



Sociocultural and textile technological influences on royal regalia among chiefs in Ghana

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Abstract

This study examines the culture of royal regalia among Kwahu chiefs in Ghana, with a focus on fashion trends and ethnic symbolism. Using qualitative methods, including archival research, observations, and focused group interviews with 20 Kwahu chiefs and elders, the research employs critical visual content analysis rooted in aesthetic theories. The findings indicate a shift from traditional to modernized celebrations, influencing the symbolic regalia of Kwahu chiefs while maintaining the cloth wrapping tradition. Differences in fashion tastes reflect the significance of occasions, colour symbolism, and ceremonial duties, with royal fashion linked to retrospective events that denote power and wealth. Textile technology advancements impact regalia quality across epochs, with some historical regalia accessories lost due to relevance decline and succession dynamics. Recommendations include revitalising lesser-known traditional festivals, emphasising indigenous royal regalia preservation, and integrating traditional elements into the Kwahu Easter festival to reinforce cultural identity. This study contributes to cultural preservation discourse, emphasising the role of indigenous knowledge in sustaining Ghana's heritage.

Keywords: Cultural preservation, fashion trends, Ghana, kwahu chiefs, royal regalia, sociocultural impact, textile technology

Introduction

In Ghana, there are various Akan cultures, notably constituting the largest ethnic group in the country, as identified by Cox and Thompson (2022) ^[6]. In recent anthropological discourse, some scholars have argued that this larger ethnic culture comprising the Bono, Asante, Adanse, Twifo, Asen, Fante, Akuapem, Akyem, Akwamu, Kwahu, Sehwi, Awowin, Nzima, and Ahanta, are descendants from the Hebrew (Kissi & Van Eck, 2017) ^[8] and also known for their Twi language, part of the Kwa group of Niger-Congo (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.). The Akan in Ghana are famous for their rich culture and traditions fabricated through various festivals, rites, rituals, and ceremonies, which form aspects of their daily lives and practices such as music, dance, arts, and traditional beliefs (Cox & Thompson, 2022; Soluap, 2023) ^[6, 14]. The Asante, for example, among the Akan culture, characterized by their rich culture, are recognized for their role in preserving the traditions of the Akan people (Soluap, 2023) ^[14]. As indicated earlier, the Kwahu are one of the ethnic cultures of the Akan in Ghana. According to some legends, the Kwahu were once part of the Asante Confederacy; however, they broke away from it in the 1870s after the British-Ashanti wars and became well-known for their business acumen (Gyasi *et al.*, 2022; Amoako, 2020) ^[4, 7]. Whereas it remains scholarly blurry on the reasons for the departure of the Kwahu from the Asante, our interactions with the elders during the field work shed some light on the possible reasons, which have been presented in the discussion section of this paper. Perhaps it is for similar reasons that might have contributed to their departure from their traditional festival, making the Kwahu currently eminent for their Easter Festival Celebration instead. However, according to the handbook by the Kwahu South District Assembly (2012 as cited in Gyasi *et al.*, 2022) ^[7], the Easter Festival was bestowed on the people by their forefathers many years ago. Interestingly, the reasons

for which the Easter Festival was bestowed on the Kwahu people by the forefathers were not explained and remain blurry in that context. The nuanced perspectives of the origin of the Easter Festival become more aggravated contextually as Gyasi *et al.* (2022) ^[7] again present conflicting views that, like any other Akan tribe, the Kwahu had a festival called "Okwahu Afahye", celebrated with its peak in December, from October. But given the high business acumen of the people, travelling to engage in trade during the Christmas festivities in December at the different parts of Ghana, left majority of them abandoning the traditional festival and rather, opted for the Easter Festival instead which was perceived as a Home-coming event (Gyasi *et al.*, 2022) ^[7]. The latter reason seems logical when analyzed critically from the economic and sociocultural needs and change point of view. This is because engaging in festival activities from October through to December could present some financial burdens for any business-conscious person. Therefore, opting to engage in the home-coming festival (Easter festival) for a few days makes much economic sense than the claims that Easter was bestowed to the people by their forefathers. Again, since it became popular, there are no traditional ceremonies or ritualistic activities performed during the Easter Festival as performed during other Akan traditional festivals like the Akwasidae of the Asante. To wit, this highlights the dichotomies of views as expressed in Gyasi *et al.* (2022) ^[7]. Given that the Kwahu were once part of the Asante (Gyasi *et al.*, 2022; Amoako, 2020) ^[4, 7], it is rather logical to ascribe the origin of their initial "Okwahu Afahye" was of ancestry descent rather than the Easter Festival. Nevertheless, it is observed that the prominence of the Easter Festival indeed impacted the diminishing trends of the initial festival, which in turn generally has affected the projection of traditions and culture of the people. Akan are generally rooted in their traditions and cultures, which they boldly outdoor not only in their daily lives but also during festivals. With the Easter

festival currently attracting thousands of international tourists and indigenes in diaspora back home, making Kwahu an attractive destination, coupling the Easter celebrations with traditional activities could help sustain the culture of the Kwahu people. Contrarily, the case is different. This has left many people, both the new generation indigenes and foreigners, unclear about the original culture and tradition of the Kwahu state. Unlike the Asante chiefs, the traditional regalia and dress culture of the Kwahu Chiefs have not been highlighted in literature, thereby creating a gap. The Kwahu Easter Festival has rather seems to be prominent and highly spoken of in literature. It is against this background that this study explores to document the regalia and dress culture of the Kwahu Chiefs, who are the principal custodians of the Kwahu culture. Scholarly exploration of this scope potentially opens a conscious engagement towards the preservation of the indigenous culture and knowledge of the people. Hence, what was, and what is, are collectively culturally relevant in the anthropological context of the Kwahu people, which is wealth preserving for posterity. This paper, therefore, presents a retrospective of the Kwahu Chiefs' regalia and its influence on culture. The aim is to establish whether the Chief custodians of the Kwahu tradition have been able to preserve their traditional royal dress culture over the epochs, regardless of the socioeconomic and cultural dynamisms leading to the prominence of the Easter Festival at the expense of the "Okwahu Afahye". Again, researchers have identified regalia as a cog of the cultural and royal lifestyle of chiefs and traditional leaders in Ghanaian societies (Quarshie *et al.*, 2024; Adotey, 2018; Acquah *et al.*, 2017; Acquah *et al.*, 2017) ^[1, 2, 3, 12]. One of such cultural routines in the life of the Kwahu people where the chiefs adorn themselves in traditional regalia. The purpose of the customary observance of the Akwasidae – observed every 40 days, is a convocation of the council of Kwahu chiefs, usually held at the palace to address issues of the people as documented in a recent YouTube video by Okwawuman TV (2022) ^[11]. It is imperative to note that this Akwasidae celebration is not a grand celebration as the Akwasidae or Adaye Kese of the Asante. Even as some video documentations have been made on the traditional celebrations of the Kwahu Akwasidae observance, there is still the need to bridge the literature gaps on the trends of the regalia and dresscodes of Kwahu chiefs from the past to present. This will help in identifying potential fallouts or appreciation of the preservation of the culture of the people. The study therefore addresses the following research questions.

- a. **What constitutes the traditional royal regalia of the Kwahu Chiefs?**
- b. **Which factors influence the royal regalia of the Kwahu Chiefs?**

Theoretical framework

This paper is anchored on the Afrocentric aesthetic theory, which has been identified as emphasizing the importance of authenticity in African artistic expression, rejecting Eurocentric standards of beauty and taste. Instead, it celebrates the distinct cultural traditions and values inherent in African art forms (Mazama, 2001; Quarshie *et al.*, 2024) ^[10, 12]. From the Afrocentric perspective, arts, including performances, installations, and morality such as

storytelling, incantations, music, and ritual practices, are characterized by communality and symbolism. Underpinning this study with the Afrocentric aesthetics paradigm levels the grounds for deeper identification and appreciation of the regalia of the traditional rulers. It also permits highlighting the sociocultural significance of the royal regalia, for inferential analyses targeted at explaining Afrocentrism reasons for preserving the culture and traditions of the Kwahu people. The Afrocentric theory thus serves as a tool to contextually identify and aesthetically appreciate the royal wardrobe of the Kwahu Chiefs, which seems too unpopular among the masses. Again, the theory was espoused to aid the critical analysis of the factors that inform the choice of royal regalia used by the Kwahu Chiefs from the 1950s to the 2020s. True the Afrocentric lens, the study critically delineates the unique traditional royal wardrobe of the Kwahu Chiefs while identifying and appreciating the labyrinthine nuances they present from the 50s to the 20s

Method (methods, samples, population, sample technique, and others)

This study explores the qualitative method espousing the narrative and ethnographic research designs (Carlos, 2018; Madden, 2017) ^[5, 9]. The data collection process utilised observation and semi-structured interview guides. Open-ended interview questions were crafted and then refined to suit the Kwahu dialect, terminology, and traditional communication norms. Whereas observations of historical and current regalia were systematised via an inventory detailing key aesthetic qualities and symbolic elements based on Akan dress customs and the primary source of data available in the royal archives. Photographs, videos, and material cultural items were analysed using contextual visual content analytic frameworks attuned to signs of identity, status, and cultural values transmitted through stylistic and compositional elements grounded in Afrocentric theories (Short, 2019; Quarshie *et al.*, 2024) ^[12, 13]. In all, a total sample of 20 participants comprises four chiefs, six royal elders, six community elders, and four young adults. Data was collected via semi-structured interviews, direct observations, archival document analysis, and descriptive field notes (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Whereas the sampling was purposeful, using a criterion that all participants are within the royal descent of the Kwahu people, the selection was based on a minimum age of 65 for the elders and between 23 and 35 for the young adults. Only participants willing to be involved in the study were considered, especially with regard to the chiefs. Ethical clearance and traditional protocols from the paramountcy were strictly adhered to. Also, the lead author is a native and resident of Kwahu, therefore setting the tone for establishing research relations and easy access to the royal courts and garnering of data through local dialects, if possible. Customarily, entry to the palace chiefs for interviews requires two bottles of Schnapps and oath-taking. However, these acts do not affect the quality of data obtained. Again, single and focused group interviews involving three elders in a group were arranged to establish the reliability and trustworthiness of the data, whereas pseudonyms were assigned to respondents for anonymity. Interview data obtained from the Akan language were transcribed and translated with the aid of language experts. Presentation and analysis of data were done descriptively

and thematically, along with appreciative visuals of the royal regalia accessories for an aesthetic discourse.

Results and Discussions

As expressed earlier, the study aimed at identifying the traditional royal regalia of the Kwahu chiefs from the 1950s to the 2020s for aesthetic appreciation. Firstly, due to the popularity of the Easter festival celebration among the Kwahu people, the researchers are interested in investigating the origin of the festival and how it gained ground within the Kwahu traditional area. The responses from the chiefs and elders indicate that the celebration of the Easter festival became a choice against the celebration of the traditional “Afahye” after the people of Kwahu lost interest in the original festival. According to one of the Chiefs, “the Afahye we used to celebrate has strong ties with negative nostalgia of encounters with Asante”. The elders continued to add in acknowledgement that “many people do not know we once celebrated festivals like the Asante people or other ethnic groups in Ghana. This is because the people stopped the celebration long ago after departing with the Asante people”. Though the interview could not establish when the Kwahu people broke away from the Asante and abrogated the celebration of the traditional festival, which had ties with the Asante people, literature, however, purports that the Kwahu people departed from the Asante in the 1870s and became more interested in various forms of trade. The Easter festival, according to the elders, became a festival of return where people who travelled out of the town usually return to connect with family and friends. Establishing these findings paved the way for further exploration into the regalia used by the chiefs before the commencement of the Easter festival and how the chiefs have preserved their traditional dress culture from the 1950s to date. The results and discussions have been presented through a contextual visual analysis approach under the following emerging themes: Enstoolment/Installation, Festivals, Joyous occasions Akwasidae, Funerals/Rites/Rituals, Durbars/Diplomatic events, Marriage Ceremonies, Casual wears and Dresscodes or Regalia for War/Calamity.

1. Enstoolment/Installations

One of the most important factors that influenced the regalia choice of the Kwahu chiefs is the culture of enstoolment or installation of new chiefs. During enstoolment or installation of a new chief, it is important that the candidate is dressed in recommended traditional clothes or costumes, said one of the sub-chiefs in an interview. In a single interview, one of the sub-chiefs recounted that the dress codes for the Kwahu chiefs during enstoolment or installation have not experienced any significant from the 1950s. During the interviews, the chiefs and elders disclosed that the wearing of the *Kobene* (Figure 1) or the *dumas* (Figure 2) cloth has long been a tradition of the Kwahu people, even though there are no visual records, thereby confirming previous studies (Quarshie *et al.*, 2024; Adotey, 2018; Acquah *et al.*, 2017; Acquah *et al.*, 2017) [1, 2, 3, 12]. Ascending to the hierarchy of a cardinal custodian of the traditions of the Kwahu people is a very significant milestone for an individual of the royal family, as well as for the entire populace of the locality. In order to become the chief of the Kwahu people, the ideal royal descendant is fortified through traditional initiations and ceremonies,

which encompass ritual processes and in-depth education on the cultural practices of the people. Whereas the duration and processes involved for installing the chief both in the past and present were mostly concealed from the public, the climax to the completion of the process often rests on the coronation or installation ceremony. Several items are used as constituents of the regalia or dress code for the chief during the coronation or installation ceremony. A study of the archival records reveals some significant items that constitute the regalia used by the Kwahu chiefs. Wearing black clothes during the installation ceremony signifies spiritual fortification. It is a codified symbolism that reminds the newly installed chief of the potential heavy derailment that bad omens bring. The chief, when adorned in the *birisi* or *kobene*, therefore feels empowered with intensified spiritual energy in readiness for any eventuality that may pose any grievous challenge to their rulership.

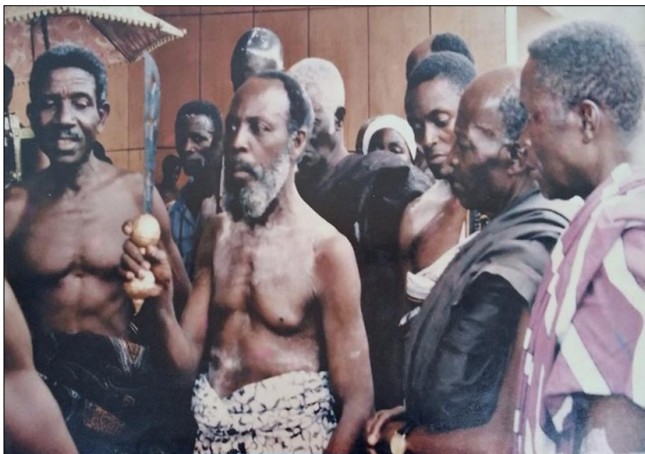


Source: Achieves of Kubeasehene

Fig 1: Kubeasehene, kwahu, Abetifi (in Kobene), taking an oath during his installation, 2010

Figures 1 and 2 present a duo perspective of some historical ceremonies performed during the installations of Kubeasehene (in *kobene* cloth holding a sword) and Abusuapinin Anom (in *dumas* cloth holding a sword), respectively. In both cases, other elders and kinsmen partaking in the ceremony also dressed in the *birisi* or *kobene* cloth for the occasion. As part of the installation ceremony, the women from the royal family cheerfully shower praises onto the newly installed chief admits chanting appellations, singing, and waving a white piece of cloth to decorate the occasion. The new chief, when clothed in black (*birisi*), red (*kobene*) or white and black patterned cloth (*dumas*), assumes the status of authority, glory, and chief custodian of the community in his outfit. As stated earlier, the *kuntunkuni* (or *birisi*) or the *kobene* are symbolically used in the connection of grief to mourn the deceased chief amidst the installation of the new one. Its usage by a chief during the installation ceremony signifies that death is inevitable. And that, the one succeeding the late chief could have done everything in his power to have conquered death but it is a natural phenomenon that cannot be overpowered by humans. It also symbolises that the successor is in a sad mood during the transitional (installation) period to become the next king. Elder Gyasi (personal communication, June 19, 2021) explained that the *birisi* consciously prepares the mindset of the incoming

chiefs towards death as the only terminator of their reign. As they mourn the death of the previous chief during this occasion, the new chief thus reflects on the task ahead of them, pondering on what to achieve during their reign with death in perspective. The kobene is a red cloth used by the Kwahu chiefs during their installation. In the 1950s to the 1990s, the kobene cloth was mainly plain and free of motifs or patterns. In some jurisdictions, the kobene cloth can be used by a chief during the performance of installation rites. The kobene eludes the same symbolism as the *birisi*. It is used to portray the mourning state of the new chief. As the successor, the new chief forms a strong blood tie with the dead chief; therefore, wearing the kobene indicates that the successor is in an aggressive mood since a close blood relation who he is succeeding has departed.



Source: Achieves of Nana Anom

Fig 2: Abusuapanin Anom, Mpraeso (in Dumas) taking an oath during the installation, 2005

In some cases, during the installations, the use of a multi-colour, patterned white cloth or the *dumas* becomes symbolically significant. Whereas some aspects of the installation are posited as mourning the deceased chief, other fashions symbolically reflect a victorious state for the newly installed chief. Hence, this significant aspect is characterised by a blend of white and black or other dark colours. This is typical in the case of Abusuapanin Anom (Figure 2) dressed in *dumas* for the swearing ceremony of his installation. One elder explained that the symbolic blend of the dark and white cloths used here is to reiterate the notion that the new chief is inheriting from a deceased one amidst the celebration. Even as the Kwahu people might have lost their traditional festival to the current popular Easter festival (Gyasi *et al.*, 2022) [7], the approach and the dress codes used by our chiefs during their installation ceremonies remain absolute (recounted by one elder).

2. Festivals, Joyous occasions/Akwasiidae

The mention of festivals by the elders ignited a further probe into the subject. Our interactions with chiefs and elders confirm the views of other authors that the Kwahu people used to have a grand festival celebrated about a month before the famous Easter, which recently attracted international recognition (Gyasi *et al.*, 2022; Amoako, 2020) [4, 7]. Festivals are very important aspects of the traditional Kwahu society. These festivals, since the 1950s, are considered joyous occasions within the society of the Kwahu people. During festivals, the chiefs have special regalia to mark the occasion. The data gathered from the

field indicates that the royal regalia of Kwahu chiefs used for such joyful celebrations over the decades have undergone some transformation in terms of the quality of the fabric and its designs. These regalia for such an occasion may include *Dumas*, *Kente*, *Ago*, *Dame Dame*, *Sireshe sireshe*, and *Kabu*. The field interactions with the chiefs and elders could not specifically decode the myth surrounding why the people abandoned the original month-long festival celebration, as mentioned at the onset. But there was evidence from their responses that there still exist some festival celebration among the Kwahu people which is unpopular and restricted to the chiefs, elders and a few community members. This festival is called the *Akwasiidae*. According to the chiefs and elders, the *Akwasiidae* festival is restrictive in nature because, it is not a grand celebration but a periodic event used to settle disputes and planning of developmental projects for the community. During the occasions, the chiefs and elders converge to discuss important issues which often ends with some music and dancing activities to ease of tensions and promote unification of the clans. A critical visual analysis of the some of the previous dress codes of the chiefs during such ceremonies revealed that, the technology of the time played a significant influence on the quality of the cloth and designs and textures of the type of cloth used by the chiefs. One chief recounted that, in our youthful days, the cloth used by our chiefs at the time (referring to the 1950s and 1960s) were considered to be of high quality and expensive, they were the finest. For example, Figure 3 presents a retrospect of the type of cloth quality used by the chiefs during the *Akwasiidae* celebration of observations in the 1970s to 1980s.



Source: Kubeasehene's archives

Fig 3: Kubeasehene of Abetifi (middle) dressed in Ago/Kabu cloth with other regalia ornaments, 2005

Similarly, in recent times, the wearing of cloth by the Kwahu chiefs has not changed from tradition. However, through a contextual visual analysis, we found a nuanced enhancement in the design patterns of the choice of clothes used as dress codes for the same occasion. Typical examples of these can be seen in the images shown in Figure 4. Whereas the cloth designs in Figures 1, 2, and 3 (1970s to 2000s) are relatively characterised by simplicity and less intricate patterns, those of Figure 4 (2000s to 2020s) seem more colourful, visually striking, and appealing. This reveals not a changing trend in the dress culture of the chiefs in terms of clothing but rather a fashion taste for current innovation in textile design. Indeed, one of the chiefs disclosed that there are no fast rules on the closet of chiefs. In that taste for a particular cloth to be worn is subjected to the fashion taste of individual chiefs, provided it matches

the occasion, as tradition demands. One of such intricate and colourful textile arts cherished by many of the Kwahu chiefs in recent times is the embroidered Kente, mostly used by the paramouncy.



Fig 4:(Kwahu chiefs, dressed in embroidered Kente, 2021
Source: Kwahu traditional council archives

3. Funerals/Rites/Rituals

As discussed earlier, funerals are part of the social construct of the Kwahu people. Whether morning, the past chief, or a loved member of the society, the Kwahu chiefs mostly adorn themselves in customarily preferred *kobene* or the *birisi*. Granted, the culture of wearing clothes for funeral ceremonies by the chiefs has not changed over the years. However, there is an appreciable advancement in the artistic presentation of the cloth designs of the *kobene* or the *birisi*, whereas the texture is also improved to meet the current textile quality of the 21st century.

The modernised version of the *kobene* fabric, which is worn by chiefs during funerals in recent times, is characterized by sharp legible adinkra prints and embossed tactile textures. Red is associated with blood, sacrificial rites, and the shedding of blood. Red-eyed mood means a sense of seriousness, readiness for a serious spiritual or political encounter. Red is therefore used as a symbol of heightened spiritual and political mood, sacrifice, and struggle. It expresses aggression and action as well as power. Adinkra symbol embedded in a traditional cloth with *Kra pa* or *Nmusuyide*, signifies good fortune and sanctity. During the burial rite's observation, chiefs may put on the red cloth. Kwahu chiefs use black/brown or red cloth during funeral ceremonies in most communities. Red kente made of stripes or wavy curvy lines, which is also known as the *Asonawo* is mostly used by chiefs in Kwahu. The chief may also wear *Kuntunkuni* for most funerals, but will put on the red cloth if the person is related or a sub-chief.

4. Durbars/ Diplomatic events

From the 1950s to date, the Kwahu chiefs have been involved in diplomatic events to mark or strengthen their relations with other ethnic cultures or governments, both locally and internationally. During such events, the chiefs dress to the occasion, once again in cloth to show their customary allegiance and roots. Surprisingly, the cloth used by the chiefs in this regard shows some interesting and seemingly complex patterns of motifs in the cloth design. But the details may not match those of the more complex and intricate patterns shown in Figure 4, the embroidered and colourful kente patterns, or the *dumas* (Figure 5) in recent cloth designs used by the chiefs.



Source: Obohene's archives

Fig 5: Obohene, Obo- Kwahu (second from left), dressed in *Dumas*, 2000

5. Marriage Ceremonies

Marriage ceremonies are one of the most important aspects of the cultural livelihood of the Kwahu people. During marriages, special costumes are worn by the families of the couple. One of the elders in an interview expresses that the chiefs are not 'lords' over the people of Kwahu. Rather, they are an integral part of the community; therefore, have an obligation to share in the activities of the people. He retorts that in situations against the odds, which could prevent the chief from attending such joyous events, there was always a representative from the royal court. Indeed, not all events would the chief be able to attend, but royal marriages are significant and considered paramount on the schedules of the chief. Findings from the field indicate that there are some collections of cloth in the royal closet which were used by the chiefs of Kwahu for gracing marriage ceremonies, such as woven or embroidered kente, *Ago*, *kabu* and *Okunini Ntama*.

6. Casual wears

Aside from the royal livelihood, the Kwahu chiefs have their private lives as individuals who still reflect the customs of the people. Aside from the traditional cloth as the royal dress code, many of the chiefs in the past have personal taste for casual wear, retorted one chief. Another chief expresses that the casual wear of the chiefs in the past still revolved around the wearing of cloth, since that was the fashion trend of the day. Casual dress codes of the Kwahu chiefs thus depend on the occasion. During the 60s, most chiefs wore *dumas*, *smocks*, and *togas* as casually within and out of their jurisdictions. In recent times, the casual wear of some chiefs has been influenced by the modern fashion trends while maintaining the cultural essence of the Kwahu people. For the chief to be dressed in suits may welcome some level of criticism from cultural fanatics. However, one of the chiefs explained that the *Daasebrɛ Akuamoah Boateng* is well-known for his cultural and ethnic identity. But this identity does not prevent him from having a personal taste for casual fashion.

7. War/Calamity

In the past, war was one of the events integrated with the livelihood of the people. One of the elders narrates that, during the 1950s, the chief heads the group of warriors who fought in defense of the people. As the warlord, there is a

special costume for the chief to distinguish him as the commander. The *batakari kese* costume was used by the Kwahu chiefs in the early 50s as war dress. The costume is a collage-like appliqué of pieces of leather, shells, knives, calabash, and furburs. These items are not mere decorations, a chief retorted, they are objects of deeper connotations. Each appliqué symbolises a particular charm that fortifies the chief against calamity and evil that could lead to any defeat at war. The costume also symbolically provides the chief with synergy of bravery from his physical strength and backing from the ancestors. In this regard, he is fully fortified and protected to lead the warriors in a victorious battle. Since there are no wars, the costume has become more of a symbolic or ceremonial costume than what it was intended for in the past.

Conclusions

The study delved into establishing what constitutes the traditional royal regalia and dress codes of the Kwahu people and the factors that influence the regalia choices. Analysis of the findings shows that Kwahu people may be known for the Easter Festival, but still possess some traditional festivities or ceremonies. The *Akwasiadae* observation is a periodic convocation of the chiefs and elders to discuss important issues, as well as planning the development of the community. These traditional activities have not been widely documented and eulogised, or publicised, perhaps due to their restrictive nature. Again, the study found that the wearing of cloth as the main traditional dress code for chiefs in the Kwahu traditional area remains the same from the 1950s to date. However, there has been a gradual modification in the design patterns, texture, and the general visual constructs of the cloth types used by the chiefs as their royal dress codes over the years. Interestingly, it was difficult to find pictorial archival records on the royal closet of the Kwahu people. This indicates that much documentation has not been done by the traditional council to hold down the historical accounts of the people for posterity. Finally, just like any other Akan society, the traditional use of cloth as a dress code for chiefs influences the royal regalia of the Kwahu Chiefs. Aside from the customary demands, the choice of dress code of a Kwahu chief is mostly driven by the occasion and the personal fashion taste of the individual chiefs. In terms of the quality of cloth, the technology of the time holds a significant role, influencing the taste of the chiefs. In this case, the intricate combo of complex textured, colourful and embroidered *kente* patterns has become a prominent choice among the chiefs as against the simplified cloth design patterns of the 1950s.

Recommendations

The findings of the study shed light on the traditional royal regalia and dress codes of the Kwahu people, offering valuable insights into their cultural practices and heritage. It is recommended that further research be conducted to comprehensively document and publicize these traditional activities, such as the *Akwasiadae* observation, to ensure their preservation and wider recognition. Efforts should be made to overcome any restrictions that hinder the documentation and dissemination of such cultural practices. Moreover, the study highlights the evolution of the traditional dress code for chiefs in the Kwahu traditional area, noting subtle changes in design patterns and textures

over time. It is recommended that efforts be made to archive pictorial records of the royal closet of the Kwahu people to preserve their historical accounts for future generations. This would involve collaboration with the traditional council and other relevant stakeholders to ensure the comprehensive documentation of Kwahu cultural heritage. Furthermore, the study underscores the influence of both customary demands and personal fashion tastes on the choice of dress code for Kwahu chiefs. It is recommended that researchers and cultural enthusiasts delve deeper into the factors driving these choices, including the role of technological advancements in cloth production. Additionally, efforts should be made to promote the preservation and appreciation of traditional cloth-making techniques, such as intricate *kente* patterns, among Kwahu chiefs and the wider community. This could involve initiatives to support local artisans and promote the cultural significance of traditional cloth.

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