

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, TAMALE

**CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE
CAPACITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE IN THE
UPPER WEST REGION, GHANA**

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

LUKE DOMELAGR WIEDONG



2018

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UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

BY

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**THIS THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL POLITICAL
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STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN SOCIAL
ADMINISTRATION**

MARCH, 2018

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature : _____

Date: _____

Name: Luke Domelagr Wiedong

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University for Development Studies.

Supervisor's Signature: Date: _____

Name: Dr. Gideon Kofi Agbley



ABSTRACT

Child rights violations have become a major issue in the Upper West Region which requires the attention of the Department of Social Welfare (DSW). Notwithstanding this, the Department is not adequately resourced to work in the best interest of children as required by the Children's Act, Act 560 (1998). The Specific objectives of the study are to: assess the Department of Social Welfare service delivery in child rights protection, investigate the complementary role played by state institutions for the protection of children rights and to examine the resourcefulness of the Department of Social Welfare in their quest to protect the rights of children in the Upper West Region. For this investigation, varied methodology was used which includes; semi-structured and structured interview guides. The study captured selected participants from the Department of Social Welfare, Department of Children, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit. The findings of the study include; limited capacity of the Department of Social Welfare in implementing child welfare policies, low level of collaboration between the Department and other state child protection institutions, inadequate resources in terms of trained personnel and finances, no further skills training for trained personnel specifically on child protection, among others. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that, state child protection institutions should focus on their core mandate. Again, the DSW can accomplish its mandate if qualified personnel are engaged in full complement to man the district offices across the region and be adequately resourced financially to perform its function. The Department's mandate is still relevant in contemporary times as children are becoming more vulnerable in a fast globalizing world and deserve better and more protective arrangements than before from the Department of Social Welfare.



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Obviously, this piece of work is not entirely my hard work. In preparing it, I have consulted several books, articles and journals among others from which extracts discussed were taken. Also, I have contacted some officials from selected state child protection institutions especially the DSW and certain individuals for pieces of information.

I am very grateful first to the Almighty God for seeing me through the period of studies at the UDS and then to my supervisor, Dr. Gideon Kofi Agbley for his guidance and immense contributions in the preparation of this thesis. His scholarly guidance and constructive comments of the drafts made it possible for me to complete this work. I also wish to register my sincere gratitude and profound appreciation to Naa Dr. C. S. Maasole, Dr. Diedong L. Africanus and Mr. Aasoglenang Arkum Thaddeus for their invaluable suggestions and all Lectures at the University for Development Studies who assisted me in diverse ways.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the Wiedong's family of Nandom Puffien Tang-zu. I owe this lovely family of mine debt of gratitude and appreciation for the motivation, support and encouragement they offered me during the period of study.



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AU	African Union
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
COS	Charity Organization Society
CRI	Care Reform Initiative
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DOC	Department of Children
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
GNCC	Ghana National Commission of Children
GNCRC	Ghana NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
HIV	Human Immune deficiency Syndrome
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MESW	Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
UNAIDS	United States Agency for International Development
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees



UN

United Nations

UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund

UWR

Upper West Region

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



CHAPTER ONE

1.1 BACKGROUND

Child Protection is the prevention and response to violence, exploitation and all forms of abuses meted out to children including commercial sexual exploitation, child trafficking and labour as well as harmful cultural practices, such as female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage (UNICEF, 2006). Child Protection according to Carolyne (2006) are the activities that are carried out by organizations, individuals and communities with a view of ensuring that children are properly brought up; develop good attitudes, knowledge and abilities, live meaningful lives and offered the opportunity to participate effectively in social activities and decision- making. In this study, child protection is the acknowledgment and enforcement of child rights enshrined in national Constitutions and other international conventions such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child as well as ensuring that these rights are not encroached upon from within and outside the home.

The 2005 Report of the state of the world's children revealed that, more than 1 billion children are denied a healthy and protected upbringing as demanded and enshrined in the 1989's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 2005). The General Assembly of the UN by resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which came into effect on 2nd September 1990 as the main international document that provides for the welfare of children. Woodhead (2006:24) points out that, “The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) requires all children to be respected as persons in their own rights, including the very youngest children. In so doing, it establishes a new



kind of universal standard”. The UNCRC agenda is to promote the welfare of children through legal restructuring of adults and child relationships in all countries across the globe. Ghana became the first country in the world to ratify the Convention on 5 February 1990 (Manful&Manful, 2010; Wilson, 2012).

In Africa, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU) adopted an African Charter on the rights and welfare of the child on 11 July 1990 by the 26 Ordinary Sessions of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; taking into consideration, the virtues of the African cultural heritage, historical background and values; it is observed that, under the Charter, the African child is entitled to all the rights and freedoms (Lloyd, 2002). The Charter defines a “child” as a human being below the age of 18 years. Ghana's Parliament ratified the Charter in July 2004, 14 years after it was signed. Kristiansen (2009) indicates that, the highest region in the world with children who are neglected or abused are in sub- Saharan Africa. The UN in 2003 estimated that there were at least 43million children, representing 12.3% of all children in the region.

In Ghana, the UN in the same year estimated the number of children that are not properly protected to be 1million which is relatively high as it comprises almost 10% of all children in the country (UNICEF, 2004; Kristiansen, 2009). According to Boakye – Boateng (2006:4), “The situation of children in Ghana and in Africa in the 21st century presents a challenge to all the appropriate stakeholders in the society”. He further notes that, an estimated number of 20,000 children are parading in Ghana's capital city, Accra, to fend for themselves and some other family members at home. Some scholars are even of the opinion that, the figures put out there could even be higher but inadequate





statistical data in most cases make the data speculative (Beauchemin,1999). Children like any categories of persons, are entitled to fundamental human rights and freedoms to guarantee their dignity. In Ghana, several legislations, policies and structures are in place aimed at safeguarding the child. The fundamental human rights of the Ghanaian child are enshrined in Article 28 of the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana. Article 28(1) makes provision for the right of every Ghanaian child to maintenance and assistance necessary for his/her development from parents. The rights of children according to Kangsangbata (2008), can be summarized as follows; right to survival and life, right to be protected from harmful influences, right to physical, moral and intellectual development and the right to participate actively in social and cultural life..

Appiah (2010) posits that, since the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana came into existence, the Children Act of 1998 (Act 560) was a main legislative reform. Among other things, the Act seeks to address issues pertaining to child maintenance, fostering, labour and the provision of institutional facilities for abused and neglected children”. Children in the Upper West Region were protected by the family and traditional institutions during the pre-colonial era. It was a collective responsibility on the part of every family member to provide and care for the children (Adjetey, 2007). Public sector protection mechanisms were non-existent in providing the needed support to family members, especially children in difficult situations. The family was an important institution for informal social protection (Oduro, 2010). However, the family as an institution lost some of its capacity to provide for the upkeep of children owing to the general breakdown of the extended family system, single parenthood, irresponsible parenting, rural income disparities, among others (Boakye- Boateng, 2006). Frimpong-Manso (2014) points out that, child labour; child abandonment, neglect and sale of

children frequently reported by the media indicate the difficulties that some parents go through in providing for the maintenance of children.

This affirms the need to offer special care and protection to children by the appropriate stakeholders across the globe and in the Upper West Region in particular. The Department of Social Welfare which is the Government Statutory Agency was created in 1946 in response to the numerous child rights issues such as child maintenance, abuse and neglect, child abandonment and delinquency, among others. It was established in 1946 by Ordinance Number 11 of 1945 and Gazetted 10 August 1946.

Social works institutions in Ghana are inadequate and the few existing ones such as the DSW are in a very poor state in terms of trained personnel, infrastructure, logistics, among others (Laird, 2008). Casey (2011:78) indicates that, “Human resources within the DSW remain a challenge. The DSW has been under a hiring freeze since the structural adjustments programme in the 1980s, and has not been allowed to expand its staff complement to cope with the increasing numbers of the population”. These institutional challenges coupled with others weakened the Department’s capacity to address social problems such as child maintenance and neglect, homelessness, health care needs of children, domestic violence, among others; thus compelling it to refer most of these cases that confronts it to other welfare institutions that are well resourced, and individuals such as priests and pastors for resolution (DuBois & Miley, 2013). The scant resources that are allocated to the Department for child rights promotion are often badly managed owing to the extremely weak institutional organization and governance (Delap, 2013). This study seeks to assess the capacity of the DSW in the Upper West Region of Ghana in child rights protection.



1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Ghana's commitment to the global agenda for the protection of children's rights in principle is commendable but the enforcement of these Conventions and Common Laws falls short of the International Standard in the country. Ghana Government Report, 2005 and the Ghana NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child (GNCRC) 2005 on the implementation of the child rights law in Ghana indicated that the State institutions such as the DSW, Department of Children (DOC) and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) tasked with implementing child rights laws are not adequately furnished with violations of children's rights (Kuyini, 2012). Some parents refuse to report cases involving child right violations to the appropriate State agencies such as the DSW owing to its inability to demonstrate over the years that, it has what it takes to stand for the best interest of the child (Kangsangbata, 2008). Officials at the DSW in the Wa Municipality, Jirapa and the Wa East districts further revealed that, child maintenance/neglect cases not brought to the Department far outnumbered the reported ones which they blamed on the concept of "Tijabunyeni" meaning we are all one people. The fact that they are one people coupled with the idea that social workers at the DSW are intruders and lacks the knowledge and skills to address children issues across board owing to cultural variations compelled most parents, families, communities, among others to settle child rights violation cases contrary to the laws of the land and many a time, to the total neglect of the victim and at times against the will of the child's immediate family members (DSW, UWR, 2015).

Ghana ratified various international conventions and common laws on human rights and freedom. The main ones are the UNCRC which Ghana ratified on 5 February 1990, the African charter on the rights and welfare of the child together with the

United Nations 5



Standard Minimum Rules for Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing rules), and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions 132 and 182. These Conventions to a very large extent influenced the legal position on children's rights (Appiah, 2010). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, for instance, enjoins states to adequately offer protection to children on issues regarding child labour, abuse, neglect, trafficking and sexual exploitation within and outside the home. As a nation, Ghana was the first signatory to the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child (November, 1959). The country established the National Commission on Children in 1979 which coincided with the United Nations Declaration of that year as the International year of the child (Baffoe & Dako-Gyeke, 2013).

The commonest cases recorded at the DSW by ranking were child maintenance, inadequate support for children's education, paternity issues, child custody and labour respectively. Similarly, out of a total number of 18 cases observed at the DSW in the Wa Municipality, Wa East and Jirapa districts investigated, 12 were child maintenance related cases. This study seeks to assess the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare in the Upper West Region in child rights protection in respect of theory and in practice.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions could be asked thus;

1. Does the Department of Social Welfare have the capacity to deliver on child rights protection in the Upper West Region?
2. What partnership role do state institutions play with the Department of Social Welfare to protect the rights of children in the Upper West Region?
3. To what extent is the Department of Social Welfare resourced to protect the rights of children in the Upper West Region?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the Department of Social Welfare service delivering in child rights protection in the Upper West Region.
2. To investigate the complementary role played by state institutions for the protection of children rights in the Upper West Region.
3. To examine the resourcefulness of the Department of Social Welfare in their quest to protect the rights of children in the Upper West Region.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The state of Ghana's DSW has attracted comments from various scholars, the media, individuals, institutions and NGOs. The media play a crucial role in pointing out some of the institutional challenges that the Department faced relating to the maintenance of children (Akpalu, 2007). This requires research to assess the reality on the ground and make the appropriate recommendations for consideration. Even though some studies have been carried out in this area, limited literature exist on the topic with particular reference to the UWR. Infact, knowledge gap exist and the area remains under researched. This study will add to existing literature and would contribute to unearth issues which may serve as motivation to other researchers to conduct research in areas where there is really the need to strengthen the institutional capacity of the DSW as regards child maintenance in the UWR and Ghana as a whole.

In view of the above, the study could be justified on the grounds that it will deepen the understanding of clients and the general public on the Department's service delivery particularly in the area of child rights promotion and protection. Also, it is expected that, the public will be properly informed and be educated on child maintenance, and where to make official reports when it did happen. The DSW whose responsibility among others



is to protect the rights of children would benefit from this study because the expectations and experiences of the children will be made known to them. The study will also contribute to both theory and practice in child protection by the DSW and serve as a point of reference to Metropolitan, Municipal and District assemblies, people in the academia and other stakeholders working to ensure that, the Department fulfils its mandate in the area of child rights protection.

This study will add to knowledge in a significant way. The study will reveal the financial and human resource challenges in the DSW and impact on child protection programmes in the Upper West Region. How frequent the Department organises child protection programmes to sensitise parents/guardians, communities, institutions, among others on child protection issues such as child maintenance and their response to the Department's programmes will add to knowledge for readers and other researchers. Also, this study will add to knowledge about the sources of funds available to the DSW in the Upper West Region to implement child rights protection laws and policies. Staff skills training, especially in the area of child rights protection and promotion and some of the major problems in the child protection unit and the DSW for that matter will be identified thus, contributing to knowledge on the topic under investigation.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study covers three districts in the UWR. They include; Wa Municipality, Jirapa, and Wa East. The researcher ever worked in these districts and is familiar with the environment. Moreso, the strategic location of the Wa Municipality accounted for its selection. The Municipality is one of the urban settlements in Ghana where most of the state's child protection institutions are found and can easily be reached out to for quality data. Opposing views as regards child protection and others were gathered from the





participants that helped to address the research objectives. Also, the selection of the Jirapa district was due to the concentration of the child welfare departments and the social welfare institution, that is, the Orphanage. Quality data was obtained in the case of both districts. The Wa East district was selected owing to its deprived nature. Apart from the Department of Social of Welfare that established an office and stationed only the District Officer, the regional offices of the other state child protection institutions such as the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service exercise an oversight responsibility over the district from Wa. This attracted the researcher to engage some of the officials for answers on how they render effective and efficient services to the people and especially children from the regional capital in Wa which is about a hundred kilometres away from the district capital, Funsu. Another area worth considering is the extent to which the Department of Social Welfare collaborates with other state child protection institutions such as the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service, Department of Children (DOC), and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice. The means and the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare to safeguard the rights of children from violation were central in this work. The concentration here was on financial and the human resource base, that is how resourceful is, the Department in terms of personnel and funds to address children issues leading to protecting their rights.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study was organized into five main chapters. Chapter one focuses on background, statement of the problem, research questions and objectives, significance of the study, organization, scope and problems encountered in the field of the study. Chapter two took

into consideration conceptual definitions and a review of related literature on the topic. Chapter three focused on the methodological approach. Data analysis, discussions and presentations covered chapter four. Chapter five contained summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

1.8 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE FIELD

In carrying out a study of this nature, barriers cannot be ruled out. Some problems of the study include; the involvement of children in the sample who many a time are not capable of understanding the purpose of the study to give consent. “It is also important to ensure that the targeted participants are legally capable of giving consent. However, children may not understand the information in order to make a decision” (Kusi, 2012:90). This ethical issue was overcome by explaining to parents /guardians whose children were part of the sampling units, the usefulness of the study and what they stand to benefit.

Another challenge was the expectation from the respondents. At least, some of the respondents expected a kind of compensation for the time spent in responding to the questions. Here again, the initial rapport established with them address this. Also, they were told that, their selection into the sample was not coincidental but because they possess some special skills which made them stand tall among others. This to some extent served as a kind of motivation to them. Resources posed a challenge to this study. This was overcome through prudent management of available resources.



CHAPTER TWO

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A lot has been written and published about the issue of child rights protection and the role of the Department of Social Welfare. In view of this, extensive and diverse literature exists on the subject. This chapter intends to give an insight into a conceptual framework that is relevant to child rights protection and promotion in relation to the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare. As scholars have different understanding of the basic concepts, arguments would be generated and this will provide the framework for this study. Hence, the focus of this chapter is to present a five part review of literature; literature relating to the development of early social welfare institutions, informal institutions in child rights protection in pre-colonial Ghana, the relevance and complementary roles of institutions in child maintenance, the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare to enforce child maintenance order, gender dimension and child rights protection. Conceptual and operational definitions of basic concepts are incorporated into the main literature review to make them more meaningful and understandable within the context of this study

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

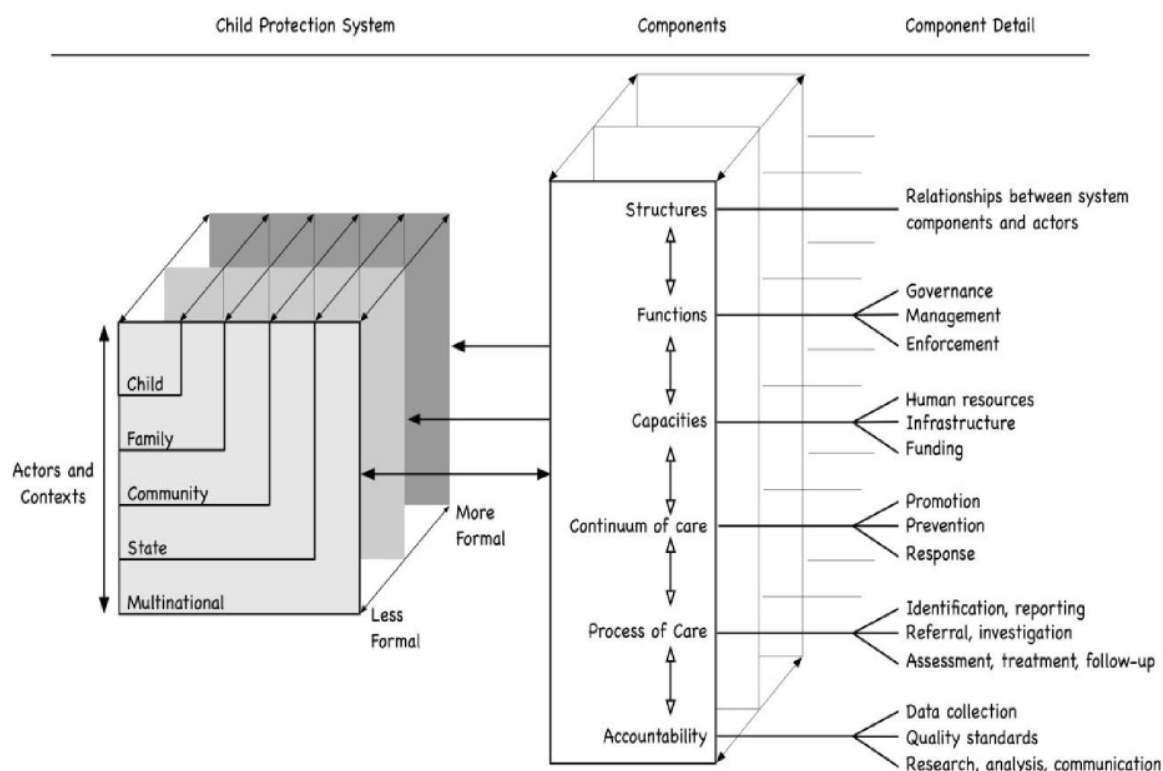
The conceptual framework applicable for this study is informed by the system theory approach to child rights protection. The state and non-state actors both have responsibilities to protect the rights of children. Adjetey (2007) notes that, it was a collective responsibility to protect the rights of children. The state as the main actor shown in the conceptual framework comprises institutions such as the Department of



Social Welfare, Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service, Department of Children and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice. The CHRAJ for instance was set up in 1993 with oversight responsibilities of promoting the rights of all citizens and therefore the rights of children (Wilson, 2012). All these stakeholders constitute the bigger umbrella to protect child rights with each playing separate roles but geared towards achieving same objectives; protecting cases involving child rights violations. The protection of child rights required stronger collaboration between state institutions and other informal institutions such as the community, family and children themselves to adequately address child protection issues such as maintenance, abandonment, streetism, among others in a holistic manner. Multilateral organizations such as UNICEF and Save the Children extensively championed the holistic approach in dealing with child protection issues as captured in figure 2.1.



FIGURE 2.1: CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS: ACTORS, CONTEXT, AND COMPONENTS



Adopted from Wulczyn et al, 2010

The conceptual framework highlights the interactive nature of the various mechanisms.

The components or mechanisms are not found in isolation but are seen to be relating and influencing other components and actors in the structure. The formal and informal organizations relate to each other and work towards achieving a common goal; that is attending to child rights violation cases in a more systematic manner. The main components as indicated on the conceptual framework are the structures, functions, capacities, accountability, continuum of care, process of care and accountability. Each of these components as indicated much earlier work in recognition of the others. The relationship that exists among the components in the system is referred to as the structure.





Capacity implies infrastructure, funding and human resources. Similarly, capacity deals with issues as regards the knowledge and competence of family and community members to protect the rights of children, the availability of physical structures at the community level to produce basic protection to the children and trained workforce. The continuum of care outlines the exact ways in which child rights violation cases are responded to by the formal and informal institutions. Some of the protective mechanisms as indicated on the theoretical framework include promotion, prevention and responses.

The process of care involves treatment, investigation, assessment strategies, referral and follow-ups “With the specific processes shaped by whether the underlying services are promotion, prevention, or response” (Wulczyn et al, 2010:22). An important component of the process of care is the recognition of families, communities and especially children as required by the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Children. The conceptual framework adopted for this study is consistent with the problem investigated owing to the recognition that, no single entity can adequately address the needs of children and that child issues should be addressed in a holistic manner. Also, in the area of child rights protection, it acknowledges the need for effective collaboration and cooperation with other stakeholders at the national, regional and local levels (UNICEF, 2008; Save the Children, 2009). The relationship among these actors is one of cooperation and mutuality as opposed to individual approach to child rights protection.

2.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

Fisher (2007) points out that, theories are in general terms, ideas about how phenomena relate to each other. Again, he observed that, theories are an attempt to draw generalized findings from specific instances. He holds the view that, theorizing does not necessarily mean inventing new theory but adapting and developing existing theories. Following



from the above, the study focused on assessing the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare in relation to child maintenance in the UWR. Two related concepts, child rights and capacity have been employed in this study to investigate issues regarding child rights protection and assessing the capacity of a state institution, the Department of Social Welfare responsible for protecting child rights in the Wa Municipality, Jirapa and Wa East districts in the study area. There are other theoretical frameworks that could also be used such as cultural capital theory to achieve the objectives of this study. This theory originates from the disciplines of sociology and was originally applied to study the impact of cultural reproduction on social reproduction. Capital is both a theory and concept which denotes investment in certain types of resources of value in a given society. Marx defines capital as part of the surplus value created in a production process. The theory of cultural capital is generally recognized as one of Pierre Bourdieu's historic work. In other words, the idea of cultural capital is associated primarily with Bourdieu (1977). This theory has been influential in American Sociology of education ever since the late 1970's. Bourdieu's used the concept extensively in educational research particularly in Sociology of education. Sociologically, Bourdieu maintains that, credentials are understood to simultaneously certify competence in two ways. He acknowledged strongly that, certificates and degrees guarantees technical capacity on the one hand. On the other hand, he argues that certificates and degrees attest to social competence and promote the social dignity of the holder and a corresponding increase in capacity. Lamont and Lareau (1988) revealed that, the concept of cultural capital was first developed by Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Claude Passeron to analyze the contribution of education and culture to social reproduction. This concept was later on imported into



Europe and the United States of America from France. It has been operationalized by various scholars in diverse ways. Dimaggio and Useem (1978) operationalized it as knowledge of high culture. Goulder (1979) points out that, cultural capital is the capacity to perform tasks in accordance with cultural practices. Lareau defined cultural capital in terms of institutionalized, that is, widely shared high status cultural signals such as formal knowledge, attitudes, among others. “Bourdieu is not concerned with how individuals gain status, but the institutionalized structure of unequally valued signals itself; therefore, again, he adopts a more structured and less individualistic approach to status attribution” as noted by Lamont and Lareau (1988:156-157). They further argued that, the individual’s social position and family background provide them with social and cultural resources which need to be actively invested to field social profits.

The concept of cultural capital denotes knowledge of or competence which is distinct and independent from other forms of knowledge or competence such as skills, ability, among others. The premise that culture cannot be ignored in studies of stratification is universally accepted and applied in sociological studies. This theory has enabled researchers to view culture as an important resource which is passed on from one generation to the other. Cultural capital theory has paved the way for researchers in various fields to place at the centre of their analysis of various aspects of the stratification of culture and its processes. This theory is relevant to the problem under consideration because it acknowledges the following: knowledge, competence and capacity as crucial in task performance which must be carried out in an acceptable manner. Professionals in the Department of Social Welfare as the theory pointed out must have the necessary competence and in-depth knowledge pertaining to children issues, especially their



maintenance as regards the laws of the land. Training specifically in child rights protection will enrich the experience of social workers. This training will lead to the acquisition of knowledge and certificates which is one of the focus areas of Bourdieu's theory. The Department of Social Welfare according to this theory must ensure that its employees especially those in the child protection unit are properly trained to adequately protect the rights of children. Bourdieu (1977) also talked about degrees and class in his work. These are essential especially for the managerial class. The Department of Social Welfare can have the needed capacity with well experienced and knowledgeable professionals but if the managerial class does not have the requisite qualifications and experience to ensure that child maintenance cases are handled in line with the laid down procedures, the knowledge and competence acquired will not yield the desired results. The managerial class must work hard to promote and protect the interest of children as hard work has been portrayed as a form of cultural capital (Pierre Bourdieu, 1977).

The theory of cultural capital in this study addresses issues relating to the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare. Also, the systems approach to child protection could be used to address child rights protection matters in this study. Child protection issues have gained international recognition. In view of this, international bodies such as UNICEF, Save the Children and United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) introduced a more systematic approach to child rights protection. The systems theory approach to child protection introduced in 2009 is geared towards improving upon the traditional methods of dealing with specific child protection issues such as, streetism, child labour, child trafficking, among others. It focuses on a holistic approach to addressing children issues with emphasis on shared responsibilities. The traditional

approach according to the proponents of the systems theory was not yielding the desired results owing to inadequacies coupled with pockets of unmet desires of children. This approach to child rights protection often starts with a goal for actors within the system, have a common purpose and how the parts of the system function together must be understood by the actors involved.

A system is a collection of inter-linked components or parts that are organized around a common purpose or goal (Save the Children, 2009). Casey (2011) notes that, child protection system refers to a set of policies, regulations, laws and services required in the social sectors such as education, social welfare, justice and security as well as community and faith based organizations including private service providers. Narrowly, child protection system is defined by others as a set of steps for handling individual cases. The theory suggests that every given system for instance child protection system is rooted within other systems like foster care and case management. This implies that, child protection systems do not exist in isolation but partner other systems such as education and health to promote the well-being of children. Similarly, in systems approach to child protection the parts interrelate with the whole in a given setting.

In some socio-cultural settings, formal systems are not required owing to the vital roles played by the community members and extended family as well as parents offer protection to children based on informal mechanisms. On the contrary, well established structures are needed in other settings to organize the various players' assigned responsibilities within that structure. The literature provided indicates that, there are no defined mechanisms put in place across board to offer protection to children. The environment determines the type of system to use in protecting the rights of children.





Formal systems refer to the government, international organizations, faith based organizations, local non-governmental organizations, among others that are recognized and supervise by the government in providing child welfare services (Casey, 2011). Again, Casey (2011) refers to the informal systems in child rights protection as initiatives undertaken by communities, children themselves and the families. This theory is relevant to the problem under investigation because it recognizes the need for effective collaboration between and among the appropriate stakeholders to adequately address the needs of children. Thus, formal institutions such as the Department of Social Welfare, Department of Children, Commission on Human Rights and administrative Justice and Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service should collaborate with the informal institutions like the communities, families and children themselves to serve the best interest of the children as required by the Children's Act, Act 560), (1998), the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Child (UNCRC, 1989) and national Constitutions. Both formal and informal institutions have separate but shared responsibilities geared towards protecting the rights of children with the DSW playing a lead role. Also, the theory pointed out that, children issues such as maintenance /neglect, streetism, labour, rape, among others should not be handled separately but holistically to guarantee the needs of children.

2.4 INFORMAL INSTITUTIONS IN CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION IN PRE-COLONIAL GHANA

Children in the UWR and Ghana for that matter were protected by the family and traditional institutions during the pre-colonial era. It was a collective responsibility on the part of every family member to provide and care for the vulnerable, especially children (Adjetey, 2007). Lidzen (2008) affirms that, the first and oldest provider of



social welfare in Ghana is the family. Social welfare refers to a sense of human wellbeing that exists where “Social problems are managed or where human needs are met and when social opportunities are maximized” (Casey, 2011:5). In this work, social welfare is the means and ability to render services, especially to children either at the request of parents/guardians, community leaders or that of the Department of Social Welfare initiatives in fulfilment of its mandate. It was the primary responsibility of the families within the different ethnic groups across the country to provide for its members, irrespective of background and social status. Lidzen (2008:4) again established that, “The family has been an important provider of social welfare since historical times”. According to DuBois and Karla (2005:89) the term family, “Encompasses those constellations of two or more persons who regard their relationship as family and assume the responsibilities and obligations associated with family membership. Thus, a family may be a group of non-related people who, nonetheless, define themselves as a family because of their emotional bonds”. From a sociological perspective, the African Union (2004) defined the family as a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption characterized by a common residence constituting a household interacting and communicating with one another in their respective social roles and maintaining a common culture. In this study, a family refers to a group of people in a common location, championing a common agenda for mutual benefits.

Oduro (2010) indicates that, public sector protection mechanisms were non-existent in providing the needed support to family members especially children in difficult situations and that; the family was an important institution for informal social protection. Children were also protected through the use of other extended family system structures such as



foster parents and guardians. Nukunya (2003) and Assimeng (1999) pointed out that, the extended family may be any grouping broader than the nuclear family which is related by decent, marriage or adoption. In this study, it refers to parents and their children as well as their great grand children including other traceable paternal and maternal relations from a common origin. Their security was guaranteed under these care givers, foster parents and guardians (Kuyini, Alhassan, Tollerud, weld, Haruna, 2009). Extended families often play an influential role in children's lives and are actively involved in their care and socialization (MOWAC, 2009; Casey, 2011). Avendal (2011:2) points out that, “In the pre-colonial era, children issues were matters for the extended family members and the traditional authorities”. The traditional system based on kinship, was the foundation upon which every individual member of the family, especially the children relied on for their upkeep. Studies and experience has shown that, “The family is the core unit of society and the major source of development of children. It provides nurturance, emotional bonding and socialization to the child. An enriching and nurturing family life is essential in the development of the child's potential and personality. The family structure, composition, practice, interactions, relationships and environment all contribute to the child's development” (Nilima, 2008:4). The family was an important medium for the provision of social assistance and insurance. Some of the protective measures were, having a child reside in the household of another family in order to pursue formal education as well as the payment of the school fees of such a child (Oduro, 2010). The scholarly literature presents many definitions of a child. The UNCRC (1989) defined a child as persons under age of 18 years and has the same meaning for people in all parts of the world. It takes into consideration the different cultural, social, economic and political

realities of individual states. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) defines a child as under the age of 18 years. In this study however, persons between the ages of 8-18 falls within the categories of children required and can be selected as sample units.

The kinship foster care services provided children was based on values such as altruism, reciprocity and the fear of punishment from the dead. According to Stroup (2007), child welfare services can be categorised into three main areas; institutional care, foster homes care of children, and the care for children in their own homes through various community services. Nukunya (2003) observed that, it was possible for the extended families to provide for majority of its people owing to the arrangements of the settlements pattern. Families were residing in compound houses, especially in the most deprived communities which made it much easier to provide for every member of the family.

Inspite of this, the family as an institution lost some of its capacity to provide for the upkeep of children owing to the general breakdown of the extended family system, single parenthood, irresponsible parenting, rural urban income disparities, emergence of modern cities, and technology, among other factors (Beanchemin, 1999; Boakye-Boateng, 2006).

"The breakdown of the extended family system is usually as the result of rural urban migration, rapid economic advancement and the adoption of foreign cultures. This has further implications since most of the children whose parents are dead do not have proper care in the best scenarios, and may turn to crime in order to survive"(Adjetey, 2007:9).

The era of colonialism witnessed the establishment of modern cities and industries especially in urban areas. The abled bodied persons migrated into these centres in search of jobs leaving their families at home to fend for themselves (Frimpong-Manso, 2014).





Bjorck (2013) notes that, when Ghana was colonized by the British, they introduced systems of social welfare from their own perspectives instead of strengthening the already existing traditional social structures that were already in place. Bjorck (2013) and Kreitzer et al (2009) observed that, one of the consequences of colonialism was its contributions to the breakdown of traditional family institutions and the individualism of the family led a diminished communal society. This weakened the leadership of the family and traditional institutions (Agyman-Duah, 2008). Boakye-Boateng (2006:41) posits that, “Occupational patterns of the new political economy could not sustain the subsistence agricultural practices of the traditional African societies and diminished the relevance of the extended family system which provided support and protection for children”. Similarly, Kopoka (2000) notes that, it is poverty that is causing families to breakup with parents being unable to support their children, poverty and the gradual disintegration of the traditional family network system have contributed negatively to the development of the child. According to Addison (2012) protection entails protecting children from all forms of abuse, harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting, exploitation, discrimination and any other thing considered to be an encroachment on their basic human rights. For the purpose of this work, protection is the ability of social workers to guide against certain harmful practices such as child exploitation, neglect, abuse and violence for the total well-being of children irrespective of location and status of parents or care givers. Thus, this study seeks to assess the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare in child rights protection in the Upper West Region.



Awumbila and Ardayfio- Schandorf (2008) points out that, 80% of the population in the three regions of the North is poor while almost 70% is extremely poor, thus impacting negatively on child maintenance in the UWR. Research literature shows that, the UWR is the poorest of the 10 regions in the country, Ghana with poverty level of 88% and lags behind others as revealed by successive surveys of the Ghana Statistical Services and other relevant sources. Again, it has an average annual per capita income of less than Ghc 130.00 which falls below the national annual average figure of Ghc 397.00 (GSS, 2007; Garba, 2013). Boon and Ahenkan (2008) revealed that, eight out of 10 people in the UWR are poor by the income measure of poverty. This necessitates social work with groups, communities, families, institutions and individuals aimed at improving upon their total well-being.

Social work in Africa can be said to be one of the products of colonialism. The result of this was the introduction of formal education, establishment of industries, Christianity, urbanization, general breakdown of the extended family system and above all social change. These factors created new problems which could not be easily addressed by the traditional institutions. Some of the problems created by the social change include juvenile delinquency, single parenting, child neglect and abandonment. The introduction of industrialization coupled with urbanization eroded most of the cultural values in Africa and a complete breakdown of the extended family system as well as weak traditional leadership (Frimpong-Manso, 2014; Kreitzer et al, 2009). Stuckenbruck (2013:10) argues that, “Rapid urbanization in Africa is creating new challenges for families, who are often faced with limited support structures and services to help care for their children. Such pressures contribute to child abandonment, exploitation and abuse, with many

children being pushed out of their homes in search of a better living”. Added to this, Nukunya (2003) observed that, new and numerous social issues took centre of the day as people were no longer guided by traditional ethics and feared to be sanctioned by the traditional authorities. Some of the mechanisms put in place by the colonial authorities were the introduction of the British welfare system with formal institutions to help address the problems that colonialism had caused (Avenida, 2011).

This study stands to benefit from the works of scholars on the informal child rights protection institutions in pre-colonial Ghana as their strengths and weaknesses will provide a guide for the discussions on the topic under investigation. Useful lessons are learnt from the operations of the informal welfare institutions which can be improved upon and chart a way forward. However, it is clear from the literature that, the structures of the early child rights protection institutions were weak to the extent that they could not cope with challenging situations. If there were effective collaboration among them, appropriate mechanisms and through team work could have re-positioned them to serve the interest of children. Child rights protection issues did not end here as more approaches continue to exist. This calls for the establishment of formal institutions, to partner each other in the maintenance of children, and makes this study relevant.

2.5 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE EARLY SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTIONS

DuBois & Miley (2013) revealed that, the concern and care for the poor, persons with disabilities, mentally disturbed, the vulnerable population and especially children in almshouses, asylums and reformatories first started in Britain and in the United States of America. The indiscriminate almshouse in the earlier days was a popular means of providing care for children with other more specialized institutions such as the orphan



asylums doing same. “Sometimes the almshouses were organized for specific types of distressed persons such as children, the aged, the poor and sick” (Stroup, 2007:34). This activity was primarily in the hands of the Roman Catholic and protestant Churches. Stroup (2007) notes that the beginning of the eighteenth century witnessed a rapid development of institutional care by both the Protestants and Catholic religious bodies with other fraternal bodies also contributing their quota to the establishment of child care institutions which were not different from those created by the churches.

Avendal (2011) posits that, professional social work begun in the western world alongside industrialization during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Baffoe & Dako-Gyeke (2013) observed that, in Europe and North America, social work emerged as a helping profession in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which led to the introduction of institutions such as the courts; protection and correctional homes were some of the measures that ensured that child welfare services and social services provisioning in general were carried out based on the institutional requirements. During this period, one of the most popular institutional cares for children was the indenture system where children were farmed out to responsible adults who needed their services most as labourers both at homes and farms and who were willing to reward them financially for their efforts. Indenture was a contractual arrangement of placing dependent children with families” for purposes of better care and protection (Stroup, 2007; DuBois & Mileys, 2013). The expansion of social welfare activities was made possible through the activities of the Red Cross Society, an enhanced form of Charity Organization Society (COS) and the settlement house movement (DuBois, 2005; Dan & Amra, 2013).





The COS is credited with the social theory for the position that it holds with regard to the dispensing of relief to the needy in society. It ensures that, structures were well established to regulate charity works and prevent overlapping and unhealthy competition among institutions that are into social services provisioning. Dan & Amra (2013:37) indicate that, “Charity was to be the first port of call for people in need with the poor law and its institutions functioning as a general safety net beneath the charitable institutions.” They argued further that, the basis of this was to encourage the application of scientific methods to investigate into the circumstances of certain individuals and families who applied for relief services. In 1601 the Elizabethan poor Law in England made provisions for the three protective services that were available to children. The first mechanism was that, if a child was not supported by his parents, he could be given over to a townsman who would employ him as an apprentice, providing him with protection and work. The second mechanism was that, the child could be left at his own home and given work materials by a townsman in order to augment the family income. If none of these measures were not available or suitable the child might be placed in an almshouse for the necessary care to be provided by the state with support from the church and other bodies (Stroup, 2007; DuBois & Mileys, 2013). Gowan (2014) notes that, the COS which was established in 1877 made some contributions to child welfare services and the provisioning of other social services. It was founded to coordinate relief dispensing activities and to rationalize charity. Individuals were perceived by the founders to be entirely responsible for their conditions and that the continuous taking of relief will go a long way to worsen the plight of the poor. Again, Gowan (2014) points out that the society was not in support of monetary giving and public institutions involvement in the

delivery of welfare services to children and similar others. In other words, state institutions responsible for child welfare services were excluded in children affairs. The literature did not point to a specific reason for the non-inclusion of the state institutions in children matters at the time.

The settlement house movement which is a community oriented organizational approach to social work was also introduced in the 1880s by Canon Barnett (DuBois & Miley, 2013). They revealed that, the settlement house movement shared a number of common features with the COS such as the suspicion of the public institutions in child welfare services. Its focus is on the environment as well as the individual factors with emphasis on empirical investigation of the individual social conditions. Their services are developmental in nature which places emphasis on scientific methods. For instance, day care centres, family life education, among others, were some of the packages in place to enrich individuals and families to adequately provide for the maintenance of their children. In this study, child maintenance refers to the ability of parents to collectively provide for the up keep of children under their care. The COS and settlement house movement both valued the training and education of social workers to live up to the challenges of the day (Gowan, 2014), and in this study, the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare, a state child protection institution in the Upper West Region is being investigated.

Tracing the historical and institutional development of social welfare in the developed countries especially in Britain and in the United States of America is of great importance to this study. It revealed and placed emphasis on training and education of social workers, the operations of earlier social welfare institutions and the relevance of



institutions in addressing child maintenance cases. This study contends that, the training will equip them with skills and good attitudes to team up with the appropriate stakeholders to address child maintenance issues. Stakeholders may be defined as individuals, groups, or organizations that are affected by and /or have an interest in a particular issue (Boakye - Boateng, 2006). In this research, government institutions like the DSW, DOC, DOVVSU, CHRAJ and NGOs are part of the stakeholders. The arguments raised by the various scholars are commendable. In spite of this, the literature did not assign reasons for the suspicion of the state institutions in relief distribution to the under privileged. Perhaps, this could be attributed to limited capacity, inadequate resources and many other reasons. Mention was not also made of the operational challenges faced by these movements and institutions so that useful lessons could be learnt in the practice of modern social work. It is impossible to rule out completely challenges in functional organizations, societies and institutions. This calls for further studies to assess the capacity of state institutions such as the DSW in Ghana with oversight responsibilities of protecting the rights of children particularly in the UWR.



2.6 THE RELEVANCE AND COMPLEMENTARY ROLES OF INSTITUTIONS IN CHILD MAINTENANCE

Adjetey (2007) posits that, in the past formal institutions were not recognized and did not matter much in child rights protection in Ghana owing to the well-established extended family system ties and relatives who provided and took care of children especially the orphans. Adjetey (2007) again writes that, the gradual breakdown of the extended family system coupled with weak leadership lead to the setting up of organized child welfare institutions across the country to address the numerous child related maintenance cases and to complement the broken down traditional systems so as to ensure that children do

not become a burden to society. According to Casey (2011), child rights are the fundamental human rights and freedoms of all persons below the age of 18 years. Agyekumhene (2012) indicates that, they are the fundamental freedoms and the inherent rights of all human beings below the age of 18. These rights include life, dignity, respect, health, education and shelter. In this study, it refers to child maintenance, that is, those basic requirements provided by the State and other stakeholders especially the parents which enable the child to grow, have full participation and to live a meaningful life.

Research literature has shown that, the European missionaries are credited with the establishment of children's homes in Ghana as a mechanism of caring and providing for children that were abandoned, orphaned and where cultural constraints did not allow certain categories of children to be cared for within the traditional family system (Kristiansen, 2009). “The Department of Social Welfare hand book revealed that, institutions were not known in Ghana until the arrival of the missionaries. These missionaries thought it best to contribute to child's development by adopting the category of children especially orphans who were denied the opportunity to be raised by their traditional families owing to cultural barriers” (Adjetey,2007:1).

Similar available research literature shows that, institutions have helped to curb socio economic problems and added value to the upbringing of children across the globe. Also, the establishment of new communities as a result of modernization and urbanization further disintegrated the families as most men abandoned their families in search of non-existence white collar jobs in the urban centres and ended up contracting causal relationship with other women. Many children were born out of such causal relationships with no proper care, thus the absence of care for such children further underscores the



need for the establishment of institutions (DSW, 2005). Adjetey (2007) notes that, Ghana's 2010 Population and Housing Census data revealed a youthful population which has a high potential for rapid growth as well as high dependency burdens which calls for the establishment of institutions to complement the efforts of families.

The DSW (2005) revealed some early institutions that were established to provide care for children that included the Osu children's home which was set up in 1953 by a non-governmental organization, the children society. After that, many more child welfare institutions such as children's homes and orphanages, private and public sprang up in various parts of the country. The DSW estimated that, there exist an estimated number of 148 children's homes across the country that is providing services to children who are in distress situations. These homes are run by NGOs, private persons and institutions but monitored by the DSW (Colburn, 2010; Voyk, 2011). Other social welfare institutions that offer protection to children are the junior and senior correctional centres. Their existence is backed by an act of parliament, the Juvenile Justice Act, 2003 (Act, 653). Part iii, section 39-41 states that, the Ministry responsible for social welfare and the DSW for that matter may establish junior correctional centres, formerly called industrial schools, to detain juveniles whose actions are in conflict with the law and senior centres, formerly called borstal institutions, where young and juvenile offenders may be detained upon a court order. Again, the Act mandates the DSW to establish remand homes where juveniles and young persons may temporarily be kept in custody in accordance with the order of a court. The Juvenile Justice Act, Act 653 (2003) defines a Juvenile as a person under 18 years who is in conflict with the law. In this study, a Juvenile is a child whose behaviour runs contrary to the laid down rules and regulations of the land and is put



before the appropriate law enforcement agencies. These institutions according to some scholars guaranteed the safety of the child. The Act further mandates the DSW to relocate children who are committed to the care of fit person to correctional Centres (Juvenile Justice Act, 2003, Act 653). Adjetey (2007:5) points out that, “There were alternative institutions which included the extended family system house, the chief's palace and the society which in fact are not well organized institutions, but the culture and society created their own way of protecting its citizens, especially children”.

The Department of Children, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice as well as the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service are some of the formal institutions that collaborate with the DSW to protect the rights of children. The Commission on Human Rights has mandate to protect fundamental human rights and freedoms, especially those recognized under Ghana's 1992 Constitution, which includes civil and political rights, social, cultural and economic rights as well as other international human rights instruments which Ghana has ratified, this includes the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights of the Child, among others. The Commission's mandate is clearly spelt out in Article 218 of the Constitution and the CHRAJ Act, 1993 (Act 456).

The Commission, like any other state child protection institution, has challenges that affect its operations. The key ones include; poor funding, delays in releasing budgeted funds, poor conditions of service which have also brought about a high rate of staff turnover especially in the professional class, poor infrastructural and logistical supports (CHRAJ, 2010). Similarly, Agyekumhene (2012) posits that, the negative performance of CHRAJ many a time can be attributed to undue delays in the release of approved



budgets by the central government, inadequate staff owing to staff turnover, coupled with poor working conditions of service, thus qualified and competent technocrats are not attracted to the institution

One other institution that complements the DSW to protect the rights of children in Ghana is the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service. Domestic violence is a worldwide phenomenon that has drawn the attention of well-meaning citizens, states and the international community. Ghana is not free from this global problem of widespread domestic violence meted out to children and women (Nancy & Vollendorf, 2010). In response to this, DOVVSU was established by an Act of Parliament, the Domestic Violence Act, 2007(Act 732) to handle home based violence that are meted out especially to children. Social workers from the DSW per the law that sets up DOVVSU are supposed to be stationed at every unit to ensure that, the principles underlying the practice of professional social work such as confidentiality, individualism, self-determination, acceptance, among other principles are strictly adhered to, particularly in cases involving children (DSW,2015). However, the location of the unit in the police department attracted lots of comments from some scholars. Baffoe (2005) and Osei-Hwedie (2011) revealed that, the unit approached social issues from a criminal and policing point of view which create doubts as regards their abilities to handle sensitive cases involving children. Studies have shown that, there are no standardized certificate – based training courses on child rights protection for welfare officers, probation officers and the police (Casey, 2011). Besides, the unit does not have adequate personnel, financial and other logistics to reach out to other districts and communities in the region for sensitization exercise on the domestic violence Act and other related issues on





domestic violence. The current staff strength of the unit in the Upper West Region stands at 16 with general police in other parts of the region and beyond who have limited knowledge on the functions of DOVVSU and the Domestic Violence Act, but are compelled under the circumstance to handle cases that are domestic in nature (DOVVSU, 2015). Nancy & Vollendorf (2010:36) posits that, “Inadequate resources in the primary agencies responsible for addressing domestic violence hinders the Ghanaian government’s response, DOVVSU, the CHRAJ, the DSW are underfunded and overworked”. Nancy & Vollendorf (2010) documented that, many a Ghanaian holds the view that, cases that are domestic in nature are private, purely family matters that should be addressed locally without necessarily resorting to the criminal justice system which has the potential to disintegrating local and community structures.

Besides, the DOC which previously was Ghana National Commission of Children (GNCC) established under the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) Decree 66 as the principal government agency in 1979 with the sole responsibility of advocating for the survival, protection and development of the child partners the DSW to serve the best interest of the child. Kuyini et al (2009:20) revealed that, “The current state of the Department of Children does not show it is capacitated to provide any meaningful addition to the enormity of cases needing attention, thus the inadequate staff numbers and skill training imply that the Department is not able to work effectively on all cases of children”.

The DSW (2005) observed that, the design of most of these institutions does not satisfy their basic objectives, most of them are found in the urban areas to the disadvantage of the rest of the country, especially in the deprived communities where majority of children



are denied their services. According to Adjetey (2007), the absence of a workable national policy governing the setting up of institutions especially the non-statutory ones to serve the best interest of the child has contributed tremendously to NGOs putting up facilities which in no way contributed to the advancement of the children. Adjetey (2007) further notes that, the DSW only plays a regulatory role with a set of guidelines. Kreitzer et al (2009) and Avendal (2011) blamed the poor state of the Ghana Association of Social Workers (GASOW) and their inability to fashion out alternative policies that will commit all child welfare institutions under the DSW to operate within their limits for sanity to prevail. A study conducted by the DSW in 2007 to ascertain the quality of care givers at the 148 children's homes revealed that, only five of them out of the total figure are certified by the DSW. The rest did not comply with the requirements and standards set out by the Department. It is also on record that, those recognized by the Department have cases involving child neglect and abuse (Kreitiansen, 2009; Voyk, 2011). Child abuse is the physical or psychological maltreatment of a child by his or her parents/guardians or other adults (Agyekuhene, 2012). The huge numbers of unregistered numbers of children homes is inconsistent with the Juvenile Justice Act, 2003(Act 653). It states that, “A court shall not designate the manager of a children's home as a fit person to whom the care of a juvenile is to be committed unless the home is one which the ministry responsible for social welfare upon the recommendation of the DSW has given approval and by practice published in the gazette”. Again, Osei (2013) further argued that, the proliferation of the many unregistered social welfare institutions contributes to the breakdown of the time tested and cherished extended family system and that, children in these institutions do not understand their fundamental human rights even if they are

infringed upon. It is on record that, an estimated 2million children worldwide were living in residential child welfare institutions, 160,000 of them in Sub Saharan Africa including Ghana, even though it is acknowledged that, the figures are significantly underestimated (Stuckenbruck,2013).

This work seeks to investigate the complementary roles of the institutions that are involved in addressing issues relating to children matters as one of its objectives. The literature provided will serve as a guide to the researcher particularly in areas of agreements and disagreement by scholars on the subject. Some scholars views on the complementary roles of the state child rights protection is inconsistent with these expressed. Delap (2013) notes that, the lack of close collaboration and coordination between and among the actors in the child protection sector leads to unhealthy competition and duplication of the state's meager resources. Available literature revealed that, numerous state agencies and non-governmental organizations are deeply involved in child rights protection; however, these agencies and bodies tend to act independently with no overarching communication strategy and team work. This has resulted in duplication and waste of scarce resources as they are basically engaged in same activities (Casey, 2011). Also, studies have shown that, the task of the DSW and social workers for that matter involves helping to improve, sustain and restore the social functioning of families, groups, communities, societies, individuals, among others, either at the request of the clients or the Department reaching out to them as part of its mandate. This enormous task cannot be adequately accomplished without the involvement of the appropriate stakeholders (Bernstein, 1995; Baffoe & Dako-Gyeke, 2013). Baffoe & Dako-Gyeke (2013) again revealed that, the lack of close collaboration between the DSW and other



organizations that are providing similar services to the vulnerable population such as children at the national and community level is one of the major constraints that negatively affect its performance owing to ineffective communication strategy. This calls for a thorough examination of the DSW ability to coordinate and implement the child maintenance order.

2.7 THE CAPACITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE TO ENFORCE CHILD MAINTENANCE ORDER

The DSW is the Government statutory Agency that has the mandate to protect children of all categories and to regulate the operations of children's homes and day care centres in the country, Ghana (Children's Act, 1998). In Ghana and in the Upper West Region, the government is the largest single provider of social welfare services through the Department of Social Welfare. The DSW is responsible for providing welfare services especially those that are funded by the State. Its services are across board with extra concentration on children owing to their vulnerability (Lidzen, 2008). Appiah (2007) posits that, section 19(3) of the Children's Act gives the DSW the mandate to remove a child in need of care and protection to a place of safety irrespective of the status of that child whether a Ghanaian or a refugee. A place of safety includes the various children's homes and managed by the DSW or recognized private children's homes or to the home of a fit person in the locality or fosterage within the family. As Casey (2011) has noted, its general mandate includes research, policy formulation, social welfare services, advocacy, capacity building and quality assurance as well as licensing of social welfare services operated by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Casey (2011) notes that, the Department's mission is to work in partnership with people in their communities, districts, among others to improve upon their social well-being through promoting





development with equity for the vulnerable population such as children and women, the disadvantaged and the excluded. In other words, Its mission is to promote the delivery of social development services to the vulnerable and excluded individuals, groups and communities in partnership with other stakeholders through its three core programmes, namely; the promotion and protection of the rights of children, justice administration of children related issues and community care. All programmes are organized in line with these headings with child promotion and protection cutting across the others (DSW Annual Performance Report, Upper West Region, 2010). Child rights protection and promotion as one of the units in the DSW is responsible for taking delivering and providing for abandoned children, monitoring and supervising children's homes, registering and monitoring of day care centres to ensure that, they comply with safety standards set up by the DSW. This is to ensure that, the rights and freedom of the Ghanaian child are well protected.

Studies have shown that, the DSW has the primary responsibility for implementing child welfare services and the responsibility of social workers to deliver services especially on child maintenance in the communities, districts, regions and across the country (Frimpong-Manso, 2014). Casey (2011:8) revealed that, "The primary responsibility for the delivering of child and family welfare services rests with the Department of Social Welfare". Also, the DSW assumed responsibility for the reformatory and industrial schools for juvenile delinquents with the aim of inculcating in them the need to lead an honest and industrious life as indicated by Frimpong-Manso (2014). Available literature revealed that, the DSW has not been able to realize this role of delivering child welfare services and the handling of child maintenance cases across the country owing to lack of

manpower; some districts especially those in the deprived areas have no social workers to perform this role and the few social workers who are working at the DSW do not enrich their knowledge through training (Frimpong-Manso, 2014). The government agencies responsible for the implementation of the policies often cite staffing and lack of resources as reasons for its abysmal failure. The DSW and children have failed to harness the necessary resources for the protection of the child (Nanguo, 2010).

The limited capacity of the DSW demonstrated by some scholars as above created an avenue for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to take undue advantage of the situation mostly for profit motives and personal gains. “Society's obligation in protecting one of its most vulnerable people was neglected, with the vacuum filled by ill-equipped non- governmental organizations, who lack the basic understanding of the circumstances of the children” (Baffoe & Dako-Gyeke, 2013:357). “In spite of the fact that, the DSW is responsible for registering and monitoring NGOs to ensure that money is used where it is most needed, the poor financial situation of the Department means that the surveillance is inadequate” (Laird, 2008:26).

The DSW is the institution in charge of correctional facilities in Ghana and the effectiveness of the Children's Act is to an extent dependent on the operations of it (Osei, 2013). Social workers are governed by the Department and have legislative obligations which include; the protection and promotion of the rights of children, justice and administration of child related issues and community care especially for persons with disabilities (PWDs) and the disadvantaged in society. This means that, social workers working in the DSW have legislated legitimacy to accomplish these different task by ensuring that, the rights of the child are guaranteed (Bjorck, 2013; UNICEF, 2004;



Kristiansen, 2009). The DSW is the lead institution mandated to handle children issues with the others playing complementary roles. Kuyini (2012) notes that, although the DSW and DOC are the lead agencies in case management involving children, they collaborate with other state agencies such as DOVVSU, CHRAJ and other stakeholders to ensure sustained maintenance of children. Research literature shows that, formal systems have limited capacity in handling child maintenance cases and are also limited in reaching outside the district capitals to sensitize individuals, groups and especially on issues regarding child maintenance owing to inadequate personnel and transport (Casey, 2011). Capacity here implies having the means and ability to carry out a mandate. In the context of this research, it refers to the human resource/manpower, programmes, training and experience to accomplish a mission. Casey (2011) notes that, the distribution of key child rights protection agencies, especially welfare and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service, is woefully inadequate to effectively carry out their mandate. These agencies according to Casey (2011) lack basic resources such as manpower, office equipment and vehicles.



The DSW in collaboration with United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Orphan Aid Africa, a U.S based NGO launched the Care Reform Initiative (CRI) with a view to changing the policy and provisions of child welfare services. The initiative is also to enhance the capacity of the DSW in encouraging family and community based care as it is considered a more sustainable approach to child welfare (DSW, 2006). The implementation of the CRI was not without challenges, the most prominent of them being lack of resources. The DSW does not have the personnel, logistics and funds to carry out its mandate under the

reforms (Aryeetey et al, 2012). “Ghana has just over 800 social workers for the entire country; the prospect of care givers being supported by after care social workers seems very unlikely” (Frimpong-Manso, 2012:416). Laird (2011) notes that, the Children's Maintenance Act (Act 297) was passed in 1965 to deal with paternity and maintenance issues. The Act established that fathers and their successors were legally responsible for providing fixed child support. However, social welfare workers found it tough enforcing child support because of lack of experience and training to enable them access incomes of informal sector employees (Laird, 2011).

2.8 GENDER DIMENSION AND CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION

Article 5 of the CRC states that, both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child and in the absence of the parents such a responsibility may be passed on to the members of the extended family to provide for the maintenance of the children. “A child's survival on earth depends on the parent first then by the immediate society next. Thus the significant factor in a child's life is his/her family” (Karibeeran, 2011:65). Again, Article 27 of the CRC suggests that, childhood is entitled to special care and assistance and that every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for his /her spiritual, physical, social and moral development. Also, Article 28(a) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana reads that, every child is entitled to same measure of special care, assistance and maintenance as is necessary for its development from its natural parents ,except where those parents have effectively surrendered their rights and responsibilities in respect of the child in accordance with law (UNICEF,2000; Kangsangbata,2008). Similarly, Article 28(c) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana states that, parents undertake their natural right and obligation of care, maintenance and





upbringing of their children in co-operation with institutions as Parliament may, by law, prescribe in such manner that in all cases the interest of the children are paramount. Studies revealed that, the reality as regards child maintenance in Ghana is altogether different. Countless children on daily basis are denied the parental love; care and protection that they need most in order to grow to be meaningful adults (Kangsangbata, 2008). Again, Kangsangbata (2008:20) indicates that, “Women traditionally have been socialized to ensure the healthy maintenance of their children and other members of the family. In traditional Ghanaian society, high premium is placed on child bearing, upbringing and nurturing but these roles unfortunately are performed by women”. Available literature revealed that, lack of maintenance by parents is one of the biggest problems that many children face in Ghana, especially by fathers. Many fathers are letting their roles go thus over burdening the women who may not be in any gainful employment. Maintenance affects practically every right required for the survival and development of the child, notably the right to survival, life, moral, physical, among others (Wilson, 2008). Chauke and Khunou (2014) observed that, the absence of fathers in most families' across the globe and in Africa especially pose a serious challenge to child's development. Studies suggest that, about 52% of African children are not being adequately provided for owing to the absence of their parents, especially the fathers who abandoned these children and are in the cities in search of non- existing jobs. UNICEF (2012) and Stuckenbruck (2013) observed that, there were approximately 153million children living without one or both parents globally, of which more than 55million were found in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Ghana.



Many fathers either default or refuse to pay maintenance fees charged by the DSW or the family tribunal for their wives to access for the up keeps of the children. Such fathers seem not to understand the concept of childhood and their roles as fathers in bringing up a child of their own and an important asset for nation building. Women are therefore disadvantaged in claiming maintenance as they have to bear the cost of transport in vain, thus increasing the burden of providing for the children (DSW, 2015; Chauke and Khunou, 2014). Casey (2011) posits that, parental irresponsibility, fathers' failure to pay maintenance to cater for their own children and the general breakdown of the extended family system left many a child uncared for, thus increasing the vulnerability of children. The commonest cases recorded at the DSW by ranking were child maintenance, inadequate support for children's education, paternity issues, child custody and labour respectively. Refusal to pay for the maintenance of children was more pronounced in the urban districts whilst non- attendance to schools by the children top the list of cases recorded in the rural districts (Kuyini, 2009).

The Africa Union (2004) pointed out that, the kinship and extended family systems are common and play complementary roles in Africa but in recent times, there has been an increase in reported cases of female headed homes, grand –parent headed families and worse of all child headed families resulting from irresponsible parenting, conflicts, wars and the HIV/AIDs pandemic. The Africa Union (2004:3) again revealed that, women in Africa and across the globe play key roles in the upbringing of their children as, “It is the women who raise the children, work on the land and produce the food, provide the care and support for all the family. However, women continue to face obstacles and barriers including discrimination and lack of opportunity making them more vulnerable within the



family”. CHRAJ (2010) revealed that, more than 80% of child maintenance cases that were reported to the Commission from 2006-2010 were from the biological mothers of the children whose fathers refused to provide for the up keep of their own children. “Children are an important asset for any nation. In the human life span, the childhood period is considered most significant, since it is the foundation period for life. At this time many behaviour patterns, many attitudes and many patterns of emotional expression are being established” (Karibeeran, 2011:59). Karibeeran (2011) further documented that, it is universally assumed and accepted that mothers have more care and affection than the fathers and their role as regards the growth and development of children with love and proper care is crucial. Brown (2004) notes that, the importance of children in every society is their fundamental role as future insurance for their families, they are expected to cater for their families when they grow older. Added to this, Frimpong-Manso (2014) revealed that, children are regarded the custodians of the future and are counted the most valuable possessions of an individual and that one’s status in a society was judged according to the assumed responsibilities for relatives, especially children. The culture of a people would have been lost if there were no children to replace the older population (Kangsangbata, 2008). Boakye- Boateng (2006) observed that, children were considered prestigious to the family as it symbolized a blessing from God. Also children were thought to have brought stability to the family and for their sake, many families were brought together and parents considered divorce as a disservice to the growth of the child. Nilima (2008:1) notes that, “Children constitute the most vulnerable section of society and are considered a supremely important asset of nations”.



Meyer (2006) notes that, about one million children in the United States have had their parents' divorce making life very unbearable for them. In addition, one third of all children are born to parents who are not married and are not living together. The literature discussed points to the fact that, women are somewhat responsible as far as the maintenance of their children is concerned as compared to most of the men who as indicated in the write up often default or refused to provide for the maintenance of their children. Such parents/guardians actions and conduct runs contrary to some requirements of the Children's Act, Act 560 (1998). Portions of the Act states that, "All parents and other persons who are legally responsible to maintain a child is under an obligation to supply the requirements of life, education, health and reasonable shelter" (Kuyini, 2009:4).

Indeed, there are some research gaps in the literature that shows the relevance of the topic under consideration: Child rights protection: An assessment of the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare. Kuyini (2012) notes that, the Departments of Social Welfare and Children are the lead agencies in the management of children issues in partnership with some state institutions such as the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service, among others ensures the maintenance of children in a sustainable manner. Mention was not made of their capacity to handle these issues in a more professional way. This research seeks to find answers to address the capacity of these child protective units in the management of child welfare services. Other research gaps identified in the literature which this work seeks to address include; the lack of training and experience of social workers to enable them access incomes of informal sector employees for child

maintenance, manpower/human resource base of the DSW and the programmes that are in place to adequately address child welfare issues in the Upper West Region.



CHAPTER THREE

3.0 PROFILE/ RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 PROFILE OF THE UPPER WEST REGION

The UWR is the youngest and one of the 10 administrative regions in Ghana with 11 administrative districts and constituencies. The administrative districts include; Wa Municipality, Wa East, Wa West, Jirapa, Nadowli, Lawra, Nandom, Sissala East, Sissala West, Lambussie and Daffiama Busie Issa districts. It covers a geographical area of approximately 18,478 square kilometres representing 12.7 percent of Ghana's total land area. The region is bordered on the North by the Republic of Burkina Faso, on the East by Upper East Region, on the South by Northern Region and in the West by Cote d'Ivoire (Garba, 2013). Again, Garba (2013:1) indicates that, the UWR like the other regions in the north is located in Ghana's Savannah zone where poverty is endemic than the rest of Ghana's ecological zones which earns it the title as the poorest region in the country. "Poverty levels are higher in the three savannah regions of the north, ranging between 69% and keep rising steadily".

The region is characterized by a single rainfall and with an annual total average record of 75-115cm of rain. Notwithstanding the pattern of rainfall, the economic base of the region dwells on agriculture with more than 80% of the population depending on farming for their livelihood (Garba, 2013). Nanguo (2010:15) indicates that, "The economy of the Upper West Region is largely agrarian with an estimated 86 percent of the population engaged in agricultural production as a source of livelihood. However, agriculture in the region is beset with erratic rainfall which leads to poor yields of crops. This goes to worsen the poverty situation of the people as 88 percent of the population is poor". Wa is the largest city and capital of the region. Some of the major settlements include Nandom,



Daffiama, Nadowli, Jirapa, Lawra, Tumu, Funsu, Issa, Wechiau, Gbolu and Wellembele. The Wa Municipality, Wa East and Jirapa districts in the regional context is captured in figure 3.2.

FIGURE 3.2: MAP OF THE UPPER WEST REGION SHOWING THE WA MUNICIPALITY, JIRAPA AND WA EAST DISTRICTS AREAS



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- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------|
| ⊙ Regional Capital | — Regional Boundary | — River |
| — District Boundary | • District Capital | — Road |

Adopted and modified from Atuoye, 2015

The 2010 Ghana's Housing and Population Census data placed the population at 24, 658, 823, out of which 15,208,425 representing 61.7% are children. The Population of the

UWR stands at 702, 110, out of which 409,412 are also children representing 58.3%. This implies that, more than half of the population are children whose rights must be protected. The activities of some parents/ guardians and certain individuals exposed children to risks, thus making them more vulnerable. For instance, DOVVSU in the UWR recorded 204 child maintenance cases from 2008-2012 (DOVVSU, UWR, 2015). The number of child maintenance and other sexual exploitation against children that are officially reported to DOVVSU of the Ghana Police Service from the homes increased from 1,128 in 2002 to over 1,600 in 2009 (Casey,2011).

This study is about human resources and institutions to ensure the maintenance of children in the Upper West Region. Discussing this aspect of the profile of the study area is relevant to the topic under investigation as it exposed the poverty situation in the Upper West Region which has a direct impact on the maintenance of children. This will require an engagement with parents/guardians by the DSW not to neglect the maintenance of their children on grounds of poverty but to devote the little resources at their disposal for the upkeep of the children. The ability of the DSW to perform this task effectively will depend largely on a research of this nature.

A total of 4,768 child rights related cases over a period of five years, that is 2006-2010 were received and dealt with by the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice in the Upper West Region. It was further disclosed that, more than 80% of the cases received were brought to the Commission by the biological mothers of the children whose fathers refused to provide for their daily upkeep. A total number of 16,115 non-maintenance cases were recorded for the period, 3,268 of the cases in 2006, 3,317 in 2007, 3,309, 2,952 and 3,269 in 2008, 2009 and 2010 respectively. The 3,269 cases in



2010, 71 came from the UWR. Unlawful custody cases amounted to 2,911 for the period of five years. Out of this number, 643 were recorded in 2010 with 16 of them coming from the UWR. The others include; 614 in 2009, 583, 541 and 530 in 2006, 2007 and 2008 respectively. Deprivation of education cases in 2010 stands at 253 and in the case of the UWR, 13 of them were recorded (CHRAJ, 2010). This shows the pattern of child rights violations and abuses locally and nationally. In the case of the study region, the figures thrown out are significant owing to the concept of “Tijabunyeni”. The fact that they see themselves as one people, most of the cases involving child rights violations and abuses are not reported to the appropriate institutions. Also, as indicated by DSW and DOVVSU officials, the cases that are not reported to them far outnumbered the reported ones but these cases cannot be traced because of lack of evidence. Nobody accordingly is prepared to come before them to testify in most of these cases. As Kristiansen (2009) puts it, even though the numbers of child rights abuses appeared to be few in the UWR as compared to other regions in Ghana and elsewhere, their rights are real which need to be protected, their lives are just as valuable and every one of them is worth the attention of the appropriate authorities and stakeholder. Here again, the literature provided is relevant to the topic under investigation. Parents are being reported by the mothers of their children for refusing to provide for the maintenance of their children. The ability of the DSW to implement the Children’s Act, Act 560 (1998) by ensuring that, such parents who are reported to the Department are made to pay the maintenance fees would have to be assessed and whether it has the means to engage the informal sector workers who have no regular source of income but are reported to the Department for refusing to provide for their children.



The Commission revealed that, child rights violation cases continuous to top the list of all cases on yearly basis. It granted interviews to 1,135 children below 18years in 112 communities out of which children in 93 communities knew the institutions that protect child rights; only 40% received some form of assistance from them. This contradicts section 47(1) of the Children’s Act which states that “A parent or any other person who is legally liable to maintain a child or contribute towards the maintenance of the child is under a duty to supply the necessaries of health, life, education and reasonable shelter for the child”. Clearly, children are quite unaware of the very institutions established by law to protect their rights and more than 50% of them receive no form of assistance from the child protection institutions. The DSW which is the state institution mandated by law to safeguard the rights of children in the Upper West Region require an investigation as regards its capacity in relation to child rights protection.

Bass (2004) posits that, the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Ghana and in Africa as well as in parts of the world has been one of the most influential factors that have affected children and childhood development. It is estimated that, 20 million of the deaths in Africa are AIDs related. These children were provided for by the extended families in the past but owing to formal education, urbanization, migration, among other factors weakened the informal kinship care and the leadership could no longer provide for everybody in the family. Ansah –Koi (2006:4) and Voyk (2011:21) observed that, “Ghanaians are struggling to meet the needs of their own children, leading them to more often than not reject taking on another child”. This led to the introduction of social work by the British colonists to address the problems that the extended family system could not solve owing to limited capacity (Kreitzer et al 2009).



The UNAID (2004) estimated that, there would be 25.4 million HIV patients in sub-Saharan Africa. These facts are indications of the increase of uncared for population in recent times. Similarly, Brou (2007) and UNICEF (2004) write that, owing to the high number of death resulting from HIV/AIDS and the civil war in neighboring Ivory Coast, the western part of Ghana, about 940,000 children under the age of 17 years have lost both parents. The younger extended family members who could have taken up such responsibilities have the tendency of starting their own family and may not be motivated to offer the necessary care and assistance to these orphan relatives of theirs.

In the educational front, research literature gives a picture of the enrolment figures of children and the teacher population at the basic level during the 2014/2015 academic year. Total enrolment figures at the kindergarten level stands at 58,006, comprising 28,295 and 29,111 girls with teacher population of 1,305 which consist of 561 trained and 744 untrained. At the primary level, the staff population stands at 4, 075 with the break down as follow; 2,166 trained and 1,909 untrained. At the Junior High level, a grand total of 48,947 are on roll, 24,940 boys and 23,977 girls with staff strength of 2,976. Out of this figure, 2,081 are professionals whilst the others numbering 895 are untrained (Ghana Education Service, UWR, 2015). The number of teachers at this level who are not professionals seems to pose a challenge to the child's right to education if adequate measures are not in place to monitor their performance. If this is not properly checked, the vulnerability of children might be worsening. During the 2012/2013 academic year, 10,019 candidates in the region sat for the basic education certificate examination (BECE). The literature revealed that, 739 of them who sat for the English language paper representing 7.4% performed above average, 5,974 representing 59.6%



performed averagely, 3,201 representing 31.9% performed below average whilst 105 representing 1.0% did not take part in the examination. Similarly, 786 of them representing 7.8% who sat for the integrated science performed above average, 5,508 representing 55.0% performed averagely whilst 3,621 representing 36.1% performed below average (GES, 2015). This may be a reflection of the high numbers of untrained teachers in the system. The implications of this for Child Rights Protection, especially on the right to quality education would not yield the desired results as these untrained teachers lack the basic teaching skills to apply the appropriate methodology in teaching. As a result of this, most of these children do not perform well at the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) to qualify them for further studies at the Senior High School.

Sabaa (2012) revealed that, there are an estimated 2.2 billion children in the world out of over 6 billion people of which 1.9 billion live in third world countries such as Ghana. The under 18 population is estimated at 340 million in sub-Saharan Africa, 153 million in the Middle East and North Africa, 585 million in south Asia, 594 million in Latin East Asia and Pacific, 197 million in Latin America and Caribbean and 108 million are in Eastern Europe and the commonwealth of independent states.

Delap (2013:3) notes that, “many girls and boys die each year because they are abused, neglected or exploited”. Bragg (2003) notes that, an estimated 3.3 to 10 million children a year are at risk for witnessing or being exposed to domestic violence, which can lead to a wide range of issues including psychological, behavioral and emotional disorders for children. This study seeks to find answers to addressing child maintenance cases in the UWR through the use of appropriate data collection tools.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is a qualitative inquiry and it employed a case study research design to address the problem under consideration. This approach which is commonly used by social science researchers has been defined by some scholars in diverse ways. Gall et al (2007:447) and Kusi (2012:5) laid emphasis on the features of a case study in their definition. To these scholars, a case study involved “The in-depth study of one or more instances of a phenomenon in its real life context that reflects the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon”. Punch (2005:144) and Kusi (2012) posits that, “The case study aims to understand the case in-depth and in its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its context. It also has a holistic focus, aiming to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case”. According to Kumekpor (2002) and Donkor (2011) a case study is a systematic way of in-depth collection of information or investigating the circumstances of a person, a group, a community, an institution or an incident. Though there are variations in these definitions, one outstanding factor that stands out clearly is the interaction with the participants in their socio- cultural setting.

There are a number of strengths that are associated with the case study approach. It involves the use of numerous approaches to obtain the data from the participants in the field which can easily be validated through triangulation (Kusi, 2012; Denscombe, 2003; Yin, 2003). As Cohen et al. (2000) and Kusi (2012) have noted, it is action oriented and therefore the results are suitable for improving practice. Also, it is able to capture and discover the difficulty of phenomenon for a better understanding. It is extremely difficult to do this with survey studies as volumes of data are gathered about a phenomenon for generalization purposes (Kusi, 2012; Denscombe, 2003). Notwithstanding the strengths of the approach, there are some critics, who argued that, the results of case studies just



like any other qualitative studies are difficult to generalize owing to concentration on a few instances of a phenomenon and the engagement of a relatively small population. Also, the approach entails a long stay in the socio-cultural setting of the participants for the data collection which may pose a challenge in negotiation access to the place to obtain the data (Kusi, 2012). Added to this, Denscombe (2008:46) and Kusi (2012:7) noted that “The boundaries of the case can prove difficult to define in an absolute and clear-cut fashion”.

This study entails a personal and professional engagement with the children, and other stakeholders such as some officials of the DSW, CHRAJ, DOC and DOVVSU. This calls for a qualitative methodological approach in finding answers to the research questions. It is important to note that, qualitative research is based upon a premise that there is no single measurable concrete truth, but multiple social dimensions that emerge from complex social interactions (Patton, 2002). In a qualitative methodology, knowledge is something that is constructed in the interaction between the researcher and the informant. In this approach, there is a subjective understanding of knowledge (Limb & Dwyer, 2001), where the aim is to gain a full understanding of the theme. This entails the uncovering of participants personal feelings, perceptions and thoughts (Kristiansen, 2009). Barker & Edwards (2012:8) note that, “Qualitative researchers generally study many fewer people, but delve more deeply into those individuals, settings, sub cultures and scenes, hoping to generate a subjective understanding of how and why people reflect, perceive,role-take,interpret and interact”.

The methodology presents the approach and specific techniques geared towards addressing the objectives of the study. Creswell (1998) writes that, qualitative research



methodology or design is an umbrella term encompassing many approaches including action research, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative research and case study. This methodological approach is linked to the interpretative paradigm which puts out the argument that, researchers' understanding of the social world can be deepened when they make an effort to understand it from the perspectives of the people being studied rather than explaining their behaviour through cause and effect (Weber, 1949; Henn et al., 2006; Agyekumhene,2012).

The study employed qualitative data collection methods. Mwinkom (2013) sees qualitative research methodology as the type of research that generates findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. He added that it was possible for some of the data to be quantified whilst the final analysis is done qualitatively. In a qualitative study, data are collected in the form of words rather than numbers and reflect the experiences, feelings, or judgment of individuals taking part in an investigation of the problem or issue (Kusi, 2012). In this type of study, the researcher interacts with the researched in their socio-cultural environment for their views, opinions and feelings on the subject under investigation. Qualitative enquiring focuses on exploring, describing, understanding and above all interpreting to understand social situations and /or how participants in a social setting perceive the world around them as indicated by Boakye –Boateng (2006). Also, a qualitative method will allow the researcher a glimpse of the children's world, as soon through the eyes of the children themselves, as qualitative methods are considered “More effective in enabling children to communicate in their own terms” (Barker,2003:14) and more suitable when doing research with children (Greig et al.,2007).



However, some proponents of the qualitative research approach have argued that, it has a number of setbacks which affects the quality of an issue under investigation. Grix (2004) and Baaberiyyir (2009) argued that, this approach is non-representative and usually carried out on a small basis, thereby generating results that cannot be generalized beyond the actual case being studied. The researcher's inability to generalize the outcome owing to the small sample size affects the validity and reliability of the study. Thus, qualitative research is often criticized as being unscientific, unrepresentative, open to bias and even to manipulation, whether this is conscious or unconscious (Grix,2004; Bryman,2012; Baaberiyyir,2009). In spite of the diverse opinions and views expressed by these Scholars, the researcher was mindful for not allowing these setbacks and personal feelings to influence the conduct of the work. Grix (2004:23) points out that, "As long as you are aware of how you are employing a specific method and what this method is pointing you towards, and how this relates to the ways you employ other methods, there should be no problem."

3.2.1 DATA SOURCES

There are two basic sources in obtaining data in social research; these are primary and secondary sources. Bryman and Bell (2011) notes that, primary and secondary data are the two main empirical sources of data in social research, but data can be obtained from both sources for a particular research. According to Rabianski (2003) the criteria for data sources are that, it needs to be reliable, accurate, relevant and current as well as conceptually correct. This study employs varied methods and techniques in gathering both secondary and primary data.

Primary data are data collected for a specific study and are gathered to fit the purpose of the study. They can also be facts and information that are obtained for not only immediate study but for other purposes. Primary data can be used to complement secondary data in a study as noted by Bryman and Bell (2012). Rabianski (2003) notes that, one researcher's primary data can become a secondary one to another researcher. The primary data for this study was collected in the field from selected respondents in the Wa Municipality, Wa East and the Jirapa Districts. The selected respondents from the three districts include; some officials from the DSW, DOVVSU, CHRAJ, DOC and children from the Jirapa Orphanage which is a social welfare institution in the region. Cases involving child rights violations were observed at the DSW offices at Wa Municipality, Wa East and the Jirapa Districts. They were reached out to in each of the districts at separate times in their homes, work places or at venues suitable to them and each were made to respond to a set of questions geared towards addressing the objectives of the study. The set of questions were administered by the researcher with support from field research assistant on one to one basis.



The secondary data for this study was sourced from the quarterly and monthly reports from the DSW, DOC, DOVVSU and CHRAJ to supplement the primary data. These were records kept concerning child maintenance, neglect, among others. Also, this type of data was significant in this work because it increased the validity and reliability of the primary data obtained from the field and also expands the scope of the study. Ismail, Langfeldt and Muth (2012) revealed that, secondary data is mostly used when a researcher develops interest in other studies that were previously carried out and want to fill in the research gaps. Other forms of secondary data that the study relied on were

documentary analyses. Documents according to Miller and Brewer (2003) and Baaberiyr (2009), are a good place to search for answers and they provide a useful check, on primary information gathered through interviews and questionnaires. They further observed that, documentary sources can provide a convincing answer when other techniques fail to address a question. Again, Miller and Brewer (2003) have identified documents commonly used in social science research to include reports, periodicals, newspaper articles, photographs, letters and diaries.

3.2.2 SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

A non-probability sampling technique was employed in this study. Kusi (2012) notes that, the non- probability sampling techniques is more appropriate for studies located within the interpretive-qualitative framework than studies that fall within the positivist-quantitative framework.

The study purposively targeted officials/ staff from the DSW, DOVVSU, DOC and CHRAJ in the Wa Municipality, Jirapa and Wa East Districts sampled for this study. Three Unit heads of the DSW, that is the promotion and protection of the rights of children, justice administration of child related issues and community care as well as the Wa Municipality, Wa East and Jirapa District Directors of the DSW, two case workers in the case of Wa Municipality and Jirapa Districts were purposively selected to respond to a set of open ended semi structured interview questions on the issue under investigation. The Station Officer of DOVVSU of the Ghana Police service, and three investigators were purposively selected. The administrator/senior investigator of CHRAJ, an investigator and research officer at the regional level and an investigator at the Jirapa District were also purposively selected to respond to set of semi-structured interview





questions based on the key issues raised in the research questions. The regional director of the DOC, the only permanent staff was equally purposively selected. These categories of persons have the requisite knowledge and experience to respond to questions raised on the issue under investigation to address the research objectives. According to Neuman (2003), purposive sampling is used when one selects respondents with a specific purpose in mind. This was found the most appropriate because they were the only people who could provide accurate and reliable information needed. In purposive sampling, “Researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon. The standard used in choosing participants and sites is whether they are information rich” (Creswell, 2008:214; Kusi, 2012:81-82). Opong (2013) maintained that, purposeful or judgmental sampling is widely used especially in the context of qualitative studies. It involves the selection of participants who have the experience or knowledge on the problem under investigation.

Purposive/judgmental sampling was also used to select the children from the social welfare institution at Jirapa in the Jirapa district. This implies that, any child in this institution met the requirement for selection as a sample but with the application of judgmental sampling techniques, only five of the children were interviewed, three boys and two girls. The engagement of the children was a follow-up for confirmation to support or reject the claim of the institution understudied. Convenience sampling which is one of the non-probabilities sampling techniques was applied in the selection of some of the participants at DOVVSU and CHRAJ. Officials in these institutions are part and parcel of the research population but whoever was available was selected and responded to a set of questions. As Kusi (2012:85) pointed out, “This is one of the non-probabilities

sampling strategies often employed in qualitative research. When using this strategy, you will have a research population in mind, but involves whoever is available or convenient in your study”. Buttressing further on convenience sampling, Opong (2013) indicates that, they appear to be the least challenging technique given that the researcher has to select the most accessible respondents to answer the research questions.

3.2.3 SAMPLE UNITS

The study targets; men, women, children, in the selected districts and areas. Also, the DSW, DOVVSU, CHRAJ and the DOC constituted the target institutions. These selected institutions are the major stakeholders as regards child maintenance cases in the study area. These institutions were purposively selected as a result of the unique role they play in the protection of children rights in the region.

3.2.4 SAMPLE SIZE DETERMINATION

According to DePaulo (2000) and Opong (2013) the determination of sample size is crucial, not just in qualitative studies but also in quantitative research. The relevance of this is to ensure that the research outcomes are reliable. Opong (2013) again revealed that, in qualitative studies for instance, it is costly or too expensive to study all cases of a phenomenon, thus compelling the researcher to select a certain number of respondents from the population based on the research objectives as sample of the study. Barker and Edwards (2012) point out that, the determination of a sample size should be based on factors such as time given to complete the study and time for the submission of the entire work, the availability of funds, among others. In this study, a total of 19 participants were purposively selected, 10 were selected from the DSW, three at the regional level, three from the Municipality and three from Jirapa District were selected. At the Wa East





District, the only officer was purposively selected. The others include four from DOVVSU and four participants from CHRAJ and a participant from the DOC. Five children were also selected from a social welfare institution at Jirapa with 12 cases involving child rights violations observed in the three districts where the study was carried out. The data obtained from the children was to support or reject the primary data collected from the State child protection institution, the DSW. The homogenous nature of the study area does not require a very large sample size. This can lead to repetition of answers and gathering of volumes of data with similar responses which can lead to the introduction of errors in the data collected from the respondents in the field. Patton (2002) argued that, qualitative methods produce a wealth of detailed data about a much smaller number of people and cases and maintains that, an inquiry focuses in depth on relatively small samples selected purposefully. Also, Glesne and Peshkin (1992) point out that, qualitative researches do not need to depend on a particular numerical basis for generation of generalization. Barker and Edwards (2012) argued that, in qualitative studies, all that the researcher needs is one respondent as a sample, the one of greatest interest to him/her. Buttressing on this further, Alder and Alder (1987) advised student researchers to sample between 12 and 60 with 30 being the mean in qualitative studies. Again Barker and Edwards (2012) remarked that, in totality, the number of persons required to make an adequate sample for a qualitative study can differ from one to a hundred or more but preferably between 10 and 60, with 30 being the mean. In the case of this study, the sample size of 19 was to ensure accuracy, fairness and representativeness. Large sample size would delude the data obtained from the

respondents in the field, thus misrepresenting the views and feelings as well as the experiences of the respondents selected for this study.

3.2.5 INSTRUMENTS OF DATA COLLECTION

Data collection in the field was carried out with assistance from a field research assistant, a first degree holder from the University of Cape Coast. He was taken through training /orientation on ethical issues in research such as confidentiality, deception, privacy and the like. Research tools/instruments that were employed to gather the primary data in the field include; semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews as well as observation. The combination of these tools in collecting the data ensures triangulation.

3.2.6. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

This instrument was used to obtain data from the key informants such as officials from the DSW, DOVVSU, CHRAJ and the DOC that form part of the sample. It offers the interviewees the opportunity to freely express their feelings and views on issues put before them and also enable the researcher to seek clarifications on matters that are unclear. This will enhance the quality of the research. Their experiences on the subject enable them respond to questions to address the objectives that the researcher sets out to achieve in this study. Kusi (2012) notes that, this instrument allows the interviewer to ask initial questions, followed by probes meant to seek clarification of issues raised. Kusi (2012:45-46) again observed that, “These instruments are flexible to a greater extend, offer interviewees the opportunity to express their views, feelings and experiences freely, and the interviewers the freedom to divert from items/questions in the scheduled to seek clarifications using probes during the interview process”. This notwithstanding, the use of this tool can lead to gathering of volumes of qualitative data, which many a time



consumes a lot of time at the analysis stage. Also, when applied to children, it becomes difficult for them to express their feelings on an issue under investigation. Care was taken to overcome the challenges of this instrument in the field.

3.2.7. UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

This is one of the techniques that were employed to gather data in the field with children between the ages of eight and under 18 years. It entails free style engagement with the respondents who in this case were the children selected for the study at the Jirapa district. Kusi (2012:48) indicates that, “Researchers using the instrument can adapt the conversation to the knowledge and understanding of the interviewees. Researchers using this method need to constantly listen to the interviewees and formulate questions in the process.” Like the semi-structured interviews, the application of this instrument to collect data from the field can lead to the gathering of volumes of qualitative data, thus the analysis of the data collected takes an amount of time and difficult to do so. This was overcome through editing of the data obtained from the field.

3.2.8 OBSERVATION

Personal observations were also carried out to witness cases involving child rights violation and how they are handled by the officials at the Department of Social Welfare offices in the Wa Municipality, Jirapa and Wa East Districts. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, International Students Edition (2010:1006), defines “Observation as act of watching somebody or something carefully for a period of time, especially to learn something”. Saunders et al (2006) terms observation as the systematic observation, recording, description, analysis and interpretation of people's behaviour. Also, Kumar (1999) describes observation as a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching





and listening to an interactive or phenomenon as it takes place with the respondents. Again Kumar (1999) revealed the basic conditions by which one observes function and behaviour in groups, among others. He pointed out that, in situations where relevant and accurate information cannot be elicited by questioning the respondent, the application of observation would be useful.

Miller & Brewer (2003) categorised observation into “unobtrusive observation” and “participant observation” based on the degree of participation by the researcher, and into “covert” and “overt” observation based on the level of awareness of subjects being observed. The phenomenon under study; Child Rights Protection: An assessment of the Capacity of the Department of Social Welfare in the Upper West Region lends itself to observation. This in addition to semi-structured and unstructured interviews was used to collect primary data from the field. The field observation as part of the data collection process enabled the researcher to gain knowledge of the nature of child rights violation cases that were reported to the Department of Social Welfare and mechanisms put in place to address them by the officials. The observation applied in this study was basically participatory. These children and their parents were very much aware that, the individual cases handled by officials at the Department were being observed as they were told of the research and its objectives and the benefits thereof.

3.3 DATA STORAGE AND RETRIVAL

Data for this research was stored and retrieved for analysis on field note books. These according to Groenewald (2004) are relevant data storage methods in qualitative research. Groves (2003) observed that, because the human mind tends to forget easily, this mechanism of storing data in a qualitative research to a very large extent will retain the

data obtained. In a qualitative research most of the time, it is extremely difficult for the researcher to engage the participants in the interviewing process whilst doing the recording at the same time. Caelli (2001:45) remarks that, “The writing of field notes during the research process compels the researcher to further clarify each interview setting”. Also, some of the participants feel threatened when the interviewer is recording during the interview process. This has the potential to end the engagement prematurely. Kusi (2012) points out that, the researcher must protect the interviewees in the data gathering and recording process by ensuring that there is no threat to the dignity, self-esteem or status of groups and/or individuals that are participating in the research. The field notes book was referred to when the data was analyzed to ensure that, relevant data are not lost to affect the quality of the research.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Data analysis is the strategy for analyzing data and specifying whether the data obtained will be analyzed manually or by the use of a computer (Kumar, 1999). Yin (2009) described analysis of data as a number related operations performed with the purpose of summarizing the data obtained and organizing them in such a manner that they answer the research questions. Content analysis was done on the qualitative data, which involves categorizing into various thematic groupings and interpreting the data collected from the field to make it meaningful or intelligible. Numbers were equally assigned to the various thematic groupings of the data in order to avoid repetition and safeguard the loss of relevant data which can affect the quality of the study. The data are presented on frequency tables, pie and bar charts before the analysis and discussions.



3.5 DATA MANAGEMENT: VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

3.5.1 VALIDITY

Miller and Brewer (2003) note that, validity checks can be made possible by comparing the data obtained from the respondents in the field with other documentary sources and the stated research objectives of the study. By so doing, data quality will be enriched. Baabereyir (2009) points out that, researchers have a duty to check their interpretations of the data obtained with the respondents as a measure of guaranteeing data quality. Again, Baabereyir (2009:123) revealed that, “Authentication of data is importance because people’s accounts even if truthful, often contain contradictions and inconsistencies that need to be respected and explored”. Thus, in this study, steps were taken to validate the interview data obtained from the selected respondents in the field. Interviewees whose responses needed clarifications, corrections were contacted for their comments. The changes that they made were incorporated before the analysis of the entire data. Similarly, the researcher did not introduce his own knowledge or experience into the meanings of the data collected from the respondents. The data collected were used during the analysis phase. No elements of subjectivity and biases were introduced by the researcher into the data collection and analysis processes.



3.5.2 RELIABILITY

Agyekumhene (2012) observed that, researchers have to ensure that, the findings of studies carried out are trustworthy, dependable and above all acceptable to other readers and researchers. Reliability refers to the capacity of research outcomes to be repeated or replicated (Agyekumhene, 2012). Issues regarding reliability were provided for in this study. First and foremost, the interview guides were developed based on the stated objectives of the study. The research instruments were given to two colleagues of the

researcher who are equally research students and are using similar instruments in their studies for their comments and suggestions, especially on the structure and content. Also, a senior member at the University for Development Studies (UDS), Wa Campus offered useful suggestions and contributions which were factored into improving the research instruments. After these comments, suggestions and contributions, the interview guides were given to the supervisor of this study who provided useful advice and suggestions for improvement. All these views were brought on board to guarantee the gathering of quality and relevant data for the study. The responses from the respondents were compared with the stated objectives of the study to ensure that the objectives were addressed. Accurate and reliable data was obtained and analysed for the study



CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the data collected from the respondents; selected officials from the Department of Social welfare, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service and the Department of Children in the Upper West Region to assess the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare in child rights protection. The data are presented on frequency tables, pie and bar charts before the analysis and discussions. The issues presented and analysed include; the background information of the respondents, that is gender, age, marital status and educational background. Others include; some achievements of the DSW, its roles and programmes in place to address child welfare issues, the resourcefulness of the Department in terms of human resource as well as the level of collaboration between the Department and other State child protection institutions in the Upper West Region. In all 19 respondents were interviewed on one to one basis in the districts investigated. This information is presented in Table 4. 1



TABLE 4.1: TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS IN THE STUDY

Name of Institution	Frequency	Percent (%)
Department of Social Welfare	10	52.6
CHRAJ	4	21.1
DOVVSU	4	21.1
Department of Children	1	5.3
Total	19	100.0

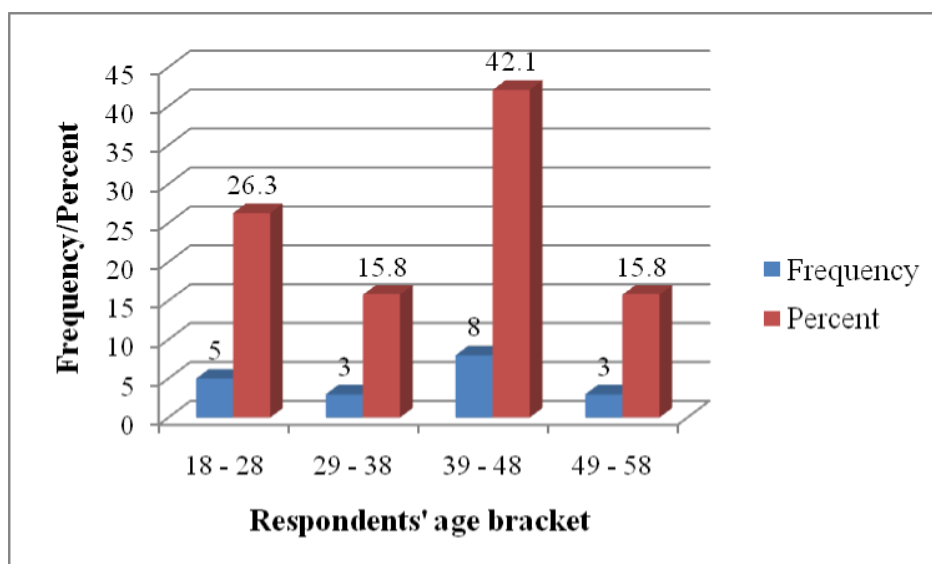
Source: Field Survey, 2016

As indicated above, 10 officials from the DSW representing 52.6%, four officials each from the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service representing 21.1% each as well as an official from the Department of Children which represents 5.3% were sampled for the study. In addition to these, five children, three boys and two girls at the Jirapa Orphanage were also interviewed but that data was only used to support or reject the one obtained from the DSW. Also, a total number of 12 cases involving child rights violations were observed in the three districts sampled for this study.

4.1.0 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Age is one of the commonest and important features in understanding the feelings, opinions and perceptions of respondents on an issue under investigation. It is an important tool used to examine the responses of the research participants and revealed the level of maturity of the individual respondents. In this study, the respondents sampled were above the age of 18 years.

FIGURE 4.3: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS



Source: Field Survey, 2016

From the figure above, the age range of the respondents is 40 starting from 18 to 58 years. Also, it shows that, large numbers of the respondents are within the age brackets of 39-48 years with total frequency of eight, representing 42.1% of the sampled population. Respondents within the age brackets of 18-28 with total frequency of five constitute 26.3% and those aged 29-38 and 49-58 with total frequency of three each represents 15.8% respectively.

4.1.1 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

The study revealed different patterns of educational achievements of the respondents in the Region. Education to an extent influences the respondent's attitude in understanding a particular phenomenon under investigation. This information with the corresponding numbers is presented in Table 4.2.

TABLE 4.2: EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

Educational background	Frequency	Percent (%)
University	11	57.9
Polytechnic	1	5.3
School of Social Work	7	36.8
Total	19	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016

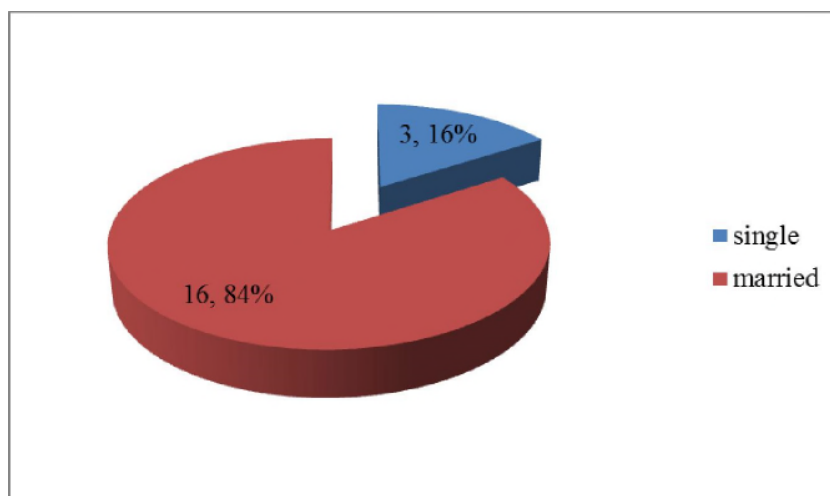
The Table indicates that, 11 of the respondents, representing 57.9% received education up to the University level, one of the respondents, representing 5.3% was educated up to the Polytechnic level and seven of them received professional training at the School of Social work in Osu-Accra.

4.1.2 MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

In a research study, determining the marital status of the respondents' is crucial as it shows how responsible and matured or otherwise a respondent is in understanding and providing answers to the set of questions asked by the researcher. The marital status of respondents in the three different districts investigated is what the figure below depicts.



FIGURE 4.4: MARITAL STATUS OF RESPONDENTS



Source: Field Survey, 2016

The figure shows that three of the respondents, representing 16% are not married whereas 16 of them sampled for the study, representing 84% are married.

4.1.3 GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Table 4.3 below shows the pattern of gender distributions of the respondents in the study.

TABLE 4.3 GENDER DISTRIBUTIONS OF RESPONDENTS

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	14	73.7
Female	5	26.3
Total	19	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016

It is evident from the above that, out of the total population sampled for the study, five of them, representing 26.3% are females whereas 14, representing 73.7% are males. With regard to the female participation in this study, equal opportunities were given but a handful of them as shown above expressed the desire to take part. Similarly, the researcher explained the objectives of the study but nine women who were among the sampled population still did not see the need to contribute to address the research



objectives. On the low participation of women in the study, the Municipal Director of the Department of Social Welfare, respondent two had this to say; “They (women) do not have the requisite skills and experience to attempt these questions, in order not to waste time and unnecessarily delay the process, let us engage those who can attempt providing answers to the set of questions irrespective of gender”. The views expressed by respondent two are consistent with Bourdieu’s cultural capital theory. In this theory Bourdieu (1977) did not provide room for on the job training for employees in organizations and agencies such as the DSW to improve upon their skills and experience. Institutions should provide the needed training for their employees to improve upon their skill to enable them render valuable services to the public, especially to children in the case of the Department of Social Welfare in the Upper West Region.

4.2 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE SAMPLED POPULATION FOR THE STUDY

A total number of 10 officials were sampled from the DSW to response to a set of questions on the topic under consideration.

4.2.0 GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

The Table below presents the gender distributions of the respondents in the study.

TABLE 4.4: GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	8	80.0
Female	2	20.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The Table shows that, 80% of the respondents with total frequency of eight are males whereas 20% of the sampled populations with total frequency of two are females. Here again, the women representation is low. Respondent one blamed it on the poor human



resource base and insufficient skills to enable them participate in an exercise of this sort with confidence. Respondent seven added that, “In-service training was required on quarterly basis to improve upon the skills of the few hands at the district level”. Again respondent seven views are contrary to Bourdieu’s cultural capital theory. The theory did not create room for on the job training.

4.2.1 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS

The educational background of the Department of Social Welfare population in this study is captured in Table 4.5

TABLE 4.5: EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENTS

Level of education	Frequency	Percent (%)
University	5	50.0
Polytechnic	1	10.0
School of Social Work	4	40.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: field survey, 2016

Five of the respondents, representing 50% as indicated above received education up to the University and 40% of the respondents with total frequency of four were professionally trained at the School of Social Work in Osu – Accra. One of them, representing 10% was educated up to Polytechnic. Four of the respondents, representing 40% of the total population sampled for this study, were educated at the School of Social Work in Osu- Accra before receiving further training at the Universities. When asked by the researcher whether the further training at the Universities had any impact on social work especially on child rights protection, the head of child rights protection and promotion at the DSW, respondent six expressed his views as follows; “Child rights protection and child maintenance for that matter is a special area in social work which



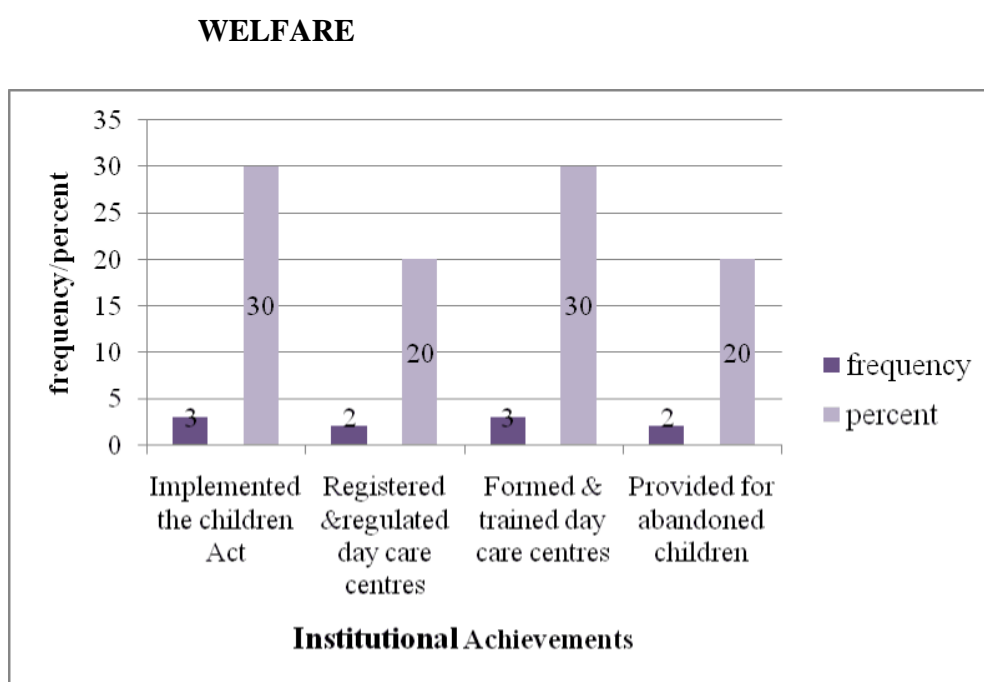
required lots of skills and experience, but over the years we have not received training specifically on child rights protection. So University education alone might not help matters unless much attention is paid to this sector”. This view is consistent with those expressed by Frimpong-Manso (2014) that, the few social workers who are working in the Department do not enrich themselves through training. Also, Laird (2011) added that, social welfare officers lack training and skills to enforce the Children Act especially with the informal sector employees. The respondents generally agreed that, maintenance fees for the informal sector workers are charged based on a compromise. In case of failure to reach a consensus with the respondent, the matter is referred to the family tribunal. Bourdieu (1977) in his cultural capital theory holds a contrary view on further studies undertaken by the DSW staff and their output thereafter. He recognized that, certificates and degrees guarantees technical capacity on the one hand. On the other hand, he argues that certificates and degrees attest to social capability and promote the social dignity of the holder and a corresponding increase in capacity.

Discussing and analyzing the demographic characteristics of the respondents was relevant to the study as the researcher needed to understand and appreciate variables such as marital status, age, educational background and gender before proceeding to ask relevant questions on child rights protection in relation to the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare in the Upper West Region. The data gathered on the demographic characteristics positioned the researcher to move at the pace of the individual respondents in the interviewing process and how to probe for further clarification on issues not well represented.

4.3 RESPONDENTS VIEWS ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE DSW

The respondents identified some achievements of the Department over the years. They include; implementation of the children Act, register and regulate the operations of day care centres, formed and trained child protection teams as well as providing for abandoned children. Figure 4.5 depicts the accomplishments of the DSW in the Upper West Region.

FIGURE 4.5: ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL



Source: Field Survey, 2016

From the figure above, three of the respondents, representing 30% of the sampled population identified the implementation of children Act as one of the successes of the Department. Also 30% of the respondents with total frequency of three recognised the formation and training of child protection teams as an achievement. Providing for abandoned children was identified by two of the respondents and 20% of them with total frequency of two recognised registration and regulation of the operations of day care





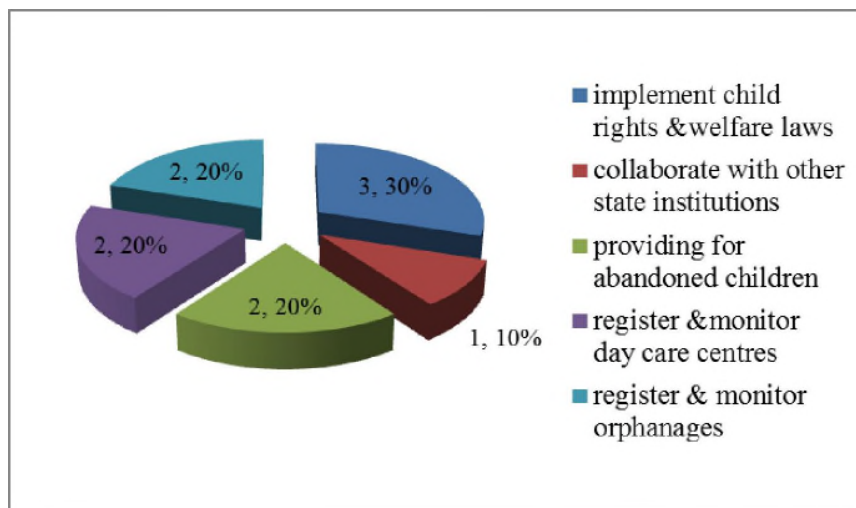
centres as one of the Department's accomplishments. Responding to a question of whether this was a single achievement, respondent six remarked that, “The Department cannot entirely attribute these achievements to its own efforts; much recognition must be given to UNICEF and Plan Ghana, our reliable partners for providing funding support especially in the formation and training of the child protection teams/committees”. The field survey further revealed that 15 abandoned children were catered for by the Department from 2014-2015. In 2014 eight of them were cared for and seven in 2015. Similarly, four abandoned children were provided for by the DSW in 2012 (DSW, UWR, 2015). Also, six child protection teams/committees were formed and trained at Sagu, Chegli, Nyagli, Kperisi, Jonga and Kumbiehi communities in the Wa Municipality. Their mandate among others is to monitor the rights of children in their respective locations, prevention of violence, exploitation and abuse as well as promoting child care best practices (Casey, 2011). The respondents generally agreed that the concept was laudable but its sustainability was not guaranteed owing to lack of motivation for the committee members. Respondent seven remarked that, “The United Nations Children's Fund must be commended for introducing the community child protection team concept to assist and furnish the Department of Social Welfare with data on child protection issues such as child maintenance, paternity, child custody, forced and child marriages, among others. Though a laudable concept, it cannot stand the test of time owing to lack of financial and material motivation for the committee members”. On child maintenance, 73 cases were recorded, 34 in 2014 and 39 in 2015.

4.4 THE ROLE OF THE DSW IN CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION

The roles identified by the respondents were categorised under five major themes. Implement child rights and welfare laws, collaborate with other state institutions,

providing for abandoned children, register and monitor day care centres and register and monitor orphanages to ensure that they comply with safety standards were recognised by the respondents as the Department's role in child maintenance. Respondent five had this to say as regards the role of the DSW in child rights protection, “The Department's role in child rights protection is a unique one which must be accorded the needed attention that it deserves, especially by the central government, and other development partners such as communities, United Nations Children's Fund, Plan Ghana and individual philanthropist”. The Department's role is captured in Figure 4.6

FIGURE 4.6: RESPONDENTS VIEWS ON THE ROLES OF THE DSW



Source: Field Survey, 2016

The figure above illustrates that, 30% of the respondents with total frequency of three recognised child rights and welfare laws implementation as one of the roles of the DSW. Some of these welfare laws include; the children Act, Act 560 (1998), the Juvenile Justice Act, Act 653 (2003) and the Domestic Violence Act, Act 732 (2007). Among these laws, the Children Act, Act 560 (1998) falls under the mandate of the DSW. The others are carried out in collaboration with other State institutions. Collaboration with



other State institutions such as Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service (DOVVSU), Department of Children (DOC) and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) was identified by a respondent which represents 10% of the total respondents. Providing for abandoned children, register and monitor day care centres and register and monitor orphanages were identified by 20% of the respondents each with total frequency of two for each role recognised.

4.5 STANDARD CRITERIA OF ASSESSING THE CAPACITY OF THE DSW

Capacity as already indicated in this study refers to manpower/human resources, programmes, training, financial resources and experience.

4.5.0 MANPOWER/HUMAN RESOURCES

The standard assessment criteria of each Metropolitan, Municipal and District offices of the DSW in terms of human resources to accomplish its mission of child rights protection and perform other administrative functions requires a minimum population of 10 trained officers comprising, the director, heads of the three core units of the DSW namely, community care, justice administration, child rights protection and promotion. Others include; medical or hospital welfare officer, probation/prisons after care officer, two case workers, an administrator and a welfare officer attach to the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service are needed for the Department to offer adequate protection to children, thus serving the best interest of the child. Besides, three auxiliary staff, an accounts officer, typist and a cleaner are required in all the Metropolitan, Municipal and District offices of the DSW (DSW, UWR, 2016; DSW Hand book, 2005). In this study, the three districts assessed; Wa East, Jirapa and the Wa Municipality shows a huge staff gap, especially in the Wa East and Jirapa districts. The Wa East district is manned by only the district director, Jirapa district is managed by five





staff and the Wa Municipality is represented by 15 staff. In line with this, the director of Wa East district remarked as follows, “The Wa East district is the most deprived in the Upper West Region and one of the deprived districts in Ghana where child protection issues are enormous. If it were possible for me to engage more hands and motivate them on my own, I would have done it many years ago, but the powers that be will never approve of such a move for fear of not meeting the agreement on my part”.

Respondents blamed the short fall of manpower /trained personnel, especially at the Jirapa and Wa East districts on the slow pace of replacement of staff who have either retired or dead as well as the embargo on public sector employment by the central government. Six out of the sample population of 10 from the DSW representing 60% described the staffing situation as woefully inadequate. As Casey (2011) puts it, the DSW is constrained in the area of manpower to carry out its child rights protection mandate in the Upper West Region. Similarly, Bjorck (2013) indicates that, the International Monetary Fund’s (IMF) structural adjustment programs promote cuts in government spending especially in the areas of education, health and welfare services which have suffered as a result of certain conditions that came with the package. This accounted for the Department’s inability to render services to children, parents and communities in deprived areas where the services of professional social workers are most needed (DSW, UWR, 2016).

4.5.1 PROGRAMMES

The DSW has the mandate to render child welfare services on daily basis to clients at the agency, communities and institutions. Also, it is mandated to organize outreach programmes on specific issues such as the rights and responsibilities of parents and children, handling of cases involving child rights violations, child marriage, the Children

Act, Act 560 (1998), safety measures at day care centres and maintenance of children, among others (Children Act, 1998). In theory, this was to be implemented on monthly and quarterly basis in selected communities and institutions. The study discovered that, what remains a challenge is the means to reach out to the target groups, institutions and communities to sensitize them on specific issues of child rights promotion and protection in the Upper West Region. The means here refers to financial resources and a faster means of transport to deliver messages on child rights violations and related ones, especially at the hinterlands. None of the three districts assessed, that is, the Wa Municipality, Jirapa and the Wa East Districts had a faster means of transport to do its work and no child at the institution level ever benefitted from programmes that are organized by the DSW either on quarterly or monthly basis for the past six years. Parents and children are really not benefitting from educative programmes that are planned by officials at the DSW (DSW, UWR, 2016). In this study, 60% of children sampled never heard and participated in programmes organized by officials at the DSW which was acknowledged by the social workers at the DSW.

4.5.2 TRAINING

This is one of the components of capacity that this study seeks to assess. Historically, social work training was heavily influenced by western models but was revised to reflect a more culturally appropriate social and community development approach. What still remain largely western up till date are the available books, journals and resource materials (Kreitzer et al. 2009; Casey, 2011). Studies have shown that, the DSW often engaged social welfare officers with graduate qualifications in social work, psychology and sociology. The DSW operates a professional training school; school of social work at Osu in Accra which initially provided in- service training for welfare and probation



officers. The school now offers diploma programmes in professional social work (MESW, 2007; Casey, 2011)). The DSW in 2007 carried out an institutional assessment and disclosed that, organizational and individual capacities need to be addressed in order to offer adequate protection to children and their care givers (Casey, 2011). Furthermore, Casey (2011) observed the need to build the capacity of staff to engage in data collection on children matters as well as carry out monitoring and evaluation exercises on child welfare institutions. In the Wa Municipality, Jirapa and Wa East districts where this study was conducted, no staff apart from general social work training was specifically trained to handle child rights violation cases in the Upper West Region. In –service training and refresher courses to deepen their skills and knowledge on how to deal specifically with children issues are not given considerations. Therefore, staff has limited knowledge and skills in the area of child rights protection (DSW, UWR, 2016).

4.5.3 FINANCIAL RESOURCE

It is the primary responsibilities of the central government to provide adequate financial resources on regular basis to the DSW to accomplish its child protection functions. The DSW under normal circumstances should benefit from government subventions to organise sensitisation programmes on child welfare policies on quarterly basis. In reality these releases do not come as expected. The Department remains under resourced and relied mainly on donor agencies such as UNICEF and Plan Ghana for support (DSW, UWR, 2016). In the year 2010, the Department never received any financial support from the central government. The approved budget remained in Accra and releases were not done to the regions as expected (Casey, 2011). In practice, the DSW do not benefit from central government subventions regularly as should have been the case.

4.5.4 EXPERIENCE

This is one of the standard criteria used in assessing the capacity of the DSW. It refers to knowledge and competence on the part of social welfare officers in addressing child welfare issues. An experience social welfare officer is one who has demonstrated a deeper understanding of child welfare matters and report accordingly for action to be taken, worked in other units of the DSW such as justice administration and community care. Also, it means strict adherence to the basic principles in social work such as self-determination, acceptance, moving at the pace of the client, confidentiality, among others (DSW Hand book; MESW, 2007). The study revealed that most of the social welfare officers in the Upper West Region lack the requisite knowledge and skills in modern social work owing to inadequate training and exposure to other units of the Department.

4.6. RESPONDENTS VIEWS ON THE CAPACITY OF DSW TO PERFORM ITS ROLE

Seven of the respondents, representing 70% revealed that the role of the Department of Social Welfare has virtually been taken over by other State institutions such as the Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), Department of Children (DOC), among others and some non- governmental organizations owing to inadequate logistics support and personnel by the central government. In line with this, respondent three remarked that, “It is common knowledge that the DSW is under resourced in terms of personnel and finances”. Three of the respondents, representing 30% held the view that, the staffing situation of the Department should not be an excuse for others taking over its mandate but emphasised that some of the State institutions such as the CHRAJ over stretched its mandate by handling maintenance cases which is a core mandate of the DSW enshrined in the Children Act, Act 560 (1998). These respondents



further stated that, no maintenance case had ever been referred to them from CHRAJ. This assertion was confirmed by CHRAJ. The Commission prefers to refer unresolved maintenance cases to the family tribunal and not any other body for settlements owing to its capacity to deal with cases of that nature. These views expressed by the respondents are consistent with those expressed by Laird (2008). He pointed out that, the Department of Social welfare is in a poor state in terms of trained personnel and logistics. Also, Baffoe & Dako-Gyeke (2013) said that, the lack of capacity by the Department of Social Welfare created a vacuum filled by ill-equipped non-governmental organizations, who have little or no understanding of the circumstances of children.

4.7 PROGRAMMES PUT IN PLACE BY THE DSW TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN THE UPPER WEST REGION

Respondents generally agreed that, a number of programmes are planned by the DSW over the years aimed at ensuring that communities, individuals, institutions and the public provide adequately for the upkeep of their children or any other child under their maintenance or leadership. What remains a challenge according to them is the means to reach out to the target groups and institutions. Education of communities and institutions on the Children Act was identified by 30% of the respondents with total frequency of three, sensitization of communities on forced and early marriages was recognized by 10% of the respondents with a frequency of one of the sampled population, 20% of the respondents with total frequency of two identified the education of day care and orphanages attendance on safety measures. Other programmes identified by 10% of the respondents with a frequency of one and 20% of the respondents with total frequency of two are formation and training of child protection teams and educate children on their rights and responsibilities respectively.



The programmes put in place by the DSW to protect the rights of children in the Upper West Region are consistent with the system approach to child rights protection with focuses on a holistic approach to addressing children issues such as maintenance, neglect, abuse, labour, among others in a holistic manner with emphasis on shared responsibilities. Table 4:6 revealed that, stakeholders namely, child protection teams, children, day care and orphanages attendance, communities and institutions were all educated on the Children Act, Act 560 (1998), forced and early marriages, safety measures and especially on the rights and responsibilities of children. They were educated on separate responsibilities but geared serving the best interest of the child.

TABLE 4. 6: PROGRAMMES PUT IN PLACE BY THE DSW TO PROTECT CHILD RIGHTS

Programmes	Frequency	Percent (%)
Educate communities and institutions on the children Act	3	30.0
Sensitise communities on forced and early marriages	1	10.0
Educate day care and orphanages attendance on safety measures	2	20.0
Form and train child protection teams	1	10.0
Educate children on their rights and responsibilities	3	30.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016



4.7.1 THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMMES ON INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITIES AND INSTITUTIONS

The respondents revealed that, programmes carried out by the DSW in communities, institutions and elsewhere influenced the beneficiaries. Four of the respondents, representing 40% of the sampled population recognised that, maintenance cases are now being reported and resolved, 30% of the respondents with total frequency of three identified awareness creation on laws that seeks to protect the interest of children, the need to report cases involving defilement, rape and incest to the Department for the necessary referrals was identified by 20% of the sampled population with total frequency of two, 10% of the respondents recognised a change of attitude as regards early and forced marriages in the Upper West Region. Furthermore, the respondents mentioned that, some specific topics or issues discussed with their clients were; the responsibilities of parents and guardians towards the maintenance of their children or children under their leadership, the roles and limitations of child protection teams/committees, the rights and responsibilities of children and the implications of forced and early child marriages. Respondent nine remarked that, “Most parents/guardians are now beginning to recognise and appreciate the rights and responsibilities of children as well as their obligations towards the maintenance of children in their families, communities and institutions”. Also, respondent seven said that, “There is an improvement in the payment of maintenance fees by parents/guardians charged by the Department of Social Welfare who initially refused to provide for the upkeep of their children for no apparent reason”. Added to this, the field survey revealed that, 379 child maintenance cases were handled by the DSW in the Upper West Region from 2011 – 2013. Out of this number, 125 were handled in 2011, 87 in 2012 and 167 in 2013. Others include; 34 in 2014 and 39 in 2015



respectively. On defilement related cases, 24 were recorded from 2012-2014. Five in 2012, 16 in 2013 and three in 2014. According to the respondents, the defilement cases were referred to the family tribunal and DOVVSU for determination owing to limited capacity on the part of the DSW. From the period of 2011-2013, 131 child rights violation cases were resolved by the Department. Among these, 49 were handled in 2011, 32 in 2012 and 50 in 2013 respectively (DSW, UWR, 2015).

The DSW and DOVVSU jointly handled 101 defilement cases involving children less than 16 years from 2008-2012. In 2008, 34 cases were reported to the unit, 18 in 2009, 22 in 2010, 13 in 2011 and 14 in 2012 respectively. On forced and early child marriages, 61 girls under 18 years who were abducted from the period of 2008-2009 were rescued by the Unit. In 2008, 26 of them were freed, 10 each in 2011 and 2012 were saved, 7 and 8 of them were salvaged in 2009 and 2010 respectively. The data obtained revealed that, 34 rape cases were resolved from same period that is 2008-2012 (DOVVSU, UWR, 2015).

4.7.2 RESPONDENT VIEWS ON COMMUNITY/INSTITUTIONS RESPONSE TO PROGRAMMES ORGANISED BY THE DSW

Respondents' expressed varied opinions as regards community/institutions participation to programmes that are organised by the DSW. Four of the respondents, representing 40% described community/institutions response to programmes organised by the DSW as good. Five other respondents with total frequency of five and 10% with a frequency of one described community response as bad and very good respectively. The data provided shows that half of the respondents held the view that, community/institutions response to programmes organised by the DSW was very unsatisfactory. The attitude of some communities to the Department's programmes prompted respondent four to remark as



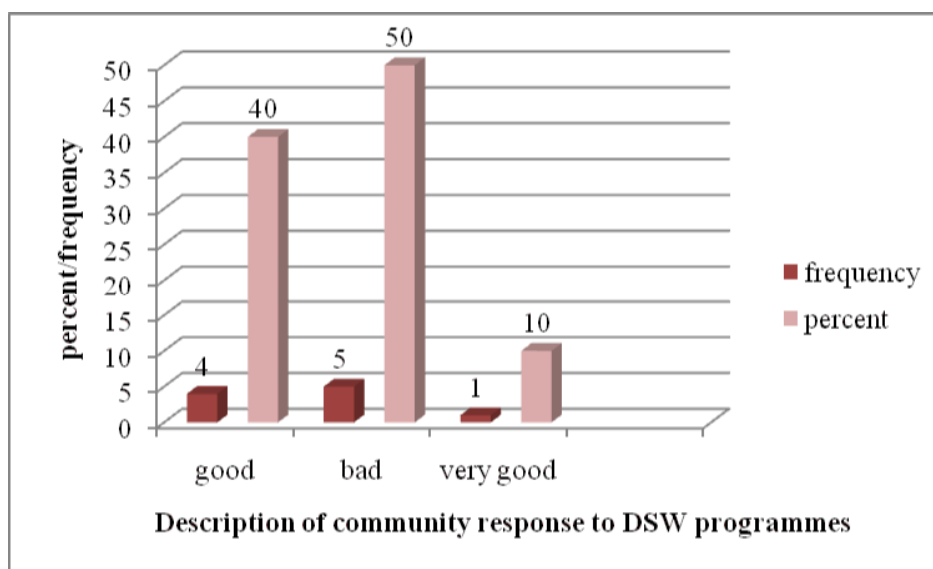


follows: “Communities/institutions are not to be blamed much for not paying attention to programmes organised by the Department but the inability of central government to adequately provide financial resources for continuous sensitisation of these players on issues affecting their welfare and children”. If funds were provided on regular basis, the constant interaction with communities/institutions would have ruled out the component of financial motivation to participants. Also, respondent nine had this to say: “Community members are not, interested in the quality of information that officials at the Department of Social Welfare are able to provide, but what is of interest to them is financial motivation which the Department is unable to provide”. Programmes organised by non – governmental organizations are usually well attended simply because participants are provided attractive financial packages at the end of the day, even though they do not have the passion for community work and the requisite knowledge concerning children’s rights and welfare matters. This is consistent with the views expressed by Laird (2008). He observed that, inspite of the fact that the DSW is responsible for regulating the operations of NGOs in Ghana, the poor financial situation of the Department means that the surveillance is inadequate.

This study employed the systems approach to child protection which entails a holistic approach to addressing children issues with emphasis on shared responsibilities. The application of this theory in the study clearly shows that children issues at the community level will still be handled with the traditional methods where specific child protection issues will be addressed. Once community members are not prepared to participate in programmes organized by the DSW on grounds of non- payment of allowances, they will not be abreast with their role in the protection of child rights and how to partner other

stakeholders to promote the rights of children in the UWR, thus serving the best interest of the child.

FIGURE 4.7: DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY/INSTITUTIONS RESPONSE TO DSW PROGRAMMES



Source: Field Survey, 2016

As indicated in the figure above, 40% of the respondents with a frequency of four from the sampled population described the community/institutions response to the DSW programmes as good, five of the respondents, representing 50% of the total population described the community/institutions response to the DSW as bad whereas a respondent, representing 10% of the population viewed the response of the community/institutions to the Department’s programmes as very good. The data presented shows that, at least half of the sampled population for this study from the DSW officials sampled, accepted that the community/institutions response to the DSW programmes was bad. This prompted respondent two to remark as follows, “Programmes organised by the Department of Social Welfare do not attract any fee, but the general public seems not to be interested in such programmes simply because they do not yield immediate benefits”. Similarly,



respondent five, remarked that, “Child rights education is not of much interest to most parents/care givers because social workers in the Department of Social Welfare are often regarded by certain individuals as intruders who should not be interfering into family matters”. These views expressed by the respondent are consistent with those expressed by Casey (2011). He pointed out that, the DSW officials tend to face strong opposition from the community, which views them as intruders.

4.7.3 THE IMPACT OF THE DEPARTMENT’S ACTIVITIES ON CHILDREN

Five children, three boys and two girls were sampled to provide data to authenticate or discard those provided by the DSW on the maintenance of children in the UWR. Three of the children, representing 60% of the sampled population never heard of the DSW let alone to talk of participating in activities organised by its officials to sensitise children on their basic rights. Infact, they are not aware that children have rights which can be infringed upon by adults and complain made against them at the DSW for a possible redress. Two of the children, representing 40% of the sampled population revealed that, the DSW is not doing much to educate children on their basic rights. The children pointed out that, there are times where programmes are not organised for them a whole year, thus making it impossible for most of them to be well-informed of their basic rights such as right to survival and life, right to be protected from harmful influence ,right to participate actively in social and cultural lives, among others. These observations compelled one of the children to remark as follows; “We are happy to be informed by the researcher that, there is a state institution known as the Department of Social Welfare whose responsibilities is largely to protect and promote the total well-being of the Ghanaian child. Children should be well educated on their fundamental basic rights and be



encouraged to participate in decision making, particularly those that affect their lives”. Another child had this to say, “Sensitisation programmes on child maintenance should be carried out by the Department of Social Welfare on regular basis for parents/care givers to appreciate the basic rights of children and their responsibilities towards the upkeep of their children”. Officials at the DSW acknowledged that, their interactions with children especially with those under institutional care have not been very regular owing to limited human and financial resources.

4.8. OBSERVATION OF CHILD RIGHTS VIOLATION CASES AND HOW THE DSW OFFICIALS ADDRESSED THEM IN THE UWR

A total number of 18 cases were observed at the DSW in the Wa Municipality, Jirapa and Wa East Districts. Six cases were observed in each of the Districts, Out of which 12 were child rights violations related cases. Among these were; child maintenance, deprivation of education, child abandonment and defilement cases as captured in Table 4.7

TABLE 4.7: CHILD ABUSE CASES

Nature of case	Frequency	Percent
Child maintenance	5	41.7
Deprivation of education	4	33.3
Child Abandonment	2	16.7
Defilement	1	8.3
Total	12	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2017

From the table, the defilement and one of the child abandonment cases as well as three of the maintenance cases were recorded in the Wa Municipality. Two of the deprivation of education cases and a case each of child maintenance and abandonment came from the





Jirapa district. A case each of child abandonment and maintenance as well as two of the deprivation of education cases came from the Wa East district. These cases were each reported to the DSW by the biological parents of the affected children, especially the mothers of the clients for the Department to intervene in the interest of the child. In a response, officials at the DSW usually served notices of invitation to the respondents stating clearly the nature of the case as reported to the DSW by the clients. The date and time for the respondents to visit the Department are clearly stated in the individual respondent's invitation letters. The focus of the DSW in addressing cases involving child rights violations is that of reconciliatory and not necessarily to punish the respondents. Any respondent who refuse to honour the invitation of the DSW in respect of a case brought against him/her is reminded in writing. If all attempts to get a respondent to the Department to resolve a matter brought against him/her yields no result, the Department in writing would forward the case to the family tribunal where force would be applied by the tribunal to find a lasting solution to the matter reported. On the other hand, the DSW may charge maintenance fees for the upkeep of a child neglected by the father upon giving him fair hearing based on the following factors; the earnings and other responsibilities. These according to officials at the DSW are important determinants in deciding the amount of money to be charged a respondent. The strength of the Department in charging any fee for the upkeep of children is based on a compromise. In an event of the Department failing to reach a compromise with respondents over the charging of maintenance fees, the matter is referred to the family tribunal for final resolution. The DSW was able to reach consensus with the respondents on the numbers

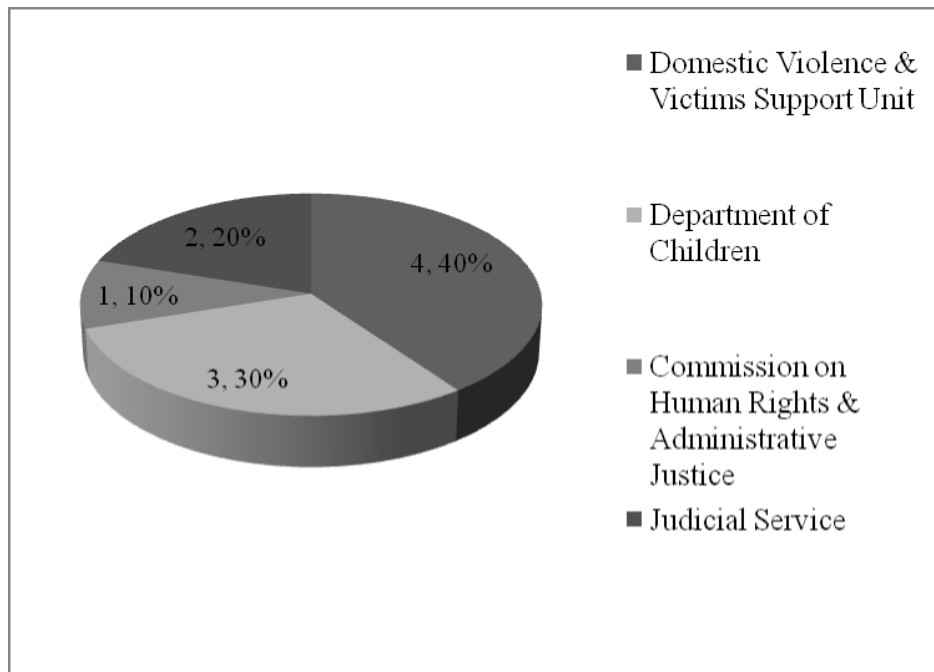
of cases that the researcher observed at the DSW in the Wa Municipality, Wa East and the Jirapa Districts in the Upper West Region.

4.9 COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE DSW AND OTHER STATE CHILD PROTECTION INSTITUTIONS

The mission of the DSW is to work in partnership with other stakeholders, through its three core programmes; the promotion and protection of the rights of children, justice administration of children related issues and community care to promote the delivery of social development services to the vulnerable and excluded individuals, groups and communities (Casey, 2011; DSW Annual Performance Report, UWR, 2010). The respondents agreed that the DSW collaborate with state institutions in the area of child rights protection and identified the major institutions in the Upper West Region to include; Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, the Department of Children and Judicial Service. The views expressed by the respondents are illustrated in Figure 4.8 below. As indicated in the figure below, 40% of the respondents with a frequency of four from the sampled population identified the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service as a major collaborator, three of the respondents, representing 30% of the respondents recognised the Department of Children, 20% with a frequency of two and a respondent, representing 10% of the population identified the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Judicial Service respectively. The data presented shows that, the key state institutions that supports the DSW to render child welfare services in the Upper West Region are the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service and the Department of Children.



FIGURE 4.8: STATE INSTITUTIONS THAT COLLABORATES WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE



Source: Field Survey, 2016

4.9.1 AREAS OF COLLABORATION AND CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND PARTNER AGENCIES

The field survey revealed the handling of child maintenance, paternity cases by 30%, public education on the rights and responsibilities of the child by 30% of the respondents, collaboration in the sentencing of children in conflict with law was identified by 20% of the sampled population, joint staff durbar/forum and training of day care givers were some areas of collaboration recognised by 10% each of the total respondents respectively. Again, the respondents mentioned some benefits of the cooperation with these agencies as; improved ways of addressing children issues, skills and technology transfer, understanding and appreciating the mandate of sister institutions, among others. In line



with this, respondent four had this to say, “There are enormous benefits that can be derived from the collaboration and cooperation between the Department of Social Welfare and partner agencies such as the Department of Children, and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit, but this must be strengthened if the focus of child rights protection is geared towards serving the best interest of the child”.

4.9.2 RESPONDENTS VIEWS ON THE LEVEL OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE DSW AND OTHER STATE INSTITUTIONS

The views gathered from the respondents as regards the level of collaboration between and among the DSW and other players in the child protection sector are illustrated in Table 4. 8.

TABLE 4.8: DESCRIPTION OF LEVEL OF COLLABORATION

Level of collaboration	Frequency	Percent (%)
Low	8	80.0
High	2	20.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The data presented on the table above demonstrated that, eight of the respondents representing 80% described the level of collaboration between the DSW and the other state child protection institutions as low whereas two of them representing 20% of the population termed it as high. The individual’s respondents views gathered and presented pointed to a low level of collaboration between and among the DSW and collaborators. Respondent one had this to say with regard to the level of collaboration between and among state child protection institutions “Collaboration between these institutions is very weak and nothing to ride home about. They were established to champion a common course but each rather prefers to work independently without due regard for the other.



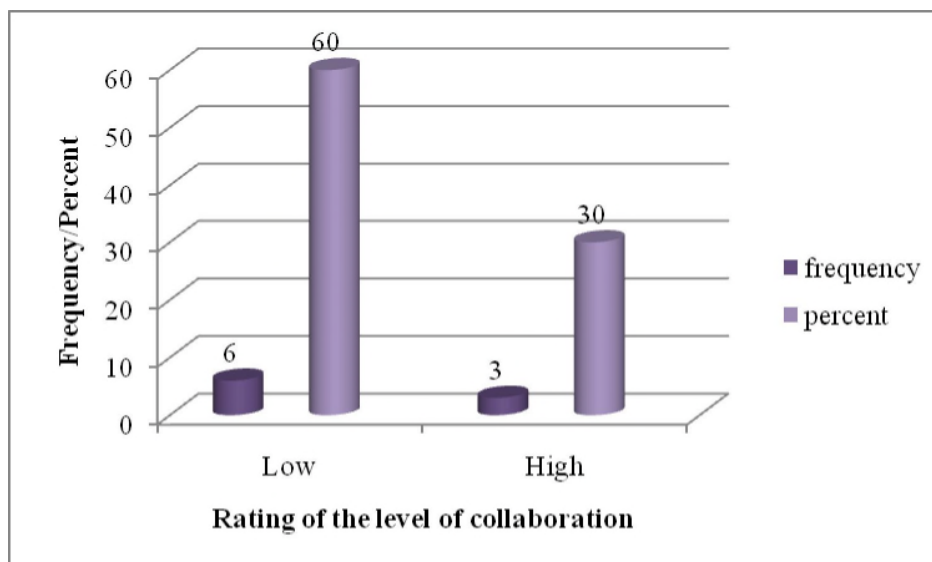
There is a complete lack of a comprehensive system and coordination leading to unhealthy competition”. Respondent four also observed the “Lack of cooperation and coordination coupled with a complete lack of comprehensive plan”. Delap (2013) observed the lack of close collaboration and coordination between and among the actors in the child protection sector leading to unhealthy competition and duplication of the state’s meager resources. This observation is consistent with the views expressed by respondents one and four on the level of collaboration between and among the DSW and other state child protection institutions.

4.9.3 VIEWS OF OTHER STATE PLAYERS ON THE LEVEL OF COLLABORATION WITH THE DSW

Nine respondents were sampled from three state child protection institutions that collaborate with the DSW. One from the Department of Children, four each from the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service respectively. Varied views were expressed which ranged from low to high levels of collaboration. Three out of the four respondents from the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice rated the level of collaboration as low and one graded it high. Two each from the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit rated low and high respectively. Also, the respondents from the Department of Children ranked its collaboration with the DSW as low. Six out of the nine respondents from the three Departments categorized the collaboration with the DSW as low whereas three classified it as high. This presentation is illustrated in Figure 4.9



FIGURE 4.9: CLASSIFICATION OF LEVEL OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE DSW AND OTHER STATE CHILD PROTECTION INSTITUTIONS



Source: Field Survey, 2016

From the figure above, six of the respondents representing 60% of the respondents categorised the level of collaboration as low whereas 30% with a frequency of three graded it high. The data presented above shows that there exist a weak working relationship between and among the state child protection institutions in the Upper West Region. Five of the respondents representing 50% from the other state child protection institutions attributed the low level of collaboration to failure of the system and over stretching of mandate just to win donor support as the focus of most of the donor agencies is centred on child maintenance. In line with these views, respondent 12 had this to say “Some of these state child protection institutions are into competition without clear cut objectives, disregarding the purpose for which they have been established justifying their actions on poor and irregular government subvention”. Also, respondent 15 remarked that, “The Department of Social Welfare lead role in child rights protection





and maintenance for that matter is often disregarded by the other state child protection institutions". Kuyini (2012) notes that, the DSW is mandated to handle children issues in collaboration with other state agencies such as the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and other stakeholders to ensure sustain maintenance of children. The views expressed by Kuyini (2012) are consistent with respondents 15 and 12 remarks but contrary to the activities of the state child protection institutions expected to collaborate with the DSW. Again Kuyini (2012) recognised the lead role of the DSW in the maintenance of children and the supporting roles of other state and non-state actors.

Bourdieu (1977) in his cultural capital theory placed emphasis on knowledge or competence which is distinct and independent from other forms of knowledge or competence such as ability or skills. This acknowledgment suggests that, institutions with the requisite knowledge and experience should be allowed to address issues relating to child welfare. The data obtained from the field revealed that, officials from the DSW are professionally trained to handle child protection issues such as maintenance and related cases. These findings are similar to those expressed by Kuyini (2012) and Casey (2011) that the DSW is the principal state institution in child right protection. Also the field survey defined the fundamental functions of the Department of Children to include; monitoring and evaluation, counseling, research, advocacy as well as programmes and projects development. Similarly, the core mandate of the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice as indicated by the field survey is the enforcement of the fundamental human rights and freedoms for all manner of persons. The core mandate of the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service revealed

by the sampled population of the unit involved the investigation of domestic violence offences involving all manner of persons. Clearly, mandates of the individual state child protection institutions are spelt out by their own officials sampled for this study in very clear terms. The tendency to outdo each other for purposes of winning donor support as established in this study accounted for the low level of collaboration between and among the state child protection institutions and the over stretching of mandate.

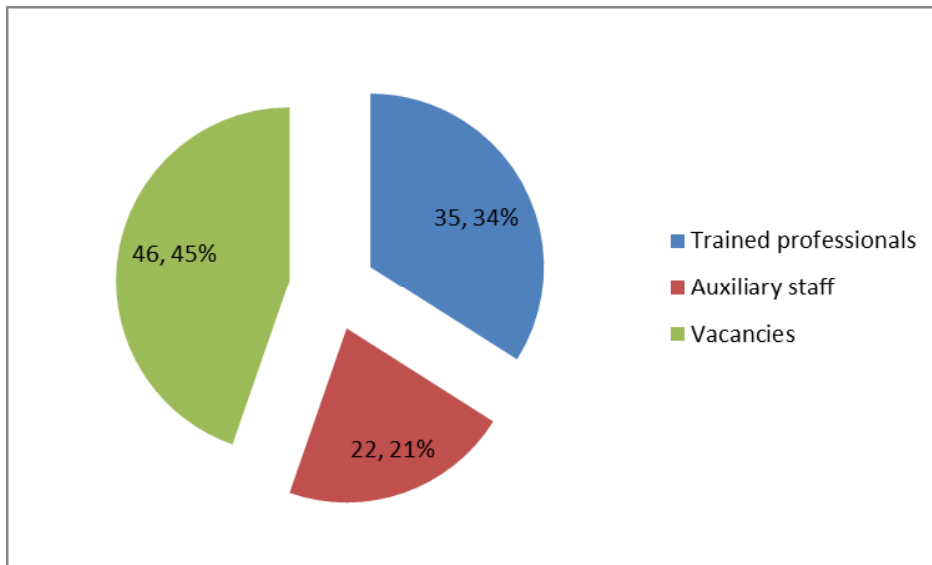
4.10 THE HUMAN RESOURCE BASE OF THE DSW IN THE UPPER WEST REGION

The study focuses on state child protection institutions with emphasis on the DSW and its human resources. The field survey revealed that, the staff strength of the DSW stands at 57 with 46 existing vacancies yet to be filled in the Upper West Region. From the total staff population, 35 of them representing 34% are professionally trained, 22 representing 21% are auxiliary staff and the vacant positions of 46 constituting 45% of the staff required. The data presented in this study shows that, the DSW is constrained in terms of human resources to adequately fulfill its child protection mandate. This prompted respondent five to remark as follows, “It is highly impossible for one officer to man a whole district in the midst of inadequate financial resources. The Department of Social Welfare deserves better than its current situation, especially in the area of trained personnel”. Casey (2011) observed that, the human resources within the DSW remain a challenge as it has not been allowed to expand its full staff complement to provide child and family welfare services to the increasing numbers of the population. According to the sampled population of 10 from the DSW, the poor staffing situation accounted for four of the districts; Nandom, Lawra, Daffiama Busie Issa and the Wa East districts being staffed by a single officer each. Similarly, three of the districts; Lambussie, Wa



West and Sissala West districts are each manned by two officers. The human resource base of the DSW in the Upper West Region is captured in Figure 4.10.

FIGURE 4.10: DESCRIPTION OF STAFF STRENGTH OF THE DSW IN THE UPPER WEST REGION



Source; Field Survey, 2016

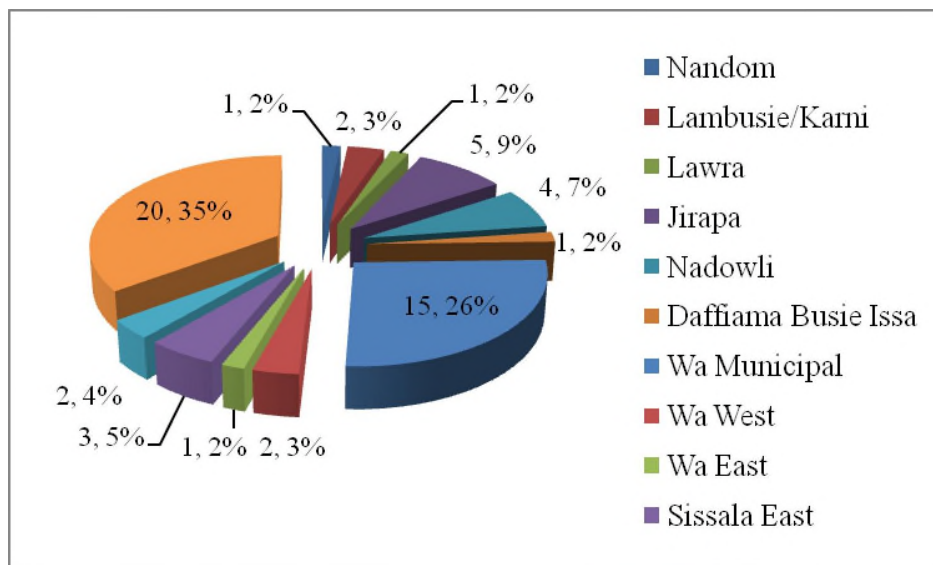
4.10.1 DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF BY DISTRICTS IN THE UPPER WEST REGION

The distribution of available staff at the DSW across the Region is presented in the figure below. The figure shows an unequal pattern of staff distribution in favour of the Regional and Municipal Offices. The Regional and Wa Municipal Offices had staff strength of 20 and 15 representing 35% and 26% respectively. Three of the Wa Municipal staff representing 13% are support staff but the remaining staff populations of 13 representing 87% are professionals. Also, four of the staff at the Regional Office representing 20% are professionally trained whereas the remaining populations of 16 representing 80% are auxiliary staff. The staff strength at the Jirapa and Nadowli districts stands at five and four representing 9% and 7% respectively. From the figure of four in the case of the



Nadowli district, three of the staff that is 75% are professionally trained and the remaining one constituting 25% is a supplementary staff. Sissala East district at Tumu is manned by 5% of the work force with an absolute figure of three, two professionals and a supporting support. The remaining districts, Lanmbusie, Wa West, Sissala West are represented by two staff each whilst Nandom, Lawra, Daffiama Busie Issa and Wa East districts are managed by a staff each.

FIGURE 4.11: DESCRIPTION OF DSW STAFF DISTRIBUTION IN THE UPPER WEST REGION



Source: Field Survey, 2016

The data presented shows that the distribution of staff is skewed in favour of the Regional capital and Urban districts. The deprived ones such as Wa East, Daffiama Busie Issa Districts, among others, where child welfare services are needed most are rather disadvantaged in terms of professional social workers. Respondent one had this to say as regards the un-balanced distribution of the available staff in the Upper West Region “Whenever transfers are made, those involved especially the women often complain that



their children and husbands would suffer as a result of them moving to other districts other than the Wa Municipality or the Regional Office”. Respondent eight also remarked as follows, “The most experienced and very knowledgeable social workers, no matter the conditions are not prepared to accept postings to the deprived districts where child protection issues such as maintenance, neglect and abuse cases need greater attention”. Casey (2011) revealed that, there are qualified, dedicated people working at the DSW, but the distribution of human resources remains concentrated in urban Districts and Regional Offices. “In Sub-Saharan Africa on average 50-60% of social workers posts are vacant, and in Tanzania only one third of the districts have a district social welfare officer” (Delap, 2013:12).

Laird (2010) points out that, the DSW, which is the state agency responsible for the provision of welfare services, employs about 800 staff, including auxiliary and managerial personnel in the country. “There are no formal government social welfare structures at the community level, and social welfare officers currently are limited for outreach within their districts” (Casey,2011:45).

Lund & Agyei-Mensah (2008) called for the training and motivation of social workers with attractive packages to accept postings to the deprived districts which are manned by single trained social workers. The data presented indicates that four of the districts are each handled by a trained social worker which is consistent with the views expressed by Lund & Agyei-Mensah (2008). Bourdieu (1977) in his cultural capital theory acknowledged, knowledge, competence and capacity as crucial in task performance. Also, he talked about degrees which are essential to the managerial class. Linking the views of Bourdieu (1977) to the decisions of staff that turned down transfers owing to

family ties and the inability of management to let those involved appreciate the transfers and where their services are most needed is a demonstration of lack of competence, capacity and knowledge of what they have been tasked to do in an acceptable manner.

4.10.2 RESPONDENTS VIEWS ON THE DSW STAFF SITUATION IN THE UPPER WEST REGION

Respondent's description of the DSW staff situation in the Upper West Region varied from adequate, inadequate and woefully inadequate. This is illustrated in Table 4. 9.

TABLE 4.9: RESPONDENTS VIEWS ON STAFF SITUATION AT THE DSW IN THE UPPER WEST REGION

Description of staff situation	Frequency	Percent (%)
Adequate	2	20.0
Inadequate	2	20.0
Woefully Inadequate	6	60.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2016

As indicated in the table above, six out of the sampled population of 10 representing 60% described the staff situation at the DSW in the Upper West Region as woefully inadequate; two respondents signifying 20% termed it as inadequate and the remaining two indicating 20% defined it adequate. Laird (2008) acknowledged the inadequacy of social works institutions in Ghana and the few existing ones such as the DSW are in a poor state in terms of trained professionals. Casey (2011) established that, the capacity of social welfare officers to provide support services to the vulnerable population, especially children after the initial crisis stage is very limited which must not be underestimated by the appropriate stakeholders in the child protection sector, especially the central government.

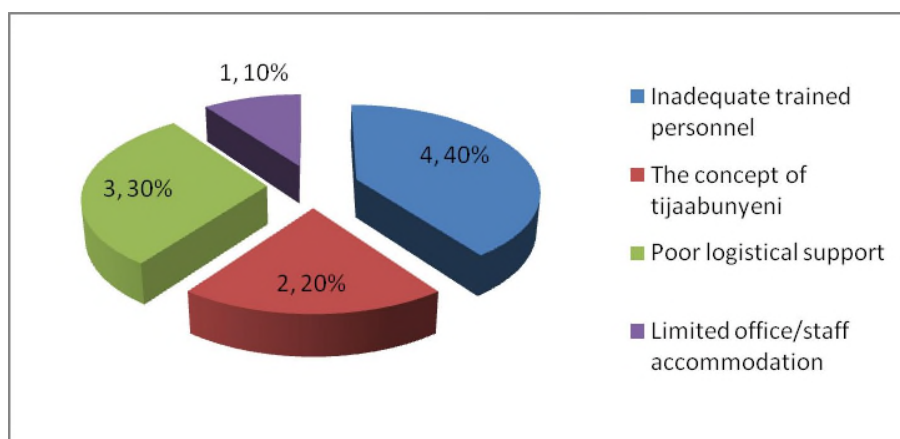




4.11 RESPONDENTS VIEWS ON THE DSW CHALLENGES IN THE UWR

The challenges experienced by the Department which were identified by the respondents included; inadequate trained personnel and other supporting staff at the district level, the concept of “Tijaabunyeni”, poor logistical support which encompasses inadequate and irregular release of funds by the central government, lack of computers and accessories as well as transport. Others are limited office/staff accommodation. Respondent seven had this to say on the challenges of the DSW in the Upper West Region, “The challenges of every state institution are public knowledge, but that of the Department of Social Welfare are enormous in view of the fact that, it has a unique mandate enshrined in the Children’s Act, Act 560 (1998) to protect the rights of children in the Upper West Region and Ghana for that matter”. These challenges are established in Figure 4.12.

FIGURE 4.12: CHALLENGES OF THE DSW IN THE UPPER WEST REGION



Source: Field Survey, 2016

From the figure above, 40% of the respondents with a sampled population of four acknowledged inadequate trained personnel, 30% with a frequency of three recognised poor logistical support, two of the respondents representing 20% of the population identified the concept of “Tijaabunyeni” and a respondent signifying 10% of the total

population approved limited office/staff accommodation as challenges experienced by the DSW in the Upper West Region over the years. The issue of staffing is the dominant view of the respondents closely followed by poor logistical support.

The concept of “Tijaabunyeni” meaning, we are all one people contributed to the unwillingness of individuals, families and communities to report cases involving child rights violation to the appropriate government institutions for redress for they are viewed as outsiders or intruders particularly in rural districts (DSW, 2015;DOVVSU,2015).

These institutions further revealed that, the number of unreported child maintenance cases far outnumbered what has been reported for redress. Respondents who identified the concept of “Tijaabunyeni” as a challenge disclosed that children who made attempts to report their parents or adults for infringing on their rights are often rejected by their families and communities for betraying the concept of “Tijaabunyeni”. This runs contrary to the Children’s Act, Act 560 (1998). Article 11 of the Act states that, “No person shall deprive a child capable of forming views the right to express an opinion, to be listened to and to participate in decisions which affect his well-being, the opinion of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child”. Records available at the Regional Directorate of the DSW in the Upper West Region indicate that 50 children were reunited with their families from the period of 2011-2013 and 2015. The details is as follows; 14 in 2011, 13 of these cases were handled in 2012, 11 and 12 of these children were reunited with their families in 2013 and 2015 respectively. Respondent 10 for instance remarked that. “These are clear indicators that, the Department could have done better if the human and financial resources were readily



available to enable it embark on outreach programmes to communities, especially the deprived ones for child rights education”.

4.12 BUDGETARY ALLOCATION TO THE DSW IN THE UPPER WEST REGION

Respondents did not expressed varied views on this subject. The general view was that, budgetary allocation to the Department was woefully inadequate taking into consideration its primary responsibility of child and family welfare services. It was further disclosed that, the limited approved budget is not released to the Department in time for programmes on child protection issues and in payment of debts. Records available at the Regional Directorate indicate that no funds were received from the central government in 2013. “For the whole of this year, the Department had not received any funds from central government” (Fourth Quarter Report, DSW, UWR (2013). Similarly, the Regional allocations for 2010 under the various units which were not released are indicated in Table 4.10 below.

TABLE 4 .10: REGIONAL ALLOCATION FOR 2010 UNDER THE VARIOUS UNITS

Unit	Administration	Service	Total(GHs)
Justice Administration	592	1,465	2,057
Community Care	583	1,433	2,016
Child rights	575	425	1,000
Grand Total	1,750	3,323	5,075

Source: Casey, 2011

From the table above, it is clear that, child rights protection and promotion was least budgeted for among the other two Units. According to the then Regional Director of the



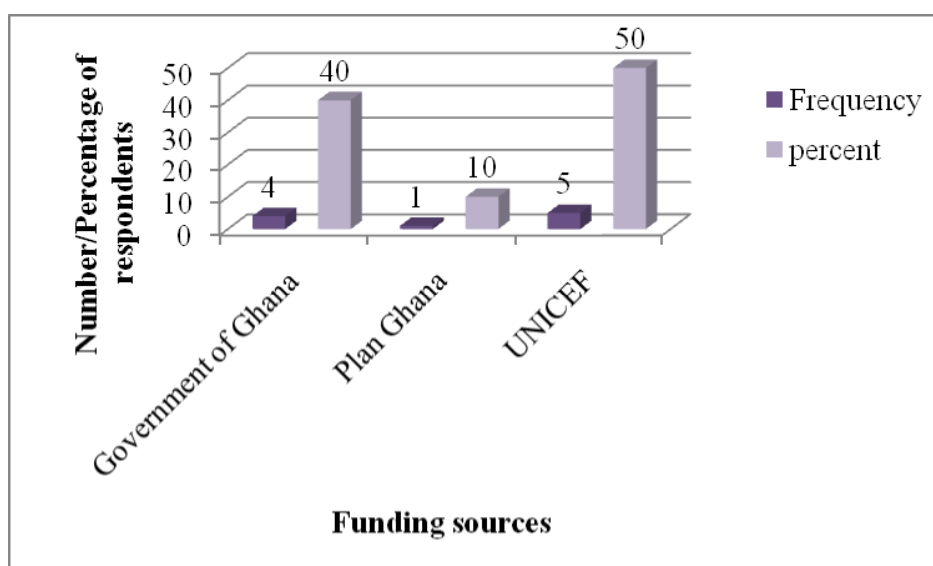


Department of Social Welfare, the approved budget remained at the headquarters in Accra instead of being released to the Regions to organise programmes and sensitise the public on the maintenance of children. The Regional Director of the Department further expressed his views as follows; “As a public institution, the Department is supposed to be funded by the central government just like any other state owned institution, but it is common knowledge that, the Department of Social Welfare is under resourced financially to effectively and efficiently carried out its mandate to the satisfaction of the general public”. But for the financial support of the United Nations Children’s Funds and Plan Ghana, the Department would not have been able to form and trained six child protection teams in six separate communities in the Wa Municipality. Casey (2011) notes that, financial resources for state institutions that are involved in child rights protection are woefully inadequate to perform their primary functions. Budgetary allocations to the Department has been very low, and well below the expected limits required to carry out its planned activities (Casey, 2011; DSW, UWR, 2015). The DSW receives only 1% of total government budget allocations compared with 15% for ministry of education, and 10% for the ministry of health (UNICEF et al, 2012; Delap, 2013). Again, Delap (2013) observed that, child protection is one of the least funded sectors in humanitarian action. For instance, projects that are funded through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) indicate that, child protection allocation is only a fraction of the allocations to other sectors of the economy. The educational sector projects funded through CERF stands at \$144 million in 2009 as compared to \$41million for child protection.

4.12.1 MAIN SOURCES OF FUNDING TO THE DSW IN THE UPPER WEST REGION

Three main sources of funding identified were; the Government of Ghana, Plan Ghana and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). Five of the respondents representing 50% of the sampled population acknowledged UNICEF as a main source of funding, 40% with total frequency of four recognised the Government of Ghana and 10% identified Plan Ghana as a funding source to the DSW. The respondents acknowledged the financial support to the child protection unit of the DWS, especially UNICEF and called for more support to the sector. As respondent three puts it “The support of UNICEF to the child protection unit must be recognised, but much financial support is still required consideration the numerous cases involving child rights violation and the lukewarm attitude of some communities, groups, families and certain individuals towards the protection of child rights”. The sources of funding identified by the respondents are illustrated in figure 4.13.

FIGURE 4.13: DSW SOURCES OF FUNDING IN THE UPPER WEST REGION



Source: Field Survey, 2016

In this chapter, the data collected from the 19 respondents from the field in the Wa Municipality, Jirapa and Wa East Districts were analyzed and presented in tables, pie and bar charts. The results pointed to the fact that, child maintenance was an issue in the Upper West Region that required the attention of the appropriate stakeholders with the Department of Social Welfare playing a lead role, though faced with a myriad of challenges in the discharge of its child protection mandate. Also, the results show that, the financial and human resources of the Department of Social Welfare are inadequate taking into consideration its child protection and promotion functions. The study further revealed a low level of collaboration between the Department of Social Welfare and the other state institutions such as the Department of Children, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service in the Upper West Region.



CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the summary, conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings. The findings are summarised under the research questions. The purpose of the study as already noted was to assess the capacity of the Department of Social Welfare in the area of child rights protection in the Upper West Region. Three objectives were set out and these were; to assess the Department of Social Welfare service delivering in child rights protection in the Upper West Region; to investigate the complementary role played by other institutions for the protection of children, and to examine the extent to which the Department of Social Welfare is resourced to protect the rights of children in the Upper West Region. To achieve these objectives, the study sought the views of respondents using semi-structured and unstructured interviews as well as observing cases involving child rights violations. A case study informed by the interpretive paradigm was designed. Judgmental/purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used to obtain a sample size of 19 respondents from the Department of Social Welfare, Department of Children, Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice for the study. Also, five children were sampled from the Jirapa Orphanage, but their views were used to support or reject the data obtained from the DSW sampled population.

5.2 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following summary of the research findings are based on the three objectives that guided the study.



5.2.1 ASSESS THE DSW SERVICE DELIVERING IN CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION IN THE UPPER WEST REGION

The variables used to measure and assess the capacity of the DSW in child rights protection include; manpower/human resources, programmes, financial resources, training and experience. The analysis shows that, the DSW has limited capacity in implementing its child protection programmes especially at the institutional level such as the children homes and orphanages. Even though the DSW officials sampled for the study acknowledged the relevance of child rights education for their total upbringing, this was not carried out on regular basis owing to inadequate financial and human resources. As a result, their programmes had little or no impact on children in the Upper West Region. The data analysis shows that 60% of the children interviewed have never heard of the DSW let alone to talk of benefitting from its activities. The remaining 40% of the children who had some knowledge as regards the mandate of the DSW argued that, it failed to demonstrate as a state child protection institution in promoting the rights of children and child maintenance in general. These assertions are contrary to the claims by officials of the DSW that programmes are organised to educate the children on their basic rights and general welfare issues in at least quarterly or yearly basis. The views expressed by the children in this study indicate that, public knowledge about the activities of the DSW in the Upper West Region is rather inadequate.

Notwithstanding this, data available at the child welfare institution in Jirapa revealed a kind of collaboration between the institution and the DSW. The DSW is duly notified on the admission of children into the home and their health conditions and the Department is represented on the governing board.



5.2.2 LEVEL OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE DSW AND OTHER STATE CHILD PROTECTION INSTITUTIONS

The study found out that the DSW collaborated with the Department of Children, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice as well the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service. The major collaborators being the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit and the Department of Children respectively. The study identified five areas of collaboration between the DSW and other state child protection institutions. These areas are; handling of child maintenance and paternity cases, child rights and responsibilities education, sentencing of children in conflict with the law, joint staff durbar/ forum and training of day care givers. The benefits related to the collaboration as revealed by the study were; improved ways of addressing children issues, skills and technology transfer as well as the expectations of each of the state child protection institutions in the Upper West Region.

In general the study shows a low level of collaboration between the DSW and the other state child protection institutions; the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service, Department of Children, among others. This was attributed to a lack of comprehensive plan, coordination and cooperation coupled with the unwillingness to promote team work and spirit leading to unhealthy competition and duplication of state resources. The tendency to outdo one another just for purposes of winning donor support was also uncovered in the study to be responsible for the low collaboration. Six out of nine respondents representing 60% of the sampled population for this study from the other state child protection institutions discussed in this study rated the collaboration as low and 80% of the respondents with total frequency of eight sampled from the DSW graded it as low too. Also, three out of the nine respondents representing 30% of the



sampled population for this study from the other state child protection identified in this study rated the collaboration as high and two respondents representing 20% out of 10 from the DSW sampled population also graded the collaboration between the DSW and the other state institutions such as DOVVSU, CHRAJ and DOC as high.

5.2.3 EXAMINE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE DSW IS RESOURCED TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN THE UPPER WEST REGION

The third objective for conducting this study was to examine the extent to which the DSW is resourced to protect the rights of children in the Upper West Region. The study found that, the DSW is inadequately resourced in terms of trained personnel, logistics and finance. The issue of resource inadequacy is a fundamental problem militating against the efforts of the DSW to protect the rights of children in the Upper West Region. The study has shown that the DSW lack the necessary financial resources to organise programmes on child rights protection at various levels. The same financial problems make it impossible for the Department to provide refreshments for participants as a means of motivating them to patronise programmes that are organised by the sector. Three main sources of funding to the Department were identified. These sources are; the Government of Ghana, UNICEF and Plan Ghana. UNICEF and the Central Government were recognised as the major sources of funding to the Department respectively.

Linked to the problem of finances is that of logistics. The study found that shortage of funds greatly weakens the ability of management to acquire the necessary equipment such as computers and accessories to facilitate administrative work. In the three districts investigated; Wa Municipality, Jirapa and Wa East, the available equipment are obsolete and often experienced frequent breakdown compelling the districts to engage the services of individuals with communication centres. The study also found the resource scarcity



problem facing the DSW in the Upper West Region to include shortage of skilled personnel to implement child and family welfare laws such as the Children Act, Act 560 (1998) in the various districts. The analysis has shown that, the DSW is constraints in terms of qualified human resources to adequately fulfill its child rights protection mandate. The study found out that, the staff strength of the DSW in the Upper West Region stands at 57 with 46 existing vacancies, 35 of them representing 34% are qualified personnel, 21% with a frequency of 22 are auxiliary staff and 46 representing 45% are the vacant positions yet to be filled. The study further revealed that, four out of the 11 districts are managed by one officer each whereas three other districts are each manned by two officers. Again, the study pointed out the concentration of the few qualified staff in the Wa Municipality to the disadvantage of the deprived districts where child welfare services and education are needed most. Also, the analysis show that the trained personnel have not benefited from further skills training specifically on child rights protection.

5.3 OTHER CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY THE DSW IN THE UPPER WEST REGION

Other challenges identified in the study besides inadequate trained personnel, poor logistical support and skills training are the concept of “Tijaabunyeni” and limited office space/staff accommodation. The study found out that, the concept of “Tijaabunyeni”, meaning we are all one people, accounted for the unwillingness of families, communities and individuals to report cases involving child rights violation to the DSW for redress. Again, the study discovered that the number of unreported child maintenance cases far outnumbered what has been officially reported to the DSW. This “Tijaabunyeni” concept made it possible for most of the child related cases to be settled at home sometimes to the

displeasure of the victim and the immediate family in most cases. Also the Department lacks decent office and staff accommodation, computers and accessories for the storage of cases involving child rights violation, furniture and means of transport in the districts assessed to reach out to communities especially the deprived ones for child rights education programmes.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

Ghana was the first signatory to the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child in November, 1959 and the first Country to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on 5 February, 1990. The UNCRC enjoins states to adequately offer protection to children within and outside the home. Also, the fundamental human rights of the Ghanaian children are enshrined in Article 28 of the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana which resulted in a major legislative reform, the children Act, Act 560 (1998) where the mandate of the DSW child rights protection emanates.

Ghana's position to championing the rights of children is in line with the recommended standard of the global community but the institutions established to work in the best interest of children are not adequately furnish with data on child rights violations owing to close family ties in the study area. The DSW is not adequately resourced in terms of finances and qualified personnel to effectively and efficiently accomplish its child rights protection mandate. The child rights protection unit of the DSW is the least budgeted for compared to Justice Administration and Community Care. Notwithstanding the setbacks and the establishment of other institutions to complement its work, the DSW mandate is still very relevant in contemporary times. Its mission of promoting the delivering of social development services to the vulnerable, excluded individual and communities



through policy formulation, programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation in collaboration with other stakeholders still stands tall among others. Added to this, children are becoming more vulnerable in a fast globalizing world and deserve better and more protective arrangements than before. Similarly, as the world is increasingly becoming a global village, many challenges including issues of child maintenance are reported on daily basis which requires the attention of the appropriate state institutions such as the DSW.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations could be made for the DSW to improve upon its capacity for effective and efficient child rights protection and promotion drive in the Upper West Region. Some of these recommendations can be addressed at the local and national level or through combined efforts of the local and national levels. Four key proposals are presented for consideration by the appropriate authorities based on the findings of the study.

5.5.1 STATE CHILD PROTECTION INSTITUTIONS SHOULD FOCUS ON

CORE MANDATE

First and foremost, state child protection institutions are established to promote the total well-being of children by complementing each other's efforts but for a specific purpose defined by law or an Act. It is recommended that each of these institutions such as the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, Department of Children and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service should focus on its core mandate enshrined in the status books and avoid the tendency of overstretching its boundaries into other areas owing to comparative advantage over other



sister institutions. This would be one of the surest ways of enhancing effective collaboration and healthy competition among the state child protection institutions and appropriate stakeholders geared towards serving the best interest of children in the Upper West Region.

5.5.2 COMMUNITY CHILD PROTECTION STRUCTURES SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED

Also, community child protection structures should be strengthened in accordance with the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the mission of the Department of Social Welfare. The community child protection committees/teams, assembly persons and unit committee members, care givers as well as the chiefs and council of elders are the recognised community child protection structures in the districts assessed. The DSW should equip them with skills on how to assist children, whose rights are deliberately violated by their care givers, community members and the general public and the necessary steps to take bearing in mind that the interest of the child is paramount as regards their rights and freedom. The acquisition of knowledge in the area of child protection would enable them to make the necessary referrals to the appropriate quarters and their limitations. Adequate strengthening of these structures would gradually eliminate the concept of “Tijaabuyeni” paving way for the law to engage irresponsible parents and persons who violate child rights appropriately.

5.5.3 ENGAGEMENT OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE IN FULL COMPLEMENT

Again, the mandate of the Department of Social Welfare can only be realized if qualified personnel are engaged in full complement to man the district offices across the Region.



Condition of service should be improved to attract competent personnel into the Department. The current conditions of service cannot entice the caliber of staff required to protect the rights of children in the Upper West Region. Similarly, the few hands that are scarifying should periodically undergo in-service training specifically on the maintenance of children. In view of this, the Government of Ghana should ensure that, financial resources are made available to the DSW to enable it organise regular in-service training on child maintenance for officials at the DSW in the Upper West Region. If this recommendation is carried out to the fullest, staff at the DSW, parents especially mothers, children and communities would be the ultimate beneficiaries.

5.5.4 THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE SHOULD BE ADEQUATELY RESOURCED

Last but not the least, the Department of Social Welfare need to be adequately resourced financially to perform its function as a child protection unit. The proper resourcing of the Department would facilitate the organisation of programmes to promote the rights of children in the Upper West Region. Adequate funding from the Central government and other development partners such as UNICEF and Plan Ghana to the Department would save it from the perennial problem of inadequate resourcing from the Government of Ghana and to perform its activities satisfactorily as required by the Children Act, Act 560 (1998). Consideration and implementing these recommendations would strengthen the capacity of the child protection and promotion unit and the DSW in the Upper West Region.



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11. How many social welfare institutions are there in the Upper West region?
12. What resources are needed by social welfare institutions to effectively discharge their child rights protection responsibilities?
13. Where do they get these resources you have mentioned?
14. Which of these resources mentioned are available and the vice versa?
15. How do you intend getting these resources to enable you discharge your child right protection mandate?
16. How does the non-availability of these resources affect your child right protection mandate?
17. What is your staff strength?
18. How will you describe your staff situation?
19. Would you say your staff have acquired the needed skills/experience in the area of child right protection and how?
20. What are some of the challenges or problems that the DSW face in child rights protection in the region/district?
21. State three to five reasons why you think the DSW is failing, retrogressing or could do better in child rights protection in your districts or in the Upper West region.
22. Does the DSW collaborate with other state institutions in the area of child right protection in your district or region?
23. If yes, could you identify or mention three to five of these agencies that partner the department to champion the course of children.





24. Mention some areas of collaboration and co-operation between the DSW and partner agencies in the past or present at the regional, district or community levels.
25. What have been the benefits of such collaborations?
26. What have been the challenges of collaboration with these other state welfare institutions in the region/district?
27. What mechanisms are in place aimed at strengthening the collaboration between the DSW and these institutions?
28. How were children protected before the establishment of the DSW?
29. Would you say such a system should have been allowed to stay and why?
30. What were some of the challenges that affected the wellbeing of children before the introduction of modern social work?
31. Would you say that the introduction of modern social work led to the breakdown of the extended family system in child maintenance and why?
32. How often do the public visit your outfit for advice or information on child right protection?
33. How much in percentage terms does the DSW contribute to child rights protection in the Upper West region?
34. Could you support your answer with empirical evidence?
35. Is the mandate of the DSW still relevant in contemporary times? Explain your answer.
36. What recommendations will you offer the DSW in its child protection drive?

**APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHT
AND ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
VICTIMS SUPPORT UNIT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN OFFICIALS**

SECTION A: Background of respondents

Gender: Age: Marital status:

Educational background/level:

How long have you

been working?

Position held at work

place: **SECTION B:** Questions

1. What is the core mandate of your outfit?
2. What special contributions have you made to advance the course of your organization?
3. Could you try pointing out three to five past and present achievements of your outfit in relation to child right protection?
4. Could you describe the relation between your organization and your clients as well as the public?
5. What are some of the major challenges that impact negatively on your organization's performance?
6. How do you cope with such challenges?
7. What are child rights?
8. Could you identify three to five of them?
9. How were child rights protected in the past?
10. Should the protection of child rights be the prime responsibility of the state child protection institutions and why?





11. Do you hold the view that, the establishment of modern social welfare institutions weakened the extended family system and its leadership to provide for the maintenance of children?
12. Could you justify your answer?
13. How would you describe the situation of child maintenance in your district and in the Upper West region?
14. Are the men or women more responsible in terms of providing for the maintenance of their children?
15. Could you justify your stand?
16. What would have been the situation of children in the region or district without the involvement of state child protection institutions?
17. What activities /interventions have your organization /unit put in place to protect the rights of children in your district and the region in general?
18. Have your outfit ever organize public education to sensitize the public on child right issues?
19. How would you describe the participation and impact on children?
20. How much in percentage terms does your organization contributes to child rights protection in your districts or in the Upper West region?
21. Could you support your answer with empirical evidence?
22. Is there an established working relationship between the DSW and your organization?
23. How would you describe the nature of the established relation?

24. What is your general impression about the work of the DSW in the Upper West region?
25. How would you describe the relationship between the DSW and the public on children matters?
26. How does your organization collaborate with the DSW?
27. Could you identify present areas of collaboration and cooperation between the DSW and your organization?
28. What aspect of the collaboration/cooperation do you appreciate and vice versa?
29. Given the opportunity, how would you advise the DSW to discharge its core mandate effectively and efficiently?
30. Is the mandate of the DSW still relevant in contemporary times?
31. Could you justify your stand?



13. What are some of the activities that you ever participated in and organized by the Department of Social Welfare in your district?
14. Do they have what it takes to protect your rights and other children?
15. Should the Department be involved in addressing child maintenance cases?
16. If yes explain and if no why should they not?

