Assessing the Effectiveness of Youth Training Programmes in Non-Violent Response: A Case Study of Tamale Metropolis, Ghana

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ABSTRACT

While the contributions of governments and Civil Society Organizations in peacebuilding in the Northern Region of Ghana is well documented, the influence of training on non-violent response to conflicts is not clearly established. This study evaluates the use of training programmes as a strategy to prevent violent conflicts. It contributes to the theoretical understanding of violent conflicts, while teasing out the reasons why it persists. This paper is based on the Human Needs theory that seeks to rationalise the linkage between human needs and violent conflicts. This research used a mixed-methods approach, collecting qualitative and quantitative data through interviews, document reviews, and questionnaires from officials from the Christian Council of Ghana and youth from in five communities. The study concludes that the training on non-violence for the youth contributes but cannot exclusively ensure non-violent response to conflicts. The study notes that some unemployed youth are lured into violent conflicts for economic benefits. The study recommends factoring livelihood schemes into conflict management programmes. Train the youth with employable skills and create job opportunities for them. It also recommends integration of peace building programmes into educational and religious based institutions.

Keywords: Ghana, Youth, Non-violence, Conflict, Tamale, Christian Council.

BACKGROUND

Introduction

According to the 2022 Global Peace Index, Ghana is ranked as the most peaceful country in West Africa and the second most peaceful in Africa [1]. This is partly because of the peaceful transition of political power since 1992, coupled with its promising mediation role in regional conflicts, assistance to war-induced refugees, and contribution to international peacekeeping

[2]. Furthermore, the localized nature of the many communal conflicts that although sometimes ferocious have not been strong enough to challenge the hegemony of the State and the fact that Ghana was spared from the many civil wars that most countries in West Africa suffered especially from the late 1980s to the early 2000s is also a contributory factor. However, Ghana has been witnessing an upsurge of communal conflicts [3]. Almost every community in Ghana has experienced some form of communal conflicts that are complex with varied causes; ranging from religious differences to land resource competition, chieftaincy succession rights, ethnic supremacy, and political and economic marginalization or deprivation [4].

Northern Ghana became a theatre for ethnic and chieftaincy related conflicts in the past. Some of the most destructive ethnic conflicts engulfed more than two ethnic groups as was the case of the "1994 Northern Conflict" which extended to nine districts involving different ethnic groups in 250 communities [5]. These conflicts specifically involved Konkomba wars against Nanumbas, Dagombas and Gonjas between 1981 and 1994 [6] and the Dagbon crisis in 2002 [8]. In general, conflicts in Northern Ghana are fought over claims to land, traditional power and the levels of discrimination meted against the minority ethnic groups by their majority or chiefly tribes and clans [8].

Government, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and religious bodies have intervened in diverse ways in the wake of conflicts in the Northern Region of Ghana. The CSOs include Action Aid, World Vision Ghana, Catholic Relief Services, Northern Ghana Peace Project and Christian Council of Ghana (CCG). A major strategy used in the Peacebuilding and Conflict Management projects are training programmes for the youth. The youth are targeted because they are mostly at the forefront of the violent confrontations [9]. The use of this strategy is based on its anticipated positive results as alluded by some writers of conflict resolution. Training disputants in conflict management skills can influence the ability to manage conflicts and come up with appropriate resolutions [10]. Similarly, training in conflict handling skills should be a combination of educational activities that are directed at improving individual skills in communicating with others and conflict negotiation tactics that will assist the person in handling conflict for the good of the parties involved [11, 12].

Purpose of the Study
While the contributions of CSOs and religious organizations in peacebuilding is documented by several scholarly literature [7, 13, 14, 2, 15], the influence of training programmes on non-violent response to conflicts is not clearly established. The motivation for this paper is that, even though several training programmes aimed at encouraging non-violent response to conflicts among youth groups in the Tamale Metropolis were made by various organizations in the wake of violent conflicts, the youth continued to resort to violence. Understanding why they still resort to violence is still incomplete. There is inadequate information about the link between training on conflict prevention and non-violent response. This article aims to fill this knowledge gap by examining peacebuilding training programmes organized by the CCG applying the Human Need Theory. This article contributes to theoretical understanding in the study of violent conflicts more broadly while teasing out the specific nuances on the reasons why it persists which is of both scholarly and policy importance. The study specifically evaluates the influence of training programmes on conflict management organized by the CCG for the youth in the Tamale Metropolitan Area.

BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the research is the Human Needs Theory. Originally conceptualized by Abraham Maslow in his hierarchy of needs, Maslow proposed that human motivation is driven by a progression of needs, beginning with physiological necessities such as food, water, and shelter, followed by safety and security, social belonging, self-esteem, and ultimately self-actualization. Building on Maslow's work, John Burton expanded Human Needs Theory within the field of conflict resolution. Burton posits that all humans possess basic, universal needs—such as identity, recognition, security, and autonomy—and that when these needs are not satisfied, individuals may resort to violence to claim their rights and fulfill their needs.

Human needs theorists argue that one of the primary causes of protracted or intractable conflict is people's unyielding drive to meet their unmet needs on the individual, group, and societal level. Coate and Rosati explain that, "Human needs are a powerful source of explanation of human behavior and social interaction. All individuals have needs that they strive to satisfy, either by using the system 'acting on the fringes' or acting as a reformist or revolutionary. Given this condition, social systems must be responsive to individual needs, or be subject to instability and forced change possibly through violence or conflict" [16]. Similarly, Rosenberg [17] explains that violence is often a tragic expression of unmet human needs, implying that all human actions are attempts to satisfy these needs. Burton [18] also emphasizes neglecting basic human needs can lead to the use of violence as a means of claiming rights or satisfying needs. In his later work, Burton [19] underscores the potential of Human Needs Theory to offer an objective and cross-cultural basis for understanding conflict, designing appropriate resolution strategies, and establishing conflict analysis and resolution as an autonomous academic discipline.

The Human Needs Theory is particularly relevant to the research, as it highlights the importance of addressing the underlying needs of individuals and communities to prevent violent conflicts. While such programmes may provide knowledge and skills, the persistence of violent behavior among youth may suggest the presence of deeper, unmet needs. The theory's emphasis on the role of unmet human needs in causing conflicts aligns well with the research objective of assessing the effectiveness of youth training programs in non-violent response. By understanding the influence of unmet needs on violent conflicts, the research can better evaluate the impact of these training programs on the youth in Tamale Metropolis. This theory helps to frame the research inquiry by positing that without addressing the fundamental needs of young people, training programmes alone may be insufficient in preventing violent responses. Thus, Human Needs Theory provides a critical lens through which the dynamics of youth behavior and the outcomes of conflict management interventions can be understood.

The Concept of Conflict and Violent Conflict

Conflict is an unavoidable aspect of everyday life. Whether with others, yourself or an organization, conflict is an inevitable aspect of life experience. According to Coser [20] conflicts occur when two or more people engage in a struggle over values and claims to status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their enemies. Awedoba [7] described conflict as a relationship between two or more parties that center on differences, disagreements on some issue of common interest or concern, divergence,

incompatibilities, clash of will and the like; it may involve antagonism and opposition. Conrad [21] described conflicts as communicative interactions among people who are interdependent and who perceive that their interests are incompatible, inconsistent, or in tension.

Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse [22] defined violence as a situation in which at least two organized parties resort to the use of force against each other. Violent conflict is hence characterized by its collective dimension (i.e. violence perpetrated by organized groups, as opposed to forms of violence put in place by single individuals), and its sustained nature (i.e. violence that is protracted in time, as opposed to forms of violence that take the form of occasional outbursts.

Causes of Conflict
Conflicts are varied and have complex causes. A cursory look at all historical conflict on the African continent revealed tremendous ethnic and religious inclinations, albeit many of them also had subtle causal relationship with environmental degradation and resource use. The concept of nationhood/statehood is misplaced in many African nation state building contexts. Nations on the African continent, unconsciously motivated by the great diversity of ethnic groups, continued to trivialise national homogeneity and ethnic unification thus allowed for powerful disaggregated ethnic formations. The inevitable tendency of this phenomenon was that many national policies by governments tended to be ethnocentric which created suspicion, rivalry, discontent, mistrust and enmity among different ethnic groups resulting in ethnic conflicts and civil wars in extreme cases [23]. According to Tanle et al [24], the causes of conflict include limited citizens participation in decision-making at the local level, miscommunication, lack of education on the functions of the District Assembly and inadequate financial resources to respond to the demands of communities. UNDP cited in Commonwealth indicated that it is widely recognized that the factors that trigger conflict include poverty and the struggle for and misuse of resources, ethnic rivalries, religious intolerance, bad governance and arbitrary national boundaries which are at play in Ghana. [25] Inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts are among the major causes of violence in Ghana. Lund, in an analysis of the longstanding ethno-political conflict between the Kusasi and the Mamprusi in Bawku, argued that the politicization of the Bawku conflict had affected government efforts to resolve the conflict [26]. He asserted that a wide range of political- including party-political- and economic competition over chieftaincy, land, markets, names of places and other issues were reframed along ethnic lines, thereby rekindling disputes over rights and prerogatives accounting for the persistent violence.

Focusing on Northern Ghana, a critical assessment of the causes of most of these conflicts can be traced to colonial and post-colonial actions of governments [27, 23]. Certain actions and in-actions of governments led to the marginalization, deprivation, exploitation and the exclusion of the 'minority groups' in many decision-making processes and governance issues that affected them. This led to dissatisfaction among the 'minority', hence any little dispute between the 'majority' and 'minority' exploded into ethnic conflict.

Strategies to Reduce Conflicts
A white paper presented by Department for International Development (DFID) in 2006 entitled Preventing Violence Conflicts which presents DFID's contribution towards reducing violent conflicts in Africa gave some insights into strategies that can be employed to reduce violent conflicts. Conflict exists in all societies at all times and need not necessarily be negative or

destructive. Conflict is the pursuit of contrary or seemingly incompatible interests whether between individuals, groups or countries. It can be a major force for positive social change. In states with good governance, strong civil society and robust political and social systems where human rights are protected, conflicting interests are managed and ways found for groups to pursue their goals peacefully. Where there is poor governance, however, grievances, disillusionment, competition for resources and disputes are more likely to become violent [28].

Dealing with the impact and consequences of violence is essential, but it comes at a high price. Preventing violent conflict is far less costly in terms of lives and resources. A strategy employed by DFID was to address conflict before it turned to violence. This means tackling underlying causes of conflict through its development work and supporting political and social processes that manage conflicts peacefully. Poor governance can lead to social exclusion. And exclusion is most likely to lead to conflict, and possibly violence, where there is marked and widening inequality between social groups or geographical regions. Groups denied access to economic, political and other opportunities and unable to achieve redress through civil institutions may believe they have little to lose from taking violent action. Such grievances are all too easily harnessed by charismatic leaders promising change and justifying violence to deliver it. Faith, ethnicity or cultural differences can be powerful sources of mobilization. War is ten times more likely to occur where there is discrimination against ethnic groups. And state failure is five times more likely where there is ethnic discrimination [29].

Prof. Ahmed Mohiddin in his paper "Democracy and the Management of Conflicts and Development in Africa" examined the role of the African civil society in the management and resolution of conflicts in Africa. He stated that "there is no doubt that Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) must play a major role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa. They are closer to the people and are thus more knowledgeable, sensitive to the nuances of the problems and sensitized to the sensitivities of the people involved" [30]. CSOs can therefore play a very useful role in the management of conflicts in Africa by devoting themselves to the following tasks:

Task	Concept
Undertake research and studies to understand the nature of conflicts, root causes, their manifestations and consequences on African societies and economies; and prepare relevant position papers on possible options for the prevention, management and resolution of specific sets of conflicts.	Academic enquiry or scholarly investigation
Prepare modules to suit what might be termed as "realistic hypothetical situations". As Prof. Bujra noted [Reconstructing the State for Development in Post Conflict Countries, 1999.] there are different types of post-conflict situations, each demanding different approaches and reconstruction packages. Although the democratic principles must be integrated in the new structures of stability, supported by good governance, accountability and transparency, their practical manifestations must, however, reflect the traditions, values, historical experiences and aspirations of the peoples concerned.	Scenario Based Learning
Promote consultative networking and meeting of NGOs and other CSOs engaged in conflicts, development and democratization issues. Monitor social, economic and political developments that might have potential for violent conflicts.	Collaborative platforms

Provide facilities and "good offices" in a neutral environment to facilitate dialogue and discussions between those involved in conflicts.	Diplomatic Mediation
Organize seminars, symposia, workshops and round-table-conferences on issues related to conflicts, so that those concerned with these issues could exchange views, opinions and experience, and thereby establish a networking relationship.	Peacebuilding Forums
Promote partnerships with non-African NGOs and other community based organizations involved in conflicts, development and democratization issues. Establish legitimate, cordial working partnership with governments and intergovernmental organizations.	Transnational Partnerships for Peace and Development
Foster a better and simplified understanding of the critical importance of democracy, good governance and the observation of human rights, and the creation of the enabling environment as the building blocks for peace and security, and thus the prevention of violent conflicts.	Civic Education
Advocate civic education for the empowerment of people to effectively participate in public affairs. Promote the creation of an enabling environment that would facilitate the evolution of succeeding generation of leaders who would be sufficiently sensitized to the critical importance of peace and security to the promotion of sustainable development	Civic Empowerment Advocacy

Source: Democracy and the Management of Conflicts and Development in Africa (Mohiddin, 2000)

Peace Building Efforts in the Northern Region of Ghana

In March 2003, The Ghana Network for Peacebuilding (GHANEP) commissioned a research to inquire about the activities of peace building organizations in the Northern Region with funding from Northern Ghana Peace Project (NG Peace). Ten organizations participated in the research were officers from these organizations were interviewed to find out details about their programmes. Based on the discussions and subsequent analysis, the following conclusions were made [31]:

- Many Non-Governmental Organizations in the Northern region were involved in peace building.
- Many communities had been educated and awareness created for peaceful coexistence.
- Peace education was carried out as one-time activity rather than a part of a strategic plan. There were no follow up programmes to build upon activities initiated.
- There was limited or no financial support for sustaining peace building after the crisis stage during conflict.
- There was no collaboration in programme implementation.
- School peace education programmes had created some awareness among the youth.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The Tamale Metropolis is located at the centre of the Northern Region. The metropolis occupies approximately 750 km sq, about 13 percent of the total land area of the Northern Region. According to the 2020 Population and Housing Census, the population size of the Tamale Metropolitan Area is 374,747 representing 185,051 males and 189,693 females . Apart from Metropolitan Tamale where there is ethnic diversity, almost all people in the surrounding villages are Dagombas. Even in the Metropolis, the Dagombas constitute about 80 percent of the total population. Before the advent of the Christian and Moslem Religions, Dagombas were mostly African traditionalist. Their culture is deeply enshrined in their customs and beliefs. The

result of this is still manifested in the numerous traditional festivals still practiced. These practices are no longer pronounced in Metropolitan Tamale as a result of the ethnic diversity and the influence of Western Culture. The most important festivals of the people are the Fire Festival, Yam Festival and Damba Festival. Major traditional authorities in the Metropolis include the Dakpema, Gulkpenaa, Sagnarinaa, Banvi-Lana, Choggu-Naa among others [32].

Data and Methods

The case study design was used for the research as it allowed an in-depth study and was useful for testing the theory underlying the research topic. It also allowed the application of a variety of methodologies and the use of a variety of sources to undertake the investigation. A mixed research methodology was employed for the research. According to George, mixed methods can help you gain a more complete picture than a standalone quantitative or qualitative study, as it integrates benefits of both methods [33]. Data for the study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The responses from the structured interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions constituted the primary sources. The secondary data was derived from published information such as journals, reports, leaflets and brochures from the Christian Council of Ghana. Structured interview schedules and questionnaire comprising both open and closed ended questions were used. Focus group discussions were also held to obtain qualitative data for the study. There were 3 separate focus group sessions each spanning a little over an hour. Participants for the focus group discussions were youth groups from the Tamale Metropolitan area. A descriptive survey research design was adopted as the most appropriate because it made it possible to provide detailed description of why the youth engage in violence even though they have been trained. The target population for the study was youth who participated in the non-violent training programmes organized by the CCG in the Tamale Metropolis and staff of the CCG in Tamale.

A sample size of 92 respondents was selected from the five project communities — Changli, Gumbehini, Lamashegu, Nyohini and Zogbeli — of the CCG in the Tamale Metropolis. The communities selected represented 18 percent of the CCG's project communities and the 92 respondents represented 47 percent of the trained youth in the five communities. A probability sampling method was used to get the sample for the research. This method ensured that a specific percentage of the population was selected by means of a systematic system in which every element of the population had a chance of being included in the sample. It was also used because the population had no differentiated levels, sections, or classes. The background characteristics of the respondents show that about two-thirds (91.3%) of the respondents were males, a departure from the fact that there are almost same percent of males (49.4%) to females (50.6%) in the Tamale Metropolis [32]. The male youth were more targeted and participated in the training programmes than the females. The higher proportion of male respondents means that their views could dominate in the effectiveness of training on youth responds to non-violent conflicts.

A little over half (66.3%) of the respondents were 35 years old or less. This means that majority fell within the age categorization of youth [34]. The youth are normally the target for political violence and were appropriately targeted for the training of youth on non-violent response to conflict. The religious background of respondents shows two thirds (71.7 %) are Muslims. This may be as a result of the fact that 90.5 percent of the population in Tamale Metropolis are Muslims [32]. On education, 55.4 percent of respondents do not have any form of formal

education and 75 percent are unemployed. This implies that unemployment is high among the youth and this can be a recipe for the youth to engage in violent conflicts. They can easily be manipulated and engaged in violent activities with the hope or promise of employment opportunities. Unemployed youth are all too often used as pawns in traditional chieftaincy, political and land use conflicts, lured by the promise of wealth [35].

The simple random and systematic samplings were the techniques employed under the probability methods to select the communities and respondents respectively. The 28 project communities were listed and each community assigned a consecutive number from 1 to 28. Numbers 1 to 28 were written on pieces of paper and put in a box. Five papers were then picked randomly from the box to represent the five communities. The communities with the corresponding chosen numbers were then selected as the target communities.

The second step was the computation of the number of respondents per community. The number of participants trained in a community was divided by the total number of participants for all the five communities multiplied by the desired sample size to get the number of respondents for particular communities. The number for specific communities was then divided by the total number of trained youth in the community to determine a specific interval for selecting respondents. A random place was selected at the top of the participants list and starting at that point, the names were selected by the specific intervals until desired sample size was reached.

The SPSS version 21 was used to analyze the quantitative data and supported with qualitative data while descriptive statistics were used to present the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Resorting to Violence by the Youth to Address Differences
The researchers sought to find out whether the respondents had resorted to violence despite being trained by the CCG and why the youth resorted to the violent conflicts (see Table 1). Youth violence defined by World Health Organization [36] is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, by youth, against themselves, another person or a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, abnormal development or deprivation. The study also sought to determine whether one's religious background had an influence to respond to conflicts or differences violently. This is against the background that religion is expected to shape the behavior of individuals or a group of people.

Table 1: Religious Background and Resorting to Violence

Resorting to violent conflicts after being trained	Moslem	Christian	Traditionalist	Total
Yes	27 (40.30%)	7 (35.00%)	2 (40.00%)	36(39.13%)
No	31 (46.27%)	11 (55.00%)	3 (60.00%)	45(48.91%)
No response	9 (13.43%)	2 (40.30%)	0	11(11.96%)
Total	67 (100.00%)	20 (100.00%)	5 (100.00%)	92(100.00%)

On whether the respondents had resorted to violence after participating in non-violence response to conflicts training programmes by the CCG, 39.13 percent said 'yes', 48.91 percent

said 'no' and 11.96 percent did not answer. The data indicates that less than half, 48.91 percent of the respondents had actually responded positively to the training. The data further shows that 40.30 percent, 35.00 percent, and 40.00 percent of the Muslim, Christian and traditionalist respondents respectively indicated they had resorted to violence. On the other hand, 46.27 percent, 55.00 percent, 60.00 percent of the Muslim, Christian and traditionalist respondents respectively indicated they had not resorted to violence after being trained. Consequently, all the three major religions recorded higher percentages of responding positively to the training programme. An average of 54 percent of the respondents belonging to all the three major religions responded positively to the training programmes. This could also be partly attributed to the role of religion and religious beliefs. This view is supported by British Academy which posited that beliefs/values, religious leaders and faith-based organizations are thought to have huge potential in promoting peace in any society and/or in the international arena [37]. However, the difference between those who had responded positively and negatively is not considerable to conclude that the training programmes had achieved the expected results. This is perhaps reflected in the less than half of the respondents responding positively to the training programmes.

Table 2: Attitude of youth groups and individuals towards violent conflicts

Function	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	47	51.09
No	37	40.21
No response	8	8.70
Total	92	100

Responding to the question on whether the respondents had noticed any change of the youth attitude towards violent conflicts, 51.09 percent indicated 'yes', 40.21 percent responded 'no' and 8.70 percent did not respond. The 51.09 percent of the respondents attributed the positive change to education and sensitisation by peacebuilding organisations, experiences of negative effects of violent conflicts, increased awareness of the manipulation of political leaders and increased alertness of the security agencies among others. This implies that CCG contributed to this positive change but cannot be solely attributed to its training programmes. This conclusion is buttressed by the outcome of the research commissioned by the Ghana network for Peacebuilding in 2003 which revealed that most development NGOs in Northern Ghana integrate peace education into their programmes. During the focus group discussion, a respondent said;

> *"Violence was our only way of solving our differences. Through the training we received we now know that violence has many negative effects on every parts of our lives and so the need to resolve our differences peacefully".*

Table 3 depicts reasons assigned by respondents on why the youth continue to resort to conflicts violently even though they have been trained. The topmost reason by 68 of the responses was poverty and large population of the youth being ranked last. Poverty is still one of the gravest threats to young people because of its association with malnutrition and health problems, exposure to environmental hazards, engagement in violence or conflict and difficulties developing skills suitable for employment [38]. In line with the human needs theory, when these needs are not met, conflict is likely to occur.

Table 3: Opinions on why the youth continue to respond to conflicts violently

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage	Ranked
Poverty	68	17	1st
Unemployment	57	15	2nd
Inadequate education	57	15	3rd
Lack of employment opportunities	54	14	4th
Manipulation by politicians	51	13	5th
Lack of confidence in the justice system	43	11	6th
Some youth feed on conflict	32	8	7th
Large population of youth	27	7	8th
Total	389*	100	

*multiple responses

This is supported by President of the International Crisis Group, Gareth Evans in Waldman [39] who posited that "There is every reason to accept that economic decline, low income, and high unemployment are contributing condition, either directly by reducing the relevant opportunity costs of joining a violent rebellion or quite probably both". To Waldman, conflict engulfed countries are usually faced with extreme poverty levels. It is therefore not a coincidence that the first Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) is "No Poverty". Addressing this goal involves creating income, jobs and decent work. Youth unemployment which is second on the list can contribute to household poverty levels. As evident in the qualitative data, a respondent indicated that:

> *"I can say poverty is a major cause for the youth involved in conflict. Some of us readily accept money from political parties to attend political rallies and do not hesitate to fight for those who gave us the money" (Youth Leader).*

Pressing Needs of the Youth
The study sought to enquire from respondents what constituted the pressing needs of the youth in the Northern Region of Ghana. People sometimes react violently to disagreements when they feel their needs are not being met or someone/group is responsible for denying them their needs.

Table 4: Pressing needs of the youth in the Northern Region

Needs of the Youth	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Employment skills	65	21	1st
Employment	65	21	1st
Formal education	54	18	2nd
Capital	51	17	3rd
Participation in local governance	27	9	4th
Security	27	9	4th
Recognition	14	5	5th
Total	* 303	100.0	

*multiple responses

Table 4 shows that employable skills and employment opportunities were ranked the highest (21%) pressing needs and the least (5%) ranked was recognition. "Human needs are a powerful source of explanation of human behavior and social interaction. All individuals have needs that

they strive to satisfy, either by using the system 'acting on the fringes' or acting as a reformist or revolutionary. Given this condition, social systems must be responsive to individual needs, or be subject to instability and forced change possibly through violence or conflict" [16]. Babyegeya [40] posited that inadequate financial resource is one of the main causes of conflict. He states that the more acute the scarcity of supply of resources relative to the amount needed and demanded by rival parties, and the more important the resources are to them, the greater the likelihood of a conflict emerging and its intensity increasing. As put by one of the respondents during a focus group discussion:

> *"because we are willing to work but cannot find work, we are frustrated and angry most at times and this can trigger violent conflicts with the slightest provocation".*

This is an assertion that the youth engage in conflict situations as a result of their inability to find jobs which leads to frustration and then triggers aggression when there are disagreements.

Institutions Responsible for Providing the Needs of the Youth
After finding out the pressing needs of the youth, the researchers sought to establish the youth's opinion about the institution responsible for meeting their needs.

Table 5: Institutions responsible for providing the needs of the youth

Background characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Traditional Authorities	0	0
Government	49	53
Churches/Mosques	0	0
Parents	23	25
Extended family members	11	12
Non-Governmental Organizations	9	10
Total	92	100.0

Table 5 depicts institutions responsible for providing the needs of the youth. A little over half of the respondents recognized the role of government in providing these needs. This is evident by the 53 percent who indicated that government is responsible for providing the needs. In the words of a respondent "everybody knows the government is responsible for providing schools, skills training and create job opportunities for the youth in the country". One other indicated that, "Government is mandated to take care of every citizen. We pay taxes to government to provide social services to us and to make life easy for us". The data shows that about half of the respondents were expecting the government to provide their needs. Also, cumulatively about one third of the respondents expected parents and extended family to provide their needs. It is clear that the provision of needs is a joint effort by both government and family. The Directive Principle of State Policy under Chapter 6 of the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana stipulate the responsibility of the state in the provision and realization of basic human rights, a healthy economy, right to work, right to good health care and the right to education [41].

Performance of the Institution Responsible for Satisfying Needs
After identifying the institution(s) responsible for meeting the needs of the youth it was logical to seek the views of the youth about the performance of the institutions. The respondents were thus asked to state their opinion on the performance of the responsible institutions.

Table 6: Meeting the needs of the youth by institutions

Are the institutions meeting the needs of the youth?							
Institution	Yes		No		No Response		Total
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Government	15	31	34	69	0	0	49
Non-Governmental Organisations	6	67	3	33	0	0	9
Parents	5	22	17	74	1	4	23
Extended Family members	7	73	3	27	0	0	10

A follow up question on whether the institutions identified as being responsible for ensuring that the needs of the youth are met revealed the following data. With regard to those who mentioned government, 69.39 percent were of the view that government did not meet the needs of the youth while 30.61 percent indicated that government met the needs of the youth. Interestingly, 66.67 percent of respondents who indicated NGOs were satisfied with the performance in terms of meeting the needs of the youth. A high 73.91 percent of respondents who mentioned parents also indicated that parents did not satisfy the needs of the youth. Talking about extended family members, 72.73 percent affirmed that extended family members met the needs of the youth. The pattern of responses showed that the youth were generally of the view that institutions that had primary responsibilities like the family and government were not performing their roles as expected as compared to the institutions like the extended family members and NGOs who were playing complementary roles. Like many places in the world the youth bear the brunt of any harsh conditions in the state. Munoz [42], observed that young people were the greatest casualty of the economic crisis of the 1970s and 1980s, and of the consequent adoption of structural adjustment reforms sponsored by the International Financial Institutions. Economic reforms required drastic cuts in public expenditures. Under pressure to reduce deficits and downsize the public sector, African states and similarly, though to a lesser extent, states in other regions in the world were unable to keep the promises that had been made to their youth.

Violent Conflicts as a Result of Needs not Being Met
In furtherance of establishing a link or otherwise between needs of the youth and their engagement in violent conflicts, the respondents were asked to mention whether needs not being met was a contributory factor to the continued violent response to conflicts by the youth.

Table 7: Violent conflicts as a result needs not being met

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	73	79
No	19	21
Total	92	100

The data in Table 7 indicates that a majority (79%) of the respondents were of the view that the needs of the youth were not met and that was a contributory factor to the continued violence as against 21 percent who indicated otherwise. Exploring reasons for the majority view during the focus group discussions, most of the respondents indicated that unemployed youth were vulnerable to politicians or any other persons who approached them to foment violence on their behalf. Lack of education and employable skills in the area of study made a considerable number of youth to idle. They were thus easily co-opted into communal violence.

This revelation finds credence in the Human Needs Theory which proposes that aggression and conflicts are the direct result of some institutions and social norms being incompatible with inherent human needs. The needs that are frustrated by institutions and norms require satisfaction. It is therefore not surprising that some youth in the Tamale metropolis direct their aggression towards government agencies any time there is discontent about an issue. It was clear from the evidence that the economic situation of the youth was one of the crucial reasons for the continued violent conflict by the youth. This view is supported by Stanford [43] who was of the view that conflicts arise when groups decide their needs are not being met or are being ignored. It is clear from the evidence that the economic situation of the youth is one of the crucial reasons for the continued violent conflicts by the youth. A respondent in one of the interview sessions had this to say;

> *"Most of us (youth) do not have jobs. We have various meeting spots we usually meet to chat and play games. Politicians visits us from time to time and they give us money. Other times they give us money and transport us to political activities. We become violent towards people who try to undermine the Politician who takes care of us". A respondent from Lamashegu.*

Strategies to Ensure Non-violence Response to Conflicts in the Tamale Metropolis
Based on the factors accounting for the violence conflicts by the youth their opinion was sought on the remedy to the problem.

Table 8: Strategies to improve and ensure non-violence response to conflicts

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Rank
The government should create job opportunities for the youth	72	22.08	1st
The government train the youth to have employable skills	68	20.85	2nd
Parents and extended family members should provide the needed guidance and resources to ensure that the children are educated and acquire employable skills	68	20.85	2nd
Non-Governmental Organizations should integrate livelihood activities into conflict prevention and peace building programmes	55	16.87	3rd
Non-Governmental Organization should organize peace building training on a sustained basis instead of the occasional trainings	38	11.65	4th
Involve traditional and opinion leaders in the communities in peace building and conflict management	25	7.66	5th
Total	*326	100	

*multiple responses

The data in Table 8 indicates that 22.08 percent of respondents were in favor of job creation for the youth as a means of reducing the youth participation in violent conflicts. Second on the table 20.85 percent of respondents indicated building the skills of the youth to be employable and the role of the parents and family members in providing guidance and resources to ensure that children are educated and acquire employable skills. About 16 percent of respondents were of the view that NGOs should integrate livelihood aspects into peacebuilding projects. In the same vein, 11.65 percent of respondents indicated that conflict management and peacebuilding training for the youth were relevant but they must be done on a continuous basis to realize the desired effect. Another suggestion made by 7.66 percent of the respondents, the least on the ranking was that opinion leaders be involved in the peace building processes at the

community level. This is in line with the basic strategies for preventing youth-related violence in programmes and appropriate funding to guarantee fundamental rights linked to reducing youth violence; education, health and employment [44].

CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded from the study that the training on non-violence for the youth cannot exclusively ensure non-violent response to conflicts. Even though the training had some positive impact and therefore it was necessary but it was not enough to stimulate behavior change in them. This is so because the positive impact on behavior change could not be solely attributed to the training organized by the Christian Council of Ghana but other factors such as the experience of negative effects of violent conflicts, increased awareness of the manipulation of political leaders and increased alertness of the security agencies among others. Furthermore, the youth who had formal education were more likely to apply the knowledge and skills acquired from the training programmes. Generally, the low socio-economic status of the youth was the key contributory factor to the continued use of violence to respond to differences despite the training programmes. The low formal educational background and a high unemployment rate among the youth, lack of employable skills among the youth, a situation that made the youth susceptible to manipulation to engage in violence. If the youth were engaged in any meaningful form of income generating activities, they will be less willing to engage in communal violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Training programmes should be preceded by a needs assessment to establish needs, interest, aspirations and gaps in the knowledge and skills of the youth. This will enhance commitment by the youth to ensure that the expected outcomes of the training programmes are adhered to.

Peacebuilding and conflict management programmes should have components that deal with the livelihoods of the youth. For instance the opportunities offered to young people by generating employment opportunities through skills training and offering micro credit facilities.

Non-Governmental Organizations and Government Institutions in the education sector should consider integrating peacebuilding programmes into all educational set ups and religious based institutions. This is because instilling positive attitudes and behavior in children and adults only occurs over time, hence effective peace education is necessarily a long-term process, not a short-term intervention.

Government should construct or expand vocational training centers in the Metropolis, Municipals and Districts. Vocational training will create the platform for both the low educated and uneducated youth to acquire skills for their self-employment as evidenced in the research where making young people more 'employable' by increasing their skills and capacities to find and retain work as one of the most pressing needs of the youth.

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