

Exploring the Rich Mosaic of Ghana: The Major Ethnic Groups in Ghana and their Location

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Abstract Ghana is known for its diverse ethnic and cultural heritage. It plays a very significant role in shaping its cultural identity and socio-political outlook. This desk study examined the rich mosaic of Ghana, taking into consideration the major and minor ethnic groups, their geographical locations and culture. The study employed an ethnographic qualitative research method, utilizing historical records, personal observations, census data, and existing literature. The paper has identified nine major ethnic groups, with six leading ones which include, Akan, Ga-Adangbe, Ewe, Mole-Dagbani, Grushi and Guan. The study, therefore, recommends that history as a discipline should be introduced at all levels of education to inform and educate early learners about their history. Also, the biennial National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFAC), which offers a platform for all sixteen regions to showcase their rich culture and traditions, should be strengthened and promoted to enable the general public to learn more about the various ethnic groups and cultures. This will help promote unity and solidarity and reduce ethnic tensions during elections and competition for resources.

Keywords: Cultural Diversity, Ethnic, Mosaic, Platform, Recommend

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1. Introduction

Like many other nations, Ghana has a diverse population of ethnic groups, each with its own history and culture, Mwakikagile [1]. Studying all the Ghanaian small ethnic groups will be challenging. The major ethnic groups and their appendages will be discussed as well as their geographical distributions and cultural significance.

An ethnic group consists of people who form a body and who claim descent from a common ancestor, Chandra [2]. Such a group has a common good, which integrates them socially, politically and culturally. An ethnic group is also a group of people who are related by a long blood line who claim descent to a common ancestor and share a common or similar language, customs, traditions and culture. An ethnic group is made up of tribes. A typical example is the Mole-Dagbani group which consists of Dagaaba, Dagomba and Grunni among others.

An ethnic group refers to a classification of individuals who recognize each other based on shared social, cultural, ancestral, or national experiences. Membership is typically determined by common language, religion, traditions, and frequently a shared history and sense of origin, Cornel and Hartman [3]. According to Ayim, Abdullah, Bentum, Amponsah, Cudjoe & Manful [4] each of these groups can be distinguished from others within the same linguistically defined category or subcategory, even if the members of the group are characterized by essentially the same social

institutions. Each has a historical tradition of group identity, at the very least, and usually political autonomy.

According to Ekeh [5], as cited in Asante [6], ethnicity is a term used as a synonym for inhumane tribalism, and it is a concept that early anthropologists used as a heuristic category, with intuitive meanings attached to it. Ethnicity involves the feelings for someone "thought" as a subnational community, often defined by commonalities in language, history, culture, or political systems. Asante [6] further argued that ethnic histories contribute to, rather than detract from, national histories among students in their studies. According to Asante, conflicting impulses of students on ethnicity and cultural sentiment underline the same collectivist orientation that is an important aspect of social investment. It is therefore important to provide students with information on ethnicity that will help them understand ethnic categories and subcategories in their country.

Danso-Wiredu and Brako [7] conducted a study that identified ethnic identity and languages spoken as the symbols and values that form a focal point for group cohesiveness, which may vary over time. They concluded that while the geographical concentrations of ethnicity can be mapped to specific places, migration has greatly diffused the sole concentration of one ethnic group in a specified place. Ayim et al [4] attributed the movement to economic crisis, wars and other social issues. The study focused on regionalism, ethnicity, and politics in Ghana. However, it fell short in addressing the cultural aspect of these ethnic groups, their locations, and tribal movements.

From these explanations, we cannot equate an ethnic

group with a tribe. In the Ghanaian context, an ethnic group may be broken up into tribes and sub-tribes. In that case, we are inclined to believe that an ethnic group refers to a larger sub-racial group than a tribe (Amoah [8]).

This study, therefore, seeks to examine the main and minor ethnic groups, as well as their shared traditional characteristics, and trace their origins and geographical locations in Ghana due to the diverse number of ethnic groups in the nation.

The manuscript aims to inform scholars and writers who have misinterpreted the major ethnic groups in Ghana, for example, some believe that the Guans are the progenitors of the Akans, or that the Gurma and Grushi belong to the Mole-Dagbani group. Additionally, there are individuals who regard foreign ethnic groups like the Hausa, Mossi, Wangara, Zambarima, and Dyula as native to Ghana.

2. Methodology

The study employed a qualitative descriptive approach that primarily relied on secondary data sources. Relevant information was collected by reviewing academic journals, books, historical documents, and official census information. The 2021 population and housing census carried out by the Ghana Statistical Service served as a reference point. Ethnographic studies and historical works from prominent scholars such as Boahen [9], Amenumey [10], Wilks [11] and Buah [12] were analyzed to explore the origins, migrations, and settlements of the various ethnic groups in Ghana. The data analysis was done in an explanatory and thematic manner. The ethnic groups were categorized according to their cultural and linguistic ties as well as their geographical locations. This method gave a clear understanding of the relationships between ethnicity, geography, and socio-cultural identity in Ghana.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Ghana is a multi-ethnic society characterized by its cultural, linguistic, and historical diversity. The main ethnic groups are the Akan, Ewe, Mole-Dagbani, Guan, Gruma, and others, Mwakikagile [1]. From a theoretical perspective, ethnic pluralism and constructivist theories of ethnicity offer useful insights into understanding their coexistence and interactions, Ozgen [13]. Ethnic pluralism suggests that different ethnic groups can preserve their distinctive cultural identities while coexisting within a unified national framework, Winter [14]. An example of this is Ghana's constitutional recognition of cultural diversity and peaceful interactions between groups despite differences, Mwakikagile [1].

Constructivist ethnicity theory argues that ethnic identities are socially constructed and are influenced by historical, political, and economic contexts, Chandra (Ed.). [15]. In Ghana, policies during colonial times and governance after independence have significantly impacted the development of ethnic identities and regional dynamics, often affecting access to resources, political influence, and social advancement, Sefa-Nyarko [16]. Collectively, these viewpoints underscore the significance of historical influences, political structures, and inter-ethnic interactions in shaping Ghana's diverse ethnic landscape.

3. Results and Discussion

Major or Main Ethnic Groups of Ghana

According to Abass & Döşkaya [17], Adu Boahen [9], linguistically, the people of Ghana are composed of two principal sub-families. They identified these two sub-families as Gur and the Kwa groups of languages found in the south and north of the river Volta respectively. The Kwa group is found south of the Black Volta and comprises of the Akan, Ewe, Ga-Adangbe and the Gur comprises of Mole-Dagbani, Grushi and Gurma.

Ghana, with a population of about 31.73 million, according to the 2021 population and housing census, is made up of people of diverse ethnic groups or tribes [18]. Major ethnic groups are related tribes that speak related languages and originated from a common ancestor or through assimilation. These various ethnic groups in Ghana have coexisted harmoniously throughout pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods, however, recent development in ethnic nationalism have led to increased tensions among these groups, Yayoh & Angbing [19]

Ghana's diverse ethnic makeup is frequently viewed as both an asset and a limitation. While the government has made deliberate efforts to unite the people for national cohesion, ethnic nationalism continues to cause tensions within the nation's socio-political landscape. Ethnic belongingness is an important impetus of political affiliations, which often undermines the endeavours to cultivate a unified Ghanaian identity [20].

Despite all the efforts of integration initiatives, ethnic nationalism still shapes elections, political selections, and the allocation of resources. The major parties like the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) incline to use ethnic considerations, thereby reinforcing ethnically rooted political alliances [21].

The current challenge fueling ethnic conflicts in Ghana is the competition for resources. The discovery of oil, gold and other minerals, has heightened the disputes over control and access to land. Indigenous people, particularly in the Akan areas and northern regions are reaffirming their demands for greater control over resources found within their ancestral lands. These claims often contradict constitutional regulations, which give ownership of natural resources to the state [22].

The thinking that wealth from local resources is mostly appropriated by elites, politicians or other regions has intensified grievances and fortifies ethnic unity against the state [23]. In northern Ghana, for instance, conflicts over land between indigenous communities and migrant populations have led to recurring disputes, frequently framed in ethnic terms and related to the competition for limited cultivable and grazing areas [24]. A recent case is the land conflict between the Gonja's and the Birifor's, which started in Gbiniyiri, a village in the Savanna region leading to the displacement of over thirty-eight thousand Birifor's in Ghana and neighbouring Cote D'ivoire.

Political exclusion of minority ethnic groups further fuels ethnic tensions. Ethnic groups that are distanced from the prevailing government often perceive themselves as disenfranchised from developmental gains, fostering a sense of injustice.

Although Ghana's constitution promotes inclusion and equality, the practice of political clientelism ((quid pro qua) patronage politics and vote buying) usually privileges regions and groups aligned with the ruling government [25].

This selective approach to development reinforces the idea that ethnicity, not merit or necessity, dictates access to public resources. The recent establishment of new administrative regions, such as Oti region, has been interpreted by some as an effort to appease specific ethnic interests, while others criticize it as a move that may further fragment ethnic identities and manipulate citizens' partisanship [26].

The influence of traditional leadership adds more complexity to the situation. Chiefs and traditional leaders often serve as both guardians of ethnic identity and local land, holding significant sway in rural areas. Although the Ghanaian constitution restricts chiefs from engaging directly in party politics, many traditional leaders do, in fact, partake in politically charged initiatives that back specific ethnic factions or agendas [27]. This dual role of chiefs as both impartial community leaders and political figures muddles the lines between tradition and politics, sometimes threatening national unity.

The emergence of media plurality with ethnic alignments has exacerbated the division of public discourse. While media freedom is fundamental to Ghanaian democracy, some radio stations and online platforms have become channels for sharing ethnic narratives and grievances. Such portrayals often heighten ethnic divisions by framing events through a narrowly defined ethnic viewpoint, thereby jeopardizing national cohesion [28]. The rampant spread of ethnocentric rhetoric, particularly during election periods, is likely to provoke animosity and rekindle historical grievances.

To address these problems, strong policy measures should be adopted to promote equity throughout all the regions in Ghana to address the imbalances in politics, access to land and resources. If not, this will threaten the democratic gains made since the return to constitutional rule in 1992.

The major ethnic groups in Ghana are currently nine in number according to research. They would be taken one after the other.

The Akan Ethnic Group

There are still some arguments about the origins of the Akan of today. The Akan's are believed to have migrated from the old Ghana Empire due to wars and pressure from other emerging states in the western Sudan (Anquandah, [29]). They entered Ghana through northwest and passed through the Black Volta and settled around Damongo and Salaga in the present day savannah region. They further migrated and settled in Techiman and Bono Manso. The Akans later moved to the southern part of the country in three groups. The first group settled around the forest area of Asante Region and the plains of the river Volta. The second group settled around the coast. They consisted of the Twi-Fante and other Twi speaking groups. They settled around the south western coastal region in Ghana.

The last group settled around Bono, Bono East, Ahafo, Eastern and Northern Volta [30]. This is the largest linguistic/ethnic group in Ghana with two sub-divisions, [1] Amoah, [8]. Without doubt the Akan speaking people constitute about 45 percent of the entire population of Ghana.

Inheritance among the Akans is by the matrilineal line as such male children from sisters inherit their uncle's properties when they die [31]; Layefa, Ezenagu & Esoso-Agbor [32]. Also only male children from princesses from the royal family are supposed to ascend to the throne of the Asante kingdom to become an Asantehene [33]. The staple food of the Asantes is fufu, pounded cassava with cocoyam and eaten with palm nut soup (Abenkoi), [34]. Culturally the Akans has one of the best traditions in Ghana which is the envy of many Ghanaians as such each Akan sub-division has its own unique cultural practice.

The Asantes celebrates the Odwira, Adaekese festivals and performs the Adowa dance, and Yam festivals performed by the people of Sehwi Bekwai while Akwanbo is done by Gomoa and Agona communities. Additionally, Fetu Afahye, Bakatue and Ayeye are celebrated by the Fantes and Ntoa Fokuose and Apo festivals are celebrated by the Bono People. Also the Akuapim and the Akyem commemorate Odwira festival and the fontonfrom dance. Among the Akans are;

- The Twi speaking Akan
- The Fante speaking Akan and other related groups

Among the Twi Akan group are the Ashanti, Akuapem, Akyem, Denkyira, Assin, Wassaw, Kwahu, Bono, Ahafo and Akwamu.

Proper Fante speaking areas include; Mankesim, Saltpond, Komenda, Elmina and with Cape Coast as the center. There are also some remnants of Fante speakers around Sekondi-Takoradi.

The other Fante speaking groups are Abora, Ajumaku, Gomoa, Ekumfi and Enyan. Breman, Assikuma and Agona speak slight variations of Akan, which are in-between Fante and Twi.

Sehwe (sefwi), Nzema, Ahanta, Baoule, Aowin, Anyin, Jwira-Pepesa and Chekwosi (Kyokosi) are classified among the Akans although they speak different varieties of dialects that will be unintelligible to other Twi and Fante speaking Akans.

The Akans are located in almost all the regions of Ghana especially the southern part.

The Ashanti's (Asantes) can be found mostly in the Ashanti Region. The Fantes, can be found in the Central and Western Regions of the country. The Ahantas, Nzema and Wassah are also found in the Western Region of Ghana. The Sehwe's and Aowin are predominantly located in the newly created Western North Region.

The Kwahu, Akyem and Akwamu can be found in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Bono are located in Bono and Bono East regions and the Ahafo located in the Ahafo Region. The Chekwosi (Kyokosi), Jwira Pepesa and Baoule are the only Akan groups located in the Northern and Volta Regions respectively (Amoah, [8]).



Source: Fiapre Traditional Council Archives. [35]

Figure 1. Display of Akan culture by the Chief of Fiapre in the Bono region, Ghana

• The Guang Ethnic Group

The Guangs are believed to have been the first people to settle in Ghana. They migrated from Burkina Faso and settled around the northern part of Ghana. They first settled in Gonjaland (Damongo, Bole, Salaga) before some made their southern journey to their present locations, [36]. They moved along river Volta and settled along the coast and other areas in Ghana. They speak distinct languages which are different from major languages in Ghana. The Guangs make up 4% of Ghana's population [18]. They are grouped under Northern and Southern Guangs.

• Northern Guangs (Guan)

Dwang, Foodo, Kyode, Gonja, Ginyanga, Kplang, Krachi, Nawuri, Nchumuru, Nkonya-Nkami, Ntrapo, Likpe, Vane, Buem, Ntrubu, Avatime and Amedzofe

• Southern Guangs (Guan)

Effutu, Gua, Kyerepong, Dampo, Larteh, Anum, Boso, Okere, Awutu, Senya, Awukugua, Apirade, Abiriw, Adukurom, Etsii and Asebu.

The Guangs have no specific region where they are located.

They can be found in Northern Region, Savannah Region and North East Region all in northern Ghana. Others are found in Oti Region. They can also be located in Eastern Region around Larteh and Anum areas. Some are also found in parts of the Central Region especially Winneba, Senya Braku, Awutu Braku and Bojiase.

The Guangs also inherit patrilineally. Inheritance and chieftaincy is from the male line. Drumming and dancing is a very good trait of the Guans as such each ethnic group has its own unique dance and also celebrates festivals.

The Effutu community celebrates the Aboakyer festival and Asafo dance. Bawjiase is known for the Akumasi

festival and Asafo dance, while the Gonjas celebrate the Damba festival and dance. Moreover, the people of Larteh observe the Ahenease Ohum festival, the Nkonya people celebrate the Wurupong sakyiba festival, and the Nchumuru of Krachi celebrate the Eat food festival.



Source: Rebecca Nantomah, [37]. Adomonline.com

Figure 2. Yagbon Wura Amonebafé Borensa I, Overlord of the Gonja People

• The Mole-Dagbani Ethnic Group

The Mole-Dagbani people live in the northern half of Ghana. Oral tradition has it that these people migrated from east of Lake Chad. They were led by strong and powerful rulers such as Tohazie the red hunter. They first settled in Zamfara, then old Ghana Empire and to the Lake Chad area and finally settling in Pusiga, Ghana (Kormisah, [38]. Wilks [11] also traces the origins of the early Mole-Dagbani groups to early migrations from the Mossi states in present day Burkina Faso settling in the northern savannah lands of Ghana.

The Mole-Dagomba or Dagbani peoples are kindred peoples who are blood related and come from the same stock and are alike in many ways. This means that they come from a common source or family, hence they are similar as the variants of the language they speak clearly demonstrate, Tuurey [39].

The Mole-Dagbani inherit patrilineally, as such male children from the father's line inherit their father's properties when they are no more. Culturally the staple food of the Mole-Dagbani's is tuozaafi with any leafy soup. Drumming and dancing is a very good trait of the Mole-Dagbanis as such each ethnic group has its own unique dance. Bawaa is performed by the Dagaabas, Takai by the Dagombas, Bine by the Birifors and Dugu and Jansi by the Walas. Each group also has a festival that is celebrated annually. The Wala people celebrate the Dumba festival, the Dagaabas celebrate the Bongo, Kobine, Kakube, Kalibi, and Wilaa festivals. The Dagomba people also celebrate the Damba, Yam, and Bugum festivals, while the Kusaassi celebrate the Samanpiid. Additionally, the Guruni and Balsa peoples celebrate the Adaakoya and Fiok festivals, respectively. The Mole-Dagbani Ethnic Group makes up 16.6 percent

of the total population of Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service, [18].

It includes; Dagomba, Nanumba, Hanga, Koma, Mamprushi, Dagaaba, Wala, Talensi, Bisa, Kusaasi, Balsa, Nankani, Nabdham, (Namnam), Gurune (Frafra), Npara, Choriba, Kamara, Kantosi and Safalba. The Lobi is another branch of the Mole-Dagbani even though some scholars separate them as a major ethnic group. It comprises of the Birifor and Miwo. Even though the Miwo, Bisa, Balsa are classified among the Mole-Dagbani's, they speak different variety of mole that is unintelligible to other mole speaking groups.

The Mole-Dagbani's are located in various parts of northern Ghana. The Dagomba and the Nanumba are located in Northern Region. The Mamprushis are located in the newly created North East Region. The

Talensi, Kusasi, Balsa, Busansi, Nankani, Nabdham and Gurune are situated in the Upper East Region. The Dagaaba, Wala, Birifor and Miwo are located in the Upper West Region. Some Birifors, Hanga and Safalba, Npara, Batige and Choriba are also located in the Savannah Region.



Source: Upper West Cultural Desk Report [40]

Figure 3. Display of Wala tradition in the annual smock festival in WA, Ghana, Upper West Region

• The Ewe Ethnic Group

The Ewe people are believed to have migrated from Oyo in western Nigeria. They migrated to Ketu a town in Benin. From Ketu they migrated and settled in Notsie in Togo [41]. While in Notsie they were ruled by a ruthless, tyrannical and a wicked king called Agorkoli. They could not withstand the ill treatment from their king and therefore decided to leave Togo for Ghana. They entered Ghana in three groups along the coast from Dzita through Keta to Denu in the 16th century [42]. The Ewes also inherit patrilineally. Their staple food is akple with okro soup or grinded pepper. Also their traditional dance is Agbaza, Boboobo and Atrikpui and the main festival is hogbetsotso.

The Ewe-speaking people, at present, mainly occupy the south-eastern part of the Volta River stretching eastwards into Togo and Benin. The Ewes are said to constitute 13.9 percent of the entire population of the

country. The Ewes in Ghana are divided into two main linguistic groups which are the Anlo Ewe in the south around Keta and Anloga areas, and the Ewedome and Wedome referring to all those Ewes in the middle section of the Volta Region.

They include: Anlo, The Mina, Anedo, Tongu Avenor, Bator, Watsyi, Bey, Gen, Peki, Ho, kpendo and Tori.



Source: Our Heritage TV, 2024

Figure 4. Chief of North Anlo area, Togbi Tenge Dzokoto Gligui VII, Volta Region

• Ga-Adangbe Ethnic Group

According to Anquandah, [29] in the seventeenth century, the Ga-Adangbes moved from Ile Ife in the southwest of what is now Nigeria to Ghana. The Okai highlands in the Eastern Region, close to Nsawam, were the first place the Ga-Adangbes settled when they arrived in Ghana. They migrated eastward and to other areas of the Greater Accra region and eastern region. The Ga-Adangbes inherit patrilineally. Their staple food is kenkey with hot pepper and shito. It is prepared from corn dough wrapped with corn husk.

Their traditional dances are Kpalongo, Deke and Klama. Festivals are also an important part of the Ga-Adangbes as such each groups have its own festival. The Ga's celebrate Homowo, Ada's celebrate Asafutufiam, Krobo's celebrate Ngmayen, Kloyosikplemi festivals.



Source: Protour Africa Archives, 2021

Figure 5. Sprinkling of kpokpoi by the Ga people in the homowo festival, Accra, Ghana

The Ga-Adangbe is one of the major ethnic groups in Ghana. They constitute seven percent of the population of Ghana [18]. The two main groups are the Ga and Adangbe. They include; Ga, Krobo, Ada, Gbugle, Ningbo, Prampram, Shai and Klioli

The Ga-Adangbe can be found in the Greater Accra and the Eastern Regions.

• Grusi/Grushi/Gurunshi

Oral traditions of the Gurunshi hold that they originated from the western Sudan. The wide geographical distribution of the Grushi people from middle portions of Burkina Faso to the lower Black Volta amounts to a dispersal, though it is difficult to identify the original home of these languages that are spoken not only in Ghana but also in Burkina Faso and Togo, Awedoba [44]. While it is unknown when the migration occurred, it is believed that the Gurunshi were present in their current location by 1100 AD [45]. Following the 15th century, when the Mossi states were established to the north, Mossi horsemen often raided Gurunshi areas for slaves, but the Gurunshi peoples were never fully subjugated, remaining independent [46].

The Grushi is one of the smallest ethnic groups in Ghana. It constitutes 2.5 percent of the total population of Ghana. They also inherit patrilineally. Their staple food is tuozaafi with any leafy soup. Some of the traditional dances and festivals of the Grushi are Nagla dance and the Fao festival by the Kasena, Chala Naawie dance and Palagbiele festival by the Sissala and Sigma dance and Odudubaliba festival by the Tampilma.

Those ethnic groups classified under this group are: Kasena, Vagla, Tampilma, Mo-Dega, Sissala and Chekalee.

The Kasena are located in the Upper East Region. The Vagla, Tampilma and Mo are situated in the Savannah Region while the Sissala and the Chekalee located in the Upper West Region of Ghana.



Source: Navrongo Photographic Archives (2019)

Figure 6. A Grushi warrior in Navrongo, Ghana

• Gurma Ethnic Group

The Gurmas origin point to a rocky footprint near Pama, a Gurma town north of the Togo-Burkina Faso border, as the place and proof of their descent [48,49,50]

The Gurma are also believed to have migrated from the Gambaga Scarp (escarpment) of present-day northeastern Ghana. According to Norris [51], some of these migrants stopped at Tenkodogo and founded the first Mossi kingdom; others continued northeastward to the Fada N'Gourma region. They also inherit patrilineally. Their staple food is tuozaafi with any leafy soup. Some festivals and dances of the Gurma people are; Konkomba has the Kinachunk dance and Ndipondan festival while the Bimobas has the Siak dance and Danjuar festival and Chamba commemorates the Leera dance and Minjar Mela festival.

The Gurma form 1.1 percent of Ghana's population and comprises of the Bimoba, Konkomba, Basaris, Komba, Kotokoli and Chamba.

The Konkomba, Komba and Chamba are located in Northern and North East Regions while Bimobas are located in North East Region.



Source: kwakudee-tripdownmemorylane.blogspot.com [52]

Figure 7. Konkomba dance group in the north east region, Ghana

• Central Togo-Atakora Ranges Ethnic Group/ Togo Remnant Group.

These are varieties of tribes, some with their major part in the Republic of Togo telling us that they might have migrated from Togo into Ghana. Some of them are simply single towns or clusters of villages with their own languages. They are dotted along the border of Ghana and Togo, Amoah [8].

These tribes are Nyangbo, Tafi, Logba, Lolobi, Santrokofi, Akpafu, Bowiri, Buem, Akposo, Ntrobui, Sekpele and Adele. Likewise, the Ewes, they also inherit patrilineally and their staple food is akple. Festivals and Dances of this group are; Lolobi-Ipor festival and Agbaja dance, Bowiri-Fusskur festival and Booboobo dance.

• The Senufo Ethnic Group

The Senufo people are believed to have migrated from the Mali Empire into present day Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire. They first settled at Sikasso and then to Kakala, [53]. From Kakala, a town in Cote d'Ivoire they moved into present day Ghana and settled around Sampa, Kokoa, Jamera and Banda Nkwanta.

The Senfo is a major ethnic group that is synonymous to Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Mali and Ghana. Some Nafaana people celebrate the Forjour festival, while others celebrate the Fofie and Sanghei festival. Their inheritance system is patrilineal. Males inherit their parents. In Ghana, it is made up of the Ligbi-Banda and Nafaana. They are located in the Bono and Bono East Regions.



Source: Isaac Kwesi Mintah, Lorldomyofm 2017.

Figure 8. Chief of Lolobi sitting in state in the first Ipor festival, Oti Region, Ghana



Source: Water Charity, 2013.

Figure 9. Chief of Jamera, a Nafana community in Bono Region, Ghana

Conclusions

The article has provided a complete and a very good account of the major ethnic groups in Ghana, addressing gaps and correcting misconceptions in earlier studies.

Unlike other previous works, this study carefully distinguishes between unrelated ethnic groups and avoids incorrectly including foreign groups within Ghana's major ethnic classifications. It also enhances understanding by presenting a map that clearly shows the geographical distribution of these ethnic groups across the entire country.

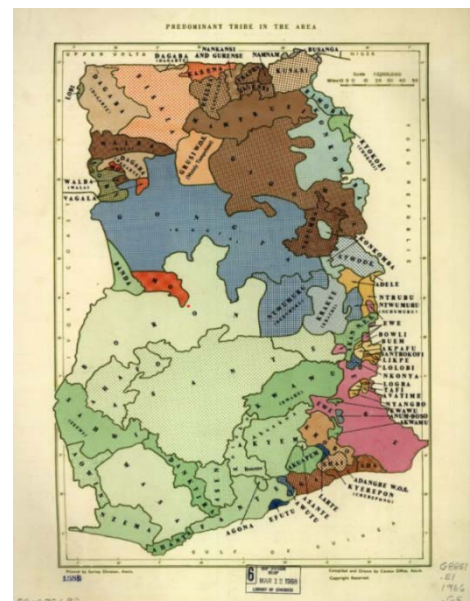
The paper serves as a valuable reference for scholars and researchers who intend to study Ghana or undertake similar research. It offers both clarity and depth on ethnic composition and spatial distribution, making it a useful academic resource.

The findings reveal that, despite occasional tensions, particularly during election periods and competition over resources, Ghanaians have largely sustained peaceful coexistence in the face of ethnic diversity. Historically, from the pre-colonial era through the colonial period to modern times, different ethnic groups in Ghana have lived together in relative harmony. The study further highlights that many cultural traits are shared across ethnic lines, creating a sense of unity that stretches from Bawku in the north to Half Assini in the south.

In addition, the research shows that Ghana's population is dominated by a few major ethnic groups, each concentrated in particular regions. The Akan, for example, are predominantly found in southern and middle Ghana, especially in the Ashanti, Eastern, Western, and Central Regions. The Mole-Dagbani groups are mainly located in northern Ghana, including the Northern, Savannah, Upper West, Upper East and North East Regions. The Ewe are largely concentrated in the Volta and Oti Regions, while the Ga-Adangbe are situated in the Greater Accra Region. The Grushi groups are primarily found in the Upper West, Upper East, and parts of the Savannah Region.

Finally, the study emphasizes the strong relationship between ethnic identity and language families in Ghana. The Kwa language family is dominant in the southern parts of the country, while the Gur language family is prevalent in the north. This linguistic pattern plays an important role in reinforcing cultural identity and cohesion within the various ethnic groups.

Recommendations



Source: Adopted from Library of congress, 1966

Figure 10. Map of Ghana showing Ethnic groups and their locations

It is imperative to introduce History and Cultural Studies as a discipline at all levels of education to educate

young learners about their culture and history. Many Ghanaians lack interest in historical and anthropological matters due to a lack of exposure to information about issues in Ghana. Therefore, it would be beneficial to display information about the country in libraries for the public to stay informed about Ghanaian issues.

The Ghana Education Service should enhance structures in the various cultural departments at the district, municipal, and metropolitan levels to facilitate the well-organized biannual festival of arts and culture for basic and senior high schools. This festival rotates from one region to another to utilize culture in shaping the identity of Ghanaians, as they gain knowledge of the language, symbols, values, norms, customs, and traditions of the ethnic groups in Ghana.

Furthermore, it is essential to properly organize and expose the biennial National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFAC), which provides a platform for all sixteen regions to showcase their rich culture and tradition. This will allow the general public to learn more about their culture.

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