the rich, the privileged and the disadvantaged.

In the above context, a government that ignores the needs of large sections of the population in setting and implementing policy is not perceived to be a capable government. The process of strengthening institutions, particularly institutions that enhance the democratic tradition, must, begin by bringing the

government closer to the people. Basically, this means bringing popular voice into policy making. In the right setting, it also means greater decentralisation of central power, authority and resources

The new local government system of Ghana

The present local government set-up emerged from the local government reform of the government of the PNDC in 1988. The reform was launched as part of the government's reform programme to restore economic stability and growth after a serious decline in the economy in the late seventies and the early eighties. The reform contained a strong participatory element in order to make local government a more effective tool for local development.

The decentralisation policy was designed to achieve a fundamental restructuring of the machinery of government to create a new democracy which will bring about greater efficiency and productivity in the state machinery through the involvement and effective participation by the people at all levels in administration. Asibuo (1999) observed that the intention was also to increase the capacity of the local communities to identify their own needs and priorities and explore options to meet these needs as far as possible for themselves through the mobilisation of resources that they command. It was to demonstrate this commitment to decentralisation that 110 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies were created in 1988 as the highest political authorities at the district level with extensive responsibilities of decentralised administration and development. The District Assemblies are regarded as the pillars upon which

people's power would be erected are the focal points of development at the village and town levels and the solid foundations for participatory democracy throughout the country. In 2004, 28 new districts were created to bring the number of districts in Ghana to 138. Now (2008) the districts are 170 (6 Metropolitan Assemblies, 40 Municipal Assemblies and 124 District Assemblies) with the creation of 28 additional ones in 2007. The idea is to bring governance to the doorstep of the people and enhance the decentralisation process.

The legal framework for local Governance

The main features of the decentralisation policy are enshrined in chapter 20 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. It states that: "Ghana shall have a system of local government and administration which shall as far as practicable, be decentralised". The legal basis for the implementation of decentralisation was further broadened by revising PNDC Law 207, 1988 into the Local Government Act (Act 462 of 1993). Other legislative provisions that facilitated the implementation of the decentralisation policy included;

- Civil Service Law, 1993 (PNDC Law 327);
- The District Assemblies Common Fund Act 1993 (Act 455).
- The National Development Planning Commission Act 1994 (Act 479);
- The National Development Planning Systems Act, 1994 (Act 480);
- The Local Government (Urban, Zonal and Town Council and Unit Committees) Legislative Instrument of 1994, LI 1589; and
- Financial Administration Act 2003 (654)

- Local Government Service Act 2003 (656)
- Internal Audit Agency Act 2003 (Act 658)
- Public Procurement Act 2003 (Act 663)
- Model Standing Orders for District, Municipal and Metropolitan Assemblies

The 1992 Constitution and the Local Government Act (Act 462 of 1993) have a five-tier structure for the Metropolitan Assemblies while the Municipal Assemblies and District Assemblies have a four-tier structure as shown in Figure 1. The sub-district structures for the Metropolitan Assemblies are the Sub-Metropolitan District Councils (SMDCs) and Town Councils (TCs) the Municipal Assemblies have Zonal Councils (ZCs) while the District Assemblies have Urban/Town/Area Councils (UTACs). The Unit Committees (UCs) form the lowest layer of the sub-district structures for the three categories of District Assemblies. The sub-district structures were created by Legislative Instrument (LI 1589 of 1994).

There are seven main features peculiar to the new local government system. They are: a non – partisan decentralised system to ensure consensus – building and promote development, the transfer of 86 functions and responsibilities from the central government to the District Assemblies, composition of the DAs made up of elected representatives- the DCE – the chief representative of the central government in the district, MPs whose constituencies fall within the area of authority of the DA and 30% of the total membership of the DA appointed by the president in consultation with traditional authorities and

interest groups. In other words, the DAs like the Unit Committees (UCs) and unlike the Regional Co-ordinating Councils (RCCs) and Urban, Zonal and Town Councils, are a hybrid form of decentralised authority combining elected and appointed members.

Others features are: the placement of 22 departments and organisations under the DAs to provide technical and managerial back-up to the DAs (PNDCL 207, 1988). However, Act 462 (1993) reduced the number of departments to 16 for Metropolitan Assemblies, 13 for Municipal Assemblies and 11 for District Assemblies, the establishment of a Local Government Service by an Act of Parliament (Act 656 passed in 2003).

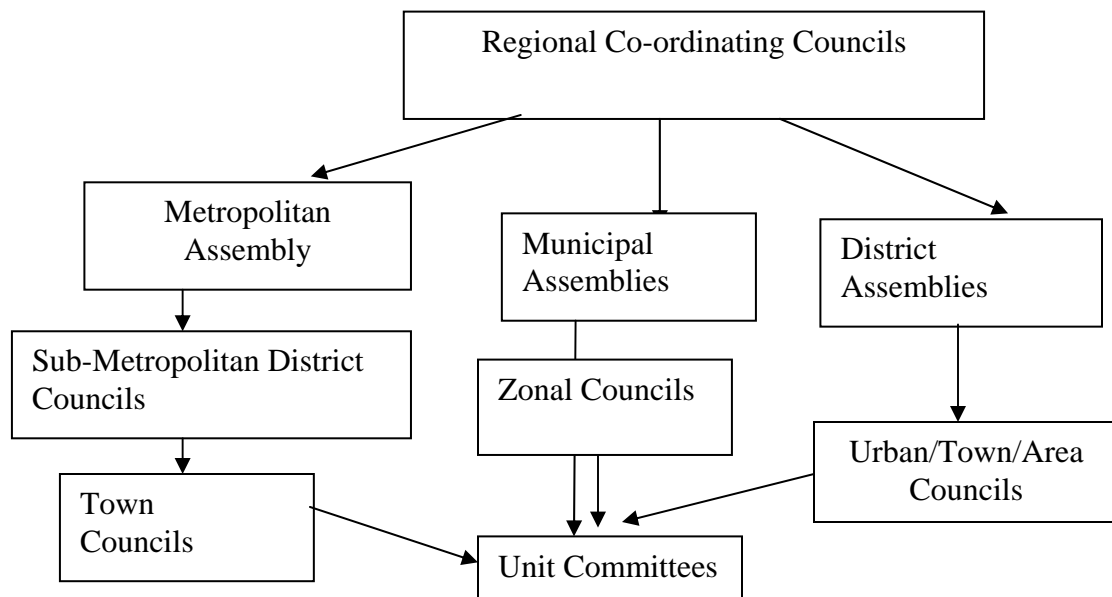


Figure 1: The new local government system

Source: Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (1996)

The rest of the features are: the bottom – up planning and composite budgeting systems which have not fully materialised and the identification of

sources of revenue for the DAs and the expansion of their financial base through the establishment of a District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF) into which not less than 5% of total government revenue are paid. Therefore, within the general framework of the available literature, this study sought to examine the impact of decentralisation in the governance of the Kwahu North District in the context of the meaning of decentralisation at the local level, roles of various stakeholders, achievements and challenges of decentralisation and governance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the study area, research design, study population, and sample size and the sampling procedure used in the study. It also discusses the research instruments, pre- testing, data collection procedure and data analysis.

Study area

The Kwahu North District is located between latitudes $6^{\circ} 40^{\prime}$ N and $7^{\circ} 10^{\prime}$ N; longitudes $0^{\circ} 40^{\prime}$ E and $0^{\circ} 10^{\prime}$ E; at the north-western corner of the Eastern Region. The district is located in the northern part of the region. It covers an area of 5,040 sq km and is the largest district in the region in terms of landmass. It shares boundaries to the south with the Kwahu South District, to the east with the Volta River, to the west with two districts in the Ashanti Region, precisely, the Sekyere Afram Plains and Asante-Akim North districts; to the north with two districts in the Brong Ahafo Region, namely; Sene and Atebubu.

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2002), the Kwahu North District has a population of 143,020. The estimated population in 2004, using the inter censal growth rate for the district of 3.6%, is 161,754. The population is male dominant with the males representing 53% and the women making up 47%.

The higher percentage of male population is due to the fact that the district is a typical migrant destination. Most of the people in the district are migrants from the Kwahu South District, the Volta Region, the Ashanti Region and the Northern Ghana who have been attracted to the area basically for employment in the agricultural sector and it is usually the men who migrate.

There are 544 towns including villages and hamlets spread over the 5040 sq km land area. (Ghana Statistical Service, 2002) Hundreds of these villages are on islands and can only be reached by boat or canoe. Figure 2 shows the study settlements in the Kwahu North District in the regional and national context.

The district is divided into two constituencies; Afram Plains North and the Afram Plains South constituencies. In each constituency, for the purpose of the study, the communities were divided into three blocks. The blocks were based on multiple paramountcy, single paramountcy and non-paramountcy. Agyaade, Akroso and Yamuoso (VRA settlement towns)-Ntonaboma fall under a multiple paramountcy which coincidentally are in the Afram Plains North constituency; Maame Krobo, under the Pitiko stool lands with a large land size and a tribal mix and Amankwa constitute a single paramountcy respectively, while Semanhyia (Akan) dominated population), Donkorkrom, Bebuso and Kwaekese under Bukuruwa stool lands (Ewe dominated population) formed the non-paramountcy. Owing to the widespread nature of the population, the district has a low population density of 19 persons per square kilometre.



FIGURE: MAP OF KWAHU NORTH IN REGIONAL CONTEXT

Figure 2: Kwahu North District in regional context

Source: Kwahu North District Assembly

The major ethnic groups are the Akans (Twi) in the west, Ewes in the east and along the banks of the Volta Lake while people of Northern extraction including the Krachis are found in most of the farming communities.

There are also the decentralised structures including the District Assembly and its sub-structures and the traditional governance structures in the district. Figure 3 shows the decentralised structure of the Kwahu North District Assembly and its sub-structures. The District Assembly has nine Area Councils, namely; Ekye Amanfrom Area Council, Forifori Area Council, Tease Area Council Area Council, Semanhyia Area Council, Donkorkrom Area Council, Amankwaa Area Council, Ntonaboma Area Council, Nyakuikope Area Council and Mem Chemfre Area Council. There are also 49 electoral areas; 22 of them are in the Afram Plains South constituency while there are 27 in the Afram Plains North Constituency.

The Kwahu North District forms part of the Kwahu Traditional Council. The Kwahumanhene is the president of the Kwahu Traditional Council comprising; the Pitiko, Nkwatia, Abetifi, Bukuruwa and Nkami stool lands. All these stool lands are Kwahus who owe their allegiance to the Kwahu Omanhene- the overlord of the Kwahus. There are 190 Unit Committees in the district.

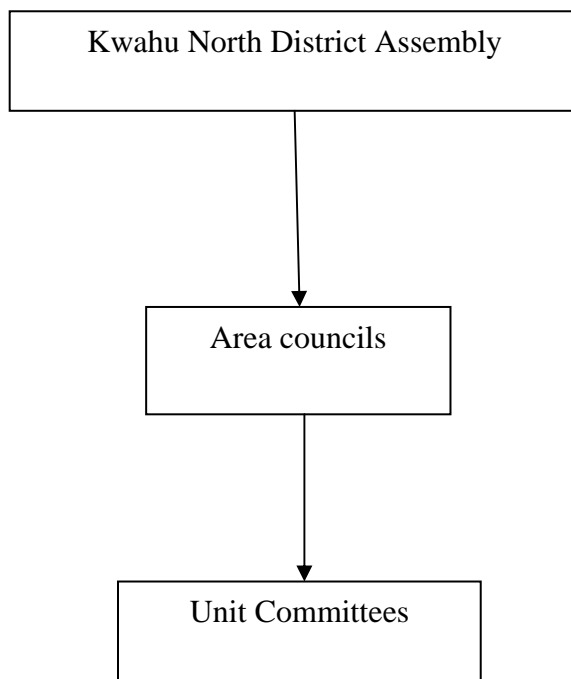


Figure 3: Decentralised structures in the Kwahu North District

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (1996)

The Pitikohene has the largest portion of land in the district and he is the only resident chief in the district. The others, Nkwantiahene (Saanahene), Abetifihene (Adontenhene), and Bukuruwahene are not resident in the district. These chiefs have their representatives in the various communities and only come to the district to observe traditional rites and also to mobilise royalties from their tenants.

Traditionally, the people of Ntonaboma who are also part of the district owe their allegiance to the Brong Ahafo Regional House of Chiefs. The Ntonaboma area has two separate paramountcies: Agyaade and Akroso. Yamouso

and Supom, which are supposed to be part of them, owe their allegiance to the Kwahus.

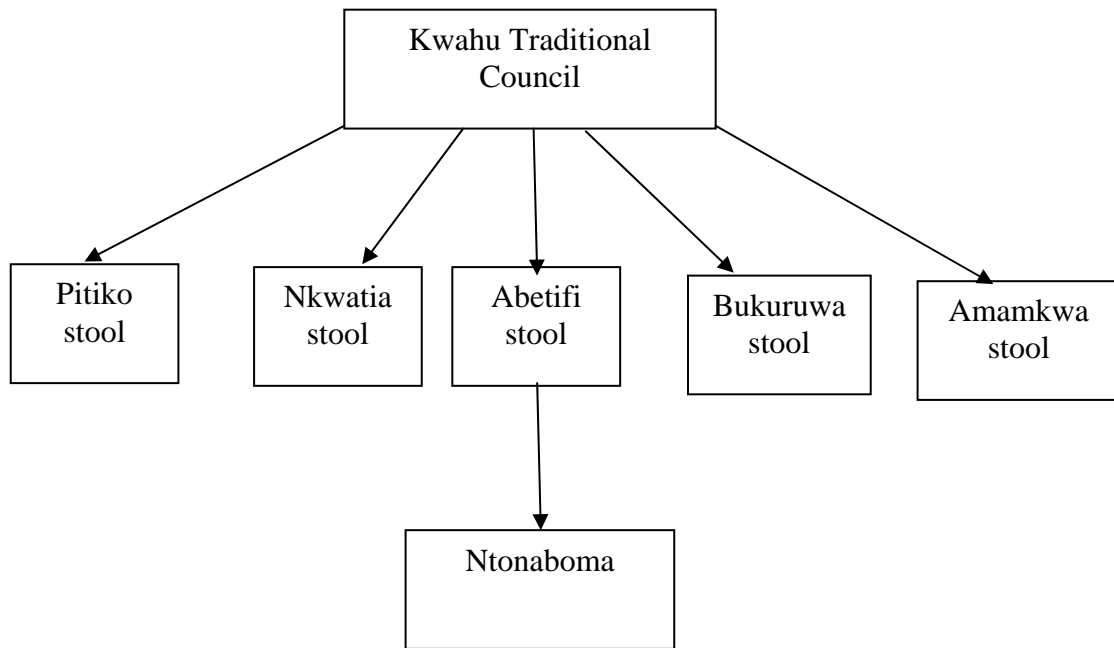


Figure 4: Traditional governance structure in the Kwahu North District

Source: Author's construct, 2009

Research design

The descriptive survey research design was adopted. A descriptive survey research is one in which the researcher is interested in studying certain characteristics, attitudes, feelings, beliefs, motivations, behaviour, opinions, etc of a group of people or items (Aborisade, 1977). In descriptive survey research, the researcher is interested in studying the characteristics of a population. Perception, just like attitude, is a hypothetical construct. One can only measure perception through its expression in what a person does and says (Oppenheim,

1992). Thus, inference is given as the main tool of tapping perception and attitudes (Gatumu 1998). It was against this background that the descriptive survey was chosen for the study.

Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (1990) have explained that descriptive research studies are designed to obtain information concerning the current status of phenomena. Among others, the descriptive design was chosen because it has the advantage of producing good amount of responses from a wide range of people. Also, in-depth follow-up questions can be asked and items that are unclear to the respondents can be explained using descriptive design (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993).

Study population

The population for this study involved institutions and communities. The institutional level included all members of the various structures of the Kwahu North District Assembly, namely; the Assembly members, Area Council chairpersons, Unit Committee members, the District Assembly core staff, heads of Decentralised Department (DDs) and NGOs. These constituted key informants in the study. At the community level, heads of households, chief and elders and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) constituted the community members in the study.

Sample size and sampling procedure

This study used both the probability and non- probability sampling. For probability sampling, each member has an equal chance of being selected to

respond to the research questions. It is often associated with surveys (Saunders et al, 1999). The probability sampling method was used to select the community members (heads of households, chiefs and elders and Community Based Organisations) while non probability sampling was used to select key informants. The study population (as shown in Table 1) is 12,723. The expected sample size was 1 percent of the study population. The justification for this was that there are certain non-definitive practices among social researchers that could be adopted. One such practice suggests that if the population is a few hundreds, a 40 per cent or more samples is desirable. If many hundreds, a 20 per cent would be alright. However, if a few thousands a 10 per cent will do, and if several thousands (and this applies to the size of this study's population) a 5 per cent or less could be used (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000, Rubin & Rabbie, 2001).

Table1: Type of respondents, population and sample size

Type of respondent	Population	Expected sample	Actual sample	Response rate (%)
Community members	12,706	127	119	93.7
DA core staff	5	5	5	100.0
NG O officials	3	3	3	100.0
Heads of DDs	9	9	9	100.0
Total	12,723	144	136	94.4

Source: Field Data, 2008

A sample was drawn from the population of heads of households (community members) and District Assembly core staff, Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) and Heads of Decentralized Departments (key informants). Following the characteristics of the population, a stratified random sampling method was used to select the sample. Indeed, stratified sample random sampling is a modification of a simple random sampling in which the population is divided into two or more strata based on one or more attributes of the population (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

At the community level, the district was divided into two constituencies with Donkokrom, Kwaekese, Amankwaa, and Ntonabomaa constituting the Afram Plain North constituency while Bebuso, Samanhyia, and Maame Krobo represented the Afram Plains South constituency as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Name of community and number of respondents

Community	Sample	Percent
Kwaekese	15	11.0
Bebuso	10	7.4
Samanhyia	25	18.4
Amankwa	25	18.4
Donkorkrom	44	32.4
Key informants	17	12.5
Total	136	100.0

*Not part of household interviews

Source: Field Data, 2008

The constituencies were grouped according to multiple paramountcy, single paramountcy and non-paramountcy. Ntonabomaa, Agyaade, Yamuoso, Akroso (VRA Settlement Towns) fall under a multiple paramountcy which coincidentally are in the Afram Plains North constituency; Maame Krobo, under the Pitiku stool lands with a large land size and a tribal mix and Amankwaa constituted a single paramountcy respectively, while Samanhyia (Akan dominated population), Donkokrom, Bebuso and Kwaekese, under the Bukuruwa stool lands (Ewe dominated population) formed the non-paramountcy.

The stratified random sampling was adopted in selecting the sample for the study at the community level so that the study could cover the five stools, namely Pitiko, Nkwatia, Abetifi, Nkami and the Bukuruwa stools. In all, five communities, namely Donkorkrom, Bebuso, Amankwaa, Kwaekese and Semanhyia were covered by the study. Donkorkrom was purposively selected because it is the district capital and the fact that it constitutes not only a sizeable proportion of the total number of the population in the district but also it has diverse ethnic groups across the district. The simple random sampling, the lottery method, was used to select four communities out of the remaining 544 communities. The four communities were selected from the paramountcies.

In this method, pieces of paper were cut using the same measurement and the names of the communities were written on them. Each piece of paper was folded, rolled and put in a container. The pieces of paper were then thoroughly mixed. The rolled papers were then picked one by one without the selector looking into the container. This was, however done with replacement in order to

maintain the same probability for each community to be selected. When one was picked, it was recorded and put back into the container. In the event of the same community being picked twice, the second picking was ignored and the rolled piece of paper returned to the container. This process went on until the targeted four communities were selected.

At the institutional level, the District Assembly core staff, Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) and Heads of Decentralised Departments (key informant) were purposively selected because their numbers were too small for random selection. In all, 136 respondents from the five communities including heads of households, District Assembly core staff, Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs), and Heads of Decentralised Departments were selected.

In addition, a total of three Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) including Chief and elders, trades/business associations, and Chairpersons of Area Councils, Unit Committees and Assembly members were conducted to supplement the results of the questionnaire.

In all, a total of 136 respondents including heads of household and Assembly core staff and Heads of Decentralized Departments and officials of NGOs were covered in the study. Thus, the total sample of 136 fell short of the 144 respondents originally sampled for interviews because of some of the questionnaires totaling eight could not be retrieved.

Research instruments

In this study, data were collected through the use of survey and interviews. The researcher engaged two experienced Research Assistants and six National Service Personnel (Field Assistants). They were trained to administer the instruments for the study. The researcher was however, available to explain the meaning of the items that were unclear to the respondents. Different instruments were used for the various respondents. With the households, questionnaires were used while for the Assembly staff, NGOs and Heads of Departments, questionnaires were also administered. In the case of the Chiefs and Elders, Trades/ business associations, chairpersons of Area Councils, Unit committees and Assembly members, Focus Group Discussion sessions were held with them.

The questionnaire designed for the study was as a survey instrument to elicit people's points of view and establish a profile of decentralisation and good governance in the Kwahu North District. The work of Bobson (1999) was considered during the development of the questionnaires. The modifications and additions to the questionnaire were made within the context of the study. In the case of the concept of decentralisation and good governance at the local level roles of the various stakeholders in the decentralisation process, good governance through the practice of decentralisation communities' understanding of the indicators of good governance in the district; the respondents were asked to respond to rating scales to indicate their level of agreement with each response.

The opportunity for written responses was provided in some parts of the survey, requesting the respondents to share any achievements and challenges of

decentralization and good governance in the district. The comments were recorded and used to enhance the presentation of data and to complement the discussion of the findings.

A focus group discussion guide was used to acquire specific answers to questions referring to chiefs and elders, Assembly Persons and Trade and Business Associations representatives' perceptions of decentralisation and good governance in the district. This allowed for probe into areas on which respondents were unable to expand their ideas. The open-ended questions allowed the respondents freedom to express their ideas about a variety of issues relating to decentralisation and governance in the district.

To complement the survey data, interviews were conducted with a sample of the respondents of each of the five sampled communities in the district. The interviews helped to obtain useful information because they presented an opportunity to ask probing questions. Prior to the beginning of an interview, the researcher remained focused so as not to be sidetracked during the interviewing process. The interviewees were chosen by purposive sampling. The interviews incorporated open-ended questions, which allowed the participant to derive responses from their own perspective. The questions guiding the interview were developed from the review of literature on decentralisation and good governance and modified according to the specific context of the study.

Pre-testing

The instruments for data collection were pre-tested to determine their validity and reliability: validity and reliability are essential to the effectiveness of any data-gathering procedure (Best and Kahn, 1998).

Researchers (Best & Kahn, 1998; Gall et al., 1996; Glesne, 1999) advocated pre-testing the instruments prior to its delivery to participants. The instruments were pre-tested by field assistants on a group of respondents at Tease in the Kwahu North District who were not involved in the main study. These individuals reviewed the instruments, commented on their appropriateness, and made recommendations for change. Their recommendations and suggestions were taken into consideration, and some modifications were made.

Method of data collection

Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data were derived from the answers respondents gave in the questionnaire and the focus group discussion. The secondary data were derived from published documents on decentralisation and governance in Ghana and other countries. Table 3 presents the type of respondent and the instrument used.

Data were collected from heads of households by the use of focus group discussion guide. The six field assistants posed the questions and filled in the questionnaires while the heads of households provided the answers. In the case of non-availability or unwillingness of a head of household to accept to be

interviewed at the time of the survey, the next available household head in the same house willing to be interviewed was used.

At the institutional level, the Coordinating Director, Deputy Coordinating Director, Budget Officer, Planning Officer and Finance Officer), heads of the Decentralised Departments, Presiding Member and representatives of the NGOs were the respondents and the data collection instrument was the questionnaire. The Focus Group Discussions method was also used to investigate the key decentralisation and good governance issues. In all, there were three main groups for the FGDs. These were the Chiefs and elders of Agyaade, Yamuoso, Akroso (Ntonaboma paramountcy) and Maame Krobo in the first instance.

Table 3: Types of respondents and data collection instruments used

Type of respondents	Instrument
Heads of households	Questionnaire
District Assembly core staff	Questionnaire
Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs)	Questionnaire
Heads of Decentralized Departments	Questionnaire
Chief and elders	Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)
Trades/business associations	Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)
Chairpersons of Area Councils, Unit Committees and Assembly Members	Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)

Source: Author's construct, 2008

The second FGDs group included Chairpersons of Area Councils, Unit Committees and Assembly Members of the sampled communities. The third group was made up of Dress Makers and Tailors Association (women's group) and the National Association of Garages (men's group). The first level FGDs took place in the sample communities, the District Assembly Hall and place of work respectively.

The field work started on 10th March, 2008 and ended on 17th March, 2008. The first day was devoted to the recruitment and training of six field assistants and two supervisors. The rest of the period of fieldwork was devoted to the actual interviewing of the respondents and editing of the data by both the field assistants and the supervisors. During this period the researcher was in the field to coordinate activities and to provide the needed logistical support for the field assistants and the supervisors.

Data analysis

The data collected were edited to ensure consistency in the responses. Also, an overview of open-ended responses was done so that responses that expressed similar ideas but were stated differently were put together. Next, both open-ended and closed-ended responses were written out and assigned codes. All the questions in the questionnaire were then coded and computerised. The computerisation was based on the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS). This aspect of the data processing included the definition of variables, keying in data (codes) and editing the data for missing values. Guided by the

research objectives and questions, the data analysis took the form of simple frequency tables, percentages, cross tabulations and figures including bar and pie charts.

Ethical considerations

As this study involved the acquisition of personal information, ethical principles were considered to ensure that all the participants of the study were treated with respect and consideration. For this reason, respondents were sufficiently informed of the kind of information that was being sought.

They were adequately briefed on the reasons for seeking the information. In addition, the participants were adequately educated on how the information generated was going to be used.

They were informed that their participation was voluntary and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Every effort was made to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Furthermore, they were taught how the data collected were going to affect them, both directly and indirectly.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussion emanating from the study. It covers issues such as characteristics of the respondents, nature of relationships between the community and other actors in the decentralisation process, reasons for the nature of relationships, meaning of decentralisation by the type of respondents, basic requirements of decentralisation, effects of decentralisation in the Kwahu North District, roles of main actors in the decentralisation process as well as governance related issues in the study.

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents investigated included sex and age, ethnicity, level of education, length of stay in the community and relationships. These characteristics put the study into context. The minimum and maximum ages were 20 and 75 years respectively, while the mean age was 40 years. This means that the population is a youthful one. The majority (93.4%) of the respondents had their ages between 25 and 59 years.

Sex and age of respondents

About 15 percent of the respondents had their ages between 25 and 29 years and 50 and 54 years. This is followed 14.7 percent between 35 and 39 years as shown in table 4 of the 136 respondents, 98 were males and 36 were females. About 81.6% and 92.0% of the males and females respectively were aged between 25 and 54 years. The majority (72.0%) of the respondents were males. This was expected because most household heads, cores staff of District Assembly and traditional leaders were males.

Table 4: Age of respondent by sex

Age (years)	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
20-24	7	7.1	4	10.5	11	8.1
25-29	14	14.3	7	18.4	21	15.4
30-34	14	14.3	4	10.5	18	13.2
35-39	15	15.3	5	13.2	20	14.7
40-44	11	11.2	1	2.6	12	8.8
45-49	12	12.2	7	18.4	19	14.0
50-54	14	14.3	7	18.4	21	15.4
55-59	5	5.1	0	.0	5	3.7
60+	6	6.1	3	7.9	9	6.6
Total	98	100.0	38	100.0	136	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2008

Distribution of respondents by sex and ethnicity

Another socio-demographic characteristic considered in this study was the relationship between sex and ethnicity. This provided information on how many males or females belonged to a particular ethnic group as shown in Table 4.

Most respondents belonged to two popular ethnic groups namely, Ewe (53.7%) and Akan (31.6%). In percentage terms, there were more females (57.9%) than males (52.0%) who belonged to the Ewe group, while the same percentage females and males belonged to Akan.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by sex and ethnicity

Ethnicity	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Ewe	51	52.0	22	57.9	73	53.7
Ga	9	9.2	0	.0	9	6.6
Akan (Ashanti, Kwahu, Akwapem)	31	31.6	12	31.6	43	31.6
Other (Krachi, Krobo, Kussasi, Kotokoli)	7	7.1	4	10.5	11	8.1
Total	98	100.0	38	100.0	136	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2008

Level of education of respondents

In this study, the educational level of respondents by sex was also considered. Table 6 shows that 32.4 percent of the respondents had reached the basic level, followed by 19.9 percent each who had attained the secondary school and tertiary education. About 16.2 percent reached the post secondary level while few (11.8%) never attended or completed any of the levels.

Table 6: Sex of respondents by level of education

Level of Education	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
None	8	8.2	8	21.1	16	11.8
Basic	24	24.5	20	52.6	44	32.4
Secondary	22	22.4	5	13.2	27	19.9
Post Secondary	18	18.4	4	10.5	22	16.2
Tertiary	26	26.5	1	2.6	27	19.9
Total	98	100.0	38	100.0	136	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2008

Length of stay in the district

Another background characteristic of the respondents that was investigated was the length of stay in the district. Around 44.1 percent of the respondents had lived 10 years or less in the district. In other words, the majority had lived more than 10 years in the district. This suggests that most of the

respondents had the potential to give adequate information and share experience on the district.

Table 7: Sex of respondents by length of stay in the district

Length of stay (Years)	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
up to 10	42	42.9	18	47.4	60	44.1
11-20	19	19.4	7	18.4	26	19.1
21-30	20	20.4	3	7.9	23	16.9
31-40	11	11.2	5	13.2	16	11.8
41-50	3	3.1	3	7.9	6	4.4
51-60	2	2.0	2	5.3	4	2.9
61 +	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.7
Total	98	100.0	38	100.0	136	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2008

Nearly 12 percent of the respondents lived in the district for the past 31-40 years while 8.3 percent had stayed in the district between 41 years and 60 years. Only one respondent (7%) had lived there for more than 61 years.

Nature of relationships between community and other actors

This study sought to investigate the nature of relationships between community and the decentralised departments, Area Councils, Assembly sub-committees, Assembly persons, Presiding member, the DCE and the traditional authorities in the decentralisation process.

Table 8: Nature of relationship between communities and actors in the decentralisation process

Actors	Very cordial	Cordial	Quite cordial	Not at all cordial	Total
Community and Area councils	17.6	46.2	26.9	9.2	100.0
Community and Assembly sub committees	5.0	61.3	24.4	9.2	100.0
Community and Unit Committees	19.3	53.8	21.0	5.9	100.0
Community and Assembly Persons	26.1	46.2	19.3	8.4	100.0
Community and Presiding Member	5.0	61.3	24.4	9.2	100.0
Community District Chief Executive	19.3	53.8	21.0	5.9	100.0
Community and Traditional authorities	26.1	46.2	19.3	8.4	100.0
Community and Decentralised Departments	5.9	14.3	67.2	12.6	100.0

Sample size (n) = 136

Source: Field Data, 2008

It can be seen from Table 8 that the relationship between community and the decentralised departments, (67.2%) the relationship between community and area councils (63.8%), community and Assembly sub-committees, (73.1%), community and Assembly persons (72.3%) were described as very cordial or cordial. Similarly, relationship between community and presiding member (66.3%), community and DCE (73.1%), and community and traditional authorities (72.3%) were all described as very cordial or cordial.

Table 9: Reasons for nature of relationship between communities and actors in the decentralisation process (percent)

Actor	political power	Source of financial support	Source of material support	don't know	Total
Community and Area councils	48.8	11.3	40.0	.0	100.0
Community and Assembly sub-committees	43.6	20.0	32.7	3.6	100.0
Community and Unit Committees	35.1	16.2	48.6	.0	100.0
Community and Assembly Persons	41.2	19.6	39.2	.0	100.0
Community and Presiding Member	72.5	9.8	17.6	.0	100.0
Community and District Chief Executive	61.3	19.4	19.4	.0	100.0
Community and Traditional authorities	21.2	15.2	62.6	1.0	100.0
Community and Decentralised Departments	40.7	16.0	42.0	1.2	100.0

Sample size (n) = 136

Source: Field Data, 2008

In general, the nature of relationship between community and other actors in the decentralisation process was very cordial. This kind of relationship is in the right direction for the on-going decentralisation in the district. The reasons for the

nature of relationship between the community and other actors in the decentralisation process were also sought. The reasons were related to political power, main source of financial support and material support as presented in Table 9.

The main reasons for the relationship between community and area councils, Assembly sub-communities, Assembly persons, Presiding Member, DCE and other actors described by most of the respondents as very cordial were material support and political power. The other reason was financial support. These reasons were expected since political power, financial support and material support form the basis for the realisation of communities basic needs in general.

Decentralisation as understood by the respondents

Objective one of this study sought to analyse people's understanding of decentralisation in the Kwahu North District. The responses on this matter presented based on the perspectives of both community members and key informants are presented in Table 10. About 88 percent of the respondents indicated that they understood decentralisation. Of the percentage, 99 (72.8%) and 21 (15.4%) were community members and staff of the District Assembly respectively, while 73 (60.8%) reported that their understanding of decentralisation is power to the District Assemblies at the local level with 42.9 percent of the Assembly staff associating themselves with this meaning of decentralisation. This is to be compared with about 33% of the community members who also understood decentralisation to mean power to the district

Assemblies. In the words of a Unit Committee member in a focus group discussion, decentralisation is “people taking their own destiny into their own hands by planning and initiating their own development”. This is consistent with Asibuo (1992) who observed that all communities appreciate their problems and needs better and this can be alleviated only by joint action generally through government at the local level.

About 36 percent of the sampled community members and 10 percent of the staff of the key informants reported that their understanding of decentralisation is government ruling the people through the District Chief Executive. The next most frequently mentioned meaning of the concept decentralisation is getting the local people to participate in the decision-making processes of government. Of the 120 respondents, about 24 percent associated themselves with the fact above. About 23.8 percent of the staff of the key informants and 24.3 percent of community members understand decentralisation as such.

The understanding of decentralisation as reported by some respondents reflects issues in government, authority, and participation, involvement in decision-making while others touched on power, authority, information, collaboration, freedom of speech and provision of employment.

Table 10: Meaning of decentralisation by type of respondents

Meaning	Community Members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
	Bringing governance to the doorstep of every stakeholders	19	19.2	2	9.5	21
Participation of all stakeholders at local level	6	6.1	1	4.8	7	5.8
Power to DAs at local level	10	10.1	1	4.8	11	9.2
The government ruling us through the DCE	17	17.2	0	0.0	17	14.2
Disseminating information from people to the government	5	5.1	2	9.5	7	5.8
Involvement in decision-making processes	9	9.1	2	9.5	11	9.2
I have heard about it but do not know what it means	4	4.0	3	14.3	7	5.8
Division of authority	5	5.1	2	9.5	7	5.8
Power to district Assembly to give exercise books	10	10.1	5	23.8	15	12.5
They are the government	3	3.0	1	4.8	4	3.3

Table 10: (Continued)

It is a matter of collaboration	2	2.0	1	4.8	3	2.5
They are not bringing anything here	1	1.0	1	4.8	2	1.7
Providing the power to the local people	2	2.0	0	0.0	2	1.7
Power to subordinates	3	3.0	0	0.0	3	2.5
It is every where	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Everybody can speak freely	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Giving everybody work to do	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Total	99	100.0	21	100.0	120	100.0

Sample size (n) = 136

Source: Field Data, 2008

These responses from the respondents corroborate the traditional authorities' understanding of decentralisation.

According to the traditional authority, decentralisation means:

- “Development for an area is planned and executed by the local people”.
- “The local people decide what their felt needs are and plan towards achieving them; it makes us prioritise our needs and select them for development”.

Not all respondents had a clear perception of what constituted decentralisation since 11.8 percent could not respond or did not know what decentralisation was all about. The meaning of decentralisation as provided by

some respondents is consistent with Rondinelli and Cheema's (1983) view that decentralisation means different things to different people.

Transfer of authority from central government to the district

Related to the meaning of decentralisation is the issue of transfer of authority, functions, responsibilities and resources from the central government to the district. About 99.7 percent of the respondents (49.6%) indicated these were well done while (35.3%) disagreed. (15%) however, revealed lack of knowledge about the transfer. This confirms Rondinelli et al (1981) definition on decentralisation as transfer of responsibilities from the central government and its agencies to field units of central government. This means that decentralisation, to some extent, is being practised in the Kwahu North District.

When asked about the reasons for the poor transfer of authority, functions, responsibilities and resources from the central Government to the district, a total of 46 respondents gave some reasons and of these, 38 were community members and 8 were key informants. About 87.9 percent and 71.1 percent of community members and key informants respectively said that most people in the district were poor as shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Reasons for poor transfer of authority, functions responsibilities and resources

Perceived effects	Community members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
The people are still poor	27	71.1	7	87.5	34	73.9
Development projects not progressing as expected	3	7.9	0	0.0	3	6.5
Delayed in releasing grants to execute programmes	3	7.9	0	0.0	3	6.5
Unqualified persons are given positions	2	5.3	1	12.5	3	6.5
They promised us a lot of things but yet to see them	1	2.6	0	0.0	1	2.2
Development is not evenly spread	1	2.6	0	0.0	1	2.2
Civil society groups are inefficient	1	2.6	0	0.0	1	2.2
Total	38	100.0	8	100.0	46	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2008

This thinking is in line with Mansuri and Rao (2004) who reported that around seven billion dollars spent by the World Bank on community-based and community-driven development efforts worldwide failed in terms of poverty alleviation. They blamed this failure on poor government commitments to

creating an enabling institutional environment, and the low accountability of local leadership.

These findings reflect Abrahamsen's (2000) critique that the struggle to define and enact development would fail where there is an *a priori* determination of economic models and a "relegation of constituents' preferences to second-order importance" by external agencies. However, not all the reasons were reported by the key informants. Indeed, two reasons were reported by the former as can be seen in Table 11. The reasons given by the respondents reflect the respondents' expectations from the decentralisation process in the district.

Basic requirements of decentralisation

Another issue related to the concept of decentralisation was the assumption that the basic requirements for decentralisation were being met and therefore decentralisation had brought some benefits to the Kwahu North District. The respondents were asked to indicate, the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the most basic requirements of decentralisation in the District. Specifically, respondents were to respond to eight statements relating to basic requirements of decentralisation (Table 12).

To the statement "As a result of decentralisation the District Assembly's response to local needs is more quickly now than before", 96 (70.6%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement while the remaining 40 (29.4%) respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. In line with this statement, a sub-chief remarked 'we have had a new school building constructed; our roads are

being constructed whilst we have electricity connected to a number of communities’.

Table 12: Percentage distribution of responses on basic requirements of decentralisation

Basic requirements	Strongly disagree	disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
District Assembly response to local needs is more quickly now than before.	9.6	19.9	61.8	8.8	100.0
Provision of opportunities to marginalised sectors of the community to participate at the local level has improved.	9.6	19.1	63.2	8.1	100.0
Decentralisation has enhanced transparency and accountability in the district	11.0	34.6	45.6	8.8	100.0
Decentralisation of government spending is closely associated with lower corruption among top government officials	10.3	34.6	47.1	8.1	100.0
Decentralisation process has helped to improve service delivery	4.4	18.4	65.4	11.8	100.0
Decentralisation has enabled government officials to receive early warnings of potential disasters	8.1	27.9	52.2	11.8	100.0
Development projects in this district are more sustainable and cost effective	8.1	20.6	62.5	8.8	100.0
Decentralisation has encouraged communities to find solutions to their problems	6.6	27.2	57.4	8.8	100.0

Note: n =136

Source: Field Data, 2008

When asked whether decentralisation had enhanced transparency and accountability in the district, the majority (54.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed while 45.6% of the respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed. A woman at Agyaade was however, quick to remark that “now people know their rights and can fight for their rights on sensitive issues without fear”. Another basic requirement of decentralisation related to good governance was that decentralisation of government spending reduced corruption among top government officials leaving more money to spend on basic services for the people in the district. Most (55.2%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this proposition as against 44.8 percent who held a contrary view.

About 77.2 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the view that decentralisation had helped to improve service delivery in the district. The majority (64%) of the respondents indicated that decentralisation had enabled government officials to receive early warnings of potential disaster enabling quick remedial action.

On the issue of whether decentralisation had made development projects in the district more sustainable and therefore cost effective, majority (71.3%) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed. The reason given was that local people were now involved in the project design, execution and monitoring. Finally, when asked whether decentralisation had encouraged communities to find solutions to their everyday problems, 66.2 percent agreed or strongly agreed that this was true. However, 33.8 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

In sum, for the majority of the respondents to strongly agree or agree to all the eight statements relating to basic requirements of decentralisation was an indication that decentralisation had made some impact in some aspects of the local economy. This finding is in contradiction to results obtained on the reasons for poor transfer of authority, functions, responsibilities and resources where some of the respondents felt that some expectations were not met. Mawhood (1993); Crook and Manor (1998); Olowu and Wunsch (1995) suggest that the benefits of such decentralisation have been mostly enjoyed by the dominant power groups. According to them, genuine decentralisation of resources and power could not take place at the local level unless the entire structure of development planning changed. In decentralised power structure, plans are formulated by the rural people at the grassroots and not imposed from above.

Effects of decentralisation on the local economy

This study attempted to ascertain the effects of decentralisation on the local economy in the district as an aspect of basic requirements of the decentralisation process. Therefore, the respondents were asked about the possible effects of decentralisation in the district with regard to agriculture support services, poverty alleviation social infrastructure (i.e. health, housing and education, physical infrastructure (i.e. roads irrigation, storage facilities) people's participation and environmental conservation. Table 13 gives the details of the effects of decentralisation in the district.

With regard to the effect of decentralisation on agricultural support services, 66.2 percent of the sampled respondents indicated positive effect. In all the focus group discussion sessions, discussants asserted that Agricultural Extension Officers were doing their best by imparting new methods of farming to farmers. Many farmers could plant in rows as taught by the officers and the result is progressive.

Table 13: Effects of decentralisation in the Kwahu North District (percent)

Area	Effect			Total
	Positive	Negative	None	
Decentralisation on agricultural support services	66.2	28.7	5.1	100.0
Decentralisation on poverty alleviation	44.9	50.7	4.4	100.0
Decentralisation on social infrastructure	86.8	9.6	3.7	100.0
Decentralisation on physical infrastructure	55.1	32.4	12.5	100.0
Decentralisation on people participation	60.3	25.7	14.0	100.0
Decentralisation on environmental conservation	35.3	47.8	16.9	100.0

n=136

Source: Field Data, 2008

On whether the effect of decentralisation on poverty has been positive or negative, 75 (55.1%) of the respondents expressed their disappointment by indicating that the effect had been negative. At the Akroso traditional area, this

was confirmed by an elderly woman. In her view, poverty was rather on the increase because policies implemented had not made any impact. On the effect of decentralisation on social infrastructure such as health, housing and education, about (87%) out of the sampled respondents were optimistic that the effects had been positive in comparison with 18 percent of those who said that the effect had been negative.

The effect of decentralisation on the physical infrastructure was also ascertained. The results showed that 55% percent of the respondents reported the effects had been positive as compared to 25 percent who held a contrary view. Another possible effect of decentralisation was people's participation in various activities in the district.

The focus group discussion with Unit Committee members reported that the members supported the District Assembly with communal labour whenever there was the need for such support, especially with the construction of school buildings and teachers' bungalows.

The majority (64.7%) of the respondents indicated that decentralisation had had negative effects on environmental conservation. Participants in all the focus group discussions complained about bush fires, charcoal burning and felling of trees as potential sources by which the environment was being destroyed.

Roles of the main actors in the decentralization process

Related to the second research question, the study identified the various roles of the main actors in the decentralisation process. Table 14 shows that 117 (86%) respondents identified the functions of the main actors.

Table 14: Roles of main actors in the decentralisation process

Role	Community members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Organize meetings for the Assembly person	15	16.9	4	14.3	19	16.2
Discuss our problems with higher authorities	9	10.1	5	17.9	14	12.0
Give us information from the government	5	5.6	2	7.1	7	6.0
Help solve problems	5	5.6	3	10.7	8	6.8
They help Assembly in terms of development	11	12.4	2	7.1	13	11.1
Heard them much but don't know what they do	4	4.5	1	3.6	5	4.3
They provide the need of the society	10	11.2	2	7.1	12	10.3
They organise communal labour	2	2.2	1	3.6	3	2.6
They plan	3	3.4	0	0.0	3	2.6
They deliberate on the community's welfare	9	10.1	0	0.0	9	7.7
They have right to collect tax	5	5.6	1	3.6	6	5.1

Table 14: Continued

Educate the duties of the central govt.	4	4.5	5	17.9	9	7.7
We don't know their office	2	2.2	2	7.1	4	3.4
They carry the duties of the central govt.	3	3.4	0	0.0	3	2.6
Provision of facilities	1	1.1	0	0.0	1	0.9
They deal with issue of situation	1	1.1	0	0.0	1	0.9
Total	89	100.0	28	100.0	117	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2008

From Table 14, there were 16 different responses of which six were frequently mentioned. These were organizing meetings (16.2%), discussing our problems (12%), helping the Assembly in terms of development (11.1%), and provision of the needs of the society (10.3%), deliberating on the welfare of the community (7.7%) and educating communities on the duties of the central government (7.7%). A higher percentage of the community members mentioned five out of the six most frequently mentioned roles as against three mentioned by the key informants.

New roles communities can play in the decentralisation process

The issue of what new roles communities can play in the decentralisation process was also investigated as an aspect of the research question two. Figure 5 shows the major new roles communities play in the decentralization process. 35% percent of the respondents identified more cooperation, collaboration and meetings as new roles community members could play in the on-going

decentralisation process. This was followed by control of own affairs and implementation of projects by communities themselves (27%). The next new role that was frequently mentioned by the respondents was the provision of communal labour and land for development projects (22%). This confirms the traditional role of communities in the provision of communal labour and land for development projects, an important role in the decentralisation process. An equally important new role that communities could play in the decentralisation process is that communities would like to make informed choices and vote for the right persons (14%). This was consistent with earlier finding in the study where respondents reported that Government appointed unqualified people to hold certain positions.

Finally, chiefs' role in promoting unity in the community was also reported as a new role to be played by communities. This was expected because ensuring unity has been a major role of chiefs in almost all communities in Ghana.

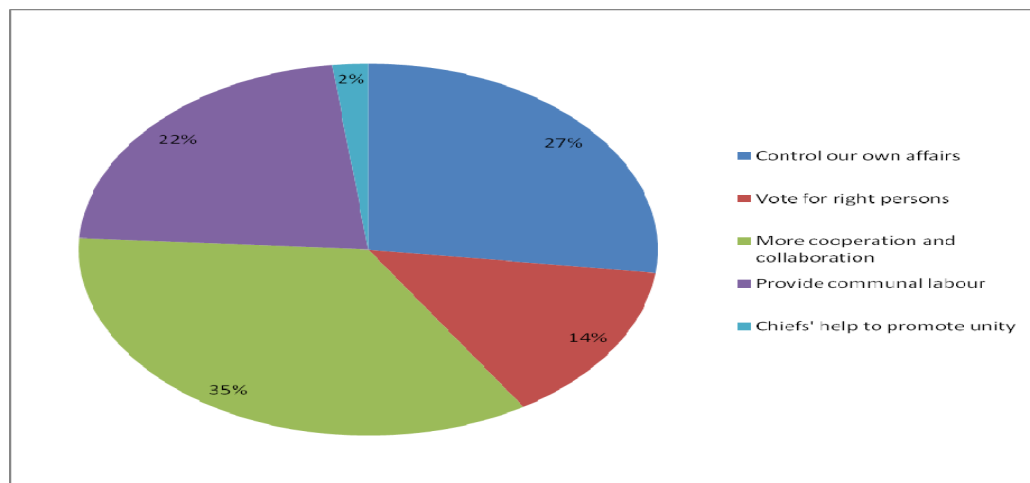


Figure 5: New roles being played by communities in decentralisation process

Source: Field Data, 2008

The mention of co-operation, collaboration, meetings and provision of communal labour and release of land for development were more pronounced among community members than among the key informants, while communities to control own affair, implement own projects and make more informed choices as well as voting for the right persons were more frequently mentioned among the key informants. This means that it would take many stake holders to put together what they think should be the new roles community could play in the decentralisation process.

Table 15: Communities' role in strengthening existing traditional structures

Role	Community members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Voting is being done	29	25.9	6	28.6	35	26.3
We have given them power/ encourage them to work harder	12	10.7	6	28.6	18	13.5
There is evidence of development	9	8.0	3	14.3	12	9.0
We contribute financially /materially /participate massively in communal labour	14	12.5	4	19.0	18	13.5
We ensure peace/respect our chiefs	19	17.0	2	9.5	21	15.8
Providing District Assembly with needed information	18	16.1	0	0.0	18	13.5
Attend community meeting and tell our authorities about our needs	11	9.8	0	0.0	11	8.3
Total	112	100.0	21	100.0	133	100.0

n=136

Source: Field Data, 2008

Since traditional structures were indispensable in the decentralisation process, another extension of research question two sought to ascertain the roles communities could play in strengthening the existing traditional structures.

Table 15 reveals the various actions being taken to strengthen the existing traditional structures. Out of the sample of 136 respondents investigated, 133 (98%) responded. There were 112 community members and 21 key informants who responded indicating that voting was being done (35.3%), while about 16% reported that communities role in strengthening existing traditional structures was to ensure that there was peace and respect for the chiefs. About 13.5% of those who responded to this view reported that they had given the chiefs power and were encouraging them to work harder. Others reported that communities role in strengthening existing traditional structures included; contributing financially, materially, massive participation in communal labour (13.5%), providing the District Assembly with the needed information (13.5%), and to attend meetings and tell the authorities about the communities needs (8.3%).

Implementation of the decentralisation in the Kwahu North District

Another assumption of this study was that the implementation of the decentralisation concept in the Kwahu North District was without challenges, hence this study made an attempt to ascertain the challenges from the respondents.

Before asking respondents about the challenges to the implementation of the decentralisation process in the Kwahu North District, respondents were to

indicate whether or not they thought decentralisation was working in the district as it should. The majority (56.6%) of the respondents reported that decentralisation was working in the district as expected. This is to be contrasted with 43.4 percent who thought otherwise. Following this, the respondents were to indicate the possible challenges to the implementation of decentralisation. It could be seen from Table 16 that, both community members and key informants responded to the issue. A total of 82 responses were reported, and of these, 65 responses were reported by key informants. The challenge most frequently mentioned was political favouritism and marginalization (37.8%). This was followed by inadequate provision of social amenities (23.2%) and lack of transparency and accountability (17.1%).

Table 16 shows that the most frequently mentioned challenges among the key informants were; political favoritism and marginalization (47.1%) and lack of transparency and accountability (23.5%). In the view of the traditional authority at Yamouso, there was no transparency and accountability at all in the district. ‘Who do you want the people at the helm of affairs at the District Assembly to be transparent and accountable to? they asked in a focus group discussion. This is to be compared with 35.4 percent and 15.4 percent of community members respectively who also mentioned these challenges to the implementation of decentralisation in the district. On the other hand there were more mention of the other challenges (in proportional terms) compared to the key informants.

Table 16: Challenges to the implementation of decentralisation

Challenges	Community		Key		Total	
	members		informants			
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Distribution of resources is not based on needs	5	7.7	1	5.9	6	7.3
Inadequate provision of social amenities	16	24.6	3	17.6	19	23.2
Selfishness on the part of Leaders	6	9.2	1	5.9	7	8.5
Corruption in the district	2	3.1	0	0.0	2	2.4
Lack of transparency/ accountability	10	15.4	4	23.5	14	17.1
Political favoritism/ marginalization	23	35.4	8	47.1	31	37.8
Lack of education/ empowerment	3	4.6	0	0.0	3	3.7
Total	65	100.0	17	100.0	82	100.0

n=136

Source: Field Data, 2008

Efforts were made to find out from the respondents about the measures to be put in place to overcome the challenges, particularly in establishing structures, opportunities to participate in ensuring accountability. Table 17 indicates that, 70 out of the 136 respondents provided some measures. Of these, 53 were community members and 18 drawn from key informants. 41.4 percent of the respondents reported that ensuring accountability and proper supervision was one of the measures to overcome the challenges to the implementation decentralisation process. The next measure according to respondents was the

involvement of all stakeholders in development projects in addition to ensuring a fair distribution of the district's share of the national cake, adding that the District Assembly should be in the forefront in this regard. Furthermore, there was the need for careful selection of political leaders such as the District Chief Executives (DCEs) and lastly, educating and empowering people on their responsibilities was another measure to overcome the challenges to the implementation of the decentralisation process.

Table 17: Measures to overcome challenges

Measures	Community members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Involvement of all stakeholders in development projects	10	18.9	4	23.5	14	20.0
Assembly ensuring a fair distribution of the district share of the national cake	9	17.0	4	23.5	13	18.6
Ensuring accountability and proper supervision	23	43.4	6	35.3	29	41.4
Carefully selection of political leaders e.g. DCEs	8	15.1	3	17.6	11	15.7
Educating and empowering people on their duties/responsibilities	3	5.7	0	0.0	3	4.3
Total	53	100.0	17	100.0	70	100.0

n=136

Source: Field Data, 2008

Participants in a focus group discussion lamented that those seeking political office spent so much and that such colossal sums of money could have been used to solve developmental needs of thousands of people. They cited the New Patriotic Party (NPP) presidential primary of 2007 where 17 aspirants contested and displayed so much wealth in the process.

Suggestions towards improvement in efficiency in the decentralisation process

To overcome the challenges, this study solicited suggestions from the respondents' towards improving efficiency in the decentralisation process in the Kwahu North District. Table 18 shows that a total of 172 suggestions were reported and of these 146 were reported by community members and 26 from key informants.

The most frequently mentioned suggestion was community participation in meetings in the decision-making process (31.4%). This was followed by “provision of more funds and equipments (19.2), regular visits, close monitoring and supervision of development programmes or projects in the district (17.4%). Other suggestions were educating or empowering chiefs and departments for development (9.3%) reducing bureaucratic procedures, ensuring transparency, accountability of units and departments (8.7%).

Table 18: Suggestions towards improving efficiency in good governance

Suggestions	Community		Key		Total	
	Members		informants			
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Involvement of communities in decision-making	44	30.1	10	38.5	54	31.4
Closely monitoring development programmes	21	14.4	9	34.6	30	17.4
Empowering chiefs and departments for development	15	10.3	1	3.8	16	9.3
Provision of more funds/equipment	32	21.9	1	3.8	33	19.2
Reducing bureaucracy and ensuring transparency	14	9.6	1	3.8	15	8.7
Government providing more infrastructure	12	8.2	3	11.5	15	8.7
Election of DCEs	8	5.5	1	3.8	9	5.2
Total	146	100.0	26	100.0	172	100.0

n=136

Source: Field Data, 2008

According to Cooperative Hair Dressers at Donkorkrom, to overcome the challenges of decentralisation, they would have to muster courage and go to the officials of the DA to discuss the numerous taxes slapped on them. They also

opined that the Assembly had to invite artisans from time to time and discuss issues concerning their welfare and not only to discuss taxes.

Decentralisation and good governance in the Kwahu North District

To ascertain whether the practice of decentralisation had led to good governance in the Kwahu North District, respondents were asked to indicate whether their assessment of good governance could be attributed to the decentralisation process in the district and if so what accounted for that?

Table 19: The practice of decentralisation has led to good governance

Achievements of good governance	Community members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Peaceful co-existence	5	2.3	1	4.0	6	2.5
Health delivery system	41	19.1	8	32.0	49	20.4
Free educational/provision of logistics	40	18.6	1	4.0	41	17.1
Provision of infrastructure	41	19.1	8	32.0	49	20.4
Construction of drainage systems e.g. gutters	6	2.8	3	12.0	9	3.8
Provision of potable drinking water e.g. boreholes	18	8.4	1	4.0	19	7.9
Creation of employment opportunities/youth employment	25	11.6	1	4.0	26	10.8
Promoting good sanitation	24	11.2	0	0.0	24	10.0
Presence of transparency /accountability	3	1.4	0	0.0	3	1.3
No achievement	2	0.9	0	0.0	2	0.8
Total	215	100.0	25	100.0	240	100.0

n=136

Source: Field Data, 2008

Table 19 shows that there was more frequent mention of health delivery system (20.4%), provision of infrastructure (20.4%), creation of employment opportunities for the youth (10.8%) and free education (17%). Table 19 has other achievements attributable to good governance in the district. Health delivery systems and provision of infrastructure as achievements attributable to good governance came from the key informants (32%) as compared with the community members (19.1%). Provision of infrastructure on the other hand was also mentioned by the key informants (32%) in comparison with community members (19.1%).

Table 20: The practice of decentralisation has led to bad governance

Weakness	Community members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
	Resource distribution is based on tribalism	16	12.2	1	5.6	17
Political influence e.g. DCE does not care much for us	28	21.4	7	38.9	35	23.5
No unity committees here	6	4.6	3	16.7	9	6.0
Things are done hastily	3	2.3	0	.0	3	2.0
Inadequate job opportunities	2	1.5	1	5.6	3	2.0
Discrimination in disbursement of funds	11	8.4	1	5.6	12	8.1
Inadequate funding from central government	12	9.2	0	.0	12	8.1
Transparency in accountability/corrupt government officials	12	9.2	1	5.6	13	8.7
Lack of unity	6	4.6	4	22.2	10	6.7
Inability of the people to vote for right persons	15	11.5	0	0.0	15	10.1
Uncompleted roads and other projects	15	11.5	0	0.0	15	10.1
Cumbersome bureaucratic procedures	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	.7
Inadequate supply of teachers	1	0.8	0	0.0	1	.7
No weakness	3	2.3	0	0.0	3	2.0
Total	131	100.0	18	100.0	149	100.0

n=136

Source: Field Data, 2008

For those respondents who described governance in the district as fair or poor or very poor or as bad, they were to indicate the weaknesses in the decentralisation process responsible for bad governance. Table 20 shows that there were some weaknesses in the decentralisation process which were responsible for governance being described as bad. For instance, the frequent mention of political influence meaning that the District Chief Executive (DCE) did not care much about the local people was seen as bad governance. In other words, of the 149 responses recorded 23.5 percent was attributed to the indifference of the DCE to the local people.

This was followed by the distribution of resources based on tribalism (11.4%), inability of the people to vote for the right persons (10.1%) and uncompleted roads, and other projects (10.1%). Other weaknesses attributable to bad governance were; discrimination in disbursement of funds, inadequate funding from central government, no transparency in accountability corrupt government officials (24.9%). The rest included; things are done hastily, inadequate job opportunities and lack of unity (16.7%).

In summary, this study has revealed that the achievements of decentralisation could be attributed to good governance while the weaknesses could be attributed to bad governance practices.

The concept of good governance in the Kwahu North District

Respondents were asked to indicate what their understanding of good governance was. From Table 21, a total of 184 responses were reported on 12

different meanings of what respondents thought good governance was. There was more frequent mention of provision of felt needs of the local communities (38.6%), followed by freedom of speech, (12.5%) participation of all in the governance process (9.8%) and, good security and health (9.2%).

Other meanings of good governance included the provision of quality education (7.6%), good salary (6.5%), provision of employment opportunities (5.4%), and absence of corruption (5%). The key informants did not see provision of employment opportunities and absence of corruption as an aspect of good governance. This suggests that there was a difference between the key informants and community members with regard to their understanding of good governance.

Both community members and the key informants understand good governance as providing the felt needs of the local communities and freedom of speech. Indeed, the other forms of good governance reported by the respondents are captured under the first item in Table 21.

Again, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not good governance was present in the district. About 50 percent of the respondents described good governance in the district as very good or good, while 31.9 percent and 16.3 percent saw governance as fair, poor and very poor respectively.

Table 21: Meaning of good governance

Understanding good governance	Community members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
	Providing felt needs of local communities	61	39.1	10	35.7	71
Participation of all in the government process	16	10.3	2	7.1	18	9.8
Freedoms of speech	21	13.5	2	7.1	23	12.5
Good salary structure	8	5.1	4	14.3	12	6.5
Good security and health	16	10.3	1	3.6	17	9.2
Provision of employment opportunities	10	6.4	0	0.0	10	5.4
Provision of quality education	12	7.7	2	7.1	14	7.6
Provision of potable drinking water all the times	5	3.2	2	7.1	7	3.8
Good leadership for local governance and development	2	1.3	2	7.1	4	2.2
Ensuring transparency/ accountability and probity	3	1.9	2	7.1	5	2.7
Fair distribution of resources to the people	1	0.6	1	3.6	2	1.1
Absence of corruption	1	0.6	0	0.0	1	.5
Total	156	100.0	28	100.0	184	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2008

About 82 percent of the key informants assessed good governance in the district as very good and good compared to 47.4 percent of community members who said that good governance was very good or good. About 32 percent of the

respondent reported that good governance was fair with most of the community members reporting that good governance was fair (33.9%) as against 17.6 percent of the key informants who assessed good governance in the district as fair.

Another dimension of research question three was the issue of the presence of good governance requirements in the district. The results are depicted in Figure 6. Respondents were to respond by indicating the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the suggestion that good governance requirements were present in the district. About 73.9 percent of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that accountability as a requirement of good governance was present in the district.

This is to be compared with 26.1 percent of the respondents who strongly disagreed or disagreed. Focus group discussions with unit committees and traditional authorities indicated there was no accountability in the district as the traditional authority did not account to the people nor the District Assembly accounting to the people.

When asked about the presence of transparency, 73.3 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that indeed, transparency as a requirement of good governance was present as against 27.7% who strongly disagreed or disagreed. Probity as a requirement of good governance that was also investigated. About 81.5 percent of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that probity as an indicator to good governance was present in the district when compared with 18.5 percent of the respondents who strongly disagreed or disagreed.

On the issue of probity as an indicator of good governance, a participant in a focus group discussion at Akroso intimated, 'we probe into matters that concern us but we seldom get convincing answers and we leave it like that.' A discussant from Bebuso said, 'it is not easy for you to probe into the traditional authority even though you may have a genuine reason to probe: Every thing is from the top to the bottom. It is possible to probe through the Assembly person what is going on at the Assembly. However; you cannot go behind him to the Assembly to ask questions.'

Finally, participation, a requirement of good governance was also investigated. Most (55.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that participation as a requirement for good governance was present in the district. This is to be compared with 4.5 percent of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed. Participation, according to Cooperative Hair Dressers at Donkorkrom, was not the best. They claimed they were apathetic to issues because they felt their concerns may not be addressed at a public forum and as a result, a few people attended community meetings. However, they indicated that when it came to communal labour, many people turned up. Most of the respondents had a clear perception of the requirements of good governance as shown in Figure 6.

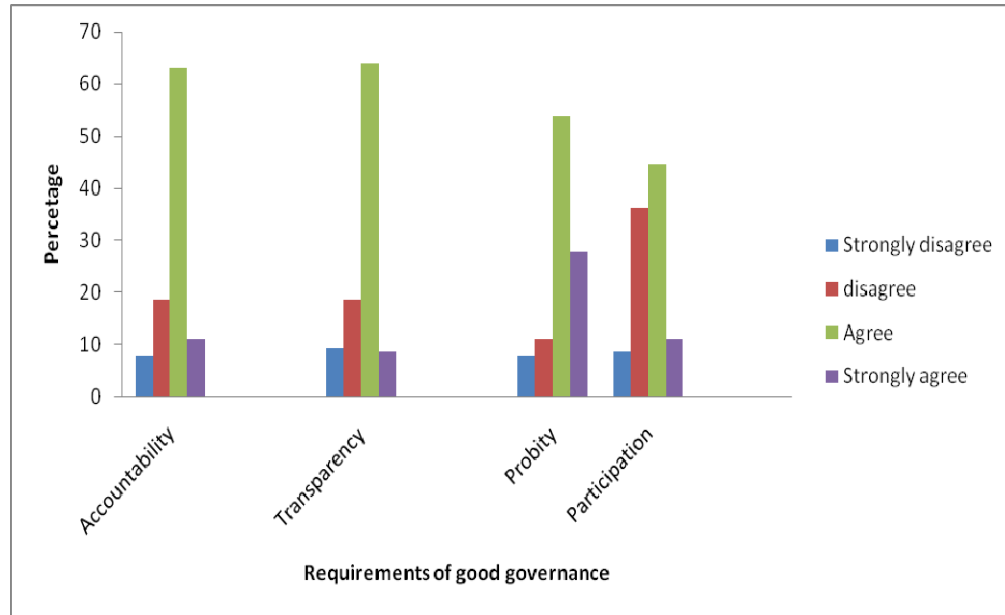


Figure 6: Basic requirements of good governance in the Kwahu North District

Source: Field Data, 2008

Challenges to the practice of good governance in the Kwahu North District

This study attempted to ascertain the challenges to the practice of good governance. Results from the field showed both internal and external challenges. Table 22 shows that a total of 155 responses were reported and of these 129 were reported by community members and 26 responses came from key informants.

In all, 13 internal challenges were reported. The most frequently internal challenges mentioned were inadequate funds for development (20%), lack of co-operation in the community (17.4%) and poverty (14.2%). Inadequate funds for development followed by lack of co-operation were frequently mentioned by

community members as compared to the key informants, while poverty was frequently mentioned by the latter in comparison to the community members.

Table 22: Internal challenges to good governance in the Kwahu North District

Challenges	Community members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Juvenile delinquency	3	2.3	1	3.8	4	2.6
Assembly persons do not really discuss our problems	5	3.9	1	3.8	6	3.9
Lack of Co-operation in the community	23	17.8	4	15.4	27	17.4
DCE exercise too much power/discretion	6	4.7	2	7.7	8	5.2
Poor communication between communities and authorities	8	6.2	0	0.0	8	5.2
Dirty politics	9	7.0	0	0.0	9	5.8
Corruption and favoritism	14	10.9	0	0.0	14	9.0
Lack of transparency /accountability	12	9.3	3	11.5	15	9.7
Inadequate funds for development	26	20.2	5	19.2	31	20.0
Internal bureaucratic system	1	0.8	2	7.7	3	1.9
Nepotism/tribalism	3	2.3	2	7.7	5	3.2
Unqualified personnel	2	1.6	1	3.8	3	1.9
Poverty	17	13.2	5	19.2	22	14.2
Total	129	100.0	26	100.0	155	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2008

During the focus group discussion sessions, the majority of the discussants said nepotism and tribalism were major setbacks to the practice of good

governance in the district. The unit committee chairman of Odumase remarked ‘those who are fined for not attending communal labour are not punished because they are related to those who are in authority. It makes the work of the unit committee very difficult.’ In sum, the respondents identified most of the internal challenges to good governance which were not different from what is generally known in the public domain. With regard to the external challenges to the practice of good governance in the district, a total of 110 responses were reported in respect of nine external challenges.

Eighty-eight responses were reported by community members and 22 were from the key informants. There was more frequent mention of politicisation of government development policies among the community members (34.1%) than among the key informants (9.1%). Other external challenges were inadequate support or funds from government (14.8.6%). This is followed by lack of supervision on the part of government (31.6%). About 18.8 percent of the respondents mentioned that either the central government appointing wrong officials or frequent changing of top officials. Table 23 shows other external challenges reported by respondents. These external challenges reflect the difficulties that the Kwahu North District Assembly faces in its attempt to achieve good governance in the district.

Table 23: External challenges to good governance in the district

External challenges	Community members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
	Inadequate investment by external businesses	4	4.5	4	18.2	8
Politicisation of government development	30	34.1	2	9.1	32	29.1
Inadequate support/funds from government	18	20.5	2	9.1	20	18.2
Lack of supervision on part of government	16	18.2	1	4.5	17	15.5
Corruption and favoritism	4	4.5	1	4.5	5	4.5
Inadequate market for farm produce	3	3.4	1	4.5	4	3.6
Central government appoint wrong officials	9	10.2	6	27.3	15	13.6
Frequent changing of top officials	3	3.4	3	13.6	6	5.5
Lack of higher educational institutions	1	1.1	2	9.1	3	2.7
Total	88	100.0	22	100.0	110	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2008

Suggestions towards improving efficiency in good governance

Nine suggestions were made towards the improvement of efficiency in good governance in the district. In all, 150 responses were reported with 131 from the community side and 19 from the key informants. There was more frequent mention of ensuring transparency and accountability at all times (24%) followed by District Assembly advertising agriculture in the district (21.3%) Government providing infrastructure for development (16.7%), central government supervising

all development projects or programmes in the district (11.3%) and co-ordination and participation in the development process (10.0%) as shown in Table 24.

Table 24: Suggestions for ensuring good governance

Suggestions	Community members		Key informants		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
	Government providing infrastructure for development	19	14.5	6	31.6	25
Open administration/release government information to public	3	2.3	1	5.3	4	2.7
Co-ordination/ cooperation/ participation in development process	12	9.2	3	15.8	15	10.0
Empowering of Civil society groups	8	6.1	2	10.5	10	6.7
District Assembly advertising Agriculture in the District	30	22.9	2	10.5	32	21.3
Central government supervising all development programmes	17	13.0	0	0.0	17	11.3
Appointment of top officials by the local community	6	4.6	3	15.8	9	6.0
Ensuring transparency/accountability at all times	34	26.0	2	10.5	36	24.0
Provision of higher educational facilities	2	1.5	0	0.0	2	1.3
Total	131	100.0	19	100.0	150	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2008

However, the key informants did not associate themselves with recommendations such as central government supervising development projects and 'provision of higher educational facilities. This suggests that there is a gap

between what the key informants and community members think about good governance through the practices of decentralisation.

Respondents wish to see transparency, accountability, advertising agriculture, and provision of infrastructure, supervision of development programmes and projects as well as co-ordination and participation in the development process as aspects of good governance through the practices of decentralisation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study set out to examine the impact of decentralisation in the governance of the the Kwahu North District. Relevant literature was reviewed to inform the researcher about the current thinking on the concept of decentralisation. It was found out that most writers on decentralisation and governance were of similar opinions. The study also examined the perceptions or opinions of the various stakeholders on decentralisation, governance, indicators of good governance, achievements and challenges of decentralisation and good governance.

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The instruments used for the study were questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion guide. A combination of purposive and simple random sampling techniques was employed to select a sample of 136 respondents.

The main findings of the study are:

- The minimum and maximum ages were 20 and 75 years respectively, while the average age was 40 years. The Ewes (53.7%) and Akan (31.6%) were the two most dominant ethnic groups in the district.

- It is surprising to note that even though the level of education of the respondents was found to be low, their responses suggested that they had a clear understanding of decentralisation and governance.
- The respondents also had a good knowledge about the roles of the various stakeholders in the decentralisation process. Organising meetings for the Assembly person helping the District Assembly in terms of development provision of the needs of the society and ensuring peace all the time were some of the main roles of the main actors in the decentralisation process.
- Respondents were of the opinion that health delivery system, provision of infrastructure creation of employment for the youth and free education were attributed to good governance through the practice of decentralisation.
- Respondents' understanding of the indicators of good governance included provision of felt needs of the local community (38.6%), freedom of speech (12.5%), participation in governance (9.8%) and good security and health.
- Political favoritism, marginalisation, inadequate provision of social amenities and lack of transparency and accountability were found by the respondents as the main challenges to decentralisation and good governance in the district.
- Decentralisation has had positive effects on key issues like agriculture (66.2%), social infrastructure (86.8%) and physical infrastructure (55.1%), and people's participation in activities of the district (60.3%).

- The respondents' perception on the effects of decentralisation on poverty alleviation and environmental conservation had been negative.

Conclusions

The major conclusions that were drawn based on the findings of the study are that:

- The population was youthful with Ewes and Akans as the most dominant tribes in the district.
- The respondents had a deeper understanding of decentralisation and governance.
- The respondents had a good knowledge of the roles of the various stakeholders in the decentralisation and the governance system in the district.
- Decentralisation as practised in Ghana impacts on governance in the district.
- The perceptions or opinions of the various stakeholders on decentralisation, governance, indicators of good governance, achievements and challenges of decentralisation and good governance corroborated what most experts had said.
- The effects of decentralisation on agriculture, social and physical infrastructure and peoples' participation in activities were found to be positive in the district

Recommendations

In the light of the foregoing findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations are made for the purpose of deepening the practice of decentralisation and improve the governance system in the district:

- Deductions from the District Assemblies 'Common Fund (DACF) should be minimised. Over deductions deprive the local people of the full benefits of the DACF. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and the Regional Coordinating Councils should live up to their tasks of supervising and coordinating respectively the activities of the Kwahu North District Assembly.
- The Kwahu North District Assembly should engage institutions like the National Commission for Civic Education, the Information Services Department and Non-Governmental Organisations to intensify public education on social and physical infrastructure initiated by the District Assemblies constitute wealth creation.
- The District Assembly should build the capacities of the decentralised structures like the Unit Committees, traditional rulers and other actors in the decentralisation process through workshops, for a and seminars. Even though the study confirmed that these actors were playing their traditional roles, empowering them would enhance their performance thus deepening the decentralisation process and improving the governance system in the district.

- The traditional authorities who are the custodians of the land should work in close collaboration with the District Assembly to conserve the environment.
- Transparency and accountability should be encouraged. Political appointments should be abolished and all district positions made elective. This would make those elected more accountable and responsible. All procurement processes should be done in a more transparent manner. The provision of social amenities should not be skewed towards one direction but should be balanced.
- To ensure that the local governance system responds to the basic needs of the affected areas or sectors of the local economy and the people in general, a coalition of Civil Society Organizations (CSO), traditional authorities and the District Assembly should hold community level workshops/seminars/discussions to address structural and operational issues affecting the decentralisation processes and the practice of good governance in the district.
- Government should create employment avenues for the youth. In this regard, the National Youth Employment Programme should be developed. The activities of the Non Formal Education Division of the Ghana Education Service should be intensified to address the issue of low levels of education in the district.

- The central government and Assembly should encourage communities to undertake self-help projects through communal labour to complement government efforts.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DISTRICT ASSEMBLY CORE STAFF, NGOS
AND HEADS OF DECENTRALISED DEPARTMENT**

This questionnaire is on Decentralisation and governance in Ghana: The case of the Kwahu North District is part of a Master of Arts Programme at the Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast. You are invited to participate in the study by responding to the questionnaire or interview schedule. Please, be rest assured that the information you give shall be handled a confidential and professional manner.

A. Background Information

1. Status of interviewer
2. Name of community
3. Age of respondent (years)
4. Sex of respondent (a) Male (b) Female
5. Ethnicity
- 6a Level of education
 - a. Incomplete/No basic education
 - b. Basic education (Primary/JSS/Middle)
 - c. Secondary professional
 - d. Post secondary profession (trg. College, Nursing, ect)
 - e. Polytechnic
 - f. University

6b. How long have you been living in this department/Unit.....

B. Concept of Decentralization

7. What is your understanding of decentralization?

.....

8. Please, indicate any two main roles/function of the following actors in the ongoing decentralization process?

a. Area Council.....

b. Assembly Sub-Committee

c. Unit Committee

.....

d. Assembly Persons

.....

e. Presiding Member

.....

f. The District Chief Executive

.....

g. Traditional authorities

.....

C Benefits of Decentralisation

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following most basic requirement of decentralisation and good governance statement;

10. As a result of decentralisation, the District Assembly's response to local needs is more quickly now than before.

(a) Strongly disagree (b) Disagree (c) Agree (d) Strongly agree

11. Participate of opportunities to marginalized sectors of the community, like women to participate at the local level in the district is attributable to the decentralisation process.

(a) Strongly disagree (b) Disagree (c) Agree (d) Strongly agree

12. Decentralisation has enhanced transparency and accountability in the way hence the amount of money which have wrongfully been diverted away from development activities has declined.

(a) Strongly disagree (b) Disagree (c) Agree (d) Strongly agree

13. Decentralisation of spending is closely associated with lower corruption among top government officials-leaving more money to spend on basic services for the people in this district.

(a) Strongly (b) Disagree (c) Agree (d) strongly agree

14. Decentralisation process has helped to increase the effectiveness in service delivery in the district.

(a) Strongly disagree (b) Disagree (c) Agree (d) strongly agree

15. The introduction of the decentralisation concept has enable government officials to receive early warnings of potential disasters, enabling quick remedial action.

(a) Strongly disagree (b) Disagree (c) Agree (d) Strongly agree

- (c) Social Infrastructure 1. Positive 2. Negative 3. None
- (d) Physical Infrastructure 1. Positive 2. Negative 3. None
- (e) People participation 1. Positive 2. Negative 3. None
- (f) Environmental conservation 1. Positive 2. Negative 3. None

24. What recommendations would you suggest to improve the inefficiency of the decentralisation in the district?

.....

E. Participate in the Decentralization Process

25. What are the current roles being played by your community in the decentralization process?

.....

26. What new roles would you/or your community like to play in the on-going decentralisation process in this district?.....

27. How would you describe the overall role of your community in this district in terms of poverty alleviation?.....

28. What is your community doing to strengthen existing traditional structures e.g. Civil Society groups, Unit Committees, Area Councils, etc in view of the decentralisation process?.....

29. How would you describe your community's effort in the empowerment of grassroot communities to enable them to determine, plan, manage and implement their own development in the district?

- (a) Inadequate (b) Adequate (d) Don't know

30. Give reasons for your answer to q5

.....

31. What is the nature of relationship your community and the following structure in the current decentralisation process?

Actors	a Very cordial	B Cordial	c Somehow cordial	D Not cordial at all
Area Councils				
Assembly sub-communities				
Assembly persons				
Presiding Members				
The District Chief Executive				
Traditional authorities				
Decentralized Department				

32. What underlies the nature of the relationship?

Actors	a	B	c	D
	Political Power	Financial resources	Material resources	Other specify
Area council				
Assembly sun- communities				
Unit committee				
Assembly persons				
Presiding Member				
The District Chief executive				
Traditional authorities				
Decentralized Department				

F. Good Governance

33. What is your understanding of good governance?

.....

34. What is your assessment of good governance in your district?

(a) Very good (b) good (c) fair (d) poor (e) very poor

35. What are the achievements of good governance in your district?

.....

36. What are the weakness of good governance in your district?

.....

37. What are the internal challenges to good governance in your district?

.....

38. What are the external challenges to good governance in your district?

.....

39. What are your recommendations for good governance through practices of decentralization?

.....

40. Pleas indicate the extent to which you agree with the following most requirements of good governance statements;

i. Accountability

I am aware that the District Assembly at all levels should make decisions and act with the knowledge that any staff can and will removed from office or penalized in some other way, if he or she used his or her office to acquire special benefits or advantages.

- (a) Strongly disagree (b) Disagree (c) Agree (d) strongly agree

ii. Transparency:

I am aware that it is the responsibility of the District Assembly to provide the public with reasonable complete and unbiased information about the decisions and actions of government actors so that members of the public can make informed decisions about the performance of their government representatives or agents.

(a) Strongly disagree (b) Disagree (c) Agree (d) strongly agree

iii. Probity:

Lack of probity is a serious problem in the district and deserves explicit consideration.

(a) Strongly disagree (b) Disagree (c) Agree (d) strongly agree

iv. Participation:

There is a little or no participation in the decentralization process hence the District Assembly is not fully informed about the needs, preferences, wishes and capabilities of my community.

(a) Strongly disagree (b) Disagree (c) Agree (d) strongly agree

41. What recommendations would you suggest to improve the efficiency of good governance in the district?

.....

APPENDIX B

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR TRADITIONAL
AUTHORITIES, UNIT COMMITTEES, TRADES/BUSINESS
ASSOCIATIONS**

This Focus Group Discussion is on decentralisation and governance in Ghana: The case of Kwahu North is part of a Master of Arts Programme at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Cape Coast. You are invited to participate in this focus group discussion.

1. What is your understanding of decentralisation?
2. To what extent is the concept decentralisation being practised in the district?
3. Has the practise of decentralisation led to good governance? Explain
4. In your opinion, is decentralisation working in the district?
5. What are the current roles being played by Area councils in the on-going decentralisation process?
6. What new roles would you like the Area Councils to play in the on-going decentralisation process?
7. What are the current roles being played by Unit Committees in the on-going decentralisation process?
8. What are the current roles being played by Unit Committees in the on-going decentralisation process?
9. What are the current roles being played by Assembly Persons in the on-going decentralisation process?

10. What are the current roles being played by the Presiding Member in the on-going decentralisation process?
11. What new roles would you like the Presiding Member to play in the on-going decentralisation process?
12. What are the current roles being played by the DCE in the on-going decentralisation process?
13. What are the current roles being played by Traditional Authorities in the on-going decentralisation process?
14. What new roles would you like Traditional Authorities to play in the on-going decentralisation process?
15. What are the benefits/achievements of decentralisation in the district?
16. What has been the effect of decentralisation in the district on;
 - a. Agriculture, Poverty Alleviation, People's participation and Environmental concerns?
17. What recommendations would you suggest to improve the efficiency of decentralisation?
18. What is your understanding of good governance?
19. What are the achievements of good governance in the district?
20. What are the weaknesses of good governance in the district?
21. What are the internal challenges of good governance in the district?
22. What are the external challenges of good governance in the district?
23. What is your assessment of accountability as an indicator to good governance in the district?

24. What is your assessment of transparency as an indicator to good governance in the district?
25. What is your assessment of as an indicator to good governance in the district?
26. What is your assessment of probity as an indicator to good governance in the district?
27. What is your assessment of participation as an indicator to good governance in the district?
28. What is your recommendation for good governance through the practice of decentralisation in the district?
29. In all, would say there is good governance in your district? What about probity as an indicator to good governance?