
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Challenges and Perceptions of Land Acquisition in Accra, Ghana: Finding Ways to Make It Safer and Easier

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ABSTRACT

Land acquisition remains a critical issue that poses threats to the perceptions people have on land matters in Ghana. There have been diverse perceptions of land acquisition systems in Ghana. Despite the availability of lands in Ghana, the numerous challenges coupled with acquiring land present extreme nervousness to potential land buyers. This study sought to find out the perceptions people have in relation to the current challenges coupled with land acquisition in Ghana and the ways to curb these problems. Based on reviews of relevant land acquisition documents in Ghana, a questionnaire and semi-structured interview questions were used to gather data from 201 respondents. The findings revealed that the perceptions most people held about acquiring land in Ghana have to do with the cost involved and institutional bureaucratic issues (weak policy implementations, delays in processing land documents at the lands commission, and extortion of monies by some lands commission officers from clients, etc.) associated with acquiring land. It is suggested that public education, adoption of a digital land registry, fighting corruption, and effectively enacting land policies should be proactive government measures to curb the current challenges associated with land acquisition.

KEYWORDS

Land acquisition, perception, challenges, Ghana, Accra

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1. Introduction

Land, as a natural asset, continues to be a valuable resource for development. It is a necessary component of wealth creation and production, accounting for half to three-quarters of global and national wealth and improving countless people's livelihoods (Boamah, 2014). Population growth and increase in riches have led to an increase in rapid demand and acquisition of lands. The ability to guarantee safe acquisition and successful land use, on the other hand, is important to improving livelihoods and any comprehensive poverty alleviation and sustainability approach (Cobbinah, Asibey, & Gyedu-Pensang, 2020). Land with customary as a host unit accrues several rights and interests. Land ownership might be private, customary, or public, temporary or permanent, large or small, secure or not (Kuusaana & Eledi, 2015). Over time, the many types of property ownership in Ghana have evolved, including state/public lands, vested holdings, family/clan lands, Stool/Skin lands, and individual or private lands (Kuusaana & Eledi, 2015). Land ownership in Ghana has mainly been categorized into two acts; the customary land act and the public land act. Approximately 80% of the country's undeveloped land is in the hands of the customary sector (Kasanga & Kotey, 2001). Individuals belonging to a certain clan have intrinsic rights to be janitors of the land, which they have inherited from their ancestral lineage. The current clan leader (king or chief) gets the highest right to own the entire communal property or land. He decides on how to sell when to sell, where to sell, and to whom to sell the land with the help of their local surveyors. There have been numerous perceptions of customary land acquisition in Ghana. Chieftaincy activities in Ghana have been reported as obstructing, denigrating, and restricting sustainable land use planning – i.e., planning that promises benefits for the environment, decreases resource use, reduces pollution, reduces the conversion of and encroachment on ecosystems and natural areas, and facilitates a congenial environment for urban residents (Cobbinah & Korah, 2016) – in Ghana (Amoateng et al., 2013; Cobbinah & Amoako, 2012; Fuseini

& Kemp, 2015). According to recent criticisms of chieftaincy institutions, most chiefs engage in multiple sales of land to different people. Many wealthy Ghanaians, however, who are dissatisfied with the bureaucracies and corruption frequently associated with formal planning institutions, support the actions of chieftaincy institutions in terms of local and cultural land-use planning (Boamah, 2014; Boamah, Gyimah, & Nelson, 2012). To achieve the following research objectives, this study relies on documented secondary data on land management and acquisition, semi-structured questionnaires, and interviews.

1. To identify and address the perceptions on land acquisition in Accra.
2. To examine the challenges associated with land acquisition in Accra.
3. To explore ways to address the challenges associated with land acquisition in Accra.

The study goes on to give an outline of land tenure and the land acquisition procedure in Ghana in the next section. The methodology follows next, and then the results and discussions. The study ends with a conclusion.

2. Land Tenure and Land Acquisition in Accra-Ghana.

Frequent land issues coupled with court cases in recent years have become an issue of public concern in Ghana. Many people have criticized chieftaincy institutions (customary) as a barrier to democratic governance and sustainable development. According to Knierzinger (2011), chieftaincy institutions' developmental operations are geared at compensating for their political power rather than increasing the quality of life of their people. The above literature and cases on land matters have created different perceptions of land acquisition in Ghana. Perception has been defined by the Oxford dictionary as the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses. It further defined it as how something is regarded, understood, or interpreted. An understanding of Ghana's land tenure system and land acquisition would provide insight into the diverse perceptions of land acquisition. This would also provide a framework for analyzing the challenges and proffering ways to address these challenges.

2.1. Land Tenure System in Ghana.

Ghana, on West Africa's Guinea Coast, has a pluralistic legal system in which traditional and statute systems regulate lands (USAID, 2013). In Ghana, there are two or three types of land ownership systems: customary lands, public lands, and private lands. The vast majority of land in Ghana is held informally through customary tenure systems. The framework of customary land tenure includes a variety of land interests. These include allodial title, freehold title, customary freehold title, leasehold title, and other minor land interests. Approximately 80% of the land is owned by families, skins, stools, or clans (Kuusaana & Eledi, 2015; Ubink & Quan, 2008). Typically, customary tenured lands are vested in distinct lineages. In metropolitan and peri-urban places such as Accra, the patriarch of these lineages is frequently the chief, who has both governmental and spiritual power over land problems. In patrilineal groups, the land is passed down from father to son, whereas in matrilineal communities, it is passed down from maternal uncles to their nephews, but it is always in male hands. State or public lands, on the other hand, are property that the state has acquired compulsorily via the use of its compulsory purchase rights (eminent domain) for the benefit or interest of the public (Kuusaana & Eledi, 2015). Approximately 20% of land in Ghana is officially owned by the state, albeit this figure only covers land purchased legitimately by the state (USAID, 2013). Individuals who have obtained legal rights over customary owners' lands have acquired private lands. Ghana's constitution immediately vests the president with all public lands and resources. The 1992 Ghana Constitution; the State Lands Act of 1962; the State Property and Contracts Act of 1960; the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands Act of 1994; the Land Title Registration Act of 1986; the Lands Commission Act of 2008; and the Marriage Ordinance of 1884 are among the formal laws governing land rights (USAID, 2013). Forests cover 40% of Ghana's surface, with deforestation occurring at a 1.7 percent annual pace. Inland and coastal wetlands cover 10% of Ghana, with the rest being bare land. Ghana's overall size was roughly 238 thousand square kilometers as of 2021. This included a land area of around 147.53 thousand, a forest area of approximately 80 thousand, and a total surface area of all inland water bodies of approximately 11 thousand square kilometers (Statista.com, 2021). Figure 1 depicts a summary of Ghana's geographical land.

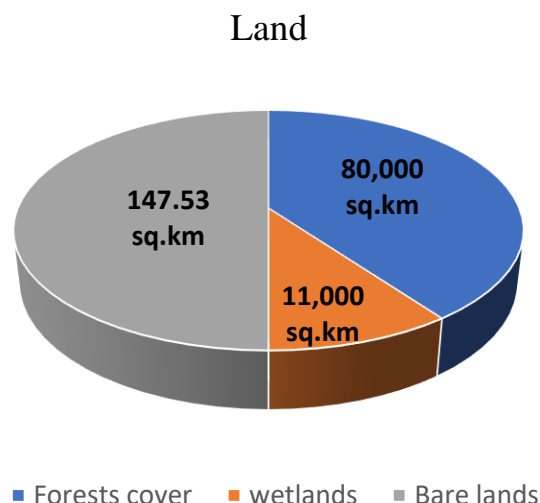


Fig 1. Geography of Ghana land area. Source: Author's construct

2.2 Acquisition of land in Ghana

In Ghana, both statutory and customary land tenure systems operate concurrently. Since lands in Ghana are primarily governed by the customary system, the two main methods of land acquisition have been government acquisition and individual or private acquisition. The government's acquisition is simply the power of the state government to acquire private lands for industrialization, development of infrastructural facilities, or urbanization (for the interest of the country or citizens). Typically, this is accomplished by compensating affected landowners for their rehabilitation and resettlement. The other common acquisition of land is the individual or private acquisition. This is where an individual or group of individuals acquire land through the legal system for housing, business, or agricultural purposes. According to Nyarko (2019), the most relevant laws governing land acquisition in Ghana are the constitution, the State Lands Act (Act 125), the Administration of Lands Act 1962 (Act 123), and the Minerals and Mining Act 2006 (Act 703). By the law, a citizen is allowed to lease land for up to about 99 years, while non-citizens are allowed to lease for up to about 50 years. In Ghana, there are three (3) types of land ownership: state lands, customary lands, and private lands. To acquire legitimate land from any of these owners, an individual must go through several procedures.

2.2.1 Acquiring from the Government

State/public lands are acquired solely from the government. Individuals interested in acquiring state land must first determine the need, intention for the land, and location of interest with the assistance of the Town and Country Planning Office. Following that, a site plan is produced and obtained following the area's development plan with the assistance of an official surveyor confirmed by the Director of Surveys. After that, the lands commission conducts an official search using the development plan or cadastral plan to determine the land's status. If the results of the search are favorable, the individual can continue the procedure by applying for a government lease with a statement of purpose to the executive secretary of the Lands Commission or the Regional Lands Officer, depending on where the land is located (Gyamera et al., 2018). After that, the individual must go through the lands commission process to get title to the land and guarantee that it is fully registered in his or her name before starting any activity on it (ensure all official receipts).

2.2.2 Acquiring from the stool/skin, or the family (customary)

This is when an individual obtains land from the chief or family head, acting with the permission and approval of the elders and senior members of the stool or family. An individual interested in acquiring this type of land approaches the landowner (s), usually the chiefs or family head, who assigns him/her a parcel. A certified surveyor will then demarcate the acquired chunk of land and generate a site plan for the potential tenant or buyer. To determine the status of the land, the lands commission conducts an official search using the cadastral plan. A lease document is prepared based on the site plan and signed by the two parties (landowner and the tenant). The prospective tenant then pays the agreed-upon amount. The land's price may fluctuate depending on public interest, its location, and potential for future development. After the signed indenture is registered and plotted at the Lands Commission's Public and Vested Land Management Division (PVLMD), alienated land rights are transferred from the lessor to the lessee in 99 years for residential purposes and 50 years for commercial purposes.

2.2.3 Acquiring from a private entity

An individual purchasing land from a private entity follows the same procedures as acquiring land from the government, stool/skin, or family. However, in this scenario, the individual must thoroughly verify the owner's title and ensure that the land is vacant. Any site plan submitted by the Director of Surveys, an official surveyor, a licensed surveyor, or any qualified surveyor should be authenticated by the individual (Gyamera et al., 2018).

Figure 2 summarizes the processes involved in acquiring land from each of the owners with their registration entities and results.

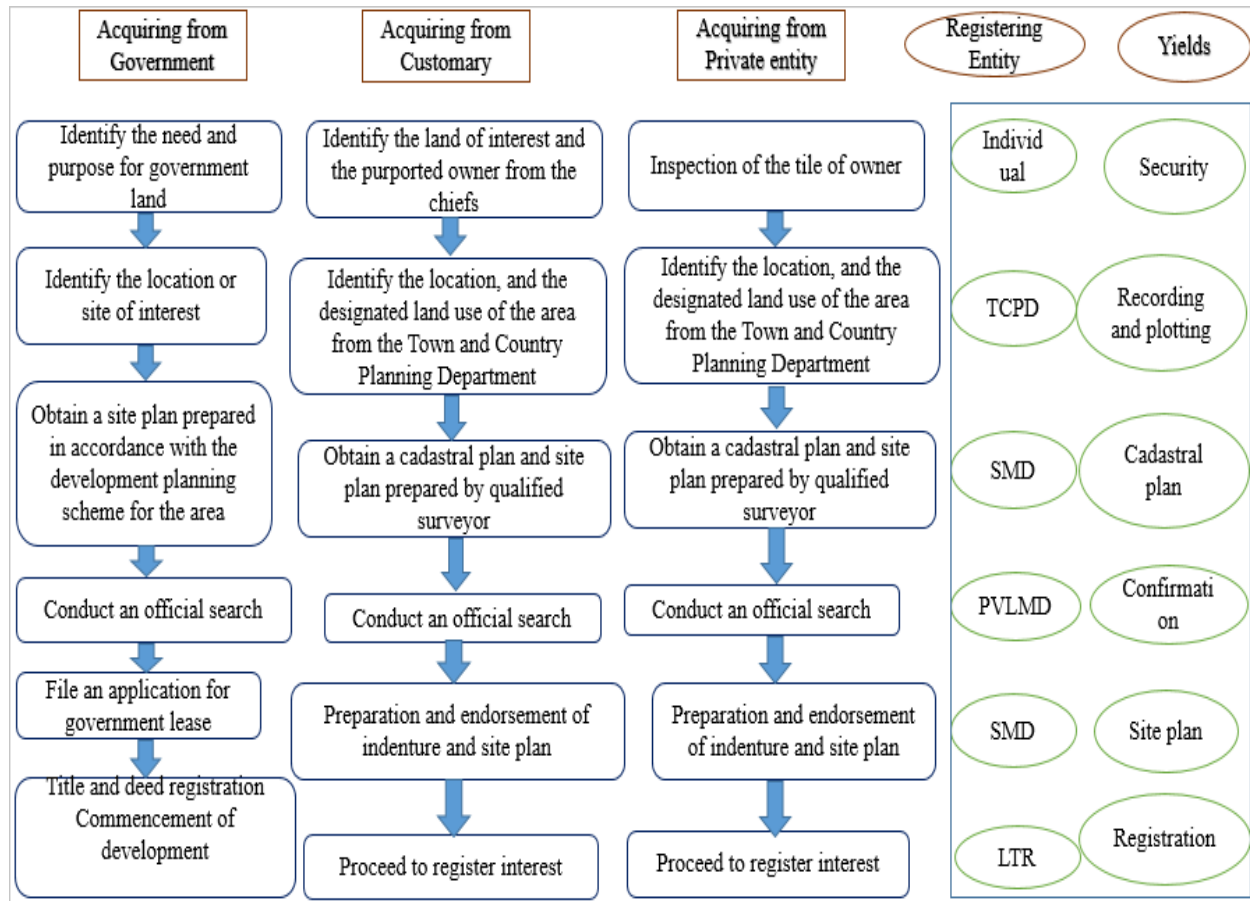


Fig 2. Land acquisition processes in Ghana (SMD-Survey and Mapping Division, LTR- Land Title Registration) Source: Author's construct based on literature.

3. Study area and research methods

3.1 Study area

The research is focused on Accra, a growing urban city in Ghana's Greater Accra region, which is one of the country's ten but currently sixteen administrative regions. It is the smallest of Ghana's sixteen existing regions, with a total land surface area of around 3,245 square kilometers, or about 1.4 percent of the country's total land area (see Fig. 3). It is the second-most populous region in Ghana, after the Ashanti Region, with a population of 5,455,692 people as of 2021, accounting for 17.7% of the country's overall population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). Accra is Ghana's capital, with 87.4 percent of the country's population living in urban areas, making it the country's most urbanized region. The study area was chosen because of the growing socioeconomic activities, expanding land acquisition and housing developments, as well as current trends and land matters in the area.

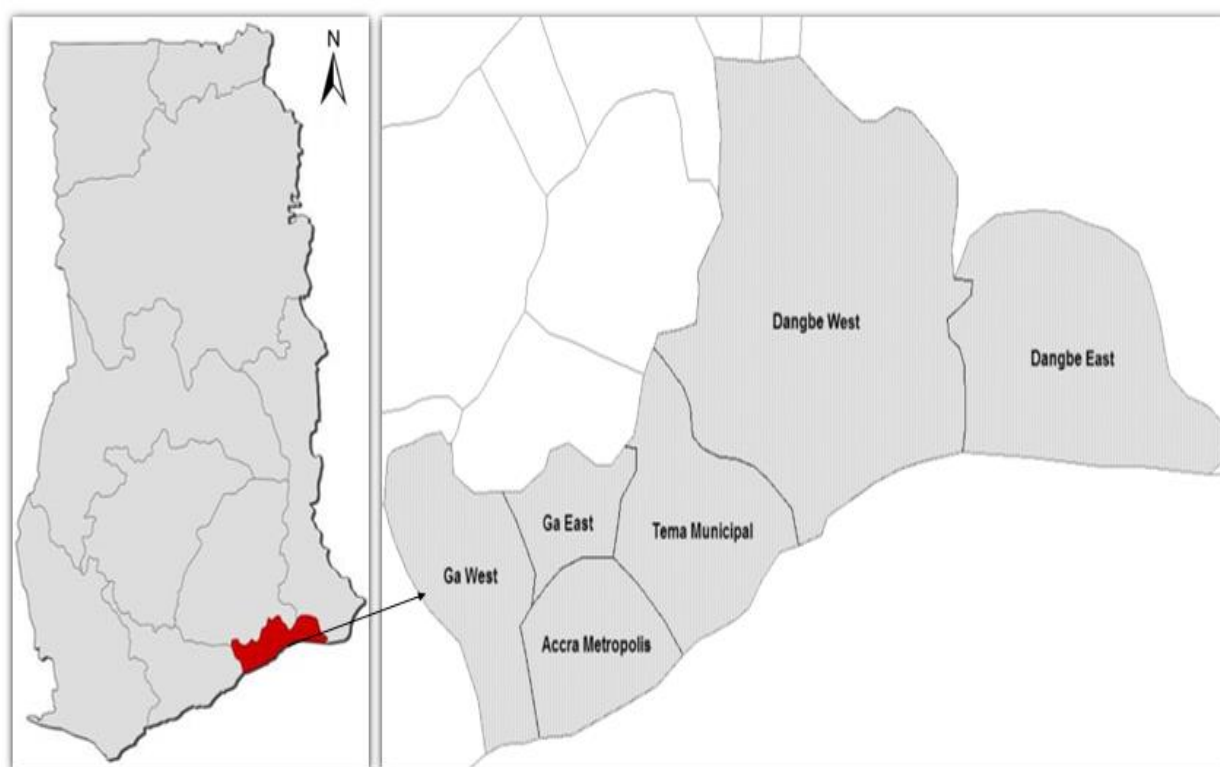


Fig 3. The Geographical location of Accra from the perspective of Ghana

3.2 Research Methodology

The research methodology entailed compiling relevant data for the investigation. Secondary sources of information were acquired from specific papers and compiled databases to assess the materials and have a decent understanding of the country's perspectives on land acquisition. The mixed-method research design was employed, which involved the use of both qualitative and quantitative data. Data collection was done employing surveys (Questionnaires) placed in popular internet chat groups among Accra residents and semi-structured interviews with prospective land buyers based in and around Accra. The questionnaire was in three folds making up the objectives of the study. A questionnaire with a 7-point Likert scale was used to collect information. The respondents indicated their level of agreement to 19 items on perceptions of land acquisition and the concurrent challenges with available options being; strongly disagree (1-3), average (4), and strongly agree (5-7). The respondents were also asked to suggest ways to curb these challenges in an open-ended question. The study employed an SPSS tool to analyze the gathered data. The study further made use of both descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlations for all variables. This estimation was to ascertain the strength of the linear relationship between the controls (age, gender, education, etc.), independent (challenges), and dependent variable (perception).

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the study in line with the objectives of the study and discusses it with relevant literature. A total of 201 respondents were the target sample size for the study. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 was used in analyzing the data gathered. This section specifically presents findings on the demographic data of respondents, perceptions of land acquisition in Ghana, the associate challenges, and the ways to curb these challenges.

4.1 Demographic Data

This research considered three demographic variables; gender, age range, and educational level. Table 1 presents the results obtained from the participants based on their demographics.

Table 1 - Respondents Demographics (N = 201)

Control	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	146	72.6
	Female	55	27.4
Age	18-30	6	3.0
	31-50	57	28.4
	51 and above	138	68.7
Education	Basic	20	10.0
	Secondary	41	20.4
	Tertiary	140	69.7
Have you acquired a plot of land?	Yes	199	99.0
	No	2	1.0
Which year?	Below year 2000	48	23.9
	Year 2001-2010	24	11.9
	Year 2011-2021	129	64.2
Cost of the land	Below Ghc10,000	47	23.4
	Ghc10,001-20,000	57	28.4
	Above Ghc20,001	97	48.3

Source: Field Data (2021)

From Table 1, the result reveals that the majority of the participants were males (72.6%) as compared to the females (27.4%), which implies a high dominance of men over women in land acquisition. Out of this, the majority of the participants were of age 51, and above years (68.7%), 28.4% of the participants were of age 31-50 years, and 3.0% of the participants were of age 18-30 years. This implies the majority of the participants were old-aged, and it is the period that people show interest in securing land to start building their dream home or start a business venture. Concerning their education level, 69.7% of the participants had attained tertiary level, 20.4% had attained secondary level, while 10.0% had attained basic level. This implies the respondents were well educated and understood the implications of the study. A total of 99% of the respondents except 1% have a plot of land in Accra. This implies the majority of the respondents had adequate experience in land matters. Out of this, the majority of the respondents (64.2%) had acquired their land between the year 2011-2021, 23.9% had acquired theirs below the year 2000, while the remaining 11.9% had acquired theirs between the year 2001-2010. The cost at which the respondents acquired their land varied from Above Ghc20,001(48.3%) to Ghc10,001-20,000 (28.4%) and Below Ghc10,000 (23.4%) over the course of the years.

4.2 Objective 1: Perceptions on land acquisition in Ghana

In this section, the respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with perceptions on land acquisition in Ghana. The results are presented in Table 2 below;

Table 1 - Perceptions on land acquisition in Ghana

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. It's expensive to acquire land in Accra	6.24	1.05
2. It is easy acquiring land in Accra	2.06	0.63
3. The chiefs go through the right proceedings in allocating a land	4.15	0.97
4. Prospective tenants go through the right proceedings in acquiring a land	2.73	1.28
5. There are a lot of issues associated with acquiring land in Accra	6.01	0.85
6. It is safe to acquire land in Accra	3.51	0.94

7. A chief can sell land to multiple people	5.90	0.87
8. The chiefs provide the right documents	2.64	1.04
9. The formal process is expensive	2.79	0.79
10. Chiefs should allocate the lands	2.65	0.93
11. Land planning agencies should allocate the lands	5.47	0.98

The findings in Table 2 reveal a majority of the respondents strongly agreed to 'it is expensive to acquire a land in Accra' (M = 6.24), ranking first. The respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 'There are a lot of issues associated with acquiring land in Accra' (M = 6.01), ranking second. The respondents agreed with the statement, 'A chief can sell a land to multiple people' (M = 5.90), ranking third. The respondents agreed with the statement, 'The chiefs go through the right proceedings in allocating a land' (M = 4.15), ranking fourth. The respondents agreed with the statement, 'It is safe to acquire land in Accra' (M = 3.51), ranking fifth. The respondents were neutral to the statements, 'The formal process is expensive' (M = 2.79), 'Prospective tenant go through the right proceedings in acquiring a land' (M = 2.76), 'Chiefs should allocate the lands' (M=2.65), 'The chiefs provide the right documents' (M = 2.64). The respondents disagreed with the statement, 'It is easy acquiring land in Accra' (M = 2.06).

The findings of the study of the respondents' perception that it is difficult to acquire land in Accra agrees with the research finding of Boamah et al. (2012). According to them, the difficulty is attributed to the planning system in the country, which is ineffective, is associated with perceived corruption and high transaction costs, and as a result, voluntary compliance by households is minimal. They argue that the planning authorities in the country cannot enforce their planning regulations, and in addition, it would be politically imprudent for the authorities to enforce the planning regulations authorizing the demolishing of unapproved properties, given the scale of violations. However, it contrasts with the research findings of Siiba, Adams, & Cobbinah (2018), who claimed it is easy to acquire land in their study at Yendi. The reason for this disparity could be attributed to the fact that land regulations in these two geographical regions, Accra and Yendi, are different. The study also revealed there are many issues associated with acquiring land in Accra that is congruent with research finding of (Paaga & Dandeebo 2013) study at Wa, Wechau, and Lambussie. The absence of a matching improvement in customary lands management in the face of increased demand for, and commercialization of land in the study areas, according to Paaga & Dandeebo (2013), has resulted in multiple land disputes.

4.3 Objective 2: Challenges of the current land acquisition processes

In this section, the respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with the challenges of the current land acquisition processes in Ghana. The results are presented in Table 3 below;

Table 2: Challenges of the current land acquisition processes

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. General indiscipline in the land market	6.13	0.85
2. Indeterminate boundaries of stool land because of lack of reliable maps/plans.	5.00	1.15
3. Inadequate security of land tenure due to conflict of interests between and within landowning groups and the state, land racketeering, and a weak land administration system.	5.30	0.96
4. Lack of consultation with landowners and chiefs in decision-making for land allocation, acquisition, etc.	5.95	0.88

5.	Delays in a court ruling on land issues.	5.25	0.97
6.	Fragmented institutional arrangement.	6.94	0.78
7.	Lack, inadequate, and delays in compensation of state acquire lands	4.67	1.12
8.	Delays in processing land documents at the lands commission and extortion of monies by some lands commission officers from clients	6.15	0.86
9.	Institutions established to administer lands are too weak to implement policies.	6.45	0.81

The findings in Table 3 reveal a majority of the respondents strongly agreed to 'Fragmented institutional arrangement' (M = 6.94) as a challenge in land acquisition ranking first. This was followed by a majority of the respondents strongly agreeing that 'Institutions established to administer lands are too weak to implement policies' (M = 6.45) as a challenge in land acquisition ranking second. The respondents strongly agreed with the statement 'Delays in processing land documents at the lands commission and extortion of monies by some lands commission officers from clients' (M = 6.15), ranking third. The respondents strongly agreed with the statement 'General indiscipline in the land market' (M = 6.13), ranking fourth. 'Lack of consultation with landowners and chiefs in decision-making for land allocation, acquisition, etc.' (M = 5.95) was strongly agreed to perception by the respondents ranking fifth. 'Inadequate security of land tenure due to conflict of interests between and within landowning groups and the state, land racketeering, and weak land administration system' (M = 5.30) was agreed to challenge by the respondents ranking sixth. The respondents agreed to 'Delays in a court ruling on land issues' (M = 5.25), ranking seventh. The respondents agreed to the statement 'Indeterminate boundaries of stool lands because of lack of reliable maps/plans.' (M = 5.00) ranking eighth. 'Lack, inadequate, and delays in compensation of state acquire lands (M = 2.05) came as the ninth challenge agreed upon by the respondents.

From the findings, it was realized that the majority of the respondents' major challenges in land acquisition hinged on Fragmented institutional arrangements. This is similar to (Quaye, 2014) research findings, which found that the potential purchaser must first deal with the sub-chiefs, then the inspection team, and finally the overlord king of the larger traditional region, who must sign the allocation letter after the sub-chief, has issued it. For many people, the time it takes to complete the acquisition, combined with all the incidental expenses that must be paid away from the land's true value, makes the entire process burdensome and difficult.

Another major challenge encountered by the respondents is institutions established to administer lands are too weak to implement policies. This finding is congruent with Maha-Atma's (2014) study, which confirmed weakness in implementing and enforcing policies that guide the acquisition process. This issue is not only common in Ghana but also across the African continent (Abubakari, Richter, & Zevenbergen, 2018). Because of this flaw, unqualified middlemen have been allowed into the system (Quaye, 2014). These unqualified middlemen disrupt the acquisition process at various stages, making it difficult for potential buyers. Although the land transaction process involves multiple divisions and departments, institutional flaws in coordinating the work of these divisions, as well as in implementing and enforcing standards, have allowed a large number of unprofessional middlemen to infiltrate the system. The majority of these middlemen hang around the land commission's offices, impersonating various offices and chatting with unsuspecting land buyers. These middlemen, in most circumstances, have connections with some of the commission's professional officials, allowing them to deal with naive potential buyers. These intermediaries collect and take substantial unauthorized fees from prospective purchasers to have enough for themselves and their professional colleagues who aid them in carrying out such agreements, in addition to complicating the acquisition process stages by providing unprofessional advice to customers. In the worst-case situation, a middleman may scam an unsuspecting buyer and run with the money.

4.3.1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

This study calculated descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlations for all variables. This estimation was to ascertain the strength of the linear relationship between the controls (age, gender, education, etc.), independent (challenges), and dependent variable (perception). As shown in Table 4, the dependent and independent variables: perceptions and challenges, respectively, demonstrated a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.186$, $p < 0.05$). These derived computations indicate that there were consistent responses to the challenges claimed on the perceptions. In addition, respondents' views on the perceptions of land acquisition appear to be more closely related to the challenges they encounter in acquiring land.

Table 4 - Descriptive Statistics, Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gender	1							
Age	-.086	1						
Education	-.048	.017	1					
Have you acquired a plot of land?	.051	.064	.061	1				
Which year?	.034	-.055	-.052	.017	1			
Cost of the land	-.120	-.021	.150*	.093	.216**	1		
Challenges	.030	.053	-.091	.222**	.126	.078	1	
Perceptions	.037	.083	-.150*	-.073	.078	.046	.186**	1
Mean	1.27	2.66	2.60	1.01	1995.64	2.25	4.01	5.65
SD	.447	.535	.665	.100	138.039	.811	.262	.208
VIF	1.032	1.019	1.047	1.072	1.075	1.108	1.086	

Notes: N = 201; *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.2 Hypothesis Testing

This study conducted a hierarchical regression analysis to examine Hypotheses 1, which states that there is a positive relationship between challenges and perceptions (see Table 5). Consistent with prior recommendations (Simsek and Heavey, 2011, Anderson et al., 2009), the estimation was carried out in separate regression models. Model 1 estimated the effect of the control variables on perceptions (dependent variable). In Model 2, this study estimated Hypothesis 1. The value of $\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.01$ validated this study's Hypothesis 1.

Table 5 – Hierarchical Linear Regression

Dependent Variable: Perceptions (DV)		
Models	Model 1	Model 2
Controls	Beta (β)	Beta (β)
Gender	.036(.618)	.032(.654)
Age	.096(.175)	.087(.214)
Education	-.137(.057)	-.117(.101)
Have you acquired a plot of land?	-.071(.315)	-.113(.117)
Which year?	.083(.253)	.063(.382)
Cost of the land	-.031(.677)	-.041(.572)
Independent Variable		
Challenges		.190(.009)
R^2	.043	.076
Adjusted R^2	.013	.043
F	1.453	2.281

Notes: N = 201; Standardized coefficients reported

4.4 Objective 3: Ways to address the land acquisition challenges.

The root cause of major land issues in Ghana can be ascribed to greed, corruption, and, in most cases, lack of Government policy implementation. As can be seen from Figure 4., three major solutions to land acquisition challenges stand out in an inverted pyramid. The most unified consensus among respondents is the issue of public education, followed by safety concerns, with government policy formulation being low among respondents' concerns. (Such issues as a digital land registry, fighting corruption, and policies are, in one way or the other, the main focus of government initiatives that can alleviate concerns relating to land registration).

This section describes the major solutions cited by the respondents to address the land acquisition challenges in Ghana.

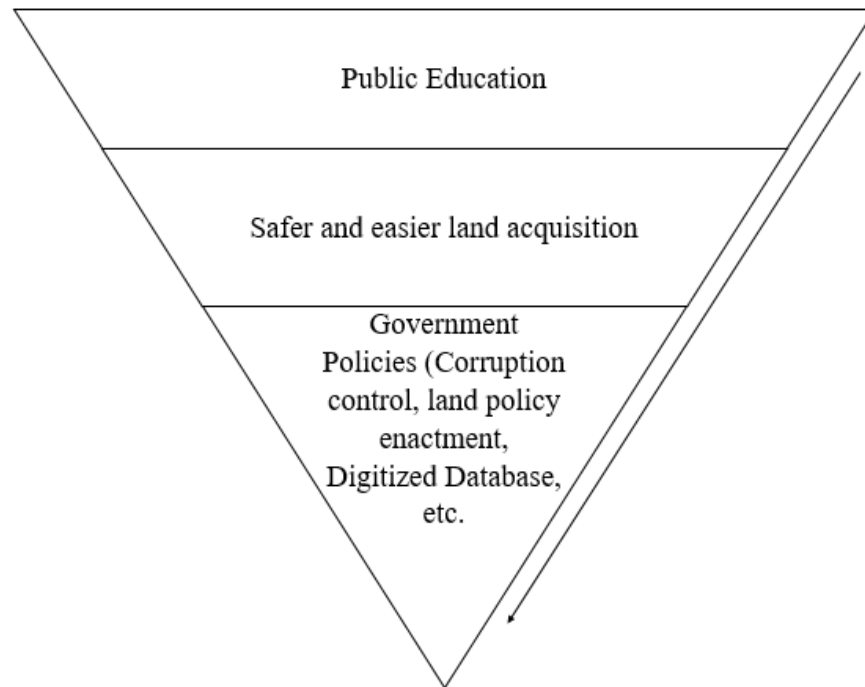


Fig 4. Inverted pyramid scheme of solutions to land acquisition challenges in Ghana.

4.4.1 Public Education

Public Education was one of the ways suggested by seven (7) of the respondents to make land acquisition safe and easier. The respondents believed the public is not duly informed on the regulations and policies of land acquisition, so there is a need for more education to bridge this knowledge gap. One of the respondents wrote, 'The mass media should help disseminate information about land issues and solutions' in a related study conducted (Sittie, 2006). Even inside the specified districts, the introduction of land title registration did not come with enough public education. As a result, land title registration has been delayed and not expanded across the country.

4.4.2 Adopt Digital land registry

One of the ways cited by five (5) of the respondents was adopting a digital land registry to make land acquisition safe and easier. Commenting on adopting a digital land registry, these were what some of the respondents had to write; "Good computerized system to provide quick access to updated land data", "Digitalized land data storage," and "We need a digital land registry concept". Computerization, according to (Goyal, 2012), can lower the cost of keeping the property register current and relevant, remove informal side payments that have traditionally been linked with property registration, and increase third-party accessibility to registry information. These could enhance the number of registered land transactions, minimize informality, and improve registry comprehensiveness.

4.4.3 Fight Corruption

The respondents cited fighting corruption as a way of making land acquisition safe and easier. This was cited by three (3) of the respondents. According to one of the respondents, 'corruption issues should be resolved at the land commission'. One respondent also noted, 'Corruption is the cause of dual or several owners of one land'. In a related study, (Ameyaw & de Vries, 2020) identified corruption as a major issue for prospective purchasers' applications for the land. Therefore, one of the ways to make land acquisition safe and easy for prospective buyers is to fight corruption.

4.4.4 Enact Land Policies

Enacting land policies was one of the ways suggested by five (5) of the respondents to make land acquisition safe and easier. Most of the respondents were of the view that the land policies should be changed. This supports Thurman's (2010) assertion that the Accra metropolitan region would benefit greatly from the adoption of a comprehensive and diverse set of policies because it now lacks appropriate land-use policies.

4.4.5 Government Involvement

Government involvement was cited by six (6) of the respondents as a way of making land acquisition safe and easier. The respondents believed it is much easier dealing with the government than customary landowners are. One of the respondents cited,

'Government could provide the public with a list of trust agencies to purchase land from. One respondent also cited 'The government must control land prices in the country. In their study, Gyamera et al. (2018) conclude that the government should be active in addressing land acquisition difficulties by establishing an institution dedicated to land market regulation.

5. Summary Of Findings, Conclusions, And Recommendations

5.1 Summary of findings

The study focused on examining the challenges and perceptions of land acquisition in Accra and finding ways to make it safer and easier. The first objective of the study sought to identify and address the perceptions people had on acquiring land in Accra. According to the results, there are a lot of issues associated with acquiring land in Accra, perceptions about the cost of land (it is more expensive to acquire land in Accra), and re-selling of land to multiple people by local Chiefs being most prevalent. The findings also revealed that the respondents did not care much and/or were neutral about how expensive the nature of acquiring land is. This is particularly alarming owing to the fact that the majority of working-class citizens cannot afford land in Accra. Additionally, respondents were noncommittal to whether prospective buyers should go through the right proceedings in acquiring land and if local chiefs should be tasked with allocating lands and providing the right documents. Not surprisingly, respondents were in agreement that acquiring land in Accra is extremely difficult.

The second objective of the study sought to examine the challenges associated with land acquisition in Accra. According to the results, the following challenges were discovered in their order of difficulty; the fragmented nature of institutions tasked with administering lands has rendered them (the institutions) too weak to implement policies. Delays in processing land documents and extortion by some lands commission officers, as well as general indiscipline in the land market, lack of consultation with landowners and chiefs in decision-making, inadequate security of land tenure, land racketeering, and weak land administration system, delays in a court ruling on land issues, indeterminate boundaries of stool lands because of lack of reliable maps/plans and delays in compensation of state-acquired lands have rendered insurmountable challenges for potential land buyers.

The challenges involved in acquiring land are one of the major contributing factors to the perceptions people have about land acquisition in Ghana. Due to the inability of stakeholders to follow proper procedures, land acquisition has therefore become troublesome for Accra residents. The third objective of the study sought to explore ways to address the aforementioned challenges by investing in (i) Public education, (ii) the adoption of a digital land registry, (iii) fighting corruption, (iv) enacting land policies, and (v) government involvement.

5.2 Conclusion

This study focused on examining the issues around land acquisition in Accra. The analysis has attempted to demonstrate the perceptions people have on land acquisition, the challenges they go through, and the ways to eliminate those challenges. The experience so far with land acquisition in Accra suggests that it's not easy to acquire land in Accra. In particular, it points to the undesirable arrangements adopted by the government to deal with land acquisition and related problems under conditions that make it difficult for potential land buyers to legally acquire a land. This research will help us gain a better understanding of the step-by-step procedures of acquiring land from each of the land owners (government, customary, and private) in Ghana. Consequently, it is safe to conclude that the results of the study add to the body of knowledge on land tenure system and land marketing. The study's findings considerably provide solutions to deal with the problems associated with land acquisition in Ghana. In addition, the results of the study validate the applicability of land administration theory which points out the basic idea of building a local land administration system using suitable tools to perform essential functions such as registration, tenures security, cadastres, boundary management, disputes, professional regulation and many, etc. Based on the findings, it is recommended that government establish institutions mainly to regulate the land market. It is also recommended for all prospective buyers to follow the right procedures in acquiring lands.

5.3 Research Limitations and suggestions for further studies

The first limitation of this study is the sample size. Even though there are a lot of people in Ghana, only 200 people participated. Hence, limiting the current study in terms of adequate respondents. The respondents of the current study are mainly limited to the residents of Accra. Due to the limitation of the scope of the current study, the statistical results obtained from the questionnaire might not be generalized to the entire prospective buyers.

Though the study concentrated on the challenges of land acquisition and the counter measures to make it easier, in the future, more research studies should be conducted on ways to make land acquisition faster and more reliable. Also, further research should be carried out to establish the specific actions the government can take to maintain bureaucracy in the land acquisition process.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

I am a Ghanaian Master's student in Business Administration from the school of management and economics, Nanjing University of Technology. I am carrying out a study on perceptions of land acquisition in Accra, Ghana. I would be happy if you could help me answer the following questions. Thank you.

Section A. Demographic questions

Gender : Male ☐ Female ☐

Age : 18-30 ☐ 31-50 ☐ 51 and above ☐

Education: Basic ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary ☐

Section B.

Have you acquired a plot of land? Yes ☐ No ☐

Which year? Below year 2000 ☐ Year 2001-2010 ☐ Year 2011-2021 ☐

Cost of the land : Below Ghc10,000 ☐ Ghc10,001-20,000 ☐ above Ghc20,001 ☐

Which part of Accra? _____

Section C.

Perceptions: The following statements deal with the perceptions of land acquisition in Ghana. Please, show the extent to which these statements reflect your perception of acquiring a plot of land in Ghana. I am interested in knowing your thoughts on land matters in Ghana. You should rank each statement as follows;

Strongly Disagree **Average** **Strongly Agree**
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Put a cross (X) on your choice of answer.

Statement	scores						
1. It's expensive to acquire a land in Accra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. It is easy acquiring a land in Accra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. The chiefs go through the right proceedings in allocating a land	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Prospective tenants go through the right proceedings in acquiring a land	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. There are a lot of issues associated with acquiring a land in Accra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. It is safe to acquire a land in Accra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. A chief can sell a land to multiple people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. The chiefs provide the right documents	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. The formal process is expensive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. Chiefs should allocate the lands	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Land planning agencies should allocate the lands	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Challenges: The following statements deal with the challenges associated with land acquisition. Please, show the extent to which these statements reflect your perception of the challenges coupled with land acquisition in Accra, Ghana.

Strongly Disagree

1

2

3

Average

4

5

Strongly Agree

6

7

Put a cross (X) on your choice of answer.

Statement	scores						
1. General indiscipline in the land market	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Indeterminate boundaries of stool lands because of lack of reliable maps/plans.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Inadequate security of land tenure due to conflict of interests between and within landowning groups and the state, land racketeering, and a weak land administration system.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Lack of consultation with landowners and chiefs in decision-making for land allocation, acquisition, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Delays in a court ruling on land issues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Fragmented institutional arrangement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Lack, inadequate, and delays in compensation of state acquired lands	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Delays in processing land documents at the lands commission and extortion of monies by some lands commission officers from clients	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Institutions established to administer lands are too weak to implement policies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Personal opinions:

- 1) In your view, what better ways can be put in place to make land acquisition safe and easier?